UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

# RADICAL REACTIONS: THE FIRST RED SCARE IN THE GREAT PLAINS AND THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS, 1918-1920

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

MICHAEL MOLINA
Norman, Oklahoma
2017

Downloaded from SHAREOK. Persistent Handle URL: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/50815

© Copyright by MICHAEL MOLINA 2017
All Rights Reserved.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my committee, namely, chair Dr. Sterling Evans, Dr. Elyssa Faison, Dr. Ben Keppel, and Dr. David Wrobel for providing support and guidance through this long process. I would also like to thank my loving and amazingly supportive wife, Kayla Griffis Molina, whose faith and encouragement made everything infinitely more doable. Without her steadfast support, and grueling enforcement of studying, I would have never passed comps and gotten this far. I love you sweety! Similarly, I wish to thank my faithful research buddy and seminar comrade, Matt Corpolongo. His keen insight and political commentaries helped shape my perceptions and gave me a unique perspective. Lastly, I would like to thank my family. To my dad, Arnie Molina, who provided invaluable assistance in Austin and made a great research partner. To my mom, Cherye Molina, whose constant love and prayers made all the difference. To my brother, Matthew Molina, whose encouragement and dry humor made thing bearable. And finally, to my grandma, Georgia Maria Hale, whose unwavering faith and daily prayer helped more than she will ever know. I stand on the shoulders of giants, and without the love, faith, and support from my advisors, friends, and family, none of this would have been possible. To them I dedicate this work, and look forward to making them proud as I begin the next chapter of my life.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements……..……iv

Abstract……....……vi

Chapter 1: Frontiers of Fear……..……1

Chapter 2: Kansas: Progressivism and Fear in the Central Plains……...……30

Chapter 3: Oklahoma: Overreaction on the Southern Plains…….…..……95

Chapter 4: New Mexico: Fear and Patriotism on the Border……...….164

Chapter 5: Texas: On the Borders of Hysteria……..……212

Chapter 6: Conclusion……..…….……258

Bibliography……..……271

## Abstract

This dissertation will focus on the First Red Scare in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. The First Red Scare was a wave of mass panic and hysteria directed against suspected radicals, leftists, anarchist, and Communist groups that swept across the United States from roughly1919-1920. Following World War I, and the rapid spread of Soviet Bolshevism in Russia, many in the U.S. government, media, and populace feared a hostile Communist takeover. The ensuing event resulted in deportations, mass deprivations of civil liberties, race riots, and exacerbated racial and ethnic hatred. State governments, media, and populations in the Great Plains, notably from Kansas and Oklahoma, and from the Borderlands, including New Mexico and Texas, contributed to the hysteria. Through the actions of these groups, the U.S. came close to a war with Mexico over suspected radical elements, and the nation experimented with repressive labor laws as a cure for left-wing radicalism. The Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands became a key center of focus during the First Red Scare, and helped shape the national narrative. While several historians have written directly about the First Red Scare in the U.S., they have generally focused on the east and west coasts. Few have analyzed the event in the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands. This dissertation restores these regions to their rightful place in the historiography, and shows how they became influential in driving policy decisions during the event, leaving a lasting legacy of repression, fear, and hatred.

## Chapter 1. Frontiers of Fear

Historically, the Great Plains region was the frontier of America, where Euro-Americans pushed to expand national boundaries and subjugate and assimilate Native populations. Similarly, the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands acted as a frontier, where cultures clashed and empires vied for dominance over each other in a conflict that has spanned generations. From 1918 to 1920, the United States faced a different frontier, one of fear that engulfed the entire country. This fear also spread across the Great Plains and the Borderlands, and involved the states of Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas. While parts of each state geographically belong to the Great Plains, they can also be identified as two sections within that region: one distinctly Plains, and one distinctly Borderlands, each with their own unique culture, politics, and history. While divided by sub-region, these states were united by fear. Fear in the face of radical labor movements, fear in the face of racial and ethnic hatred, and fear in the face of a Communist threat that purported to take over the world. This dissertation will cover these states' reactions to this fear, known as the First Red Scare.

Following the end of World War I, the United States entered a period of demobilization, increased costs of living, labor strikes, and a general fear of Communist conspirators. From 1919 to 1920, the First Red Scare bore witness to returning veterans seeking employment, disgruntled workers dissatisfied with frozen wages, and a creeping xenophobia that included racism and anti-Communist sentiment. Strikes occurred across the country, paralyzing many sectors of the nation's economy. Disturbances occurred in Boston, Seattle, and major metropolitan areas on the East and West coasts. Similarly, a nationwide coal strike begun in November 1919 would have

catastrophic effects for the nation, with many suspecting Bolshevist influences. Confronting this violent maelstrom, President Woodrow Wilson's Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer, conducted a series of raids against suspected radicals in events that came to be known as the Palmer Raids. Rounding up thousands of radicals across the country for deportation, these raids marked a startling violation of civil rights for many American citizens. As rhetoric against foreign elements increased, other sections of the country not limited to the major urban centers of the East or West coasts became affected.

This dissertation explores the First Red Scare in the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, specifically Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas, and examines how this region, united by fear against radicalism, played a significant and heretofore unexplored role in shaping the national narrative. Through oppressive labor laws, unsound use of martial law, and overreactions to a number of strikes, governors, the media, and populations of these states brought national attention to their region and profoundly shaped the Red Scare narrative. Fear, hysteria, and repression became the order of the day, and many states across the country looked to these four states with horror and alarm. Countless strikes there appeared as Bolshevist conspiracies attempting to overthrow the U.S. government. Other states sought to adopt some of the region's ideas to combat their own radical labor issues. The region also became the prime mover in drumming up support for a full-scale invasion of Mexico. Whatever the issue, these four states became thrust into national headlines for better or worse, and helped drive the nation further off the cliffs of reason.

Throughout these events, race and ethnicity played a key factor. Race riots occurred across the country, with lynchings and mob rule becoming everyday occurrences in the region. Fleeing racial violence in Texas and Arkansas, some African-Americans sought shelter in Kansas, whose governor had a notably tolerant reaction towards those facing such injustices. Across the region, African Americans, Hispanics, Italians, Germans, Russians, and others fell under intense pressure from local and government forces, becoming prime suspects in the rampant radicalism and terrorism that splashed across newspaper headlines every day. As Bolshevik forces marched to victory in Russia, and announced their plans for global expansion, many eyes fell on the diverse minority populations in the United States as being easily susceptible to Communist propaganda. State governments and local populations made no distinction between race and ethnicity, and conflated the two into a single Bolshevist menace. Violence and discrimination would rule the day for much of Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, with many citizens urging their lawmakers to round up entire immigrant communities for mass deportation. Attorney General Palmer would follow this advice, and deport thousands nationwide without due process, violating numerous civil liberties along the way. Governors of these Plains states kept in contact with the attorney general, providing him information on potential targets in their own states. Applying themselves to Palmer's crusade like fearful sycophants, these lawmakers and politicians integrated the regiom into the national conversation, becoming just as much a factor in the hyperbole and xenophobic fear of the First Red Scare as metropolitan states on the East and West coasts.

Historians have continued to ignore these events, choosing instead to focus on individual strikes or race riots in places such as Boston, Seattle, and Chicago. Some historians have done work on labor and agriculture in the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, but few directly link these events to the First Red Scare, and if so, only devote a scant few pages to it. In these studies there is also insufficient attention played to race or ethnicity, with relatively few links to the broader Red Scare events. Race riots, xenophobic fears of immigrant communities, and border subversion played a major part in ramping up intolerance and panic during the First Red Scare. By linking these elements to the broader nationwide panic, the dissertation aims to provide a clearer understanding of the First Red Scare in the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, and demonstrate the their vital importance to shaping the broader narrative. To better understand these events however, the states must be placed in a national context. Throughout much of 1919 and 1920, the United States teetered on the brink of mass hysteria and panic, experiencing numerous labor strikes, terrorist attacks, and disruptions to everyday life. These events remain the key pillars in Red Scare scholarship, and show how the entire nation became engulfed in suspicion and fear.

**National Context**

On February 6, 1919, Seattle, Washington, experienced one of the first opening volleys of the Red Scare conflict, and became the center of attention for the entire nation. Disturbed by the country-wide wage freeze that remained unaltered after the conclusion of World War I, Seattle shipyard workers threatened a walk-out unless they received a pay increase. The owners refused and the Metal Trades Council, representing over 35,000 workers, declared a strike, effectively closing the shipyards. Shortly

thereafter, 110 other local unions voted in favor of a sympathy walkout, creating one of the largest general strikes in United States history. Before the workers even closed shop, local newspapers painted the employees as lazy and suffering from Bolshevik influences.[1] As the strike wore on, most in the national media had parroted the lie that the strike was Communist-inspired. Federal agents began raiding the headquarters of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, Wobblies), and other left-wing groups, and by February 11, the Central Labor Council declared an official end to the strike. While only lasting five days, the general strike represented an opening salvo in the First Red Scare that showed a public and media all-too quick to blame left-wing groups and to violate their rights in the name of peace and security.

The national situation deteriorated further, as between April and June, radical anarchists led by Luigi Galleani deployed over thirty bombs across the country targeting numerous government personnel.[2] The summer bombing campaign spread dread and panic across a nation that had not yet fully recovered from World War I and gave many individuals reason to fear for their safety.[3] After the incident, the U.S. media seized on the issue, with countless newspapers printing headlines escalating the hysteria. A public outcry soon called for the apprehension of those responsible for the violent terrorist acts and demanded their immediate prosecution. Leftist organizations including anarchists, communists, and socialists bore the brunt of the blame, with the *New York Times* calling

---

[1] Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States: Postwar Struggles 1918-1920* (New York: International Publishers, 1988), 64-5; "Real Cause of the Strike, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, February 1, 1919.
[2] "The Red Raid on Law and Order," *Independent*, June 1919, 427.
[3] Charles Howard McCormick, *Hopeless Cases: the Hunt for the Red Scare Terrorist Bombers*, (Lanham,MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2005); "Destroy Government In One Fell Swoop," *New York World*, June 19, 1919.

Socialism an "alien enemy."[4] Leftist groups faced a wave of arrests and deportations spearheaded by U.S. Attorney General Palmer. Under his tenure, the Department of Justice conducted one of the most extensive raids in American history, rounding up thousands for proposed deportation. The so-called Palmer Raids occurred in November, December of 1919, and into January 1920. These resulted in the arrest of thousands of individuals in sweeping raids across the country.

Under the direction of Palmer, the U.S. government deported roughly 500 foreign citizens, loading many onto the sailing ship *Buford*, dubbed the "Soviet Ark," by the media. The government aimed to send these foreign nationals to the Soviet Union, regardless if they were born there, and negotiated with third party counties such as Latvia to help facilitate these deportations.[5] Throughout the raids, the Department of Justice committed numerous violations of civil liberties, including forced confessions, violations of free speech, and torture. Palmer's flagrant violations of rights held great support from the American people, as countless citizens feared for their safety in the wake of the successful Bolshevik Revolution, threats of Communism spreading across the globe, and the rash of radical bombings.

The fall of 1919 also brought another major strike that many in the government, media, and public painted as a Communist conspiracy. On September 22, 1919, steel unions seeking to renegotiate their contracts initiated a nation-wide strike over resources that affected states and workers across the entire country. The event was a

[4] "Socialism as an Alien Enemy," *New York Times*, January 11, 1920; "Urges Law to Punish Anarchists," *Hartford Courant*, December 15, 1919.
[5] The Commissioner at Riga (Gade) to the Secretary of State, December 17, 1919. *FRUS vol. III*, 691; The Secretary of State to the Commissioner at Riga, June 7, 1920. *Foreign Relations of the United States vol. III*, 698.

long time coming, as for several years, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) attempted to unionize steel mills throughout the country. Spearheaded in part by William Z. Foster, the National Committee for Organizing Iron and Steel Workers successfully recruited members into its group, with significant numbers coming from immigrant populations. Foster represented all that was dangerous to business interests, including affiliating with Socialism and holding previous membership in the radical IWW. With Foster's assistance, the AFL requested a meeting on June 20 with U.S. Steel's board of directors to lay out demands for collective bargaining, eight-hour work days, one day off a week, double pay for overtime, and other important issues. Never receiving a reply, (and with subsequent attempts at negotiation failing), the labor organization voted for a strike on September 10, with the actual stoppage occurring on September 22, 1919. When the fateful day arrived, approximately 275,000 workers walked out, increasing to over 365,000 by the end of the week. Immediately, the national press painted the event in fearful terms, with the *New York Tribune* calling it "another experiment in the way of Bolshevizing American industry."[6]

Deadly rioting occurred after the steel companies introduced strike breakers to the situation, and the governor of Indiana, James P. Goodrich, ordered the state militia into Gary to quell the unrest. The rioting grew exponentially after this, with 500 strikers attempting to breach the U.S. Steel plant. The governor immediately called for federal troops, which soon arrived under the command of General Leonard Wood, who placed the town under martial law. Samuel Gompers, founder of the AFL, attempted to resolve the situation, and after negotiations ended in failure, he bowed out of the issue. The

[6] *New York Tribune*, October 4, 1919, in Robert Murray, "Communism and the Great Steel Strike," *Mississippi Valley Historical* Review 38 (1951): 447-52.

strike situation soon collapsed, as public support turned against labor, and the government set up a commission to discover the causes of the incident.[7] The causes remain clear as the growing struggle over control of resources, pitting labor against business amidst the worrisome climate of the time, guaranteed that the nation would label the strikers as Bolshevist-inspired. Logic gave way to fear as entities found ways to link wage disputes with radical Communist elements. Preying on these suspicions, opponents of labor and ethnic and racial minorities used the crisis to squelch opposition.

The nation's coal miners would also become targets of national suspicion, and were prime suspects in a Communist plot to starve the country of warmth during the winter of 1919. Having deferred demands for higher pay during the war, miners subsequently demanded increased wages to offset the high cost of living. Originally in 1917, the government had signed a contract with mine workers fixing wages until World War I ended. At that point, the government refused to raise the workers' pay, citing economic difficulties. In October 1919, the justifiably agitated miners held a conference in Cleveland, Ohio, and presented mine operators with demands for better pay and fewer hours. Demands included an increase of wages by sixty percent, a work schedule of six hours a day five days a week, and double pay for work done on weekends and holidays. In the event coal operators did not accept these demands the union said it would call a strike on November 1. The demands laid out at the Cleveland convention became the basis for all contracts under negotiation in the United States.[8]

---

[7] Murray, "Communism and the Great Steel Strike*,"* 458-62.
[8] Sewell, Steven L., "Painted Red: The Coal Strike of 1919," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 75 (Summer, 1997): 161: "Statement by Coal Operators," October 20, 1919, Folder 2, Box 11, General Correspondence, Governor J.B.A. Robertson, Governors' Papers, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Sewell, "Painted Red," 161.

With the two sides unable to reach an agreement, the strike went ahead. Spurred by the U.S. government to settle the dispute, both sides met in Indianapolis on December 9. The government promised a 14 percent wage increase as well as a guarantee from President Wilson to create an investigative committee for the purposes of wage readjustment given the increased cost of living. The two sides reached a compromise and the strike finally ended on December 10. During the strike, many in the government and media painted the miners as Bolshevist-inspired, and that Lenin and Trotsky had financed their operations during the walkout. These stories, lacking any real evidence, continued to increase during the strike and spread Red Scare fears across the nation.[9]

Displaying the bloody nature of the hysteria, a dramatic incident punctuated the nationwide coal strike in Centralia, Washington, on November 11, 1919. During an Armistice Day celebration, clashes erupted between the American Legion and workers affiliated with the IWW. The American Legion, an American veterans' organization, came to Centralia to participate in a local parade. As members of the American Legion passed in front of Wobbly hall, shots rang out and killed members of the Legion. Authorities arrested many in the group and sent them to jail. Soon after, a mob formed around the suspects and eventually took one of the IWW leaders from his cell. The mob proceeded to beat his teeth in with a rifle butt, castrate him, tie a noose around his neck, and throw him over a bridge three times before his neck finally broke. Wesley Everest, the man in question, was a union member and World War I veteran. He had stood in front of the IWW hall and was reported to have said, "I fought for Democracy in France

[9] Murray, *Red Scare*, 155.

and I'm going to fight for it here. The first man that comes through this hall, why, he's going to get it."[10] After his death, the town's coroner ruled it a suicide and he was later buried in an unmarked grave. Eight IWW members were later convicted of murder and given sentences of 25 to 40 years in prison. No community members were ever brought to trial for the lynching. The despicable act set off a reaction of police and mob violence across the West Coast, resulting in roundups and arrests of countless members of the IWW.[11] This, along with the earlier bombing campaigns and strikes, gave rise to a severe need among the public for the government to take swift action against all manifestations of radicalism, either real or implied.

Red Scare fears would reach their zenith by May 1920, as Palmer predicted a massive anarchist attack on May Day, similar to what happened in 1919 during the bombing campaign. The nation girded itself, with some towns and cities organizing a patriotic "America Day" to counteract the socialist activities. As the fateful day approached, many newspapers fostered scare tactics. The holiday passed without incident though, and the media began to question the attorney general's credibility. An editorial cartoon printed in the *Chicago Tribune* showed how Palmer strolled through the streets, surrounded by peaceful civilians, though all he saw in front of him were Communist agitators.[12] Enthusiasm for punishment for radicals began to fall. Congress

---

[10] Patrick Renshaw, *The Wobblies: the Story of the IWW and Syndicalism in the United States* (Ivan R. Dee, 1999): 164; In, Murray, *Red Scare*, 184-5.
[11] Murray, *Red Scare*, 185-6.
[12] "'America Day' Is To Be Celebrated," *Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 1920; "City Under Guard Against Red Plot Threatened Today," *New York Times*, May 1, 1920; "Many Public Men Marked for Death in May Day Plot," *Hartford Courant*, April 30, 1920; "The Revolution that was Not," *Independent* 102 (May 1920): 213; "Red Plot Fell Flat, Federal Agents Say," *New York Times*, May 2, 1920; Robert M. Buck, "Wild-Eyed Palmer Waves Red Flag," *New Majority* 3, no. 19 (May 1920): 1; "A. Mitchell Palmer Out for a Stroll," *Chicago Tribune*, May 4, 1920 (accessed October 21, 2009).

soon called the attorney general to testify on the charges made against the Justice Department.[13]

As Palmer began to testify, he complained that the "ultra-radical press" had maligned him. The attorney general lashed out at the media, complaining of liberal bias, and how they were more inclined to see the mistakes made by the government than its successes. Palmer maintained that all criticisms and charges brought against him stemmed from radical revolutionaries, and that he did not need to provide any answers to Congress. At the close of the hearings, committee members found that the Department of Justice committed no wrongdoing, however, the attorney general's reputation, along with his presidential ambitions, was obliterated. With this judgment, Congress effectively halted any further raids or deportations. Other states would continue manifestations of Red Scare fear, drumming up hysteria against individuals linked with Communism or Socialism, and the terror would take different forms such as racial violence perpetuated by the Ku Klux Klan. However, the vast violations of civil liberties committed by the federal government in the name of Red Scare xenophobia came to an end.[14]

**Red Scare Scholarship: National Perspectives**

First Red Scare scholarship began in the 1950s, during the height of the Second Red Scare. The event itself has received little coverage in the ensuing decades, with works tending to focus on different aspects of the First Red Scare, including radicalism, labor, and the role of gender, race, and ethnicity. While the specific event is

[13] "Women Appeal for Wives of Reds," *New York Times*, May 31, 1920, 1; "Attorney-General will be Witness," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 14, 1920, 1.
[14] House Committee on Rules, *Charges Against the Department of Justice*, 66th Cong., 2nd sess., 1920, 4, 34, 35; "Find Palmer in Right in 1920 Raid on Reds," *New York Times*, April 11, 1922.

underreported, these other aspects remain positive developments overall, adding more nuance and detail to events leading up to, and surrounding the First Red Scare. When the event is covered, historians have generally favored broad approaches, focusing on major metropolitan centers on the East or West coasts, excluding the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, falsely explaining that the coasts were solely responsible for expanding Red Scare fear and hysteria.

One of the first and most notable works on the subject remains Robert K. Murray's *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920*. First published in 1955, Murray's work came out a mere year after McCarthyism had ended, and fear of Communism was rampant. Murray argued that the First Red Scare served as an example of how easily excessive hate and intolerance could spread within a democratic nation, when fear and suspicion supplanted reason. Murray's reasoning for writing the book was to offer a full-length analysis of the Red Scare, which he concluded was caused by wartime intolerance, postwar industrial unrest, the lack of statesman-like leadership, and an ill-fated quest for false normalcy. He also gave credit to Americans for a fearful mentality that apprehensively dreaded the spread of the "Red Scourge" across the world.[15] Murray's interpretation of the Red Scare as an overreaction fueled by intolerance, unrest, and fear became the standard among historians. He tended to focus on big-picture events, such as the various national strikes, and the effect of radicalism on the major population centers of the country. His work nonetheless represented a powerful opening salvo in the field of Red Scare scholarship, and provided many avenues for subsequent scholars to explore.

[15] Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), ix, 15.

Stanley Coben's *A. Mitchell Palmer: A Politician*, published in 1963, charts the political career of the U.S. Attorney General Palmer. Obsessed with becoming president of the United States, Palmer led the Department of Justice's persecution of suspected radicals and Bolsheviks, becoming the key zealot in spreading Red Scare fear and hysteria.[16] Both Coben and Murray portray the Red Scare as occurring across the United States, with the entire country engulfed in the same paranoid trends as other major metropolitan areas. Some historians built on Coben and Murray's work, using their framework to show how a particular state followed national trends in Red Scare hysteria, among them, Arnon Gutfeld, Philip Cook, and others.[17] Andrew Hunt and Ted DeCorte challenged these interpretations, showing that the Red Scare did not occur uniformly across all states. Despite these criticisms, Murray's and Coben's books remain the two major national-level interpretations of the First Red Scare.[18]

Labor historians on the other hand have made critical contributions to our understanding of the First Red Scare. Melvyn Dubofsky's *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World*, published in 1969, has remained the definitive history of the radical labor union known as the Wobblies. That same year, Joseph Conlin produced *Bread and Roses: Studies of the Wobblies*, a collection of essays exploring various aspects of the radical group. Greg Hall's *Harvest Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World and the Agricultural Laborers in the American West, 1905-1930* traced the rise and fall of the agricultural wing of the IWW. Hall's work

[16] Stanley Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer: A Politician* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 1.
[17] Arnon Gutfeld, *Montana's Agony: Years of War and Hysteria, 1917-1921* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1979); Philip L. Cook, "Red Scare in Denver," *The Colorado Magazine* 43 (Fall 1966).
[18] Andrew Hunt, "Beyond the Spotlight: The Red Scare in Utah." *Utah Historical Quarterly* 61 (Fall 1993); Ted DeCorte, "The Red Scare in Nevada, 1919-1920." Master's Thesis. University of Nevada Las Vegas, 1979.

showed how harvest Wobblies attempted to unionize men, women, and even children to overcome the rampant exploitation they faced at the hands of increased mechanization and substandard working conditions. Frank Higbie's *Indispensable Outcasts: Hobo Workers and Community in the American Midwest, 1880-1930,* published in 2004, wove together race, class, and gender. Higbie provided valuable coverage on an oft-overlooked group in the American workforce: the seasonal laborer. Patrick Renshaw, in *The Wobblies: the Story of the IWW and Syndicalism in the United States,* provided a balanced look at the rise and fall of the IWW. Jane Botkin's *Frank Little and the IWW* provided a biography on the eponymous labor leader who became a martyr for the organization when anti-union forces lynched him in 1917.[19]

In 1978, Robert Goldstein's *Political Repression in Modern America: From 1870 to the Present* claimed that past historians were incorrect in downplaying the radical labor threat. He concluded that, by downplaying this radical threat, often to point out the valid excesses of the period, most historians obscured the fact that there was a large upsurge in radicalism both within and outside the labor movement in 1919.[20]

Philip Foner's *History of the Labor Movements in the United States: Postwar Struggles 1918-1920,* published in 1988, provided an invaluable treatment on the First Red Scare. Foner argued that Red Scare hysteria was reinforced by the press, business groups, and super patriotic societies, and that by the summer of 1920, the Red Scare

---

[19] Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969); Joseph Conlin, *Bread and Roses: Studies of the Wobblies* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1969); Greg Hall, *Harvest Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World and the Agricultural Laborers in the American West, 1905-1930* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2001); Frank Higbie, *Indispensable Outcasts: Hobo Workers and Community in the American Midwest, 1880-1930* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Renshaw, *The Wobblies*; Jane Botkin, *Frank Little and the IWW: The Blood that Stained an American Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017).

[20] Goldstein, *Political Repression*, 163.

"was just about over." Foner provided strong coverage of many of the important strikes, and also went into detail of the "Red Summer" that involved massive race riots across the country. He similarly discussed the open shop movement begun in Texas that spread across the country, as well as political reactions to the tumultuous events of 1918 to 1920.[21]

Regin Schmidt challenged the early literature on the Red Scare when he published *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943* in 2000. He explored the connection of the FBI to the First Red Scare, and claimed that the institution entrenched itself in a political role during this period. He built on Murray's work, whom he cited as claiming that the Red Scare "made" the FBI and put it on the road to becoming the famous organization that it is today. Schmidt, however, challenged the early literature on the topic, saying that the existing explanation that the event was caused by an irrational, mass-based hysteria deserves questioning. He refuted Murray, who compared the event to McCarthyism and attributed it to a bottom up, grassroots support for the drastic actions taken. This "consensus" school of thought dominated American historical thinking during the 1940s and 1950s, and assumed that events and polices were supported by a consensus of Americans. Schmidt repudiated this viewpoint, and instead argued that powerful economic and conservative groups exploited the already existing social conflicts, as the First Red Scare gave them an opportunity to promote their anti-radical campaigns for their own benefit. The author agreed with Goldstein's brief treatment of the topic where he mentioned government and business elites used the event to crush their opposition.

[21] Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, 31.

Schmidt stated that these elitist interest groups served as the primary causes of anticommunist policies, and had a real reason to want to see an end to organized labor's influence. To that end, they helped initiate a propaganda campaign to discredit unions as subversive, Bolshevist, and alien to American values. Furthermore, the government knew of this campaign, and even used private detective agencies, like the Pinkertons, as labor spies to exaggerate the revolutionary threat posed by radicalism to frighten employers. The press too engaged in such practices to keep its readership from its wartime highs when it reported on sensationalist stories. Schmidt concluded that the First Red Scare was an integrated part of a reactionary political campaign, created by businesses and their conservative allies aimed at destroying the power of organized labor and halt the growing government regulation of the economy.[22]

Kim E. Nielson published *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare* in 2000, and argued that gender was a primary component of First Red Scare antiradicalism. Antifeminists from 1919 to 1920 saw radicalism as entangled in a web of economic, gender, sexual, and racial chaos, and successfully imbued much of the Red Scare sentiment with this belief. Nielson completely rebuffed the idea that gender played no relevant role in the First Red Scare, instead claiming that antifeminists embraced the fear, and their political fervor helped sustain antiradicalism throughout the 1920s. From this viewpoint, the Red Scare did not end in 1920, and continued throughout the decade as conservative women attacked the work of progressives. These antifeminists were driven by a fear of gender, sexual, and political disorder that compelled them to lead activist lives. Nielson maintained that

[22] Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), 18, 32, 34-40.

these women used the anxieties surrounding Bolshevism, expansion of the state, social welfare programs, and peace efforts, to foster a political culture hostile to progressive female activists. She concluded that gender remained at the core of how people in America lived, discussed patriotism, proper citizenship, and the needs of the nation.[23] Her work represented a fresh wave of discussion on the topic, incorporating the theme of gender into the field. For the purposes of this dissertation, I have not used gender as a strong component. However, chapter 2 does provide a look at the female telephone operator's strike that served as the catalyst for faulty reports of a Communist uprising in Oklahoma and the deployment of the National Guard.

In *Rethinking the Red Scare: The Lusk Committee and New York's Crusade Against Radicalism, 1919-1923*, published in 2003,Todd Pfannestiel argued that as events unfolded, repression became more focused, with education a key target. As targets changed, methods of repression also shifted from raids and arrests to subtle legal and legislative proceedings. Pfannestiel provided an important development to the scholarship by arguing that the First Red Scare did not end in January 1920, but lasted until 1923. He stated that shifting perceptions on civil liberties brought the event to its conclusion, rather than the end of the Palmer Raids.[24]

Charles McCormick published *Hopeless Cases: The Hunt for the Red Scare Terrorist Bombers* in 2005, and explored the search for the bombers of the Red Scare. While authorities arrested countless individuals and violated numerous civil liberties, the true culprits were never caught. Further, McCormick spearheaded a new outlook in

[23] Kim E. Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Anti-feminism, and the First Red Scare* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001), 4-5, 10, 139.
[24] Todd Pfannestiel, *Rethinking the Red Scare: The Lusk Committee and New York's Crusade Against Radicalism, 1919-1923* (New York: Routledge, 2003), xii, 9.

the post 9/11 world as he compared events of the Red Scare with those of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the unfolding need for accurate intelligence and the fear of an unknown adversary.[25]

Kenyon Zimmer expanded the scope of First Red Scare studies to include scientific racism, immigration, and anarchist movements in his 2010 dissertation. In his chapter on the First Red Scare period, Zimmer portrayed the activities of various Jewish, Italian, and Russian anarchist groups, and concluded that Congress, during and after World War I, was motivated by a combination of nativism, scientific racism, and antiradicalism that signaled the death knell of anarchist movements by limiting immigration of southern and eastern Europeans. This struck at the very heart of the domestic anarchist movement, migration and working-class mobility, which caused the eventual withering away of immigrant anarchism.[26] Zimmer added to the historical debate by focusing specifically on immigrant populations and their contributions to radical movements of the period.

Michael Lansing published *Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in American Politics* in 2015. Lansing showed its importance in empowering citizens and halting corporate influence, as well as its political successes during the 1910s, and its control of politics in North Dakota. He incorporated transnationalism into his work to show how the group stretched beyond the United States and into Canada, and argues

[25] McCormick, *Hopeless Cases*.
[26] Kenyon Zimmer, "The Whole World is Our Country": Immigration and Anarchism in the United States, 1885-1940" PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2010, 356.

that rather than a brief moment of Populist rage, the group's effects lasted well beyond its zenith.[27]

**Red Scare Scholarship: Regional Perspectives**

The historiography of the First Red Scare in the American West stands as a field desperately in need of cultivation, with pockets of discussion and synthesis in some areas, and while lacking in others. The most prominently covered state is Oklahoma, with major studies still needed for Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. Major works only tangentially touch on intersecting issues, and to date no general overview of the First Red Scare exists for many of these states. Regardless, many of the works build on context surrounding the First Red Scare, giving detail and nuance to various events and issues of the period.

James Green's *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest 1895-1943*, published in 1978, provided an overview of radicalism in Oklahoma and Texas, as well as Arkansas and Louisiana. He captured the spirit of the southwestern Socialist movement, describing it as one of combined anger and optimism, motivated by feelings of both hate and hope. As he put it, the Socialists "were terribly angry with the 'parasites' who denied the 'producers' the full reward for their honest toil,' but they were also amazingly hopeful about the possibility of creating a new society in their own lifetimes.'" Green broke with several prominent authors and defined the Red Scare as

[27] Michael Lansing, *Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in American Politics* (Chicago: University Press of Chicago, 2015); For more on this transnational movement between the United States and Canada in the northern plains, see Jason McCollum, "'We Are Tied Together . . . in a Hundred Different Ways': Farmers and Farm Organizations across the 49th Parallel, 1905-1915," in Sterling Evans, ed.,*Farming across Borders: A Transnational History of the North American West* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2017).

beginning in the fall of 1917, rather than 1919. He made this distinction by telling how government agents took severe action against the IWW and other radical labor movements, eventually leading to the destruction of the Socialist Party in many states. Similarly, he showed how the Green Corn Rebellion demonstrated frustration and activism by farmers, and how most news outlets attempted to bury the story for fear of provoking further disturbances. He only briefly touched on the other major events of the Red Scare, addressing the nationwide coal strike in 1919, and how the governor of Oklahoma targeted radical labor unions and declared martial law.[28] In covering Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas, Green contributed to our understanding on Socialism in the Great Plains. His work, while a worthy addition to the scholarship, represents the continued need for a comprehensive study of the Red Scare in the Great Plains. Other similar works covering grass-roots movements and populism in Oklahoma specifically include Garin Burbank's *When Farmers Voted Red: The Gospel of Socialism in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1910-1924*, and Jim Bisset's *Agrarian Socialism in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1904-1920* in 1976 and 1999 respectively.[29]

Steve Sewell's article about the nationwide coal strike and its effects in Oklahoma, "Painted Red: The Coal Strike of 1919," provided a comprehensive look on the overreaction of Oklahoma Governor James Brooks Ayers Robertson to the strike, and shows the effects his actions had on perceptions of the First Red Scare. Sewell

[28] James R. Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), xii, xxi, 361, 375-76, 394.
[29] Garin Burbank, *When Farmers Voted Red: The Gospel of Socialism in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1910-1924* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976); Jim Bisset, *Agrarian Socialism in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1904-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1999).

contended that the coal miners, who maintained legitimate demands, became swept up in the nationwide assault on the country's radicals. Sewell concluded that "the nation was so consumed by the paranoia associated with the Red Scare that a strike over wage rates frozen for two years became an attempt to topple the government in the eyes of many officials."[30] He portrayed the events in light of the rampant hysteria of the time, and how Oklahoma gave in to national trends. More importantly, his work represented the first and to-date definitive publication on the coal strike in Oklahoma.

Nigel Sellars provides the most extensive research on Wobblies in Oklahoma. In his 1998 publication, *Oil, Wheat, & Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World in Oklahoma, 1905-1930,* Sellars decried mainstream historians for their neglect of the IWW in the state. He maintained that the IWW's presence in the Oklahoma oil fields led directly to the massive state and federal efforts to prosecute and break the union completely, which was a central event in the IWW's history. Sellars devotes extensive time to the destruction of the radical organization during 1918-20, providing a much-needed account of Red Scare events in the state.[31]

Clifford Farrington examined Texas radicalism in 2007's *Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925*. Farrington showed how both white and black longshoremen joined together to strike for improved wages following the end of the war. Like Oklahoma and other Great Plains states, Governor William Hobby overreacted to striking workers during the Red Scare, declared martial law and brought

[30] Steven Sewell, "Painted Red: The Coal Strike of 1919," *Chronicles of* Oklahoma 75 (Summer 1997): 161, 78.
[31] Nigel Anthony Sellars. *Oil, Wheat and Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World in Oklahoma, 1905-1930* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 12, 127.

in National Guard troops to quell the disturbance.[32] Farrington showed different ethnicities interacted and even came together against opposing forces.

Joseph Abel's "Opening the Closed Shop: The Galveston Longshoremen's Strike of 1920-1921" provided placed the events in Texas within context of the national scene. He showed how the longshoremen, upon engaging in the strike for better pay in March 1920, became swept up in the martial law declaration by Governor Hobby. Like Farrington, he made note of the racial composition of the strikers, examining the mix of black and white workers. In the article, Abel examined the motivations behind Hobby's declaration of martial law, and how he followed national trends in wanting to establish an open shop. Showing how business leaders and proponents couched their reasoning for an open shop behind the hyper-patriotism and Americanism from World War I, they advocated a right for all men to work regardless of union membership. Calling their movement the "American Plan," Abel demonstrated how this movement used Red Scare hysteria and patriotism to achieve its goals in crushing labor movements. After the failure of the strike, workers across Texas felt the impact from business interests and the state government. Linking the event with national trends, Abel concluded that state workers were placed on the same precarious footing that workers across the nation were, and that such events "were to be echoed from coast to coast for the rest of the decade."[33] While both articles discuss race, neither fully explains the severity of government reaction despite a lack of immigrants from eastern or southern European countries. Nevertheless, while chronicling the most explosive event during the Red

[32] Clifford Farrington, *Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2007), 189.
[33] Joseph Abel, "Opening the Closed Shop: The Galveston Longshoremen's Strike of 1920-1921." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 110 (Spring 2007): 320-21, 347.

Scare in Texas, Farrington and Abel provide thoughtful analysis on the unions in Galveston's waterfront.

In 1981 David Wagaman published his work on radicalism in Nebraska, chronicling the IWW's experiences in the state during World War I. He argued for the key importance of the Omaha headquarters of the union, and provided in in-depth examination of the justice department's raids on the Wobblies in 1917. Highlighting the Nebraska State Council of Defense, Wagaman showed how this key player drummed up support from the populace against radicalism, and persecuted workers as well as intellectuals in academia during the war.[34]

While labor and radicalism remained important points that added depth to events surrounding the First Red Scare, race and ethnicity also played a major role.

In *From All Points: America's Immigrant West*, Elliot Barkan examined the issue of race and immigration in the West, saying that many westerners came to realize "the real danger was not only from European enemies but also from unassimilated Asians and inferior Mexicans." He argued that because race was at the forefront of

[34] David G. Wagaman, "Rausch Mit: The IWW in Nebraska during World War I," in Joseph Conlin, ed., *At the Point of Production* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981), 129; for other works on IWW trials, see Earl White's essay on the Kansas trial of the Wobblies from 1917-1919 More of a commentary on the trial and the fates of those involved, this history of radicalism in Kansas offers a descriptive narrative over Wobblies in the state, and demonstrates the need for a general study on the Red Scare in Kansas; In 2007, Daniel Bell published *Radicalism in the Mountain West: Socialists, Populists, Miners, and Wobblies*, a truly insightful work that touched on the role of populism and radical labor in the Rocky Mountain States, Daniel Bell, *Radicalism in the Mountain West: Socialists, Populists, Miners, and Wobblies 1890-1920* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007); Duane Smith published *Rocky Mountain Heartland: Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming in the Twentieth Century* in 2008, touching on similar themes as Bell. He covered in great detail the rise of the IWW in the region, and argued that the Rocky Mountain Heartland reflected the same tensions and fears of the East. Regarding the First Red Scare, Smith maintained that it channeled the same fear and bigotry inherent in World War I, and those sentiments expressed themselves most fully in the Ku Klux Klan. He provided only a brief sentence on the event, and never went into great detail over its impact on the region, Duane Smith, *Rocky Mountain Heartland: Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming in the Twentieth Century* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008), 76, 98.

Western concerns, Americanization programs during and after the war became key tools to fight against suspected radicalism. While Barkan spent only a few chapters on Red Scare events, his book remains highly useful for its statistical data on immigrant populations in the West. Telling how foreign-born populations rose and fell throughout the period, he showed a distinct pattern of how the war reduced immigrant populations in Wyoming, Oregon, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Hawaii, Colorado, and Alaska. Other important scholars of immigrant history during this time period are Lawrence Cardoso, Carol Christian, and David Glaser.[35]

In 2011, Cameron McWhirter published *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*. This exceptional work explored major race riots across multiple states during the Red Scare panic. Using first-hand accounts, newspaper articles, and a richly descriptive narrative style, *Red Summer* offered a fascinating glimpse into race and ethnicity in 1919 America. Eschewing a declensionist narrative of brutality and hopelessness, McWhirter showed the prevailing optimism of African-Americans during the panic. Providing a sense of agency for blacks, empowered to fight for their own destinies, the author presented a side of the Red Scare that few authors have explored. While most works over labor history repeat the same arguments over national influences, McWhirter took the Red Scare in a completely new direction by portraying from the viewpoint of African-Americans their reactions to the cataclysmic events of 1919. The author concluded that "if you explore the whole story of those

[35] Elliott Robert Barkan, *From All Points: America's Immigrant West* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 208, 214; Lawrence Cardoso, *Mexican Immigration to the United States, 1897-1931* (Tucson: University Press of Arizona, 1980); Carol Christian, "Joining the American Mainstream: Texas's Mexican Americans during World War I," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 92 (1989): David Glaser, "1919: William Jenkins, Robert Lansing, and the Mexican Interlude," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 74 (1971).

troubled months, you are not left thinking of America's bald and cruel failings, but of its astounding and elastic resilience. The Red Summer is a story of destruction, but it is also a story of the beginning of a freedom movement."[36] McWhirter's book stands as a strong addition to the historiography, and points in a positive direction for the field to go.

Jeffrey Johnson provided his take with "*They Are All Red Out Here*"*: Socialist Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1895-1925*. In this regional study, the author provided a strong comparative analysis on the aforementioned states, and goes into depth on the nativist as well as Socialist tendencies of the different populations. His work serves as a valuable model for studying leftist groups from a regional perspective over the span of several decades. He contended that Socialists in the Pacific Northwest displayed tendencies similar to Socialists at the national level, but also retained a uniquely regional distinctiveness that enabled them to be some of the nation's "most active and hopeful Socialists."[37]

The major works on the Red Scare in the American West share many common themes. Tracing their roots to Murray and Coben, they portray a West engulfed by the same red fires that spread across the East Coast. Never asking why the intensity of the

---

[36] Cameron McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011), 271; Other prominent regional works include Doug Hurt *The Big Empty: The Great Plains in the 20th Century* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011). For prominent western history textbooks that include nativism and the rise of the KKK, see Richard Etulain *Beyond the Missouri: The Story of the American West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006); Richard Etulaine and Michael Malone, *The American West: A Modern History, 1900 to the Present* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

[37] William Robbins and Katrine Barber. *Nature's Northwest: The North Pacific Slope in the Twentieth Century* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011), 4, 73; Jeffrey Johnson, *"They Are All Red Out Here": Socialist Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1895-1925* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008); For more general works on leftist movements regarding the American left, see John Diggins, *The Rise and Fall of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992); Michael Kazin, *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed the Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011).

fires appeared so brightly in the West, nor delving too deeply into issues of race and gender, the current state of the field features several holes. Too few general studies exist, with only a few paltry articles having only tangentially related material on the states during the Red Scare. Most scholarship remains concentrated on labor history, missing other key aspects of this time period. States in dire need of Red Scare works, including California, Texas, Oregon, the Dakotas, and others, call out for historians to investigate, proving the field to be wide-open for exploration. Regardless, the works that do exist are valuable supplements to First Red Scare literature, providing nuance and background.

As all these studies show, the United States in the immediate post-war era appeared at a dynamic crossroads. Cruelly denied a return to normalcy, the nation appeared confronted with its most insidious challenge yet: calm a fearful populace and attempt to restore peace through compassion and understanding, or give in to xenophobic rhetoric and heavy-handed uses of state power? More often than not, Americans unfortunately chose the latter. Giving in to fear, repression, and intolerance, the entire country became swept up in a madness that knew no bounds: be they foreign-born or citizen, black, brown, or white, male or female, all became victims in this juggernaut of repression, though some groups were terrorized more than others.

The states in the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands had a major part to play in the unfolding drama, magnifying the fear to such an extent that the region became a major force in the public spectacle, holding captive the nation's attention by showcasing some of the worst abuses of the First Red Scare. Through the actions of its people, these states brought the nation closer to war, expanded racial animosity, and

promised an end to radicalism through unconstitutional labor courts. Let the record be corrected to show that the states of the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands had an important role to play.

The following chapters will expand on these ideas, and help restore the region to its rightful place in the historiography. Chapter 2 will explain how Kansas remained central to the nationwide discussion on the First Red Scare, as it was the only state whose governor proposed a framework for dealing with labor issues that received mainstream attention. Reacting to the nationwide coal mining strike in 1919, which many officials and publications termed a Bolshevist conspiracy, Governor Henry Allen sought to implement a court of arbitration that would settle labor disputes. He wished to export this model and defended its use in a much-publicized debate between the governor and Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor. Further events in Kansas, including actions by its native son Phil Zimmerman, who would became one of the most famous anti-Bolshevik crusaders of the First Red Scare, as well as the government's treatment of African-Americans, would thrust the state into national headlines, helping to drive the narrative of the First Red Scare towards greater fear and suspicion.

Chapter 3 examines the role of Governor J.B.A. Robertson in expanding the First Red Scare in Oklahoma, and shows the state's vital importance in magnifying anti-Communist hysteria across the United States. Through the governor's ineptitude, the small town of Drumright would be thrust into the national spotlight as the site of a supposed Bolshevist uprising that media outlets falsely reported as imminently threatening the fate of the nation. The chapter will also tie in events of the coal mining

strike, and the xenophobic mood of citizens that made the state a major player in shaping the Red Scare narrative for the rest of the country. Similarly, it will explore the relationship between small-town and state government in magnifying fear and intolerance for the entire region.

Chapter 4 explores the ineptitude of New Mexico Governor Octaviano Larrazolo in dealing with Red Scare suspicion, and the various events that led his state down the dark path of racism and fear. Larrazolo, the only Mexican elected to a governorship in the United States during the First Red Scare, remains an overlooked figure in many historians' works on the event. None places him in context of xenophobia or anti-Communist hysteria, and this chapter seeks to rectify this. By exploring the links the New Mexican government had with amplifying xenophobia, Larrazolo's disastrous handling of labor issues, as well as his furthering the fear the United States felt towards Mexico as a bastion of Communist infiltration, this chapter will show the vital relationship New Mexico had in projecting the First Red Scare nationwide, and drawing into its web an irrational fear of the U.S.-Mexican border.

Chapter 5 will expound on the relationship between race and labor undrest during the First Red Scare in Texas, and for the first time place in context Governor William Hobby's fears of African-American radicalism with the larger events of the Galveston Longshoremen Strike and the Longview Race Riot. Few historians have placed these events in the context of the First Red Scare, though owing to Hobby's own admission, and that they occurred concurrently with the broader xenophobic hysteria, the chapter aims to refocus the discussion by linking them directly with the broader national event. Other topics include Texans' fears of Communist subversion from

Mexico, as well as Hobby's attempts to draw the attention of Attorney General Palmer to his state to help tackle the supposed Bolshevik menace. Texas remains vitally important to discussions of Red Scare fear, and by placing these events in their proper context, this chapter will provide a clearer picture of the contributions of Texas to the First Red Scare.

Through all these events, the Great Plains and the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands helped shaped the national experience, and helped dictating appropriate reactions state leaders could take in responding to the crisis. Whether strikers would be met with understanding or painted as Bolshevists, or whether incendiary newspaper reports would be taken with a grain of salt or believed wholeheartedly, the actions of the people and the media helped guide the ebb and flow of the First Red Scare. As will be seen in the following chapter, Kansas under Governor Allen would have a major role in the nationwide event, helping inspire other states to take actions to settle their radical labor issues, they hoped, once and for all.

## Chapter 2. Progressivism and Fear in the Central Plains

### Introduction

During the First Red Scare, Kansas more than any other state in the Great Plains and U.S-Mexico Borderlands took center stage in the national debate of radicalism and labor relations. Reeling from the coal mining strike of 1919, which many officials and publications termed a Bolshevist conspiracy, Governor Henry Justin Allen sought to implement a court of arbitration that would settle labor disputes. This garnered the governor and his state national attention, as other states considered adopting the Kansas model to rid themselves of labor disputes and the radicalism they supposedly engendered. Further events in Kansas, including actions by its native son Phil Zimmerman, who would became one of the most famous anti-Bolshevik crusaders of the First Red Scare, as well as the government's treatment of African-Americans, would thrust the state into national headlines, helping to drive the narrative of the First Red Scare towards greater suspicion and fear.

The Sunflower State remains a striking example of Red Scare fear because it harbored both a strong Populist and Progressive streak that characterized its political development. The state became a hotbed of Populist reform during the 1890s, with the rapid success of the People's Party in the state legislature. As Populism faded, the Progressive party replaced it, becoming a major force in Kansas politics until the end of World War I. This record of reform contributed a complex backdrop to the events of the Red Scare, as the state would later demonstrate both intolerance and occasional sensitivity toward civil rights and liberties.[1] During the war, the state maintained its

[1] Craig Miner, *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854-2000* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

patriotic fervor, engaging in liberty bond drives, setting up its own State Council of Defense, and rooting out suspected radicals plotting against the state.

The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or Wobblies), a radical labor union that had made strong inroads among desperate agricultural workers, became a prime target for repressive action. In 1917, the U.S. government struck a near-fatal blow to the union, raiding meeting houses across the state in a dramatic roundup that foreshadowed the harsh tactics of the Red Scare. Cast against the looming threat of Bolshevism, the Wobblies finally made it to trial in 1919. Also in that year, major strikes in the steel and coal industries occurred, in addition to a police strike in Boston, and a massacre in Centralia, Washington between Wobblies and members of the American Legion that left six dead. Similarly, a general strike in Winnipeg, Canada that summer involving over 30,000 workers sent shockwaves across North America, causing worry for many in America over radical influences coming from the north. [2] Many government officials also linked race issues back to Bolshevist conspiracies, and concurrent with the Red Scare workers demanded improved conditions and wages after having suspended all such action during the war. Numerous race riots broke out in several cities--the worst being in Chicago, Illinois, and Elaine, Arkansas--and left hundreds dead. By 1920, Attorney General Palmer predicted a massive May Day attack by radical groups attempting to destroy the very foundations of American society. Palmer put the nation on high alert, but the attacks never came, and the Red Scare thankfully dissipated in the wake of Palmer's overzealousness.

[2] *Grand Forks Herald*, "Winnipeg Industry is Paralyzed by Strike of 60 Labor Unions," May 16, 1919, 1.

Kansas faced its own maelstrom of race issues, labor disturbances, and radical fear and suppression. Its governor, Henry Allen, holds a mixed record among governors during the Red Scare. While showing remarkable support for African-Americans in the state, even providing protection to those fleeing racial violence in Texas and Arkansas, he nevertheless gave in to the prevailing hysteria against Communism. Kansas' record in addressing the threat of radicalism is one of contrasts, with sensible fairness on the one hand, and alarmist fear-mongering on the other. Nonetheless, the actions of Kansas' governor and its residents during the First Red Scare included moments of genuine level-headedness amidst the atmosphere of fear and panic.

**Setting the Stage for Fear: The Kansas IWW Trial**

In 1917, states across the country, Kansas included, passed criminal syndicalism laws, making it a crime to advocate self-government through a labor organization. The radical labor union, the IWW, had spread across the state, becoming popular among agricultural workers and making inroads among oil field workers. Formed in 1905 and infused with a spirit of class-conciousness, the Wobblies advocated revolutionary industrial unionism, seeking to overturn capitalism and wage labor and replace them with industrial democracy. They achieved success during this period, recruiting many members across the Midwest. On June 9, 1917, Missouri National Guardsmen raided the IWW hall in Kansas City, beating members and arresting local leaders. Similar attacks occurred across the Midwest, with the U.S. government imprisoning and trying members in Chicago, Omaha, and Wichita.

Wobbly prisoners suffered humiliation and beatings while confined to the federal prison in Leavenworth. The warden had imposed longer work hours and reduced

their rations. Some inmates decided to strike, and the warden reacted sharply. As one witness recalled, "the warden put face masks and protectors on big negroes and armed them with whips and ball bats and told them to clean up those boys." After the incident, the wife of one Wobbly revealed that three inmates were not expected to live, eight were in the hospital, and others were hung by their wrists for 24 hours. She added that "a trusty in the prison told me that three days after the affair he went into the 'pit' to clean up and there were scraps of clothing and hair and blood and even chunks of human flesh about on the walls and floors of the place."[3] Further abuses by Kansas officials occurred in Camp Funston, where they detained a large number of conscientious objectors to the war. After reports of vicious treatment by guards were leaked to the public, newly appointed Governor Henry Allen freed 100 prisoners.[4]

The *Appeal to Reason*, an influential socialist-leaning newspaper located in Kansas City, Kansas, accurately portrayed the suspicious sentiments of IWW-fearing Americans in an editorial. In one excerpt, the author told of sensationalized accounts of a suspected Wobbly sighting at a local farm. It was as if someone "with hoofs and horns and a sinister speared tail" had been discovered. Was this reaction a manifestation of small town prejudice, the author asked? "Not in the least. Quite generally throughout the United States, in city and country, the superstition exists that an IWW is a terrible and indescribable social menace." The editorial laid blame squarely on the media, saying that "it is the daily press, that formidable and treacherous enemy of all that is

[3] "I.W.W. Beaten Up, Says Stanley Clark," *Appeal to Reason*, January 25, 1919, 2.
[4] "Objectors Freed," *Appeal to Reason*, January 25, 1919, 2 ; "A Negro IWW Out on Bond," *Topeka Plaindealer*, February 13, 1920. One bright spot appeared however, when on February 7, Ben Fletcher, the only black IWW member confined at Leavenworth, was released on a bond of $10,000. The details remain unclear over the terms of his release, though shortly thereafter he made his way to Chicago most likely to confer with other Wobbly members.

true and just, that has waved the terrifying bugaboo of the hoofed and horned IWW before the blank state of a public mentality." Criticizing the average American's lack of thoughtful contemplation, the paper said that most people had only a vague understanding of what a Wobbly actually was. It said that most only knew that Wobblies were bad, to be feared, and were unfamiliar to many people. Being caught up in the hysterical war-time drive against subversives, the paper correctly explained that many were persecuted simply for the crime of advocating industrial unionism.[5]

In late December, 1919, the trial began in Kansas City, Missouri, for many of the accused radicals. Thirty-two alleged Wobblies appeared in court charged with violating the Espionage Act. Fred H. Robertson, United States district attorney, presented arguments for the government while B. Amidon of Wichita, Kansas, also acted as attorney for the government and would provide closing arguments for the prosecution. Fred Moore, chief counsel for the defense, first filed a motion to discharge twelve of the thirty-two defendants, contending they had not been connected to the alleged conspiracy. Judge John Pollock overruled that motion. Moore asked for merely one day to conduct his defense, to which the judge agreed. Robertson, on behalf of the U.S. Government, argued before the court that to members of the IWW, civilization was a lie and did not see themselves as being governed under any law but their own. Their flag was the red flag of Bolshevism, and rather than being called Industrial Workers of the World, the prosecutor announced that the Wobblies should be called the "Insidious Wreckers of the World." He went on to argue that anyone carrying a red card could not help but know that the organization to which they belonged was designed to overthrow

[5] "America's Blind Staggers," *Appeal to Reason*, November 8, 1919, 1.

the laws of the nation and the entire social system.[6] The courts found many IWW members guilty of violating the Espionage Act, and the Wobblies were essentially gutted as an organization by the end of 1919. The repression and vigilantism by state and local forces in Kansas served to highlight the fearful and intolerant attitude of many in the state, providing a strong warning to labor movements that dissent meant punishment.[7]

**Kansas Views on National Strikes**

By 1919, Kansas newspapers remained keenly aware of Red Scare events in the United States and across the world. They reported in alarming headline stories about Bolshevist infiltration in many labor unions across the country, and warned against the global Communist menace. Kansas papers supported Attorney General Palmer's drive against the suspected menace, announcing in bold headlines how the Justice Department had foiled the plans of over 500 "reds" who plotted to overthrow the U.S. government. The *Wichita Beacon* categorized Palmer's efforts as a needed "cleanup of radicals," and repeated his cries for deportation of all alien radicals.[8] One paper, the *Appeal to Reason*, became a major critic of media coverage of the strike. Publishing from 1895-1922, the paper had become a mouthpiece for many worker's groups, including the Farmer's Alliance, People's Party, and later the Socialist Party of America. By 1910, its circulation reached 500,000, making it the largest Socialist paper in the country. The *Appeal*, commenting on the steel strike, argued that the same workers who "today are being clubbed and shot down by the Pennsylvania state constabulary have year after

[6] "The I.W.W. Case Soon to Jury," *Iola Register*, December 17, 1919, 1.
[7] Clayton Koppes, "The Kansas Trial of the IWW, 1917-1919," *Labor History* 16 (1975): 350.
[8] "Government Foils Plans of 500 Reds," *Wichita Beacon*, November 8, 1919, 1.

year cast their ballots for the political tools of the steel trust." The paper encouraged strikers to vote their politics instead, and work against the industrial interests that oppressed them.[9] Regarding the numerous labor disruptions in the United States, including the Steel strike and Boston police strike of 1919, most Kansas papers followed along national trends, hyping up stories emphasizing that these events were part of a larger Bolshevist conspiracy to undermine the entire country. The events would soon hit home for Kansas, as the state would become the center of its own fully-developed Red Scare.

