

Immigration: The Palmer Raids

The First World War slowed immigration to the U.S. but, after the armistice, mass immigration resumed, reaching 805,000 in 1921. Various events after World War I, such as the recession of 1920 to 1921, the First Red Scare, the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, the furor surrounding the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, and organized opposition to immigration intensified the "clash of cultures." The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 limited immigration to 3% of the number of immigrants of any particular country that had been living in the United States in 1910. Three years later, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1924. This law restricted new arrivals to just 2% of foreign-born residents according to the Census of 1890, when the number of "new" immigrants was relatively small. As a result, immigration law all but eliminated the flow of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, and it effectively excluded all immigration from most of Asia until WWII. By 1928 immigration had declined to about 300,000.

Opposing Viewpoints on The Palmer Raids

Document 1: "The Case Against the Reds," Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer

"Like a prairie-fire, the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution a year ago. It was eating its way into the homes of the American workmen, its sharp tongues of revolutionary heat were licking the altars of the churches, leaping into schools, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes, burning up the foundations of society. My information showed that thousands of aliens supported communism in this country. The whole purpose of communism appears to be a mass organization of the criminals of the world to overthrow the decencies of private life, to usurp property that they have not earned, to disrupt the present order of life. Communism distorts our social law. The Department of Justice will pursue the attack of these "Reds" upon the Government of the United States with vigilance, and no alien, advocating the overthrow of existing law and order in this country, shall escape arrest and prompt deportation."

Aliens: Foreigners

Usurp: take over

Distort: To give a misleading or false interpretation, usually on purpose

Document 2: Emma Goldman's Deportation Statement (Goldman was a socialist deported during the Palmer Raids)

"I wish to register my protest against these proceedings, whose very spirit is nothing less than a revival of the ancient days of the Spanish Inquisition or Czarist Russia (when anyone who disagreed with the government was deported or killed). Today so-called aliens are deported. Tomorrow American citizens will be banished. Already some "patriots" are suggesting that some native-born American citizens should be exiled. The free expression of the hopes of a people is the greatest and only safety in a sane society. The object of the deportations and of the anti-anarchist law is to stifle the voice of the people, to muzzle every aspiration of labor. That is the real and terrible menace of these proceedings. Their goal is to exile and banish every one who does not agree with the lies that our leaders of industry continue to spread.

Emma Goldman New York, October 27, 1919

Exile and Banish: send out, deport

Aspiration: hope or ambition

Menace: danger, threat

Document 3: Aftermath of the 1920 Wall Street bombing. 38 people were killed. Police suspected political radicals, but no arrests were ever made.

Immigration: The Palmer Raids



Document 4: Offices of the International Workers of the World (IWW “Wobblies”) after being raided by the FBI, 1920

