

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER

A FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETY • INCORPORATED 1930 • CHARTERED BY THE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK STATE

80 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-7733

WILLIAM WEINER, PRESIDENT
MAX BEDACHT, GENERAL SECRETARY
PETER SHIPKA, TREASURER

April 25, 1940

Dear Friend:

The crucial period of history in which we are living today calls for the utmost vigilance in safeguarding the civil liberties and constitutional rights which American democracy affords.

That is why we take this opportunity of acquainting you with the most recent activities of the Dies Committee in direct violation of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. These activities took the form of an illegal and unwarranted raid on the offices of the International Workers Order in Philadelphia and seizure of our properties.

The enclosed statement of our General Executive Board sets forth all of the facts in this case, as well as a statement of the principles and program of the International Workers Order. As a fraternal society chartered by the Insurance Department of the State of New York, with licenses to operate in Pennsylvania and in other states, the records of our organization are open for inspection at any time to the legal authorities of the State. There was therefore no reason for the Dies agents to carry through this raid other than to create a dangerous precedent which would allow the Dies Committee to proceed against any and all individuals and organizations whom they wish to attack.

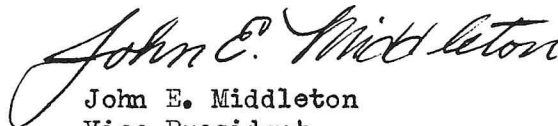
We are taking the necessary legal steps to protect our membership. Legal action has been taken to compel the return of our properties which Mr. Dies not only seized but illegally took out of the state to Washington. We must add here that Mr. Dies has already conceded the illegality of this procedure by returning these properties to the Philadelphia magistrate who issued the search warrant. Warrants for the arrest of the investigators and lieutenant of police have been issued by Judge George A. Welsh of the Philadelphia Federal Court. Simultaneously our 163,000 members, aroused over this threat to civil liberties, are filing protests with their representatives in Congress.

However, we feel that protests against such actions of the Dies Committee are not merely a question for the International Workers Order. This attack is a danger signal which should alarm every organization and liberty loving person of what lies ahead for all of us unless we stop Dies in his un-American practices.

We are glad to be able to report that already the American Civil Liberties Union and other civil rights organizations, prominent Congressmen, people in the professions, fraternal organizations and trade unions, have communicated their protests against these illegal acts to the proper authorities.

May we ask you to join them in expressing your protest and affirming your belief in the basic principles of our Bill of Rights and our Constitution by signing and returning to us the statement below. May we also suggest that you convey your protest to your Congressmen in Washington through personal letters and get as many of your friends as you can to take similar action.

Fraternally yours,


John E. Middleton
Vice-President

JEM/SS
UOPWA-No.16

Mr. John E. Middleton
International Workers Order
80 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

As a citizen of the United States believing firmly in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, I deplore the un-American activities made upon our democratic forms by the Dies Committee. A specific example of the abridgment of the Bill of Rights and civil liberties is the recent raid upon the offices of the International Workers Order in Philadelphia by agents of the Dies Committee and the Philadelphia police.

The methods employed by the Dies Committee are a direct threat to our American institutions and in order to safeguard them we must rid this nation of any committees or organizations which employ such tactics.

(Signed)

(Address)

(Organization If Member Of One)

Statement

OF THE
GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER
ON
The Latest Un-American Activities of the
Dies Committee

ON MONDAY, APRIL 1, agents of the Congressional Committee Investigating un-American Activities, fortified by nearly two dozen local police and plain-clothes men, raided the office of the Philadelphia District organization of our International Workers Order.

The raiders were armed with a search warrant which did not mention the International Workers Order. It ostensibly empowered the bearers to search the effects of Brother Frank Hellman, our temporary District Secretary of Philadelphia. The searchers were further armed with blank summonses from the Dies Committee. Such a summons was served on the office worker, after the police had ascertained her name and written it into the summons.

The search warrant had been issued by a local Magistrate upon application by the Dies agents. Before this Magistrate, oath was made that upon information and belief, a violation of a Pennsylvania law had been committed, and that a search of Mr. Hellman's effects would disclose said violation.

The General Executive Board of the International Workers Order declares that this oath of an agent of the Dies Committee was obviously false. There existed neither information nor proof of a violation of a Pennsylvania law. The General

Executive Board of the International Workers Order accuses the Dies Committee of conspiring to have this oath taken by one of its agents, as a means of violating the constitutional protection of the International Workers Order from unreasonable searches and seizures.

The raiders, contrary to the law, packed up everything within sight and kidnapped this material out of the State of Pennsylvania. Before the Congressional Committee in Washington could have possibly ascertained the exact character of those materials, its chairman, Congressman Dies, rushed into print insinuating that this raid had uncovered proofs of un-American activities. Mr. Dies triumphantly shouted into the ears of the press: "They cannot laugh that off."

The General Executive Board of the International Workers Order declares that the statement by Congressman Dies of having obtained proof of un-American activities against our Order by these raids, are made out of whole cloth. What was taken consisted in the main, of an American flag, some membership policies, some executed applications for membership, some blank membership applications, directions for a membership campaign, reports on this campaign, directives for the organization of social life in lodges, copies of the By-Laws of the International Workers Order, a list of State Legislators and State Congressmen of Penn-

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

of the

International Workers Order

The International Workers Order is a fraternal benefit society. Its principles and practices are guided by the experiences and progressive traditions of American fraternalism.

The Order provides sick, disability and death benefits. It organizes medical aid and other forms of fraternal help for its members. It pledges its members to aid and comfort each other in times of need. It endeavors to make its lodges a source of joy and happiness for the members and their families.

The International Workers Order is founded on the principles of democratic fraternalism. Its doors are open to all regardless of sex, nationality, race, color, creed or political affiliation.

“... The cultural heritage of every one of the many national and racial groups which make up the American people has contributed to and enriched the life and the traditions of our country. Our Order endeavors in its fraternal life to make the same culture and traditions a source of Americanization, of education, recreation and happiness for its members. The Order thus hopes to become a stronghold of unity and progress of mankind, fostering the ideals of fraternalism.

Around this program the Order undertakes to organize adults, young people and children. It helps to promote sports life, musical organizations, dramatic and educational groups for social entertainment.

The fraternal service of the International Workers Order aims primarily to help the toiling people. Their only source of income is their own labor. Fraternal benefits are for them an indispensable emergency aid. The Order recognizes, however, that emergency aid alone cannot solve the problem of economic insecurity. The activities of labor unions contribute to that solution by striving for job security, for better working conditions and for adequate wages. Progressive movements of the people contribute to that solution by securing adequate social legislation. “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty” and the safeguard of the democratic institutions of the land.

With these principles, the International Workers Order pledges to educate its members to support labor's economic and social efforts. The I.W.O. assumes the great traditional obligation of the fraternal movement to win its members for unity of the people in city and country, as a means of preserving and extending our American democracy and of maintaining world peace. Everywhere and at all times the International Workers Order shall make itself a part of democracy and progress which make for the continuous improvement of the economic security of the people and for the development of a better America.