

# INVESTIGATION WAITS ON INQUEST MONDAY

## County and State Officials Ready to Press for Prosecution of Lynchers.

COLLINSVILLE, Ill., April 5.—Formal investigation of the death of Robert P. Prager, who was hanged last night by a mob which accused him of disloyalty, will not be made until next Monday, when Roy A. Lowe, Coroner of Madison County, will hold an inquest over the body. No arrests have been made by county officials, who spent the day in investigation, and none is anticipated until after the inquest Monday, according to Coroner Lowe.

Chief of Police Staten of Collinsville declared today that the identity of a number of members of the mob was known, but that the local police would not attempt to make arrests because the crime was committed outside the city limits.

Representatives of the State Attorney General and the Adjutant General will be present at the inquest prepared to carry forward any measures deemed necessary to apprehend those who participated in the hanging.

Mayor J. H. Siegel of Collinsville declared he would launch no investigation, but that he stood ready to co-operate with State and county officials. In a statement tonight he asserted he had telegraphed today to Senator Overman, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, urging the immediate passage of the law imposing a severe penalty on disloyalty. It was his opinion, he said, that the violence of last night was the result of neglect by the Federal Government to furnish this penalty.

"We arrested a man charged with disloyalty last Sunday," he declared, "but because of insufficient evidence under the present law we were unable to hold him. The crowd last night evidently believed that another disloyalist was about to escape and took the matter in their own hands. This deplorable act merely emphasizes the necessity for a drastic law to apply in such cases."

So far as could be learned tonight the action of the mob was precipitous and no person has stated concrete instances of disloyalty by Prager. He registered as an enemy alien in St. Louis on June 27, 1917, giving his occupation as a baker. He registered for the army draft on June 5, 1917.

The mob idea had its inception, it was said tonight, in a saloon on the outskirts of the city, where miners from Maryville and Collinsville gathered. Many of the men were foreigners, who understood little English, and it is believed the remarks of Prager were magnified.

Rumors that quantities of powder had been hoarded in a mine by Prager and that in his home were found numerous incriminating maps also were denied tonight by the authorities.

Prager was unmarried and so far as is known has no relatives in this country. He was born in Dresden, Germany, and came to the United States in 1905. Before the rope was placed about his neck Prager wrote the following note in German:

Dear Parents: Carl Henry Prager, Dresden, Germany: I must on this, the 4th day of April, 1918, die. Please pray for me, my dear parents. This is my last letter and testament.

Your dear son and brother,  
ROBERT PAUL PRAGER.

In Prager's pocket was found a long "proclamation," in which he stated his loyalty to the United States and to union labor, and told of his difficulty in entering the miners' union. Prager yesterday afternoon put up posters at the Maryville mine, proclaiming his loyalty to the Government. When the miners left the workings they were incensed by the proclamations and began to hunt Prager:

ST. LOUIS, April 5.—Robert Prager, who was lynched at Collinsville last night, in April, 1917, caused the arrest and internment of John Pohl, who boarded at the same house as Prager. Pohl was arrested on a disloyalty charge. Soon after the United States entered the war Prager, then a baker in St. Louis, got a permit to enter all barred zones to seek employment.

Charles Otto, with whom Prager boarded, said today that Prager, though a radical Socialist, declared when this country entered the war that "he was all for the United States." Last Summer, Otto said, Prager attempted to enlist in the United States Navy, but was rejected because he had a glass eye.