

**TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT**  
***Lesson Title - The IWW and the Perceived Threat to American  
Democracy during the First Red Scare***  
**From: Cynthia Petrie**

**Grade – 11**

**Length of class period – 90 minutes**

**Inquiry**

1. Did the formation and activities of the International Workers of the World (IWW) pose a threat to American Democracy?
2. How different was the IWW from other labor unions?
3. Was the suppression of the IWW by the US government necessary to preserve democracy? And, was it constitutional?

**Objectives**

Content:

1. Students will gain a better understanding of the early labor movement in the United States.
2. Students will better understand the meaning of the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 and the implications they posed for abuse of constitutional rights.
3. Students will gain insight into the fears of Americans during the first Red Scare.

Skills:

1. Students will improve their ability to analyze primary source documents and place them in a historical context.
2. Students will improve their ability to see the historical impact of social/cultural attitudes during a given time period.
3. Students will improve their ability to see how economic conditions and international events impact American attitudes and government actions.
4. Students will improve their ability to work cooperatively in groups.
5. Students will improve their ability to support a point of view both orally and in writing.

**Materials** - *All documents can be found attached at the end of the lesson.*

1. Minutes from the Founding Convention of the IWW
2. IWW Symbol
3. IWW Anti-War Resolution and cartoon
4. IWW Resolution on Sabotage
5. IWW Resolution on the Communist Party
6. Songs from the IWW Song Book
7. The 1917 Espionage Act
8. Excerpts from the 1918 Sedition Act
9. Documents from the 1917 prosecution of IWW members in Chicago

10. Excerpts from the President's Mediation Commission
11. Excerpts from Samuel Gompers' writings, speeches, and interviews

**Activities** - Holding a Senate Hearing on the Activities of Members of the IWW

1. The students will be given a packet of documents to read for homework the night before the class activity. They should come to class with a list of details from the documents supporting the view that the IWW posed a threat to American democracy and a list of details that show that the IWW was not a threat. *You may want to give out entire packets or divide the documents among the class members based upon their abilities.*
2. When the students come to class having read the materials, divide them into three groups. One group will be the senators investigating the IWW members, a second group will be members of the IWW, and a third group will be the members of the President's Mediation Committee.
3. The groups will have the following responsibilities:  
*Give the groups 30 minutes to prepare for their role play and then spend 45 minutes on the role play. Then give the Mediation Committee a few minutes to deliberate and present their findings (You may need to do this the following day and use it as a wrap-up if time is short.).*

**Senators** - will develop questions for each accused IWW member. Each senator must create a minimum of three questions and ask them during the role play. The group will need to discuss the types of questions each member will create to prevent redundancy.

**IWW Members** - Each person must develop a different identity using the "facts about the defendants" section in the documents on the Chicago trial. They should prepare a statement on their innocence based upon who they are and be prepared to answer questions from the Senate committee during the role play.

**President's Mediation Committee** - These students will create a list of criteria that they will use to judge whether or not there is enough evidence to send the IWW members to trial under the Sedition Act. They should decide whether or not they will judge the defendants individually or as a whole. They should take notes during the hearing. Following the hearing they will determine whether any or all of the IWW members will be held over for trial and present their reasons why or why not to the senators and the IWW members. They will also develop a statement as to whether or not they believe anything the IWW members or the government have done is unconstitutional.

### **Assessment**

1. Students will be given a homework grade for their list of pro/con details from their reading of the documents.
2. Students will be given a class participation grade on their group work in preparing for and participating in the role play.
3. For homework following the activity students will be required to write a five paragraph persuasive essay answering the essential question of the activity:  
**Did the formation and activities of the International Workers of the World (IWW) pose a threat to American Democracy?**

### **Connecticut Framework Performance Standards**

- 1.8-40: Analyze the relationship between law enforcement and personal behavior.
- 1.9-44: Analyze the tension between the need for national security and protecting individual rights.
- 2.4-10: Prepare formal oral arguments using relevant evidence to defend a point of view.
- 3.1-1: Use evidence to develop an interpretation of a historical event.
- 3.2-5: Develop criteria for judging the actions or policies of an individual or group in the past.

