

Anti-Labor Activities Of FBI Brought to Light

SAN FRANCISCO—As the dominant part played by the FBI in the Bridges case comes more to light through the testimony of witnesses Maurice Cannalonga and Jim O'Neil, it is evident that the FBI, in aims and methods, parallel Germany's Gestapo.

A recent survey by the Bridges Defense Committee charges that although J. Edgar Hoover has built up himself and the Federal Bureau of Investigation as the friend and protector of the American people against crime and "subversive elements," the record actually shows that:

"Hoover is the 'Little Hitler' of an organization of 2,050 people which he runs in dictatorial fashion as personal political and publicity machine.

"He opposes civil service for FBI employees.

"FBI members who tried to unionize were fired and black-listed.

"The FBI has a labor turnover of 70%, hiring and firing at will.

"Of all the crime-fighting agencies of the federal government, the FBI has next to the lowest percentage of convictions gained from arrests made.

"Hoover uses the FBI as a labor-spy and union-busting agency.

"Wire-tapping, use of agents provocateur, illegal entry and arrest, brutality, third degree methods, and other violations of law and civil liberties are con-

tinuously indulged in by the FBI.

"The FBI has spied upon United States senators, men who are now seated in the Supreme Court and other outstanding persons whose views did not coincide with Hoover's."

In 1939 the FBI was linked with the strike-breaking Cleveland Industrial Safety Council, and in the Spring of 1940, a 9-month strike of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers at Ducktown, Tenn. was smashed when the FBI arrested 22 strikers, held them incommunicado for 6 days in a makeshift concentration camp, third-degree'd them, and wrung false "confessions" from 5 men. The strike was lost.

PICKETS

In speech before the New York Chamber of Commerce, Hoover boasted that he had 4,800,000 sets of "criminal" fingerprints. Those who are startled at the increase of the criminal population should know that many of these prints are marked simply "picketeer," while others carry the notation "union agitator."

In August, 1940, Hoover pub-

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lished an article in the Hearst American magazine, charging that Communists were attempting to close down a large aircraft factory if the company took orders for British planes.

And at that very time, 6,000 AFL unionists in Boeing's Seattle factory were desperately trying to stave off employer attempts to enforce wage cut at a time when the company was making millions from war orders.

Hoover, who has been characterized as "obsessed with a complex against liberals and advanced thinkers," was the leader of the famous Palmer 'Red Raids' of 1919.

In these raids people were arrested at public meetings enmasse, homes were invaded without search warrants, women were torn from their children and forced to dress before the FBI men in the middle of the night, then confined in filthy quarters without sleeping or sanitary accommodations, and chained to together to be photographed for the newspapers.

SPIES CONDEMNED

Federal Judge Anderson, handing down a decision in regard to some of these raids, delved into the use of the FBI for labor-spying activity.

"I cannot adopt the contention," said the judge, "that government spies are any more trustworthy, or less disposed to make trouble in order to profit therefrom, than are spies in private industry . . . the evil wrought by the spy system in industry has, for decades, been incalculable. Until it is eliminated, decent human relations cannot exist among employers and employees, or even among employees. It destroys trust and confidence; it kills human kindness; it propagates hate."

In applying for increased appropriations for the FBI, Attorney-General Jackson wrote to Senator Norris:

"In the years since Mr. Hoover became head of the bureau not one case has been reversed by an Appellate Court because of third degree or other improper treatment of defendants." Jackson also stated the FBI secured conviction in 96 per cent of the cases it prosecuted.

Investigation shows that the percentage is actually 72.5 per cent, and that the only federal law enforcement agency with a lower percentage is the customs bureau with 71.5 per cent.

Court records show that FBI convictions have been reversed because of wire-tapping, and third degree methods. These methods include such things as forcing a man

to sign certain papers by threatening to arrest his pregnant wife if he refused, illegal search and seizure, holding a defendant incommunicado for six days and questioning him, although he was ill.

SICK MEN

It is interesting to note that both O'Neill and Cannalonga, hostile government witnesses in the present Bridges trial, were sick men.

Cannalonga had just come out of the hospital when he was originally questioned by G-men, while O'Neill took the witness chair only one week removed from hospitalization for pneumonia.

And in line with forcing a man to sign papers is O'Neill's charge that his alleged statement is a trumped-up one, manufactured by the FBI.

Observers note, when defense attorneys asked to see this "statement," that assistant FBI Director Earl Connelly emphatically shook his head at Prosecutor Del Guercio, and showed definite signs of chagrin when Judge Sears finally allowed defense counsel to see it.

One reversal of an FBI conviction was obtained because an agent had taken the defendant to a morgue at 3 a. m. and forced him to watch attendants working on the corpse of a supposed murder victim.

The Bridges defense survey merely quotes these reversals by Appellate Courts, and because of space requirements, ignores many reversals in trial courts for similar reasons.

Hoover, who employs 30 press agents to publicize the bureau (at public expense) makes a specialty of attempting to frighten the public, but study of his quoted figures show amazing discrepancies.

In March, 1936, he refers to more than 3,000,000 "active participants in crime;" in June, 1936, he says there are 500,000 in America's "criminal standing army;" in December, 1936, he quotes 3,500,000 criminals; in 1937, he says there are 4,300,000 persons engaged "by day and by night" in committing major crimes.

When he claimed there were 150,000 murderers "roaming at large," a checkup showed that in

987 cities with a population of 35 million, police knew of only 3,582 cases of criminal homicide, of which 2,935 had been cleared up by arrests!

This man and this organization, are the key factors in the case advocating Harry Bridges' deportation. It is no wonder that good union men and women all over the country, have flocked to defend Bridges.