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Oregon Federation of Fraternal Societies letter

C. Yeager
Oregon Federation of Fraternal Societies

Object: Employment of American Citizens

PORTLAND, OREGON Nov. 2, 1922.

Dr. F. O. Lehman,
J. R. McD Donald,
Mrs. Maude Radcliffe

My dear folks:

You were appointed upon a committee from this Federation some time ago for the purpose of investigating the alleged violation on the part of certain aliens in monopolizing and using our streets, particularly along market row, for the sale of their wares. You will remember that at the November meeting of the Federation it was decided to give your committee further time to investigate this condition, and from the report of Dr. Lehman, whose most zealous and able work has been greatly appreciated, I thought at the time that it was probably the wise thing to do. However, I want to say that after listening to the request and discussion which has come to me since that meeting, I believe it would be wiser to insist upon Mr. Bigelow and such others as you think it necessary to secure the results desired, that this matter be immediately rectified. I am informed that Mr. Bigelow has a habit, particularly in respect to the market matters, in evading and delaying any complaints that might come in connection with this market, and that you will probably receive the same evasive results if you wait, than if you immediately go right after this, and I would, therefore, respectfully request that you immediately demand and insist from those who have authority to rectify it, that this condition, if true, be eliminated, and while you are investigating this particular end of it, I want to call your attention to another report that has come into the office, and which apparently bears enough truth to require some investigation. Our public market should be one in which a preference is given to our citizens, and after all citizens have been taken care of, them, if the city sees fit, that foreigners, Italians, Japanese, etc. might be considered. However, I am reliably informed that there are certain sections of the city public market which are set aside for the use of Italians, and these sections of considerable proportions too, and in spite of the fact that a goodly number of white people, producers, are turned away every day because there is no space, where these Italians and Japanese are allowed to continue at their same old stalls without molestation and without regard to the rights of the white producers. This is wrong, if true, and should be remedied.
at once. Furthermore there is a rule prevailing in the market that no man can sell unless he is a producer of his own sales stuff, yet we are advised that these Italians visit other sections, pick up stuff on the East side, and in the early mornings will distribute it along the market row to certain Italians that are there every day of the year and selling produce which is not produced by themselves.

Furthermore, there is an Italian policeman on the market row now who is a politician, so called, and who is giving favorable consideration to these Italians in preference to the whites.

Furthermore, the Market Master himself seems to openly give preference to the Italians and foreigners to the detriment of the white people. In fact the whole thing there seems to be an unsavory situation, and allow me to say that I feel that the Federation has an opportunity in the investigation of this condition to make itself felt, because the people of Portland generally seem suspicious of the whole thing anyhow.

I would, therefore, urge you to go into this matter thoroughly and fully, and let us do something for the Federation that will make the public and our city officials know that the Federation insists upon getting what it goes after, and I know of no committee that I could have appointed that could bring about the results desired so effectively as yourselves.

Very truly yours,

OREGON FEDERATION OF FRATERNAL SOCIETIES.

President.