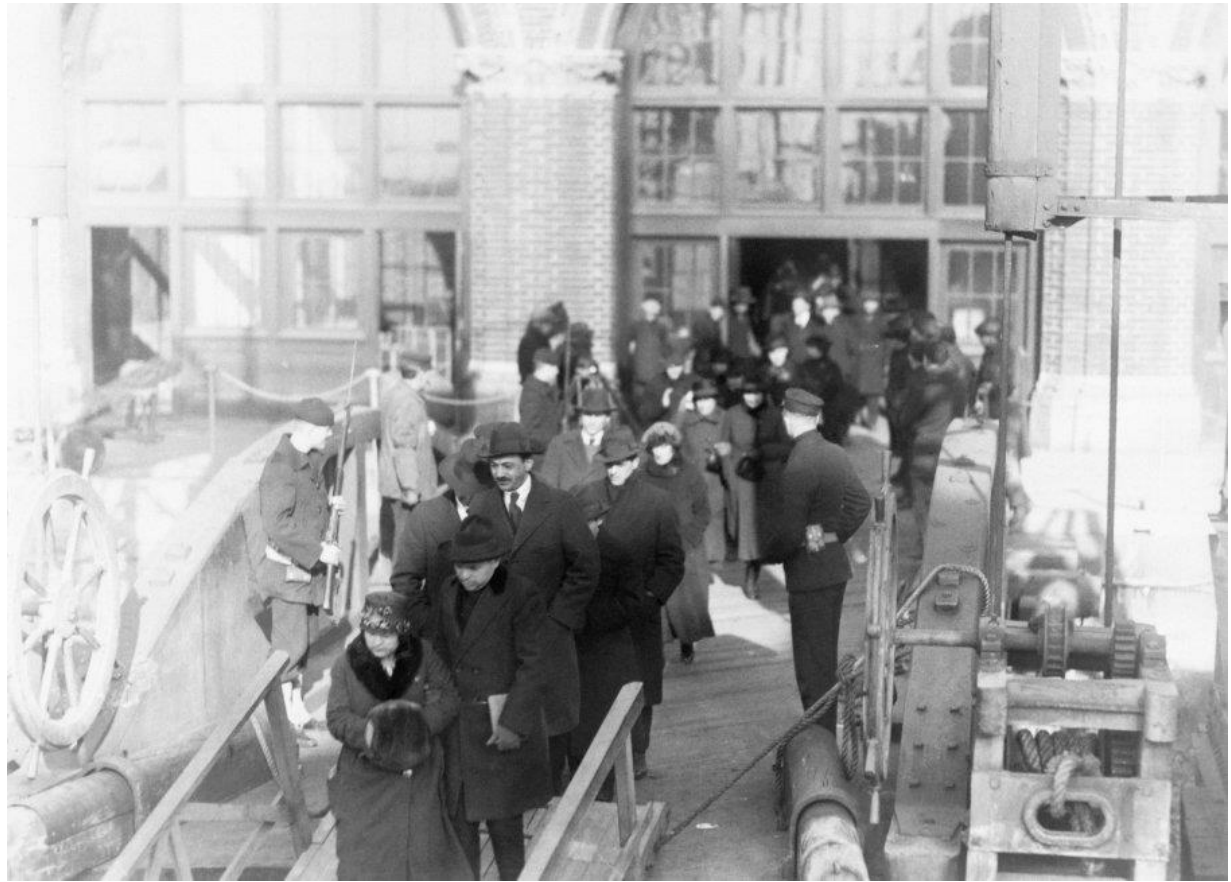
Immigration: The Palmer Raids



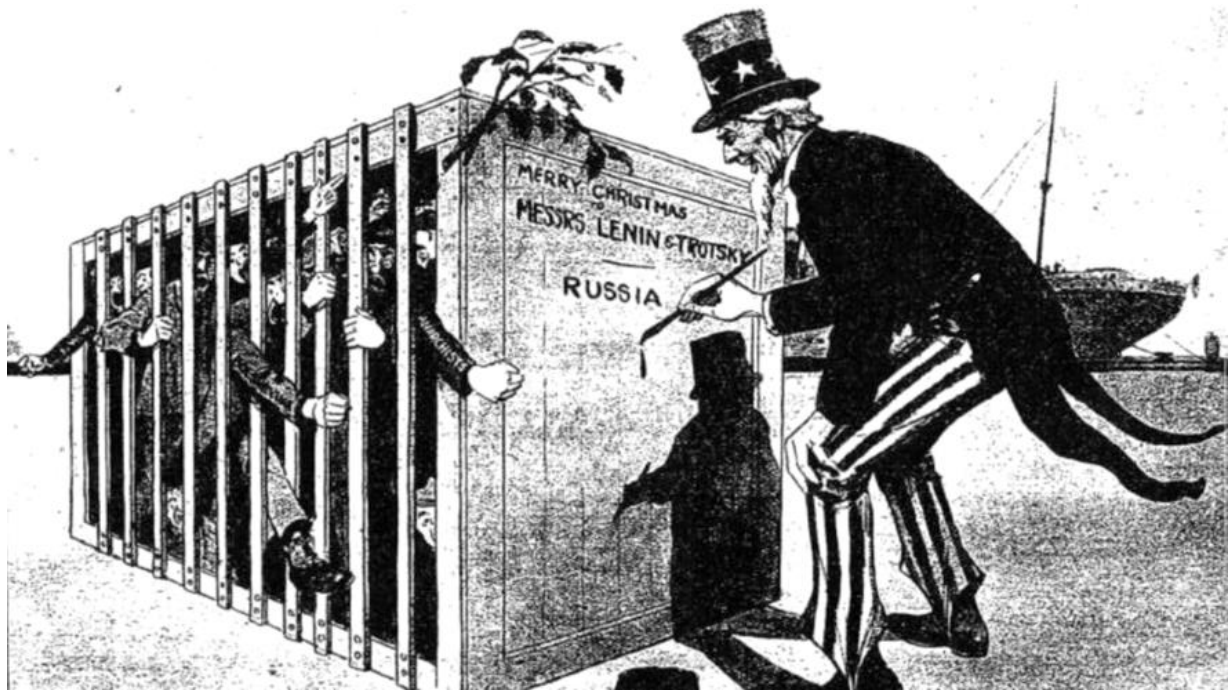
Document 5: Suspects in the Palmer Raids board the Ellis Island steamer at the Barge Office, Battery, NY, for their short trip to Ellis Island for investigation and deportation proceedings,

