
Jury Finds Rose P. Stokes Guilty: Socialist Faces 60 Years Jail Sentence: Mrs. Stokes Convicted on Three Counts Under Espionage Act

Unsigned news report in the *New York Call*, v. 11, no. 124 (May 25, 1918), pp. 1-2.

KANSAS CITY, May 24.— Mrs. Rose Pastor Stokes was convicted on the charge of violating the Espionage Act on 3 counts of the indictment by a jury in the federal court.

Then sentence of Judge Van Valkenburg, who presided, will not be announced until June 1, when motion for a new trial made by Seymour Stedman, attorney for the defense, will be acted upon.

Mrs. Stokes faces a maximum penalty of \$10,000 or 20 years imprisonment, or both, on each count.

The first count against her deals with an alleged attempt to cause insubordination in the United States military forces. The second concerns itself with alleged obstruction of recruiting and the third is based on the charge of conveying or making false reports interfering with either branch of the military service.

Not “Properly Patriotic.”

United States District Attorney Wilson denounce the defendant for not being “properly patriotic” and spreading what he termed “disloyal beliefs.” He harped on her statements on the witness stand to show that she had referred to the Bolshevik government of Russia in favorable terms.

From statements of others, declared Wilson, she had said that it was the ideal government and

the only true democracy.

“She stands today,” he cried, in summing up the government’s case, “as the most subtle, vicious German propagandist in America. I do not charge her with being a paid agent of the Kaiser, but I do say she is a frenzied fanatic of Socialism.”

Stedman, in summing up the case for the defendant, declared here speech before the Woman’s Dining Club was intended for mature minds and was theoretical.

“They say she made speeches in the East, but they were not held seditious there,” said Stedman. “The club that invited her here knew she had returned to Socialism, and the four last presidents of the club have testified they did not consider her disloyal.”

Mrs. Stokes up to the time of her arrest was knitting for the soldiers. Her husband is a sergeant in the 9th Coast Artillery guard. She herself has purchased the first two issues of the Liberty Loan, but did not buy of the third lest she be accused of seeking public sympathy. Her return to the party was influenced largely, as she had declared in meetings in New York City, by the Russian situation.

On leaving the court, Mrs. Stokes was calm and unemotional.

“If I can keep my health,” she stated, “I expect to continue my work, and if I should be locked up it would make my efforts tremendously more effective.”

Mrs. Stokes life has not been one of leisure,

for, as a child in England, where her parents settled on leaving Russia, she had to augment the family income by sewing ribbons on slippers. On her arrival at Cleveland, Ohio, she became a cigar roller. During this time she wrote for Yiddish newspapers and weeklies.

On coming to New York [in 1903] she joined the staff of the *Yiddish Daily News*. The same year she accepted a clerkship in the office of J.G. Phelps-Stokes. In July of 1905 she became his wife. The two worked together, lecturing and organizing for the Socialist cause.

When war was declared, however, they left the party, not being in accordance with the St. Louis platform. Mrs. Stokes did not remain out very long, for, as she expressed it, she could not do her best work outside of the party.

Mrs. Anna Pastor, the mother of Mrs. Stokes, is active in Socialist affairs largely connected with the problems of the housewife.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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