

PICKETS AT F. B. I. SAY THEY MAY QUIT

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Italian-American Group Plan
Plea to Congress

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By CRAIG R. WHITNEY

The group that has organized an allegedly disruptive picket line at the Federal Bureau of Investigation's headquarters here said yesterday that it might call off the demonstrations after a rally at Columbus Circle on June 29.

Anthony Colombo, a member of the executive committee of the group, the Italian-American Civil Rights League, and a son of Joseph Colombo Sr., a reputed Mafia chieftain who is also associated with the picketing, made the announcement.

Earlier, State Supreme Court Justice George Starke said he would make impromptu visits to the picket line, at 69th Street and Third Avenue, in addition to an announced visit he planned for last night.

Hearing to Be Requested

The younger Colombo said that on the 29th "we will ask for a Congressional hearing into the ethics of F.B.I. methods, and, if we get it, then we will see if we have to continue the picketing."

The pickets, who have been demonstrating against the F.B.I. since April 30 on the ground that it defames Italian-Americans, have been sued by neighbors and owners of three apartment houses.

In court and outside on Monday, the elder Colombo said he supported the picketing. Some of his associates said that he was its principal organizer and that his son, Anthony, used a bullhorn to rally the demonstrators who went to court.

The demonstrations have been large and noisy, with hundreds of people in the line at times, and the neighbors asked Justice Starke for a restraining order limiting their size and volume.

He is expected to rule soon—perhaps tomorrow morning—on the request. The neighbors' lawyer, Leon Brickman, said he would drop the suit, however, if the demonstrators quieted down.

The organizers appear to be planning a large demonstration at Columbus Circle at noon on the 29th, which they call Italian Unity Day. They have asked shopkeepers and workers in Italian neighborhoods in the city to stop working that day.

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POLICE ERROR SEEN IN F. B. I. PICKETING

Judge Says Amplifier Permit
Was Not Justified

Justice George Starke said yesterday in State Supreme Court that the police had no right to permit the use of bullhorns or other sound equipment by Italian-Americans who nightly picketed the headquarters of the Federal Bureau of Investigation here.

However, the justice declined to enjoin the use of all amplifiers, as urged by residents of the East side area, pending a further conference with lawyers representing the pickets and residents.

The picketing, which lasts for several hours each evening at Third Avenue and 69th Street, was organized by Joseph Colombo, a reputed Mafia figure, to protest alleged harassment of Italian-Americans by the F.B.I.

Justice Starke summoned reporters into the small robing room behind the Foley Square courtroom in which he was hearing other cases, and made a statement on the picketing, which has been going on for a month.

Justice Starke, the reporters and a court stenographer were the only persons present in the robing room.

Speaking without notes, but with a law book in front of him, Justice Starke said he was making the statement, to be read into the record of the case later at the request of lawyers for both sides.

Expects Lawyers' Help

He indicated that he was anticipating the lawyers' help in setting up "guidelines" on how "the demonstration can proceed."

He said "the public is entitled to know" that what was involved was not the "rights of the parties insofar as their grievances are concerned between the various defendant organizations and the F.B.I."

"The defendants have the right to picket, but they must do so peacefully and without interfering or depriving anyone else of his rights," he said.

"Apparently my preaching on Monday of 'do unto others that which you would have others do unto you' has had a salutary effect," Justice Starke continued. He referred to a court session when nearly 300 people, some waving Italian and American flags, heard him praise their courtroom conduct.

Justice Starke, who has been criticized for his visits to the scene of the picketing, said he "must clarify" them for the record.

Parties' Consent Recalled

"Most laymen are unaware of the fact," he said, "that the trier of the facts, whether it be a judge or jury, should not visit the scene unless it is on consent of both sides, in writing."

This, he said, was done, with the further stipulation that both sides agreed to agree to his visits as long as the picketing continued.

Justice Starke said "the chief inspector in charge of the whole area" had told him the police issued a permit to the pickets under the Administrative Code, which states in part that no one may be denied a permit for use of sound equipment on a public street after paying a \$5 fee.

He added, however, that apparently neither the lawyers nor the police were aware of further sections of the code that bar the use of sound equipment at any time within 500 feet of a hospital. The justice noted that the demonstration took place well within that distance of the New York Foundling Hospital. He urged that the City Council reconsider the laws governing picketing.

In the meantime he reserved decision on the motion to limit the picketing.