**The Coal Strike of 1919**

On November 1, 1919, the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) staged a nationwide walkout of coal miners. The walkout of hundreds of thousands of the nation's miners left the country paralyzed from lack of fuel, and with the threat of a harsh winter looming, hurled the mining states farther into the grips of Red Scare fear. Reactionaries brazenly and incorrectly portrayed the miners as foreign Bolshevist radicals, intent on usurping power by holding hostage the resources of the country. In one comment, Governor Allen called those refusing to work "undesirable citizens" who dared to defy and criticize the government."[10] Roughly 10,000 Kansas miners, primarily in eastern Kansas, participated in the walkout led by UMW leader Alexander Howat. Fearing the cold winter, Governor Allen attempted negotiations with the miners. As national-level talks proceeded in Indianapolis between mine operators and the UMW,

[9] "Vote as you Strike is Lesson for Labor," *Appeal to Reason*, December 6, 1919, 2.
[10] "Public Letter to Governor Allen from some Returned Sodliers," *Kansas Trades Unionist*, January 23, 1920, 1.

Allen worked strenuously over several days, talking with miners urging them to get back to work.

Addressing one group of over 1,000 men, Allen argued that coal was vital to the success of the state and the nation. "Coal must be mined. I am giving you the first opportunity to dig it." At another gathering in Mulberry, addressing a crowd of 500 miners and their families, Allen made yet another appeal. One reporter characterized the governor as being very pleased at the high turnout, and that the audience remained respectfully silent throughout his impassioned speech. The governor praised the citizens for their attentive interest and several times during his talk asked whether there was anything about the situation which was not clear to anyone. Only one person asked a question of Governor Allen, a local miner who wanted to know if the governor himself was willing to dig coal to relieve the suffering of the people of Kansas. The questioner also wanted to know whether it was agreeable to the governor to dig coal for $1 a ton and live in the paltry shacks provided by the mining companies. Without hesitation Allen replied that if it was necessary for him to go down into the mines himself to relieve suffering that he would do so even under those conditions. He later conceded that he did not believe he could dig a dollar's worth of coal even if he had all winter.[11]

Miners reacted negatively, and Governor Allen returned to Topeka by late November. As the strike went on, many argued that the true nature of the coal strike lay in Bolshevist sympathies of the miners and other foreign elements in the state. Miners and even some members of the American Legion quickly reacted, proclaiming that Kansans were generally loyal and that no such elements existed. Upon his return to

[11] "Miners Hear Gov. Allen's Appeal to End Coal Crisis," *The Sun*, November 19, 1919, 1.

Topeka, Governor Allen stated that he found the more patriotic and conservative miners to be in the majority in the coal fields, though they refused to step forward out of fear. "These principally are the American miners," the governor concluded, pouring much fuel onto the already xenophobic fires that raged across the state.[12] After talks broke down, the Kansas Supreme Court empowered the state to take control of the mines.

When miners refused to work, Governor Allen called for volunteers to labor in the coal fields. Dozens of mines remained open by December 1919, supplied by an all-volunteer army. Kansas papers proudly extolled these virtuous workers, and boasted that Oklahoma and Missouri followed the lead of Kansas in having similar calls for volunteers to work effected mines. U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer vowed to fight against the walkout and utilized the powers of the federal government to furnish an injunction against the strike. One pro-labor paper appealed this ruling, noting that mine owners did not face the same danger as the miners did, and were not under threat by any federal action. "Appeals were made to both sides that they negotiate an agreement of some kind; but when these efforts at negotiation failed, threats instead of appeals were issued to miners, but no threats to operators." The paper concluded that the main lesson of the miners should be that the only thing for labor to do was to unite politically and vote the politicians of capitalist parties out of power. "The workers of America must strike at the ballot box."[13]

Leveling sharp criticism directly at Attorney General Palmer, the paper said he "who showed his hand in the coal strike, was never anything but a corporate politician. He is himself a man with large business interests. Body and soul he is the capitalist

[12] "Coal Strike Status," *The Iola Register*, November 22, 1919, 1.
[13] "Conditions Good in Coal Fields," *The Iola Register*, December 5, 1919, 1.

system. For labor to expect justice from such a man is to expect figs from thistles or bread from stones." Also criticizing President Woodrow Wilson, the *Appeal* said that "the man who appointed Palmer is an aristocratic college professor, who believes in the capitalist system, who is a creature of capitalist party politics, elevated to power by the votes of the people upon a platform of sham pacifism and radicalism."[14]

The *Appeal* concluded that the lesson of the coal strike, along with the other national strikes throughout the year, had been that labor had agitated for mere pittance, either for meager raises or humane working conditions. The *Appeal* argued that a bigger change needed to happen, one that would overturn the entire capitalist system of exploitation, for so long as this system remained in place, labor would be exploited and remain in wage slavery. "The lesson of the coal strike, and of all these other strikes, that should be brought home to the common man is that private ownership perpetuates disastrous conflict."[15] Eventually, after national arbitration, the coal strike ended in December 1919.[16] Afterwards, many letters of congratulation flowed into Governor Allen's office. Linking labor unions with anarchism and Bolshevism, one letter to the governor congratulated the governor on his "manly" stance, and stated that "Bolsheveki, communism, and all other isms are not a drop in the bucket compared to the arrogance of the union labor chiefs. Down with this autocracy… Show them what a fighter such as you can do to forever silence their arrogance."[17]

---

[14] "The Ballot is Our Weapon," *Appeal to Reason*, November 22, 1919, 1.
[15] Ibid., 1.
[16] "Court of Industrial Relations," Kansas Historical Society, https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/court-of-industrial-relations/12017 (Accessed March 31, 2015).
[17] "John McGinnis to Governor Allen," January 6, 1920, Box 12, Folder 7, Allen Papers.

Much of the vitriol aimed at the strike surrounded the foreign status of many of the miners, and their perceived susceptibility to Communist propaganda. Harboring xenophobic tendencies well before the strike, Governor Allen wrote to a concerned citizen stating that the Americanization of the foreign-born remained one of the most vital questions affecting the country. He proudly recounted his stance in requiring English-only education in all elementary schools, and restricting the use of foreign languages state-wide. Allen doubted that any community could truly be American unless it understood the "American language," and that should be a goal to which he would continue to direct his efforts.[18]

After the strike settlement, the *Appeal to Reason* concluded that the event taught the American people an unforgettable lesson about the coal industry. Namely, that the industry appeared inexorably divided into two different classes: one made up of operators and owners who manage the mines for pure profit, and the other composed of miners digging for mere wages. The paper argued that Americans should find ways to stop all strikes, rather than simply to prevent the next one, and argued for giving workers more than a living wage, reasonable working hours, and an end to ownership based on profiteering.[19] Governor Allen would pay heed to the call to prevent all strikes, though hardly in the manner labor leaders wished. To that end, Allen would react far more harshly toward labor than any other governor in the United States when he helped establish the Industrial Court of Relations, a governmental body that outlawed all strikes and proposed to settle matters through arbitration by a panel of experts.

[18] "Governor Allen to Maude Neale," August 2, 1919, Box 9, Folder 18, Allen Papers, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS (hereafter cited as Allen Papers).
[19] "Coal Mines for the People," *Appeal to Reason*, January 3, 1920, 3.

**Industrial Court**

As the nationwide coal mining strike subsided at the end of 1919, Governor Allen proposed legislation to establish the Industrial Court of Relations to prevent such disturbances from ever occurring again. The fear, intolerance, and xenophobia engendered by strikes had shown the calamitous effects that such actions could have on the country, and how it fed the Red Scare hysteria. Allen called a special session of the Kansas Legislature in January, 1920, and began by explaining the necessity for such a court. He argued that blame lay both with miners and mine operators, saying that they had made no effort to keep the mines running to capacity during the summer months, and that miners worked an average of 211 days per year. Operators made no effort at storing coal for the winter months, which exacerbated the state's situation. The governor also explained that from April, 1916 to December 31, 1918, there had been 364 separate strikes at individual mines in Kansas. Attempting to portray the futility of the strike as a weapon, he stated that the victory gained by miners because of striking was relatively small, gaining only $784.84, compared to lost wages numbering over $1,000,000. He blasted miners for calling strikes for the most trivial reasons, and said that the most recent coal strike had been more damaging to them than what they had achieved. Allen argued that miners should welcome a just tribunal to oversee such controversies, and protect them in their desire to work and the needless closing of mines.[20]

Governor Allen maintained that miners were not being left to form their own judgments. Rather, outside forces influenced their actions. Allen insinuated that radicals

[20] "Industrial Court," Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

and professional labor officials who lived off the exploitation of labor controversies were the true enemy, and they would be the only ones to oppose his legislation. Attempting to deflect the incoming firestorm of criticism, Allen stated that "from all over this state there is coming a flood of protest from various union bodies who are not concerned in this bill, who do not belong to the essential industries affected by it and who have absolutely no study of the plan, but who are being urged by professional labor leaders to save the day." Allen continued, saying that these agitators sought to promote the "insane notion that an organized minority is greater than the government itself," and that their recent victories over the government gave rise to the belief that the general public had no rights which labor needed to respect.

The governor argued that such radicals would have a rude awakening once the bill passed, and that they underestimated the Kansas spirit. Allen believed that when the Industrial Court legislation passed, and after its operation for a year, its best friends would be in the "fair minded members of union labor, who desire a cessation of useless strife and ask nothing more than a just consideration of their rights." He concluded with his earnest belief that workers desired a fair and impartial adjudication from an honest tribunal, and would prefer such a court system to the "expensive leadership of radical agitators."[21]

Reaction to the governor's speech was polarized. Business owners and professionals heaped praise on the governor, with one lawyer congratulating the governor on his vision and "splendid courage." Pointing to the larger aims of Allen's Industrial Court, the individual argued that the program would be a "splendid beacon

[21] "Industrial Court," Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

for the nation's guidance," and that no better piece of legislation had ever been formulated.[22] Allen faced little legal opposition in the Kansas legislature, and received much support from many Kansans. One letter-writer, upon hearing of opposition to the governor's efforts, explained that he was an "expert on 'unrest,'" having more experience than any other man in America. He explained he would gladly come to Topeka and teach the governor "many things" about how to deal with such opposition.[23] Local union leaders sent in letters of their own to the governor's office, expressing their doubt and worry over the court. The governor's office took great pains to answer many of these letters, attempting to assuage union leaders' trepidation. In one, the Secretary to the Governor sympathized with union fears, saying that "we realize the fear of labor that they will not receive justice at the hands of the proposed court and we realize that there are many people who question the justice of our criminal and civil courts." The secretary stated that the governor felt that judicial institutions had to be extended to meet "this vital American need," and falsely said that the court was not designed to prevent strikes of all kinds. Rather, the court would be designed to make strikes unnecessary by providing a just substitute. He explained that the bill would not be passed without the most "searching and open-minded endeavor on the part of the legislature to frame a just law," and, in the words of countless unjust laws, argued that "only those who fear justice will have anything to fear from this court."[24]

In an effort to make the Industrial Court more tolerable for detractors, supporters of the bill produced the "Ten (Industrial) Commandments," based ostensibly on Biblical

[22] "R.M. Anderson to Henry Allen," January 7, 1920, Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.
[23] "M. Andrews to Governor Allen," January 9, 1920, Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.
[24] "Secretary to the Governor to Local Union 4405, UMWA," January 10, 1920, Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

principles. Separated in 4 sections (to organized labor, to capital, to the general public, and to everybody), the authors of this pamphlet outlined the aim of the Court. Addressing organized labor, one commandment argued that "thou shalt not permit any of thy members to place the union card above our country's flag." Another stated "thou shalt not demand for any worker a good day's wage in return for a bad day's service." To the general public, it stated "thou shalt pay thy taxes cheerfully and honestly, to the end that the obligations of the state to all its people may be promptly and properly fulfilled." Finally, the 10th commandment sought to dissuade any radical activities on the part of union members, stating "thou shalt honor and love thy government for it is the people's government, the best ever devised by man and there is none other like it in all the world."[25] The blatantly pro-government anti-labor tract sought to suck the momentum out of labor agitation, and remained a key propaganda piece for Allen's government.

One of the most damning pieces of criticism came from the American Federation of Labor, which responded to the proposed legislation on January 8. In a letter signed by Kansas representatives of the union, members stated that after careful consideration they wished to condemn the measure "in most stringent terms as being non-American, un-democratic, and in direct conflict with the Constitution of the United States." They stated that Allen sought to eliminate internal distress by obliterating its cause, and that the Court would establish a precedent whereby 85 percent of the country could be thrown into bondage "more abominable than the slavery of the darkies prior to the Civil War." AFL members proclaimed that organized labor stood for an honest and

[25] "The Ten Industrial Commandments," Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

just government of, by, and for the people, but not for the privileged 15 percent. Blasting the proposed Court as one of the most infamous pieces of legislation that had ever been imposed on a free people, members of the AFL of Kansas said they would be watching Governor Allen's actions, and that he would be judged by the way he used his power.[26] The governor's office blithely sidestepped the most stringent portions of the letter, and simply responded that when workers realized that the court was not something sinister, they would fall in line and support the measure.[27]

Unions across Kansas adopted the language of slavery, as the AFL had done, in responding to the Governor's efforts. In one, a labor union said the law would shackle Kansas workers, and that they stood instead for a free state and a free nation.[28] In another letter, union members called the bill the "anti-strike law" and that if implemented would mean complete disarmament of organized labor and effective slavery for coal miners. They concluded that the governor's efforts was a blow directed at the working class, and that such "atrocious legislation" would drive laborers of the state to anarchy and Bolshevism as a last resort, "as was the case in Russia."[29] The pronouncement of eventual anarchism and Bolshevism stood as a major threat to Governor Allen, who took such pronouncements seriously.

In a letter of support, one writer from western Kansas extolled the patriotic virtue of the governor and exclaimed "I just want to tell you that we people out here in the short grass country appreciate the good fight that you and the other good Americans

[26] "American Federation of Labor to Governor Allen," January 8, 1920, Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.
[27] "Secretary to the Governor to American Federation of Labor," January 15, 1920, Industrial Court," Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.
[28] "Parsons Central Labor Union to Governor Allen," January 2, 1920, Industrial Court, Box 11, Folder 9, Allen Papers.
[29] "Local Union 4405 UMW to Governor Allen," January 2, 1920, Industrial Court, Box 11, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

are putting up for our state and let you know we are back of you."[30] Another citizen, showing the impact the proposed bill had on the state, remarked in astonishment the amount of interest taken in the bill, and that it had replaced "the weather" as the main topic of conversation for most. He provided examples of conversations he overheard that extolled the bill as the "biggest piece of constructive legislation ever attempted in Kansas, if not in the United States."[31]

Illustrating the gulf in opinions between organized labor and the middle and upper classes in Kansas, a local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution adopted a resolution expressing strong support for Governor Allen's "heroic" efforts. They concluded that, after having emerged from the destructive World War, the nation faced social and industrial unrest amounting almost to an "internal revolution," brought on largely by anti-American propaganda and the hatred of foreign anarchist, Bolshevistic elements. These disloyal groups, promoted by a handful of demagogues, sought to undermine the government, urge disloyalty, and pierce the very fabric "of our religious social and industrial institutions." The Daughters resolved to commend the "heroic and statesmanlike" conduct of Governor Allen, and his "fearlessness to protect the fair name of Kansas, and save from death by freezing the unfortunate and helpless women and children of our state," during the coal strike. The group looked with favor on the governor's Court of Industrial Relations, and urged all to support the act and to join 100 percent American clubs to demonstrate their patriotism.[32]

[30] "A.P. Barrett to Governor Allen," January 9, 1920, Industrial Court, Box 11, Folder 9. Allen Papers.
[31] "G.S. Battey to Governor Allen," Industrial Court, Box 11, Folder 9. Allen Papers.
[32] "Daughters of the American Revolution," Industrial Court, Box 11, Folder 9. Allen Papers.

Finally, demonstrating the striking impact the Court would have, a member of the National Federation of Vehicle Dealers wrote to the governor, saying that "you have set the pace for the nation and the eyes of a large proportion of the 110 million of our population are on you." He proclaimed that the hearts of all Americans beat as one with the governor, and that Allen had a "glorious" fight on his hands. "We do not feel that his is politics, but that a really big man has arisen from our midst who is fearless enough to meet the biggest problem with which the state was ever confronted." The writer stated that the Court seemed to be the only manner in which the labor question would ever be settled, and wished the Governor Godspeed.[33]

Governor Allen himself argued that his Industrial Court model should be exported to the rest of the country. In a speech to the Kansas Legislature, he explained that "I believe the thing we have done in Kansas can be done in the nation at large… Surely as believers in Anglo-Saxon institutions, we must all realize that the only sure source from which justice may emit is orderly and impartial government." Couching his language in patriotic terms, the governor warned that "at an hour when radical labor leaders are seeking to create a proscriptive political organization which shall threaten public officials, it is time for patriotic Americans to insist that there shall be one standard of justice for all men." That standard, Allen argued, remained "the sovereign power of the government to which so many have given their lives and pledged their sacred honor."[34]

[33] "Geo. W. Collins to Governor Allen," January 7, 1920, Industrial Court, Box 11, Folder 10. Allen Papers.
[34] "Governor Allen Speech," Box 12, Folder 5. Allen Papers.

On January 5, the special session of the Kansas legislature convened and the Industrial Court Bill went to both houses for a vote. Representatives of the labor unions, employers' associations, and the public received invitations to present their cause. Representing labor unions, UMW member Frank Walsh led off with a seven-hour speech, followed by J.I. Sheppard who talked for four hours. Pro-bill and anti-bill supporters devoted an entire week to open discussion in the House, with the House finally passing it by a vote of 106 to 7. The law came into effect on January 24, 19 days after the convening of the special session.[35]

Upon its passage many in Kansas and across the nation greeted its establishment with celebration and fanfare. Weary of constant labor strife, papers heralded the event as a grand experiment that deserved careful attention. The *Chicago Tribune* hailed the event as "one of the most significant experiments in our labor legislation," and worthy of being monitored for future implementation in other states.[36] The *New York Times* reported that while Kansas had little industrial output compared to the East, for that very reason it would be best that the experiment be tried there. The paper concluded that the program was ambitious and deserved the entire country's attention. In the wake of the calamitous strikes during the First Red Scare, and the rampant rise of xenophobia linked to labor disputes, it argued that "if there can be established a tribunal that will stand as a just arbiter between capital and labor… it will be a long step in advance."[37]

State governments from across the country expressed interest in Kansas' new experiment. Representing the Industrial Commission of Colorado, members there wrote

[35] "Legislative History of Senate Bill Number One 'The Industrial Court Bill," Box 12, Folder 5. Allen Papers.
[36] "The Kansas Industrial Court," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 26, 1920, 8.
[37] "An Industrial Court Solution," *New York Times*, February 11, 1920, 1.

to the Governor's office expressing interest in the legislation, seeking greater details about it in order to submit to their own legislature a similar bill.[38] The New Jersey Legislature also considered adopting similar measures, passing several acts modeled after Kansas' Court of Industrial Relations. That state had already perpetuated its own share of hysteria, as a local Kansas paper reported that union labor there remained menaced by Bolshevist and IWW influences. Repeating a speech by a union leader in New Jersey, the Kansas paper repeated how "vicious alien propaganda has obtained a foothold in American trade unionism," and that "it is more than a coincidence that some of the same traitorous influences which sought to handicap our government during the war are today cooperating to disrupt the American trade union movement."[39]

Similarly, the Constitutional Convention in Nebraska opted to place in its new constitution an article making it mandatory upon the next Nebraska legislature to establish a court of industrial relations similar to the one in Kansas. In a glowing letter by Walter Gardner, representing New Jersey Title Guarantee & Trust, he congratulated Governor Allen and the effect his law was having in New Jersey, and across the nation, and assured him that similar laws would be introduced in two other unnamed states. He explained that legislators in New York explained that there was a "very fair passage of this bill" in their legislature, where members introduced it several days prior.[40] In Chicago, local board members of the Methodist Episcopal Church wrote to Governor Allen, saying that they felt he had taken one of the most important steps towards the solution to the labor question. He explained that several important figures in Chicago

[38] "Industrial Commission of Colorado to Governor Allen," Box 11, Folder 10. Allen Papers.
[39] "Union Official Warns of Vicious Alien Propaganda," *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 26, 1920, 1.
[40] "Walter Gardner to Governor Allen," February 27, 1920, Box 11, Folder 14. Allen Papers.

had likewise expressed interest in the solution that Kansas inaugurated, and requested copies of the Industrial Court law be sent there as soon as possible.[41]

Once the court had been established, four hundred Kansas miners went on strike in protest. The event made national news, as many in the country thought the coal strike issue had been settled. Kansas remained the sole outlier, and the *New York Times* reported in alarming tones of the situation in the state. Governor Allen reacted harshly and sent his attorney general to go to the mining districts to assist local authorities in "vigorous prosecution under the criminal remedies provided by the court." Allen declared "I deplore the spirit which brings any union into open defiance of laws of this state."[42] Many Kansas news outlets looked with anticipation as the strike represented an immediate test of the new Industrial Relations Court. Governor Allen declared that although the court had not yet been organized, it became legally established with the publication of the new law the previous weekend. Allen, in conference with members of the court, announced that "whatever action is deemed necessary will be taken at once." He went on to blast the unions for thinking themselves above the Kansas state government, and accused all strikers of violating the law. Allen defended the Industrial Court, saying that "the law is intended to give the miners a just tribunal in which a fair and impartial adjustment of their grievances may be had under the guaranty of the state." Allen argued that every fair-minded citizen of the state regretted the refusal of the miners to give his court decent consideration. He went on to provide a half-hearted olive branch to the workers, saying that if any miners disagreed with the law they were free to work in another state, and would not face prosecution so long as they did not

[41] "Methodist Episcopal Church to Governor Allen," January 29, 1920, Box 11, Folder 15. Allen Papers..
[42] "400 Kansas Miners Strike as Protest," *New York Times*, January 27, 1920, 12.

interfere with other miners' attempts at working.[43] Allen's pleas fell on deaf ears, and Kansas' coal problems only worsened.

Labor resentment towards the Industrial Court continued through 1920, and on April 24, imprisoned UMW leader Alexander Howat spoke to a crowd of several thousand outside his jail cell in Girard. Imprisoned indefinitely for refusing to testify in the Industrial Court, Howat emphasized that he had been jailed for his principles, and continued adherence to those labor values remained preferable to living as a "slave" under Governor Allen. Cheers went up in the crowd, composed mostly of miners, who whistled and shouted as the leader spoke. Howat continued, saying that Allen had passed the law to "get back at the coal miners of Kansas" for their failure to return to work. He remained defiant, accusing the governor of having presidential ambitions. Howat concluded that "the fight is on. Organized labor will never submit… If they are going to place 12,000 miners in jail, they will have to build more prisons down here."[44] Howat would go on to be released, arrested again, and released throughout the next several years in defiance of the Court.[45]

By July, nearly 6,000 Kansas miners were still on strike. Howat, who had been released, placed blame of the situation squarely on Governor Allen and Attorney General Hopkins. He argued that "this simply illustrates again that you can put men in jail, but you can't force them to work."[46] By September, State Mine Inspector James Sherwood cited that strikes by coal miners in Pittsburg during the previous month cost

[43] "The Law is Ready," *Iola Register*, January 26, 1920, 1.
[44] "Law to Make Strikes a Crime is Fought Bitterly by Kansas Miners, Led by Howat," *Appeal to Reason*, April 24, 1920, 3.
[45] John W. Hevener, "Alexander Howat" in Gary M. Fink, ed. *Biographical Dictionary of American Labor* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 305-306.
[46] "Kansas Miners Idle," *Iola Register*, July 26, 1920, 1.

the state 197,096 tons of coal. The production of 236,163 tons was only 55 percent of possible production. Ostensibly, the main reason for the strike remained a $1 fine for every Saturday that miners refused to work. Operators contended that their contract with the miners authorized the fine, though other reasons included their demand for extra hours. On average, 42 mines were closed an average of 10 days during the month, representing a staggering loss of productivity for the state.[47]

As the crisis deepened, committee members of the international board of the UMW proceeded to investigate worker conditions in Kansas coal fields, meeting local Kansas union members and discuss their situation. National UMW president John L. Lewis later wired local unions ordering the men back to work, and denounced maverick District President Howat for his attitude and threatened to take over district union affairs from him. Howat broke with the organization and declared that no consideration "would be given to the insulting message." Industrial Court members looked on the spat with amusement, seemingly content that the situation would soon resolve itself. On August 4, members decided to take no action. Despite this, reports from the coal fields showed that none of the idle workers had gone back to work. In mining circles, many widely believed that the international board committee would request a takeover of district offices, bringing an inevitable escalation between the national union and Howat.[48]

Challenges to the court continued throughout 1920. Led by Frank Walsh, UMW members in Kansas initiated a legal campaign against the court charging it to be unconstitutional. The District Court Judge sitting at Pittsburg, Judge Curran, disagreed

[47] "Kansas Coal Strikes," *Iola Register*, September 20, 1920, 6.
[48] "To Dethrone Howat," *Iola Register*, August 5, 1920, 1.

with Walsh and upheld the institution. Labor papers charged the judge with bias, as Curran had earlier commented that the Industrial Court "was one of the best and most progressive pieces of legislation enacted in recent years." Walsh mounted a stirring defense, saying that the court was a "steel casket for labor," and was the most infamous blow at human rights since the Dredd Scott decision. In responding to critics who condemned the miners from the previous year's coal strike for defying the law, Walsh pointed out that corporations had invariably violated numerous laws with their gross negligence of worker's rights.

During the proceedings, Phil Gallery, a local UMW representative, asked why the state had not shown the same energy in prosecuting profiteers as it had exhibited in attacking miners. Judge Curran responded, saying that he had heard much recently about the so-called "divine right to quit work," and responded that he would like to hear more about the "divine right to work" instead. He opined that the divine right to strike was on the same plane as the divine right of kings, and his decision came as no surprise to many.[49]

The *Appeal to Reason* characterized the event along class lines, saying that under a class system labor cannot place its economic welfare in the hands of any so-called impartial tribunal. The paper claimed that such impartiality could be an illusion, and that the Industrial Court, composed of an economic class naturally opposed to labor, could not render genuine justice." Harkening to Walsh's comparison to slavery, the *Appeal* stated that "once more Kansas is the battleground where the issue of slavery

[49] "Industrial Court Law is Upheld by Kansas Court," *Appeal to Reason*, May 8, 1920, 1.

is being fought out, this time… not on behalf of colored chattel but of supposedly free and independent American workingmen."[50]

American Federation of Labor (AFL) leader Samuel Gompers came out fast and furious against Allen's Labor Court. In an op-ed piece entitled "What is the Matter Kansas?" published in the *Kansas Trades Union*, Gompers violently blasted the now-established court. He began stating that Kansas traditionally loved freedom, and had until now moved in the direction of progress and reform. He exclaimed that the governor "has been converted to the autocratic ideals of those who seek undisputed mastery over industry and over the lives of the workers," and that he had projected a measure of "unsurpassed audacity in despotic concept." Under the bill, Gompers held, the lives of men and women would be but mere property, "as if they were so many sides of pork… in the market." He concluded that Kansas could not legislate men into serfdom, and that the state could not resurrect despotism and "make it stand in 1920."[51]

On May 28, Governor Allen engaged in a much heralded debate with AFL leader Samuel Gompers in Carnegie Hall to a sold-out crowd. The *New York Times* gave the event substantial coverage, printing that a large partisan audience both booed and cheered as each side made its points in the raucous debate. The *Times* framed each argument succinctly: whether on one hand the right to strike stood as an inalienable right and that the Kansas State Industrial Court infringed on that, and as a consequence the liberty of every individual worker, or on the other hand whether the interests of the public were paramount and that no strike should ever endanger the well-being of Americans. Gompers assessed that the Kansas law meant nothing less than slavery for

[50] Ibid., 1.
[51] "What is the Matter Kansas," February 18, 1920, 1.

American workers, while Allen contended that it was the only effective method yet attempted to protect the public interest. “The law does not take away from the individual workman the divine right to quit work,” Allen said. “It takes away from Mr. Gompers the divine right to order him to quit work.” In summing up his side, Allen asked whether the public had any rights when a strike that threatened public peace and safety, or if it was simply a private matter between labor and capital. “If you answer this question in the affirmative, Mr. Gompers, how would you protect the rights of the public? Who controls the divine right to quit work?”

Gompers refused to answer the question citing lack of time. The crowd booed and chanted from all parts of the arena: “You can’t! You can’t!” Gompers hastily responded that he would prove it if he lived long enough. Cries rang out again from the audience: “Answer it! Answer!” Gompers sarcastically responded that the governor’s adherents were “ladies and gentlemen” and that he would meet the governor’s statements as best he could. The *Times* reported that every seat in the hall was taken, and included places for standing room as well. There was apparently an equal division of adherents, with the applause made by Gompers’ supporters being met in volume by many of Allen’s supporters from Kansas whom he had brought in by train. While the two candidates remained civil towards each other, supporters in the audience showed a decidedly partisan split. Groans and boos greeted every remark by Allen, which his supporters attempted to drown out with applause. As the debate wore on, Gompers contended that the right to strike had been a necessary weapon of workers, and that “the right for a man to own himself, the right to be free from a court’s direction or a Judge’s direction when we exercise that normal and natural right to stop work, not to commit

crime," remained the worker's right alone, not belonging to the Government or the court system. Allen countered, saying that the law protected the sanctity of the worker's contract, saying to operators they could not close down their plant, and that miners could not conspire to close down operation of an industry so vital to the welfare of the people. "That is the oldest law in the world… the safety of the public is the supreme law, and you may build around it all the phraseology that belongs to the history of the labor movement, but you will not be able to wipe out that fundamental fact." As the debate neared its close, Gompers attempted to show how Abraham Lincoln would have sided with him, and with the poor in general. One member of the audience shouted to Gompers "I am poorer than you!" Gompers retorted "I will bet you two cents that I am poorer than you." Shouts and boos filled the auditorium at this petty exchange. Allen repeated his original question to Gompers, whether the public had any rights in labor disputes. Gompers evaded the question, prompting one audience member to shout "how about the answer?" Gompers testily responded: "Why don't you shut up?" The debate ended shortly thereafter, with pundits on each side editorializing that their person had won.[52]

One Kansas paper dramatized the debate: "As knights of old went forth to clash swords in the tournament, so Governor Allen of Kansas and Samuel Gompers met and clashed words in their forensic tourney in New York City." However, the paper concluded that like the battles of old the Allen-Gompers debate failed to settle anything. Categorizing the eastern press as being in the pockets of the capitalists, the *Appeal to Reason* concluded that "Allen has won the debate in the editorial and news columns…

[52] "Governor Allan and Gompers Debate Kansas Law," *New York Times*, May 29, 1920, 1.

but that is far from saying that he has won it in the larger and more important forum of American public opinion. The paper concluded that the debate remained unsatisfactory because Allen simply represented and defended the status quo, while Gompers spoke too narrowly, arguing only of the right to strike.[53]

While the much-heralded spectacle did nothing for either side, Kansas state organizer for the AFL, A.L. Flemming slowly came around in support of the Industrial Court. In a letter sent to labor organizers, Flemming told of his meeting with Governor Allen, and received assurances that the Court's powers would not be abused. He stated that he "sincerely believed that Governor Allen is the fairest man of his standing that I have ever talked to in regard to organized labor." Despite evidence to the contrary, he astoundingly proclaimed that Governor Allen's record indicated that the state leader was friendly to labor, and that the court itself could be a "blessing" for workers. He cited several cases that had already been settled by the court, resulting in wage increases of several cents an hour for the aggrieved parties. Flemming concluded that people should give the court a chance before they condemned it, and that it had already benefited labor tremendously in the state.[54]

Cases continued through the Industrial Court until 1925, when the Charles Wolff Packing Co. of Kansas City, Kansas, won its appeal to the United States Supreme Court. In its appeal, the company disagreed with an Industrial Court decision that fixed the number of hours employees could work. The Supreme Court ruled that the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations could not prescribe the number of hours of labor required per day. With the Industrial Court essentially gutted of its power, it ceased to exist after

[53] "Allen and Gompers," *Appeal to Reason*, June 12, 1920, 2.
[54] "New Industrial Court Pleases," *Iola Register*, July 31, 1920, 1.

the verdict. The Supreme Court eventually ruled the body unconstitutional and dissolved it.[55] Regardless, the court thrust Kansas into the national spotlight, serving as an infamous experiment to quell fears brought about by fear of striking workers during a period of heightened intolerance of leftist ideologies and activities.

**Nonpartisan League**

The Nonpartisan League (NPL), a political organization founded in 1915 by Socialist Party of America organizer A.C. Townley, provided yet another target for Kansans fearful of Bolshevism. The NPL advocated state control of mills, banks, and agriculture to support beleaguered farmers suffering through the harsh conditions that followed the War. Originating in North Dakota, the League spread its message across the country, gaining important traction in many agricultural regions. Nationally, many states viewed the organization with fear, suspecting socialist or possibly foreign inspiration. In early January 1920, one article in the *New York Times* by the paper's western correspondent Charles Selden said the NPL was involved in terrorism and fraud, robbing farmers of "money, newspapers, banks, constitution, and schools." Selden argued that public opinion seemed to have picked the wrong set of initials. Instead of worrying about the IWW, whose actions according to him amounted to no more than loud noise, the true threat lay with the NPL. The organization had a presence in more states and actually accomplished many of its goals. Selden blasted North Dakota, saying the League had gained absolute control in the state and instituted a regime of "rank terror."[56] By the First Red Scare, the group had made important inroads

[55] "Kansas Court is Overruled," *New York Times*, April 14, 1925, 1.
[56] "Terrorism and Fraud of the Nonpartisan League," *New York Times*, January 4, 1920, 1. For further reading on the NPL, see Michael Lansing, *Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in North American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

into Kansas, causing much consternation among those linking socialism with radical Bolshevist plots.

The League's surprising strength in Kansas can be linked to inroads made by Socialists in years prior, notably with the establishment of the People's College in 1911. Located in Fort Scott, the college was one of over a thousand created by Socialists in the early 1900s to provide education to the working class. It was supported by funds from the *Appeal to Reason*, and fielded Eugene Debs as its chancellor. The college promoted education for workers, with its logo stating "for social service, not for profit." In 1915, Eugene Debs penned a promotional article about the college published in the *American Socialist*. He argued that the school marked the awakening of the masses to the necessity of establishing their own educational institutions, free from capitalist exploitation. For only through knowledge, Debs argued, could one truly be free and fulfill their destiny. The Socialist leader explained that the college was founded by the working class, financed by the working class, and controlled by the rank and file of the working class, and concluded that the school was "fundamentally democratic and no shadow of caste falls across the threshold."[57]

Because of the school's location in far eastern Kansas, Fort Scott became a hub of Socialist activity. It drew attention from prominent Socialists across the world, including Alexander Berkman. After the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado in 1914, in which Colorado National Guard units killed over a dozen striking miners, many of the

[57] Julia Allen, "'Dear Comrade': Marian Wharton of the People's College, Fort Scott, Kansas, 1914-1917, *Women's Studies Quarterly* 22 (1994), 121;" Eugene Debs, "The School for the Masses," *American Socialist* 2 (1915): 2.

survivors came to Fort Scott to tell their story.[58] Many Wobblies came to the school as well, and by 1915 the college boasted over 100 students. Many of the readings came from Socialist-inspired texts, featuring declarations such as "Labor creates all wealth," and "The state was founded on exploitation." Students had access to many other Socialist and Communist works, including Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*. The college fell prey to reactionary forces, however, after the Midwest section of the Socialist Party broke with the Eastern section over U.S. involvement in World War I. It remains unclear if the government or local residents were to blame, but an unknown arsonist burned the three-story Victorian structure to the ground. [59] This brief interlude with Socialist education left a strong imprint on Kansas memory, and by the time of the League's arrival during the Red Scare, some citizens had a solid foundation for fear against encroaching Socialism.

Despite the recent history of reactionary fear, some pro-labor Kansans viewed the arrival of the NPL more favorably. On June 12, 1919 a Kansas paper reported that while authorities were eager to "enslave workingmen by attempting to crush the slightest sign of a strike," they were not so willing to safeguard the rights of citizens to hold political meetings. Earlier in the month, uniformed mobs of the American Legion prevented meetings by Nonpartisan League farmers who were hosting guest speaker Walter Mills. Legionnaires forced NPL members into a car and drove them out of the county. Mills had previously appealed to local officials for protection, but in this period of heightened fear of radicalism, such appeals went unanswered. Mills and other NPL

[58] For further reading on the Ludlow Massacre, see Scott Martelle, *Blood Passion: The Ludlow Massacre and Class Warfare in the American West* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007).
[59] Allen, "Dear Comrade," 128-29.

members, outraged at their treatment, marched on Topeka and demanded an audience with the Attorney General to protect their rights. The Attorney General responded that it was not his place to take action, and that unless a sheriff or county attorney notified him, he was unable to "butt in." This reticence to interfere from the highest legal office in the state demonstrated the power anti-labor forces had over the state. The situation enabled local law enforcement to act as they pleased, looking the other way when fearful mobs violated other Americans' civil liberties. The *Appeal* condemned the Attorney General, declaring that he had "perfected arrangements with sheriffs and county attorneys over the state for the apprehending of all suspicious characters," and concluded that some laws in Kansas were held to be more important than others.[60]

Persecution of NPL members continued throughout the First Red Scare, with many concerned citizens demanding the governor take action against the organization. One individual stated that he knew of an NPL picnic being held at Hays City on Sunday, September 14, 1919. The person requested the governor to "use your power in stopping this as they include some of their powerful speakers… and this should not be allowed on our Lord's day." The governor responded, saying that he had launched an inquiry to determine whether the NPL ever violated any statutes. The event later drew a large protest from a number of citizens from Ellis County, with several dozen affixing their signatures to an official complaint.[61] In another event, an angry mob attempted to break up a meeting by the Nonpartisan League in Stafford, mistakenly abducting a farmer who they thought was a member of the group. Jay McFadden, a local agricultural worker, had introduced a NPL speaker during their meeting when around

[60] "Lawlessness in Kansas," *Appeal to Reason*, June 12, 1920, 2.
[61] "Albert Day to Allen" September 9, 1919, 1919, Box 2, Folder 2, Allen Papers.

50 men entered the hall from both the front and the rear. In the confusion, McFadden was mistaken for the speaker he introduced. The mob took him out of town several miles in a car, and upon realizing their mistake they released him. McFadden had no comment upon his release, undoubtedly in fear of reprisal. Initial news outlets reported that the NPL speaker had made incendiary statements angering the crowd, but others in the audience declared his speech "was conservative and inoffensive."[62]

At an NPL conference held in St. Louis, anti-Bolshevik advocate P.E. Zimmerman sneaked into the meeting, pretending to be a delegate from Kansas. He reported that "his fondest anticipations were realized," and that the conference was merely aimed at bringing together all the radical and "un-American" elements into one league. Zimmerman named the leader of the NPL as "Herr Townley," conflating the recent fear of German infiltration with that of radical Bolshevism, and argued that the NPL leader's goal was to be able to manipulate 3,000,000 votes in the 1920 election in favor of "the Reds." Zimmerman concluded that "this presents a deadly menace that no patriotic American can afford to ignore or underestimate." He contrasted well-financed and organized "Reds" with the unorganized groups of patriotic Americans who did not have the financial wherewithal to preserve their own democracy. Zimmerman complained that NPL agitators had managed to raise $36,000 from Kansas farmers, while the "supposedly patriotic people of the entire state of Kansas… have not contributed one-fifth of that amount" in support of his organization.[63]

Fear of radicalism in Kansas continued with numerous publications printing material warning of the dangers of Bolshevism. The *Iola Register* reprinted an editorial

[62] "Non-Partisan Leaguers Introducer Kidnapped," *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, November 7, 1919, 4.
[63] "American or Bolshevism," *Council Grove Republican*, February 5, 1920, 1.

from the *Wichita Beacon*, arguing that the NPL was a revolutionary movement more dangerous than the IWW in its preaching of class hatred. It decried the *Appeal to Reason* as a leading organ of the Socialist Party, and blasted editorials that defended the Russian Bolshevik government. Flying directly in the face of free speech laws, one Kansas editorial decried an NPL organizer who held a school house meeting a few miles outside of Wichita, and who in the course of his lecture defended the Bolshevik government. The editorial claimed that "this insidious poison gas is being laid everywhere." Drawing direct parallels to poison gas attacks during the Great War, the author opined that "straight, clear thinking is discouraged, muddled, dazed, mulling over the diseased cerebrations of parlor Bolshevists is encouraged," and that such elements had invaded Kansas in full force. The paper concluded that "they are right in this country. It is time to wake up."[64]

Other Kansas editorials decried the release of suspected Communists who had not taken any overt action. The paper proclaimed that abundant proof existed that the suspects had been doing everything they could by word of mouth and printed documents to stir up insurrection against the government of the United States and to start riots and cause bloodshed. However, because no action had been taken, no law existed under which they could be punished. The editorial argued that there ought to be a law within 24 hours that would make such actions illegal. "A man who gets up on a soap box at a street corner, or attends a meeting of strikers, or… denounces our form of government… is a public enemy and ought to be regarded as having already committed the overt act which would subject him to the penalties which such a crime deserves."

[64] "The Impasse at Washington," *Iola Register*, November 18, 1919, 1.

The paper concluded that "We ought not to have to wait until our house is blazing before attempting to intercept the men who are declaring their intention to set it on fire."[65]

**Governor's Reaction and P.E. Zimmerman**

The vitriol against suspected radicals and foreigners remained an increasingly prominent feature in Kansas throughout the First Red Scare. Concerned citizens across the state wrote in letters to the Governor, demanding action be taken to protect them from the Bolshevist menace. One group, the local board from Russell County, penned a letter claiming to have a list of aliens who came from Russia seventeen years prior. The letter stated that "they have accumulated in this country wealth… claimed exemption as aliens [for the draft] and in answering their questionnaires they were willing to return to their native country. Something must be done to get them back." The letter concluded that Kansans had "no use for them here," and asked the governor to recommend action in the House of Representatives. Russell residents gave in to prevailing fears, asking the governor to deport all aliens who had claimed exemption from military service. Criticizing them as "cowardly, disgraceful, and unpatriotic," the board stated that this exemption for aliens was "exasperating." They further charged that for every alien exempted, a "good American boy had to go to the front," and that "when this nation faced a crisis, these men were not willing to bear any burdens."[66] Russell County's anger at its immigrant residents was no anomaly, but rather represented a strong drive by many other counties to bar aliens from living in the state. The issue even prompted New York Congressman Isaac Siegel to write Governor Allen, asking him to evict

[65] "The Impasse at Washington," *Iola Register*, November 18, 1919, 1.
[66] "Local Board to Governor Allen," February 26, 1919, Box 2, Folder 2, Allen Papers.

foreigners from Kansas. The governor responded favorably to the spirit of the letter, though he stated that the number of aliens did not merit action by the state.[67]

Ethnic minorities in Kansas were alarmed by the swift and repressive measures taken by many citizens and members of congress. Writing to Governor Allen, members of Russian and Slavic groups pled their case, showing how meetings among them had been disrupted and life made difficult by local police. Numbering over 10,000 in the Kansas City, Kansas area, they argued for fair treatment, and said that "nearly all of us are holders of liberty bonds and are unable to understand why we should be singled out for irritating restrictions which we feel are wholly undeserved." The letter concluded "all of us came to America before this unfortunate war… and ought not to be held responsible for what our people have done in Russia."[68] Allen responded dismissively, emphasizing that the state government never interfered so long as local government was capable of maintaining law and order.[69]

Kansas business leaders and concerned citizens sustained the push for anti-radicalism after the Great War, with many pressuring Governor Allen to enact restrictive measures against foreign-born individuals. One individual, responsible for the state-sanctioned anti-radical Campaign, gained particular prominence in Kansas. Phil Zimmerman, a retired motorcycle salesman, would become Kansas' most famous anti-Bolshevist agitator, traveling across the country giving anti-Bolshevist, IWW and Nonpartisan League speeches. Zimmerman's inspiration began in 1915 when, as a motorcycle salesman traveling in South Dakota, he witnessed a gathering of NPL

[67] "Governor Allen to Siegal," March 8, 1919, Box 2, Folder 2, Allen Papers.
[68] "Slavonics to Allen," March 12, 1919, Box 2 Folder 2, Allen Papers.
[69] "Allen to Slavonics," Box 2, Folder 2, Allen Papers.

members. The leaders of the group, including Townley, and D.C. Coates, were according to him either IWW or Socialist and did not represent a true patriotic farmer's movement. He quit his job as a salesman in 1918 when he had gathered enough interest in Kansas to form his Anti-Bolshevik Campaign. That same year, former president Theodore Roosevelt visited Wichita, where Zimmerman's state office was located. Roosevelt asked to see the anti-Bolshevik crusader personally, and talked with him for over an hour about the threat of radicalism in Kansas. According to local newspaper the *Star Telegram*, Roosevelt agreed with Zimmerman, saying that the forces of the IWW and NPL represent the same ideas that Leon Trotsky and Vladimir Lenin used in bringing "ruin to Russia." Remarking on Kansans who joined Zimmerman's group, he stated they had took a patriotic stand to protect the country against Bolshevism and rendered a valuable service to the country.[70] Receiving a strong endorsement from the former president, Zimmerman became a rising star in Kansas and in the state government.

Making wild accusations about suspected Bolshevik activity at the height of the coal mining strike, he became a personal favorite of Governor Allen. The official anti-Bolshevik campaign spearheaded by Zimmerman, expressed its gratitude for the governor's support, especially considering it did not have such support from the previous administration. Writing to the governor, Zimmerman had vowed that A.C. Townley would never control Kansas, and that his vow had cost him dearly. He exclaimed that he had invested more time and money into the anti-Bolshevik campaign than any man he knew, and remained confident that his methods were just. He

[70] "Fighting Reds is Zim's Hobby," *Wichita Beacon*, November 10, 1919, 8.

confidently concluded that "I know we'll win for we at this time have the moral support of every patriotic citizen of Kansas regardless of party affiliation… Failure is inconceivable."[71]

Governor Allen discussed different proposals with Zimmerman at length, including the use of members of the Council of Defense to root out suspected Communists. Allen later said the proposition would not make a big enough impact, explaining that "using the State Council of Defense now is something like blank ammunition. It would make a good sound but wouldn't hit very hard."[72] Having a direct line to the governor, Zimmerman bombarded Allen with fallacious ideas about the nature of the supposed radical threat. He claimed that there existed a mass of evidence to show that "enemy" propaganda had only increased since the end of the war. "The enemy agents, considering the Espionage Act now a dead letter, are going 'wide open,'" Zimmerman explained. Remarking that Bolshevik publications had a combined circulation of around 52,000,000 per month, and that countless individuals helped disseminate each issue, he concluded that "Kansas has more than her share of these disciples of despair, sowing discord among our farmers and laborers and preaching class hatred." Arguing the need for reinforcements, Zimmerman requested that Governor Allen write an open letter to citizens of Kansas promoting cooperation with the anti-Bolshevik campaign in the form of volunteer units organized throughout the state and "maintained at a high state of efficiency."[73] Allen did not go that far, but the level of communication that existed between the two, especially considering the deeply

[71] "Anti-Bolshevik Campaign," April 14, 1919, Box 2, Folder 8, Allen Papers.
[72] Allen to Zimmerman," April 8, 1919, Box 2, Folder 8, Allen Papers.
[73] "Zimmerman to Allen," April 6, 1919, Box 2, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

reactionary nature of some of Zimmerman's proposals, show how receptive the governor was to Red Scare fear-mongering.

Zimmerman's Anti-Bolshevik Campaign claimed that Kansas workers were more patriotic than those of any other state, and went "over the top" in every war drive and by June 1919, had not had a single major labor disturbance. The future appeared uncertain however, as the Nonpartisan League had grown "by leaps and bounds." Their "slimy agitators are working every labor center in Kansas, and their poisonous propaganda is bearing fruit," the anti-radical crusader declared. Complaining that some Kansans' patriotism had shriveled to "microscopic proportions" as wartime excitement subsided, Zimmerman exclaimed that he rested well knowing that he had done his patriotic duty despite the threat of losing his house because he spent most of his money fighting Bolshevists. Zimmerman concluded his letter in melodramatic fashion, labeling himself an ignored harbinger of the end times. Admonishing Kansans, he declared them "unthinking long-eared asses," who were indifferent to their own fate. Decrying businessmen and politicians specifically, Zimmerman said that "so far as I can perceive, not one of them is raising his hand or voice to help us save Kansas from certain fate."[74]

The tireless agitator went on to target education in the state, with his anti-Bolshevik campaign decrying Socialist and Communist influences in Kansas' colleges and institutions of higher education. In a public speech, he warned parents to consider carefully the college they chose to send their children, lest they be sent to a university that harbored Bolshevists or other undesirables. He urged parents to "demand a written assurance from its president that on the faculty thereof there is no person of the

[74] "Zimmerman to Reed," June 12, 1919, Box 2, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

intellectual cootie type, such as Socialists, pacifists, parlor Bolsheviks, or Huns, and who, if given the opportunity would impress upon your son or daughter their peculiar brand of 'kultar.'"[75] Zimmerman purposely conflated the recent World War I fears of German infiltration and American pacifism with the First Red Scare and fear of Communism, and soundly condemned each group as part of the same strand of insidious ideology that sought to bring down American democracy itself.