# Minutes of the IWW's Founding Convention - Part 1

## CONVENTION

Industrial Workers of the World

## FIRST DAY

Tuesday, June 27, 1905.

## MORNING SESSION

The convention called in accordance with the terms of the Manifesto issued by the Chicago Conference, January 2, 3, 4, 1905, and which before final adjournment organized the Industrial Workers of the World, met at Brand's Hall, Chicago, Tuesday, June 27, 1905, at ten o'clock A. M. The convention was called to order by William D. Haywood, in the following words:

MR. HAYWOOD: Fellow Workers: In calling this convention to order I do so with a sense of the responsibility that rests upon me and rests upon every delegate that is here assembled. This is the Continental Congress of the working class. We are here to confederate the workers of this country into a working class movement that shall have for its purpose the emancipation of the working class from the slave bondage of capitalism. (Applause). There is no organization, or there seems to be no labor organization, that has for its purpose the same object as that for which you are called together to-day. The aims and objects of this organization should be to put the working class in possession of the economic power, the means of life, in control of the machinery of production and distribution, without regard to capitalist masters. (Applause). The American Federation of Labor, which presumes to be the labor movement of this country, is not a working class movement. It does not represent the working class. There are organizations that are affiliated, but loosely affiliated with the A. F. of L., which in their constitution and by-laws prohibit the initiation of or conferring the obligation on a colored man; that prohibit the conferring of the obligation on foreigners. What we want to establish at this time is a labor organization that will open wide its doors to every man that earns his livelihood either by his brain or his muscle. There is a great work to be accomplished at this convention, and every one of you must recognize the responsibility that rests upon you.

When the corporations and the capitalists understand that you are organized for the express purpose of placing the supervision of industry in the hands of those who do the work, you are going to be harassed and you are going to be subjected to every indignity and cruelty that their minds can invent. You are also going to be confronted with the so-called labor leader, the man who will tell you and other workers that the interests of the capitalist and the workingman are identical. (Applause).

<http://www.iww.org/en/about/founding/part>

**IWW Symbol:**



***Anti-war resolution passed by the 1916 convention of the Industrial Workers of the World:***

We, the Industrial Workers of the World, in convention assembled, hereby reaffirm our adherence to the principles of industrial unionism, and rededicate ourselves to the unflinching, unfaltering prosecution of the struggle for the abolition of wage slavery and the realization of our ideals in Industrial Democracy.

With the European war for conquest and exploitation raging and destroying our lives, class consciousness and the unity of the workers, and the ever-growing agitation for military preparedness clouding the main issues and delaying the realization of our ultimate aim with patriotic and therefore capitalistic aspirations, we openly declare ourselves the determined opponents of all nationalistic sectionalism, or patriotism, and the militarism preached and supported by our one enemy, the capitalist class.

We condemn all wars, and for the prevention of such, we proclaim the anti-militaristic propaganda in time of peace, thus promoting class solidarity among the workers of the entire world, and, in time of war, the general strike, in all industries.

We extend assurances of both moral and material support to all workers who suffer at the hands of the capitalist class for their adherence to these principles, and call on all workers to unite themselves with us, that the reign of the exploiters may cease, and this earth be made fair through the establishment of industrial democracy.

[http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/Convention\\_war\\_1916](http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/Convention_war_1916)



**BIG BUSINESS (to Labor, generously):** "My good fellow, you'll be well paid for your patriotic action in 'tending this glorious plant; you shall have all the fruit above the ground—I'll take **ONLY** the roots!"