Immigration: The Palmer Raids

1920

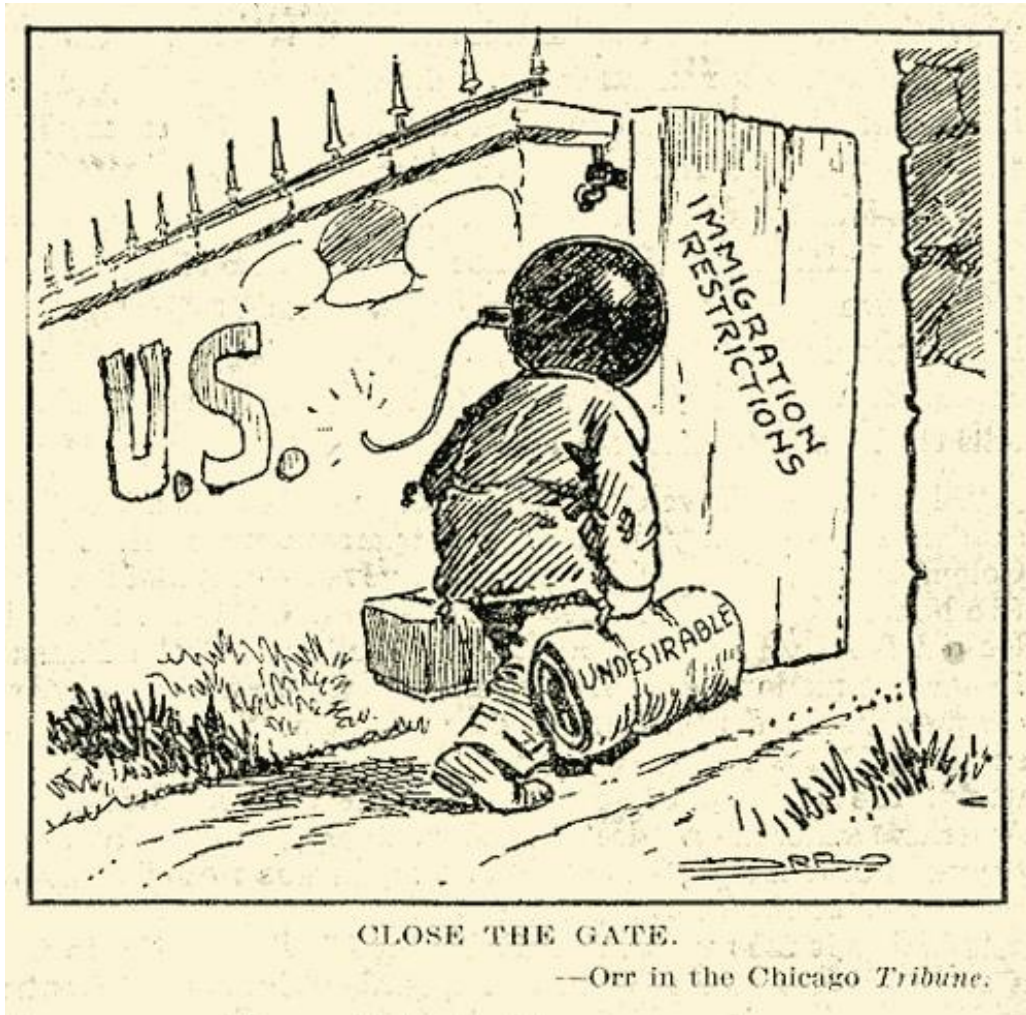


Document 6: A political cartoon featuring the "Soviet Ark" during the Palmer Raids