The anti-Bolshevik crusader would go on to give many similar speeches, and would become especially close to Allen's personal secretary, future governor and senator Clyde Reed. Writing personal notes to the secretary, often starting with the familial "dear Clyde," Zimmerman continued to offer his opinions on the menace of the Nonpartisan League and other suspected Bolshevist influences. Despite the fervor of Zimmerman's convictions, the stress of his constant anti-Bolshevism became too great for him to bear. On September 29, 1919, Zimmerman threw in the towel in Kansas, claiming that he had done more than anyone else over the past two years to combat Communists. He exclaimed that "I have been doing the most sincere, aggressive, self-sacrificing work of my lifetime; that I have been rendering a patriotic and unquestionably valuable service to my state and country." Unfortunately, Zimmerman revealed, he had neglected his family to such an extent, that they themselves appeared ready to revolt. The tired campaigner revealed that "I must now confess that the game isn't worth the candle." He bitterly exclaimed that the people of Kansas were "as indifferent to their fate and welfare as were the people of North Dakota." The NPL had enjoyed massive success in its native North Dakota, gaining control of the legislature

[75] "P.E. Zimmerman Believes in Running Them Out of the Colleges," *The Hutchinson News*, August 20, 1919, 6.

and governorship with Lynn Frazier. Under NPL stewardship North Dakota enacted state control of the railroads, grain coops and banking. Alarming many reactionaries like Zimmerman, the NPL in North Dakota proved the brand's popularity, and served as a base to spread its operations across the region. Zimmerman further cited the financial difficulties of the Anti-Bolshevik Campaign, emphasizing that he had personally funded most state-wide efforts. In the same period apparently, his ideological rival Townley had taken in a staggering $17,000 from Barton County alone from January to September 1919. Unable to raise even one tenth of that amount, Zimmerman was outraged and cynically proclaimed that his failure stemmed from "the fact that we have no scheme to offer for overthrowing the government."[76]

Nonetheless, Zimmerman congratulated himself on his successes, proudly stating that his group had put out of commission suspected Bolshevik operations in Hutchinson. He criticized the town regardless, asking rhetorically that "after cleaning up the nest; after doing for that town what they confessed they could NOT have done for themselves, did they contribute anything to our state campaign? Did they pay my railroad fare and hotel bill? They DID NOT! (Giving you this confidentially)." Zimmerman next warned that someday "Kansas will wake up, rub its eyes, and discover that the whole livery stable has been purloined. Then they'll consider buying a padlock." He went on to say that his work was strictly non-political, and exclaimed that unless the Republican Party takes a definitive stand on the Communist menace, the "horrible example" of North Dakota and Nebraska would apply to both Republicans and Democrats during upcoming 1920 election. Referencing the success of NPL candidates

[76] "Zimmerman to Reed," September 29, 1919, Box 2, Folder 8, Allen Papers.

in Kansas' northern neighbor states, the firebrand warned that the League "revolution" would spread soon to Kansas, with many residents facing socialist legislation "shoved down their throats," and a slew of higher taxes for the public, with increases of at least 500 percent for the banking sector.[77]

In the wake of his failures to garner sufficient support in Kansas, Zimmerman instead traveled to Iowa to become the new field secretary for a similar anti-Bolshevik cause. The *Council Grove Republican* reported in glowing terms of Zimmerman's efforts for the state. It stated that "in leaving Kansas Mr. Zimmerman… has done a great and patriotic work during the last three years, fighting the forces that have tended to disrupt the nation." Arguing that Kansas had benefited tremendously from his efforts, the paper warned its readers that it remained likely the NPL, IWW, and other radical organizations would redouble their efforts to enter the state when they got wind of Zimmerman's departure, "as he was a terror to them."

The *Republican* later went on with its fearmongering, proclaiming that investigations in New York City revealed that there existed fewer than 500,000 people who believed in the forcible seizure of all kinds of property from owners. "This does not include merely factories, business buildings and other property of capitalists, but homes, land, cattle and all other kinds of property of the most modest kind." The paper concluded that this was only one indication of the menace of Bolshevism facing the country, and that "surely there are some artificial forces at work to stimulate this unrest. Every new movement these days must be examined carefully."[78]

---

[77] Ibid., 1.
[78] "Americanism or Bolshevism," *Council Grove Republican*, February 5, 1920.

As Zimmerman made his way north, he commented on increased funding opportunities. He exclaimed that "in a single northern state a fund of $200,000 a year is raised" for anti-Bolshevik campaigning. He concluded "I have no regrets for having made the flight, though it cost me the savings of a lifetime. I believe in it as strongly as ever and am glad to have taken part in it."[79] Zimmerman returned to Kansas by the summer of 1920, presumably exhausting the goodwill of the people of Iowa and arriving just in time for the zenith of Palmer's Red Scare hysteria. He refocused his activities in his home-state yet again, and sought to foment trouble between the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Nonpartisan League.

Zimmerman claimed that the two were in league, and that "the reds had completely undermined the American Federation of Labor and that Samuel Gompers now held in charge only the shell of a once strong organization." He pointed to the large number of "outlaw strikes" as proof that the majority of Federation members had fallen under the spell of Bolshevik control, and that "three times in the past year plans have been laid to overthrow this government." Zimmerman argued that Soviet Russia had bankrolled these plans, funding their heinous designs with plundered treasure from the Russian middle-class.[80] Showing the clout that the anti-Bolshevik firebrand still maintained, Gompers responded in a public letter directly to Zimmerman, stating that there existed no connection between the two groups. "The AFL is made up of bona-fide wage earners working at their respective trades and callings."[81]

[79] "Zimmerman Gives up Kansas Work," *The Wichita Beacon*, December 22, 1919, 9.
[80] "Field Worker Talks of Bolshevist Peril," *Independence Daily Reporter*, May 11, 1920, 1.
[81] "Labor and N.P.L. Not United," *Great Bend Tribune*, July 10, 1920, 1.

The Kansas City *Independent* reported that the newly returned Zimmerman was doing a good job of arousing the people to the "red-peril." In a glowing editorial printed in May 1920, the paper reported that Zimmerman was a plain businessman who devoted his time to warning the nation of the insidious effects of Bolshevism. Finding himself in the employ of the Kansas State Employers Association, Zimmerman soon lined up speeches for the Commercial Club, Rotary Club, and the American Legion. At the zenith of the Red Scare hysteria, the firebrand held sway over much of the commercial community of Kansas, with business owners and town leaders falling prey to his heralds of doom. "The employers very wisely believe that the surest way to continue the country's business along sane, normal lines is to stop forever the tendency toward soviet rule in America, and thus save the nation from the curse which has befallen Russia."

The editorial opined that Zimmerman could hardly be called an eloquent orator, but that his great strength lay in the earnestness of his appeal. Furthermore, it argued that "outlaw" organizations that distributed Bolshevik literature should be banned. The editorial said that the government permitted them to circulate freely under free speech and free press laws, and implicitly argued that such laws should be curtailed. In a speech to one of the business organizations in Kansas, Zimmerman quoted from William Lloyd, a millionaire Socialist from Chicago, who urged fellow believers to equip themselves with rifles and be ready for "the big revolution." The anti-Bolshevik preacher rhetorically asked why such seditious talk could be allowed. He quoted from a ruling of Attorney General Palmer that stated the first amendment to the constitution allowed free speech, and that no crime was committed until someone took an overt act. Zimmerman decried this, saying the First Amendment virtually defanged the U.S.

government in protecting its citizens. He proclaimed that the only way to cope was to take the message of 100 percent Americanism to the people, which he had attempted, and that patriotic citizens should work towards change of the Constitution or to urge Congress to pass a law that made a clearer distinction between free speech and sedition. The firebrand went on to say that the government should make all efforts to stop the circulation of Communist and Socialist publications, and that with no law on the books regarding the issue, he foresaw doom for the country. He argued that "with no law to stop a man making a speech in Milwaukee urging men to arm themselves, to dynamite the banks, to seize federal customs houses, post offices and other buildings-in a word advocating a complete and bloody revolution," and with congress passing no laws to handle anarchists, the situation would require patriotic Americans to stand fast and remain loyal. In a much smaller section of the newspaper, right below the alarmist editorial, the paper printed a small blurb of no more than 30 words from Major General Leonard Wood, who in conference with Senator Henry Cabbot Lodge of Massachusetts declared that in his recent trip over half the country "he had found no evidence of dangerous unrest."[82] The short shrift on the professional military figure, compared to the lengthy discussion of an orator who lacked polish but appeared "earnest," showed the remarkable disparity between credence given to professionals who provided expert opinions and logical assessment versus passionate rabble-rousers who appealed to the lowest-common denominator.

By the end of May, Attorney General Palmer's proclamations of a May Day plot by radicals appeared unfounded. Many started to wonder whether fear of Bolshevism

[82] "Field Worker Talks of Bolshevist Peril," *Independence Daily Reporter*, May 11, 1920, 1.

remained logical given the lack of evidence pointing to any real threat. This did not deter Zimmerman however, and he continued well into the end of the year to gather support in his anti-radical crusade. In Junction City, Zimmerman addressed merchants, clergy, and other professionals as he explained to them the dangers of the IWW, NPL, and Communists. Zimmerman argued that the NPL was but a part of a widespread conspiracy to "Bolshevize" America, a scheme fostered by radical Russians, and stimulated by Germany during the war for its own purposes. He argued that the NPL, along with 50 other radical groups regularly received funds from abroad, and that Leon Trotsky himself had a representative in America to foster discontent. The fiery orator proclaimed that over half a million Americans were members of the IWW, 300,000 members of the NPL, and that as their numbers grew the organizations would seek to "Bolshevize" leaders of the world to unite them into one powerful party. Zimmerman baselessly proclaimed that a number of conventions with that goal in view had already been held in various parts of the country.[83] Despite the prevailing national sentiment that the Red Scare appeared to be fizzling out, the fact that Zimmerman and his anti-Bolshevist hysteria still made front-page news in Kansas showed that their still existed much fear in the region.

Zimmerman would go on to found the National Society of Longfellows, an advocate group for tall people, and could even be found officiating the occasional motorcycle race in his home state. He would die in 1965, leaving a legacy that testified to the dangers of fear-mongering during the Red Scare.[84]

---

[83] "Exposes Tricks of the IWW," *Junction City Daily Union*, October 1, 1920, 1.
[84] "Phil Zimmerman with a Pope Motorcycle," Kansas Memory, Kansas Historical Society, http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/226128 (Accessed January 2, 2017). Surprisingly, there is very little

**Trade Unions and anti-Bolshevism**

The First Red Scare proved to be a galvanizing moment for Kansas labor, with many organizations promoting radical language against Governor Allen. Kansas labor had good reason to fear, as during the 1919 legislative session, representatives debated harsh anti-labor bills aimed at curbing radicalism and sedition. At the start of the session, the labor lobby was barred from entering the floor of the state house to witness proceedings and to promote their own bills. These bills included the repeal of one statute which provided for the punishment of anyone who used slanderous language against financial institutions or banks. However, labor responded with its own misguided bill, aimed at punishing offenders for doing the same towards any labor union or farmer's association.[85]

The union friendly paper *Kansas Trades Unionist*, took a dim view of Red Scare hysteria, criticizing any individuals who promoted 100 percent Americanism or condemned socialist activities. The *Trade Unionist* took direct aim at Zimmerman, calling him a "special propagandist," for Governor Allen. It belittled the former salesman's efforts, saying that spectators flocked to his speeches only for the free food offered by organizers, with "many eating and hurriedly leaving before the 'treat' was introduced."[86]

Despite these denunciations, Zimmerman remained in heavy demand, with organizers generally introducing him as the "John the Baptist of the anti-Bolshevik movement in America." As a traveling salesman, many heralded him as a wanderer

written about Zimmerman or his activities during the First Red Scare. As of 2017, no articles exist on this topic.

[85] "State Lawmakers Ignore Labor," *Kansas Trades Unionist*, March 7, 1919, 1.

[86] "Townley Most Important Factor in Politics Today," *Kansas Trades Unionist*, August 4, 1919, 1.

whose experiences brought him into contact with all phases of life and human endeavor, and one who could speak "authoritatively of the great European situation, and its possible effect on America." Zimmerman rallied the crowd to action, recalling how he personally heard A.C. Townsley, founder of the National Popular Government League (NPGL), make the statement in North Dakota that "having captured the government of that state the next stop was to capture the government of Kansas." Throughout his time as chief sponsor of anti-Bolshevism, Zimmerman enjoyed the backing of both the Kansas Employer's Association and the Retail Merchants Associations, groups having a membership of over 100,000. In one speech, Zimmerman alarmingly told how Kansas was "the birthplace of Bolshevism that is now ravaging Russia," saying Leon Trotsky created it in his "fertile brain… while a resident of Kansas." He recounted that Trotsky once told Lenin, "do not fear, while there is Townley and LeSeuer, there is hope." The *Kansas Trades Unionist* concluded that Zimmerman made "a highly amusing after-dinner speaker" and hoped "his employers are getting their money's worth."[87]

The *Trades Unionist* also took aim at two of the state's most prominent newspapers, the *Daily Capital* and *State Journal*. In a scathing editorial, one *Unionist* writer proclaimed that the two publishers filled their columns and editorials with filth. Decrying the antagonistic atmosphere, the author argued that "every paper has assumed the attitude of 'up and at them.' They have been busy stirring trouble between the laboring classes and the farmer. Arousing the ire of the American Legion against the workers, so that they will go forth to rule the states by mob rule." In one damming

[87] "Townley Most Important Factor in Politics Today," *Kansas Trades Unionist*, August 4, 1919, 1. There is little evidence that Trotsky was ever in Kansas, and appears to be fabricated to bring attention to the Bolshevist threat.

statement, the author argued that "there is nothing published by either the Bolsheviks or the IWWs that is as fire-eating, blood-thirsty, and red as the news carried by the two dallies of Topeka." The author went on to say that there remained little sense in inflaming the passions of the people of the state, and called on all publications to print the truth, rather than offering stories through a fear-mongering "red" colored lens. He concluded that the misstatements and half-truths published by the press may complete the very thing they railed against. "Decorate every lamp post with a human body seems to be their aim. News they must have, and if it does not come as a consequence of daily happenings, their effort is to force it."[88]

By early 1920, as the Palmer Raids and mass deportations reached their zenith, union papers in Kansas reported that the U.S. government officially began its own reign of terror. President Wilson, as well as Governor Allen, had attempted to substitute Americanism with a toleration of tyranny. Attempting to divine the true nature of the mass violation of civil liberties, the paper argued that "The men who are instituting this reign of terror to frighten citizens so they will not old or express political opinions that will endanger the grip of Big Business on industry and government." While such groups commit their reign of terror in the name of preventing a violent revolution, they were actually preventing peaceful change of the system "which permits exploitation of 90 percent of the 110,000,000 of our population by less than 1 percent of the population."[89] Anticipating the popular slogans of a century later, Kansas union papers recoiled at the

[88] "Press of the Country Should be Cleaned of its Destructive, Mob and War Inciting News," *Kansas Trades Unionist*, November 28, 1919, 1.
[89] "Reign of Terror," *Kansas Trades Unionist*, January 16, 1920, 1.

political repression of the post-war era, and laid blame firmly in the seat of big business and the government that enabled it.

**The African-American Response**

While union members across Kansas became prime targets in the governor's campaign against labor radicalism, some African-Americans bore the brunt of a double stigma, being both black and in a union. Many had to defend themselves on all sides, and African-American leaders and news outlets attempted to protect themselves from the racist xenophobic onslaught of the First Red Scare. During this time, some black newspapers in Kansas chose to distance themselves from the fearmongering and threats of radicalism, choosing instead to print stories highlighting black patriotism during the war. Acutely aware of the threats they faced, one black newspaper highlighted a social gathering where the keynote speaker addressed black loyalty in the face of German opposition. Telling of one instance where German soldiers invited black troops to join their side, the speaker argued that their men were too loyal to commit such a treasonous act. Speaking of other regiments, the orator proudly proclaimed that the 49th, 50th, and 51st black artillery divisions had a sector that covered and held 100 towns. "They were in the Argonne forest and at Metz, which was the most strongly fortified city in the world. They loaded guns on their knees, with blood coming out of their nostrils… At the armistice, they had to stop them, as they were still fighting."[90]

Most black papers focused not only on patriotism but also on the evils of lynching. During the First Red Scare, race riots and lynchings rose dramatically, notably in Chicago during the "Red Summer," and in Elaine, Arkansas, where whites

[90] "Citizens Forum," *Kansas City Advocate*, January 31, 1919, 2.

killed nearly 200 blacks in the state's worst race riot. Black Kansas papers reacted passionately, declaring that in the Elaine massacre, lives were snuffed out because they protested against immorality of whites. One reporter questioned whether whites would be able to give blacks a fair trial after having put to death "some of the best men and boys, and not a single white has been arrested." The reporter reacted with calm however, proclaiming that he had "no mean words to say now… I am willing to reason with the white man if he is willing to reason with me, and I want to do it as a man and that only." He went on to say that "I am not bothered much about my color, for I have a fast color that will neither run nor rub."[91]

One Kansas paper reported hopefully on an anti-lynching conference held in New York City. The conference unanimously passed a resolution seeking to obtain federal legislation against lynching, stating that mob murder was not just a local or sectional issue, but a national one. The paper concluded that "in spite of the fact that Negro troops in the United States army demonstrated their heroism and patriotism in the fields of France, all has not been well." The paper spoke warily about the Ku Klux Klan, mentioning a petition signed by 3,000 citizens in Los Angeles asking President Wilson to take steps to suppress a revival of the group. It also decried attempts by wealthy whites to prevent black labor from organizing.[92]

Kansas presented a stark reality for many blacks, with lynching and death rates for blacks well above the national average. Remarking on the dire statistics, one paper

[91] "Lives Snuff Out at Elaine, Ark.," *Kansas City Advocate*, December 26, 1919, 1. For further work on the Elaine Race Riot and similar events during the First Red Scare, see Lee Williams, *Anatomy of Four Race Riots: Racial Conflict in Knoxville, Elaine, Tulsa, and Chicago, 1919-1921* (Oxford, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1972) and Cameron McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011).
[92] "American Negroes Unite Against Evil of Lynching," *Kansas City Advocate*, July 11, 1919, 2.

reported that the African-American death rate was more than double what it was for whites and higher than the national average, while death rates for whites in Kansas were lower than their national average. One medical study confirmed these figures, claiming sanitation and disease control efforts for blacks remained behind those for their white counterparts in Kansas.[93] Fear of lynching remained the brutal reality for many African-Americans in the state. In one report, a white mob seized a black man who had been supposedly identified as an attacker of a white girl named Sylvia Brown. The man, only identified as "the negro," had reportedly tied the 15 year-old girl to a tree and slashed her throat with a razor. The black man, accompanied by a white, had met near one of Mulberry's coal mines, and had come upon the girl as they walked. A local paper reported that the Brown girl "was not dangerously injured," and that her appearance at the jail caused a white mob to overpower the local sheriff and two other officers. The mob, numbering around 1,500 people, took the suspected attacker out through a window of the jail and proceeded to hang him from a tree outside. Authorities took no further action, and the events of the day simply garnered a slight headline in the local paper that "little excitement follows lynching."[94] Despite a complete lack of evidence, or interest by authorities, this case represented much of the prevailing sentiment that pervaded the era. This fearful sentiment heightened during the First Red Scare however, with increased suspicion, xenophobia, and vigilante justice occurring regularly.

The situation for many blacks was placed into keen focus with the case of Harvard-educated D.H. Davis, an African-American Ph.D. fleeing from Texas to

[93] "Colored Death Rate in Kansas more than Double that of Whites," *Kansas City Advocate*, February 6, 1920.
[94] "Little Excitement Follows Lynching," *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, April 20, 1920, 1; "Mob Lynches Negro Assailant of 14 Year Old White Girl," *The Sun*, April 20, 1920, 1.

Kansas. Implicated in violence relating to the Longview riot of July, 1919, Davis fled Texas with a bounty of $7,500 on his head. He surrendered himself to Governor Allen, claiming he fired into a white mob, killing four men in defense of his home and family. Davis told the governor how he escaped with his family in a car and spent hours hiding in a river while angry whites swarmed the countryside with bloodhounds. A large delegation of blacks from Topeka, headed by President of the Kansas Defense Society Nick Chiles, accompanied Davis to the governor's office. Allen stated that he had no right to accept Davis' surrender, and directed him to local sheriff Hugh Larimer. A local black newspaper recounted that "few more dramatic scenes have been enacted in the state house than that which surrounded the twenty minute conference in Governor Allen's office." The paper retold Davis' story, how six strong white men came to his home while his niece was there, charging her with insolence towards her employer. Davis recounted "she had already been beaten once. I drew a revolver to protect her." The mob then sought to destroy his property and cut the tires on his car to prevent his escape. "They were coming with torches and oil and a rope," Davis said, when he finally opened fire killing four of them. The mob drew back, giving him time to escape. He and his family waded in the river back and forth for hours to throw off the scent of the bloodhounds, saying that sometimes the dogs were within fifty feet of him.[95]

Davis explained his reasoning for coming to Kansas, saying that "I knew of just two states that were truly dear… Massachusetts, where I was educated, and Kansas. On his way through Oklahoma, authorities arrested Davis but he was able to post the $1,500 bond and reached Kansas. Demands for extradition came quickly from Texas,

[95] Ibid., 1.

while Davis appealed to the governor for protection, saying "removal to Texas meant just one thing: mob violence."[96] Under Governor Allen, he believed he could receive a fair hearing. One paper contributed to the positive feelings Allen engendered from the black community. It proclaimed that the governor was the best chief executive Kansas ever had: "He is an honest, Christian gentleman and the colored people, we hope, will have nothing to regret with him at the head of the affairs of state."[97]

In response to racial violence and tension, highlighted by the recent Davis case, the Western Negro Press Association (WNPA), made up of members from newspapers in Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Illinois, convened a meeting in Kansas City. The group passed a resolution, stating that violence and oppression directed against blacks was thoroughly unwarranted, and was a consequence of Southern propaganda. The group further held that these efforts undermined the good reputation earned by black soldiers during the war as well as the record at home in War Work campaigns and subscriptions to liberty bonds. The WNPA further resolved to go on record as being "rigidly opposed to such practices." They further decried the operations of the "metropolitan press, which continually publishes under bold headlines, every act derogatory to the Negro and to obscure those deeds which are creditable." Reacting against the prevailing xenophobic hysteria, the organization demanded that the government of the United States assert itself and "defend the people who have never turned traitor, but who have in every instance rallied to the flag."[98]

---

[96] Ibid., 1.
[97] "The New Governor," *Topeka Plaindealer*, January 17, 1919, 1.
[98] "Western Negro Press Association Met in Kansas City, MO., Last Week," *Kansas City Advocate*, August 1, 1919, 1.

Black papers generally took a favorable view of Governor Allen, proclaiming that under his administration, "color has no bar to a square deal." Similar to the Davis case, in April 1920, Robert Hill made headlines as he sought protection from the Kansas governor. Hill, alleged leader of the Progressive Farmers and Household Union of America, belonged to the group that authorities charged with "planning a massacre" of whites during the Arkansas race riot. This prompted the Arkansas Attorney General to travel to Topeka to demand his extradition. The *Topeka Plaindealer* strongly criticized the attorney general's move, stating that he had "come to Kansas to take Mr. Hill back to Arkansas to be lynched or burned by the barbarous people of that country." Contrasting Arkansas "barbarism" with Kansas education and civilization,, the paper concluded that "the colored people of Kansas are respected and treated as humans rather than as cattle." The glowing review of the state continued, proclaiming that the vote of black Kansans counted for something. "As long as you continue to intimidate, beat down, lynch, and burn the colored people your state shall always be semi-barbaric, and no civilized community will have the high respect for that state as they do the people of Kansas and other Northern states."[99] The comparison to northern states highlighted the positive view Kansas blacks held of their state and of Governor Allen's policies.

During the Red Scare, while some Kansas newspapers attempted to paint blacks as radical agitators, the governor showed uncharacteristic level-headedness regarding the issue of race. The Arkansas Attorney General John D. Arbuckle later charged that "the influence of the Negro political leaders, together with that of some of the most prominent white politicians was more pressure, apparently, than Governor Allen could

[99] "As Attorney General Arbuckle Views his Failure in Hill Case," *Topeka Plaindealer*, April 4, 1920, 1.

stand." Arbuckle concluded that the governor's backbone had given way, and that he would have responded favorably if not for the political pressure. Stating that "we have a splendid system of government," the attorney general concluded that blacks played too big a role in Kansas political life, and that "it is a good thing that the Negroes of Arkansas have not been so degraded in their political ambitions and aspirations."[100] The NAACP sent a public letter to Governor Allen, expressing its deep appreciation for his decision in denying extradition.[101]

That same month, April, 1920, the *Topeka Plaindealer* reported in bold headlines that "lynching had reached Kansas," when whites hung an unknown black man in Mulberry. The paper stated that the act represented "a shame and a disgrace to the state and the good government that has placed Kansas in the front rank of states that stand up for law, order and decency and a square deal for all mankind." The paper spoke hopefully, trusting that Governor Allen would bring to justice those responsible.[102] It had reason to be optimistic, as Allen had in the previous year helped call a national anti-lynching conference. The result of this conference drafted language that provided for removal of law enforcement officers perceived as being racially biased, as well as allowing counties to sue participants of lynchings for indemnities. It further called for reports of every lynching to be presented in the state legislature at each legislative session.[103] Governor Allen continually received letters from the NAACP throughout his tenure requesting investigations be done in relation to mob violence and racially motivated attacks. With his reputation as a champion of fair race

[100] Ibids., 1.
[101] "Thanks to Governor Allen," *Topeka Plaindealer*, April 2, 1920, 1.
[102] "Lynching has Reached Kans.," *Topeka Plaindealer*, April 16, 1920, 1.
[103] "Legislation Proposed at National Conference on Lynching," Box 2, Folder 9, Allen Papers.

relations firmly cemented, Governor Allen attempted to forestall the legal storm that followed Mr. Hill.

By April 30, Arkansas successfully lobbied federal charges against Hill, charging him with impersonating a federal officer, and successfully extradited him despite the efforts by Governor Allen. Famed black attorney Elisha Scott, who the *Topeka Plaindealer* called the "David of the colored race, and one of the most fearless lawyers practicing before the Kansas bar," now entered the picture. Scott, along with help from the NAACP lobbying efforts in Washington, DC, helped Hill mount a successful defense, and on October 11, 1920, authorities dropped federal charges against the defendant. Both the Davis and Hill cases illustrated how some whites used the prevailing sentiment of fear to inflame racial hatred and oppress the black population. Charges of radicalism pervaded many racial incidents, and despite the prevalence of racist administrations across the country, Governor Allen remained a bright spot in an otherwise bleak story of Red Scare era fear and racial oppression.[104]

Despite these successes, African-Americans across Kansas still remained targets from groups of whites. In reaction, many blacks formed associations not only to protect themselves from white violence but also to demonstrate their loyalty. One paper reported that a group of black veterans would organize their own separate unit of the American Legion to demonstrate their patriotism.[105] These efforts failed to convince reactionary elements in the Kansas populace, leading many in the black community to speak out. Responding to the dramatic violence and Red Scare fears gripping the nation, one black speaker proclaimed that while the war was over and "hell has been filled so

[104] "Elisha Scott to Arkansas," *Topeka Plaindealer*, April 30, 1920, 1.
[105] *Kansas City Advocate*, October 3, 1919, 1.

full from it that it is almost running over," now Americans were turning on each other. He stated that if whites were not able to maintain the rule of law, they should turn it over to blacks, who would "give them a few lessons in law maintenance."[106]

While the majority of black newspapers in Kansas refused to participate in the fear-mongering that so many white-owned newspapers readily engaged in, a few gave in to the hysteria. The *Topeka Plaindealer* reported that Bolshevik, Ku Klux Klan, and German agents in Pittsburg were attempting to illegally sell land of black residents to whites without their knowledge of the African-American community. Circulars distributed by this alleged German Communist Klan conspiracy were distributed to both black and white homes in the city, declaring that "every lot is restricted to white people for all the time." The paper melodramatically stated that this was "one of the greatest outrages inflicted upon the race in the eyes of humanity or the civil law of the state of Kansas." It recommended that the local black defense society should take the matter up with the mayor and demand that such literature be prohibited.[107] By linking racist activities with the Bolshevik menace, the *Topeka Plaindealer* showed its susceptibility to the mainstream fearmongering attitudes of the Red Scare.

Some newspapers took a more hopeful tone, emphasizing that the recent labor issues provided blacks the opportunity to unionize and compete for fair wages. Responding to a pro-black editorial printed in the white *Topeka Capital*, the black *Topeka Plaindealer* stated that usually editorials on the subject were half-hearted and rife with race-prejudice. Labor, the *Plaindealer* concluded, had "thrown wide open her doors to America's most loyal citizens." Commenting on the *Capital*, the *Plaindealer*

[106] "The Negro has Decided He is Tired," *Kansas City Advocate*, October 24, 1919, 1.
[107] "Pittsburg, Kansas," *Topeka Plaindealer*, May 23, 1919, 2.

said that the former had avoided its usual process of "that ducking, dodging manner heretofore employed… when attempting to say something commendable of the black race." The editorial in question praised the opening of membership to blacks by the AFL on equal terms with whites. Previously blacks had been "practically forced" to act as "scabs," as unions routinely locked them out. The *Capital* editorial concluded that "if the unions of the country admit Negro workers to membership it will do more than anything that has ever been done to open doors of opportunity to the Negro race." Membership would also have a tremendous effect on lynching, the *Capital* argued, since whites would be bound to see justice done on their fellow black members." The *Plaindealer* reiterated these points, and proclaimed that "black men do not swell the ranks of the IWW, the Bolshevists or the anarchists, although if there are any people in this country who would be justified in joining such organizations it would be the negro race." The paper concluded that there was a manifest inconsistency in proclaiming to spread democracy and freedom across the world when that same freedom was denied to ten million citizens of the United States.[108]

Other black newspapers, such as the *Kansas City Advocate*, proclaimed that African-Americans should feel proud to belong "to this race of ours, because it is a great race, and we are making it to the goal."[109] Published in the middle of the coal strike in November, 1919, the editorial reacted to the rising tide of racial hatred prevalent during the coal ordeal. Some papers reacted to events by distancing themselves from any hint of radical support. The *Hutchinson Blade* proclaimed that their policies promoted a "clean cut newspaper, free from 'ISM,' [such as BolshevISM,

[108] "Organized Labor will Admit Blacks," *Topeka Plaindealer*, June 20, 1919, 1.
[109] "The Race has Made Good for over 300 Years," *Kansas City Advocate*, November 7, 1919, 1.

SocialISM] which some would make believe is true." They stated their policies were completely their own, completely free of influence from any party or parties.[110]

In Galena, the race issue became front-page news as members of the local commercial club sent a pro-segregation letter to the Kansas legislature in 1919. These white members addressed a law that would expand school segregation from so-called first class cities, (populations of 15,000 or more), to second class cities (populations of 2,000 or more). The commercial club felt that failure to expand segregation would cause people to "not move here and buy or build homes because they do not wish to send their children to school with negroes." Arguing that blacks were better off in their own separate schools, they asked the legislature to pass a resolution urging support of the compulsory segregation bill. The letter also highlighted support by certain black and mulatto representatives for this measure.[111]

Black newspapers reacted with a call to arms, stating that "it is now the duty of every colored person in Kansas to respond with money to assist in fighting down this law and strengthening the civil rights of law of Kansans." The Kansas Defense Society then began soliciting funds to block segregation laws, and promised to have a committee formed to watch for any Jim Crow legislation that might arise. It stated that such measures were "predicated upon the wishes and whims of a small majority of whites who do not believe that a colored man is a human being." The group also brought charges against the war department for its treatment of returning black veterans. One case involved an individual known as Captain Latson, who was confined to quarters because he was sent to take the place of a white officer at Western University,

[110] "The Blade Policies," *The Hutchinson Blade*, March 13, 1920, 1.
[111] "Kansas Must Respond to Defeat 'Jim Crow' Laws," *Topeka Plaindealer*, January 3, 1919, 1.

Quindaro, Kansas. The government later exonerated Latson, though failed to press any charges against the white officers who had detained him. One black newspaper stated "it is the duty of every colored American to get busy and show every white man they meet that they are as much of an American as the Indian, Mexican, or any other foreigner, and demand they be recognized as such."[112]

The Kansas Defense Society continued to battle the segregation bill, meeting with the House Committee on education. A black newspaper reported that the chairman of the committee met the black delegates in a friendly manner. Defense society members put forth the Reverend S.J. Watson, pastor at the Shiloh Baptist Church, to argue their position. He stated that, having been born and raised in the South, he knew what the bill would mean for the state's black population. "Shall we pass such a law as will say to its colored citizens 'you are not worthy of education?' To pass such a bill puts the stamp of inferiority on the race and opens the way by law for mistreatment." He continued, bringing up the issue of patriotism, asking "shall this state say to our boys before the smoke of battle has cleared away that you fought well, but we are shutting a door of hope in your face?" Contrasting the charges of radicalism against numerous whites, the pastor exclaimed "what a record. Fifty-four years of freedom and not a single assassin or anarchist born in the race."[113] The NAACP fielded Topeka teacher Nathaniel Sawyer to battle the issue. Anticipating the arguments made in Brown v. Board of Education thirty years later, Sawyer argued that "separation and segregation tends to lower the segregated class both in its own estimation and that of its fellows."

[112] Ibid., 1.
[113] "Kansas Defense Society in a Plea for Equal Opportunities," *Topeka Plaindealer*, January 31, 1919, 1.

While the racially motivated bill failed to pass, segregation would nonetheless continue to be a major issue for the state in the coming decades.[114]

Generally, Kansas remained a bright spot in an otherwise intolerant region. Attorney General Palmer, predicting a massive May Day attack across the country, warned many Americans of the imminent radical danger. The attack failed to materialize, leaving Palmer's credibility and the Red Scare mentality in disrepute. In the embarrassing aftermath of Palmer's overreach, in late May, 1920, the editor of the *Topeka Plaindealer* summarized the positive attitudes of many blacks during his tour of the state. Making stops in several towns including Wichita and Emporia, he reported how black entrepreneurs continued to open and run successful businesses, and had even become leading businessmen and highly respected citizens, and highlighted one white mercantile company that employed several blacks.[115]

Despite these positive pronouncements, nationwide the NAACP reeled against pervasive denunciations from various groups, calling into question black patriotism and adherence to democratic and capitalistic values. The threats occurring during the Red Scare prompted the NAACP to field a drive to add 100,000 members to its ranks. The following month after the bombing campaign by radicals in May 1919, the organization released its nine point program to make "America Safe for Americans." It advocated, among other ideals, equality in voting rights and education, stronger protection against lynching, and importantly, the abolition of "color-hyphenation and the substitution of

---

[114] "The Segregation of Topeka's Public Scholl System, 1879-1951," http://www.nps.gov/brvb/learn/historyculture/topekasegregation.htm (accessed March 28, 2015). For further literature on these events, see Ben Keppel *Brown V. Board and the Transformation of American Culture: Education and the South in the Age of Desegregation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016).

[115] "Race Progress Through Kansas," *Topeka Plaindealer*, May 21, 1920, 1.

'straight Americanism."[116] This last point underscored the drive the NAACP made in proving the patriotism of all its members. Despite the anti-foreign hysteria and persecution of suspected radicals, the NAACP engaged in its own protection programs while promoting its own members as 100 percent American.

During the First Red Scare, many black organizations such as the Kansas Defense Society and the NAACP saw little in common with white agitators, and attempted to distance themselves from them. They instead emphasized protection for themselves, and promoted anti-lynching and anti-segregation legislation. They countered in many instances, pronouncing their own patriotism through honorable military service, establishment of American Legion posts, and other patriotic activities. These African American advocacy organizations and publications emphasized that most blacks had nothing to do with Bolshevism or radicalism. A few black newspapers, such as the *Plaindealer*, even engaged in Red Scare hysteria. Generally however, most black publications avoided this ethical pitfall, and instead opted for editorials proclaiming support for America and decrying the wrongs done to blacks by an intolerant white majority. Governor Allen proved a sympathetic figure towards African-Americans in Kansas, defending equal rights before the law, while spearheading his own attacks against radical leftists. Regardless, the African-American experience in Kansas during the Red Scare remained one of hope, foreshadowing the reform of Brown v. Board of Education thirty years later, positioning Kansas as a symbol of progressive racial reform.

**Conclusion**

[116] "To Make Americans Safe," *Wichita Protest*, June 5, 1919, 1.

Through the actions of Governor Henry Allen, and Kansas citizens, hysteria increased against suspected radicals. The state's fears gave rise to such individuals as Phil Zimmerman, who relentlessly played on the apprehensions of the public. The state also suffered during the nationwide coal strike, as Allen forcefully brought coal production under control and dismissed many of the miners' demands as Communist-inspired. Similarly, Kansas harshly treated foreign workers, radical labor unions, and leftist organizations including the Wobblies and the NPL. Allen abrogated the civil liberties of labor organizers when he finally helped create the Industrial Court of Relations. This oppressive violation of labor's negotiating rights became the ultimate symbol of Kansas' excesses during the Red Scare, and thrust the state into the national limelight, becoming a beacon that other states attempted to follow. The Supreme Court eventually abolished the Court in 1925, though its effects in shaping the narrative of the First Red Scare for the rest of the nation remain powerful. Despite these negative measures, the many in Kansas also showed moments of level-headedness, as Zimmerman's star fell long before the peak of Red Scare fear. Forced to relocate to Iowa in late 1919 prior to the concerted, and constitutionally questionable drive for deportations of foreigners nationwide, Zimmerman's failure showed that there were limits to Kansans' gullibility, and that the state's residents saw through the illogical fallacies of his zealotry. Governor Allen's failure to support the Anti-Bolshevik Campaign's financially also showed good judgement, despite his later anti-radical actions.

These conflicting actions beg the question of whether Kansas can be seen in a positive or negative light during the First Red Scare. Kansas showed remarkable

tolerance and clarity in dealing with racial issues, despite protests from certain white groups. But the state's actions against suspected radicals and treatment of its labor groups thrust the state into the national spotlight, placing it within the national mainstream, and even going beyond what many other states did with its creation of the Industrial Court. The final word on Kansas' actions however must be guardedly positive. While the state's leaders and citizens did give in to Red Scare fears and repression, they followed the national trend. Kansas showed its progressive side in supporting racial equality, serving as a rare example of tolerance in a time of racial upheaval. To this day, Kansas' record on race during the First Red Scare, no matter how else it followed national trends in other areas, serves as a positive example in an era defined by racial intolerance and repression. Through the actions of Governor Henry Allen, Kansas charted its own course through the First Red Scare, standing as an example of both anti-radical excess as well as level-headedness in the arena of race relations. It ultimately provided a safe haven for some members of the oppressed, something few other states could do during the turbulent Red Scare years of 1919-1920.

## Chapter 3. Oklahoma: Overreaction on the Southern Plains

### Socialism, War, and Politics in Oklahoma, 1914-1919

Oklahoma had a major part to play in the unfolding saga of the First Red Scare. Under the leadership of its governor, James Brooks Ayers Robertson, the state government magnified anti-Communist fears and drew national attention to its botched handling of a supposed Bolshevik uprising in one of its small towns. It also participated in the nationwide coal miners' strike of 1919, which served as another example of the governor's abuse of power in calling out the National Guard and depriving citizens of rights. While Oklahoma shared much with the rest of the nation as far as First Red Scare fears, it remains one of the only states to have had national media attention thrust on it for fear of a Communist takeover of an entire town. The entire state appeared caught up in anti-Bolshevist hysteria. This dramatic event appeared shockingly unlikely just a few years earlier, as the state had a Progressive reputation as a bastion of Socialist thought and activity.

In the pre-war era, Oklahoma experienced an unprecedented rise in the popularity of agrarian reform and grassroots socialism. The Socialist Party, not the Republican Party, remained the second most popular political organization in the state after the Democrats, and elected many individuals to public office. The election of 1914 would remain the zenith of the Socialist Party's power in the state. The fear and xenophobia induced by World War I and the First Red Scare provided ultra-patriotic and anti-communist forces with an opportunity to deal a fatal blow to the movement, crippling its organization in the state and across the nation. Later, as agricultural prices

rebounded, the Socialist Party lost the source of its popularity. Nevertheless, the 1914 victory, as one historian put it, proved "the last great effort of an agrarian movement of general strength, as the inheritors of the Populist tradition rallied for a last concerted assault on privilege before the World War intervened."[1] This achievement set itself at odds with the populace in the post-war era, but for now, Socialists looked forward to their promised bright future. Within the state, they effectively fostered campaigns of education and recruitment, establishing summer Socialist encampments that allowed rural farming families to assemble and hear lessons on economic theory. Prominent speakers from across the country came, including Eugene Debs, Walter Thomas Mills, Kate Richards O'Hare, and Caroline Lowe.[2] In 1914, one group of Socialists even organized an entire 278-acre community in western LeFlore, with offers of $50 lots at $5 a month offered to party adherents.[3] Several papers served as proponents of the party advocating their platform, such as the *Oklahoma Pioneer* and *Appeal to Reason*, with many local outlets setting up their own dailies to increase party popularity**.** With the rise in attention, political leaders realized that the Socialist Party posed a serious threat to their success.

With the arrival of the First World War however, the tide against socialism in the state and nationwide would irrevocably change, signaling a continual spiral into the realm of fear and persecution involving resources, radicals, labor, and business. These

[1] James B. Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma, 1907-1949," Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1949, 174.
[2] James B. Scales and Danny Goble, *Oklahoma Politics: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), 71; Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma," 174.
[3] Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma,"175.

actions would lead directly into the First Red Scare, providing a basis for the overreaction and fear that characterized the event. In 1917, the United States declared war on the Central Powers, thus entering the great conflict among European nations. The Oklahoma government, eager to prove itself as a loyal state, initiated a strident campaign of liberty bond sales and military recruitment. With the upheaval in the international system, Oklahomans increasingly saw anti-war and anti-government sentiments, often linked with socialism, as tantamount to treason. This required oversight and punishment and to that end, the Williams administration created an Oklahoma State Council of Defense headed by J.M. Aydelotte.[4] The government placed local community leaders in charge of the individual county branches, who promoted educating the civilian population on their duties during wartime. The council also evolved to include persecution of seditious activities, vigilantism, and terror. The targets of these acts invariably included the Socialist Party in Oklahoma, as it took a prominent anti-war stance.[5]

An unprecedented wave of fear swept across the state and nation against any seen as aiding the enemy or standing against the country's war effort. The government tolerated the hysteria and even encouraged elements of it, as it aided in the suppression of radical elements in society. This attitude formed an early basis of the Red Scare mentality after the war's conclusion. Certain citizens often wrote letters to the governor, suggesting that the war provided an "irresistible opportunity" to discredit and destroy

[4] Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma," 191.
[5] Scales and Goble, *Oklahoma Politics*, 87-8.

the Socialist movement.[6] Further displaying the growing sentiment that opposition to the war equaled treason, Oklahoma congressman Dick T. Morgan proclaimed that all patriotic Americans needed to purchase liberty bonds, claiming that "We will be derelict in our duty as citizens of this Republic if we do not respond to the appeal of the President."[7] Such calls for Americanism and persecution of supposed disloyalty played a major role in destroying the Socialist Party nationwide.

To its detriment amidst the patriotic fervor, the organization attempted to take a platform of non-interference and pacifism in the war. According to one Socialist pamphlet, "If we send an armed force to the battlefields of Europe, its cannon will mow down the masses of the German people and not the Imperial German government. Our entrance into the European conflict at this time will serve only to multiply the horrors of the war…."[8] The piece went on to argue that the American working class had no quarrel with the German working class, and that they branded the declaration of war by our government as a crime against the people of the United States and against the nations of the world."[9] It did not take long for opponents to portray Socialists as unpatriotic. The *Oklahoman* painted the organization negatively with incriminating headlines such as "Socialist Fought Liberty Bond Sales," with a story of how Socialist leaders were indicted for printing an advertisement in their paper urging readers not to buy liberty

[6] Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma," 192.
[7] Dick T. Morgan, "For Morning Papers," October 24, 1918, Dick T. Morgan Collection, Box 4, Folder 2, Congressional Archives, Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma, 3.
[8] Leslie Marcy, "Resolutions on War and Militarism," *The International Socialist Review* 17 (1916): 671.
[9] Marcy, "Resolutions on War and Militarism," 671.

bonds.[10] A major blow against the Socialists occurred later as the public linked them with a local draft riot that threatened to spread to Washington, DC.

In August 1917, with threats of Communism looming on the horizon, Oklahoma experienced a crushing blow to the Socialist movement and the growing fear against radicalism. That month, local draft-rioters attempted to organize a march on Washington, DC. These individuals revolted against a war they believed was not their fight. Previously, in June of that year, state officials expected 215,000 Oklahomans to register for the draft, in accordance with the Conscription Act. Less than half that number did so with 72 percent of those registered claiming exemption to avoid military service. The locations with the heaviest cotton farming, and the lowest levels of development, principally in the south and the east, experienced the highest levels of disturbances during this time. In Okmulgee County, members of the Working Class Union (WCU) dynamited a local town's water works, while in Seminole County, a letter written by a local told of an imminent uprising of farmers that would destroy the town, and, being fully armed and numbering in the hundreds, would resist until death.[11]

On August 3, an estimated 1,000 armed members of the WCU convened in southeastern counties along the Canadian River in a planned march on Washington to force an end to the draft. Along the way, they would gather followers and sabotage transportation and communication lines to inhibit authorities' implementation of recruitment. They planned on living off the land, feasting on ripening corn in the fields,

[10] "Socialist Fought Liberty Bond Sales," *The Daily Oklahoman*, December 31, 1918, 1.
[11] Jim Bissett, *Agrarian Socialism in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1904-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 149-50.

thus giving rise to the rebellion's name, the Green Corn Rebellion. Within three days, local authorities and posse members rounded up suspects and virtually destroyed the rebellion before it began.[12] Evidence of the dangers of the coup quickly surfaced, as investigators found hidden caches of dynamite, strychnine, and weapons. Officials arrested 450 alleged members of the conspiracy, causing *Harlow's Weekly* to respond that this sampling represented only a small fraction of the true numbers of trouble-makers. The major result of the rebellion was that government authorities and the public would associate all Socialists with this act, and suppression soon became systematic. By the end of the war, authorities jailed many of the major Socialist leaders in the state, including Fred Holt. The party's dues-paying membership went down to 65 percent, essentially resulting in its destruction from the war-related persecution.[13] That very same persecution continued after the war. With no main enemy to focus its attention on, the fear-induced suppression instead would turn its head towards labor disturbances centered on resource production, magnifying countless cases into Bolshevik-inspired coups. By war's end, however, the state turned towards electing a new governor. This new administration would play the largest part in magnifying the Red Scare hysteria, overreacting and hyping a number of labor disputes across the state, eventually calling

[12] Bissett, *Agrarian Socialism*, 151; Scales and Goble, *Oklahoma Politics*, 88.
[13] Bissett, *Agrarian Socialism*, 151; *Harlow's Weekly*, August 8, 1917; Scales and Goble, *Oklahoma Politics*, 88-9; John Womack Jr., "Oklahoma's Green Corn Rebellion: The Importance of Fools," Senior Thesis, Harvard University, 1961; Meredith Howard, "The Principles and Programs of Oklahoma Socialism, 1900-1918," Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1969; Kurt Lively, "Where the Great Plains and South Collide: A History of Farm Tenancy in Oklahoma, 1890-1950," Ph.D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 2002; William Cunningham, *The Green Corn Rebellion* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010).

out the National Guard more times than any government in Oklahoma history until that time.

As the war reached its bloody conclusion in 1918 the state went to the polls to elect a new governor, Democrat JBA Robertson. Supported by oilmen in the east, Robertson easily won the contest, defeating his rival Horace G. McKeever 104,132 to 82,865.[14] Thanks to the crushing effect of war paranoia and government actions against the Party, Socialist candidate Pat Nagle received a paltry 7,438 votes. Robertson, the first governor elected from the former Oklahoma Territory, was born on an Iowa farm in 1871. He arrived in Oklahoma in 1893, and settled in Chandler teaching school, working as a section hand, raising cotton on a tenant farm, and studying law.[15] He eventually found employment on the district bench, which propelled him to membership in the State Capitol Commission and he later became Supreme Court Commissioner under Cruce for three years. He had an unsuccessful run for congress, but remained active in countless extra-political organizations including the Knights of Pythias, Elks, Modern Woodmen of the World, the Freemasons, and was a regular member of the Episcopal Church. Upon assuming office and in his first message to the legislature in 1919, he pointedly stated that "Oklahoma is no longer the baby state; we have passed the day of swaddling clothes, and have donned the habiliments of full grown manhood." And like any man seeking to prove his worth to his elder, Robertson sought to put Oklahoma firmly in the camp of loyalty, and to rid the state of its image as Socialist leaning state with proclivities for anarchism that threatened the region's resources. To

[14] Scales and Goble, *Oklahoma Politics*, 91.
[15] Scales and Goble, *Oklahoma Politics*, 92; Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma," 201.

that end, the governor used the National Guard more than all his predecessors combined, and before his first year as governor ended, had spent more than $100,000 in excess of appropriations for the Adjutant General's office.[16]

Robertson originally came to the governorship on a platform of state-sponsored marketing cooperators for farmers, lower property taxes for businesses, support for school consolidation for educators, and support for anti-radicalism.[17] Laws passed under the governor soon turned towards the suppression of dissent within the state, following a nationwide trend that fanned the flames of Red Scare hysteria. In 1919, the Seventh Legislature convened and proposed House Bill No. 80, which provided for teaching only in English in public, parochial, denominational, and private schools through the seventh grade. The bill passed 94-3 in the House and was completely unopposed in the Senate, 23-0.[18] Two other bills surfaced and passed the legislative session in January 1919. One law prohibited criminal syndicalism while the other forbade the display of red flags at political events. The author of the former measure, Luther Harrison, lived in Wewoka near the site of the Green Corn Rebellion. The legislature defined criminal syndicalism as a doctrine that advocated crime, physical violence, arson, destruction of property, sabotage, or other unlawful acts or methods, as a means of accomplishing or effecting industrial or political ends, or as a means of effecting industrial or political revolution, or for profit. Violators of the act could expect a maximum penalty of ten years in jail and a $5,000 fine. The bill also provided for the punishment of any owner

[16] Ibid, 202-06.
[17] Scales and Goble, *Oklahoma Politics*, 94.
[18] James Robinson, *Anti-Sedition Legislation and Loyalty Investigations in Oklahoma* (Norman: Bureau of Government Research at University of Oklahoma, 1956), 6;

or agent who knowingly rented a place to criminal syndicalism advocates. The law passed unanimously in the Senate, 35-0, and in the House, 82-4. Oklahoma joined thirteen commonwealths and two territories in passing criminal syndicalism legislation, while thirteen other states enacted anti-sedition and anarchy laws, and twenty-nine adopted a similar red flag law. In Oklahoma, the maximum penalty for display of a red flag carried a $1,000 fine and ten years in jail. No test of the red flag law ever occurred in courts, while there have been only six prosecutions based on the criminal syndicalism law, with two in 1923 and four in 1940-41.[19]

The bills enacted in Oklahoma reflected the spirit of the nation, with rampant fear and a people eager to demonstrate their tough stance towards radicals. In other states, the hysteria ran just as deep. In Texas, ultra-patriotic elements utilized repressive tactics in preventing pro-union candidates from achieving electoral success. Texas governor Jim Ferguson was impeached by such methods, accused of harboring pro-German sympathies, and soundly defeated by his opponent in the 1918 election.[20]

Near the end of World War I, Russia became engulfed in the throes of revolution. Communists continually gained ground against their enemies, and heralded the start of a worldwide Bolshevik revolution. The fear and patriotism drummed up during the war years were refocused by Oklahoma Governor Robertson against the new enemy, purported communist, socialist and anarchist agitators. On March 12, 1919, a letter sent to Robertson stated confidence in his ability in making America and its

[19] Robinson, *Anti-Sedition Legislation*, 9-11; ; Eddie Horn, "The Acculturation of Low German Mennonites in Oklahoma: Continuity and Change," MA Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2011.
[20] James Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 381.

children safe from "Bolsheviki foreigners, I.W.W. or alien slackers." The author claimed that America "should help purge our Nation of the un-desirables – the anarchistic foreign element and the alien slackers who have been and are now holding fat jobs as the expense of our men… We have the right to order our internal affairs as we see fit. Let's prove it." A movement by a congressman in Washington encouraged the naturalization of all aliens residing in the nation, and wrote specifically to Robertson, beseeching him to encourage all churches, temples and synagogues to promote the movement.[21] Public sentiment appeared on the side of the governor, allowing him to pursue harsher policies in response to domestic events. There were few outbursts against such legislation, coming primarily from left-leaning organizations and labor unions.

On March 17, 1919, John Wilkinson, president of the local United Mine Workers (UMW) affiliate headquartered in Muskogee, took umbrage at the rash of anti-Bolshevik legislation. In a letter to the governor, he stated that he failed to see the necessity for such measures with regard to unions, as practically all vital industries of the state were organized and on record as being absolutely opposed to Bolshevism. He later said that "as far as our particular movement is concerned all that I can say is 'please leave the Bolshevists in our hands.'"[22]

After the summer bombing campaigns by radical anarchists, Oklahomans shared with the rest of the country the nation-wide hysteria against suspected radicals. State

[21] House of Representatives to Robertson, March 5, 1919, Folder 6, Box 9, General Correspondence, Governor J.B.A. Robertson, Governors' Papers, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Hereafter cited as Robertson Papers).
[22] "John Wilkinson to Robertson," March 17, 1919, Folder 4, Box 13, Robertson Papers.

government officials told Oklahomans to remain forever vigilant against the enemy of the nation, and after the bombing campaign, Robertson contacted U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer directly and sent word of a local periodical, the *Liberator*, which appeared disruptive in its language against the government. The governor's office continually sent copies of the *Liberator* to Palmer throughout the summer. The Department of Justice responded stating that the publication was under the observation of the Bureau of Investigation.[23] The magazine served as a political and cultural outlet for "radical intellectuals" and also acted as an unofficial organ of the Socialist Party during the war. The publication supported the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and aligned itself with the Communist movement afterwards.[24] Thanks to the suspicious eye of Robertson and his readiness to comply with the dictates of Palmer, the magazine remained another target of the alarmist sentiment of the time.