[http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/Convention\\_war\\_1916](http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/Convention_war_1916)

# Resolution Regarding Sabotage

[Adopted by the General Executive Board of the Industrial Workers of the World and first published in *Defense News Bulletin* of May 4, 1918.]

**Whereas**, The Industrial Workers of the World has heretofore published, without editorial adoption or comment, many works on industrial subjects, in which the workers have a natural interest, including treatises on “Sabotage” and

**Whereas**, the industrial interests of the country, bent on destroying any and all who oppose the wage system by which they have so long exploited the workers of the country, are attempting to make it appear that “Sabotage” means the destruction of property and the Industrial Workers of the World favor and advocate such methods, now,

**Therefore**, in order that our position on such matters may be made clear and unequivocal, we the General Executive Board of said Industrial Workers of the World, do hereby declare that said organization does not now, and never has believed in or advocated either destruction or violence as a means of accomplishing industrial reform;

- first, because no principle was ever settled by such methods;
- second, because industrial history has taught us that when strikers resort to violence and unlawful methods, all the resources of the government are immediately arrayed against them and they lose their cause;
- third, because such methods destroy the constructive impulse which it is the purpose of this organization to foster and develop in order that the workers may fit themselves to assume their place in the new society,

...and we hereby reaffirm our belief in the principles embodied in the Report of this body to the Seventh Annual Convention, extracts from which were later re-published under the title, On the Firing Line.

Reaffirmed by the present General Executive Board and published December 13, 1919 in *New Solidarity*.

Members of G. E. B.: George Speed, chairman; George D. Bradley; James King; Henry Bradley; John Jackson; Fred Nelson; Chas. J. Miller; Thomas Whitehead, Gen'l. Sec'y.-Treas.

[http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/GEB\\_sabotage\\_1919](http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/GEB_sabotage_1919)

# IWW Resolution on the Communist Party

## **Adopted by the IWW General Convention, 1946**

**Whereas:** there has been considerable confusion as to the I.W.W. and the Communists, causing some people to believe that we are Communists, and

**Whereas:** the purposes of the I.W.W. and the Communists are unalterably opposed since the I.W.W. aims at the extension of Industrial Democracy while the Communists aim at the establishing of a party dictatorship over the working class, and

**Whereas:** the Communists represent the interests, not of labor but of the totalitarian regime in Russia, and

**Whereas:** for these reasons the Communists have been trying for 25 years to liquidate the I.W.W.,

### **Therefore be it resolved:**

- First, that we look upon the Communist Party and its fledglings as a major menace to the working class, and
- Second, that the interests of world peace can best be served by labor movements that clearly represent the interests of Labor and not the interests of any political state, and
- Third, that we consider that the foolishness of the Communists can best be exposed by assuring them complete civil liberties and,
- Fourth, that our publicity dealing with Communists follow this resolution and confine itself to factual information exposing their folly and harmfulness to labor.

[http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/Convention\\_Communists\\_1946](http://www.iww.org/en/history/resolutions/Convention_Communists_1946)



## **WORKERS OF THE WORLD, AWAKEN!**

By Joe Hill

Workers of the world, awaken!  
Break your chains, demand your rights.  
All the wealth you make is taken  
By exploiting parasites.  
Shall you kneel in deep submission  
From your cradles to your graves?  
Is the height of your ambition  
To be good and willing slaves?

Chorus

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!  
Fight for your own emancipation;  
Arise, ye slaves of every nation.  
In One Union grand.  
Our little ones for bread are crying,

And millions are from hunger dying;  
The end the means is justifying,  
'Tis the final stand.

If the workers take a notion,  
They can stop all speeding trains;  
Every ship upon the ocean  
They can tie with mighty chains  
Every wheel in the creation,  
Every mine and every mill,  
Fleets and armies of the nation,  
Will at their command stand still.

Join the union, fellow workers,  
Men and women, side by side;  
We will crush the greedy shirkers  
Like a sweeping, surging tide;  
For united we are standing,  
But divided we will fall;  
Let this be our understanding-  
"All for one and one for all."

