

with the operations for the success of the military and naval forces of the United States," *and the charge is based directly and simply on these men's membership in the I. W. W.*: that they have received cards of membership, voted in meetings, paid dues and distributed literature, etc. These are the "overt acts" on which the government indicts and seeks to convict!

The arrests and the raids, the seizure of records and destruction of property, were a great blow at the I. W. W., but the activity continues relentlessly and intensively. The government's idea that the arrest of the leaders might destroy the organization and the movement it expresses has proven a miserable fizzle. Men from the rank and file have taken over the direction of affairs; mass action can dispense with leaders and continue its activity of itself, spontaneously and successfully.

The coming trial, which will be held in Chicago some time in January, according to present indications, will be perhaps the most interesting and colossal of its kind in this country. It will become historic, as it will be a factor in the decision of certain great issues in the labor movement.

The first count in the indictment charges that the I. W. W. is a revolutionary organization that seeks to secure for the working class "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 (by the members of said organization designated as 'capitalist,' 'the capitalistic class,' 'the master class,' 'the ruling class,' 'exploiters of the workers,' 'bourgeois,' and 'parasites'); such 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 (known in said organization as 'sabotage,' 'direct action,' 'working on the job.') of the property of such other classes, the forcible resistance to the execution of all laws and

finally the forcible revolutionary overthrow of all existing governmental authority, in the United States."

It is apparent from this that revolutionary unionism is on trial, and that the government seeks to use the war to destroy a revolutionary menace to Capitalism. The purpose is impossible of achievement; but its temporary results still may be very disastrous.

Recent developments indicate that the government is trying to "regulate" labor through herding it in the conservative unions of the A. F. of L., and hamstringing its activity through control of the corrupt and conservative bureaucracy. The A. F. of L. national officials are working cheek by jowl with the government; they are crushing all attempts to strike by the affiliated unions; and it is clear that the destruction of the I. W. W. is aimed at as a means to this end. Indeed, in his speech at the A. F. of L. convention, President Wilson vaguely referred to the creation of certain new "instrumentalities" in the government's dealings with labor; and the Washington correspondent of the New York *Tribune* interprets this as meaning an attempt to get labor within the A. F. of L. so as to simplify the problem of dealing with it by dealing with the national officials of the A. F. of L.

I feel very strongly on the issues involved in the case of the I. W. W., and the issues, in my opinion, are so vast, that they can be dealt with from time to time as events develop. It appears to me no exaggeration to say that the future of the revolutionary movement in this country is now in process of being determined.

In the meanwhile, the actions of the government are a challenge to every single revolutionist. The I. W. W. should be supported morally and financially. The Socialist Party should do infinitely more than it is doing in the matter, and it is the task of the revolutionary minority within the Party to force action on this most momentous issue.