Not merely an isolated state separated by thousands of miles from the troubles in the East and the West, Oklahoma remained profoundly affected by the actions taken around the country during the First Red Scare. The state witnessed events on the national scene and became swept up in a similar frenzy. Influenced by events across the country, Oklahoma's leaders would look to their own labor issues in alarmingly similar fashions, portraying countless incidents of disorder as radical plots aimed at toppling the government. The populace also played a role, abandoning the Socialists in favor of the national pro-war fervor. By the end of 1918, Oklahomans had all but deserted the

[23] Department of Justice to Secretary to the Governor, July 17, 1919, Folder 7, Box 9, Robertson Papers.
[24] Antoniette Galotola, "From Bohemianism to Radicalism: The Art and Political Context of the *Liberator*, 1918-1924" Ph.D diss., City University of New York, 2000, ix, 18.

party and signaled its death knell. Disputes over resources, existing since the state's inception, would continue to act as the primary focal point for disturbances across the state, mimicking events across the country. These events played a large part in influencing the heavy-handed response by Oklahoma and other states, and helped create the ingredients for the Red Scare mentality of fear and xenophobia to thrive. Particularly in eastern Oklahoma, in the rich Cushing-Drumright oilfields, and in Tulsa, radicals would make inroads that contributed to the panic shared by the populace, businesses, and the government. As sentiment grew against such groups in the climate of fear, the state laid further foundations to the increasingly solid structure of Red Scare terror.

**Oil Fields and Labor Unions in Oklahoma, 1917-1919**

With the increasing instability across the nation caused by World War I and the foundations for radicalism and disputes over resources laid by Oklahoma's past, the state further integrated itself into the hyper-patriotic and paranoid mentality prevalent in America that characterized the First Red Scare. The state continued to give in to the irrational fears of the day and acted harshly towards unions that attempted to provide better conditions for workers. Violent clashes also occurred in eastern Oklahoma as law enforcement fought in a lopsided battle with labor during 1917-1919. These disturbances centered around important oil-rich regions with resources once again acting as a catalyst for agitation and hostility. Through such labor disputes and irrational fears, overzealous officials and citizens created the perfect storm for the First Red Scare to flourish in the post-war era.

The Industrial Workers of the World, (IWW or Wobblies), persevered in Oklahoma, however, becoming part of the largest disturbances in the state at that time. The union propagated the abolishment of the capitalist system and hoped to usher in a new revolutionary society.[25] In 1906, at the time of their second convention, the Wobblies established themselves in Oklahoma, setting up three branches in Oklahoma Territory and two in Indian Territory.[26] By 1907, with the large number of unskilled and impoverished laborers in the state, the union found success and recruited a few thousand dues-paying members. A major focus of the group lay in propaganda and agitation, with the organization regularly spreading leaflets and flyers denouncing the capitalist system and espousing their own ideals. This caused great alarm among business interests and the citizenry, especially as the Wobblies spread into the oil-rich locations of eastern Oklahoma. Authorities and the media continually linked major disturbances to the IWW, including the Green Corn Rebellion, and by the time of the U.S. entry into World War I, the radical union appeared to the public as a dangerous, disloyal menace prone to anti-American rhetoric and violent acts against government and business interests.[27] Nevertheless, the group found some success among the poor and the immigrant populations of the state, and encountered its fiercest battles in the oil-rich towns of eastern Oklahoma. As the *Tulsa World* later put it, the eastern half of the state "appears

---

[25] Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), 87.
[26] Nigel Sellars, *Oil, Wheat, and Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World in Oklahoma, 1905-1930* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 17.
[27] Sellars, *Oil, Wheat, and Wobblies*, 11.

to be the section most attractive to the anarchists because of its immense oil and other industries."[28]

As the IWW gained clout, authorities took measures to counteract its growing influence. On October 29 in the eastern oil hub of Tulsa, an explosion damaged the home of the manager for Carter Oil, J. Edgar Pew. Immediately the media blamed the IWW, and a report in the *Oklahoman* claimed that the city was on its toes all night, expecting at any moment to hear dynamite explosions in or near the oil refineries, or shots fired. Tulsa sought to raise a defense force of 250 men while the Council of Defense worked with the governor to procure ammunition for the eventual witch hunt. The city immediately boosted its defense around major refineries, with the Cosden refinery, one of the largest in the nation, protected by over 300 men. Officials of the Carter Oil Company stated that they had tripled their guard, and expected explosions before dawn. The article concluded with a warning, saying that unless IWW members made a secret retreat, bodily harm would come to them, and that all persons not able to give a good reason for being on the streets that night would be ordered by authorities to head for their homes as soon as possible.[29] The hunt was on for the suspects in the bombing, and local forces from the start took matters into their own hands.

Suspicion against union members increased dramatically throughout the war years, and intensified with each event, whether they were at fault or not. In Ada, one day after the explosion in Tulsa, fires occurred so frequently that county officials feared

[28] "Oklahoma Sleeps With One Eye Open for IWW Depredations," *Tulsa World*, November 16, 1917, 1.
[29] "Tulsa Expects Bloodshed and Bombs by Morning," *Daily Oklahoman*, October 30, 1917, 1.

the Working Class Union (a smaller union affiliated with the IWW) was behind the action. They admitted that the organization had been inactive since the rounding up and arrest the previous August of several hundred members. Nevertheless, officials claimed that the fires in Ada could not all have been accidents.[30]

In Tulsa, authorities commenced raids on IWW headquarters on November 5, 1917, causing the eventual crippling of the network in Oklahoma. The action netted eleven men, and as one local headline put it, "war on the IWW was declared by the city of Tulsa last night." Authorities, for lack of evidence, placed a charge of vagrancy on the individuals, and bluntly stated they planned to arrest every man known to belong to the "un-American organization." The *Tulsa World* categorized most of the men as uncouth in appearance and described the Wobbly base as rife with seditious paraphernalia. On the day of the raid, police found the members simply gathered around a table playing cards and reading. They offered no resistance upon arrest, and the paper reported that as they marched to their cells, their heads remained erect, with sneers on their faces and "looking for all the world like 'martyrs' marching to their doom. Displaying the paranoid attitudes that made freedom of expression difficult during that time, the paper surmised that any attorney in Tulsa risked attracting contempt from "loyal" citizens by representing the defendants. Captain Wilkerson of the Tulsa Police Department later stated his intent to arrest every man found loitering around the IWW headquarters, and if they got out of jail only to head back there, he would arrest them

[30] "Fires Blamed Upon Working Class Union," *Daily Oklahoman*, October 31, 1917, 12.

"again, and again and again. Tulsa is not big enough to hold any traitors during our government's crisis, and the sooner these fellows get out of town the better for them."[31]

During this time of unionism and suppression in the eastern oil fields, the public worried over the region's image, afraid that all the radical attention gave it a bad name. An article encouraging pro-Americanism appeared two days after the much publicized Tulsa raid, stating that the city required a new face. Detailing stories of draft resistance, dynamite bombings, and other instances of violence, the paper said that "upon such stories people often base their opinion of a state or a community. Not a rosy picture of Tulsa and Oklahoma is it?" The *World* claimed that, since Oklahoma was practically a new state, strangers could associate the area with outlaws and radicals. To combat the negative publicity generated by the rampant disorder, the paper intended to produce a run of stories detailing Oklahoma's positive contributions to the country. This example detailed a growing fear that the area would be known for its radicals, and served as a partial explanation for why authorities so ruthlessly hunted down any and all suspects of anti-Americanism.[32]

Further revealing the xenophobic tendencies of the populace, the State Council of Defense warned that "a blank wall and a firing squad may soon be the remedy for the pro-Germanism in Oklahoma in the few sections where it exists." Channeling the fear that was already in the process of redirection to Socialist and Communist elements, the council went on to say that the man not aiding in America's fight against Germany was

[31] "IWW in Tulsa Raided by Police," *Tulsa World*, November 6, 1917, 1.
[32] "Bloody Stories are Detriment to Tulsa," *Tulsa World*, November 7, 1917, 8.

aiding instead the Prussian to slaughter his neighbor's sons. "We must realize that a disloyal remark is an assassin's shot at every boy wearing khaki. Those living in American can be of but two classes, Americans or enemies." The article concluded with a near prophetic warning to those making anti-American remarks, stating that, while they may not be molested now, a "day of wrath is coming in America," and that the State Council of Defense was already hard at work turning over information concerning disloyal statements to federal authorities.[33] The stage for the state to enter the First Red Scare appeared completely set, with the entire population drummed up with irrational fear and suspicion, ready to pounce on the slightest hint of disloyalty, especially in geographically strategic areas.

On November 8, 1917, the trial for the suspected radicals netted in the Tulsa IWW raids began. In sworn testimony, one IWW member named Johnson, who spoke in broken English, had only arrived in Tulsa three days earlier with just a penny in his pocket, and hoped to find a job soon. Five detectives appeared to testify, and all maintained that the headquarters of the Wobblies held a reputation as being a place where men congregated to "defeat the aims of the government." The prosecution asked the members of the union if their organization sanctioned the violent actions featured in many strikes staged by the IWW, but the *Tulsa World* reported that their answers came concealed in sarcasm. Regarding the reputation of the headquarters, the prosecution queried members of the union, who all spoke in broken English and responded that they

[33] "Defense Council Warns Traitors," *Tulsa World*, November 7, 1917, 1.

thought the place exceedingly orderly.[34] During cross-examination, one IWW member spoke of the increasing prices and low wages, prompting persons in the courtroom to burst into applause. After the outburst, the judged warned he would arrest anyone who applauded thereafter.[35] On November 9, prosecutors rested their case based on the defendants' IWW membership. Police failed to prove their guilt in the bomb attack on Pew; however, the judge found the members guilty of not owning Liberty Bonds to support the war effort, in addition to vagrancy. Similarly, authorities arrested five defense witnesses for the same offense, finding them guilty. The court fined all the men $100, and the judge concluded that "these are no ordinary times."[36]

On November 9, shortly after the Tulsa trial ended, policemen loaded seventeen prisoners into three automobiles for transportation to the county jail. At 11:00 PM that night, a crowd of roughly fifty men in long black robes and masks stopped the vehicles, and diverted them to a secluded area where they lashed each prisoner with a cat-o'-nine-tails. They then applied a coat of hot tar to the bleeding backs of the men, and applied feathers to conclude their work. The robed vigilantes belonged to the Knights of Liberty, an organization dedicated to expunging anti-American sentiment from the country. One witness reported that with each strike of the instrument, a black-robed man in charge of the ceremony uttered: "In the name of the outraged women and children of Belgium." Another observer told of an old man who pleaded for mercy, explaining that he had lived in Oklahoma for 18 years, raised a large family, and was

[34] "IWW Tried in Night Court," *Tulsa World*, November 9, 1917, 3.
[35] "IWW Members Are Held Guilty," *Tulsa World*, November 10, 1917, 2.
[36] Sellars, *Oil, Wheat, and Wobblies*, 107.

not a member of the IWW. An individual in the party remembered his arrest at the union headquarters, however, and the mob gave the man no quarter. After the ceremony, the Knights of Liberty forced the men, wearing nothing but their trousers, into the Osage hills, firing hundreds of rifle and revolver shots in their direction, causing the victims to flee "with the speed of kangaroos." One "knight" yelled at the fleeing men "let this be a warning to all IWW's to never come to Tulsa again! Now get!" The *Tulsa World* surmised that the plot remained a carefully planned operation, indicated by the machine-like precision of its execution. Some scholars postulated that the police actually aided in the mob action, and that the Knights of Liberty received their weaponry from the Tulsa Home Guard. The very same mentality that caused this destruction would also wreak havoc several years later during the Tulsa Race Riots of 1921.[37]

This action, later called the "Tulsa Outrage" by the Wobbly community, inspired even more serious action against suspected radicals. That same day, Muskogee suffered serious fires when its cotton storehouse burned to the ground. Three other fires accompanied it, and while harboring no proof, authorities immediately blamed the IWW for starting the blazes. The Sapulpa cotton gin, the oldest and largest in Creek County, also suffered from a severe fire which eventually destroyed the structure. Losses from both events came to over $275,000, and with the recent publicized persecution of the Wobblies, citizens appeared anxious for more. Newspapers quickly

[37] "IWW Members Flogged, Tarred and Feathered," *Tulsa World*, November 10, 1917, 1; Sellars, *Oil, Wheat, and Wobblies*, 108-9.

hyped the events, with the *Tulsa World* telling of an alleged IWW member arrested by police who knew how to create quick-acting poisons that could not be detected in the body after death.[38] The public widely supported the vigilante actions upon radicals, and the *Tulsa World* reported that Oklahomans buzzed with excitement in reaction to the actions performed by the Knights of Liberty. "Everyone talked about the incident and everyone seemed to approve of the actions that had been taken. There seemed to be a feeling 'in the air' that the 'Knights of Liberty' would be heard from again."[39]

The recent and much-publicized actions against the Wobblies caused even more instances of vigilantism against the group, with similar measures occurring elsewhere to drive the organization out of the state. Reports from Guthrie indicated that two victims of the tar and feathering arrived, boarded a train and fled the state. In Drumright and Bartlesville, among other towns, authorities and vigilantes arrested and ran out other IWW members. The *Tulsa World* reported that the Knights of Liberty "have apparently started a movement that will lead to the breaking up of the organization in the Oklahoma oil fields and prevent the strike that they have threatened for some time."[40] Across the state, citizens and officials attributed any major act of violence to the IWW. In Henryetta that year, a local newspaper blamed a passenger train wreck to the organization. Evidence later exonerated the Wobblies, pointing instead to a metal

[38] "Four Gin Fires One Day's Work," *Tulsa World*, November 10, 1917, 1; "Alleged IWW Knows of Quick-Acting Poison," *Tulsa World*, November 10, 1917, 1.
[39] "IWW Danger in Tulsa Not Ended," *Tulsa World*, November 11, 1917, 1.
[40] "IWW Danger in Tulsa Not Ended," *Tulsa World*, November 11, 1917, 1.

machine part left on the track by children. The newspaper refused to retract, arguing that such an action remained consistent with IWW tactics of sabotage.[41]

As authorities and vigilante groups continued in their dismantling of the IWW, the radical union's efforts in the oil fields ground to a halt. The foundations of fear laid during the war years remained however, and by the time of the First Red Scare in 1919, manifested itself in a number of alarmist articles. In one example, newspapers exaggerated reports of a telephone strike in neighboring Drumright, claiming that Bolshevist elements had fomented violence in their sister city.[42] The *Cushing Citizen,* reported in dire terms the state of the nation, portraying every strike as an attempt to destroy constitutional authority.[43] The *Citizen* also refused to call Communists by their name, instead referring to them by the slang terms "reds" and "anarchists."[44]

By 1919, authorities, media, and the populace fully completed the foundations allowing for the First Red Scare mentality to thrive in Oklahoma. The state, with its history of socialist agitation, anti-draft movements, and labor struggles over resources appeared poised to react to any disturbance. The IWW was crushed as it tried to make in-roads in eastern Oklahoma, and the population remained drummed up with hysteria over suspected saboteurs, radical agents, and Communists. While the Wobblies were indeed a far-left revolutionary organization, this did not give state and local officials the right to persecute them ruthlessly. Oftentimes, the media, judges, and the civilian population would disregard laws and decency itself to harass members of the IWW, whether they

[41] Robinson, *Anti-Sedition Legislation*, 6.
[42] "Drumright Telephone Strike Causes Riot" *Cushing Citizen*, September 25, 1919, 1.
[43] "Situation is Threatening when Strikers Parade," *Cushing Citizen*, October 9, 1919, 1.
[44] "Red Government Near an End," *Cushing Citizen*, October 23, 1919, 1.

had committed a crime or not. The Tulsa Outrage remains a potent symbol on the dangers of illogical fear as it illustrates the depths that frightened people would go to protect themselves against supposed threats. All of these elements of fear and suppression would come to a head by 1919 with further labor disputes occurring in the east in Muskogee, Drumright, and other places. Coupled with the irrational fear and threats to resources, events that year would propel Oklahoma into the darkest reaches of the First Red Scare, standing as a paradigm of overreaction and fear during a time of national uncertainty.

**The Drumright Affair, 1919**

On September 22, 1919 a group of striking female telephone operators demonstrated peacefully in the sleepy town of Drumright. During the march down Main Street, an unidentified individual fired off a gun, causing supporters of the strikers and the local police force to engage in a brief scuffle. There were no injuries, with only two shots fired in the air, and by the next day the trouble had ended. Later, after an intense investigation, a governor appointed State Board of Arbitration determined that there was no proof of IWW involvement or major violence. Initial reports told a far different and highly sensationalized story, with initial associated press telegrams telling of serious violence, and a mob that rounded up the mayor and law enforcement officers demanding their resignation. By the end of the event, the National Guard occupied Drumright to "restore order," the local newspaper engaged in a feud with the *Tulsa*

*World* over the latter's negative portrayal of the town, and false tales of a Bolshevist conspiracy flooded the national media.[45]

The buildup to the incident offered little indication of the dramatic series of events that would follow. In the sleepy town of Drumright, situated near the eastern oil fields of the state, the worries of Bolshevik uprisings appeared far off. On September 2, a Labor Day parade occurred without incident as labor organizers, pastors, judges and citizens gathered to celebrate the holiday.[46] The local newspaper, the *Drumright Derrick*, took a casual approach to labor disturbances occurring in other parts of the state. A strike in Shawnee by telephone operators was met with relaxed undertones by the *Derrick*, with the outlet reporting on ongoing mediation and possible reconciliation.[47] Another report told in little threatening language that police killed some strikers and wounded fifteen in a battle between law enforcement and employees of the Standard Stock Car Company.[48] Drumright soon approached their own troubles, as local operators later threatened phone service across the town. A report circulated before the walkout that phone service was inadequate. Heralding an early warning of the event, the article pointed out that "Here in Drumright, we are told, that much of this inefficiency of service is due to poor equipment, a lack of modern facilities and too much work being placed on a few operators, long hours and low pay for the operators."

[45] I have written a more complete study of this event. See Michael Molina, "Red Panic: The Drumright Telephone Operator's Strike of 1919," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 91 (Fall 2013).
[46] "Labor Day in Drumright was Attended by Many and Fine Time Enjoyed," *Drumright Derrick*, September 2, 1919, 1.
[47] "Hello Girls at Shawnee go on Strike," *Drumright Derrick*, September 5, 1919, 1.
[48] "Strikers Killed and 15 Wounded," *Drumright Derrick*, September 4, 1919, 1.

A pattern of overworked and underpaid workers appeared, as demand skyrocketed, with 200 more phones desired by the town.[49]

On Saturday, September 20, eighteen out of twenty-one female telephone workers of the Southwestern Bell Company went on strike. The workers demanded recognition of their organization, better hours and pay, and received support from the Drumright Trades' Assembly, which represented every union in the town.[50] The women demonstrated the rising tide in female activism that had grown since the early 1900s.. While barred from outright participation in politics through voting, they nonetheless took matters into their own hands and championed for their own rights against a company dominated by men. The telephone operators later conditionally went back to work pending a decision from the State Board of Arbitration.[51] The town kept relatively calm during the event, and the *Derrick* reported that the strikers were "very quiet," and that they were "quietly abiding the decisions of the company and are not making any demonstrations."[52] Several workers put out statements regarding the conditions at Southwestern Bell, revealing their unacceptable conditions, and their 10-11 hour work days.[53]

On September 22, the Drumright strike took a turn for the worse. The telephone operators were conducting a demonstration in the middle of town with several hundred

---

[49] "Inadequate Phone Service is Daily Complaint Made by Patrons in Drumright," *Drumright Derrick*, September 6, 1919.
[50] "Telephone Operators Go on a Strike This Afternoon at 2:30 and Service is Tied Up," *Drumright Derrick*, September 20, 1919, 1.
[51] "Telephone Girls Will go to Work," *Drumright Derrick*, September 22, 1919, 1.
[52] "Phone Strike is Very Quiet," *Drumright Derrick*, September 22, 1919, 1.
[53] "A Statement Made by a Girl Who Worked for the Bell Telephone Company," *Drumright Derrick*, September 22, 1919, 1 .

sympathizers when, as the *Derrick* explained the following day, "some kid with a howitzer about as big as himself took a shot at one of the policemen and when the attempt was made to arrest the kid the riot started." When police attempted to arrest the youth, strike supports and law enforcement squared off. The newspaper reported that some over-zealous sympathizers took Police Chief Jack Ayers into custody, disarmed him and made him promise to resign his office. The *Derrick* reported that "good natured Jack didn't seem to be very badly scared, neither did he resign from the office." The newspaper humorously stated that "with all the excitement there was no serious disturbances and no one was hurt, but it was bully fun while it lasted and there were many who thought that there would be rioting and killing." It proclaimed that the only serious side of the trouble appeared the next morning when twenty special officers appeared on the streets armed with Winchesters, intent on keeping a wary eye on all who had the appearance of making trouble.[54] Unfortunately for Drumright, the brief brush with violence coincided with the nationwide steel strike that affected thousands of union workers. The striking ladies quickly and permanently took a back seat to the developing story, as U.S. newspapers categorized the major walkout as a coup masterminded by radical labor and Communist supporters who intended on overthrowing the government.

News of the outburst spread far and wide across a nation already gripped by the fear of Bolshevism, with many papers choosing to escalate the hysteria. *Harlow's Weekly*

[54] "Telephone Strike Becomes Serious: Big Riot Last Night Was Narrowly Averted," *Drumright Derrick*, September 23, 1919, 1.

characterized the event as “The first serious attempt to dethrone constituted authority by mob law.” They stated that authorities believed the IWW and bolshevist elements perpetrated the so called riot, despite a signed statement from unions and the striking telephone women that organized labor held no support for the outburst.[55] The same day the *Derrick* printed its non-sensationalist reporting, the national media took hold of the story and reported on the exaggerated events based off the faulty associated press reports. Hundreds of miles away in Mississippi, the Biloxi *Daily Herald* declared that "mob members assume control of Oklahoma Town: law and order apparently thrown to the wind in Drumright as result of telephone strike." They reported the unsuccessful attempts to reach Drumright, citing a mob taking over the wires. The *Herald* also brought up the town's choice location in oil rich Creek County, and told of reports stating a mob drove the police department from the city and assumed control, disarming the chief of police and threatening his life if he did not resign. They mentioned an unconfirmed report from Oilton that stated a group was attempting to burn the Bell telephone building down at Drumright.[56] The *Herald* further claimed that not only had the majority of police been driven out and the police chief threatened with death, and the telephone building threatened with destruction, but three women operators who refused to strike were reportedly held prisoner by the mob in the telephone building where their friends were refused admittance or the right to supply them with food. The paper clarified that the trouble supposedly started when a policemen clubbed a picketer

[55] Hall, Orville D., “Radicals Attempt to Dethrone Drumright Officials,” *Harlow’s Weekly*, September 24, 1919, 1,
[56] "Mob Members Assume Control of Oklahoma Town," *Daily Herald*, September 23, 1919, 1.

that morning.[57] From as far away as Wyoming, news of the Drumright affair made front-page news. With an entire section devoted to strikes and disturbances across the country, the telephone strike made headlines, with the *Wyoming State Tribune* stating "Oklahomans shoot up streets and otherwise conduct themselves scandalously." They further claimed that a mob detained Mayor W.E. Nicodemus, a local councilman, and Chief of Police Jack Ayers, but later released them that same day.[58]

The event made headlines in countless other newspapers across the country, from Idaho where an outlet trumped up the foreign influence of the riot, to Michigan, New Mexico, and Ohio. Stories told of how one individual, a union leader named Ed Welch, led oil field workers on a rampage.[59] Welch would later be one of the few individuals actually convicted of inciting a riot, though he received a light sentence. One uncharacteristically calm portrayal of events came from the Kentucky paper *Lexington Herald*, which reported that that the town was "perfectly quiet." It said that "there were no deaths, no hospital cases and no property damage," and that after the telephone operators went on strike, "considerable feeling developed in the community and there was some disorder, in the course of which two harmless shots were fired." The newspaper elaborated that the first shot was aimed at Henry Carlos, assistant chief of police, who was on guard at the telephone office in front of the mob-like crowd. City

[57] "Oklahoma Town in Hands of Mob," *Miami Herald*, September 23, 1919, 1.
[58] "Mob Demands Resignation of Officials," *Wyoming State Tribune* (Cheyenne), September 23, 1919, 1.
[59] "State Troops Control City in Oklahoma," *Jackson Citizen Patriot*, September 24, 1919; "Mob Rules City in 'Phone Strike," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, September 24, 1919; "Telephone Co. Attacked by a Rioting Mob," *Morning Olympian*, September 24, 1919; "Troops will Patrol Streets of Drumright," *Pueblo Chieftain*, September 24, 1919; "State Troops go to Western City," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 24, 1919.

Commissioner John Baxter seized the assailant's weapon and fired a second shot in the perpetrator's direction. Far from being detained by a group of angry Bolsheviks, the paper claimed that Chief of Police John Ayers escaped the crowd and made his way to neighboring Cushing, where he signaled alarm and returned with three deputy sheriffs. Apparently, city officials insisted that political opponents of the mayor who sympathized with the striking workers brought about the demonstration to hurt Nicodemus' administration. [60] This ran counter to the national tendency to sensationalize, with most papers printing stories similar to the *Tucson Citizen*, which told of IWW involvement in the riots. It went on to say that Nicodemus made a statement linking Bolshevist and IWW elements among the oil field workers, again repeating the sensationalist line fed by the mayor. [61]

The event made the front page news of the *New York Times*, with the paper reporting that after a night of severe rioting by a mob, five people remained in custody. It commented that one of them hailed from Germany, harkening back to xenophobic war-time fears of subversion.[62]The *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, for its part, linked the oil richness of the area with the day's outburst in its article, and repeated the story that one of the perpetrators came from Germany.[63]

The *Drumright Derrick* condemned the Associated Press, which irresponsibly sent out exaggerated telegrams to dozens of other newspapers.[64] On September 23, the

[60] "Troops Sent to Oklahoma City," *Lexington Herald* (Kentucky), September 24, 1919, 1.
[61] "State Troops Patrol Streets at Drumright," *Tucson Citizen*, September 24, 1919, 1.
[62] "Rioters Arrest Mayor," *New York Times*, September 24, 1919, 1.
[63] "State Troops go to Western City," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 24, 1919, 1.
[64] "Telephone Strike Becomes Serious," *Drumright Derrick*, September 23, 1919, 1.

same day news outlets across the country told of anarchist rule, the *Derrick* explained that "There is no mob and there has been no semblance of one. However, there are millions of people throughout the country who are hearing of Drumright… who would probably never know the town existed." It called the Associated Press releases sensationalist pieces that maintained no regard for the truth. The *Derrick* also attempted to bring clarity to the situation, saying that "there has been no attempt to destroy property. Chief of Police Ayers and Mayor Nicodemus have not disappeared and the Chief of Police has been attending to his duties as usual today. Mayor Nicodemus is well and hearty and smiling." The editor for the *Derrick*, obviously outraged by the faulty reporting, printed a direct rebuttal against the *Tulsa World*, saying that their stories were a "misrepresentation of fact, in other words, it is a story manufactured out of the vivid imagination of some one who wants to resort to sensationalism and such a statement as appears in that paper of this morning only lends to inflame an element that is always inflamable[sic]."[65] The feud between the two newspapers escalated, as editors of the *World* would later print their own counterargument. In the meantime, officials attempted to keep the situation calm. On September 23, the union president of the Drumright central Trades and Labor Council H.M. Boyle requested that there be no mass meetings that might disrupt law and order, and instructed all union affiliates to that effect. Lois Reenh and Ina Woods, representing the striking telephone operators also put out a statement, requesting their friends and sympathizers to in no way or

[65] "Telephone Strike Becomes Serious: Big Riot Last Night Was Narrowly Averted," *Drumright Derrick*, September 23, 1919, 1.

manner cause any disturbances on the streets and not to make demonstrations that would cause trouble, owing to the false reports that had went out of the town. [66]

That same day, however, Governor Robertson took action that severely undermined the attempts at normalcy during the First Red Scare. He sent in the National Guard to quell the supposed revolt adding further fuel to the erupting firestorm.[67] Under orders from Robertson, Adjutant General Charles Barrett and roughly 200 soldiers from Companies H, I, M, G, Supply, 2nd Infantry, and Companies B and D 1st Separate Battalion, fully armed and equipped, marched intro Drumright.[68] Barrett informed the governor that night that intelligence showed the situation as "extremely dangerous," and citizens expressed "grave alarm for fear mob may resort to fire and more intense rioting."[69] During and after the incident, descriptions tended to play up the severe nature of the disturbance. Most histories of the event portray the affair as a serious threat and that a large, threatening mob actually existed and did detain the local mayor and police chief. Articles, newspapers, and recollections from the commander of the National Guard all corroborate the sensationalist point of view. Nevertheless, according to various primary sources, no such dramatic event occurred. While there was undoubtedly some kind of a disturbance in Drumright, many news outlets in the state and nation succumbed to the illogical fears of the First Red Scare, and sensationalized the event. Whether large scale violence in the town appeared or not (and most evidence points to

---

[66] "Telephone Strike Becomes Serious: Big Riot Last Night Was Narrowly Averted," *Drumright Derrick*, September 23, 1919, 1.
[67] "Arrival National Guard Last Night," *Drumright Derrick*, September 24, 1919, 1.
[68] Charles F. Barrett, *Oklahoma After Fifty Years: A History of the Sooner State and its People 1889-1939* (Oklahoma City: Historical Record Association, 1941), 205.
[69] "Barrett to Robertson," September 23, 1919, Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.

the latter), the *Derrick* took a positive view of National Guard troops entering. It stated that "the authorities backed by every peace loving citizen stand behind the troops and are backing them up in the effort to see that law and order is maintained and that a repetition of Monday night's trouble is not repeated." The newspaper went on to state that "violators will be severely dealt with. This is a country of free speech but free speech does not consist of allowing… agitator[s] to inflame the lawless and incite them to acts of violence."[70]

Authorities initially arrested nine suspects in connection with the disturbance, and according to a Sapulpa dispatch two of the men were "alleged to have been sent to the United States from Germany by the Bolsheviki element for the purpose of inciting unrest in this country."[71] *Harlow's Weekly* portrayed the action by protestors as revenge against Drumright's mayor, who achieved victory over a socialist challenger in the previous election, and the telephone strike was used as a means of embarrassing and overthrowing the administration. Trumping up alarmist calls of revolution, the newspaper also mentioned that, "whatever the underlying cause of the Drumright disturbance may be, the fact stands out in bold relief that it was the first serious attempt in Oklahoma to substitute mob rule for constituted authority and thus the situation calls for the most careful consideration. Good citizens were thoroughly aroused and brought to a realization that the bolshevist element, although doubtless in a hopeless minority, is

[70] "Arrival of State Troops Last Night Put a Crimp in Plans of the Lawless," *Drumright Derrick*, September 24, 1919, 1.
[71] Bolsheviki appeared commonly as a catch-all term in the media generally meaning any suspected radical agitator.

attempting to rear its head in Oklahoma."[72] In a piece written for *Harlow's Weekly* by Orville Hall, he said that developments with the disturbances in Drumright "have removed all doubts that the disturbance was caused by the IWW or bolshevist element." Hall claimed that bolshevist elements used the telephone strike as an opportunity to unseat the government and that that while some initial reports appeared overblown, criticisms of Robertson's handling of the situation remained unfair. He maintained that the troops sent by the governor kept a restraining effect on supposed radicals, and forestalled a superior show of violence.[73]

The situation remained at a standstill between operators and Southwestern Bell, though the citizens of Drumright appeared indignant at the false reports sent out to the nation. Practically every citizen in the city supported the striking women, and the *Derrick* held that their newspaper was "for the girls and as their demands are within reason, and should be granted, we hope that the telephone company can be made to see that their claims should be granted."[74] The *Derrick* went on to say that the early reports sent out that escalated the hysteria resulted in much damage to the city. Regarding early statements of rioting and destruction of property, it claimed they were "point blank" lies, and that the man or men who sent them to the press associations were "barefaced liars as every citizen in Drumright knows." The paper went on to say that there had been not one single man, woman or child hurt or injured, and aside from the fact that

[72] Hall, Orville D., "Radicals Attempt to Dethrone Drumright Officials," *Harlow's Weekly*, September 24, 1919, 1.
[73] Hall, Orville D., "Drumright Strike Situation Being Probed," *Harlow's Weekly*, October 1, 1919, 1.
[74] "Strike Situation Between Operators and Company Remains Unchanged Today," *Drumright Derrick*, September 25, 1919, 1.

someone threw a rock through the sign of the Southwestern Bell telephone Co.'s sign, there had not been "five cents worth of damage done to any property in the city."[75]

Countering the *Derrick's* earlier reports and attacks on their journalistic integrity, the *Tulsa World* printed a rebuttal on September 25, after troops had "restored order" in the town. The *World* told its readers that if one wanted to know the true situation in the town, then one needed to go to Drumright and talk to the people. They claimed that while initial reports of the rioting were exaggerated, the causes leading up to it "must be written in terms of red card Socialists and Bolsheviki and terrorism." They labeled the event a reign of terror by radicals, and painted one of the suspects, Ed Welch, as a radical extremist and even an IWW member. The *World* told that from his jail cell, Welch admitted as much, and that he and the element he represented did not like the way the local government had conducted itself during the strike. The article went on to say that the instigator's intention was to force Mayor Nicodemus and Councilman Baxter and the chief of police to resign. The suspect denied that the mob had used violence though, and that he merely wanted the officials out of office.[76]

To support its credibility, the *World* mentioned that there was an active IWW organization in Drumright that routinely agitated for membership. The newspaper maintained that 1,195 Wobblies still resided in the town, and that they were the ones responsible for the recent affair. The news outlet characterized the situation as a fight between radical and conservative elements, and became bitter especially during the last

[75] "The False Statements of Rioting and Lawlessness Big Injury to Drumright," *Drumright Derrick*, September 25, 1919, 1.
[76] "Political Grudge, Bolshevism and History Tear Drumright," *Tulsa World*, September 25, 1919, 1.

city election. "It was so intense that the ordinary political lines were wiped out and the contest for office was fought out in the lines of the conservatives against the radicals." Nicodemus headed one ticket, while a radical, chosen by Welch, headed the other. Eventually, the town elected Nicodemus, which created a near final obstruction for the leftists, that eventually culminated in the lawlessness of September 22. The paper went on to say that the telephone strike was a minor matter and had nothing to do with the demonstration, "it merely provided an excuse."[77]

The *Tulsa* rebuttal, directly contradicting the *Derrick*, also reiterated that the mob had indeed disarmed the police and threatened his life unless he left town. The chief, not wanting to become a martyr, decided to feign agreement and fled to Cushing where he sent out calls for help. The newspaper claimed he was later joined by other officers and Baxter, who escaped the scene in an automobile. The mayor stayed off the streets and sent out calls to the governor's office asking for troops to be sent, and upon hearing affidavits describing the event, Robertson agreed. Purportedly, a band of 300 oil workers intended to come in on September 23 to finish the job begun by the mob, and upon finding out, officials deputized over 100 citizens to defend the streets. Labor unions denied responsibility for the event and offered to supply their men for patrol duty. Citizens expected the small army of Wobblies to invade, and, as the *World* attested, reasons why no such event occurred was not known, though they suggested it was due to a false report in the first place. It later chalked up the lack of appearance to

[77] "Political Grudge, Bolshevism and History Tear Drumright," *Tulsa World*, September 25, 1919, 1.

the arrival of the troops, who deterred any would-be invader. The *World* warned how seriously near Drumright came to anarchy, and that "it was not only a riot that was stopped in Drumright Monday night. Bolshevism in an aggravated form has been squelched and now energies are being turned toward wiping it out."[78] In the wake of troops arriving, few newspapers attempted retractions. One exception appeared in the *Colorado Springs Gazette*, which called the riots "greatly magnified."[79] This remained a unique example of truth, as most outlets opted to continue faulty the hysteria.

The reporting by the newspapers did considerable harm to the image of Drumright, and Governor Robertson attempted to repair the town, and by extension the state's image. He contacted Earl Foster, the County Attorney for Creek County on September 25, and said that the disturbance at Drumright incurred great expense to the state and gave it exceedingly undesirable notoriety. He called on the attorney to prosecute all those guilty of perpetrating the riots, and expected officers of Creek County to "spare no effort in bringing about the immediate arrest, prosecution, and punishment of the offenders." He offered to give the attorney all the assistance in his power to support the investigation, and stated that he had directed the attorney general to make a special investigation of the matter.[80] To that end, he sent a letter to the attorney general, telling him, if necessary, to call a grand jury, and to "kindly use all the machinery of your office looking to the immediate arrest, prosecution and punishment of those guilty."[81]

---

[78] "Political Grudge, Bolshevism and History Tear Drumright," *Tulsa World*, September 25, 1919, 1.
[79] "Riots at Drumright Greatly Magnified," *Colorado Springs Gazette*, September 25, 1919, 1.
[80] "Robertson to Earl Foster," Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.
[81] "Robertson to Freeling," September 25, 1919, Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.

Judge Lucien Wright, representing the county attorney's office, responded to the governor's letter. He offered his assurances that they remained busy in procuring evidence for the preliminary hearing of those arrested, and also said that he was away from the county at the time of the occurrence and all knowledge he had of the event was from hearsay. Nevertheless, he vowed to assist Robertson in his crusade against the trouble-makers of Drumright.[82] Mayor Nicodemus for his part, appeared more than willing to assist in the investigation, and offered profound thanks to the governor for sending in troops. Despite earlier claims from the *Derrick* that nothing of note happened during the riot, and that the mayor was not in any danger, Nicodemus stated that since the county attorney and sheriff were away the night of the event, they were unable to "fully realize the seriousness of the situation."[83] A complete statement of the situation was sent to the Governor on September 26 asking him for arbitration.[84]

By September 27, authorities released a majority of the men arrested as they had posted their bail bonds.[85] Judge Gaylord Wilcox, of the superior court of Creek County, sent a letter to Robertson explained that authorities had indicted twelve men in all, and that the real trouble stemmed from the war. He told how local officers had to deal with the IWW and socialists, and the revolutionary element in the oil field, "where there are thousands of men employed, more than any other place in this state." He reiterated the *Tulsa World's* influential article rebutting the *Derrick*, and after a failed bid for

[82] "Lucien Wright to Robertson," September 30, 1919, Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.
[83] "Nicodemus to Robertson," September 26, 1919, Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.
[84] "Complete Information Sent to Governor Robertson To-Day Asking for Arbitration," *Drumright Derrick*, September 26, 1919.
[85] "Major Taylor Report," September 27, 1919, Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.

electoral power running, radicals took the opportunity of the striking ladies to exact revenge. He praised Robertson exceedingly for his decision to send in troops, saying that "the best possible thing and the only proper thing, in my judgment, under the conditions, was to do just exactly what you did."[86]

That same day phone service resumed in Drumright, though none of the operators on strike went back to work.[87] By October, law enforcement officials rounded up and indicted sixteen men for rioting, with all but two able to make bail.[88] Later, the State Board of Arbitration, appointed by Governor Robertson, attempted to solve the crisis between Southwestern Bell and striking operators.[89] Their eventual report served as the major piece of evidence in debunking the sensationalist tales from the *Tulsa World*, and newspapers across the country.

The official report emphatically condemned the early media stories on the strike. "We believe that the spread of false and misleading statements concerning the early stage of the strike situation in Drumright was the cause of a lot of dissention in this community, and was put out by unknown, irresponsible parties."[90] In one telling example of inaccuracies, the Board commented on reports of hundreds of shots fired by rioters, the claim that Mayor Nicodemus, a local councilman, and the chief of police were jailed by the mob, and mob demands for resignation of the officials under threat of lynching. The report declared that "we have been unable to find any truth, whatever, in

---

[86] "Wilcox to Robertson," Folder 22, Box 3, Robertson Papers.
[87] "Phone Service Resumed but Company Refuses Information," *Drumright Derrick*, September 27, 1919, 1.
[88] "Men Charged with Rioting Tried Tomorrow," *Drumright Derrick*, October 1, 1919, 1.
[89] "Arbitration of Phone Strike Refused by Co.," *Drumright Derrick*, October 2, 1919, 1.
[90] "Recommendations of the State Board of Arbitration," Folder 10, Box 26, Robertson Papers.

this report. Relative to the question of violence in Drumright, we will state that the State Board of Arbitration and Conciliation has been unable to find the slightest evidence which directly connects the telephone strike with it."[91] The report remained part of a larger series of investigations done by the federal agency into Wobbly activity in Oklahoma. It shows how concerned U.S. officials were of radical activity in the state, and their willingness to investigate a headline-grabbing incident that thrust Oklahoma into the heart of the First Red Scare.

While government forces restored order in the town, rampant hysteria claimed yet another victim. Newspapers failed to help the matter, and acted only to make the situation worse. The town of Drumright served as a microcosm for the fear that gripped the nation, as no town, no matter how small, was safe from the irrationality of the times. Strong blame lay directly with Governor Robertson, as the ordering in of the National Guard into a situation that was, by all accounts, nowhere close to a riot, proved to be a gross overreaction. As a major test of leadership, he gave in to the prevailing attitudes and committed forces to what would have been, in any other time period, an insignificant event in the history of Oklahoma. The overall labor situation in the state appeared to improve. A telephone strike in Shawnee as well as a street car strike in Chickasha ended without serious problems.[92] Years later, important figures in the event would attempt to glorify their role in the Drumright affair.

[91] "Recommendations of the State Board of Arbitration," Folder 10, Box 26, Robertson Papers.
[92] Hall, Orville D., "Oklahoma Strike Situation Improved," *Harlow's Weekly*, September 17, 1919, 1.

Adjutant-General and commander of National Guard forces Charles F. Barrett demonstrated that he still succumbed to the hysteria when, writing in 1941, labeled the incident a Bolshevist and IWW riot. He argued the events in the town, though originally a simple telephone operators' strike, "were directly traceable to IWW influences and leadership." Contradicting the State Board of Arbitration, he repeated the alarmist and inaccurate storyline, saying the rioters "had gone so far as to disarm and assault the chief of police, drive the mayor out of the city, and to threaten to 'burn up the town.'" Barrett maintained the situation looked for a time like a second Omaha affair, where during race riots the local mayor was hanged by a mob. For Barrett and his men however, much like the media and general public, deeds of daring and sensationalism far outweighed the necessity for truth.[93]

The Drumright strike wreaked havoc in the state during the First Red Scare, plunging Oklahomans deeper into the grip of fear and panic. They viewed communist conspiracies as everywhere, threatening the vital resources of the state. The disturbance in Drumright especially epitomized what the First Red Scare was all about. The town entered into the national spotlight, appearing as one of dozens of local events blown out of proportion by a news media swept up in hysteria. What began as a symbol of female activism quickly escalated, with the striking ladies taking a back seat to the dramatic pronouncements of doom from major newspapers. For the first time, the state was making national headline news, becoming a central story in the First Red Scare.

[93] Barrett, *Oklahoma After Fifty Years: A History of the Sooner State and Its People, 1889-1939* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Historical Record Association, 1941), 204.

Oklahoma would suffer yet another major panic before the paranoia concluded, only this time the event would become part of a nationwide strike that involved hundreds of thousands of miners. This walkout, spearheaded by the UMW, affected the mines around McAlester, caused the government to send in troops to protect its mineral interests, declare martial law, and drew the state further into the bowels of fear. It would be the last major event during the First Red Scare in Oklahoma, and along with Drumright, served as the second major pillar of hysteria during this traumatic period.

**The Coal Miners' Strike of 1919**

The United Mine Workers of America initiated a strike on November 1, 1919 against perceived unfair labor practices by mine operators. The walkout of hundreds of thousands of the nation's miners left the country paralyzed from lack of coal and fuel, and with the threat of a harsh winter looming, hurled the major mining states farther into the grips of Red Scare fear. Reactionaries incorrectly portrayed the miners as foreign Bolshevist radicals, intent on usurping power by holding hostage the resources of the country. Oklahoma, possessing valuable deposits of coal in the southeast, became a part of this national uproar, producing its second major Red Scare overreaction in 1919. By the end of the tumult, Governor Robertson had called out the National Guard yet again, initiated martial law in several coal producing counties, and pandered to xenophobic tendencies of the people. A report later released by the state government revealed that foreign miners had few if any ties to communism, were not part of a Bolshevist plot, and threats to Oklahoma's supply of coal by radicalism were unfounded. The overreaction by Robertson remains a stark example of the paranoid fear

of the time, and the miner's strike in the state stands alongside the Drumright affair as one of the two unfortunate yet main pillars of the First Red Scare in Oklahoma.

The cause of the entire ordeal revolved around the precious resource of coal. Oklahoma contained an ample supply, with a mining area that included Pittsburg County, Coal County, and Latimer County. This important location drew migrant laborers from various European countries, thus raising suspicion for the area as a major location for trouble during the First Red Scare.[94] Railways provided important links that carried supplies of coal to neighboring states and across the country. The immigrant distribution in the region was highly diverse, with a record number of immigrants arriving yearly in towns such as McAlester as well as neighboring Krebs. Using McAlester as an example, its distribution of white population stood at 9,393, or over three-quarters of the total population. However, foreign-born whites and African-Americans numbered 392 and 2,090 respectively. Italy held the record as the country with the most foreign nationals in Pittsburg County, with over 900 registered. The largest areas of occupations for Oklahoma remained in agriculture, though the coal industry boasted nearly 8,000.[95] The various nationalities that helped make up the working classes drew much anger and criticism, bearing the brunt of assaults as reason gave way to panic during the First Red Scare. During 1919-1920, countless letters into the governor's office warned against foreign nationals infiltrating the country and

[94] Charles Goins and Danny Goble, *Historical Atlas of Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 5, 25.

[95] 1920 US Census. For excellent historical analysis of the impact of migrant communities in coal mining, see Thomas Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

causing great harm to the state.[96] After the war, Oklahomans needed little encouragement in xenophobic tendencies. The influx of immigrants coupled with the history of the region caused many citizens and government officials to view the miners with distrust. Pittsburg County reported some of the highest levels of Socialist voting patterns in previous elections. During the 1914 election, for example, when Oklahoma voted for Socialist candidates in unprecedented numbers not seen before or since, Pittsburg County's vote for the Socialist candidate for president totaled 25-29 percent. [97] Historically, McAlester held a much higher proclivity for leftist candidates. In 1911 townspeople voted in two Socialist Party aldermen. [98] The influx of immigrants and the region's pro-socialist past all came to a head by 1919, as the forces of labor and business engaged in a volatile disputes centered on the state's mining industry. The disagreement culminated in the nationwide walkout of miners on November 1, creating a firestorm of fear and overreaction that few could have imagined.

Support for the walkout had simmered for some time. As the walkout of workers loomed across the nation, mine operators struck the first blow in a bid for public support. On October 20, the Colorado and New Mexico Coal Operators' Association sent a letter to dealers and consumers of coal playing up the danger of the situation. They quoted John Lewis, President of the UMW, who said that "the government cannot stop the threatened strike of coal miners," and that unless coal operators accept their demands, they would shut down every coal mine in the country without question or

[96] Commander-in-Chief of Sons of Veterans to Robertson, September 24, 1919, Folder 6, Box 9, Robertson Papers.
[97] Goins, Goble, *Historical Atlas*, 161.
[98] *Appeal to Reason*, May 20, 1911.

modification. The letter further claimed the strike maliciously punished coal consumers of the entire nation as well as operators. It concluded that the limited number of operators in the eastern and middle states were not able to grant the workers' demands, labeling them "oppressive, despotic and tyrannical." Furthermore, the wages paid remained sufficient, and there was no logic in the request for a decrease of work hours. They compared the earnings of mine workers to other professions, saying that their $250 a month exceeded even that of doctors, lawyers, and merchants.[99] The mine operators argued that the decrease in hours would reduce the output of the mines to an alarming rate. They produced mathematical calculations showing that a mine producing 50,000 tons per month would not even be able to produce over 30,000 tons under the UMW demands, and the production capabilities during the critical winter season would not exceed sixty percent of its former output. The letter concluded that citizens needed to express their opinions to governmental leaders, and that if the public refused to support mine operators, they would be forced to accede to the demands because the populace could not survive without coal. This in actuality bolstered morale for UMW members, who saw that if they successfully held out long enough they would force mine owners to capitulate to their demands. The document ended in threatening tones, stating that "the high cost of living can only be remedied by increasing production. It cannot be remedied by decreasing output. If the union succeeds in the demands, the increase in cost and price of coal to you will be for all time and not a temporary

[99] "Statement by Coal Operators," October 20, 1919, Folder 2, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

matter."[100] Further letters attempted to demonize the miners, calling their demands unreasonable and their methods akin to radicalism.

On October 24, the Southwestern Interstate Coal Operators' Association sent a letter to Governor Robertson detailing their conversations with Governor Henry Allen of Kansas, and how they planned on solving the situation. The association had told Allen that unless the government took serious measures, the strike would cause "untold suffering and misery." The letter explained that the wage increase was unjustified by the present cost of living, and if the government granted it or any other increase above present rates, it would be an outrage to Americans everywhere. The coal operators predicted that the strike would create a crisis unparalleled in the history of American industry, and called for "the most drastic and vigorous governmental action in dealing with the Bolshevic[sic] spirit shown in these demands." They further urged state representatives to enact legislation to hold labor legally responsible for their acts and to enforce existing anti-trust laws against them, thus protecting the welfare of citizens against such "autocratic acts of radicals in union labor ranks."[101]

As mine operators demonized their opponents and labeled them incorrectly as radicals in the lead-up to the strike, Governor Robertson attempted to prevent a strike in his own state. To that end, he called a conference in McAlester, inviting both sides of the dispute to participate. He wished for miners to stay on the job regardless of the national strike, while those workers desired to follow the directives of the United Mine

[100] "Statement by Coal Operators," October 20, 1919, Folder 2, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[101] "Southwestern Coal Operators to Allen," Folder 2, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

Workers of America.[102] Negotiations collapsed, and all evidence pointed to the walkout going on as planned on November 1.[103] Revealing his biases and anti-miner sentiment, Robertson responded to the workers with indignation at their threat to cut off coal supply to the nation, stating "we'll see who's running this old USA," and that the strike was "nothing short of a lawless conspiracy." After adjourning the conference, the governor bluntly stated that the coal mines of Oklahoma would remain in operation. "I made that statement this morning and I meant it," he explained. Robertson saw little use in prolonging the summit and instead chose to convert it into a meeting of patriotic American citizens. He proclaimed that all who cared to stay for that kind of meeting were welcome. No one left the room, and the governor began the task of ensuring that the fierce bite of winter would not affect his constituents. To heat Oklahoma homes, he proposed the importation of coal from New Mexico and Colorado mines, worked by non-union laborers. He had originally opposed such a move as it would have harmed Oklahoma union miners, but now that they were on strike, he felt no compulsion to assist them.[104] Hearkening to the fears of immigrant labor and their supposed ties to radicalism, the governor sent a telegram to U.S. Attorney General Palmer, claiming "About 30 or 40 percent of the miners in this state are alien non-citizens. Their refusal to work is due largely to failure to appreciate our government and renders them and their presence undesirable in every way."[105] This unsympathetic language demonstrated

[102] "Strike Called for Nov. 1 is Still Menacing," *McAlester News-Capital*, October 22, 1919; Steve Sewell, "Painted Red: The Coal Strike of 1919," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 75 (1997): 162-3.
[103] "Workman Hold Little Hope for a Settlement," *McAlester News-Capital*, October 23, 1919.
[104] "He's Going to Find Out Who's Running the U.S.," October 29, 1919, Folder 9, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[105] "Governor Robertson to A. Mitchell Palmer," October 30, 1919, Folder 1, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

Robertson's harsh stance and his unwillingness to compromise with the so-called enemies of America, a common attitude he held throughout the crisis, and a holdover from the paranoid World War I era.

Countless groups and individuals supported the governor's overly harsh rhetoric against the mine workers, with reams of letters flowing in to his office. One correspondence framed the conflict in patriotic terms, stating that "We desire to congratulate you on your stand for Americanism, and heartily endorse your attitude in requesting the deportation of all aliens. If we only had more public officials who would champion the cause of the general public, the Anarchists, Socialists, IWW and other tendencies towards destroying our American institutions would soon be a thing of the past."[106] One unique form of support came from G.J. Rousseau, the minister at First Baptist Church in Norman. He sent a letter to the governor expressing his admiration and support for the harsh stand taken against the miners, and also enclosed a copy of a sermon he planned on delivering the following Sunday. This lengthy oration served as an enlightening look into the popular notions of average Oklahomans, and the level of politics mixed with preaching that pervaded the chaotic period after World War I. In his address, the pastor sardonically asked if striking miners sought to remedy their oppressive labor conditions by tying up commerce and subjecting millions of people to misery, sickness, and semi-starvation.[107]

[106] RK Hughes and A. Mitchell to Governor Robertson, October 31, 1919, Folder 1, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[107] "Rousseau to Robertson," November 7, 1919, Folder 2, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

Rousseau, displaying in full force his tendency to believe the alarmist calls of the day, introduced a comment from the *New York World*, which claimed that nine tenths of present strikes occurred not from honest desires to improve conditions but from a skillful body of revolutionary leaders whose sole object was the disruption of the present social system. Using newspapers to further the red hysteria, the sermon reprinted quotes from the *New York Evening World*, which stated that there existed revolutionary bodies, such as the IWW, which aimed at overthrowing the institutions of government and currently controlled over 30 percent of all organized labor. Endorsing the current labor-capital relationship, he went on to conclude that the situation demanded "square-jawed Americanism," and that it was time to "skim the scum from the melting pot" and deport the foreign reactions who had abused American hospitality. Bringing in the legacy of war paranoia, the pastor proclaimed that citizens should show the government the same solidarity and singleness of purpose that they used to defeat the "Hun," and that "we should break the back and crush the head of that rattle snake of radicalism within the labor unions." The pastor concluded that if the teachings of Jesus were applied, the Bolshevik would "shave his whiskers, take a bath and go to work; applied to predatory labor unions it will cause them through their constituencies to give fair value to fair value received."[108]

This sermon fully laid bare the reactionism that a pervaded all levels of society. Not only from the media and government was fear preached, but also from the pulpit,

[108] Ibid.

creating a virulent strain of suspicion that enabled the public to believe in even the wildest notions of Communist infiltration, and support any action to dislodge this menace. This held profound ramifications for deeply religious Oklahoma, as the faithful received weekly doses of indoctrination in fear from many of their trusted religious leaders. One by one, the major institutions and centers of influence fell to the Red Scare hysteria. It was not long before these sentiments impacted schooling, as the media drummed up fears that education would succumb to Communist infiltration.