Political Cartoons
"Close the Gate," 1921

Immigration: The Palmer Raids



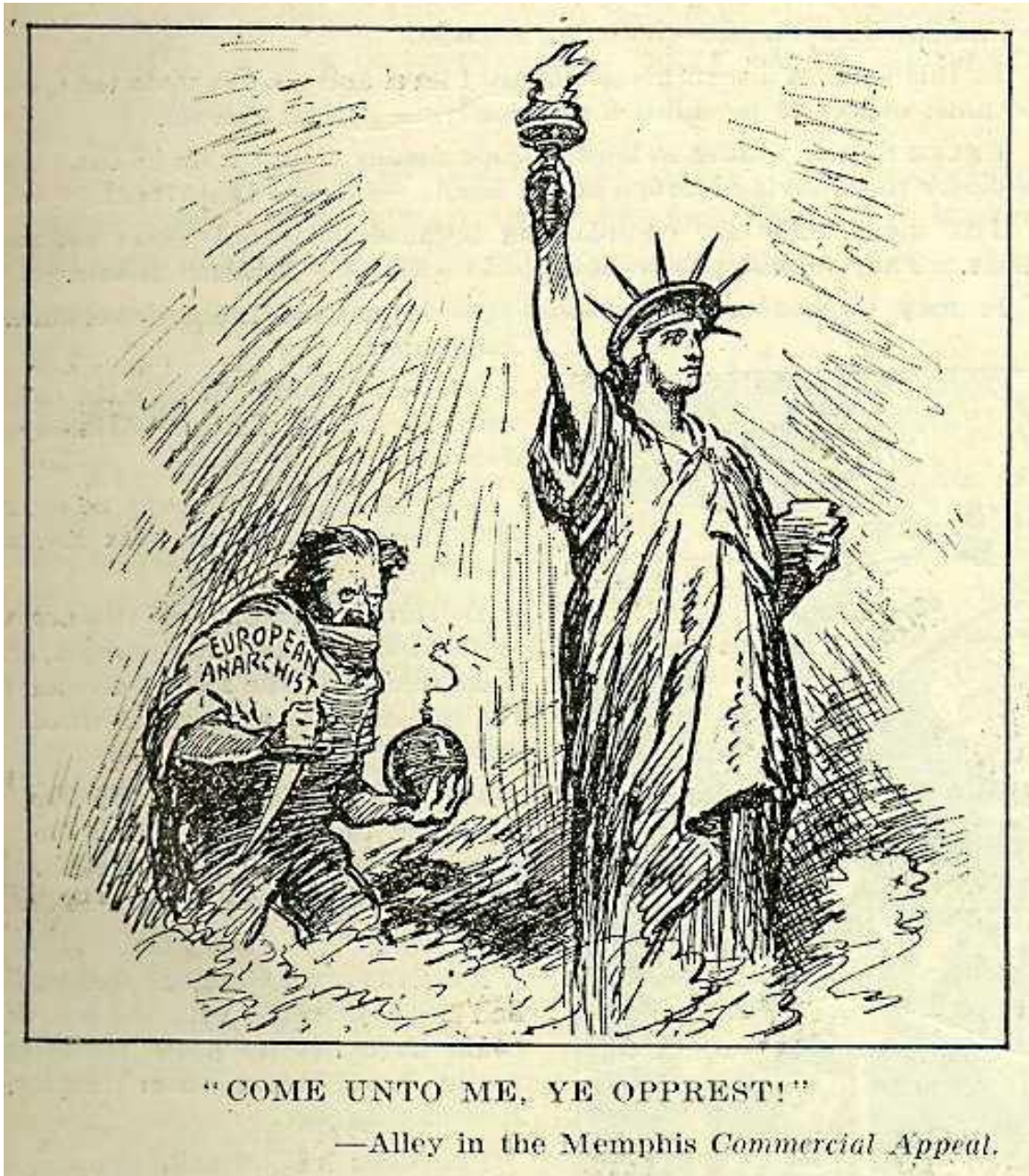
“The Cloud,” 1919

Immigration: The Palmer Raids



James P. Alley, "Come Unto Me, Ye Opprest!", *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, 5 July 1919.

Immigration: The Palmer Raids



"COME UNTO ME, YE OPPREST!"

—Alley in the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*.