
Ruthenberg Jury Selection, Day 2

by T.J. O'Flaherty

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(Special Wire) St. Joseph, Mich.— Mr. [Frank P.] Walsh resumed his examination of prospective juror Mr. J.H. Harmon, retired businessman and at one time contracting freight agent for the Southern Pacific Railway, with offices in Chicago, who believes this government is the best in the world and does not desire any change.

The probable social outlooks of the jury that will sit in judgement on C.E. Ruthenberg may be judged from the fact that among the jury panel are a treasurer of the Chamber of Commerce, who is also a member of the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, a retired capitalist, a brother of the bailiff, an ex-policeman, jailer, and now private detective, a justice of the peace, and a nephew of a member of the Foster jury who voted for a conviction.

This is what is supposed to be a jury of Ruthenberg's peers, the only union man in the panel was yesterday kicked out of the box by the State, and today a similar fate befell a man by the name of Luther, whose name, perhaps cause some apprehension among the legal battery that represents the prosecution because of the history of the great reformer Martin Luther, and because of his German ancestry.

The defense retaliated by challenging the bailiff's brother, and the man who held every menial state job but that of hangman, Mr. O. Gervis [?].

A feature of this trial is the uniform good feeling that exists between prosecution and defense. It might be said that the conduct of the Judge leaves nothing to be desired in the way of fairness and the simplicity of his conduct, to those who are acquainted with the black robed judicial figures which awe the courtroom visitors in other states, a Judge who smiles, occasionally whirls his chair around or takes a walk into the rear room is a delightful novelty.

The stool pigeons Louis Loebel and [Francis] Morrow appear to have the ambition to smoke themselves to death. The former leaves a cloud of blue smoke in his trace wherever he goes. His wife is a constant attendant in court. She wears a string of pearls, a fur coat, and her broad face is liberally rouged. The air of prosperity that surrounds this family of finks is a subject of curiosity in the county which is paying the cost of the prosecution. There is a growing feeling that the taxpayers of Berrien County could find some other use for their money than to provide cigars to underworld characters

for the purpose of sending a highly educated and constructive citizen like C.E. Ruthenberg to jail.

Louis Loebel was likened by one observer to a dressed monkey, but it appears to be that this is not fair to the monkey, who is an amusing little animal and hurts nobody. He looks to me like a cornered rat. He is narrow between the eyes — very narrow, he would fill the picture of the popular conception of the dope peddler and pickpocket type. When he took part in the Bridgman raid he carried some hirsute adornment on his upper lip. This has since been removed but its absence has not improved his looks any. In fact, his face suffers from public exposure, and these two degenerates are among the star witnesses that the State hopes will enable it to send C.E. Ruthenberg to jail.

Walsh called the attention of the prospective jurors to that as a result of the civil war millions of dollars worth of property were confiscated, that is taken without any compensation, and again that the prohibition act confiscated the property of thousands of people without giving them anything in return.

The prosecution endeavored to create the thought in the minds of the prospective jurors that the Bridgman convention advocated the taking of property without compensation and that this constituted larceny and was therefore a crime punishable under the Michigan Criminal Syndicalism Act.

Christ was used by Prosecutor Gore in an attempt to make clear to the mind of a juror the distinction between predicting violence and advocating it. "I could take a soapbox," he declared with a wave of his arm toward the county jail, "and predict that Christ was going to come to earth again, but that would be a different thing to advocating—" There he quit as the juror was going to confess that he understood him. Nobody could exactly follow Mr. Gore in his heavenly flight.

While Attorney Gray for the defense was explaining to the talesmen that political parties such as the Republican and Democrat Parties and the Communist Party sometimes change their platforms in accord with their changing beliefs or changing conditions, Attorney Smith objected to this line of questioning, but his objection was overruled.

I cannot finish this story without calling attention to a very remarkable occurrence. A talesman admitted that he heard of the Bridgman raid, formed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the defendant, and kept the same opinion until now. He was excused.

Just as the court was about to take the noon recess Attorney Smith got into trouble with the French language over the definition of the word "syndicalist." He defined it as "a teacher of crime," and gave some dictionary as his authority. Considerable amusement was caused by this novel interpretation. The mystery will be solved perhaps during the afternoon session.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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