The same day the nationwide coal strike began, the *Daily Oklahoman* reported on a group of high school students that threatened a strike of their own. Twelve boys and girls asked for shorter hours, among other concessions, and held gatherings to convince school authorities to accede to their demands. The newspaper portrayed the event in dramatic undertones, saying that "for two days the trouble had been brewing… During the 'fifth period' yesterday, about 200 determined pupils gathered in the front corridor. Bloodshed was averted when the class bells rang for the next period." The *Oklahoman* went on to say the remainder of the "angry throng" scattered for class rooms, and possibly planned a future strike. Those who were caught in the act were detained for an extra hour after school, and, according to school officials, the only display of violence during the disturbance occurred when one of the so called rioters, "in the heat of passion forgot herself and, in the hearing of several bystanders, exclaimed 'Oh, fudge!'"[109] An editorial in the newspaper dramatically exaggerated the event, calling the students a juvenile Soviet whose actions were "extremely deplorable."

[109] "Student's 'Kept In' For Trying Strike," *Daily Oklahoman,* November 1, 1919, 2.

It complained that the determined stand taken by the would-be strikers displayed a well-defined spirit of bolshevism among students, who sought to emulate radical adults. The newspaper concluded that the cure for these young Communists was a good spanking.[110] The hysterical tendencies of state papers to exaggerate events to revolutionary proportions were truly a skill greatly utilized by the media during the first Red Scare. With threats of radical activity coming from newspapers, the government, schools, and the pulpit, no realm of society was safe from harmful paranoia. This attitude dramatically affected the coal mining strike, and influenced the governor's actions in dealing with the supposedly Bolshevist inspired UMW.

With the public receiving paranoid indoctrination across all levels of society, the coal mining situation continued to deteriorate as supplies threatened to diminish. Desperate pleas soon rolled in to Robertson's office regarding the lack of fuel. One telegram told how the town of Brinkman remained out of coal for two weeks and that the people there "are badly in need."[111] Another from Chickasha ruefully explained that the city was out of coal and that if the mines shut down suffering would result.[112] Despite the citizens' appeals, Robertson rebuffed the idea of concessions for the workers. On November 1, 1919, the strike became reality as 8,000 miners in the state and 400,000 nationwide refused to work in protest of better wages and conditions. The ensuing debacle lasted for thirty-seven days and cost Oklahoma $10,000,000.[113] By

[110] "The High School Strike," *Daily Oklahoman*, November 1, 1919, 6.
[111] I.R. Warren to Governor Robertson, October 31, 1919, Folder 1, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[112] Wootten, R.K., C.P. Lamons, J.A. Ryndak, C.H. Van Valkenburg, and others to Robertson, October 31, 1919, Folder 1, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[113] Kenny Brown, "Peaceful Progress: An Account of the Italians of Krebs, Oklahoma," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 53 (Fall 1975): 332; Murray, *Red Scare*, 158.

November 3, State Chief Mine Inspector Ed Boyle sent out a letter to all assistant mine inspectors regarding the attitudes that the government office needed to take to diffuse the situation. He clearly endorsed a non-confrontational posture, instructing his staff not to take sides in the dispute or use the power of the office to aid one over another. He next took a jab at Robertson, whose famous escapade during the Drumright ordeal remained fresh in the minds of Oklahomans. Boyle explained that, while officials had a right to personal opinions in any controversy that arise, they had no right to inject their opinion in official acts and that one needed to stand openly for law and order. Any group, miners or operators, deserved the same if they violated laws and civil authority. Perhaps predicting Robertson's eventual overreaction, the chief mine inspector said that if the governor decided to suspend civil authority and establish martial law, the duties of the mine inspectors in enforcing mining laws would cease until civil rule was restored. Until then, all inspectors should carry out their duty, he wrote. [114] While Boyle acted rationally throughout the event, Robertson believed that a vast Bolshevist conspiracy lay behind the miner's actions.

In preparation for the walkout, the governor once again called out the National Guard under the command of Adjutant General Barrett. The general's men numbered over 2,000, and occupied positions in effected areas, including McAlester, Henryetta and Coalgate. Countless citizens offered their praise to the governor for his action. Soon after, Robertson sent a call out for volunteer miners to provide coal for the people of

[114] "Ed Boyle to Mine Inspectors," Folder 9, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

Oklahoma.[115] The American Legion sent a letter to Robertson pledging their support in "upholding Law and Order in Oklahoma" and offered to dig coal, do police duty, or any other wish the state desired. The governor responded, thanking the Legion for its "patriotic" offer.[116] Countless citizens viewed the summoning of the Guard as a positive development. Over twenty years after the event, General Barrett looked with pride on the work of the National Guard in what he saw as the state's "first supreme test." He framed the situation as a foreign threat, stating that a large percent of the miners came from other countries and recognized only the orders of mine officials as supreme law. Barrett lauded the governor for his actions, saying that Robertson had tried by intercession with mine leaders to avoid the distresses of the strike, but his pleas had little effect. Barrett maintained that while historical troubles plagued the Ohio and Pennsylvania mining communities, Oklahoma and Arkansas miners had "no particular grievance," and only struck out of sympathy to show solidarity for their brothers in other states. The general claimed that the prompt calling out of the guard and its efficient service in protecting lives and property, as well as the supplying of coal, was welcomed as a great and necessary public service.[117]

Small-scale disturbances occurred throughout the mining community during the guard's deployment. One operator told of a striker who chased two mine company officers away. The miner later threatened the operator's home. General Barrett quickly issued a threat to mine workers stating that if any further disturbances occurred, he

[115] Sewell, "Painted Red," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*: 170.
[116] "Robertson to American Legion," November 12, 1919, Folder 3, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[117] Barrett, *Oklahoma After Fifty Years,* 205-6.

would exert military control over the entire mining district. As the general later recounted, however, some troops encountered favorable conditions among the miners, who welcomed them and expected to get along well with them.[118] He explained the miners themselves thanked the guard for the fair and considerate treatment they had exhibited toward them.[119] Overall the general claimed a great victory for the guard, and held steadfast in his belief that the governor's actions combated the foreign menace of the union workers. Robertson continued to act upon his xenophobic tendencies, and attempted to curtail alien influence in the state.

In statements made during the crisis, Robertson explained his desire to rid Oklahoma of foreign radicals. The population met these statements with overwhelming support. One citizen from Ardmore declared of Robertson that "you hit the bullseye when you said let us deport these aliens."[120] Another individual wrote in an uncompromising letter that "I trust you will insist upon the President causing all foreign miners, who refused to work, after Nov. 1, be deported. If they don't like our 'Uncle Sam' let them go back to their own beloved country."[121] The actions of the governor continued to influence the populace, as citizens appeared on the lookout for suspected Communist activity. One letter from an individual in Oklahoma City maintained "As a patriotic citizen I congratulate you on good stand regarding the mining strike. Will you kindly inform me to whom one should report a man for Bolshevistic talk?"[122] These

[118] Sewell, "Painted Red," 167.
[119] Barrett, *Oklahoma After Fifty Years*, 206.
[120] "Val Mullen to Robertson," October 30, 1919, Folder 3, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[121] "Sam Butler to Robertson," October 30, 1919, Folder 3, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[122] "Rundell to Robertson," November 3, 1919, Folder 4, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

sentiments hardly appear surprising. The near complete inundation of fear spurred by the government, media, pulpit, and schools helped promote such ideals, with each group influencing and feeding off each other at the expense of common sense.

Showcasing his similar lack of rationality and unwillingness to compromise, Governor Robertson called the strike an insurrection leading to anarchy, and an act of disloyalty to the government. He condemned the laborers, and said "The state of Oklahoma cannot abdicate its sovereign rights at the dictates of any foreign controlled labor oligarchy and it will not surrender while I am Governor to a conspiracy among labor leaders that measures the supremacy of our laws, the orderly progress of civil government and the very lives and physical welfare of our people."[123] In an open letter printed during the time, one citizen encouraged harsher laws to protect against agitating workers. "Congress should immediately propose and pass laws to confine the labor unions to their original beneficent purpose, and to control the criminal conspiracy commonly called 'strike.'" The individual called for the execution of union leaders to protect unions from future invasions of anarchists.[124] Shortly after the UMW walkout on November 1, Governor Robertson contacted Attorney General Palmer and told of the dire situation in the state. He mentioned that the coal strike was 100 percent effective, and that he still believed the deportation of aliens was advisable. He concluded by offering his services to Palmer, stating that he desired to cooperate with him "in every

[123] "Statement of Robertson," Folder 4, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[124] "Open Letter," Folder 4, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

way in the entire matter."[125] While threatening removal of foreigners from the mines, Robertson faced the difficult task of filling gaps left by the striking workers.

Robertson fully intended to use volunteer as well as convict labor to work the mines and on November 2, he released a statement justifying his decision to call out the guard. He explained that its purpose was to give every man who wished to work in the mines the opportunity of doing so without interference from the strikers. The governor maintained he would operate every mine in the state where he could receive sufficient help, and admitted to using criminals from the prison farm at McAlester to act as convict labor.[126] Robertson faced a challenge, however, as some states including Illinois and Oklahoma had laws requiring examination of miners before allowing them to work. Chief Mine Inspector Boyle also disagreed with the governor, fearing the influx of inexperienced miners. He stated that he would forbid any operations with "green men," including soldiers.[127] General Barrett later referred to Boyle as a "mild degree of anarchist," and reportedly called him and his deputies lunatics.[128]

Boyle attempted to stymie the governor's plans and on November 10, one of his deputy state mine inspectors unsuccessfully tried to prevent convict laborers from working the mines. Under orders from the chief mine inspector, the deputy inspector went to the McAlester penitentiary to stop operations at the Hiawatha mine. General Barrett took the man into custody, releasing him two hours later. Barrett later issued orders stating that any person who attempted to go through the guard lines to prevent

[125] "Robertson to Palmer," November 3, 1919, Folder 5, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[126] "Governor Asks People to Support National Guard," *Daily Oklahoman*, November 2, 1919, 1.
[127] "Late Bulletins of Coal Strike," *Daily Oklahoman*, November 1, 1919, 1.
[128] "Strike Commission Hearings," November, 1919, Page 8, Folder 13, Box 30, Robertson Papers.

further mine work was to be held by troops. He stated that "wherever our lines are established, martial law is established. Martial law puts out of operation the civil law under which Boyle claims the authority to prevent the working of the mines by convicts." He went on to say that any further attempts to prevent the digging of coal would only lead to more arrests, and he would hold the prisoners until convinced they would not try to make any more trouble.[129]

While the National Guard oversaw the mining camps, an undercover special agent, former Deputy US Marshal Chris Madsen, was sent in to examine conditions. The sending of undercover agents to assess the situation was not new during the strike. Earlier, the U.S. government employed several investigators to infiltrate and damage the reputation of the United Mine Workers and its president, John Lewis. An injunction handed down by the government in October forbidding the UMW to take part in the proposed strike helped set up a legal precedent for federal investigation once the violation occurred. Afterwards, Attorney General Palmer sent out word advising U.S. attorneys to cooperate with U.S. Marshals and Bureau of Investigation agents to search out violators of the injunction.[130] Madsen figured prominently into the aforementioned plan and was dispatched to the coal mines to uncover the supposed intentions of the strikers. He interviewed the superintendent of the mines, and attempted to discover the state of the situation. Madsen reported that the surface mines "can be worked at any time with unskilled labor." He commented on the status of explosives at the mines, and

[129] "Gets Arrested For Try Stop Working Mines," *McAlester News-Capital*, November 11, 1919, 1.
[130] Schmidt, *Red Scare,* 228.

the lack of sufficient guards to protect the stores from being raided by striking miners. Madsen explained that the superintendent consented to put more men to watch the magazines and to confer with the military officers and abide by their decision to employ more guards. He went on to tell how he secretly interviewed miners and union members, and how some of them sought work on other places such as the lead mines. Reiterating the non-revolutionary aims of the workmen, Madsen reported that that they did not want the public to suffer, and would make no objections to anyone working in the mines. The special agent also told of the poor working conditions miners had to endure, and how both they and mine operators suffered from it. "The miners in this district are practically broke… not withstanding the bold face they have shown they will be compelled to work or stave in a very short time or else go to work at other occupations."[131] Madsen's report presented a clear rebuttal to the fear-mongering sentiments of the government, media, and public. His conclusions revealed that the union miners were not influenced by radical, communist ideology, nor were they opposed to non-union laborers working to provide coal for the state. They merely wished for operators to improve their conditions and would not violently stand in the way of the government.

Robertson ignored Madsen's report, and continually sent other operatives undercover as intelligence agents, including National Guard personnel. A report issued by the National Guard in the McAlester coal mines provided information about the

[131] "Madsen Report," Folder 4, Box 11, November 8, 1919, Robertson Papers.

suspected cases of radicalism among the workers. The document revealed that IWW leaders started courting UMW laborers that they thought could be useful to their cause. "He is then asked quietly to join. In the event of refusal, he is asked two more times; if he refuses the third time, he is shot from ambush. One instance of this kind happened near Hartshorne." The report went on to dispel rumors of radical support, maintaining that the strikers as a body did not endorse the IWW, and in fact, seemed very much afraid of them.[132] In another report from the 2nd Infantry, an undercover officer reported that few strikers expressed a willingness to go back to work except under a written order from their UMW superiors. The mood of the strikers appeared extremely sullen, with some reports of resentment towards the National Guard. One example told of a certain doctor in McCurtain who pretended to be a friend of the guard and offering his medical services. After treating an injured hand of one of the men, the doctor later went away and stated that he wished it had been the guardsmen's neck instead of his hand that was injured.[133] As witnessed, not everyone remained pleased with the calling out of the National Guard. One telegram from the Oklahoma School of Mines requested the governor to remove all troops from the buildings and campus. They complained that school was impossible and that if not removed at once, students "will quit."[134]

Despite minor setbacks, the guard continued in its duty to protect the mines, as national representatives of both sides sought an end to the conflict. To that end, a federal judge issued an injunction against the UMW's leaders, with the union filing a

[132] "Regimental Intelligence Officer to Commanding Officer," Folder 8, Box 11, November 9, 1919, Robertson Papers.
[133] "Intelligence Officer, 2nd Inf., to Commanding Officer, 2nd Inf.," Folder 8, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[134] "Student Committee to Robertson," November 4, 1919, Folder 4, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

countersuit demanding the order be lifted. After threats and legal wrangling, the union agreed to an order issued by Judge A.B. Anderson to withdraw the strike order. After a lengthy debate between the two parties, at around 4:10 in the morning John Lewis voiced his compliance with the court, stating that "we do it under protest. We are Americans. We cannot fight our government. That is all." The union later issued a statement to all its workers declaring their cancellation of the strike order.[135]

By November 13, coal miners and operators once again convened at the meeting table to negotiate a new wage scale. Over 200 operators and 100 representatives from miners attended the conference. Spirits remained high as miners expected to receive improved wages while the government and public at large expected them to resume work in the mines. While the strike recall order had been received, Illinois district President Frank Farring stated that he did not believe the men would return to work. Alexander Howat, President of the Kansas miners, numbering around 10,000, was quoted as saying he looked for no general resumption of production. The *McAlester News-Capital* reported in hopeful tones however, stating that "from West Virginia, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah came optimistic reports. In the majority of mines in those states it was believed normal production would be reached by Monday."[136] On November 18, the *News-Capital* reported that National Guardsmen intended to leave per orders from General Barrett. He informed

[135] "Orders End of Strike," *McAlester News-Capital*, November 8, 1919, 1; "Mine Union Officials Decide to Call of Strike Order as Federal Court Directed, *McAlester News-Capital*, November 11, 1919, 1; "Mine Union Officials Decide to Call of Strike Order as Federal Court Directed, *McAlester News-Capital*, November 11, 1919, 1.

[136] "Coal Miners and Operators Confer with Secretary Wilson Regarding Agreement Friday," *McAlester News-Capital*, November 13, 1919, 1.

Robertson that, in light of the successes in negotiation, continued presence of the guard was useless. The guard had arrived on November 1, the day the strike began, and as the local McAlester paper stated, had little to do during the crisis. "Sent purely as a precautionary measure, there has been no hint of trouble which would occasion their use."[137]

The conference between mine operators and labor stalled, as both sides argued over proposed wages. By late November, the talks collapsed. Frustrated with the lack of progress, the US government threatened to take over all idle coal mines if owners failed to increase production. On November 29, mine owners offered to open up the work sites to non-union men.[138] Robertson selected President of the State Board of Agriculture and Chairman of the State Council of Defense J.A. Whitehurst to oversee the use of volunteer labor in the state. Whitehurst proposed that rations of coal be based on number of volunteers each county supplied to work in the mines and fixed wages based on the last government offer at the conference with the UMW, which was a 14 percent increase from current wages.[139] Robertson appealed for federal troops to protect the volunteer force, and again called out the National Guard. One member of the State Council of Defense declared that "volunteers by the hundreds from all sections have offered their services in manning the coal mines of the state." He told of scores of offers and telegrams pouring into his office, and all throughout the state citizens volunteered

[137] "National Guardsmen to Leave Wednesday Following Advice from Adjutant Gen. Barrett," *McAlester News-Capital*, November 18, 1919, 1.
[138] "US To Take Over All Idle Coal Mines," *McAlester News-Capital*, November 28, 1919, 1; "Owners to Throw State Mines Open to Non-Union Men," *McAlester News-Capital*, November 29, 1919, 1.
[139] Sewell, "Painted Red," 173-4.

to work in the mines. These efforts eventually produced 3,000 tons of coal, but provided less than one-half of the state's daily demand, estimated at 7,000 tons.[140]

Unfortunately for Robertson, comments he made early in the crisis came back to haunt him. As the strike began, the governor had encouraged citizens to practice self-preservation and seize any coal supply they could possibly lay their hands upon. This caused some individuals in western Oklahoma to steal coal from freight trains passing through the state. In one instance, an engineer reported that a mob confiscated his shipment of coal after they were informed his train carried an entire car of the precious resource. The locomotive originally intended to carry the coal to Tipton to supply the town. The train engineer recommended that distribution of coal be stopped altogether unless they had public support.[141] On December 2, 1919, these actions forced Robertson to backtrack from his earlier statements, as the federal regional director of railroads instructed the governor to cancel his call for self-preservation or else he would halt all trains operating in Oklahoma. Robertson was attending a coal conference in Chicago at that time and hurriedly rushed back to the state to rescind his previous call to action.[142] The governor's irresponsible handling of the strike compounded the already difficult situation, and demonstrated his aversion to reason during the panic-induced event.

By the time Robertson returned to Oklahoma, an increasing number of volunteers had arrived to work in the mines. To protect the workers from the supposedly violent conditions, Robertson declared martial law on December 4, 1919, in

---

[140] "First Workers to be Sent to Dawley Mines," *McAlester News-Capital*, December 1, 1919, 1.
[141] "BF Bush to Robertson," Folder 5, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[142] "Trains Through State May be Stopped Unless Orders Obeyed," *McAlester News-Capital*, December 2, 1919, 1.

Pittsburg, Latimer, Leflore, Haskell, Coal, and Okmulgee counties.[143] Officially, Robertson declared that he sought to protect the lives of citizens, uproot sedition, prevent sabotage and criminal syndicalism, and secure coal for fuel purposes whereby the lives and health of the people may be properly protected.[144] The governor then requested 1,000 federal troops to assist. A controversy arose when the commander at Fort Sam Houston offered to include two black infantry companies. Robertson protested fiercely and prevented them from being called out. The governor later wrote that owing to his protest, the government would call for white troops only.[145]

With the freedom allowed the government during martial law, breaks in union solidarity slowly appeared as Robertson took harsher actions. The governor ordered all strikers and their families evicted from company houses at the Dawley mines southeast of McAlester. After negotiation, the miners agreed to go back to work as volunteers if troops would protect them. General Barrett surmised that only half would return to work. The *News-Capital* assessed that an ultimatum had forced the miners back to work recommended such actions as the only path to future success.[146]

By December 9, both parties agreed to a conference in Indianapolis to solve the issues. Attorney General Palmer remained confident that workers would accept the new government proposal, which included a 14 percent wage increase and a guarantee from

[143] "Public Notice," *Daily Oklahoman*, December 6, 1919, 1.
[144] "Declaration of Martial Law," Folder 9, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[145] "Robertson to Clarence Douglas," December 4, 1919, Folder 5, Box 11, General Correspondence, Governor J.B.A. Robertson, Governors' Papers, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
[146] "Dawley Miners Agree to Return to Pits Under Military Edict," *McAlester News-Capital*, December 6, 1919, 1.

President Wilson to create an investigative committee for the purposes of wage readjustment given the increased cost of living. The two sides reached a compromise, leaving Robertson severely unhappy.[147] The governor dramatically opposed the compromise in Indianapolis. In a letter to an acquaintance, he wrote "You must not forget that this coal strike was settled against my wishes. I have at all times opposed any compromise. I was very much opposed to the compromise effected at Indianapolis."[148] He also said "If I had been consulted in regard to the matter at all, there would have been no compromise at all. As it was, however, I was compelled to withdraw the volunteers and troops after the order had been issued from Washington." Robertson concluded his letter by mentioning the effect of the volunteers and cited their intelligence and patriotism as the key weapon that helped stem the tide of the strikers.[149] By December 11, the *News-Capital* reported in bold headlines that over four thousand union miners would return to the McAlester mines for the first time since November 1, with others heading back to work nationwide. After the settlement, the paper portrayed the miners in an understanding tone, saying that "their strike was a sympathetic one. While they demanded an increase in wages and while they will profit by the 14 percent increase... they had no personal quarrel with any of the operators of Oklahoma. They stopped work when miners and operators of the central competitors did."[150]

Despite this sympathy for the miners, numerous citizens lavished praise upon Robertson for his heavy-handed actions during the strike. Contemporaries saw his

[147] "Coal Strike is Near End," *McAlester News-Capital*, December 9, 1919, 1; Sewell, "Painted Red," 176.
[148] "Governor Robertson to Jasper Hale," December 18, 1919, Folder 7, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[149] "Robertson to Hale," Folder 5, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[150] "State Miners Back on Jobs on Thursday," *McAlester News-Capital*, December 11, 1919, 1.

policies as a reinforcement of the paranoid hysterical attitude that prevailed during the time period. Robertson expressed no regrets. Pioneer Cotton Mills stated that the stand Robertson took against the miner's strike was commendable, writing: "Every good citizen of Oklahoma will be willing to back you up in whatever step it might take to see that your orders are obeyed." Another congratulatory letter from the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma explained: "As far as I have been able to ascertain, all the anarchists, socialists, and criminals at large are bitterly opposed to your recent conduct toward the miners' strike."[151] The President of Central State Normal School John G. Mitchell wrote to the governor making note of a criticism by a member of the United Mine Workers, and explained that such a harsh denunciation was a distinct honor. "I take this opportunity of saying to you that your action in this crisis should meet, and in my judgment will meet, the hearty endorsement of a grateful public," he argued. "If there is anything that Central State Normal can do further to assist you please command me."[152]

After union workers returned to the mines, a commission appointed by Robertson released a report in January 1920, attempting to solve questions over the causes of the strike. The information was collecting through hearings conducted in November and December of 1919, with the final report reaching the governor's desk at the dawn of the new year. Particular credence in the report was given to the ethnic and international make-up of the miners, and whether they adhered to any Socialist

[151] "Clerk of the Supreme Court to Robertson," Folder 6, Box 11, Robertson Papers.
[152] "John G. Mitchell to Robertson," December 9, 1919, Folder 6, Box 11, Robertson Papers.

tendencies. No evidence of such was found. Taking place in McAlester, committee members interviewed key individuals involved in the strikes, from General Barrett, to local mine operators, and even workers. This report provided a scathing indictment of the Red Scare hysteria, proving that much of the claims of IWW links and foreign-born agitators seemed fraudulent. One of the first questions asked to the adjutant general involved the number of foreigners present in the mines. Barrett replied that 55-60 percent of the workers were American citizens. The committee then asked if foreigners were the most dangerous, to which the general said that the worst element in the mines were the Americans. The questioner asked again "not the foreigners?" Barrett replied "not the foreigners."[153]

This notion at first seemed unbelievable to the committee members, but as the hearing wore on, the supposed Communist and foreign element of the coal strike seemingly evaporated. The general also revealed that the majority of people in the affected coal counties, those closest to the action, held great support for the striking miners. This stood in stark contrast to places where anti-miner and Red Scare sentiment abounded, areas farther away from the actual event. In questioning Major Johnson, a member of the National Guard at McAlester, the committee again inquired whether foreigners influenced the position of American miners. He replied emphatically that such was not the case, and reiterated Barrett's earlier statement that foreign miners were the best behaved, and were humble, meek, and fearful of trouble.[154] After the report

[153] "Commission Hearing," Folder 30, Box 13, Robertson Papers, 4.
[154] "Commission Hearing," Folder 30, Box 13, Robertson Papers, 15.

came out, no connection with Bolshevist activity was seen in the miners' demands and the foreign threat appeared made-up.

The event turned into yet another spectacle of the Red Scare that showcased the irrational fear of the people and government. The key argument in favor of calling out the National Guard and taking strong action against the miners involved workers' links to Communism, foreign influence, and threats to the security of the nation and the state's resources. As soon as the strike occurred on November 1, the people in Oklahoma and across the country called for strong action from the government, demanding the deportation of foreigners, suspected radicals, and any other supposed menace that threatened the security of the state. All sectors of society in Oklahoma, including the government, media, religion, education, and the civilian population succumbed to the hysteria and overreacted to what in any other year would have been a simple labor dispute. The report issued by the government, similar to the Drumright report, proved conclusively that rumors of radicalism were overblown. The foreign miners were actually the best behaved of the group, with the greater threat coming from Americans. The miner's strike along with the Drumright affair stand as the two major pillars of the First Red Scare in Oklahoma. They illustrate the willingness of a population to forgo reason in favor of reactionism and fear, and as the report by the government revealed, the greatest threat came not from the foreign element, but from Americans themselves. The fear endemic to the Scare soon expanded on the national level, and after the end to the coal mining strike, calls against radicalism reached their

peak. As 1919 came to a close and America fearfully entered 1920, a new wave of arrests, deportations, and hysteria would rock the nation.

**Beginning of the End, 1920**

By 1920, major disputes over labor, resources, and radicals associated with the First Red Scare slowly started to subside. After confronting the IWW in the east, and the overblown handling of the Drumright and McAlester strikes, the domestic scene in the state entered a period of relative calm. Minor strikes still occurred, and the state still gave in to the fear exhibited on the national scene. However, no major disturbances or radical activities occurred on the level of those in the previous year. This resulted from the security of the state's resources. The government and populace had successfully crushed the IWW in the oil fields and the presence of the National Guard in Drumright served as a warning to any other imagined Bolshevist who threatened the region. The miners in the coal fields agreed to go back to work, and for now the state's mineral resources appeared safe. While across the nation the First Red Scare would reach its zenith in the beginning of 1920, Oklahoma appeared on the sidelines only. The state still gave in to the hype, though since its resources remained secure, no instances on the level of the events of 1919 occurred. By the summer of 1920, the ludicrous spectacle would burn itself out, leaving behind a startling legacy of post-war fears and insecurities, stemming from the volatile relationship between resources, radicals, and reactionaries.

Despite this, Governor Robertson continued in his steadfast belief of the dangers of radicals, and plainly said as much during a special session of the legislature convened

in the off-year of 1920. In his opening address, the governor told how "no wise man can shut his eyes to the dangers which face us and which, at times, to my mind, threaten to engulf us." He went on to say that "The public mind, in these days, is anything but stable; the fact that some people, ordinarily very reasonable and responsible, cannot see and properly appraise the dangers of the situation is the best evidence of the need of conservatism in every line of human activity."[155] Robertson again defended himself before possible critics, recalling how the coal strike necessitated only the most prompt and vigorous action on his part. He claimed that the situation was such that nothing but "immediate and energetic action" would solve it, and regarding his heavy-handedness of the situation, he said that he did the very best he could under the circumstances, and that, "judging from the newspaper reports, resolutions of civic bodies, letters and other means of communication, that the action of the state… was endorsed by ninety-five percent of the people."[156]

Going against the prevailing tide, and wanting to put an end to the Red Scare madness, Oklahoma Senator Robert L. Owen spoke on the issue of restrictive legislation in January 1920. He proclaimed that that such measures would become dangers "in the highest degree" to the liberties of the all Americans, and that there would be hanging over the head of every person who desired free speech or a free press the menace of some bureaucrat who could suddenly arrest, interfere with, and treat them as a criminal with all the powers of a mighty government brought down upon them. No

[155] *Senate Journal*, 7th Legislature, Extraordinary sess., February 23, 1920, 8-10.
[156] *Senate Journal*, 7th Legislature, Extraordinary sess., February 23, 1920, 10.

citizen, Owen proclaimed, could defend themselves against such an autocratic bureaucrat. He also commented on the irrational fear that pervaded the environment: "We passed laws, under the excitement and hysteria of war, with a view to punishing the so-called Bolsheviks in this country; and I pause to say that in my judgment there are very few Bolsheviks in the United States. The atmosphere of the United States is not such as to encourage bolshevism." [157] While some politicians and news outlets slowly turned against the prevailing hysteria, the seeds had already been planted and matured, causing much damage to the state and its reputation. The seeds of hate would take other forms, as seen during the Tulsa Race Riots in 1921, but for now, some few in the state attempted to stave off the climate of xenophobia and fear that so categorized much of the First Red Scare.

**Conclusion**

As Red Scare fears slowly ebbed, many Oklahomans attempted to return to a sense of normalcy. Governor Robertson continued to serve out his term until 1923, though he would not be reelected. In 1920, in the state's gubernatorial election, Democrats lost control of the Oklahoma legislature, and Robertson would not be successful in any further major legislature ventures. In 1921, the state would face its worst racial violence during the Tulsa Race Riots. Facing a slew of corruption charges, Robertson came within one vote of being impeached. He left the governorship in 1923 and never again held political office. The events of Drumright and McAlester both

[157] Robert L. Owen, "The Sedition Bill," January 20, 1920, pages 3-4, box 4, Robert L. Owen Collection, Congressional Archives, Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

faded into memory, as the prosperous 1920s and the search for normalcy preoccupied many Oklahomans' minds. Regardless, the legacy of Governor Robertson remains powerful in terms of meaning for the First Red Scare. During his tenure, the state government violated the rights of workers, exacerbated local strikes in the case of Drumright, and placed Oklahoma on the map of Red Scare hotspots that garnered national media attention. As many citizens gave way to xenophobic fears, the Governor enlarged these fears and thrust the state into the worst panic it had ever known.

## Chapter 4. New Mexico: Fear and Patriotism on the Border

### Introduction

More than any other state in the country, New Mexico's government showcased the most dangerous aspects of the First Red Scare, depriving their own citizens of civil liberties while plunging the nation the closest it ever came to international war following World War I. Under Governor Octaviano Larrazolo and Senator Albert B. Fall, and aided by a voracious and jingoistic media, New Mexico plunged headlong into the abyss before the federal government reigned the state in. For the governor's part, Larrazolo would feed pre-existing xenophobic attitudes, doing nothing to discourage racism against suspected Mexican radicals. In addition, he held a deep fear of labor activism, decrying any form of agitation as anarchy and akin to Communism. As the only non-white governor in the United States during the First Red Scare, Larrazolo took an especially harsh stance against the coal miners' strike in 1919. Wishing to portray New Mexico as patriotic and "American to the core," he stoked fears against radical labor and Mexican Bolshevists as local newspapers reported both traveled across the U.S.-Mexican border with impunity. The crusade brought the governor into conflict with a local mayor and even the federal government, who each decried his declaration of martial law and illegal use of the National Guard. Similarly, New Mexico's Senator Albert Fall carried on efforts on the national scene, stoking fears of a Communist Mexico that threatened to spread chaos across the border. Calling for direct intervention and war with Mexico, Fall would form committees, present reports, and even attempt to persuade President Woodrow Wilson to intervene to prevent Bolsheviks from seizing power in both countries. By the actions of these two men, New Mexico led the way in

stoking the fires of xenophobia, racism, and war, leading to potential catastrophe in New Mexico, the United States, and Mexico itself.

Governor Larrazolo was born in Allende, Chihuaha, Mexico, on December 7, 1859. He traveled to the United States under the sponsorship of Bishop J.B. Salpointe of Arizona, and attended St. Michael's College in Santa Fe from 1875-1876. Joining the Republican Party, Larrazolo became a law clerk in the U.S. District Court system in El Paso, Texas, and was admitted to the bar in 1888. He moved back to New Mexico in 1895 and in 1911, served as a Latino delegate chosen to attend the territory's constitutional convention. Along with other Latino delegates, he successfully ensured that the policies of racial segregation that applied to African-Americans would not apply to Latinos in the state. His popularity caused the New Mexican Republican Party to nominate him for governor of the state in 1918 and he narrowly won the election, becoming the first Mexican-born Latino to govern any state.[1] As a newly elected governor who was also an immigrant from Mexico, Larrazolo was obsessed with proving the "Americanism" of the state, and ensuring his own credibility as a loyal American and rising star in Republican politics. The First Red Scare would provide Larrazolo with such a chance, and put him on a course that would have ramifications not only for his political career, but for his entire state as well.

**New Mexican Views on National Events**

As the First Red Scare progressed, a strong climate of fear and suspicion remained especially prominent in New Mexico. Fear-mongering newspapers warning of racial perils barraged citizens regularly, with headlines warning against "Hun terror,"

[1] John Chávez, *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 102-103.

Bolshevik conspiracies, and "grave Japanese perils."[2] The world appeared on fire to residents of the state, as every day brought another new calamity. Race played a key role in intensifying this hysteria. Local papers regularly reported on the race riots that occurred throughout the summer, and by September, New Mexican papers gravely told of how "race rioters turn[ed] terror loose" in Nebraska.[3]

State papers generally took a negative view of labor, with one paper printing that union control would mean the end of industry. Proudly reprinting propaganda from major companies, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* recounted one U.S. Steel executive who said that if unions controlled industry, it would mean "decay and the dropping of production." In reporting on the major steel strike of 1919, another paper told how related labor events in Gary, Indiana, helped sow the seeds of anarchy. Later, the same paper accused steel mill workers of engaging in a Soviet plot to overthrow the government, and that unions had a stranglehold on the public. The paper then ran a story on how unionism led to Bolshevism, and that it set up systems worse than "Kaiserism."[4] Showing how the population refocused its hyperpatroitic energies from Germany onto the labor movement, this anti-union bias geared the population up for support against strikers as the United Mine Workers prepared to engage in one of the largest walkouts of miners the country had ever seen.

**The Coal Strike of 1919**

[2] "Japanese Peril is Grave," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 27, 1919, 1.
[3] "Furious Race Rioters Turn Terror Lose," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 29, 1919, 1.
[4] "Union in a Soviet Plot," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 4, 1919, 1; "Gary Sows the Seeds of Anarchy," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 3, 1919, 1; "Unionism Leads to Bolshevism," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 21, 1919, 1.

On October 23, the *Gallup Independent* reported that New Mexican miners would take part in the nationwide coal mining strike beginning November 1.[5] Governor Octaviano A. Larrazolo issued a proclamation to the state, demanding miners to stay on the job. The governor blamed foreign elements in the United States for labor troubles, stating that "I am firmly of the belief that if our true American working men understood and realized the underlying objectives of foreign doctrines that are being preached... they would not lend a willing ear to the so-called apostles of reform."[6] The governor's words had no effect and the strike went on as planned on November 1st.

Larrazolo remained predisposed against miners' demands, and denounced radical elements in labor that he saw as causing much harm to the country. During a memorial ceremony for the recently deceased President Theodore Roosevelt, the governor maintained that the former president had warned throughout his life on the dangers that lurked within America's borders. He quoted Roosevelt, saying that "The worse foes of America are the foes of that orderly liberty without which our republic must speedily perish. The reckless agitator who arouses the men to riot and bloodshed is, in the last analysis, the most dangerous of the workingman's enemies." Larrazolo commented that a grateful people would seek to raise a monument to Roosevelt's memory, and that it would rise before mankind commanding respect and invoking indebtedness for generations to come. Colonel R. Twitchell, New Mexican chairman of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, invoked similar sentiments as Larrazolo, pointing out that at a time when there existed so much industrial unrest, he felt it appropriate to invoke Roosevelt's ideas of Americanism to the "un-Americanized foreign element,"

[5] "Coal Mining Will Be Suspended in New Mexico on Nov. 1," *Gallup Independent*, October 23, 1919, 1.
[6] "Governor Calls on New Mexico Coal Miners to Stay at Work," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 24, 1919, 1.

which he considered the main source of present industrial disturbances throughout the country. The affair proved to be awash in patriotic pride, including an impressive flag ceremony, officers and men who had served in the Civil, Spanish-American, and World Wars, and a brief address calling attention to the love Roosevelt bore for the flag. The audience responded, reading from the program's pledge to the flag, with a so-called liberty chorus singing "Onward Christian Soldiers."[7] Governor Larrazolo and fellow orators used the day's pageantry and patriotism to drum up support against union laborers, and appeared strongly opposed to their demands as the mining crisis escalated.

As the deadline for the national strike loomed, miners in Gallup held a mass meeting to discuss their grievances in hopes that the government would listen to them. A large number of coal miners and other mine employees flocked to the meeting site, with one paper reporting that "practically every man employed in the mines" in Gallup attended. Several union members gave speeches, and also provided opportunities for all workers not members to join the UMW. Many did so, and echoed complaints about the high cost of living since the end of the war. They felt that they had sacrificed much to win the war only to find themselves held hostage by robbers and profiteers. These unscrupulous mine owners reaped considerable profits while mine workers' wages remained frozen. Nearly 1000 workers attended the meeting, with hundreds joining the UMW on the eve of the walkout. The chairman of the meeting, representing the UMW, asked those who were already members to rise. A large number did so, and afterwards, the chairman asked those who did not rise if they wished to join. This brought every man in the house to his feet. According to one paper, some local citizens believed that the men were afraid to show that they were members of the Union, as the government

[7] "Gov. Larrazolo Warns Against Red Agitator," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 28, 1919, 1, 6.

had engaged in deportations in Gallup during the war. This demonstration proved without a doubt, however, that all were proud members of the UMW, unafraid of what was to come. As tensions flared at the meeting, it quickly became clear that the strike would proceed on schedule, with many workers maintaining a steely resolve.[8]

As the great walkout began, papers across the state began reporting of the empty mines. Roughly 95 percent of miners left, with one news outlet saying that only twelve workers returned across all the mines in the county. Mine operators stated that they would start ejecting absent workers from the camps at once if they refused to return to work. Roughly 700 miners at Gallup alone were reported absent, representing a large percentage of the 4800 men employed in coal mining in the state.[9] Concurrent with these reports, New Mexican newspapers alleged that "Bolshevist conspirators" existed throughout the country, and fomented trouble wherever they went. The *Santa Fe New Mexican* reported that the "terrorist menace" had gained a foothold and become widespread in Cleveland, and that dozens of communist cells existed in that city alone. The paper reported that police were on the trail of one plotter in Chicago who hoped to "leave the city at their mercy."[10] The media appeared hyped up on "red terror" plots, and engorged the reading public with daily accounts that linked labor unions with radicalism, doing the striking miners no favors in the realm of public opinion. One article drove the point home even further, as it said in bold headlines on the front page that union labor had effectively declared war on the United States. Another said during the strike that the Bolsheviks were working hard to overthrow the American system of

[8] "Miners Hold a Mass Meeting," *Carbon City News*, November 1, 1919, 1.
[9] "700 Miners at Gallup Go Out," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 1, 1919, 1.
[10] "Reds Thick in City of Cleveland," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 30, 1919, 1; "Bomb Plot Uncovered," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 29, 1919, 1.

government, and that Russian “reds” had availed themselves of every opportunity to bring about a revolution in the United States.[11]

Soon after the strike, the local coal mining town newspaper, the *Gallup Independent,* engaged in a war of words with the *Albuquerque Journal.* It accused the *Journal* of being in the pocket of the "coal barons" for suggesting that the Gallup branch of the American Legion wished to volunteer to prevent lawlessness in the coal fields. The *Independent* clarified the Legion's position, stating that the organization had no desire to volunteer as strike breakers, did not expect violence, and that local authorities could handle any situation that arose.[12] While larger state papers printed stories hyping the situation, local outlets closer to the coal fields maintained an attitude of calm and attempted to correct the misinformation that categorized the First Red Scare. That same day on November 3, Governor Larrazolo issued an official proclamation widely reprinted in major state papers. He stated that the strike had produced a "condition of public excitement and insecurity" that amounted to insurrection in Colfax and McKinley counties. He went on to say that people willing to work faced violence to themselves and their families from other miners. Giving in to the prevailing sense of fear and suspicion, the governor stated that said communities could "not be given under the ordinary process of law," and that the peace of the entire state remained in jeopardy.

Proclaiming a state of insurrection in those counties, Larrazolo declared martial law and called on federal troops to intervene. Without waiting to assess the situation, he hastily telegrammed the commander at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, and declared that

---

[11] “Declare War on U.S.,” *Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 31, 1919, 1; “Bolsheviki are Working Hard to Overthrow U.S. System of Rule,” *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, November 5, 1919, 1.
[12] "Gallup Legion Did Not Volunteer Service to State during Strike," *Gallup Independent*, November 6, 1919, 1.

the strike of coal miners had assumed threatening and dangerous proportions, and that he requested federal soldiers come to the aid of New Mexico. Pursuant to Field Order No. 2, the 8th Cavalry of the regular army stationed itself in Gallup, and commenced with policing duties across the city.[13] This sparked a confrontation with Mayor A.T. Hannet of Gallup, who became enraged that the governor would send troops without even asking him. On November 2, Hannet stated that there was no need for troops, and that it would only cause violence rather than dissuade it. The mayor argued that there had not been a single occasion for an arrest, and that he vigorously protested against sending troops without even consulting him, thereby intimating that the people of Gallup were not capable of preserving the peace. "I express [the] sentiment of 99 percent of citizens in protesting. It will have [the] tendency to disturb, not pacify. Local sheriffs at Raton disagreed with mayor Hannet's assessment, and exclaimed that the situation was out of control. The governor requested a further 600-700 additional troops and sent a telegram to the commander at San Antonio, Texas, wanting reinforcements for the coal camps in Colfax County.[14]

Larrazolo, in private letters to an acquaintance, revealed his true motive for declaring martial law. He explained that "it has been the history of every strike, of which I have had knowledge, that the strikers will not satisfy themselves with quitting work, but that they go further, and by actual violence when it is necessary they prevent others from doing the work that they themselves refuse to do." He went on to say "that

[13] Governor Octaviano A. Larrazolo, "A Proclamation by the Governor," November 3, 1919, Governor Octaviano A. Larrazolo Papers, Folder 153, Box 8, New Mexico State Records Center Archives, Santa Fe, NM (hereafter shortened to Governor's Papers); "Governor Larrazolo to General Dickman," November 1, 1919, Folder 153, Box 8, Governor's Papers.
[14] "A.T. Hannet to Governor Larrazolo," November 2, 3, 4, 1919, Governor's Papers, Folder 153, Box 8."Governor Appeals for 600 More U.S. Troops to Police Camps Near Raton," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 3, 1919, 1.

is anarchy pure and simple, also known as mob rule, and more modernly as Bolshevism." Larrazolo mused that a successful strike of coal miners would mean the destruction of the U.S. government and the establishment of a Soviet state. "It is plain that that is the final objective of the united workingmen of the whole country; and this period of social and economic unrest is not going to abate... until this strike is finally settled once and forever; and that means strikers must... go back to work unconditionally and under existing conditions."[15]

With this hysterical mindset in place, Mayor Hannet's objections fell on deaf ears. Governor Larrazolo went ahead with the declaration of martial law and cavalry units from El Paso, Texas, soon converged on the town. Local papers reported that people reacted with curiosity, wanting very much for the squadron to perform cavalry drill exhibitions for them.[16] Outside of Gallup, American Legion posts reacted with fervor. One group from Lordsburg offered its services in securing the coal fields, saying that it would help resist "all attempts to overthrow the state and federal governments by IWW and Bolsheviki and similar public enemies." The governor responded affirmatively, thanking them for their patriotism and "Americanism" and requested them to organize at once under the adjutant general.[17]

Newspapers lost no chance in capitalizing on the hysteria, and publishing many editorials and reports agreeing with the governor's illogical assessment. In a story reprinted shortly after the declaration of martial law, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* reported that Bolsheviks intended to gain a foothold in the country, and have "availed

[15] Larazzolo to Richard Edmonds, Governor's Papers, Box 5.
[16] "Squadron of Eight Cavalry Stationed in City," *Gallup Independent*, November 6, 1919, 1.
[17] American Legion, "Edward A. Mitchell to Governor Larrazolo," November 1, 1919, Governor's Papers, Box 8, Folder 155; Larrazolo, "Larrazolo to American Legion," November 2, 1919, Governor's Papers, Box 8, Folder 155.

themselves of every opportunity to initiate in the United States a propaganda aimed at the forcible over throw of our present form of government."[18] As troops converged on the affected counties, striking miners stood in solidarity with the rest of the nation. Refusing to go back to work until they received official word, New Mexican miners experienced a surge in union membership. In the month of August, the local in Gallup reported only 22 members. By November, it reported over 500 members. As one miner proudly declared: "Practically every man in this district is now a member of the United Mine Workers of America," one member proudly stated.[19] This explosive growth in membership provided even greater strength and resolve for the miners, and meant less of a chance that the strike would be settled quickly.

On November 7, the governor received a heavy blow against his efforts to use federal troops to quell labor protests when the War Department in Washington sent him a letter reprimanding him for his conduct. The letter stated that federal troops were designed to resist and overcome enemies of the government and was provided strictly for federal use. They were not supposed to be utilized for the purpose of quelling disorders or riots among citizens, unless such citizens assumed the position of enemies of the government or endeavored to overthrow the state. In a stinging criticism of Larrazolo's methods, Secretary of War Newton Baker stated that the governor's use of federal troops could have been avoided if his state took adequate, proper, and timely measures for the suppression of lawlessness and disorder which could potentially ensue. He further asserted that it should be understood that government forces were designed not to oppose or favor one party in a dispute, but to protect states and localities from

[18] "No Chance Lost by Bolsheviks to Get Foothold in the US," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 4, 1919, 6.
[19] "Miners not to Return to Work at Gallup Mines," *Gallup Independent*, November 13, 1919, 1.

more severe threats. Requesting the governor's "earnest efforts and immediate cooperation," the secretary of war concluded his letter.[20] The governor acknowledged the letter but failed to mention publicly this chastisement from the War Department. Federal troops debated withdrawing without the governor's consent, though a local captain in writing to the governor assured him that he would be informed once the commanding general made his decision. He did indicate that troops would be withdrawn in the very near future. Despite this, he gave his voice of support for staying until most of the miners had returned to work.[21]

As the governor faced his own internal crisis with federal troops, he faced an ordeal confronting other governors across the Southern Plains as New Mexican citizens faced the prospect of a winter without heat. In Raton, the governor strongly warned mine operators that coal had to be produced no matter the condition. Fearing the dangers of an upset public, Larrazolo announced he intended to make a personal tour of the mines of the state, with a mission to see who wanted to work. Under supervision of the military, some miners in Gallup began going back to work, and military reports from the camps revealed no disturbances or indication of any kind of disorder.[22] The relative calm shattered on November 7, as an explosion in Madrid in Santa Fe County occurred, burning several miners. The local mine superintendent reported that the cause was "probably incendiary," and had destroyed the tipple of one of the coal mines with some men being painfully though not seriously burned. Local townspeople rushed to the scene, with many women filling in as nurses in the absence of local medical

[20] "Newton Baker to Governor Larrazolo," November 7, 1919, Governor's Papers, Box 8, Folder 156.
[21] "Captain [name unintelligible] to Governor Larrazolo," November 15, 1919, Governor's Papers, Box 8, Folder 156.
[22] "Troops at Raton," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 6, 1919, 1.

professionals. With the news of suspected arson, public opinion in New Mexico turned strongly against striking miners. Miners in the meantime appeared quiet, with many refusing to speak to reporters. One paper opined that "from appearances one could guess that they are pondering what to do next."[23]

On November 20, miners in New Mexico contemplated returning to work, with many attempting to labor in other mines around the state. Mine operators bluntly refused their services, with many miners complaining that this refusal came about due to their membership in the UMW. Facing discriminatory tactics by local mine operators, the workers again voted to continue the strike. Papers reported that because of this poor treatment, many seasoned miners fled Gallup and moved towards the state's eastern coal fields. Roughly 300 miners and their families relocated between November 17 and November 27, representing a dramatic exodus of skilled labor from one of the state's most vital resource producing areas.[24]

As the strike situation continued, Governor Larrazolo heard once again from Secretary of War Baker, who regretted that the governor did not appreciate the spirit of his original communication. He maintained that Washington deemed it essential that New Mexico provide suitable forces to assume control over its own state functions and that upon informing the federal government, federal troops would return to performing their normal duties. Baker urged Larrazolo to make a sincere effort immediately to organize a National Guard, and that if present laws prevented him, then he should alter such laws to expedite the process. This comment by the Secretary of War no doubt did much damage to the self-confidence and public image of Governor Larrazolo, who

[23] "Explosion and Fire; Madrid; Miners Burned," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 8, 1919, 1.
[24] "Miners Quit When Men are Refused Work," *Gallup Independent*, November 20, 1919, 1; "Miners Leaving for Eastern Coal Fields," *Gallup Independent*, November 27, 1919, 1.

redoubled his efforts to portray the strikers as a grave threat, and doubly show the patriotism of his state.[25]

During the military occupation, New Mexican law enforcement picked up three men accused of preventing the production of coal. According to police, the men had encouraged other miners to abstain from working and remain in solidarity. The government sent the three to the state penitentiary but by early December charges had been dropped and were allowed to return home.[26] One man's family remained hysterical over the conditions surrounding their detention. The wife reported that authorities had thrown the men into a dark jail cell and kept them in solitary confinement. The innocent men shared cells with rapists, murderers, and other "ruffians," and were released only after repeated demands by their attorney. In gross violation of their civil liberties, New Mexican authorities denied the men their right to trial, held them without evidence, and denied them the right to see an attorney upon their arrest.[27] This event would later cause outrage against Governor Larrazolo, although during the crisis many citizens praised his decisive actions against suspected labor radicals.

The *Carbon City News* also reported on the outrages committed against the men, and printed a negative story pertaining to Governor Larrazolo's actions on December 6, 1919. Under direction from the governor, Captain K.B. Edmunds of the 8th Cavalry contacted the editor of the paper, W.H. Hanns, and informed him that his articles about the mining strike violated the 62nd Article of War in reflection on the governor, and tended to incite disorder. Edmunds informed the editor that unless he issued a full

[25] "Newton Baker to Governor Larrazolo," November 21, 1919, Box 8, Folder 156, Governor's Papers.
[26] Larrazolo, "Executive Order," December 3, 1919, Box 8, Folder 153, Governor's Papers.
[27] "Labor Union Men Home from Pen," *Carbon City News*, December 6, 1919, 1.

retraction, his newspaper would be suspended. Under direct intimidation by the military at Larrazolo's behest, Hanns gave in to censorship and agreed to print a retraction.[28]

As the strikers continued their demands, New Mexican papers gave in to greater racial prejudice and printed increasingly alarmist stories about Mexicans. Blaming Hispanic laborers in the border states, papers in New Mexico accused them of radicalism and of harboring Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and Bolshevist sympathies. Authorities arrested one Mexican near a mining camp in possession of a Soviet Constitution in Spanish. Another pamphlet found advocated unionization of all industries, free love, and the overthrow of existing governments. Demonstrating the ineffectual nature of the U.S.-Mexico border as a hindrance, the paper accused Mexicans of spreading the literature across the United States as well as into Mexico.[29] In reporting this story, the newspaper overstated the danger posed by Mexicans. It succeeded however in showing the permeability of the border and how elements from both sides used it to advance their agenda.

