
Winitsky Hears of Pardon Action Two Days Later: Gets Copy of *Freiheit* by Accident

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NEW YORK.— Harry Winitsky, general manager of the New York daily, *Freiheit*, who was pardoned from a 5 to 10 year prison sentence for “criminal syndicalism” this week, received news of his pardon in a strange manner.

Winitsky happened to be in Philadelphia, attending a conference, when he casually picked up a 2-day-old copy of the *Freiheit* and read that Governor Smith had granted him a full pardon with complete restoration of civil rights. He paused, rubbed his eyes, and concluded that the *Freiheit* must have fallen victim to a hoax. Nevertheless, he stepped to the telephone and called the Philadelphia *Bulletin*. He was connected with the local city editor.

“I’m interested in the case of this man, Winitsky,” he told the editor. “Can you tell me anything about this gossip that he’s been pardoned by the governor?”

“Why sure,” was the reply. “It’s all over the front page. Of course, it’s true.”

Winitsky is celebrating tonight by turning the tables on the world. At a ball given by the National Defense Committee and the Labor Defense Council, there will be a good-natured farce in which Winitsky will play the role of judge. Gitlow, a former cellmate of Winitsky at Dannemora

State Prison, will be sergeant of police. Winitsky will spend the evening sentencing his comrades to 20 and 30 cent fines for dancing with another man’s wife — or with their own. Proceeds of the court procedure at the ball will be devoted to the political prisoners’ fund.

Winitsky was sentenced in April 1920 on charges based upon his writings and activities in the communist movement. For 2 years he submitted to the harshest treatment that could be concocted by the Department of Justice Torquemada. He was beaten repeatedly and brutally, threatened with confinement in an insane asylum, and framed on false charges of attempted murder made by an embittered prison warden at the Department of Justice’s instigation.

Two weeks ago the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court flatly refused his plea for a new trial. Meanwhile, his attorneys submitted a petition for pardon. Winitsky himself declined to seek that escape. In granting an unreserved pardon, Governor Smith established a precedent in this state in releasing a convicted man who is at liberty. Winitsky was freed from Sing Sing in May 1922 on \$5,000 bond offered by the American Civil Liberties Union.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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