Workers of the world, awaken!  
Rise in all your splendid might;  
Take the wealth that you are making,  
It belongs to you by right.  
No one will for bread be crying,  
We'll have freedom, love and health.  
When the grand red flag is flying  
on the Workers' Commonwealth.

### **THE RED FLAG**

By James Connell

The workers' flag is deepest red,  
It shrouded oft our martyred dead;  
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold  
Their life-blood dyed its every fold.

### CHORUS

Then raise the scarlet standard high;  
Beneath its folds we'll live and die,  
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,  
We'll keep the red flag flying here.

10

Look 'round, the Frenchman loves its blaze  
The sturdy German chants its praise;  
In Moscow's vaults its hymns are sung,  
Chicago swells its surging song.

It waved above our infant might  
When all ahead seemed dark as night;  
It witnessed many a deed and vow,  
We will not change its color now.

It suits today the meek and base,  
Whose minds are fixed on self and place;  
To cringe beneath the rich man's frown,  
And haul that sacred emblem down.

With heads uncovered swear we all,  
To bear it onward till we fall;  
Come dungeons dark or gallows grim,  
This song shall be our parting hymn.

### **THE WORKERS OF THE WORLDD ARE NOW AWAKING**

By Richard Brazier

(Tune: "The Shade of the Old Apple Tree")

The Workers of the World are now awaking;  
The earth is shaking with their mighty tread.  
The master class in great fear now are quaking,  
The sword of Damocles hangs o'er their head.  
The toilers in one union are uniting,  
To overthrow their cruel master's reign.  
In One Big Union now they all are fighting,  
The product of their labor to retain.

#### Chorus

It's a union for true Liberty  
It's a union for you and for me;  
It's the workers' own choice,  
It's for girls and for boys,  
Who want freedom from wage slavery;  
And we march with a Red Flag ahead,  
'Cause the blood of all nations is red-  
Come on and join in the fray,  
Come on and join us today,  
We are fighting for Freedom and Bread

The master's class in fear have kept us shaking,  
For long in bondage they held us fast;  
But the fight the Industrial workers are now making  
Will make our chains a relic of the past.  
Industrial unionism now is calling,  
The toilers of the world they hear its cry;  
In line with the Industrial Workers they are falling,  
Bu their principles to stand or fall and die.

<http://www.angelfire.com/nj3/RonMBaseman/songbk.htm>

## **Espionage Act- June 15, 1917**

An Act To punish acts of interference with the foreign relations, the neutrality, and the foreign commerce of the United States, to punish espionage, and better to enforce the criminal laws of the United States, and for other purposes.

### TITLE I.

SECTION I. That (a) whoever, for the purpose of obtaining information respecting the national defense with intent or reason to believe that the information to be obtained is to be used to the injury of the United States, or to the advantage of any foreign nation, goes upon, enters, flies over, or otherwise obtains information concerning any vessel, aircraft, work of defense, navy yard, naval station, submarine base, coaling station, fort, battery, torpedo station, dockyard, canal, railroad, arsenal, camp, factory, mine, telegraph, telephone, wireless, or signal station, building, office, or other place connected with the national defense, owned or constructed, or in progress of construction by the United States or under the control of the United States, or of any of its officers or agents, or within the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States, or any place in which any vessel, aircraft, arms, munitions, or other materials or instruments for use in time of war are being made, prepared, repaired, or stored, under any contract or agreement with the United States, or with any person on behalf of the United States, or otherwise on behalf of the United States, or any prohibited place within the meaning of section six of this title; or (b) whoever for the purpose aforesaid, and with like intent or reason to believe, copies takes, makes, or obtains, or attempts, or induces or aids another to copy, take, make, or obtain, any sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, document, writing, or note of anything connected with the national defense; or (c) whoever, for the purpose aforesaid, receives or obtains or agrees or attempts or induces or aids another to receive or obtain from any person, or from any source whatever, any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note, of anything connected with the national defense, knowing or having reason to believe, at the time he receives or obtains, or agrees or attempts or induces or aids another to receive or obtain it, that it has been or will be obtained, taken, made or disposed of by any person contrary to the provisions of this title; or (d) whoever, lawfully or unlawfully having possession of, access to, control over, or being entrusted with any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note relating to the national defense, willfully communicates or transmits or attempts to communicate or transmit the same to any person not entitled to receive it, or willfully retains the same and fails to deliver it on demand to the officer or employee of the United States entitled to receive it; or (e) whoever, being entrusted with or having lawful possession or control of any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph,

photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, note, or information, relating to the national defense, through gross negligence permits the same to be removed from its proper place of custody or delivered to anyone in violation of his trust, or to be lost, stolen, abstracted, or destroyed, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by imprisonment for not more than two years or both.

SEC. 2. (a) Whoever, with intent or reason to believe that it is to be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of a foreign nation, communicates, delivers, or transmits, or attempts to, or aids or induces another to, communicate, deliver, or transmit, to any foreign government, or to any faction or party or military or naval force within a foreign country, whether recognized or unrecognized by the United States, or to any representative, officer, agent, employee, subject, or citizen thereof, either directly or indirectly, any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blue print, plan, map, model, note, instrument, appliance, or information relating to the national defense, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than twenty years: Provided, That whoever shall violate the provisions of subsection (a) of this section in time of war shall be punished by death or by imprisonment for not more than thirty years; and (b) whoever, in time of war, with intent that the same shall be communicated to the enemy, shall collect, record, publish, or communicate, or attempt to elicit any information with respect to the movement, numbers, description, condition, or disposition of any of the armed forces, ships, aircraft, or war materials of the United States, or with respect to the plans or conduct, or supposed plans or conduct of any naval or military operations, or with respect to any works or measures undertaken for or connected with, or intended for the fortification or defense of any place, or any other information relating to the public defense, which might be useful to the enemy, shall be punished by death or by imprisonment for not more than thirty years.

SEC. 3. Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies and whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or of the United States, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both.

## TITLE XII.

SECTION 1, Every letter writing, circular, postal card, picture, print, engraving, photograph, newspaper, pamphlet, book, or other publication, matter or thing, of any kind, in violation of any of the provisions of this Act is hereby declared to be nonmailable matter and shall not be conveyed in the mails or delivered from any post office or by any letter carrier....

SEC. 2. Every letter, writing, circular, postal card, picture, print, engraving, photograph, newspaper, pamphlet, book, or other publication, matter or thing, of any kind, containing any matter advocating or urging treason, insurrection, or forcible resistance to any law of the United States, is hereby declared to be nonmailable.

<http://www.historycentral.com/documents/EspionageAct.html>

### **The U.S. Sedition Act**

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16 May, 1918

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United States, *Statutes at Large*, Washington, D.C., 1918, Vol. XL, pp 553 ff.  
A portion of the amendment to Section 3 of the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917.  
The act was subsequently repealed in 1921.

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SECTION 3. Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States, or to promote the success of its enemies, or shall willfully make or convey false reports, or false statements, . . . or incite insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct . . . the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, or . . . shall willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States . . . or shall willfully display the flag of any foreign enemy, or shall willfully . . . urge, incite, or advocate any curtailment of production . . . or advocate, teach, defend, or suggest the doing of any of the acts or things in this section enumerated and whoever shall by word or act support or favor the cause of any country with which the United States is at war or by word or act oppose the cause of the United States therein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both....

