



## Spy System

The United States Steel Corporation— America's first billion-dollar trust—has a far-reaching spy system which reminds one of the secret service stories of the Old World. It reaches into the trade unions and gets the names of new members well before it is known at union headquarters that they have joined; it reaches into radical organizations and picks the most revolutionary to do its vile work; it debauches its poorly paid employees with some more potent lure—the forgotten slip of younger days, perhaps. \*\*

### SPIES IN STEEL: AN EXPOSÉ OF INDUSTRIAL WAR

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<http://www.mnopedia.org/sites/default/files/styles/xlarge/public/CrewMahoningMine60334.jpg>

\*\* [http://www.hometownfocus.us/news/2011-04-15/Range\\_History/SPIES\\_IN\\_STEEL.html](http://www.hometownfocus.us/news/2011-04-15/Range_History/SPIES_IN_STEEL.html)

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...spies (identified only by number, like No. 9) who were members of various unions in the Iron Range and Duluth would attend meetings, then send in notes and names of new members to post office boxes in Duluth.

From the post office, the reports would travel to the “headquarters” of this spy network, which were located in the offices of the Oliver Mining Company on the upper floors of the Lyceum Building in downtown Duluth.

It was not a harmless activity, because any worker talking about unions would likely be fired and find himself on a blacklist used by anti-union employers... \*\*

<http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/event/image/id/47304/headline/Home%20to%20spies/>

\*\* <http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/event/article/id/161466/>



*We Never Sleep*



Robert M. La Follette, Jr. United States Senator from Wisconsin **In office**

### **Pinkerton**

Due to its conflicts with labor unions, the word *Pinkerton* continues to be associated by labor organizers and union members with strikebreaking. Pinkertons, however, moved away from labor spying following revelations publicized by the La Follette Committee hearings in 1937.

The **LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee**, or more formally, **Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee Investigating Violations of Free Speech and the Rights of Labor** (1936-1941), began as an inquiry into a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) investigation of methods used by employers in certain industries to avoid collective bargaining with unions.

The Committee reported that as late as 1937, its census of working labor spies from 1933 to 1937 totaled 3,871 for the period. Private security firms like Pinkerton National Detective Agency and Burns were employed to infiltrate labor unions. The Committee concluded that espionage was "the most efficient method known to management to prevent unions from forming, to weaken them if they secure a foothold, and to wreck them when they try their strength."