By late November, the strike situation reached a crescendo. On the 28th, Governor Larrazolo, at a conference held between government official and mine operators, issued an order for workers in the Gallup coal field to return to work or evacuate company houses. Men who refused to dig coal but still occupied company houses, along with suspected agitators, were given until November 30 to evacuate or face eviction by mounted troops.[30] Workers refused and on the appointed day, the government evicted over 50 miners and arrested another 36 for holding a meeting without a permit. The eviction occurred without incident, showing that Larrazolo's

[28] "Captain Edmunds to Mr. Hans," December 8, 1919, Box 8, Folder 154, Governor's Papers.
[29] "Radicals at Work Among Mexicans of Border States," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 17, 1919, 1.
[30] "Striking Miners at Gallup Must Work or Get Out," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 28, 1919, 1.

overwhelming force was unnecessary.[31] Reporting simultaneously on the deportations of suspected radicals across the country, the *New Mexican* reported that Communists hated the U.S., but would "fight like the devil to avoid being sent away."[32]

Further exacerbating the tense situation, on December 1, the New Mexican state government issued sharp constraints on the consumption of coal, reintroducing war-time restrictions. Industries effected included railroads, coastal and inland shipping, the military and other government departments, county departments, public utilities, retail dealers and household consumers. Railroad administration officials lamented that the application of the order would mean an industrial shutdown of considerable magnitude. Signifying the dire situation, the Albuquerque Gas and Electric Company called on the people of the city to conserve their use of power, announcing that the company only had two days supply of coal. Once it went through its supply, all residents who relied on coal would be without heat for the winter.[33]

That same day, mounted police carried out Larrazolo's order and evicted striking miners occupying company-owned houses in the Gallup coal district. Reports told that those who elected not to go back to the mines quit their housing, going peacefully, "although perhaps not willingly." Preceding the arrival of the police, soldiers had disarmed every civilian in the Coal Basin and Allison camps, loading the confiscated weaponry into escort wagons that followed them from camp to camp. Officials explained to owners that their weapons would be held for safekeeping by the state and would be turned over once the crises abated. In another alarming turn of events that treaded on unconstitutional ground, a local commanding officer banned

[31] "Gallup Miners Evicted from Company Homes," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, December 1, 1919, 1.
[32] "Reds Hate Country," *Santa Few New Mexican*, December 6, 1919, 1.
[33] "Coal Goes Again on a War Basis," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, December 1, 1919, 1.

meetings for the discussion of matters concerning the coal strike unless workers first obtained permission from said officer. The military arrested Steve Katzman, president of a local mining union, along with 36 men for violating this rule, but were forced to release them shortly thereafter as the local jail was too small to hold them.[34]

On December 9, the coal strike came to an end. Agreeing to arbitration plans by President Wilson, mine operators and workers agreed to return to the coal fields, bringing back over 400,000 striking workers. On December 14, Governor Larrazolo lifted martial law from Colfax County, with the remaining troops returning to Fort Bliss, Texas.[35] On December 31, the governor finally lifted martial law in Gallup and gave a stern warning to those who would be disloyal to the United States, particularly those foreign born citizens of the nation. He bluntly said that he did not address himself so much the American citizen, whose loyal devotion to country "is but too well known to me… for they but too well value the worth and incomparable excellence of our government, and certainly fully realize that nothing good can come from disobedience." Rather, Larrazolo made his appeal directly to foreign residents, and called their attention to the fact that they were receiving the full protection of the nation's laws, and that under the liberal government, they reaped the benefits that the nation could offer. America offered rewards to all hard-working, law-abiding people regardless of their background. Rewards they "certainly have never found in their" in their home countries. The governor went on to say "in this connection I would remind them that a sense of gratitude, if not an attachment to our country and its laws demands of them obedience to our laws, respect for duly established authority, and a peaceful and orderly department

[34] "Gallup Miners Evicted from Company Homes," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, December 1, 1919, 1.
[35] "Governor Lifts Martial Law in Colfax County," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, December 15, 1919, 1.

in our midst." This was the least their adoptive country could demand of aliens it harbored and protected, and it was the least that a grateful man should render "to the land that offers to him such unequaled opportunities." Larrazolo concluded that if anyone attempted any form of resistance, disorder, or lawlessness, such individuals would be "promptly and sternly suppressed and due punishment therefore will be firmly meted out."[36] Such strong and shockingly blunt language coming from the governor after there having been little resistance and even less threat from foreign nationals proved to be quite an overreaction. Considering the governor's previous efforts at disregarding law and questionable record with freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, he came off as quite self-congratulatory for securing his state from the imagined menace of foreign radicalism.

Many letters poured in to the governor's office thanking Larrazolo for his strong stance against the supposed mischief of radical labor. Some, however, stood up to the governor. The mayor of Gallup engaged in a war of words with the governor, accusing him of breaking the law. Mayor Hannett boldly accused Larrazolo of violating the U.S. Constitution and state laws, of unjustly evicting workers from company homes, and of illegally arresting the three men charged with violation of martial law regulations. He began his letter saying he felt it his duty as a member of the bar, citizens of New Mexico, and of the United States, and as the chief executive of Gallup to inform the governor of his gross negligence in carrying out his duties as governor. Hannett charged that prior to the governor's declaration of martial law in Gallup, there existed neither violence or threat of violence, or any indication that violence might ensue. The only

[36] "Martial Law in Gallup District to be Lifted on Wednesday," *Santa Few New Mexican*, December 30, 1919, 1.

violence came from the deputy sheriff who guarded one of the mines, and received a fine for drunken and disorderly conduct. Rather, the governor and those acting under him violated the law. Specifically, in New Mexico's Constitution it stated that the military would always be in strict subordination to civil power. Martial law violated that. Also, the mayor invoked the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which he held that the governor also violated when he ordered workers' guns taken away. Similarly, when Larrazolo evicted miners from the camps, he forced them to leave without statutory notice or without trial, resulting in their sacrificing their personal property and right to a lease-hold estate without any process of law.

Hannet remained deeply grieved at the governor's accusations of disloyalty against anyone in Gallup. While he agreed that he thought the strike was illegal and un-American, it did not justify the governor's violation of the law or the Constitution. McKinley County and Gallup stood first and foremost among the counties of the state that doubled their quotas during the war years, and the loyalty of its people and their ability for self-government were second to none. Taking straight aim at the governor's race and heritage, the mayor said that a large majority of the population of the county was Anglo-Saxon, "whose ancestors have labored, fought, bled and died for constitutional government long before you immigrated from our sister republic in the south." He concluded, bluntly saying that Larrazolo had failed miserably at dismantling the unions, as their membership had increased dramatically.[37]

The governor responded smugly, thanking Hannett for providing him with "so much valuable information" concerning constitutional provisions. Larrazolo attempted to dismember Hannet's objections, and compared himself to President George

[37] "Governor Law Breaker Says Mayor," *Santa Few New Mexican*, January 4, 1920, 1, 6.

Washington, saying that under conditions “somewhat similar,” Washington had acted just as he did. Larrazolo then stated that “if it be true that I have so grossly violated the fundamental law of our state and country,” “there certainly ought to be a way of reaching and punishing me for the same, and indeed that ought to be done if I am guilty as you seem to think I am.” The governor said that if such a situation ever arose again during his next term he would certainly pursue the exact same policy. The governor thanked the mayor “for the most learned knowledge that” he had so liberally and gratuitously imparted to him, and wished him a “very happy and prosperous New Year.”[38] No charges ever appeared in court against the governor, and he continued in his position for the remainder of the First Red Scare.

Furthering the racist sentiments of the period, in a report released after the coal strike, the state inspector of mines categorized Mexican workers as less effective than their Euro-American counterparts. Their inferior physique and inability to produce as much coal hampered their usefulness, he stated. However the inspector concluded that "the Mexican is less turbulent by nature than the European, and unless outside influences dominate the coal camps; he will continue to work during periods of industrial unrest."[39]

While the lens of racial hatred appeared more concentrated on Hispanic workers, New Mexican newspapers reported gravely on other threats posed by incoming immigrants. In one article the *Santa Fe New Mexican* warned about the dangers posed by the Japanese. Categorizing immigration from Japan as an imperiling “yellow flood,” the paper told how sojourners from that country continued to violate the “gentlemen’s

[38] "Governor Law Breaker Says Mayor," *Santa Few New Mexican*, January 4, 1920, 1.
[39] "Eighth Annual Report of the State Inspector of Mines," Governor's Papers, Folder 133, Box 8.

agreement" signed by the United States and Japan that severely restricted Japanese immigration. Pundits argued that completely excluding them remained the safest option, and urged law enforcement on the west coast to begin deportation operations as quickly as possible. Otherwise, the United States would be reduced to a province of Asia. Proponents of restrictive legislation argued that the question remained a purely economic rather than racial one. They paradoxically argued that the "white race was hopelessly unable to contend against Japanese economic competition."[40]

The racist atmosphere engendered by many publications on the eve of and throughout the coal mining strike caused many in New Mexico to turn a blind eye towards discrimination and even support restrictive acts against those deemed a threat to American unity. Through race-baiting and appeals to patriotism, the media effectively utilized the Red Scare sense of fear to turn many in the state against each other. Issues came to be dominated by warnings of radical labor and radical minorities, further plunging the state into xenophobia and panic.

**Increasing Fear against Mexico**

As New Mexico became engulfed by the fires of racial hate and fear, international factors came into play that would further stoke these flames. By late 1919, rival factions of rebels opposed to Mexican revolutionary and then President Venustiano Carranza conducted operations that attempted to showcase the leader's weakness. Led by Federico Córdoba, a rebel group planned to kidnap several officials, including the American consular agent in Puebla. They ended up abducting only one consular official by the name of William Jenkins, with the latter being informed that the object of his kidnapping was meant to create an international incident between Mexico

[40] "Japanese Peril is Grave," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 25, 1919, 1.

and the U.S., and that his ransom of 300,000 pesos would be payable only by the Mexican government. Córdoba informed the American embassy that the kidnapping was not mere banditry, but proof that Carranza could not give protection to foreign nationals. Jenkins' wife telegraphed Secretary of State Robert Lansing, along with New Mexico's own Senator Fall, urging the United States to force Mexico to act. The Department of State made it clear that the country's official position was that the Mexican government should take charge of releasing Jenkins, even if payment by them was necessary. Rumors circulated that Jenkins and Córdoba were in cahoots, though no evidence came forth on that matter. Some of Jenkins friends finally established contact with his captors and on October 26, affected his release after the ransom had been paid from a Mexican company of which Jenkins was a heavy stockholder. All seemed to be resolved, though some workers from Santa Lucia later confronted Jenkins and testified that they overheard him having friendly exchanges with his captors. Jenkins denied these accusations, though was arrested by the Mexican government on November 15. Secretary of State Robert Lansing lambasted Mexican officials, accusing them of bad faith, deliberate misrepresentation of Mexican law and the evidence against Jenkins, and of perversion of justice.[41] Jenkins would eventually achieve freedom, though not before adding to long-simmering calls for action against Mexico and its repeated violations of American rights. As one official in the Wilson administration regarded it, the event merely represented one in a long train of wrongs in which the Mexican government had failed to act to the satisfaction of Washington.[42]

[41] Charles Cumberland, "The Jenkins Case and Mexican-American Relations," *Hispanic American Historical Review* (1951): 586-595..
[42] "New Note Sent to Mexico City; Delivered Today," *New York Times*, December 1, 1919, 1.

By late December fears of war with Mexico steadily increased. One New Mexican headline read that Mexican troops were "shooting Americans daily," and that since April 1917, a total of 20 Americans had been killed in Tampico alone. Eighteen of them were employed by American oil companies, and as the crisis mounted, the American embassy in Mexico City urged the Mexican government to take steps to bring the guilty to justice.[43] One military expert informed local media that more planes would be needed to launch a successful invasion of Mexico, if violence there did not abate. The noted expert stated that "the most dangerous enemy the army would face in Mexico would not be the Mexican, but his deserts, his mountains, and his climate and to conquer the first two menaces a large and efficient air force would be necessary."[44] Years of violence along the Mexican border had already frayed many nerves. Cross-border incursions by Pancho Villa, especially the Colombus Raid in 1916, had galvanized civilians across the Southwest, with many volunteering for local police and militia duty.[45] In 1915, racial animosity exploded with the discovery of the Plan de San Diego, a call to arms against Anglos in states ceded to the U.S. in the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, with plans for the establishment of an independent republic with hopes of eventually returning the states back to Mexico. The plan in particular called for the proclaiming of liberty for "individuals of the black race," and that blacks would be aided in obtaining six other states from the United States that they may form their own

[43] "Americans Being Shot Daily in Mexico," *Santa Fe New Mexican,* January 7, 1920, 1.
[44] Planes Needed if We Invade Mexico Expert Authority Informs Solons," *Santa Few New Mexican*, December 9, 1919, 1.
[45] Miguel Levario, *Militarizing the Border: When Mexicans became the Enemy* (College Station: Texas A&M University, 2012), 79; For more information on the raids by Pancho Villa, see Friedrich Katz *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

republic.[46] Racialized tension and increased border security became normalized during the war years, and as the Red Scare expanded, these tensions exploded. Situated among stories of global communist threats, the war drums beat stronger for action against Mexico.

While the climate of fear that existed along the border gave way to xenophobia and racism, it also allowed for new opportunities for some. In early 1920, New Mexico appointed its first female deputy sheriff, given commission by Sheriff Rafael Garcia at the Bernalillo County courthouse. The woman remained unidentified, though the paper said that women would "have a chance to show if they are capable of using their suffrage in more ways than one. The new deputy sheriff filed her bond, received her arms and ammunition, and was detailed for secret service work on January 5.[47]

Despite this lone bright spot, the atmosphere of intolerance would expand along the border, soon engulfing both sides in a war of words over Communist threats. In a news report widely reprinted by papers across the country, and especially in New Mexico, government officials in the state told of great quantities of literature they seized from suspected radicals traveling from Mexico. The report explained that thousands of Mexican laborers were distributing Communist literature in states bordering the United States and Mexico, and were being sent there from the interior of Mexico by IWW sympathizers and Soviet rulers in Russia. The story told of an "underground line" of Russian Communist propaganda coming directly from Mexico into the United States that ran right through the border. This line brought in untold amounts of propaganda,

[46] Benjamin Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 72.
[47] "Woman Receives Appointment as Deputy Sheriff," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, January 6, 1920, 2.

arms, and men across, giving rise to an influx in "Russian radicals and other aliens of Red tendencies." In Arizona, authorities arrested a Mexican who possessed a Soviet constitution translated into Spanish near one of the state's mining camps. The Mexican also possessed translated works from the IWW, and caused many to believe that Wobbly agents and Soviet sympathizers had been sent into Mexico to cause whatever chaos they could. One article cited travelers along the border who said radicalism was spreading rapidly in Mexico, with mining and ranching industries reporting trouble with their workers who profess a belief in nationalization.[48]

Fear increased along the border when, on December 10, a New Mexican paper reported that Bolsheviks and Wobblies threatened to invade America on the Arizona border. Unnamed sources advised immigration officials that no fewer than 50 Russian Communists and 150 IWWs were poised to cross the border into Arizona from Mexico, and that the government needed to take more appropriate measures to increase border security. Appropriations for the maintenance of a border guard, maintained during the war to apprehend violators of passport regulations had been discontinued since July, and immigration service and army intelligence forces had been reduced since the end of the war. The unnamed source said the Russians arrived at Salina Cruz, Oaxaca, on November 1 from Japan, where officials denied them applications for visas to enter the United States. They subsequently sailed on a Japanese steamer for Salina Cruz. The source reported that American secret service agents knew about all these individuals, and were liable to arrest them on sight should they appear in American territory. Because of the unsubstantiated manner of reporting, the New Mexican press

[48] "Radicals at Work Among Mexicans of Border States," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, November 17, 1919, 1; "Red Propaganda is Coming from Mexico," *Dallas Morning News*, November 15, 1919, 1; "Red Propaganda Reaches America Through Mexico," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, November 15, 1919, 1.

irresponsibly continued to hype fears of a cross-border invasion that would never take place.[49]

Despite the controversy, the impact of Communism in Mexico could hardly be called threatening. The Mexican Communist Party (Partido Comunista Mexicano, PCM) was founded in 1919, and was among the first parties to be organized in Latin American following the successful Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. It held strong foreign ties, and maintained close association with the Soviet Union. It came too late to bear any fruit during the Mexican Revolution, however, and soon found itself struggling for members. Similar to other leftist organizations, the PCM grew its members from the labor movement, and its leaders remained deeply influenced by anarcho-syndicalism. They favored revolutionary tactics over the ballot box, and attracted some socialist-minded Americans to its cause. These included primarily draft-dodgers and adventurers, and an American even rose to create the party's official magazine, *Gale*. Communists in Mexico were hardly unified however, as the group had split between members of the hardline PCM and the Mexican Socialist Party. With the founding of the PCM on September 25, 1919, the party began its activities in earnest the following November, the same year as the coal mining strike. While the dates are similar, little evidence suggests Mexican Communists had a hand in the labor dispute.[50]

The PCM made little progress in its nascent years, with its biggest accomplishment being the establishment of a youth wing at the end of 1919. It concentrated primarily inwardly, and by 1920 had attempted to infiltrate Mexican trade

[49] "Bolsheviki and I.W.W. Threaten to Invade U.S. on Arizona Border," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, December 11, 1919, 1.
[50] Karm Schmitt, *Communism in Mexico: A Study in Political Frustration* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1965), 1-7.

unions, gaining control from within. By September of that year, it had organized the Communist Federation of the Mexican Proletariat under the direction of Sen Katayama, a Japanese union leader and Comintern agent. Its main program sought to oppose political action by labor, prevent labor leaders from gaining government jobs, and prevent the affiliation of Mexican labor with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Disputes arose almost immediately, with a high turnover rate in the party. Eventually, under direction by Katayama, the PCM changed its party line to support political action and attempted to solicit funds for the next Mexican election. The party achieved little success, and by 1922, artists and intellectuals had taken over the party. There existed little evidence that the party sought to expand its reach beyond Mexico, and even less proving Mexicans had anything to do with labor strikes in the United States or attempts to overthrow the government there. The party's own ambitions appeared stymied in its home country, and had dramatically little power to effect change on any meaningful scale. Despite this, the American media magnified the supposed Mexican Communist threat, and told wild tales of Bolshevist plots that sought to hurl America into a sea of red.[51]

One newspaper article continued to hype up the red menace by touting a letter seized from Mexican Consul General Ramón P. Negri that "endorsed the principle of nationalism," which seemingly proved his connection with radical socialists. Negri defended his statements by arguing that allowing foreign exploitation by Wall Street capitalists of the Mexican oil industry was criminal, and that his country should not abandon nationalism. In the climate of Red Scare hysteria, border state newspapers

[51] Ibid, 7-10.

interpreted Mexican nationalism through the lens of socialist propaganda.[52] Negri attempted to diffuse the situation, as the possibility of U.S. intervention had a strong precedent. He explained that Mexicans were not connected with radical groups, and showed surprise that his letter caused Mexico to be presented in a sensationalized light. He concluded that Mexico was "not conducting any propaganda in the United States nor has any sum whatsoever been appropriated for such a purpose, and is not in any way connected with the IWW, Bolshevists, or any other radical group."[53]

Other efforts came from Mexico to halt what increasingly looked like another American intervention. One editorial from a Mexican newspaper argued that President Wilson remained chiefly responsible for the Mexican situation as it existed. It claimed that Wilson sought to stir up sentiment against Mexico for American economic gain. “We have profound admiration for the North American republic. For its powerful energy, for its love of work and liberty… but these virtues are little shown unfortunately, in its comportment to Mexico.” The editorial went on: “The president of the United States, contrary to his famous doctrine of no intervention, has intervened in Mexico every time he has seen a chance to gain. All his orations and his democratic romances do not remove one atom from the force of his acts.” The editorial went on to cite the lack of respect shown by the Unites States towards the Carranza government, and played up American efforts at meddling in Mexican affairs. The piece did little to engender any sympathy on the other side of the border. And despite pleas from Mexican

[52] "Red Propaganda is Coming from Mexico," *Dallas Morning News*, November 15, 1919, 1.
[53] "Mexicans Aren't Connected with Radical Group," *Dallas Morning News*, November 17, 1919, 1.

officials such as Negri, stories continued to warn of Communist propaganda from Mexico, with calls ringing out for the extermination of all "reds."[54]

The *Albuquerque Journal* did its fair share of drumming up hysteria and race hate, as it reprinted a radical pamphlet that targeted African-Americans. In "The Negroe and War with Mexico," the article sought to incite blacks to revolt against the government, arguing that they constituted the most miserable and oppressed element of the American proletariat. Having both racial and economic reasons for immediate revolution, they were keenly aware of their precarious situation. "The negro has had a sleeping sickness of many centuries, induced first by the violating tendencies of chattel slavery, but made even worse under the wage slavery that followed emancipation. The negro is not sleeping. He will fight no more wars for his tormenters and tyrants. The article went on to extol how Mexico remained fertile for the sowing of Soviet seeds, and warned that a second Russia would appear right under Wall Street's nose.[55] By coupling purported Mexican Communism with African-Americans, the *Journal* cast undue suspicion on an entire group of people. Racial animosity continued to explode during the First Red Scare, with numerous lynchings, race riots, and increased xenophobia becoming the norm. With this irresponsible piece of hearsay, the *Journal* did profound damage during a time of escalated crisis.

**Albert Fall and the Drumbeat of War**

[54]"Mexican Editor Says Wilson is Mexico's Enemy," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, January 1, 1920, 1; "Reds are Active Among Mexicans Along Boundary, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, November 18, 1919, 1; "American Legion Asks that Reds be Exterminated," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, November 18, 1919, 1.

[55] "Soviet Rule for Mexico is Plan of Radicals There," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, January 12, 1920, 1, 2.

As the situation with Mexico intensified, one of New Mexico's original senators would hitch his rising star to the currents of anti-Bolshevism, racial intolerance, and fear-mongering against Mexico, nearly bringing about a disastrous war that would imperil the lives of millions. Albert Fall, later infamous for his participation in the Teapot Dome Scandal in 1921, began his political career in the New Mexico House of Representatives, serving as a Congressman from 1891-92.[56] During the Spanish-American-Cuban War he served as a captain, and upon his return served as New Mexico Territory's attorney general in 1907. By 1910 he served as a delegate in the future state's constitutional convention, and from 1912-1921, served as one of its state senators. By the time of the First Red Scare, Fall remained fully engaged in the racist fear-mongering that gripped the country, and represented New Mexico's interests in Washington where he tirelessly worked to prevent Mexico's supposed exploitation of the U.S.-Mexican border. To that effect, Senator Fall participated in a senate sub-committee charged with investigating possible actions in response to Mexico's continued "outrages" against America. He, along with Marcus Smith and Frank Brandegee, from Arizona and Connecticut respectively, formed the main body that would decide the fate of U.S.-Mexico relations. Fall, a Republican and supporter of intervention, remained a bitter critic of Wilson, considering his policies too lenient. The senator set about his work, collecting evidence on reported outrages committed against American citizens in Mexico, and investigating the conduct of Mexican officials during the war with Germany. Speaking to a lawyer's club two years earlier, Fall made no secret of his opinion on Mexico. "I favor the immediate organization of an army of

[56] For more information on Fall and his activities during the Teapot Dome Scandal, see Laton McCartney, *The Teapot Dome Scandal: How Big Oil Bought the Harding White House and Tried to Steal the Country* (New York: Random House, 2008).

500,000 men, ostensibly for the policing of Mexico or for the invasion of that country, to protect our citizens." Fall favored reducing Mexico to armed occupation and its creation as a buffer state between the United States and the Latin American republics to the south.[57]

By December, Senator Fall produced what became known as the Fall Resolution, a policy proposal that attempted to drum up support for a war with Mexico. The resolution favored breaking off diplomatic relations with Mexico, and charged the Carranza government with fomenting revolution in America and trying to overthrow the U.S. Government. Specifically, Fall accused the Mexican ambassador to the United States, as well as consul generals in other cities, with aiding in the dissemination of anti-American, revolutionary, and Bolshevist propaganda. Fall proclaimed that his resolution offered "the most mature consideration, on evidence which will in my judgment astound the people of the United States when it is produced." He went on to say that he had listened to revolutionary doctrines being preached in America, and that the situation was far more serious than anyone realized, specifically because the Mexican Government, according to Fall, fostered directly this Communist plot. Naming Mexican diplomats in Washington, New York, and consuls along the border, the senator stated that these agents deliberately stirred revolutionary troubles, were engaged in Bolshevist propaganda, and that Carranza himself endorsed their actions.

Fall continued, saying he was prepared to lay before the Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate a mass of documentary proof of his charges, including letters which he said traced clearly the connection between Carranza, his diplomatic agents, and revolutionary propaganda. Fall displayed as one exhibit a booklet entitled "The

[57] "Investigating Mexico," *New York Times*, September 9, 1919, 16.

Conspiracy Against Mexico," bearing the name of Arthur Thomson. Thomson, Senator Fall said, was an Australian anarchist. The senator declared that he could prove beyond question that a Mexican ambassador had been active in distributing the booklet from Washington. Fall pointed out passages in the booklet which he said showed its dark purpose. These include: "Outside of Soviet Russia no country in the world has taken such a step toward real liberty," and "Soviet Russia and also Soviet Hungary are the only countries that have produced constitutions of the people as have the Mexican revolutionists." Upon its release, the resolution met with a mixed reaction from American senators. Support for an outright declaration of war came from Senator Shields of Tennessee, from which state William Jenkins hailed from. Shields proclaimed that Fall's resolution did not go far enough. He proclaimed that "we have had occasion for war with Mexico for five years, and now this resolution ought to declare war against Mexico." The *New York Times* commented that if the government adopted the Fall Resolution, it would complicate the ongoing Jenkins case. As the resolution would cause Mexican diplomats to be expelled, the only way to secure Jenkins would be through armed intervention. Some congressmen doubted whether the resolution could be passed, although both the House and Senate held deep resentment against Carranza.[58]

Fall, along with Senator Gilbert Hitchcock of Nebraska met with President Wilson on December 4 to discuss the Mexican situation. Dispatches from the meeting reported that the president was weak, but mentally vigorous, and entertained Fall while propped up on a bed and attended by his physician. During the meeting, an aide coincidentally revealed that Mexico had released Jenkins, removing much of the

[58] "Fall Resolution Proposes Break," *New York Times*, December 4, 1919, 1.

impetus for direct action against Mexico. The attending physician reported that news of Jenkin's release fitted into the situation so dramatically that it felt like an actor making a sensational entrance as he broke up the presidential meeting. Until the meeting between Fall and Wilson, the Jenkins case as well as the overall situation with Mexico had been dealt with by the State Department. Before the meeting however, aides acquainted Wilson with the main features of the case and he had some idea of the general charges made by Fall against the Carranza Government. After the hour-long meeting, Hitchcock revealed that the talk remained pleasant, and that Senator Fall had done most of the talking. The president apparently responded to Fall by telling humorous anecdotes, and that the Mexican situation reminded him of an illness, and that "Mexico is so contagious to us that I'm thinkin' we'll have to take it." Joking aside, Wilson agreed to go over Senator Fall's memorandum, and studied it throughout the meeting, marking in the margins as he lay in bed. Wilson promised to provide an answer by the following week.[59]

After the meeting, Fall proclaimed that Jenkin's release, instead of weakening his case, only made it stronger. "It merely proves," said Fall, "that when we go into this Mexican business intending to get somewhere at whatever cost we get somewhere with little cost." Fall argued that he saw no reason for changing his course as his resolution did not deal with the Jenkins case. "The Jenkins case is but one, and one of the least serious of a long list of crimes against American national honor which Carranza and other Mexicans have committed. My proposal is based upon this accumulation of insult and injury, and not upon any one incident." He further held that release of Jenkins did not settle anything with respect to Mexico, and that deferring a settlement any longer

[59] "Senators See President," *New York Times*, December 6, 1919, 1, 2.

would only make the task that much harder when America finally decided to face it. Senator Hitchcock, taking the contrarian point of view, said that adopting Fall's resolution would be a grave tactical mistake and would only strengthen Carranza in his defiance of the United States. Hitchcock argued that if America intervened before elections in June, it would give Carranza an excuse for setting aside constitutional guarantees and annulling the election, thus rallying all factions of Mexicans to his own cause and making the United States responsible for perpetuating him in power. The senator concluded that now that Jenkins was free, and they knew President Wilson was fully capable of arriving at decisions, Congress should leave in the president's hands, where it belonged, the conduct of the nation's affairs with Mexico.[60]

As the House and Senate debated different measures against Mexico, President Wilson put a complete stop to Fall's efforts. In a letter to Senator Fall, Wilson said he would be gravely concerned to see Congress adopt any measures such as the Fall Resolution, requesting that the Executive break diplomatic relations with the Carranza government. Wilson stated that the adoption of the resolution would be unconstitutional, and cause grave international doubt over the reliability of U.S. foreign affairs. Within half an hour of Wilson's statement, Senator Henry Cabbot Lodge, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, announced that the Fall resolution was dead. Fall responded by making public part of his memorandum submitted to the president that presented evidence against the Carranza regime. The memoranda revealed, according to Fall, that Carranza had knowledge of and gave help to radicals who plotted recently in Mexico to incite a revolt in the United States. The revolt was to have begun in November, and was to have included a general strike of miners and metal

[60] "Senators See President," *New York Times*, December 6, 1919, 1, 2.

workers in the United States, and also the seizure of three American ports. The capital of a "reformed" government was to have been established in Colorado.[61]

These efforts failed to achieve congressional success, and Fall's warnings against Mexico remained unheeded by the government. As one historian put it, President Wilson

"rallied from his sick bed to thwart… imminent war with Mexico."[62] Despite this, disparate interest groups continued to pressure members of congress as well as the public into believing a Communist Mexico threatened the very existence of America. To that end, the National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, formed in 1910 by a fringe group of worried capitalists, produced a pamphlet entitled "Bread, Bolshevism, Binder Twine." Published in 1920, this work told the recent history of Yucatan in Mexico. It explained how the region became a key producer of henequen, a material used in making binder twine, a substance that bound roughly 90 percent of the grain crop of the United States at that time. Planters became rich as costs rose, making Yucatan the richest state in Mexico. However, General Salvador Alvarado, serving under Carranza, became jealous at the state's riches and sought profit for himself. The authors of the pamphlet proclaimed that Alvarado's first "Bolshevistic move" was to seize the railways of the state and take over the regulation of Henequen production. Thereafter, all Henequen needed to be sold through him. He threatened to burn all the planters' fields unless they agreed to deliver their products to his

[61] "Wilson Rebuffs Senate on Mexico," *New York Times*, December 9, 1919, 1.
[62] Clifford Trow, "Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Interventionist Movement of 1919," *Journal of American History* 58 (1971): 48.

"Regulador," and promised that if they acceded, their fields would be operated on a co-operative plan, similar to the Communist way espoused by Lenin and Trotsky.[63]

When Alvarado gained control of the industry, he raised prices exponentially on the product. Thus, according to the National Association, Alvarado, with Carranza's blessing, introduced Bolshevism into Yucatan. The association argued that because American farmers continued to do business with Mexico for their henequen, many Americans had become involuntary patrons and victims of Bolshevism. The authors noted the atrocities committed by these Mexican "Bolshevists," writing in graphic detail how they would punish disobedient planters by hanging them from oak trees lining the main streets of Mérida. Alvarado also brought in teachers of Communism to reform the school system, and assigned instructors throughout Yucatan, with one stationed on each plantation. With many of them unable to read or wright, the authors argued that these teachers were simply agitators sent there to create discord and teach anarchy. They taught workers there that the planters had kept them in slavery, and if they attempted to enforce future discipline, they should kill their masters.[64]

The pamphlet concluded that through its economic dealings with Mexico, and specifically for binder twine, Americans had contributed more than $112,000,000 to Bolshevism in Yucatan. The planters had been robbed of their rightful payments, and were on the verge of bankruptcy. The National Association presented a strong warning for the United States that rich Yucatan had been looted by Bolshevists posing as

---

[63] National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, *Bread, Bolshevism, Binder Twine* (New York City, 1920): 1-10; For more information on the transnational implications of Mexico and its production of binder twine, see Sterling Evans *Bound in Twine: The History and Ecology of the Henequen-Wheat Complex for Mexico and the American and Canadian Plains, 1880-1950* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013).
[64] National Association, *Bread,* 1-10.

reformers. For each loaf of bread bought in America, more money had been sent to prop up Communism. It concluded that Bolshevism was a purely destructive force, a scheme for tearing down what someone else had built. It had been tried to ruinous effect in Yucatan, and could only spell disaster for the United States. This document, along with the association that produced it, provided much impetus to the forces in the United States urging war with Mexico. Senator Fall, along with other hawkish New Mexicans along the border, looked with worry at their southern neighbor and used any opportunity they could to help drum up support for action. Pamphlets like these, showing the powerful hold moneyed American interests held on U.S. politics, went a long way in justifying such actions.[65]

Another strong supporter of intervention came in the form of British subject Edward Field Harvey. Harvey was the vice president and manager of the La Guna Company of Mexico, who argued that "the best class of Mexican people" would welcome "friendly intervention" by the United States and restoration under guidance of this country of a responsible form of government. Testifying before the senate foreign relations subcommittee, Harvey argued for a blockade of all Mexican ports, occupation of Mexico City, and added that the first duty of the United States after intervening would be to call a constitutional convention and take steps to reorganize the government along more favorable lines. With a penchant for imperialism and maintaining an unhealthy dose of hysteria, he proclaimed that the Mexican mind was fertile soil for radical beliefs, and that no greater menace to the industrial welfare of the United States existed than in the spreading of radicalism among Mexicans. Responding when asked

[65] National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, *Bread, Bolshevism, Binder Twine* (New York City, 1920): 1-10.

how many men were needed for an occupation force, Harvey maintained that only 25,000 would be needed to reach and occupy the capital, with little loss provided it was supported with railroad troops and guards to maintain communication with Veracruz. Mexican hostility, he added, would increase and contempt for the United States because the United States did not insist on proper respect due its diplomatic exchanges with Mexico. Many in the New Mexican press agreed with the gentleman's sentiments, and published front page stories showing support for intervention.[66]

Meanwhile, Senator Fall continued to press his Mexican agenda despite presidential blowback, with his senate committee hearing stories from men who traveled in what one New Mexican outlet dubbed "Carranzaland." Specific individuals selected to appear before the committee told tales of Bolshevism becoming rampant throughout the whole of Mexico, spreading from the north in Sonora to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in the far south. A traveling salesman invited to speak corroborated these tales, and remained heavily guarded for fear of reprisals by Mexicans. He also maintained that Carranza, when forced to choose between two small armies in the south, one led by a federal commander and the other a known Communist, declared in favor of the latter. Additionally, striking laborers in other districts were frank in their adherence to the radical cause, and almost everywhere the salesman went found undisguised evidence of the success of extremist agitators. He commented that President Wilson "seemed to be hypnotized by Carranza," and that if the American government should cease to support him, his government would not last 30 days. He concluded that the merchants and businessmen of Mexico wanted law and order, but

[66] U.S. Congress, Senate, *Investigation of Mexican Affairs Part 9* 66th Cong., 1920, 2nd Sess., 1345-1359; "Occupation of Mexico Way to Stop Disorders," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, January 15, 1920, 1; "Americans Being Shot Daily in Mexico," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, January 7, 1920, 1.

could not hope for such while the "Bolshevik gang" was upheld by the American government.[67]

In continuing testimony, Civil War veteran Matthew Warner gave a history of a colony he had founded during the rule of Porfirio Díaz near Tampico. He told of many settlers attacked by Mexicans, with most being forced to flee. Further, as an indication of the openness with which Bolshevism was taught in Mexico, Warner told of a method employed in Sonora when he visited last year. "A man got upon a bench and sang to attract the crowd. It was a hymn of the Bolsheviki. When the crowd became larger, he continued his speech and then he repeated the song." The witness told how the agitator had copies of the song printed in a pamphlet which he distributed. Returning to the bench again he sang, this time with the crowd joining in. The next evening the same man spoke on "The Doctrine of Bolshevism." Warner also told of a strike he witnessed in Orizaba, Veracruz, where radical agitators goaded crowds into crying "vivas" for the Bolsheviks and for Russia.[68] These testimonies added to the growing clamor to resolve the U.S.-Mexico situation, though for now at least, government sanctioned intervention appeared remote thanks to Wilson's tough stance.

By January 1920, despite this sensational congressional testimony, Senator Fall received another blow to his attempts to make war as he became a suspect in a major scandal linked to Mexico. Responding to criticism that he had financial interests in Mexico and stood to gain by military intervention, the senator maintained that the only interest he had in Mexico was $75,000 in stock of the Sierra Mining Company, and involved mines that he had discovered when prospecting in Mexico nearly forty years

[67] "Bolshevism Now Rampant Through Whole of Mexico," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, January 16, 1920, 1.
[68] Ibid, 1.

earlier. Regardless, the event added a bit of tarnish to his reputation, though he continued incessantly throughout the year, even beyond the traditional date of the end of the Red Scare (May 1920) in touting the Communist menace in Mexico.[69]

Despite his accusations of corruption, and Wilson putting an end to threats of invasion to Mexico, Fall carried on his fearmongering and released a report in June 1920 that detailed damages and outrages committed against American citizens residing in Mexico. The report concluded that the State Department received seventy-three claims for damages for killing American citizens, and a total amount of damage in forty-eight cases equaling $2,317,375. Regarding losses of American companies, one mining company reported that its losses alone amounted to $25,000,000 during the previous 10 years. The report stated that power lines had been cut, power plants destroyed, irrigation works dynamited, canals sabotaged, factories burned, mining tools destroyed, cash looted, and countless Americans whom had lost their investments.[70]

The report also detailed that Carranza propagandists in the United States had filled papers with attacks upon "predatory interests," who were seeking intervention in Mexico for selfish purposes. Churches too resounded with denunciations from the pulpit against those same predatory interests. Fall's report went on to accuse Wilson's administration of ignoring the plight of U.S. citizens. It cited one American who was tied to a tree and forced to watch the rape of his daughter and disembowelment of his wife. The report argued that the American, and many others like him, had received no protection from his government, and that only through the medium of this publication could it make its loss and sufferings known to the public. Speaking in racist terms, the

[69] "His Mexico Wealth $75,000, Says Fall," *New York Times*, January 18, 1920, 5.
[70] U.S. Congress, Senate, *Affairs in Mexico* 66th Cong., 1920, 2nd Sess., Report No. 645, 17-18.

document also stated that Mexico was an "Indian empire," and not properly a Latin American country. It asked its readers to imagine a percentage of Spanish blood being mixed with fifty-seven varieties of Indian blood, with the Spanish blood not being renewed or strengthened, but growing "weaker" from generation to generation. Acknowledging this, "one may dimly perceive the outlines of the racial problems in Mexico. The report further argued that that Mexico's population was not a homogenous people, and Mexico was not a nation, but a population of different tribes with nothing in common between different localities. It went on to conclude that Mexico's people remained a "great voiceless, submerged, inarticulate mass." Despite Wilson having already declared his intention not to intervene militarily in Mexico, New Mexico's senator continued his tirade against his state's southern neighbor, driving the deeper wedge, and drawing a greater disparity between Anglo-Americans and Mexicans.[71]

In going over the history of Mexican radicalism, the report provided a history of leftist organizations in the country, and how they sought to model themselves on extreme French syndicalism and "IWWism." Sprouting from this intellectual background, radicals sought to overthrow the Mexican government, confiscate all property including real estate for redistribution to the masses. They appealed to Indians in particular, the report alleged, upon whose ground much land had already been seized. All that was necessary for Indians was for them to rise up and take their property back. The radicals appealed specifically to the Yaquis, who had a long history of armed resistance against state power. Linking American labor with radical Mexicans, the

[71] Ibid, 19, 21, 60-61.

report told of the AFL who in 1908 telegrammed Mexican leaders of this leftist movement sympathizes for their troubles.[72]

In a special heading titled "Mexican IWW Agitation in the United States," the report detailed how Mexican laborers and others at Bisbee, Arizona, and at different points along the border between Mexico and the United States were stating to Mexicans on the other side that sooner or later they would take over the border states and return them to Mexico. On December 13, 1919, the report told how Army intelligence assessed the Mexican radical movement based in Sonora, and how it aimed to extend across the border into the United States. "Delegates from this organization have been preaching Communism among miners. Another hotbed of radicalism appeared to be northern Coahuila, where Bolshevist agitators operating in the region made Sabinas mines their headquarters. Laborers there did not deny their Bolshevist affiliations, and the Mexican organization supposedly sent delegates to a number of Texas towns, notably El Paso, Maria, Alpine, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, San Antonio, Laredo, Brownsville, and Galveston. Army Intelligence also reported how Carranza attempted to take advantage of the coal miners' strike, and presented evidence showing how the Mexican president had conspired with his agents to put into operation a "plan" in Texas. The report never identifies the plan, though for investigators it appeared to be ample evidence of Carranza's Communist collusion.[73]

Further drumming up hysteria against non-white races, the New Mexican senator's report also told of the peril immigrating Japanese represented, as they seemingly colluded with the Mexican government to sneak into the country and

[72]Ibid, 36-37.
[73] Ibid, 54-55; On Yaqui resistance see Evelyn Hu-DeHart, *Yaquis Resistance and Survival: The Struggle for Land and Autonomy, 1821-1910* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984).

overwhelm the United States demographically. The account cited reports that showed Japanese liners arriving at the port of Salina Cruz every ten days, and, and that "the Japs enter Mexico through that port in increasing numbers every year; they practically control commerce on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec." The findings also blamed the Japanese for stirring up anti-Chinese sentiment in Oaxaca, being largely responsible for their government-sponsored deportations. With the danger of a Communist Mexico colluding with the Japanese to swarm into the United States, Mexican Bolshevist agents would have an easy time in sowing chaos across America, the report implied. The report did little to convince the United States that increased military action was necessary, though border units remained on high alert throughout the year.[74] The crisis eventually abated as revolutionary forces seized the Mexican capital and executed Carranza. While tensions eased for a time, the racial hatred and fear of Communist infiltration across the border demonstrated New Mexican officials' willingness to engage in fear-mongering tactics that only gave in to Red Scare hysteria, propelling America the closest it had ever come since World War I to open warfare with another country.

**New Mexico's "America Day"**

As Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer warned against terrorist attacks on May Day, 1920, many state officials across the country attempted to counter the threat by proclaiming patriotic holidays. New Mexico was no exception and on April 11, Governor Larrazolo called for all patriotic citizens of the state to show their loyalty to the government on "America Day." Referencing the collapse of imperial Russia and the rise of the Soviet Union, the governor attempted to give reason for the holiday. With so many people who before had been involved in coordinated efforts to live in peace and

[74] Ibid, 57.

build up industry in their country, they were now arrayed against each other, and against the rest of the world. These outspoken agents of anarchy and Bolshevism do not hesitate to openly avow the destruction of the American way of life, the governor said. "No true American can for one moment believe… that our troubles can be solved… by a change in our form of government, and by the adoption of those principles and doctrines of communism, Bolshevism, and anarchy that now seem to control so many European nations." He went on to say that it followed that it was the duty of all true Americans to devote their best energies and efforts in the preservation of their government, and that loyalty to those institutions be made publically known, so that the "disciples of darkness, anarchy, and destruction" may understand the futility of their efforts in a free America.[75]

Thus, Governor Larrazolo proclaimed May 1, 1920, as America Day. He went on to encourage all municipalities in the state, as well as all public school teachers and others in education to make known the purpose of this proclamation. Larrazolo invited all New Mexicans to attend celebrations including street parades, public gatherings, and patriotic addresses to be delivered in public and in schools. These lectures would dwell particularly on the excellence of the American government and all it has done for the welfare, happiness, and prosperity for all those who reside in the nation. He also requested that attention be called to the dangerous and pernicious doctrines of "misgovernment" and anarchy that had been so liberally sown and scattered across the country, and to arouse the public to the dangers they posed.[76]

[75] "'American Day' Proclaimed by Gov. Larrazolo," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 11, 1920, 1.
[76] Ibid, 1.

As the governor beseeched citizens to recognize the magnanimity of the nation, Attorney General Palmer continued rounding up suspects across the country in preparation for the supposed May Day attack. Federal agents continually violated civil liberties in detaining and abusing suspects, with some driven to suicide.[77] One New Mexican news source reported giddily that the Justice Department had finally woken up and had begun another roundup, detaining six in Chicago with twenty-four more warrants issued. "Disturbers squeal they've broken no law," the paper said.[78]

As the fateful day of May 1 approached, news outlets reported that American Day would break "all patriotic records." Some estimated that thousands would march in a parade, all carrying flags. One division would have as many as 2,000 schoolchildren. "The celebration of American Day will be the biggest demonstration of loyalty to the American government ideals and patriotism held in Santa Fe since the war," one paper reported. Businessmen in Santa Fe announced their businesses would be closed from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM in the afternoon that Saturday for the parade and patriotic rally. The American Legion, and veterans from every war going back to the Civil War would march, and the Santa Fe band would lead the column. In total seven divisions would participate, including students from the U.S. Indian School, the city board of education, fraternal societies, and the Santa Fe fire department. The program for the day included a parade and mass meeting at the museum, officiated by Governor Larrazolo and other state officials.[79]

---

[77] R.G. Brown, et al., *To the American People: Report on the Illegal Practices of the United States Department of Justice* (Washington D.C.: National Popular Government League, 1920), 21.
[78] "Government Wakes Up; Outlaw Strike Leaders are Arrested," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 15, 1920, 1.
[79] "America Day Celebration Will Break All Patriotic Records," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 29, 1920, 1.

In an editorial published the day before the event, one writer proudly stated that Santa Fe would show that it was "American to the core." He argued that indications pointed to the finest parade ever staged in Santa Fe, proudly saying that everyone attending would be given flags. Following the parade, Larrazolo would "no doubt deliver a powerful oration on Americanism." The writer argued that the governor was one of the foremost men in the country on that subject, and that he would be followed by other speakers who were American to the core. "Every feature of the program… will help to create a stronger attachment to the institutions that have made America great." The editorial stated that it was especially important that all students be given an opportunity to take part, and that the better they get to understand what American institutions are, the better citizens they will be. "The idea that law and order are fundamental to the life of a free nation can not be too strongly impressed on the minds of the young." The local Elk club argued that participation in the parade was of paramount importance. "Anarchy, Bolshevism, "IWWism" and other isms run riot throughout our fair land. Let the Elks take a forefront in the fight to be waged against the evils bent upon ruining our country and enter into this demonstration with the enthusiasm which every good Elk is capable."[80]

On May 1, as every patriotic New Mexican gathered in Santa Fe to mark the festivities, Americans across the nation braced for the inevitable anarchist attacks. That same time last year, terrorists had waged a frightening bombing campaign across the United States setting off explosives targeting government officials on an unprecedented scale. Manhunts, mass arrests, and deportations followed in one of the largest violations of civil liberties at that time. Exactly one year later, on May Day 1920, papers across

[80] "Santa Fe Will Show It's American to Core," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 30, 1920, 3.

the country reported that all was silent. One New Mexican paper recorded that there were "no May Day outbreaks," and that despite predictions of widespread violence, no serious trouble had developed. It reported that in Chicago, the usual meetings of Socialists and radicals was overshadowed by a strike of cooks and waiters that threatened to close every downtown hotel and restaurant. It appeared that the Communist hysteria was in vain.[81]

**Conclusion**

As the Communist hysteria began to wane, so too did Larrazolo's reputation. After the withering criticism he received for his handling of the coal crisis by Mayor Hannett and several sympathetic news outlets, the governor unexpectedly announced that he would not run for office after his term expired in 1921. In late March 1920 he appeared before the Republic state convention and delivered an address voicing a ringing challenge to all within the Republican Party to forgoe their petty squabbles and unite under the banner of patriotism. Larrazolo reviewed his own accomplishments, and said he did not want to run again for fear of interfering in the party's victory. "The interests of the party exceed those of any man. No man is as great as the Republican Party." Recognizing his slim chances at reelection, the governor maintained that if he was in the way, to forget about him and nominate someone who they could get elected. In reviewing his own accomplishments, he saved his handling of the coal miners' strike for last. Of the matter he proclaimed that during his tenure the state had sufficient coal

[81] "No May Day Outbreaks," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 2, 1920, 1.

and that 5,000 tons had been sent to other states during the crisis. He chose not to dwell on any other matters, and left the podium to great applause.[82]

Through the governor's actions, fear of radicalism increased, as did violations of civil liberties and workers' rights. Similarly, New Mexico's Senator Albert B. Fall remained the key force behind a racist and economically motivated push towards war with Mexico. Because of his efforts, the nation came the closest it had ever come in the immediate post-war period to engaging in another armed conflict with another country. Through these individuals, as well as a willing media that hyped up the threat posed by radical labor and foreigners, New Mexico contributed strongly to the anti-red hysteria that swept the nation, nearly plunging the entire country into a full-blown war.

Governor Larrazolo, near the end of his term, summed up his views on post-war New Mexico in highly positive language. He proclaimed that the state had emerged from the war with a greater sense of itself, assured and confident in its place among the states of America. More important, it represented a spirit of cooperation unparalleled in the rest of the country. By virtue of its varied population, with peoples hailing both from Spanish as well as Anglo-Saxon descent (perhaps unshockingly omitting Native Americans in that mosaic), the governor declared that this mixed population was particularly fitted to prove by accomplished acts that which no other state in the union could do: namely the magnificent unequaled superiority of its government. "Behold, two races of people absolutely distinct from one another, different in everything that marks the differences of the various races; we find them side by side, with equal devotion, equal patriotism and with equal enthusiasm, fighting for one flag, for one

[82] "Larrazolo Not Seeking Office Says in Speech at Convention," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, March 27, 1920, 1.

government." He also congratulated New Mexican officials and citizens for their common sense and patriotic attitudes which helped the state through the recent period of strikes, and specifically the coal miners' strike, of which New Mexico "hardly" felt any effects, and without "any disturbances of that peace" which has always been maintained in the state. He concluded that New Mexico represented patriotic devotion and true Americanism at work.[83] If Larrazolo and Fall defined such terms as violations of civil liberties, racist hysteria aimed at foreign workers and migrants, and war-mongering attitudes that threatened the peace of the entire country, then they could indeed say with certainty that New Mexico remained unique among the states, assured of its superior patriotism and Americanism.

[83] Octaviano Larrazolo, "New Mexico," Folder 117, Box 5, Governor's Papers.

## Chapter 5. Texas: On the Borders of Hysteria

### Introduction

The Texas government, media, and populace contributed heavily to perceptions about the First Red Scare nationwide, bringing national attention to border issues with Mexico, suppression of bi-racial union activity in its labor sector, and harsh treatment of its African-American population. Similar to New Mexicans, Texans grappled with their own fears of a clandestine border invasion by Mexican Communists, contributed to national media attention over the issue, and experienced a large number of labor and race-related disturbances throughout 1918-1920. Governor William P. Hobby played a key role in this process, and remained privately suspicious of African-Americans, warning Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer that blacks should be especially watched, as they were repressed by labor forces and had the most to gain by ties to Communism. Hobby did little to ease repression, and clamped down hard on biracial unions during the Galveston Longshoremen strike of 1920. The previous year, the Longview Race Riot occurred, prompting the governor to declare martial law. He agreed with the faulty assumption that the African-American community was responsible, and deployed the cavalry and a machine-gun company to quell the disturbances. With fears of Communist inspired African-Americans, as well as suspected threats from Mexico, Texas magnified a frightening new dimension to the First Red Scare not seen in non-border states. With suspicions of an international threat so close to home, and fears of internal disloyalty, Governor Hobby along with other elements amplified events of the First Red Scare, thrusting the state into national headlines, and stoking the fires of xenophobia and racism across the country.

William Hobby was born in Moscow, Texas, on March 26, 1878. His father, a former Confederate soldier and state senator, imbued in his son a thirst for politics. Hobby started out as a newsman however, and quickly rose to become publisher of the *Houston Post*. He became James Ferguson's Lieutenant Governor in the election of 1914, and served in that capacity until Ferguson was removed from office 3 years later for corruption and misapplication of funds. Hobby outright won the governorship in the election of 1918, joining the list of newly minted elected officials across the Southern Great Plains tasked with returning their states to normalcy at the end of the Great War.[1]

Dismissed as a "political accident" by his detractors during the election for his take-over from Ferguson, he galvanized the state in the final year of the war, pushing for greater enlistment during the draft and for increase contributions to liberty loans. During the war, Texas contributed nearly 200,000 men to the war effort, 5,000 of whom did not return. The state became a major military training center, housing more than thirty bases and several hundred thousand troops. With a dramatic increase in the male population, Texas society faced increasing pressures. Outside Houston, the Army stationed black soldiers of the 24th Infantry at Camp Logan. Enforcement of segregation led to black resentment and violence in August 1917, resulting in sixteen deaths and twenty-two wounded. A court martial sentenced eighteen of the 125 black troops involve to death. The state hanged thirteen, while others received long prison terms.[2]

Similar to other states across the country, Texas established its own State Council of Defense in May 1917. The Council assisted in liberty bond drives and Red

[1] James A. Clark, *The Tactful Texan: A Biography of Governor Will Hobby* (New York: Random House, 1958), 3-5.
[2] Lewis Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 224-25.

