
Five Russians Jailed for Distributing Nuorteva Reply: Three Men who Circulated Denunciation of Creel “Exposé” of Bolsheviki Get 20 Years — Woman 15.

Unsigned news report in *The Milwaukee Leader*, v. 7, no. 273, home edition (Oct. 26, 1918), pg. 1.

NEW YORK — Five Russians indicted under the espionage act for circulating statements by Santeri Nuorteva, Finnish Socialist, that the documents published by the Creel Bureau purporting to show Bolsheviki intrigue with the German government are forgeries, were sentenced to prison in federal court here late Friday [Oct. 25, 1918]. Three were given 20 year sentences, the fourth, who turned state’s evidence, was committed for 3 years, and the fifth, a woman, was sentenced to 15 years. The persons sentenced are: Samuel Lippman, Jacob Abrams, Hyman Lachowsky, Hyman Rosanzky, and Mollie Steimer.

Miss Steimer, Abrams, and Lippman asked permission to address the jury, but Judge Henry D. Clayton cut short all three speeches on the ground that he would not allow the defendants “to make themselves out as martyrs.”

The purpose of the defendants to question the authenticity of the documents of the Creel Bureau by witnesses George Creel; Edgar Sisson, who brought the documents from Russia; and Raymond Robins, Red Cross commissioner to Russia, were frustrated by the refusal of the court to go into testimony of this nature.

Nuorteva’s statement charged that the documents were acknowledged in Europe to be forgeries and that the Kerensky government admitted this when it failed to use them against Trotsky in his trial in 1917. He asserted later that if Robins were permitted to speak he could substantiate this statement.

†- The conviction of anarchists Jacob Abrams, Hyman Lachowsky, Samuel Lippman, and Mollie Steimer was upheld by the US Supreme Court in the landmark case *Abrams v. United States*. The four were imprisoned in federal penitentiaries at Atlanta (men) and Jefferson City, MO (Steimer) until Oct. 23, 1921, when their sentences were commuted. The four were then deported to Soviet Russia. Steimer was afterwards twice arrested by the Cheka for her political activities and deported from Soviet Russia on Sept. 27, 1923. In 1940, following the occupation of France by Nazi Germany, Steimer was interred in a concentration camp, from which she escaped after six months. She lived out the rest of her life in Mexico, never wavering from her anarchist ideals. (see Stephen M. Kohn, *American Political Prisoners*, pp. 133-134).

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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