

Posse Leader Charged

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Sacramento

Francis Gillings, a leader of the "Posse Comitatus," a right-wing vigilante group that was formed to maintain law order and "God-given, Constitutional rights," has been indicted on federal charges of income tax evasion.

Indicted with the 43-year-old Gillings was his wife, Ruth, 44. Both live in Tracy. The indictment charges that the couple failed to report \$39,718.34 and \$43,444.62 in gross income for 1971 and 1972. If convicted, each could face a maximum penalty of a \$10,000 fine and one year in prison on each of two counts.

Gillings, a former service station operator who says he is now unemployed, was one of three posse members arrested September 2 near Stockton.

Sheriff's deputies said tomato growers and posse members banded together to keep United Farm Worker Union organizers from talking to field workers about forthcoming union elections.

Gillings was charged with assaulting a peace officer with a deadly weapon.

This spring Gillings told a reporter for The Chronicle that one of the functions of his posse was to "protect members and any other private citizen from the service of liens by federal tax agents for delinquent tax matters."

Known as the "Tracy Tax Rebel," he said then he had paid no income taxes since 1971.

Gillings claims his Posse Comitatus has a membership of 400,000 in all states except Hawaii and Maine. Many of its members hold that taxation on personal incomes is unconstitutional.

The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of the personal income tax.

Our Correspondent

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