Cross relief. Similarly, it helped spread pro-war propaganda, galvanizing the citizenry against foreign threats with slogans of patriotism and anti-radicalism. Helping to enhance the xenophobic tendencies that the First Red Scare would thrive upon, the Council also engaged in suppression of dissent during the war through its program of Americanization. This became a key issue for the state, as it contained a large German population from successive waves of immigration. The war remained exceedingly unpopular for many Texans of German descent, with the Council swooping in to imprison anti-draft organizers across Texas. Germans who refused to buy liberty bonds were subject to public whippings, while those who kept pictures of Kaiser Wilhelm in their homes risked invasion and terrorism by their neighbors. The Council requested that the public use of German cease, and by the end of the war, Governor Hobby and the Texas Legislature banned not only the teaching of the German language but its usage completely. In the words of one member of the Council, "this is no time for foolishness and my method in a case of this kind would be to act for the good of the country and then find out afterwards whether it was legal."[3] Challenges arose to the ban almost immediately, and especially during the First Red Scare, cases came forth arguing against the constitutionality of such a law. Similarly, any speech that could be categorized as pro-German was also punishable. In one case, an accused man of German descent who made supposedly pro-German remarks wrote to the governor directly, appealing the harsh nature of the law. Governor Hobby responded coldly, saying that he was not given any authority in the matter of interpreting the law of the state on whether it was constitutional or not. Leaving the individual without recourse,

[3] J.F. Carl to T.H. Postell, August 3, 1917. Quoted in Gould, *Progressives*, 225, 26.

the governor spoke of how he helped pass the law, and that henceforth it became the duty of the courts to interpret it and ascertain whether or not it was indeed unconstitutional.[4]

Germans had long maintained a presence in Texas, and by the mid-1800s stretched from Houston and Galveston in the east into Texas Hill Country. Situated within this stretch were numerous German settlements, and by 1900, the total number of Germans in Texas numbered over 50,000.[5] Galveston, Houston, and San Antonio would all boast large German populations by the time of the Great War, and these populations fell under increasing suspicion and harassment as the war went on.

As the conflict wound down however, Texas itself faced a series of catastrophes that would push the state into greater instability. By 1918, Texas was suffering from one of its most severe droughts, with Hobby pushing for millions of dollars in relief aid from the legislature. Simultaneously, the state experienced some of the most severe effects of the Spanish Flu, with nearly four out of every five men in Texas military camps stricken. By the end of the epidemic, more than 9,000 died, almost twice the number of Texans killed in the war. Thousands of civilians also succumbed, and in Austin alone, the toll ranged from 10-14 civilians dying each day. Within this backdrop, Red Scare hysteria increased, as did racism and xenophobia towards Hispanic-Americans. Hobby would feed into these unfortunate byproducts of unrestrained fear, patriotism, and war, and engage in his own activities that would expand the Red Scare across the state.[6]

---

[4] "Governor Hobby to C.I. Schellenger," July 8, 1919, , Box 391, Letter Press Book, Telegrams July3-August 7, 1919, Governor's Papers: William P. Hobby (Hereafter cited as Governor's Papers).
[5] Terry Jordan, "The German Settlement of Texas After 1865," *Southwest Historical Quarterly* 73 (1969): 196, 211
[6] Clark, *Tactful Texan*, 99-100.

Mexicans would bear the brunt of much xenophobia during the First Red Scare. Facing a destructive revolution at home, many Mexicans sought to immigrate to the United States, creating an unprecedented surge that coincided with labor shortages in America due to conscription during the war. Railroad and mining industries argued for the necessity of recruiting Mexican workers in the name of national defense, and by 1918, Secretary of Labor William Wilson extended a waiver to Mexican laborers to include nonagricultural workers. This relaxed stance by the federal government created a surge in immigration that caused nearly 250,000 Mexicans to enter the United States looking for work from 1918 to 1920. Some estimates place the figures, both legally and illegally, at upwards of 500,000 Mexicans. By the time of the First Red Scare, Texas newspapers reported with alarm the number of Mexicans fleeing to their state. Similarly, responding to both internal and external pressures, the Mexican government threatened to use force if its people did not stop crossing into the state.[7]

**The Texas Rangers**

Similarly feeding into the atmosphere of fear, the Texas Rangers had become a liability for the state's image of peaceful race relations, as during the war many untrained recruits had joined the venerated organization and were wreaking havoc among minority populations. From 1917 to1918, the Rangers greatly increased their numbers, with most new members stationed on the border with Mexico to watch for German spies trying to cross the Rio Grande. As the war wound to a close, complaints against abuses committed by the Rangers mounted. The violence against Hispanics

[7] Lawrence Cardoso, "Labor Emigration to the Southwest, 1916-1920: Mexican Attitudes and Policy," *Southwest Historical Quarterly* 79 (1975): 401, 403, 404: "Mexicans Flocking Into Texas," *Austin Statesman*, March 4, 1920, 1.

reached its zenith by 1919, representative of a murderous trend going back a decade. By January of that year, Texas State Representative José T. Canales filed nineteen charges against the Texas Rangers and demanded an investigation into their conduct. The state government then formed a committee and began taking testimony on January 31.[8]

Canales brought forth many charges against the Rangers, including intimidation of locals, torture, and murder. Many of the victims were of Hispanic descent, and gave gripping testimony about their treatment at the hands of the Rangers. One citizen of the town of San Diego, Texas, used the same language many other Americans used to describe Mexican bandits when she compared the Rangers to a "lawless band of highwaymen." She appealed to the committee saying that the Rangers had shot up her town twice already and had no regard for civil or military laws. The witness went so far as to accuse the Rangers of being German propagandists, achieving the latter's aims by stirring up trouble between the United States and Mexico. Another witness testified that Mexican citizens and authorities were more law-abiding than the Rangers. Similarly, the Rangers, instead of discouraging banditry, multiplied it. "They would go out and hang them [Mexicans] to trees until practically dead, or would shoot and leave dead on the ground some Mexican who was as innocent as you… The result of that was you would make that man's brothers and relatives for two or three generations bandits or

[8] "Texas Legislature, Joint Committee of the House and Senate in the Investigation of the Teas State Ranger Force," Texas State Library and Archives Commission, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/tslac/50062/tsl-50062.html (accessed June 4, 2016); For more information see Andrew Graybill, *Policing the Great Plains: Rangers, Mounties, and the North American Frontier, 1875-1910* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); Chuck Parsons, *Images of America: The Texas Rangers* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).

potential bandits." The witness went on to say that the conduct by the Rangers was the absolute "worst thing in the world that could happen to the frontier."[9]

One witness, Jesus Villáreal, testified through an interpreter that he had been brutalized by Rangers on his way to a wedding in Rio Grande City from Copita, Texas. Rangers intercepted him and asked him where he came from. Upon answering, the Rangers arrested Villáreal and forced him to lay flat on the ground. They asked him if he was going to cross the river [Rio Grande], and when he answered no, the Rangers held him by his throat and demanded that he tell the truth. Barely able to speak, the captive maintained his story, at which time a Ranger placed a cocked pistol into his mouth, telling Villáreal that if he did not tell the truth they would kill him. One Ranger told another to place a knife in the suspect's hand, implicating him in some kind of attack, but another explained that they would place the knife there after he was dead, and then tell others that he had attacked them. Eventually, the Rangers released Villáreal, but not before having caused considerable physical and psychological abuse.[10]

Another victim, a former colonel in the Mexican Army by the name of Aurelio Farfán, was arrested by Rangers in Rio Grande City, Texas. After laying down to rest in the evening, Rangers stormed into his room and cursed him, calling him a *cabrón* and assaulted him with the muzzle of his gun. He then hit Farfan over the head and locked him in a closet saying "if you come out of [there] I will kill you." After an hour, a U.S. Army officer arrived and Farfán's treatment improved. He was later transported to Fort

[9] Proceedings of the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House in the Investigation of the Texas State Rangers Force, Volume 1, 1919, 1-5, 6a, 380-81 (Hereafter called Proceedings Vol. 1).
[10] Proceedings, Vol. 1, 468.

Ringgold and later to Brownsville, and by the time of the hearings still faced trial for illegally crossing the border.[11]

The Rangers also harassed members of Texas' African-American community. Thomas Johnson, a black resident at San Angelo, told how he had been falsely arrested for theft by the Rangers. His wife employed a local attorney to track him down after he had not returned, and the attorney eventually found him in a jail in Sweetwater. No charge was ever filed against Johnson, and he eventually stepped forth to testify on his own behalf. He told how a Ranger had come up to him and run his hand right in his pocket as if looking for a gun. Johnson explained he had no gun, but the Ranger arrested him anyway. The Ranger accused Johnson of stealing from the railroad company, and after denying it, the Texas official declared Johnson did know something about it and they would find out. Johnson explained that the Ranger began cursing at him, calling him "[all the] bad names he could think of, and so I just sat there." He told how the Ranger had physically abused him, and how he tried to get word to his wife that he was in trouble. Local authorities refused to assist Johnson, as they did not want to earn the wrath of the Rangers.[12]

Testimony went on for two weeks, and by the end of the hearings the government reduced the Texas Rangers force. A task force put in place more stringent recruiting and training standards, and began implementation of procedures to hear complaints over abuses. Reports later concluded that from 1914-1919, the Rangers had

---

[11] Proceedings of the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House in the Investigation of the Texas State Rangers Force, Volume 2, 1919, 623-24 (Hereafter called Proceedings Vol. 2); For more information on the Texas Rangers investigation see Charles Harris and Louis Saddler, *The Texas Rangers and the Mexican Revolution: The Bloodiest Decade*, 1910-1920 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).

[12] Proceedings Vol. 2, 669-71.

killed up to 5,000 Mexicans, leaving a legacy in the post-war era of racial suspicion and animosity.[13]

**Texas Newspapers and Local Strikes**

As the opening salvo of fear and terrorism in the climactic year of 1919, the Texas Ranger hearings did much to encourage racial animosity in Texas. However, later that summer, the state would have other reasons to be fearful. Local newspapers had already begun to spread xenophobic fears about Communist upheaval, with reporters writing daily stories about Bolshevik successes in Russia as well as threats to other countries in Europe. The *Austin Statesman* reported in bold headlines across the front page that Hungary was in the throes of revolution while revolutionaries threatened more chaos in Germany and Austria. The next week, it told how a Communist clique in Budapest had executed several Austrians. A few days after that, the paper warned that revolutionaries in Turkey were expected to form their own Soviet form of government. All over the world it seemed that discontent and worker strife had reached a boiling point, with much of Western civilization threatened by the specter of Bolshevism. Domestically, many Texans feared the same troubles would reach their own shores. Happening simultaneous to the ongoing international revolutions, American workers were engaged in a fierce battle with the government over frozen wages and price controls that had been in place since World War I. As the war ended, many expected relief and an increase in their wages to match the rising cost of living. This did not happen however, and discontent among American workers appeared on the rise. Agricultural workers were severely affected by this, as they reeled against fixed prices

[13] "Rangers and Outlaws," Texas State Library and Archives Commission, https://www.tsl.texas.gov/treasures/law/index.html (Accessed January 25, 2017).

imposed by the U.S. government. Cotton farmers in Texas believed the whole world stood against their crop, and that the government was colluding with other countries to keep prices low.[14]

By the summer of 1919, the labor crisis became acute, as marine firemen, oilers, and water tenders struck all along the Atlantic coast. This affected Galveston in particular, as workers there walked off the job demanding increased wages and an end to the open shop movement. Tensions between labor and management in Texas had already been exacerbated a month earlier, when on June 11, a striking worker from a local light and power company was killed during a clash between strike sympathizers and non-union men taking the place of striking employees. That same day, all regular commercial telegraphers in Austin walked out to join in the nationwide strike called by the international president of the Commercial Telegraphers Union. Previously, the state Attorney General's Office declared that strike breakers could carry loaded shotguns while traversing public streets and roads without a permit. On June 12, local Texas papers reported in bold headlines about the continued wire strike, couching the story between tales of Bolshevik revolution across the world, and even more threatened strikes across the country, including dire reporting of a proposed telephone strike spearheaded by the American Federation of Labor (AFL).[15]

---

[14] "Revolution Reported in Hungary While Another Threatens in German Austria," *Austin Statesman*, April 7, 1919, 1; "Austrians are Executed by Communist Clique in Budapest," *Austin Statesman*, April 15, 1919, 1; "Revolution is Reported on in Turkey to Form Soviet," *Austin Statesman*, April 22, 1; "Farmers Will Organize to Combat the Embargo on Cotton," *Austin Statesman*, April 8, 1919, 1.
[15] "Strike of Marine Firemen to Grip Atlantic Coast," July 11, 1919, 1; "Dallas Striker Killed by Shot," *Austin Statesman*, June 11, 1919, 1; "Local Operators Join in Strike," *Austin Statesman*, June 11, 1919, 1; "Opinion Says Shotguns Can be Carried by Strike Breakers," *Austin Statesman*, June 6, 1919, 1; "Wire Strike Continues with no Additional Walkouts Reported," *Statesman*, June 12, 1919, 1.

Compounding the fear even more, tales of bloody revolution in Mexico splashed across the pages of newspapers across the state. While the dreaded phone strike appeared to be called off, Pancho Villa and his band of rebels sowed chaos across the border. The ongoing violence in Mexico prompted a growing sense of fear in the United States, as American citizens living in the interior of Mexico faced certain doom. One paper reported that Americans were "at the mercy of Francisco Villa and his force of rebels." Reports from the area warned that telegraph lines remained down south of Ciudad Juárez, railroads were wrecked, and that American mining companies had begun ordering U.S. workers to flee the area. In order to avoid Villa's bands, many employees had to rove across the countryside in search of safety. Heightening the tension, the American government sent out warnings about the border region, and asked citizens in Mexico to report to consular agents. The growing fear of a threatened and isolated group of U.S. citizens in a hostile foreign territory, coupled with the local threats of foreign-inspired strikes and insurrection, played havoc on the mindset of Texans. Further exacerbating this, on June 3 anarchists had bombed several buildings in that nation's capital, and attempted to assassinate several prominent government officials. The following day, Texas news outlets reported that anarchists operating under direct orders from Russia appeared the most likely suspects, and that links to the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) remained prominent.[16]

**Border Troubles**

[16] "Rebel Chief Heads Column in First Move," *Statesman*, June 15, 1919, 1; "Americans in Small Cities in Interior of Mexico Helpless," *Austin Statesman*, June 18, 1919, 1; "'Reds' Wreck Buildings," *Austin Statesman*, June 3, 1919, 1; "Russian Radicals Suspected as Prime Movers in Bomb Plot Against Officials," *Austin Statesman*, June 4, 1919, 1.

Leading up to 1919, the border between Texas and Mexico remained a heated zone of conflict. Throughout the entire decade, the United States had been engaged in a sporadic border war with Mexican rebels, including the infamous Pancho Villa. In 1918, American forces prepared for a direct invasion of Mexico after agents reported that the German military operated in the Mexican state of Sonora. Yaquis, who had established a base in Arizona, also began storing weapons that would be smuggled into Mexico.[17] The U.S. Army quickly swooped in, destroying the camp and capturing nine Yaquis while killing one other. That same year, a brief skirmish occurred between American and Mexican Federal forces. On August 27, a suspected Mexican gun smuggler made his way from Arizona into Sonora, followed by U.S. Customs agents and two Army troops. A Mexican soldier observed the crossing and, fearing that the border had been violated, opened fire on the invaders. The shot struck one of the soldiers prompting U.S. troops to return fire, killing the Mexican. The tension escalated into the battle of Ambos Nogales, and by the conflict's end left four American soldiers dead and over 120 Mexicans killed, most of them civilians.[18]

As the summer of 1919 progressed, fears of increasing conflict with Mexico steadily increased. Texas newspapers reported with alarm stories of American citizens slain in Tampico. Recent deaths there brought the total number of American citizens killed to nineteen since 1917. As war drums beat on against Mexico, fear and xenophobia increased. A faulty report came out, widely reported in Texas, that

---

[17] For more information see Brenden Rensink, *Native but Foreign: Indigenous Transnational Refugees and Immigrants in the U.S.-Canadian and U.S. Mexican Borderlands, 1880-Present,* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, forthcoming.

[18] Oscar Martinez, *U.S.-Mexico Borderlands: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 130-131; "Americans and Mexicans in Armed Clash at Nogales," *Dallas Morning News,* August 28, 1919, 1.

Governor Hobby had requested the War Department to mobilize the Texas National Guard on account of the situation in Mexico. Hobby soundly refuted this report, and maintained that he had merely offered the service of two cavalry brigades, roughly 7,000 men, to be used in case the situation became too chaotic. The situation did deteriorate however, as on that same day, Yaqui raiders murdered thirty-two Americans and Mexicans in Sonora. Friends and relatives of the dead Americans quickly wrote the State Department in Washington, urging the government to take action.[19]

Three years earlier in 1916, Pancho Villa conducted a raid into Columbus, New Mexico. The resulting attack turned into a pitched battle between Villa's forces and the U.S. Military, and resulted in the Punitive Expedition into Mexico led by U.S. general John Pershing. By 1919, the U.S., still fearing the destabilizing effects of Pancho Villa's raids across the border joined forces with federal troops loyal to the Mexican President Venustiano Carranza. As other countries dealt with Communist and revolutionary forces, the United States intervened in Mexican affairs, sending troops to assist the Mexican military battling with Villa's forces. On June 15, 1919, Villa's forces attempted to capture the border city of Ciudad Juárez. Situated a mere seven miles from El Paso, Texas, the town stood as a bulwark against what appeared to be the ever-spreading revolutionary instability of Mexico represented by Villa. American forces joined Carranza's troops and repulsed Villa, turning Texas and its border with Mexico into a hostile war-zone. The resulting battle, involving nearly 10,000 Villa supporters,

[19] "Two More Americans Are Slain in Mexico," *Dallas Morning News*, January 7, 1920, 1; "Hobby Refutes Reports from Capital on Mexican Affair," *Austin Statesman*, June 8, 1919, 1; "Americans are Murdered by Yaqui Band in Sonora District," *Austin Statesman*, June 8, 1919, 1.

7,300 Mexican soldiers, and 8,600 American troops, left over 200 killed, with nearly 30 of those being civilians.[20]

Concurrent with the nationwide coal strike in November 1919, rebel leader Andrew Almazón and about seventy men occupied the town of Reynosa in Mexico, just miles from Hidalgo, Texas. Meeting no opposition, he forced the few loyalist troops to flee into Texas. In McAllen, Texas, just seven miles from Reynosa, American troops rushed to its defense and began border patrols when reports indicated rebels would advance into the United States. Mexican officials were quoted as saying Almazon was attempting to distract military attention in order to smuggle arms and ammunition from the Texas side.[21]

The climate of fear rapidly expanded along the border, soon engulfing both sides in a war of words over Communist threats. Much like New Mexicans, Texans remained keenly aware of the reports that suggested Bolshevists were using an underground tunnel to infiltrate propaganda, weapons, and men across the border. As one Dallas paper put it, these illegal crossings brought in untold amounts of Russian Communist propaganda, coming directly from Mexico into the United States. Government investigators concluded that radicals seemed to have first been attracted to Mexico by certain "ultra modern" provisions of the new Mexican constitution (provisions on the nationalization of industries), and that Mexicans were willing hosts, as they admired Russia's own efforts at nationalization. Ramón Negri, a Mexican Consul General, spoke hopefully of radical movements in the United States. He claimed that social movements in that country were of such importance in the present day that at any moment things

[20] "Villaistas Attack Juarez," *Austin Statesman*, June 15, 1919, 1.
[21] "Rebel Leader Takes Town Near Border," *Dallas Morning News*, November 2, 1919, 1.

could change that would impact similar movements across the world. He condemned attempts at arbitration between labor and capital, saying that their failure had caused a clamoring for the socialization of industries, and that it would be sad if Mexico, which helped start the movement of nationalization, would abandon it for fear of American reprisals. By the word of one Mexican official from a government already in turmoil, Texas papers broadcast to the rest of the world the desire of the Mexican government to subvert the society of the United States. The situation became so severe that Secretary of State Robert Lansing ordered an inquiry into Mexican orders of munitions from Belgium. Lansing succeeded in halting those orders, preventing Mexico from receiving its shipment of armaments. The secretary of state next sought to prevent weapons shipments leaving Spain for Mexico. The secretary's official excuse proclaimed that Mexico was in violation of an international arms convention, though said convention's official document had not even been published yet. Regardless, the fear that sprouted along the border between Mexico and the United States bloomed from an international dispute into a transatlantic one as soon as reports of Communist infiltration increased. Mexican officials responded by accusing the United States of being the true criminal for its allowing Wall Street capitalists to exploit Mexican resources. Despite Mexican pleas, stories continued to warn of Communist propaganda from Mexico, and Texas papers printed editorials urging government efforts to crush radicalism.[22]

[22] "Red Propaganda is Coming from Mexico," *Dallas Morning News*, November 15, 1919, 1; "Government Prepares to Crush Radicalism," *Dallas Morning News*, November 16, 1919, 1; for more information see Sterling Evans, *Bound in Twine: The History and Ecology of the Henequen-Wheat Complex for Mexico and the American and Canadian Plains, 1880-1950* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013).

As politicians in Washington debated courses of action, Texas newspapers reported regularly the outrages committed against Americans across the border. One article stated how Mexicans had desecrated an American flag in front of aghast patriots. "Men and boys brought it to the side of the train and after sweeping it over the ground, tore it into strips. These they burned and threw the ashes through the car windows." In another article, it told how Carranza himself had directed border raids against Texas during the Mexican Intervention.[23] On November 29, 1919, Some of Carranza's men killed Jim Wallace, an employee of the Gulf Refining Company. Reported as a murder by Texas news outlets, Wallace's death represented the eighth official of the company killed in Mexico in the previous four months. One U.S. official termed the death as one of many "last straws," and that the American government was prepared to take a firm position. Lansing approached Mexican Ambassador Ignacio Bonillas, complaining of the outrage and, according to reports at the time, conveyed to Carranza's representative a message "more forceful and direct than any yet transmitted in any diplomatic note." Bonillas responded that Wallace had caused his own death, as the mule he was riding on strayed too close to a passing machine gun, causing it to overturn. Interpreting the event as a hostile act, the Mexican soldier manning the gun immediately shot Wallace, striking him in the neck and killing him instantly. Regardless of blame, tensions along the Mexican border flared in no small part to the sensational hyping of many Texans.[24]

United States efforts against Mexico would intensify in December, as Senator Albert Fall of New Mexico would press for military invasion. Similarly, Texas papers

[23] "Stars and Stripes Foully Desecrated by Mexican Mobs," *Austin Statesman*, January 19, 1920, 1; "Carranza Directed Border Raids," *Austin Statesman*, January 22, 1920, 1.
[24] "Another American is Slain in Mexico," *Dallas Morning News*, November 29, 1919, 1.

reported on debates in Congress about establishing a border patrol to prevent entry of aliens and undesirables from Mexico as well as Canada. The bill, attached to naturalization legislation that proposed strict standards on admitting immigrants, failed in the House. One representative cited that the bill failed because it was a rider attached to a larger bill, and that such a measure deserved its own separate piece of legislation. Bemoaning the bill's failure, Texas news outlets warned of reports that thousands of radicals who had been denied entry in New York had simply sailed down to Mexico to cross the porous border there. A House Committee report argued that radicals looked upon Mexico as the most promising place to establish a soviet form of government, and that they regarded it as comparatively easy to spread the doctrine to the United States.[25] Through fear of radical infiltration, the militarization of the border became an important topic that would dominate how Americans viewed their southern neighbor in the years to come. The crisis with Mexico would eventually abate, as revolutionary forces seized the capital and executed Carranza by 1920. This would not stop the xenophobic fears of the country however, and as the Red Scare progressed, fear against radicalism and ethnic minorities only increased.

**Red Scare in Education**

As fear and suspicion increased, the press, government, and the public reacted with swift condemnation over any mention of Bolshevism or Socialism. Amidst this stifling atmosphere of intellectual repression, institutes of higher learning succumbed to the long shadow of fear. The University of Texas came under fire by elements in the Texas legislature that sought to investigate supposedly radical teachers. One local paper

[25] "Republicans Hostile to Border Patrol," *Dallas Morning News*, December 3, 1919, 1.

stated that many charges had been made against the university in the last two years and that they had employed teachers who taught Socialism in addition to their regular course load. Senator Isaac E. Clark from Fayette County argued that the teaching of Socialism and Bolshevism in the university system "ought to stop," and supported a resolution to that effect. Other senators joined in, and held that the resolution would give ample time for the University of Texas to clear itself of the charges. The bill originated after a wary student brought the matter to authorities saying faculty were poisoning the minds of young people. Texas Senator Walter Caldwell capitalized on the story and advocated the termination of any professor guilty of teaching Socialist doctrines. The University of Texas Board of Regents cooperated fully with the desire to eliminate all "isms" on campus, including Socialism, Bolshevism, and anarchy. The anti-Bolshevist hysteria in Texas education had its roots planted during the war, as the University of Texas received similar venom from anti-German crusaders from the Texas State Council of Defense. At the latter's behest, the university fired "alien" members from its faculty and discharged Professor Lindley M. Keasbey when he spoke at a peace rally in Chicago.[26]

During World War I, the university had demonstrated its willingness to engage in the politics of fear as it discharged any professor who held citizenship from an enemy country. A notable case that Texas legislators cited as precedent during the Red Scare involved Austrian-born professor of German E. Prekosch. After a protracted battle, the Senate Finance Committee finally cut out the university appropriation for teaching German in 1919, and so without a salary, the board of regents forced Prekosch to resign.

[26] "Senate Asks Inquiry into Socialism at University," *Dallas Morning News*, July 11, 1919, 5; Austin *Statesman*, July 11, 1919, 1; Gould, *Progressives*, 226.

With such a precedent set, local authorities and universities appeared prepared to expand repression across the state towards anyone deemed teaching anti-American values.[27]

Spurring on this anti-intellectual fervor, events across the country came to a head causing many to support harsher measures against suspected Communists. On June 3, 1919, radical anarchists had attempted to dynamite the homes of several prominent Americans, including Attorney General Palmer. One Texas paper reported that an attacker had blown themselves up trying to kill Palmer, and that a blood-stained identification check showed the assailant's journey from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C. Police commented on the ethnicity of the man, saying he was Italian by birth, and probably knew very little English owing to his having an Italian-American dictionary on his person. This method of identification immediately conjured up images of foreign-born, non-English speaking boogeymen who would hang as a specter over all Red Scare events. Texas news outlets later highlighted that Russian Radicals were probably behind the spate of bombings, and also cast suspicion on the IWW.[28]

Governor Hobby took swift action against anyone suspected of teaching radicalism during the First Red Scare, and amidst the government and media-induced anti-intellectualism of the period, filed an educational appropriation bill with the provision that teaching German be eliminated from the curriculum. In cutting out the provision for teaching German, the governor stated that, with regard to appropriation for the University of Texas, he believed it would be more conducive to a "purer"

[27] "Resignation of German Professor Accepted," *Dallas Morning News*, July 8, 1919, 4.
[28] "Reds Wreck Buildings," *Austin Statesman*, June 3, 1919, 1; "Russian Radicals Suspected as Prime Movers in Bomb Plot Against Officials," *Austin Statesman*, June 4, 1919, 1.

Americanism. Texans, much like their counterparts across the country, became embroiled in organized efforts to restrict freedom of speech and engender social animosity between differing groups of people.[29]

**Longview and Racism in the State of Texas**

As tensions increased between minority groups, educators, politicians, and laborers across the country, race riots soon broke out during the so-called Red Summer of 1919. On July 12, the Texas papers reported that a race riot broke out after blacks ambushed a group of whites in Longview.[30] In actuality, a group of white men had surrounded the house of prominent black leader Samuel L. Jones. Jones had previously angered whites by urging black cotton farmers to sell directly to buyers in Galveston rather than local white cotton brokers who more-often-than-not offered unfair prices. Longview's racial tensions had been building for quite some time. The town, with a population 5,700, was 31 percent black, and had exports centering on cotton and lumber. Earlier in July, a young black named Lemuel Walters fell in love with a white woman from Kilgore. The two lovers were found out, and a white mob murdered Walters in cold blood after a local sheriff turned the lad over to them. Jones, a local teacher in Longview, and a correspondent for the black newspaper *Chicago Defender*, was beaten by brothers of the Kilgore woman, who blamed him for spreading anti-white articles. On July 11, a group of angry whites approached Jones' yard and were greeted with gunfire. They fled, though three of them suffered superficial wounds, with a fourth being found and beaten by local blacks. The whites fled into town and recruited help, breaking into a local hardware store to get weapons and ammunition. The mob returned

[29] "German Teaching Gets Knockout in Texas University," *Austin American*, August 8, 1919, 1.
[30] "Longview Race Riot Occur When Negroes Ambush White Party," *Austin Statesman*, July 12, 1919, 1.

to Jones' house, found that he had fled, and set fire to it, and the houses of other prominent black citizens, as well as a black dance hall.[31] County Judge E.M. Bramlette and Sheriff D.S. Meredith frantically telephoned Governor Hobby to send assistance, and the governor dispatched 100 National Guard troops as well as the Texas Rangers to quell the situation. Many blacks fled Longview, fearing reprisals by angry whites. Renewed trouble occurred when local authorities attempted to arrest several blacks, and shots rang out yet again. Governor Hobby declared martial law over the entire county and dispatched an extra 200 National Guardsmen to restore order. The governor proclaimed that there existed in the city of Longview and Gregg County certain individuals who were resisting the laws of the state and were doing violence to its citizens and property. To that end, Hobby sent a cavalry and machine gun company to Longview and by the 13th, papers reported that all was quiet in the town.[32]

Two weeks after the race riot, Hobby wrote to Attorney General Palmer claiming that Bolshevik agents aimed to incite race trouble across the South. Being keenly aware of the suspected Communist influence across the border, Hobby stated that sources of African-American anger over mistreatment stemmed from "red propaganda," and that he desired to create a taskforce to find the source of the trouble. The governor requested the Department of Justice cooperate with state authorities to conduct an investigation into the matter. He argued that Bolshevists were attempting to foment a race war by making African-Americans believe they were treated unfairly by

[31] "Longview Race Riot of 1919," Texas State Historical Association, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/jcl02 (Accessed June 15, 2016).
[32] "More Troops Ordered Sent to Longview," *Dallas Morning News*, July 13, 1919, 1; "More Race Riots Break Out Now At Longview," *Austin Statesman*, July 13, 1919, 1; "Martial Law Over Longview Quiet Sunday," *Statesman*, July 14, 1919, 1. For more information on the Longview Race Riot, see Kenneth R. Durham, "The Longview Race Riot of 1919," *East Texas Historical Journal* 18 (1980).

whites, and pitting them against state and local forces. The governor claimed that Communists were appealing to black "prejudice," and were attempting to turn it into a "frenzy" against constitutional authority. Further, he believed that the publication of black newspapers in the South, and throughout the country, together with the "propaganda carried on by negro speakers," was financed and prompted by some "sinister source." To locate the source of the trouble, Hobby beseeched Palmer to exert the powers of his department. The governor specifically asked that his "suggestions" remain confidential, no doubt in fear of exacerbating racial tension in his state. Regardless, Hobby's racially and ideologically paranoid mindset underlay his decisions in Longview, and would also inform his thought process in the later strike at Galveston involving bi-racial unions.[33]

Governor Hobby also took a dim view of the NAACP, whose representative had recently been assaulted by angry whites. On August 22, John Shillady, secretary for the NAACP, was traveling in Austin when he was attacked by a group of 6 to 8 men that included County Judge David Pickle and Constable Charles Hamby. After using several slanderous epithets, the men proceeded to strike Shillady, and did not stop until his face and chest were a mass of blood and bruises. Two hours later, when the secretary proceeded to the railway station, the same men were present and threatened to lynch him. No further violence occurred and Shillady left the state. When the national office of the NAACP heard of the assault, it quickly sent a telegram to Governor Hobby asking him to punish those responsible. The governor responded coldly saying that Shillady was the only offender in connection with the matter and he had already been

[33] Governor William P. Hobby, "Letter from Hobby to Palmer," July 29, 1919, Governor's Papers, Folder Unnumbered July 3-August 7, Box 391.

punished. He warned the group that they could contribute far better to race relations by simply keeping their representatives and propaganda out of the state. An editorial by Mary White Ovington, vice president of the NAACP, argued that it was a grave matter worthy of attention that a sitting governor would endorse mob violence. She reported that as of 1919, Texas led all other states in increasing membership in the NAACP, and that until recently the people of Texas and its governor had shown no unfriendly signs towards them. Following the incident, the Texas government summoned the local Austin branch of the NAACP to court before the adjutant general and Texas Rangers, and asked whether they needed a charter to operate in the state. The legal loopholes now imposed by the governor showed his unwillingness to tolerate African-American organizations, especially since he suspected many of them of harboring Bolshevist sympathies. As Hobby kept these opinions to himself, Mary Ovington's editorial expressed a justified amount of confusion at the apparent turnaround in the governor's attitude during the Red Scare. [34]

On October 4, many Texas newspapers heralded a "sinister plot" cooked up by "revolutionary negroes," related to the race riot in Elaine, Arkansas. The paper argued that blacks aimed to start a revolutionary uprising, but were stopped by Arkansas state troops who breached their hideout at Winchester. Making the front-page of the *Austin Statesman*, this uncorroborated story blatantly linked the ongoing racial upheaval with radicalism and revolutionary Socialism, further cementing in the minds of many Texans the link between Bolshevism and African-Americans. Two days later, the same paper reported that suspected agitators had planned a general massacre of whites, further

[34] Mary Ovington, "Is Mob Violence the Texas Solution of the Race Problem?" *Independent* 99 (September 6, 1919): 320.

exacerbating fears.[35] As concern grew, the Austin-based paper decided to release an editorial commenting on the furor. It stated it had received 10 to 12 phone calls from women who were alarmed by the reports they heard, and that they heard a number of exaggerated reports of blacks buying firearms, and hardware stores being completely bought out. The author, attempting to calm fears, said that such stories were utter nonsense, and that no white store would ever sell weapons of any quantity to blacks. The paper did comment that the result of such unfounded rumors had created "a certain amount of apprehension" among both whites and blacks, but cautioned that there was no special reason for alarm, unless of course some "excitable, hairbrained [sic] person would start trouble." In an interview with police chief Jake Platt, the officer exclaimed that he had seen no concrete evidence of any trouble, but that if any did happen, the city's thirty police officers could handle it. Despite these pronouncements, and due to the governor and local paper's fear-mongering of radicalized African-Americans, many white Texans were filled with increased suspicion.[36]

The Texas Department of Justice took the supposed threat by radical African-Americans seriously and attempted to solicit spies from among Texas' black communities to infiltrate local IWW headquarters and report on members' activities. Governor Hobby communicated with department members regularly, helping them narrow down suitable candidates for the position. In one instance, the governor suggested a particular individual, though a local judge argued that said person was unfit

[35] "Sinister Plot Hidden Behind Arkansas Riot," *Austin Statesman*, October 4, 1919, 1; "General Massacre of Whites Planned by Arkansas Blacks," *Austin Statesman*, October 6, 1919, 1.
[36] "Those Rumors of Race Trouble Current in Austin," August 3, 1919, 1.

for such service. Rebuffed, Hobby proclaimed that if the department needed in further assistance with the matter, it had only to command him.[37]

After the fearful "Red Summer," and the ensuing fall that showed that labor strikes and fear of radical labor would only increase, many organizations across the state announced their loyalty and pledged to root out any suspected agitators in their midst. In the first convention of the Texas division of the American Legion, held in Dallas on October 11, 1919, the organization proudly pledged its oath to 100 percent Americanism, representative government, and white supremacy. In an effort to quell the rising animosity between labor and capital, the convention, at the request of enlisted men, voted to eliminate all distinctions of class or rank in election of delegates to conventions and the election of state officers, and also voted down a proposal to bar from the conventions any person employed by the state or nation in an official capacity. Two days later, Texas papers reported with excitement at the rounding up of "reds" in Gary, Indiana, who had supposedly plotted the May Day attacks over the summer. On October 16, the paper urged the government to close America's doors to aliens, and on the 20th, it reprinted an incendiary statement by a senator that proclaimed a "Bolshevik taint" was in Washington, and that "reds" had infested the capital. The entire state of Texas appeared engulfed in the flames of hysteria and anti-radicalism, seeing its neighbors, immigrants, and those in Washington as potential suspects in attempts to overthrow American democracy.[38]

---

[37] "Governor Hobby to Charles Braniman," January 23, 1920, Governor's Papers, Folder Unnumbered July 6-March 20, Box 391.

[38] "Americanism, 100 Per Cent, Legion Slogan," *Austin Statesman*, October 12, 1919, 1; "Reds Rounded Up at Gary," *Austin Statesman*, October 14, 1919, 1; "Close America's Doors to Aliens," *Austin Statesman*, October 16, 1919, 1; "Bolshevik Taint in Washington," *Austin Statesman*, October 20, 1919, 1.

**Victory Fair**

After the harrowing summer, Texas attempted to quell fears and bring a sense of joy and normalcy back to the state. To that effect, beginning on October 6, Texas held the greatest fair it had ever produced up until that time. Dubbed the "Victory Fair," the event in Dallas brought together countless exhibitions and visitors in a celebration of the end of World War I and the promise of peace. Such promises would prove to be unfounded as the Red Scare increased in severity, and in that same month the worries over a nationwide coal strike supported by radical labor would become all too real. In that moment however, for two brief weeks in October, the state government and many of its citizens rested on their laurels, championing the hard-won peace that would later elude them. Balmy weather added cheer to the first day and many fair-goers proclaimed it to be first-rate. Governor Hobby attended the opening ceremonies, and attempted to avoid political topics, instead limiting himself to proclaiming his support for the League of Nations. That did not stop other attendees from using the occasion to stir discontent and rail against the menace of radical labor. R.L. Knight, a speaker from Dallas, addressed a press convention at the fair and proclaimed that the world remained in turmoil both politically and socially. Declaring that the struggle was on between capital and labor, he proposed to "squeeze the water out of capital, and pump the wind out of labor." His solution: mandate a minimum eight-hour work day, rather than a maximum, and force every mam, both rich and poor, to work, "thereby escaping both the contemptuous arrogance of capital and the impudent violence of labor." This outrageous

proposal was greeted with thunderous applause by those in attendance, and provided a dubious start to the supposed politically neutral festivities.[39]

The balmy weather soon turned to rain, with local weather patterns bringing forth a deluge matched only by the excitement of fair-goers. On the second day, local papers reported an estimated 39,000 trudged through the dampness to experience the celebration of victory. "The tragedies to white shoes were tremendous," one paper told, but despite that, there was great sport for small children. All of Dallas remained closed for the events, with local businesses and schools remaining shuttered so all its citizens could experience the patriotic events. Crowds tightly packed in the limited space to see vaudeville acts, automobile races, livestock shows, and listen to live music as well as a bevy of speakers on wide-ranging topics. Texas soldiers who had been sent overseas returned and paraded in the Dallas Coliseum to rapturous applause. Delegates from the American Legion also held meetings for their first meetings of a two-day convention during the fair. Train cars from across Texas were filled to capacity with people from across the Southwest for the event. By fair's end, nearly 200,000 people had visited, providing a decidedly patriotic boost to Texas' reputation as a major economic producer, and capping celebrations ending the war.[40] This brief interlude of positive feelings would soon fade into distant memory, as the nation lurched ever-closer to economic paralysis in one of its most important industries: coal.

**The Coal Strike of 1919 and the Strengthening of the Open Shop Movement**

[39] "Texas Greatest Fair Opened to Public with Simple Ceremonies," *Dallas Morning News*, October 7, 1919, 1.
[40] "Thirty-Nine Thousand Trudge Through Rain to Celebrate Dallas Day at Fair," *Dallas Morning News*, October 8, 1919, 1; "Khaki-Clad Heroes of Year Ago Gather in State Fair Reunion," *Dallas Morning News*, October 11, 1919, 1; All Texas State Fair Records Smashed," *Dallas Morning News*, October 19, 1919, 1.

Failure of coal operators and miners to settle their differences after multiple conferences gave way to desperation in much of the media and public. Texas newspapers bleakly told how a nationwide coal strike by November 1 seemed inevitable. Many of the state's papers appeared predisposed to side against the miners, and would later give in to radical hysteria that portrayed the event as a foreign-inspired Socialist plot. In an editorial printed in the *Dallas Morning News*, one columnist wrote how giving in to miners' demands would raise Texas consumers' coal bill by over 1,000,000 dollars. If the strike went forward, it would cause a great deal of suffering for the people, to say nothing of the disastrous effect on the growth of industry. The editorial made special mention of the racial make-up of the miners, saying that of the approximately 400,000 miners employed in the coal fields nationwide, about 164,000 were foreigners. Italians predominated these numbers, with a large number of Russians and Germans also swelling the ranks. In testimony before the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce, H.N. Taylor, president of the National Coal Association, drummed up hysteria against mine workers by saying that there existed a strong radical element in the industry, of which a large percentage were aliens. These alien miners openly agitated for what they called "Soviet government of mines," and cited instances of efforts to expel an official of the miners' union because he insisted that the miners live up to their contract before making new demands upon the operators. Further testimony warned that the IWW sought control over all industries including the mines, and that coal-dependent entities had not collected near enough to last them through the strike. With the state already predisposed to take a dim view of miners and foreigners,

many in Texas took to further xenophobia, warning on the dangers of succumbing to radicalism.[41]

In the run-up to the nationwide strike, local Texas judge C. Grennwood penned an editorial in the *Austin Statesman* on October 25, laying out the dangers of giving in to miners' demands, and the slippery slope that led to Socialism. In a flowing article that took up an entire page, the judge extolled Texans to return to the faith of the founders, and stand up for states' rights over the intrusion of big government. From Thomas Jefferson on down, the judge argued that every Democrat had defended the principle of the individual over the government, and of the state over the country. In "this day of Socialism and class domination," however, he argued that it behooved patriotic men to assert their rights and defend the life of their Republic against every "innovation" that threatened it. Railing against government control of industries, Judge Greenwood outlined his opposition to safety nets that rewarded failing businesses and kept afloat industries that failed to make enough to survive. Comparing the struggle of labor against capital to Biblical proportions, he argued that there were deep fundamental truths in the moral and spiritual universe that were the same in all ages and affixed by God, and that the "puny acts or decrees of men" could not change them. Greenwood called on every patriotic American to resist such Socialist calls for change, and stand up for the Constitution the way the Founders intended it to be interpreted, emphasizing small government, and the power of states' rights.[42]

---

"Coal Mine Strike Seems Inevitable," *Dallas Morning News*, October 22, 1919, 1; "Demands of Miners Mean Heavy Burden," *Dallas Morning News*, October 27, 1919, 1, 2.

[42] Constitutional Government on Trial," *Austin Statesman*, October 25, 1919, 6.

As the coal strike neared, the state government attempted to assure its people that Texas remained in good shape to meet the ensuing shortage, however long it would last. According to Railroad Commissioner Allison Mayfield, Texas' "inexhaustible" reserves of crude oil and natural gas would go a long way towards solving any shortage, and a large number of train engines could be equipped to transport the resource across the state. These confident predictions proved false however, as by late November, towns and cities across Texas appealed to the governor for assistance. The Texas Gas and Electric Company telegrammed Hobby saying that the coal situation at their Del Rio plant was distressing, and that the entire town lay in darkness. By December, the governor had wired Governor J.B.A. Robertson of Oklahoma requesting that he ship coal from Oklahoma to Texas to help alleviate the state's "present acute conditions." Previously, Robertson had ordered all coal produced in Oklahoma to remain in that state. Even after the strike situation had resolved, in January 1920, the governor's office still received telegrams from across the state telling of women and children suffering for want of fuel, and begging Hobby to send a coal car to them at the earliest possible moment.[43]

At the height of the strike, Texas newspapers reported of a plot by the Union of Russian Workers to bring down the U.S. government. They would use a general strike as their weapon of choice, and wipe from the earth anything that was a reminder of private property. According to Texas news outlets, documents published by the

[43] "Texas in Good Shape to Meet Coal Shortage," *Austin Statesman*, October 27, 1919, 1; "Texas Gas and Electric Company to Governor Hobby," November 20, 1919, Box 301, Letter Press Book, Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor's Papers; "Governor Hobby to Governor Robertson," December 18, 1919, Box 301, Letter Press Book, Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor's Papers; "J.F. Dowdy to Governor Hobby," January 13, 1920," Box 301, Letter Press Book, Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor's Papers.

Department of Justice during the Palmer Raids revealed radical labor's "program of death and destruction," and that the strike remained the most important weapon in its arsenal. One Texas paper also pointed out radical labor's loathing of religion. Reprinting statements from a seized pamphlet, an article told how radicals hated religion "because it lulls the spirit with lying tales, takes away the courage, and faith in the power of man... It has always sanctified slavery, grief, and tears. And we declare war upon all gods and religious fables. We are atheists." By placing such divisive language on the front page of their papers, Texas news outlets increased the fear and hysteria during the First Red Scare, fostering enmity between labor and capital, religious versus non-religious, and against various ethnic groups. In this way, papers across the country made it easy for Attorney General Palmer to round up thousands for deportation, and deprive American citizens of their constitutional rights. In this atmosphere, Governor Hobby would help drive a wedge between workers and businesses owners, culminating in-part with the crisis over the open shop movement.[44]

Concurrent with the coal crisis, the issues of right-to-work and the open shop exploded onto the Texas scene. Texas' labor troubles had long simmered leading up to the open shop movement. As commodities prices remained frozen after the war, unions across the board demanded increases and the right of collective bargaining. Businesses responded by forming open shop associations, giving local merchants a potent weapon against union organizing. Most non-union newspapers in Texas took a positive stance towards the open shop associations and the so-called right-to-work. In an editorial, the *Austin Statesman* argued that a denial of right-to-work to non-union members carried

[44] "Radicals Planned to Destroy Government," *Dallas Morning News*, November 10, 1919, 1.

with it a violation of economic principles that upset the standards of production and marketing of commodities. The editorial went on to say that a man was not poor because he had nothing, but rather because he did not work. It decried the idea of "one big union," as espoused by radical labor, and said that its negative effects could be plainly seen in Russia. It concluded that it was necessary to keep labor "under the law," just as much as it was to keep capital under control.[45]

Unwittingly anticipating the Kansas' state government's efforts at reform after the coal mining strike, the Waco Central Labor Council invited newspapers to comment on a resolution it submitted to Governor Hobby that called for the enacting of a law that provided all employees of public service corporations to settle labor disputes via compulsory state-sponsored arbitration, in case of failure to agree through conciliation or compromise. It cited the desire to prevent inconveniences and injury to the public and idleness and suffering to the workers. The *Austin Statesman* took a dim view of the plan, saying that government arbitration was "but a step to state supervision" of all their labor problems. Additionally, a state board of arbitration would be no more infallible than employer or employee, and the good it would accomplish would depend on the measure of its disinterestedness which could not be guaranteed. Further, it would possess a power beyond that of employer or employee, increasing the scope of its errors should it make them. The editorial concluded that industrial peace was highly desirable, but an enforced peace always had glaring defects. If it oppressed the general public, the peace would soon be disturbed, and if it wronged the worker, there would be even greater disturbance; "for general oppression is quickly felt and local oppression by a

[45] "Union Labor at Testing Point Seeking to Monopolize Work," *Austin American*, July 27, 1919, 1.

governing body soon arouses the general ire." Directly countering Kansas Governor Henry Allen's efforts months later, the paper countered that the best possible system of arbitration would be one under which all interests affected would have a voice.[46]

As business owners and state officials debated the rights of labor, a group of Texas employers organized the first Open Shop Association in Austin on October 28, 1919. With 276 signatures affixed to membership rolls, business owners in Austin who employed union labor sought to make Texas the headquarters for the movement regionally, and to spread their organization across the Great Plains and Southwest. Undoubtedly worried by the increasing militancy of labor across the country, Texas business owners wanted to make their state a central battlefield in the right to allow laborers to work against the interests of their local unions.[47] As membership grew, the Austin Open Shop Association [AOSA] attempted to dissuade workers' fears and released a statement arguing that their goal was not to declare war on union labor. Published in the *Austin Statesman* under the disingenuous headline "Equal Rights for All," Secretary of the AOSA, F. Thompson, argued that his organization's members wanted it distinctly understood that they were not in any way attempting to fight against union labor. Rather, his group wished "to give an employer the right to employ his labor regardless of religion, creed, or affiliation of the men he pays." Thompson said that the Open Shop Association would also maintain a card catalogue of labor, which would give employers a chance to hire men on the basis of merit, whether they were union or non-union men. Further, the secretary released his association's declaration of principles, which included resolutions to foster and protect industrial business interests,

[46] "Editorial: Compulsory Arbitration," *Austin Statesman*, June 22, 1919, 6.
[47] "276 Employers of Labor Sign Charter Roll," *Austin Statesman*, October 28, 1919, 1.

prevent industrial disturbances, insist upon the enforcement of the laws of the land, oppose restriction of production, sympathetic strikes lockouts, and boycotts, and to prevent any interference with persons seeking "through honest effort to work and earn an honest living." These decidedly anti-union labor measures did little to calm the fears of union organizers, and only served to heighten tensions as the nationwide walkout of coal miners loomed.[48]

On November 1, as the UMW order to cease work went out across the country, roughly 2,500 Texas miners joined their compatriots and obeyed the strike order. Most of the men were at Thurber, Strawn, and Bridgeport in north Texas. Governor Hobby Decided against making a statement on the day of the strike, but stood ready to call out the state militia if necessary to protect the public interest. Adjutant General W.D. Cope surmised that there was no indication such action would become necessary, and no orders had been given for troops to mobilize.[49]

Texas Representative Tom Connolly, a Democrat, took the Republican majority in the House of Representatives to task for not supporting Wilson's efforts during the coal strike sooner. Days before the strike he offered a resolution endorsing the president's position, which Republicans of the Judiciary Committee would not permit to be voted on. Connolly argued that the heart of his resolution was for the enforcement of law. Another Texas Representative, Thomas Blanton, faced off against a representative from Illinois when the latter attempted to insert in the Congressional Record a telegram sent to the Secretary of Labor by John Lewis, acting president of the UMW criticizing

[48] "Equal Rights for All Keynote of Open Shop Society," *Austin Statesman*, October 29, 1919, 1.
[49] "2,500 Texas Miners to Strike, Leaders Declare," *Dallas Morning News*, November 1, 1919, 1; "Hobby Still Reticent," *Austin Statesman*, November 1, 1919, 1.

and denouncing President Wilson's attitude toward the situation. Blanton defied the Illinois representative, saying that he "did not want that rot in the record." The latter shot back "I thought that you would object," and when he started to attack Blanton's stance against labor, the speaker of the house stopped him calling for order.[50]

Despite the rancorous back-and-forth over who was to blame for the coal strike, some in Texas voiced support for the workers' position. Dr. A. B. Wolfe, professor of economics at the University of Texas, speaking before the Dallas Open Forum in the City Hall auditorium, defended the position of organized labor during the coal strike. On November 2, he declared that industrial democracy was no less essential to the well-being of the nation than political democracy, and that most of the public press made little or no effort to state labor's case or to analyze in a calm and balanced way its motives and economic causes. He insightfully argued that repression of free speech and the unconstitutional invasion of rights had not ceased with the close of the war, but the passions of national conflict had been carried over, adding fuel to the fires of class conflict. Wolfe claimed that the long history of labor had been the history of workers' attempts to achieve fulfillment, while capital only rewards them with a number on a pay roll and scientific management. Addressing the role of the public and the media, he argued that the people were being told in outrageous headlines of Bolshevist demands of labor, creating unjust prejudice in the public mind. "The public betrays a lack of objective critical capacity, becomes emotionally inflamed and flies into a tirade of incentives against labor because it accepts unquestionably ex parte evidence instead of demanding the right to hear both sides." Dr. Wolfe's insightful musings were a minority

[50] "Connally of Texas Scores Republicans," *Dallas Morning News*, November 1, 1919, 1.

voice in Texas unfortunately, where racism, xenophobia, and fear continued to rule among the government, media, and general populace.[51]

With Congress at odds over how to solve the coal strike and the labor situation in general, and accusations of disloyalty flying across house and senate chambers, other organized laborers went on strike in protest of Texas businesses' open shop stance. On November 10, union painters of Austin left jobs where contractors had signed open shop agreements, marking the opening in a fight between labor unions and open shop associations. Carpenters did likewise, and local reports hinted that all members of Allied Building Trades would soon follow. Officials at the aforementioned union stated that several hundred would be involved and it would tie up much construction. Local unions of plumbers and electricians also followed suit. Texas State Labor Commissioner T.C. Jennings, in attempts to get a handle on the situation, came out in opposition to the open shop associations that had been organized in Austin and other cities, saying that "in view of the great amount of unrest among the people… it is extremely unfortunate that our conservative business men are lending themselves to such movements [open shop]." He went on to say that although these groups were couched in high-minded language, thoughtful people could not mistake the meaning of their principles: "it means war instead of peace. It means a bitter struggle in the industrial world. It means a widening of the breach between capital and labor, when our efforts should be along lines that would establish clearer [respect] between employer and employed."[52]

---

[51] "Labor is Defended in Forum Address," *Dallas Morning News*, November 3, 1919, 2.
[52] "Austin Union Men Begin Fight on Open Shop; Painters Out," "Labor Commissioner Jennings Condemns Open Shop Movement," *Austin Statesman*, November 10, 1919, 1.