[http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The\\_U.S.\\_Sedition\\_Act](http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_U.S._Sedition_Act)

**Documents from the 1917 prosecution of IWW members in Chicago under the Espionage Act**

*Published by the* NATIONAL CIVIL LIBERTIES BUREAU

70 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Washington Office: 647 Munwy Building

*April, 19 18*

**THE REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,**

The report of the Secretary of Labor (Fifth Annual, 1917) sets forth the record of labor disputes in the period between the declaration of war (April 6) and October 25, 1917. The report states that "the number of labor disputes calling for government mediation increased suddenly and enormously with the beginning of the war."

An examination of the record of the 521 disputes handled by the Department in the war period to October 25 (281 strikes, 212 controversies and 28 lockouts) shows that only three out of **the total of 521 involved the I. W. W. in any way** (copper-miners, Arizona, mine-workers, Butte, Montana, and ship-yard workers, Washington. In both the mine-workers' strikes an A. F. of L. union was involved besides-the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' Union). **All the others occurred in industries either unorganized, or organized by unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. or the so-called "conservative" international unions.** (Fifth Annual / Report, Secretary of Labor, pp. 41-49, 60.)

"As an organization we have handled ore and munitions. The fact is that every pound of munitions in the Philadelphia Navy Yard is handled by members of this organization, and munitions carried out of New York Harbor are carried out by members of this organization. There is coming a day of accounting to place this organization in its true light before the public."

-George F. Vandeyzreer, general counsel *for* the I. W. W.---Statement in court, Jan., 1918.

Public statement issued by the Seattle branches of the organization:

"There are employers, great and small, who are taking advantage of present conditions to vent their animosity against the I. W. W. and other organizations of labor, and are disguising their brutality under the cloak of patriotism.

"The I. W. W. is a labor union. It has no hatred for the workers of any nationality, but it most distinctly is not pro-German. Thousands of I. W. W. members registered, were drafted and are now in. the training camps; others proclaimed themselves to be conscientious objectors and are paying the penalty for having

taken that stand; some did not register at all ; this is the record of practically all organizations, religious, political and economic. "I. W. W. speakers and the I. W. W. press have been careful to confine their efforts entirely to the work of education and organization along industrial lines, and any opinion expressed that is at variance with that policy is an individual matter. Reports that I. W. W. papers and speakers have been defaming the flag or advising the violent overthrow of the government are untrue, as you can easily find out for yourself by reading the papers and listening to the various lectures. Such reports are purposely spread in order to create a condition favorable to mob violence."

*The indictment returned against 166 I. W. W. members and sympathizers by the Federal Grand Jury at Chicago, Ill., Sept. 28, 1917. (Number of defendants reduced finally to 112.)*

The five sets of wrongs which the indictment says the 166 defendants agreed together to bring about are these:

**First Count.** Forcible hindrance of the execution of a long list of federal laws;

**Second Count.** Injury to unknown persons in the right and privilege of furnishing to the United States articles, materials, and transportation ;

**Third Count.** Attempts to induce 10,000 draft eligibles not to register, and to induce 5,000 drafted men to desert;

**Fourth Count.** Insubordination, disloyalty, and refusal of duty in the military and 'naval forces, and obstruction of recruiting and enlistment ;

**Fifth Count.** 2,020 crimes of depositing propaganda in the mails in order to execute a "scheme and artifice to defraud employers of labor" by sabotage.

**Statement by the prosecution in the transcripts from the Chicago trial:**

"Said organization : . . has been one for supposedly advancing the interests of laborers as a class . . . and giving them complete control and ownership of all property, and of the means of producing and distributing property, through the abolition of all other classes of society ;"

"said abolition to be accomplished not by political action or with any regard for right or wrong, . . . but by the continual and persistent use and employment of unlawful, tortuous and forcible means and methods, involving threats, assaults, injuries, intimidations and murders upon the persons, and the injury and destruction . . . of the property of such other classes, the forcible resistance to the

execution of all laws. and finally the forcible revolution & overthrow of all existing governmental authority in the United States;”

“use of which said first-mentioned means and methods was principally to accompany local strikes, industrial strikes, and general strikes of such laborers,”

