

DETROIT FREE PRESS
14 January 1922

**O.T.O. VIOLATED U.S. MAIL LAWS,
SAYS ATTORNEY**

**Counsel for Book Firm Creditors to
Bring Letters Before Federal Official**

**5 PROMINENT CITIZENS OF CITY
LINKED IN CASE**

**Charges That Sleuths Were Paid to
Be Silent About Mystic Cult Made.**

Letters from which Grover L. Morden, attorney, says it may be established that publishers of the "O.T.O." love cult literature violated the U.S. postal laws were read to Frank Murphy, assistant U.S. district attorney, over the telephone Friday night.

These communications will be placed before Mr. Murphy Friday morning, when, following his perusal of their contents, it is expected he will announce what action, if any, the federal government will take.

Prosecution May Follow.

Prosecution of the publishers who mailed the literature and the persons who accepted it with knowledge of its nature and a federal grand jury investigation into the mystic society will follow, providing the evidence warrants such action, Mr. Murphy says.

Mr. Morden consented Friday afternoon to supply the district attorney's office with the letters, which he says should establish a violation of the postal laws.

Mr. Morden, who is counsel for the stockholders and trustees of the bankrupt Universal Book Stores, Inc, whose affairs are inextricably woven with those of the mysterious cult, was reticent to appear in the role of a prosecutor of the organization. After his conference with Mr. Murphy Friday, during which he was requested to furnish the district attorney with informa-

tion he has, he expressed his willingness to cooperate with that official.

Must Be Shown, He Says.

Mr. Murphy will not act until he has been convinced that *The Equinox*, official publication of the "O.T.O.," was placed in the mail. During the conference with Mr. Morden, the federal prosecutor was advised that letters and orders would be placed at his disposal which would prove this conclusively.

Mr. Murphy, earlier in the day, had condemned the book as "indecent and obscene."

"I consider *The Equinox* the most indecent and obscene book I ever have seen," Mr. Murphy said.

"This is not the first time its existence has been called to my attention. More than a year ago, I was approached by a woman who asked me to investigate the order. I did, but could find no violation of federal laws.

"This woman mentioned the names of five prominent citizens of Detroit. They are big men. The mention of their names would immediately bring on a scandal. I am not going to place their reputations in jeopardy without first being positive that a law has been violated.

"When I obtain from Mr. Morden the information he has, I will proceed. The evidence will be laid before a federal grand jury if it is strong enough, and I will subpoena everyone who has been mentioned in connection with this society. A request for the indictment of everyone who has had a part in placing the literature in the mails will follow, and this will include those who have accepted the book with knowledge of its contents."

Woman in Divorce Court.

The woman, who approached Mr. Murphy, since has been in the divorce courts. An unsuccessful attempt was made during one of the hearings of her case to have *The Equinox* admitted into testimony.

Seven hundred dollars in cash recently was placed on the desk of a prominent Detroit attorney if he would "shut up" about the organization, and it also developed, Friday, that four private detectives who were employed to investigate the order's workings were paid to maintain secrecy.

In spite of this, persistent denials are made that a chapter of the "O.T.O." never has existed in this city.

A well known physician in Detroit admitted to a representative of *The Free Press* that he had been approached by the national organizer of the "O.T.O." along with two other business men and asked to join. He said that he had refused and gave as his reason that he considered it an "improper order."

The expose of the "O.T.O." began with the hearing of the bankruptcy proceedings of the Universal Bookstores, Inc.

It was the contention of Mr. Morden, at the outset, that the publication of *The Equinox* was responsible for bankrupting the firm.