Jennings' stance would place him at odds with Governor Hobby, who supported the open shop movement and remained suspicious of union labor during the Red Scare. As the open shop movement gained prominence, the Texas Chamber of Commerce ran free employment agencies finding jobs for non-union workers. The state also brought in thousands of Mexican laborers, and established training schools to foster a non-union work force. The state also hired many strikebreakers, in anticipation for the ensuing resistance by organized labor. With the governor firmly in control over the reigns of state power in relation to labor, despite objections from his labor commissioner, the Texas government would clamp down hard on anything it deemed radical, or opposed to a well-regulated society.[53]

On November 23, public opinion towards union labor continued to sour as a mysterious letter-writer supposedly linked to radicalism penned multiple letters to Austin businessmen who were in favor the open shop movement. The writer threatened that if they kept on fighting against labor, the scabs would bury them. In another note, the writer warned of arson attacks, saying that they could burn faster than the city could build. One paper mused that "the spirit of the Bolshevik seems to have boiled over here in Austin," and quoted open shop organizers who said that these "typical 'red' notes," undoubtedly represented only a few extreme radicals. The organizers also argued that the radicals were probably foreigners, and that no one expected the writer of an anonymous letter to carry out such a threat. Despite the downplaying of the event, state papers took the story and ran with it, splashing the Communist death notes across their front pages in bold headlines. One local union leader commented that cases like these

[53] Chandler Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 124.

gave labor a bad name across the United States, and that unions should help pay reward money to catch the culprit as an act of good faith. Despite union efforts to stave off a backlash, the media's hyping of the story represented yet another tightening of the noose around organized labor.[54]

As the coal strike neared resolution, the actions by the striking miners left a sour taste in many Texans' mouths, even driving a wedge between different union groups. The Texas Farmers' Union, citing the attitude of coal miners, stated that they would not work with the AFL under any circumstances. A week later, on December 22, papers reported in gleeful tones that finally, America would be purged of "foreign anarchists," relating to Attorney General Palmer's raids and planned deportations happening across the country. Retelling how the so-called "Soviet ark," began its journey across the ocean, papers across Texas exclaimed with jubilation that its labor troubles, or at least foreign involvement in them, would be curtailed.[55]

That did not stop Texas members of the House and Senate from criticizing the national government however, and on January 24, 1920, Congressman Thomas L. Blanton, vigorously attacked AFL President Samuel Gompers for his opposition to anti-sedition legislation. Blanton made the riotous claim that the Department of Labor was "honey-combed with anarchy," and feeding into the popular fears of the time, the representative asserted that Gompers had not been patriotic during the war, and that in order to combat the rampant strikes occurring across the country, Congress needed

[54] "Austin Business Men Threatened," *Austin Statesman*, November 23, 1919, 1.
[55] "Texas Farmers Will Not Work Alongside Labor Federation," *Austin Statesman*, December 15, 1919, 1; "America to be Purged of Foreign Anarchists," *Austin Statesman*, December 27, 1919, 1.

either to pass a sedition law which would "squelch anarchy or else bear the mark of having bowed to Gompers."[56]

As Texas veered further into the politics of unreason, embracing hysteria, xenophobia, anti-unionism, and hyper-patriotism, Governor Hobby consumed a steady diet of propaganda in favor of such elements. Writing to the producer of movie he recently watched in February 1920, Hobby told of his viewing experience of *The Land of Opportunity* in highly positive terms. The movie begins at a dinner party with many successful men gathered about, exchanging ideas on how to improve the country. One younger man, identified as a radical by the movie's text, stands up and argues that the rich were a specially privileged class. This starts a debate, with several older men countering that any person who accumulated enough money through hard work and donated to charity was worth "a cartload of agitators." The older men then pile on the young radical, saying he belonged to a "herd of uplifters who never lift anything but their voices." The radical then produces a book entitled *Classes against Masses*, by the intentionally foreign-sounding Yakem Zubko, in an attempt to educate his older compatriots. One older man then tells about the life of Abraham Lincoln, and by movie's end, helps the radical to conclude that the same America that gave Abraham Lincoln his opportunities, going from a simple rail-splitter to becoming president, was the same America in 1920 that provided justice, and freedom to work for all. The movie ends with the young radical tearing the pages from his Socialist book and casting them into a fireplace situated beneath a giant picture of Abraham Lincoln. Governor Hobby stated that the move revealed a story "so human as to touch the heart and so patriotic as

[56] "Texan Accuses Labor Chieftain of Unpatriotism during the War," *Austin Statesman*, January 24, 1920, 1.

to arouse the pride of any person imbued with Americanism." The governor argued that the movie should be seen throughout the nation, and remained obviously affected by its anti-labor Red Scare narrative.[57]

As the governor consumed a steady diet of anti-Communist and xenophobic propaganda, the lens of racial hatred appeared more singularly concentrated on Mexican workers. A general report ironically told that "northeast Texas is suffering severely from decreased production due to the shortage of Mexican labor." Governor Hobby stood firm in his anti-Mexican stance however, and upon hearing of the possibility of a recent order authorizing temporary admission of laborers from that country into the United States, sent a telegram to the Secretary of Labor in Washington D.C. In it, Hobby argued that such an action would be disastrous and "work ruin to thousands of Texas farmers." The governor pulled as many favors as he could to halt the order, and wired Elbert Johnson, Chairman of the House Emigration Committee, as well as several senators and congressmen, urgently requesting their assistance. Hobby's negative perceptions of races outside the white spectrum played havoc with his moral compass, and throughout the Red Scare he continually employed racist viewpoints in many of his decisions.[58]

**Texas Labor, Race, and the Galveston Strike**

Race would play a central role in another major labor incident when on March 12, 1920, 1600 longshoremen joined dockworkers along the Gulf Coast in a nationwide

[57] "Governor Hobby to Lewis Selznick," February 12, 1920, Box 301, Letter Press Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor's Papers; Ralph Ince, *The Land of Opportunity*, Film, Selznick Pictures Corporation, 1920.
[58] "Texas Heard from on Entry of Mexicans," *Dallas Morning News*, January 31, 1920, 1; "Governor Hobby to Secretary of Labor," "Governor Hobby to Elbert Johnson, et. al., April 22, 1920, Box 301, Letter Press Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920. Governor's Papers.

walkout. The strike was spearheaded by the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), with workers seeking improved conditions and a 25 percent wage increase from the Mallory and Morgan steamship companies. The owners refused to arbitrate, and dockworkers remained on strike. During the walkout, several business leaders in Texas came together and wrote to Hobby urging him to pass legislation creating a so-called "loyalty week," a time similar to many other states' "American Day" pageants that sought to instill loyalty and patriotism in a country seemingly wracked by radicalism and instability. The governor stated that it would give him great pleasure to issue such a proclamation, and to that end he worked with the American Legion as well as business groups to push the idea forward. As the governor juggled various calls for outward demonstrations of loyalty, he continued to face challenges to cohesion represented by the Galveston strike.[59]

The Galveston strike remains notable for its biracial character of its union movement, as the local union included both whites and blacks. Of the 1600 men who went on strike, 900 were white, while 700 were African American. This extraordinary cooperation came about from pragmatic concerns, as neither race could improve its position without the other since blacks made up over 50 percent of the waterfront workforce in Texas. To combat the strike, the Mallory and Morgan steamship companies utilized white scabs for jobs previously given to blacks, and black scabs to replace those worked by whites. Given the heightened racial sentiments and nativism

[59] "Strikers Denounce Employers' Stand," *Dallas Morning News*, May 31, 1920, 1; "Governor Hobby to [name unreadable]," March 11, 1920, Box 391, Letter Press Books March 4-April 16,1920, Governor's Papers.

engendered by the Red Scare and supposed threats from Mexico, a race riot appeared imminent.[60]

On June 2, Governor Hobby sent a letter to Mayor Sappington of Galveston and Sheriff Henry Thomas complaining that congestion in the movement of goods through the port of Galveston was preventing smooth trading operations by Texas merchants. He argued that it had reached proportions affecting the welfare of Texas and property rights of citizens to such an extent that he felt it was his duty to advise them that unless they provided increased police protection and insured the uninterrupted movement of freight, as well as the safety of all workers employed in its loading and unloading, he would assume direct control of the city. This veiled threat of martial law aimed at intimidating Galveston authorities prompted them to reply that they would comply with all of Hobby's demands. Despite this, the governor placed Adjutant General W. D. Cope on the ground as his personal representative, and went ahead with the declaration of martial law on June 7. In a letter to Cope, Hobby communicated his regret at the necessity of sending troops to Galveston, but opined that the question was whether the best interest of the state would be served or if it would be subordinated to a "local controversy." He went on to say that any issue with respect to labor organizations or open shop organizations was not involved in his decision making, and that he wished to protect both within the law so long as that protection was not incompatible with public welfare. The channels of trade effecting the life of business in Texas needed to be kept open, and Hobby stated he would exert the full limit of the state's power to accomplish

[60] Joseph Abel, "Opening the Closed Shop: The Galveston Longshoremen's Strike of 1920-1921, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 11 (2007): 319-20; Clifford Farrington, *Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2007), 189.

that purpose. He concluded that “the supreme sovereignty of the state will be maintained at any cost.” The governor then communicated with the Mallory Steamship Company, assuring them that the military would keep open the arteries of trade and protect the property rights of its citizens. The governor made no such assurances to organized labor, and remained keenly focused on keeping business leaders ingratiated to him.[61]

On June 7, Governor Hobby placed Galveston under martial law, citing the inability of city authorities to preserve the peace and protect the "lives and liberty of the men employed... and to keep the channels of commerce open." That afternoon, 500 members of the Texas National Guard arrived from Houston, despite a request from city authorities that Galveston not be placed under military rule. The local mayor indignantly proclaimed that his city's police force was able to handle any situation. A month later, on July 16, the governor declared that the mayor, city commissioners, the chief of police, and all the members of the police force had failed, refused, and neglected to enforce the law in Galveston, and subsequently failed to maintain order and preserve the peace. They refused to make any attempt to prevent and suppress the riots that occurred in the city or arrest and apprehend persons who engaged in unlawful activity. Ultimately failing to protect citizens of the city, Hobby declared the suspension of civil law in Galveston. Instituting direct military control of the city, papers reported that there were few disorderly actions occurring in the city. Soldiers made less than half

[61] “Governor Hobby to Mayor Sappington and Henry Thomas,” June 2, 1920, Box 301, Letter Press Book, Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor’s Papers; “Governor Hobby to Adjutant General Cope,” June 7, 1920, Letter Press Book, Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor’s Papers; “Governor Hobby to Mallory Steamship Company,” June 10, 1920, Letter Press Book, Telegrams August 22, 1919-June 18, 1920, Governor’s Papers.

a dozen arrests and all of those made were routine. Grumblings appeared from some members of the local fire department, which argued that they might refuse to work if Hobby suspended civil law. The fire chief attempted to rebuff these claims, though newspapers carried the story anyway.[62]

As strikebreakers exploited race-hatred in the Galveston strike, racial clashes erupted in other parts of Texas. In Paris, on July 7, a white mob burned at the stake two African-Americans accused of killing a man and his son. Fearful of unrest, armed volunteers began patrolling the streets and there were reports that scattered gunfire had taken place at the outskirts of town. Sherriff C.D. Clarkson and his two deputies were away in search of other blacks suspected of the same killing of whites, and the mayor of Paris began organizing squads of volunteers to send into the black quarters of town as a "safety measure." In another incident, near El Paso, a 25 year old woman named R. L. Stanford, wife of a local cavalry officer, was kidnapped by two Mexicans and taken to Ciudad Juáraz. In the cross-border incident, according to her story, she was "mistreated" by fifteen Mexicans. Sanford said she was abandoned in the street late at night, and was later found by local officials.[63]

Hobby's exploitation of racial animosities and declaration of martial law showed his willingness to push for the open shop movement and solve the labor crisis that so beleaguered the nation. Fearful of Bolshevist infiltration from both Mexico and within other racial groups in Texas, he took measures to crush opposition through his use of

---

[62] "Galveston Placed Under Martial Law," *Dallas Morning News*, June 8, 1920, 1; "Hobby's Proclamation Suspending Civil Law in City of Galveston," *Austin Statesman*, July 16, 1920, 1; "Bayonets Rule in Galveston; People Sullen," *Austin Statesman*, July 16, 1920, 1.
[63] "Armed Men Patrol Paris, Texas; Racial Outbreak is Feared," *Austin Statesman*, July 7, 1920, 1; "Texas Woman Stolen by Mexican Fiends," *Austin Statesman*, April 16, 1920, 1.

martial law and unite business leaders behind him. The Galveston strike would come to a close by the end of 1920 with a clear defeat for union labor. Workers received pay increases far lower than they demanded, and new contracts permitted the hiring of non-union labor. Through the use of martial law, Hobby crushed the threat of organized labor and its suspected links to Bolshevism, and by late 1920, helped push through legislation that banned any actions that would hinder free trade.[64]

**The End of Governor Hobby and the Election of 1920**

As the state overflowed with labor conflicts and racial animosity, Governor Hobby refused to run again for the governorship. Former Texas Senator and House Minority Leader Joseph W. Bailey stepped forth to take the mantle of leadership of the Democratic Party, and came out swinging against the so-called "Dallas Oligarchy," and extended his support for the open shop movement. Calling for his listeners to put an end to class warfare and "machine rule" in Texas, he spoke in a hall filled to capacity and was greeted with great applause. Bailey, a major supporter of states' rights, constitutional conservatism, and opponent of women's suffrage, argued for the restoration of constitutional rights back to the people, cut out government waste, and "kick out useless officeholders." As Bailey rose to speak, the band played "Dixie" and the crowd stood and cheered. Regarding the open shop issue, Bailey argued that his past electoral defeats were attributed to organized labor and their publications for his favor of the policy. "I am for the open shop and I am opposed to a law-made eight-hour day. If the politicians had the courage to resist the radical labor leaders, we would never have had such [labor] circulars as this to read." He continued saying that he had dared to

[64] Abel, "Opening the Closed Shop," 318.

labor that they were wrong, and that while they had the right to organize, they did not have the right to stir up aggression against the differing classes. He maintained that any man had a right to quit work when he chose, but also that another man had a right to take his place.[65]

Bailey's gubernatorial challenge would eventually sputter out as he became the center of corruption allegations and attacks against his own patriotism. Pat Neff, member of the Texas House of Representatives would eventually defeat Bailey in a landslide, and would also defeat his Republican challenger to become Texas' 28th Governor in 1921. Regardless, during the heated election cycle of 1920, issues of labor and patriotism, as well as a country desperately seeking a return to normalcy after the excesses wrought on by years of war and xenophobia, became key determinants in who would gain control of state governments.[66]

The legacy of Governor Hobby during the First Red Scare remains strongly negative. Through his actions the state increasingly embraced racial fear and labor disturbances, becoming a key player in hyping up war hysteria against Mexico. African-Americans suffered under Hobby's watch, and the governor's paranoid suspicion over black links to Communism informed his perceptions about race and labor constantly. From 1918 to 1920, Texas authorities and the media would reshape education, labor, and entire communities, guided by the themes of 100 percent Americanism, and anti-radicalism. Texas acted as a major influencer of perceptions about the border for many across the country, and became a center of fear and hysteria during the First Red Scare.

[65] "'Dallas Oligarchy' and Class Agitation Draw Bailey's Fire," *Austin Statesman*, July 13, 1920, 1, 3.
[66] "Landslide for Pat M. Neff," *Austin Statesman*, August 29, 1920, 1.

## Chapter 6. Conclusion

By the end of 1920, fear of Communism nationwide went into a general decline. There were some entities that continued to hype foreign threats, though by and large the national mood yearned for a return to normalcy. Several events had come together to undermine Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer's crusade. During the so-called "deportations delirium" when the U.S. Department of Justice rounded up thousands across the country for unlawful detainment and deportation, Louis Post, the acting Secretary of Labor stepped in and declared the department had overstepped its bounds. Putting a stop to the roundups, he successfully defended his position during congressional hearings that year. Additionally, a report authorized by the National Popular Government League directly challenged the Department of Justice on the grounds that its actions were illegal and unconstitutional. Authorized by prominent civil rights attorneys, the report did much damage to Palmer's program, and helped end government sanctioned persecution of suspected radicals during the First Red Scare. Nationwide, the hype against radicals subsided tremendously after Palmer's ill-fated declaration of a massive May Day attack. After no attack surfaced, Palmer's reputation along with the Department of Justice became heavily tarnished.[1] A veil lifted over much of the nation's population, and the call for persecution of suspected radicals dropped off dramatically. In the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, calls continued to ring out warning of Bolshevist threats, though not near in the number they used to.

[1] Louis F. Post, *The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty* (New York, 1923): Brown, et al., *To the American People: Report on the Illegal Practices of the United States Department of Justice* (Washington D.C.: National Popular Government League, 1920).

The hatred cultivated during this time morphed into different forms, directed at new scapegoats. For much of the region, the Ku Klux Klan would take center-stage as it railed against African-Americans, Catholics, Jews, and any other group they deemed insufficiently patriotic or American. In Kansas, Governor Henry Allen directed the latter years of his term towards defeating the Klan, and argued that the organization rose from religious intolerance and racial bigotry. By 1923, the KKK counted over 60,000 Kansans as its members, providing a serious challenge to Allen. By 1925 however, the Kansas legislature outlawed the organization's activities, the first state in the nation to do so. Governor Allen would serve only one term but returned to politics as the state's senator in Washington, DC from 1929 to 1930. He would die in 1950, leaving a mixed legacy of crushing labor dissent and progressive views on race during the First Red Scare.[2] Herman Zimmerman would continue his drive against Bolshevism in any form, and railed against different groups he saw as undermining American society. As 1920 drew to a close, he changed tactics and threw his hat into the ring for election to U.S. marshal. He succeeded, and represented southeastern Kansas for several years. He later moved to Topeka, and took various jobs including hotel and restaurant commissioner before dying in 1965 at the age of 86.[3]

In Oklahoma, Governor J.B.A. Robertson ended his only term mired in scandal and chaos. Red Scare fears turned into race-based hatred giving rise to the Tulsa Race Riots in 1921. Unable and unwilling to confront the organization as Allen had, Robertson allowed nativism and a resurgent Klan to make Oklahoma a hotbed of racist

[2] "Ku Klux Klan in Kansas," Kansas Historical Society, https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/ku-klux-klan-in-kansas/15612 (accessed February 10, 2017).
[3] "P.E. Zimmerman for U.S. Marshall," *The Wichita Beacon*, November 9, 1920, 8; "Spanish War Veteran Dies," *Topeka Daily Capital*, December 9, 1965, 45.

activity. The ensuing riots led to the destruction of the Greenwood District in Tulsa, known as "Black Wall Street," and left a giant scar across the city that has never fully healed. Robertson's Democratic Party lost its majority in the state House of Representatives, and the governor failed to pass any major legislation in the waning years of his term. He came close to impeachment, avoiding the embarrassment by only one vote. He attempted to run again for the governorship in 1926, but was defeated by Henry Johnston. He never attained another political office, and eventually succumbed to cancer in 1938.[4]

New Mexico's Octaviano Larrazolo fared little better in political life. Being consumed by controversies during the First Red Scare and becoming a liability, the Republic Party of New Mexico chose not to re-nominate him for governor. He was also failed in an ill-fated bid for a spot on the New Mexico Supreme Court, but would eventually serve from 1927 to 1928 in the New Mexico House of Representatives. Larrazolo later filled the vacant seat of U.S. Senator Andieus Jones, who had died in office. He served a mere six months before he too fell ill. Larrazolo died in 1930, leaving behind a legacy of overreaction and zealotry, ever-intending to prove the patriotism and 100 percent Americanism of his state.[5]

Governor William Hobby's political aspirations in Texas ended with his term in 1921. He returned to the publishing world, purchasing the *Beaumont Journal* and later becoming president of the Houston *Post-Dispatch*. Hobby's effective control of the *Post* enlarged it substantially, and by the 1950s he controlled the paper as well as a radio and

[4] "Robertson, James Brooks Ayers," Oklahoma Historical Society, http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=RO006 (accessed February 10, 2017).
[5] "Octaviano Larrazolo," Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/larrazolo.html (accessed February 10, 2017).

TV station. Hobby died in 1964, but not without leaving his mark on the open-shop movement, crushing labor dissent, and deteriorating race-relations in the state.[6]

As witnessed, the Red Scare proved an end to careers for several politicians in the region. The Great Plains states of Kansas and Oklahoma as well as the Borderlands state of New Mexico and Texas all suffered at the hands of rampant hysteria and misguided fear. Because of these similarities, as well as differences, it is useful to draw a comparison of these two sections. Kansas and Oklahoma for example had a stronger background in radical and leftist agitation, notably with the IWW and Nonpartisan League. Before the war Kansas had a strong Socialist Party presence, with regular attendance to speakers including Eugene Debs, and Kate Richard O'Hare. Similarly it was no accident that the left-leaning *Appeal to Reason* was based in the state in the small town of Girard. While remaining a beacon of sanity during the panic of the Red Scare, its readership declined. The publication ceased to exist by 1922, replaced by a new paper that lacked the Socialistic character of its predecessor. As one historian put it, "never again would Kansas be identified in the public mind with leftwing politics."[7]

Similar to Kansas, and perhaps even more-so, Oklahoma enjoyed a strong Socialist presence that contributed to the party's electoral success in the 1914 elections. More than 175 Socialists assumed local and county offices in Oklahoma, with six sent to the state legislature after the election: five successful house members from western counties (Beckham, Dewey, Kiowa, Major, and Roger Mills), and one senator from the Beckham-Ellis-Roger Mills-Dewey district. In both the third and seventh districts, the

[6] "Hobby, William Pettus," Texas State Historical Association, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fho04 (accessed February 10, 2017).
[7] William Pratt, "Historians and the Lost World of Kansas Radicalism," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 30 (2007): 270-291.

Socialists ran second to the Democrats, and ran close races in other districts, with Republicans narrowly beating them out.[8] In the race for president, the Socialist candidate Fred Holt received 52,703 votes, roughly 21 percent of the total votes cast in Oklahoma. The Socialist Party showed itself to be an earnest contender for the number two spot in state politics, positioning itself as the Democrats' main rival in many instances marginalizing the Republican Party. Similarly showing a strong leftist background, the radical agricultural wing of the IWW made strong inroads in the state. The group attempted to expand in the oilfields, though faced strong opposition. Much like Kansas, the coming of World War I and ensuing IWW raids put an end to much of the radical leftist activity in the state. Regardless, it gave Oklahoma strong left-leaning character, so much so that even the state's flag bore the symbol of a star on a red background. Whether it was intended to be Socialist-inspired or not, legislators voted to change the flag by the 1920s in reaction to it being associated with Communism.[9]

Both Kansas and Oklahoma were heavily dependent on agriculture and mining. This created strong support for union groups in these fields. Empowered labor groups exercised this muscle, and exacerbated the effects of the coal strike hoping to achieve more favorable terms. New Mexico and Texas also shared in the coal strike, though Texas under Hobby appeared far less worried than its western and northern neighbors. Another key difference lay in racial issues. Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas had larger

[8] Jim Bisset, Jim. *Agrarian Socialism in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1904-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999): 126: Scales, "Political History of Oklahoma, 1907-1949." Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1949, 173; Von Russell Creel, "Socialists in the House: The Oklahoma Experience Part I," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 70 (1992): 146.

[9] James Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism*: Radical Movements in the Southwest 1895-1943, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 291; Jim Bisset, *Agrarian Socialists in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1904-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

populations of African-Americans than did New Mexico, and governments in those three states dealt with racial minorities in different ways. While Allen in Kansas appeared far more sensible, Hobby in Texas reacted in an incredibly racist manner. Similarly, the Tulsa Race Riots in Oklahoma a mere year after major Red Scare fears subsided proved that racial minorities in the region had plenty to fear. Occurring in 1921, the Tulsa Race Riots represented an unprecedented outrage against Oklahoma's African-American community, then one of the most affluent in the entire country. The event began when an African-American named Dick Rowland was riding in an elevator with a white woman named Sarah Page. According to varying accounts the woman claimed Dick had attacked her, causing many in the black community to fear the formation of a white lynch mob. A group of blacks, many of them former World War I veterans, convened at the jail to protect the accused man, though a white mob also arrived and shots soon rang out. The ensuing violence by whites destroyed dozens of blocks in the wealthy Greenwood District, involved the arrest of nearly 6,000 African-Americans, and cause the deaths of an estimated 300 blacks. With millions of dollars in property damage, and an entire community in shock, the riot spelled the end of "Black Wall Street," left a permanent scar on the history of race relations in Oklahoma, and represented the worst outburst of racial violence in the country at that time.[10] New Mexico, with its large Mexican population, also played host to fear and suspicion, and many Mexicans became suspects in Communist plots drummed up by the media. Throughout the Red Scare, each state's differing racial and ethnic make-up proved to be key in engendering further fear and xenophobia among an intolerant population.

[10] Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, "Tulsa Race Riot," (Commission Report, Oklahoma City, OK, 2001).

While Kansas and Oklahoma appeared more susceptible to infiltration from radical labor, citizens of New Mexico and Texas were more worried about Communist threats coming from Mexico, and an eventual war with that country. Government and media sources in the plains and borderlands states directed their resources to drumming up support against each group, and showed how Red Scare fears played out differently for each region. In the plains, the boogeyman appeared in the form of radicalized labor, while in the borderlands, it appeared as a Bolshevist-inspired Mexican. The events showed that fear continued to evolve and take on many forms, representative of whatever local environments dictated. Fear proved adaptable to the different landscapes it encountered across the American West, and found willing victims in the Great Plains and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands.

Red Scare fears did not simply end overnight. As shown, they adapted to the differing climates of the time periods. Race riots, labor disturbances, and xenophobia inspired by the First Red Scare continued into 1921, and began to morph into different forms, notably the second rise of the Ku Klux Klan. Eventually, the fear would take other forms, naming different targets. In ensuing decades, other groups would learn to harness that fear. Groups such as the Nazis, whose unrestricted malevolence would lead the world to the closest it has ever come to wholesale destruction. As anti-German xenophobia in America would rise, fall, and rise again, racial animosity against African-Americans persisted. Refusing to cower, many blacks would hone the lessons learned during World War I and the First Red Scare.

The Roaring Twenties provided a false sense of security. As the nation at-large appeared to recover from the war and large metropolis's bustled with vibrancy, the rural

countryside remained in a far more tenuous position, and would ultimately succumb to economic depression. Labor unions across the country declined, and xenophobic radicalism became more mainstream than ever. As the U.S. government approved laws restricting "undesirable" immigrants, the Ku Klux Klan achieved a form of respectability in society. As the Great Depression set in, many in the U.S. searched for scapegoats. Radio preachers and heralds of social reform targeted Jews, while others labeled different minorities the blame for causing economic upheaval. Whatever the scapegoat, many willing Americans grasped at these answers in a vain attempt to find comfort, and a reason to explain the dire situation they were in. As World War II approached, many minority groups would learn new lessons to combat fear and racial intolerance, notably in organizing and demonstrating.

Mexican immigration would increase, beginning with the Mexican Farm Labor Program (later known as the Bracero Program), bringing in millions of Mexican guest workers into the U.S. The government created the program in 1942 out of a fear of labor shortage caused by World War II, and crafted a series of agreements with Mexico to sign labor contracts with the latter's workers. The program lasted well beyond the war, proving extremely popular, albeit controversial. Mexicans, willing to brave poor conditions and lower wages than their white counterparts, flocked to the program in desperate need of employment. From 1942 to 1964, the U.S. Government signed nearly 4.2 million contracts, making the Bracero Program the largest U.S. contract labor program in the country's history. Mexican workers willing to relocate faced harsh

conditions, and primarily served to enrich growers who benefited from the influx of cheap labor.[11]

Backlash against immigration rose, with many white Americans viewing their ways of life threatened by outside forces who, much like during the First Red Scare, supposedly sought to overturn the U.S. way of life. This hatred of racial minorities helped perpetuate countless rights movements, including the African-American Civil Rights Movement, which found new life by the 1950s. Taking all that had come before it, Civil Rights leaders marched in protest, demonstrated against intolerance, and practiced civil disobedience against a fear and hatred that had infested the country for far too long. Using lessons learned from the founding of the NAACP, through the First Red Scare, and beyond, African-American leaders proved their desire for rights were more powerful than any fear-mongering promoted by racist ideologies.

Simultaneously, fear against Communism once again reared its head. As the two lone superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union surveyed each other at the end of World War II, ideological conflict came to dominate relations between them. Cooperation gave way to suspicion, and a new Red Scare thrust itself on the United States. While the Second Red Scare shared much in common with its older counterpart, it remains distinct from the First in many ways. For example, the First Red Scare had a strong emphasis on racial xenophobia tied to ideology, whereas the Second was purely ideological-based. In the 1950s, overreaction against Communism remained firmly rooted in beliefs of the superiority of Capitalism over all other systems, including Communism, Fascism, and any other "ism" that seemed un-American, and the rampant

[11] Bracero History Archive, http://braceroarchive.org/about (accessed February 21, 2017).

racism of the period appeared incidental. Quite dissimilar to the First Red Scare, the hysteria against Communism actually provided an impetus for the U.S. government to improve race relations. With the Soviet Union rightfully criticizing its rival's dismal record on race, the United States found itself losing allies in the emerging decolonized states of Africa. Adolph Hitler had similarly criticized the U.S. for its sanctimonious preaching against Germany's racial policies, later revealing that he had borrowed the idea for concentration camps from the U.S. government's own use of reservations for American Indians.[12] Compelled by this international shame, U.S. leaders acted relatively quickly in supporting bills granting greater civil rights by the 1960s. In essence, the Second Red Scare and the hysteria against Communism could be ironically seen as improving race relations. Conversely, during the First Red Scare, race and ethnicity remained intimately tied to fears of Communism. Depending on the state, African-Americans and Mexicans suffered inordinately as local governments, media outlets, and citizens pressed for greater security against these supposed alien menaces. These powerful institutions turned on the country's own citizens, imprisoning many simply for the crime of associating with leftist groups, and targeted thousands based on racial and ethnic background. Calls rang out for deportations, and the U.S. government willingly responded, sponsoring raids and deportations that removed countless immigrants and even some U.S. citizens from the country, shipping them to the Soviet Union regardless of if they originated there or not. Violations of civil rights and abuses of power were the calling cards of the First Red Scare, proving how rampant fear and

[12] John Toland, *Adolph Hitler: The Definitive Biography* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991).

xenophobia could so quickly remove rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and showcase the utter fragility of American democracy.

Fear against radicalism, state suppression of groups and ideas, and the silencing of individuals in the name of safety were common themes throughout the First Red Scare, and provide a glimpse into the past that does not at all seem unfamiliar. The government, media, and populations of the states of the Great Plains and the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands had a large role to play in expanding these practices, and while sharing many similarities with the rest of the nation, these states and their impact can no longer be discounted. They helped shape experiences of the First Red Scare, bringing national attention to their activities, and showed the exploitative and reprehensible actions of their governors, encouraged by a fearful populace. While some states, such as Kansas, showed remarkable racial tolerance in some respects, the overall cadence of the First Red Scare remained one of gross magnification of intolerance and repression, stoking the fears of xenophobia and international war. In today's world of racial fear and intolerance, xenophobia and suspected radicalism, the lessons learned from the First Red Scare remain paramount to the American experience, and continue to hold relevance in the United States today.

While it may seem like such destructively xenophobic acts belong to a less-enlightened age, and such things would never happen in the present, these weak excuses for past transgressions are no longer valid. It may seem easy to argue that many people were less educated, less cultured, or simply less concerned with individual freedom nearly 100 years ago. Why then has the U.S. witnessed continuing racial and xenophobic tendencies? Simply looking at the past decade, one bears witness to racial

hatred in the form of Dylann Roof, the mass murdering white supremacist who sought to start a race war by gunning down innocent worshippers in a black church. Or the newly resurgent Ku Klux Klan which is actively and successfully rebranding itself as more inclusive, family-focused, and intent on protecting Christian morality. The Southern Poverty Law Center, a nonprofit organization specializing in civil rights, estimates that Klan membership in 2016 rests between 5,000 and 8,000 members, with the group expanding from 72 groups in 2014 to 130 in 2016.[13] With similar fears of refugees, Islamophobia, and other forms of discrimination making headlines across the country, recent history shows a striking similarity to the same kind of fear that existed during the First Red Scare. The post-World War I era bore witness to monumental changes in American life, full of uncertainty, violence, and fear, much like the post-9/11 world.

Invariably however, many Americans rose to meet the challenge not with suspicion or hatred, but with compassion and understanding. Like Governor Allen during the racial chaos of the period, or Louis Post, the unflinching Acting-Secretary of Labor who argued that Palmer's raids and deportations went too far, the story of fear in America can be told just as much through the lens of those who acted in defiance of that fear, and those who acted to restore constitutional law and freedoms back to the people. In the words of one of America's most prominent television personalities: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."[14] During the First Red

[13] "Ku Klux Kan," Southern Poverty Law Center, https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/ku-klux-klan (Accessed February 21, 2017).
[14] Fred Rogers, "Tragic Events," The Fred Rogers Company, http://www.fredrogers.org/parents/special-challenges/tragic-events.php (accessed February 23, 2017).

Scare, the tide of fear and repression appeared to crest, though there were always those few who stood in opposition to help drive it back; individuals like UMW leader Alexander Howat who stood against repressive labor laws from a seemingly all-powerful industrial court, and NAACP members John Shilady and Mary White Ovington, who railed against the racist and xenophobic attitudes of intolerant Texans, or Gallup mayor A.T. Hannet who denounced the unconstitutional actions of New Mexico's governor. Much like today, as voices of calm and moderation are seemingly drowned out amidst the cacophony of hate and intolerance, there are always those few who stand to resist.

## Bibliography


### Archival Sources

Carl Albert Center. University of Oklahoma. Norman, OK.

- Robert L. Owen Collection
- Thomas P. Gore Collection
- Dick T. Morgan Collection.

Kansas State Archives. Kansas State Historical Society. Topeka, KS.

- Henry Justin Allen Collection.

Library of Congress. Manuscript Division. Washington, D.C.

- Judson King Papers.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Washington, DC.

- Record Group 65, Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Investigative Case Files of Bureau of Investigation 1908-1922.

New Mexico State Archives. Santa Fe, NM.

- Governor Octaviano A. Larrazolo Papers.

Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma City, OK.

- J.B.A. Robertson Papers.

Oklahoma History Center. Manuscript Collection. Oklahoma City, OK.

- Oscar and Fred Ameringer Papers

Texas State Archives. Austin, TX.

- Governor William P. Hobby Papers.

### Government Documents

NARA. Investigative Case Files of the Bureau of Investigation 1908-1922, Old German Files 1909-21.

Oklahoma State Senate. *Senate Journal*, 7th Legislature, Extraordinary sess., February 23, 1920.

Texas Legislature. *Joint Committee of the House and Senate in the Investigation of the Teas State Ranger Force*. 1919.

U.S. Congress House Committee on Rules. *Charges Against the Department of Justice*. 66th Cong., 2nd sess., June 1-2, 1920.

U.S. Congress House Committee on Rules. *Investigation of Louis F. Post, Assistant Secretary of Labor, In the Matter of Deportation of Aliens*. 66th Cong., 2nd sess., May 7-8, 1920.

U.S. Congress, Senate, *Affairs in Mexico* 66th Cong., 2nd sess., 1920.

U.S. Congress, Senate, *Investigation of Mexican Affairs Part 9* 66th Cong., 2nd sess., 1920.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, *The Ownership of Tenant Farms in the United States*, Department Bulletin No. 1432, Washington, D.C., 1926.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920,* Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1922.

U.S. Department of State. *Foreign Relations of the United States 1920, Vol. III, Russia*. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1936.

**Published Primary Documents**

Ameringer, Oscar. *If You Don't Weaken*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1940.

Blackmar, Frank. *History of the Kansas State Council of Defense*. 1920.

Brown R.G., et al. *To the American People: Report on the Illegal Practices of the United States Department of Justice*. Washington D.C.: National Popular Government League, 1920.

National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico. *Bread, Bolshevism, Binder Twine*. New York City, 1920.

Oklahoma State Council of Defense. *Sooners in the War: Official Report of the Oklahoma State Council of Defense From May 1917 to January 1, 1919*. 1919.

Post, Louis F. *The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1923.

Wilson, Woodrow. The Papers of Woodrow Wilson. Vol. 66, August 2- December 23, 1920. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.

**Newspapers**

*Albuquerque Morning Journal,* 1919-1920.

*Appeal to Reason*, 1919-1920.

*The (Kansas City) Call,* 1919-1920.

*Carbon City News,* 1919-1920.

*Christian Science Monitor,* 1919-1920.

*Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 1919.

*Council Grove (Kansas) Republican*, 1920.

*Dallas Morning News*, 1919-1920.

*Daily Oklahoman*, 1918-1920.

*Drumright (Oklahoma) Derrick*, 1919-1920.

*Emporia (Kansas) Gazette*, 1919-1920.

*Fort Scott (Kansas) Tribune*, 1919.

*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 1919-1920.

*Gallup (New Mexico) Independent*, 1919-1920.

*Great Bend (Kansas) Tribune*, 1920.

*Hartford Courant*, 1919, 1920.

*Harlow's Weekly*, 1914, 1919-1920.

*Hutchinson Blade (Kansas)*, 1919-1920.

*Hutchinson (Kansas) News*, 1920.

*Independence (Kansas) Daily Reporter*, 1920.

*Iola (Kansas) Register*, 1919-1920.

*Junction City (Kansas) Daily Union*, 1920.

*Kansas City Advocate*, 1919-1920.

*Kansas Trades Union*, 1919-1920.

*Lawrence Daily Journal*, 1920.

*Los Angeles Times*, 1919, 1920.

*McAlester (Oklahoma) News-Capital*, 1919-1920.

*McPherson (Kansas) Daily Republican*, 1920.

*New York Times*, 1919-1921.

*Pittsburg (Kansas) Daily Headlight*, 1919-1920.

*Pueblo (Colorado) Chieftain*, 1919.

*Santa Fe New Mexican*, 1919-1920.

*Santa Rosa (New Mexico) Sun*, 1919-1920.

*Seattle Star*, 1919.

*Seattle Times*, 1919.

*Topeka Capital*, 1919-1920.

*Topeka Plaindealer*, 1919-1920.

*Tulsa World*, 1919-1920.

*Wichita Beacon*, 1919-1920.

*Wichita Protest*, 1919.

**Contemporaneous Articles**

"Mr. Palmer's Propaganda Factory." *The Nation* 110 (March 6, 1920): 298.

Palmer, A. Mitchell. "The Case Against the 'Reds.'" *Forum* (February 1920): 173.

"Palmer Under Fire." *Independent* 105 (February 1921): 141.

"The Red Raid on Law and Order." *Independent* (June 1919): 427.

"The Revolution that was Not." *Independent* 102 (May 1920): 213.

"Raids on Radicals Blow to Freedom of United States." *Milwaukee Leader* 9 (January 1920): 7.

"Sowing the Wind to Reap the Whirlwind." *The Nation* 110 (January 17, 1920): 64.

"What is Attorney General Palmer Doing?" The *Nation* 110 (February 1920): 190-1.

"Wild-Eyed Palmer Waves Red Flag." *New Majority* 3 (May 1920): 1.

**Secondary Sources**

Abel, Joseph. "Opening the Closed Shop: The Galveston Longshoremen's Strike of

1920-21." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 110 (Spring 2007): 317-347.

Avila, Henry J. "Immigration and Integration: The Mexican American Community in Garden City, Kansas, 1900-1950." *Kansas History* 20 (1997): 22-37.

Baird, David W. and Danney Goble. *Oklahoma: A History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008.

Barkan, Elliott Robert. *From All Points: America's Immigrant West*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007.

Barr, Alwyn. *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas, 1528-1995*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.

Bell, Daniel. *Marxian Socialism in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967.

_____. *Radicalism in the Mountain West: Socialists, Populists, Miners, and Wobblies 1890-1920*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007.

Benton-Cohen, Katie. *Borderline Americans: Racial Division and Labor War in the Arizona Borderlands*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Berman, David. *Radicalism in the Mountain West: Socialists, Populists, Miners, and Wobblies, 1890-1920*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2007.

Bissett, Jim. *Agrarian Socialism in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1904-1920*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999.

Botkin, Jane. *Frank Little and the IWW: The Blood that Stained an American Family*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017.

Burbank, Garin. *When Farmers Voted Red: The Gospel of Socialism in the Oklahoma Countryside, 1910-1924*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976.

Cardoso, Lawrence A. "Labor Emigration to the Southwest, 1916 to 1920: Mexican Attitudes and Policy." *Southwestern historical Quarterly* 79 (1976): 400-416.

_____. *Mexican Immigration to the United States, 1897-1931*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980.

Chávez, John. *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

Christian, Carol. "Joining the American Mainstream: Texas's Mexican Americans

during World War I." *Southwestern historical Quarterly* 92 (1989): 559-595.

Ciotola, Nicholas P. "From Agriculturalists to Entrepreneurs: Economic Success and Mobility Among Albuquerque's Italian Immigrants, 1900-1930." *New Mexico Historical Review* 74 (1999): 3-27.

Clark, James A. *The Tactful Texan: A Biography of Governor Will Hobby*. New York: Random House, 1958.

Coben, Stanley. *A. Mitchell Palmer: Politician*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963.

Conlin, Joseph. *Bread and Roses: Studies of the Wobblies*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1969.

_____. Ed. *At the Point of Production: The Local History of the IWW*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981.

Cox, Patrick L. "An Enemy Closer to Us than Any European Power": The Impact of Mexico on Texan Public Opinion before World War I" *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 105 (2001): 40-80.

Cumberland, Charles. "The Jenkins Case and Mexican-American Relations," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 31 (1951): 586-607.

Denmark, Judith Boyce., ed. *Essays in Twentieth-Century New Mexico History*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1994.

Diggins, John. *The Rise and Fall of the American Left.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.

Dubofsky, Melvyn. *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969.

Ellis, Richard N. "Hispanic Americans and Indians in New Mexico State Politics." *New Mexico Historical Review* 53 (1978): 361-364.

Etulain, Richard and Michael Malone. *The American West: A Modern History, 1900 to the Present*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.

Etulain, Richard. *Beyond the Missouri: The Story of the American West*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006.

Evans, Sterling. *Bound in Twine: The History and Ecology of the Henequen-Wheat Complex for Mexico and the American and Canadian Plains, 1880-1950*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013.

_____. ed.,*Farming across Borders: A Transnational History of the North American West*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2017.

Farrington, Clifford. *Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925*. Austin, TX: Texas State Historical Association, 2007.

Fehrenbach, T.R. *Lone Star: a History of Texas and the Texans*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2000.

Fink, Gary. ed. *Biographical Dictionary of American Labor*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984.

Fitzgerald, Daniel C. "'We Are All in This Together'-Immigrants in the Oil and Mining Towns of Southern Kansas, 1890-1920." *Kansas History* 10 (1987): 17-28.

Foner, Philip S. *History of the Labor Movements in the United States: Postwar Struggles 1918-1920*. New York International Publishers, 1988.

Gibson, Arrell M. *Wilderness Bonanza: The Tri-State District of Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972.

Gilderhus, Mark T. "Senator Albert B. Fall and the Plot Against Mexico." *New Mexico Historical Review* 48 (1973): 299-311.

Glaser, David. "1919: William Jenkins, Robert Lansing, and the Mexican Interlude." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 74 (1971): 337-356.

Glasrud, Bruce and James C. Maroney, eds. *Texas Labor History*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013.

Goins, Goble, *Historical Atlas of Oklahoma*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006.

Goldstein, Robert Justin. *Political Repression in Modern America from 1870 to 1976*. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

Gonzalez, Philip and Ann Massman. "Loyalty Questioned: Nuevomexicanos in the Great War." *Pacific Historical Review* 75 (2006): 629-666.

Goossen, Benjamin W. "'Like A Brilliant Thread': Gender and Vigilante Democracy in the Kansas Coal Field, 1921-1922." *Kansas History* 35 (2011): 206-223.

Gould, Lewis. *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973.

Graybill, Andrew. *Policing the Great Plains: Rangers, Mounties, and the North*

*American Frontier, 1875-1910.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007.

Green, James R. *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest 1895-1943*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978.

Greve, Justine. "Language and Loyalty: The First World War and German Instruction at Two Kansas Schools" *Kansas History* 37 (2014): 130-147.

Hall, Greg. *Harvest Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World and the Agricultural Laborers in the American West, 1905-1930.* Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2001.

Harris, Charles and Louis Saddler. *The Texas Rangers and the Mexican Revolution: The Bloodiest Decade*, 1910-1920. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004.

Haury, David A. "German-Russian Immigrants to Kansas and American Politics." *Kansas History* 3 (1980): 226-238.

Higbie, Frank. *Indispensable Outcasts: Hobo Workers and Community in the American Midwest, 1880-1930*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Hofstadter, Richard. *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*. New York: Vintage Books, 1964.

Hu-DeHart, Evelyn. *Yaquis Resistance and Survival: The Struggle for Land and Autonomy, 1821-1910*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.

Hurt, Doug. *The Big Empty: The Great Plains in the 20th Century*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011.

Jensen, Joan M. "'Disenfranchisement is a Disgrace': Women and Politics in New Mexico, 1900-1940." *New Mexico Historical Review* 56 (1981): 5-35.

Johnson, Benjamin. *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

Johnson, Jeffrey. *"They Are All Red Out Here": Socialist Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1895-1925.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008.

Jordan, Terry G. "The German Settlement of Texas after 1865." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 73 (1969): 193-212.

Joyce, Davis D., ed. *"An Oklahoma I Had Never Seen Before," Alternative Views of Oklahoma History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.

Juhnke, James C. "Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918." *Kansas History* 43 (1977): 334-350.

Katz, Friedrich. *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Kazin, Michael. *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed the Nation*. New York: Vintage Books, 2011.

Kennedy, David. *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Koppes, Clayton R. "The Industrial Workers of the World County-Jail Reform in Kansas, 1915-1920." *Kansas History* 41 (1975): 63-86.

_____. "The Kansas Trial of the IWW, 1917-1919." *Labor History* 16 (1975): 336-358.

Langer, William. The Nonpartisan League: Its Birth, Activities, and Leaders. Bibliobazaar, 2015.

Lansing, Michael. *Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in American Politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015.

Larson, Bruce. "Kansas and the Nonpartisan League: The Response to the Affair of Great Bend, 1921." *Kansas History* 34 (1968): 51-76.

Larson, Robert. "The Profile of a New Mexico Progressive." *New Mexico Historical Review* 45 (1970): 233-244.

Lee, Alton R. *Sunflower Justice: A New History of the Kansas Supreme Court*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014.

_____. *Farmers Vs. Wage Earners: Organized Labor in Kansas, 1860-1960*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.

Levario, Miguel. *Militarizing the Border: When Mexicans became the Enemy*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012.

Martelle, Scott. *Blood Passion: The Ludlow Massacre and Class Warfare in the American West*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007.

Martinez, Oscar. *U.S.-Mexico Borderlands: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996.

McCartney, Laton. *The Teapot Dome Scandal: How Big Oil Bought the Harding White House and Tried to Steal the Country*. New York: Random House, 2008.

McCormick, Charles Howard. *Hopeless Cases: the Hunt for the Red Scare Terrorist Bombers*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2005.

Miner, Craig. *Harvesting the High Plains: John Kriss and the Business of Wheat Farming, 1920-1950*.Topeka, University Press of Kansas, 1998.

_____. *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854-2000*. Topeka, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002.

Morlan, Robert L. *Political Prairie Fire: The Nonpartisan League, 1915-1922*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.

Murray, Robert K. *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria 1919-1920*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.

Nord, David P. "The Appeal to Reason and American Socialism, 1901-1920." *Kansas History* 1 (1978): 75-89.

Obedele-Starks, Ernest. "Black Labor, the Black Middle Class, and Organized Protest along the Upper Texas Gulf Coast, 1883-1945." *Southwestern historical Quarterly* 103 (1999): 52-65.

Parsons, Chuck. *Images of America: The Texas Rangers*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

Perry, Bob. *The Great Railroad Strike of 1922: A Town in Crisis, Shawnee Oklahoma*. Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.

Pfannestiel, Todd J. *Rethinking the Red Scare: The Lusk Committee and New York's Crusade against Radicalism, 1919-1923*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Post, Louis F. *The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1970.

Pratt, William. "Socialism in the Northern Plains, 1900-1924." *South Dakota History* 18 (1988): 1-35.

Ramírez, José. *To the Line of Fire!: Mexican Texans and World War I*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009.

Renshaw, Patrick. *The Wobblies: The Story of the IWW and Syndicalism in the United States*. Ivan R. Dee: 1999.

Rensink, Brenden. *Native but Foreign: Indigenous Transnational Refugees and Immigrants in the U.S.-Canadian and U.S. Mexican Borderlands, 1880-Present.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, forthcoming.

Richmond, Douglas W. "Mexican Immigration and Border Strategy During the Revolution, 1910-1920." *New Mexico Historical Review* 57 (1982): 269-288.

Robbins, William and Katrine Barber. *Nature's Northwest: The North Pacific Slope in the Twentieth Century* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011.

Robinson, James. *Anti-Sedition Legislation and Loyalty Investigations in Oklahoma*. Norman: Bureau of Government Research at University of Oklahoma, 1956.

Roberts, Calvin A., Susan A. Roberts, and Katherine Chilton. *A History of New Mexico*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004.

Saban, Arthur J. *Red Scare in Court: New York Versus the International Workers Order*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.

Scales, James B. and Danney Goble. *Oklahoma Politics: A History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982.

Schmidt, Regin. *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000.

Schmitt, Karm. *Communism in Mexico: A Study in Political Frustration*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1965.

Sellars, Nigel. "With Folded Arms? Or With Squirrel Guns?: The IWW and the Green Corn Rebellion." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 77 (1999): 150-169.

_____. *Oil, Wheat and Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World in Oklahoma, 1905-1930*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

Sewell, Steve. "Painted Red: The Coal Strike of 1919." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 75 (1997): 160-181.

Sherow Bonnie Lynn. *Red Earth: Race and Agriculture in Oklahoma Territory*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

Smith, Duane. *Rocky Mountain Heartland: Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming in the Twentieth Century*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008.

Thompson, John. *Closing the Frontier: Radical Responses in Oklahoma, 1889-1923*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986.

Trow, Clifford W. "'Tired of Waiting': Senator Albert B. Fall's Alternative to Woodrow Wilson's Mexican Policies, 1920-1921." *New Mexico Historical Review* 57 (1982): 159-182.

_____. "Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Interventionist Movement of 1919," *Journal of American History* 58 (1971): 46-72.

Von Russel, Creel. "Socialists in the House: The Oklahoma Experience, Part I." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 70 (1992): 144-83.

White, Richard. *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

Winters, Donald. *The Soul of the Wobblies: The I.W.W., Religion, and American Culture in the Progressive Era, 1915-1917*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Yost, Genevieve. "History of Lynchings in Kansas." *Kansas History* 2 (1933): 182-219.

Zamora, Emilio. *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993.

**Dissertations and Theses**

Dawson, Katharine. "Coal, Community, and Collective Action in McKinley County, New Mexico: 1900-1935." Ph.D. diss., State University of New York, 2004.

DeCorte, Ted. "The Red Scare in Nevada, 1919-1920," Master's Thesis, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, 1979.

Galotola, Antoniette. "From Bohemianism to Radicalism: The Art and Political Context of the *Liberator*, 1918-1924" Ph.D diss., City University of New York, 2000.

Horn, Eddie. "The Acculturation of Low German Mennonites in Oklahoma: Continuity and Change," MA Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2011.

Lively, Kurt. "Where the Great Plains and South Collide: A History of Farm Tenancy in Oklahoma, 1890-1950." Ph.D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 2002.

McNutt, Steven. "Utah's Reaction to the 1919-1920 Red Scare." Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University , 1995.

Meredith, Howard L. "The Principles and Programs of Oklahoma Socialism, 1900-1918" Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1969.

Scales, James B. "Political History of Oklahoma, 1907-1949." Ph.D. diss., University of

Oklahoma, 1949.

Womack, John J., Jr., "Oklahoma's Green Corn Rebellion: The Importance of Fools." Senior Thesis, Harvard University, 1961.

**Websites**

Bracero History Archive, http://braceroarchive.org/about.

"Court of Industrial Relations," Kansas Historical Society, https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/court-of-industrial-relations/12017.

Fred Rogers, "Tragic Events," The Fred Rogers Company, http://www.fredrogers.org/parents/special-challenges/tragic-events.php.

"Ku Klux Klan in Kansas," Kansas Historical Society, https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/ku-klux-klan-in-kansas/15612.

Ku Klux Kan," Southern Poverty Law Center, https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/ku-klux-klan.

"Hobby, William Pettus," Texas State Historical Association, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fho04.

"Longview Race Riot of 1919," Texas State Historical Association, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/jcl02.

"Octaviano Larrazolo," Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/larrazolo.html.

Phil Zimmerman with a Pope Motorcycle," Kansas Memory, Kansas Historical Society, http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/226128.

Rangers and Outlaws," Texas State Library and Archives Commission, https://www.tsl.texas.gov/treasures/law/index.html.

"Robertson, James Brooks Ayers," Oklahoma Historical Society, http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=RO006.

"The Segregation of Topeka's Public Scholl System, 1879-1951," http://www.nps.gov/brvb/learn/historyculture/topekasegregation.htm.

"Texas Legislature, Joint Committee of the House and Senate in the Investigation of the Teas State Ranger Force," Texas State Library and Archives Commission, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/tslac/50062/tsl-50062.html.