“and use of all of which said means and methods was to be made in reckless and utter disregard of the rights of all persons not members of said organization, and especially of the right of the United States to execute its above-enumerated laws,”

[That the defendants’ methods] “involved . . . finally” forcible revolution; that they had an “especial and particular design” of seizing the opportunity presented by the war for “putting said unlawful, tortuous and forcible methods of said organization into practice” (want of space prevents analysis of the peculiar perversions of language and reason which this accusation involves) ; that they intended to impede the Conscription Act by failing to register, notwithstanding the requirements of-said laws . . .“notwithstanding the patriotic duty of such members...so to register and submit to registration and draft and so to enlist...and notwithstanding the cowardice involved in such failure and refusal.”

#### **FACTS ABOUT THE DEFENDANTS.**

*Note: Since these facts were secured, the indictments against some have been dismissed; others have not been apprehended. The total number on trial at Chicago is 113.*

Of the 166 indicted at Chicago (165 men, 1 woman), the following facts obtained regarding about 100 of them are significant:

**1.Membership in the I. W. W.** In the first place, 11 of them are not now, and never have been members of the I. W. W. Two more are not now members and have not been during the war, nor have they taken any part in I. W. W. affairs during the war. Four more are not members now, having been expelled for “conduct unbecoming a member of the I. W. W.”-which it appears in one case was “going south with the money”!

**2. Politically,** 2 are Republicans, 1 a Democrat, 4 Non-partisan Leaguers, 17 are members of the Socialist Party, 18 more are former members, 2 only are avowed anarchists (using the term to describe their conviction that all forms of government are wrong), 58 do not vote at all.

**3. Education and professional training.** Four are college graduates, 1 a college student, 1 a civil engineer, .1 a railroad engineer, 2 stenographers (1 court), 3 poets and 1 cartoonist.

#### **4. Occupations :**

Agricultural . . . . . 13

I. W. W. organizers and officials. . . . .	14
Journalism . . . . .	9
Skilled trades . . . . .	38
Unskilled migratory workers. . . . .	18

**5. Domestic state:**

Married, childless . . . . .	21
Married, with children . . . . .	26
Single . . . . .	62

**6. Where they hail from:**

Pacific Coast . . . . .	19
Coast to Mississippi River. . . . .	42
Mississippi River to Alleghanies. . . . .	36
Alleghanies to Atlantic Coast. . . . .	8

**7. Ages:**

Under 31 . . . . .	*20
31 to so . . . . .	7.5
Over 50 . . . . .	4

(“18 of *wh. om* registered under the selective service act; 1 other was under 21 ;  
1 only did *not* register.)

**8. Nationality :**

Born in U.S. . . . .	50
Born in allied countries. . . . .	43
Born in neutral countries. . . . .	11
Born in enemy countries. . . . .	*6

(\*1 *Hungarian, 4 Germans, held as* alien enemies; 1 Bulgarian.)

**In more detail:**

3 Mexicans, 4. Canadians, 9 Englishmen, 3 Irishmen, 3 Scotchmen, 1 Greek, 3 Italians, 5 Scandinavians, 3 Poles, 4 Russians, 2 Finns, 1 Belgian, 1 Portuguese, 1 Slav, 2 Slovaks, 1 Spaniard, 1 Lithuanian, 1 Australian, 1 Frenchman, 1 Bohemian. (Total 50.) 16 of these are citizens either by naturalization or declaration of intent.

**9. Other interesting facts:**

One of the indicted men was dead at the time of the indictment; two were in Russia, one of whom is now connected with the Bolshevik government. Two are ardent prohibition workers; two are Roman Catholics; five were formerly in the U. S. Army or Navy; one is a Negro, and one an American Indian.

[http://debs.indstate.edu/a505t78\\_1918.pdf](http://debs.indstate.edu/a505t78_1918.pdf)

### **Excerpts from the President's Mediation Commission (Jan. 9, 1918)**

The President's Mediation Commission was appointed by President Wilson in 1917 to deal with "two vital aspects of wartime labor policy: 1) the spreading wave of strikes which interfered with the production of goods deemed vital to the war effort, and 2) the growth of labor radicalism associated with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), which precipitated widespread state and local repression of labor's rights and murderous vigilantism."

[http://library.truman.edu/microforms/president\\_mediation.asp](http://library.truman.edu/microforms/president_mediation.asp)

"Membership in the I. W. W. by no means implies belief in or understanding of its philosophy. To the majority of the members it is a bond of groping fellowship. According to the estimates of conservative students of the phenomenon a very small percentage of the I. W. W. are really understanding followers of subversive doctrine. The I. W. W. is seeking results by dramatizing evils and by romantic promises of relief."

"The I. W. W. has exercised its strongest hold in those industries and communities where employers have most resisted the trade union movement, and where some form of protest against unjust treatment was inevitable."

*-President's Mediation Commission.*

[http://debs.indstate.edu/a505t78\\_1918.pdf](http://debs.indstate.edu/a505t78_1918.pdf)

### **Samuel Gompers, founder of the Federation of Labor: Excerpts from writings, speeches, and interviews**

1876: ...[T]o effect any good by our Unions, we must bring all elements working in our trade into one Organization, for the wrongs heaped upon one element today are merely the precursor for another tomorrow.  
(Vol. 1: SG to George Hurst, Jan. 22, 1876)

1890: I believe that the trade unions will bring about both the improvement of conditions and the ultimate emancipation of workers. . . . I think that the emancipation of the working classes has to be achieved by the workers themselves. Trade unions are the pure, unadulterated organizations of the working classes.  
(Vol. 2: *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, Dec. 21, 1890)

1893: We want more school houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures, to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful and childhood more happy and bright. These in brief are the primary demands made by the Trade Unions in the name of labor. These are the demands made by labor upon modern society and in their consideration is involved the fate of civilization.  
(Vol. 3: Address, Aug. 28, 1893)

1905: Any one may say that the organizations of labor invade or deny liberty to the workmen. But go to the men who worked in the bituminous coal mines twelve, fourteen, sixteen hours a day, for a dollar or a dollar and twenty five cents, and who now work eight hours a day and whose wages have increased 70 per cent. in the past seven years -- go tell those men that they have lost their liberty and they will laugh at you. (Vol. 6: SG to National Civic Federation, Apr. 25, 1905)

1912: And what have our unions done? What do they aim to do? To improve the standard of life, to uproot ignorance and foster education, to instill character, manhood and independent spirit among our people; to bring about a recognition of the interdependence of man upon his fellow man. We aim to establish a normal work-day, to take the children from the factory and workshop and give them the opportunity of the school and the play-ground. In a word, our unions strive to lighten toil, educate their members, make their homes more cheerful, and in every way contribute an earnest effort toward making life the better worth living. (*McClure's Magazine*, Feb. 1912)

1916: Class is no assurance of genius, ability or wisdom. No man is fit to control the lives of his fellows. The trade unions are the agencies through which wage-earners are working out their destinies and interposing a check upon the arbitrary power in industry. (*American Federationist*, Nov. 1916)

1917: The European war has demonstrated the dependence of the governments upon the cooperation of the masses of people. Since the masses perform indispensable service, it follows that they should have a voice in determining the conditions upon which they give service. (*American Labor's Position in Peace or in War*, Mar. 1917)

1924: [D]uring the years of [World War I] I was absorbed with the one object that it was labor's war as much as it was the war of any other group of our people; that labor had to make good in helping to win the war and to emerge from the war with freedom and democracy safeguarded and its honored name and high ideals maintained. (*Seventy Years of Life and Labor*)

<http://www.history.umd.edu/Gompers/quotes.htm>