

impartiality into that court-room; the twelve men, good and true, may have striven honestly and sincerely to be fair to the defendants, but the air that they breathed, the surroundings in which they lived and had lived, the whole United States were charged with anti-I. W. W. poison. Years of systematic campaigning in the capitalist press, and the spectacular climax of sudden raids upon I. W. W. headquarters all over the country, could not fail to have their effect. That a jury could have come to an agreement in a case involving the fate of 101 men within one short hour shows how fully justified was the confidence placed in the anti-I. W. W. propaganda.

Since the war began the I. W. W. has been accused again and again of working with German money, that its strikes were financed out of German propaganda funds, that their bureaus and their officials, in short, their whole activity, had been supported by the Kaiser's gold. According to the generally accepted opinion, the I. W. W. was one of the central agencies established and still supported by Wilhelm von Hohenzollern for the purpose of hampering the war industries of the United States. Wherever an I. W. W. organization had differences with its particular group of employers, whenever they set out to violate the civil peace that the united efforts of the Gompers machine and Capitalism & Co. have fastened upon the American working-class, we heard it again: German money! The A. F. of L., with the warmest support of officialdom, went into the fight with undivided energy. For to these gentlemen it meant the defeat of an organization that was making itself rather unpleasantly felt as a dangerous competitor. The press took up the cry, and the stories of I. W. W. men who had received money from Germany became as commonplace as those of the corruptibility of the officials of the A. F. of L.—and with a great deal less justification.

Before the famous raid upon I. W. W. headquarters all over the country, public officials declared everywhere with the greatest assurance that the I. W. W. propaganda was being fed with German money. Then, after I. W. W. correspond-

ence, books, pamphlets and literature had been carried off by the wagonloads, the capitalist press was full of "statements from well-informed sources" that overwhelming proof of criminal relations between the I. W. W. national officials and the German government had been found. Strange, in the trial itself, even in the opening speech of the public prosecutor, not a word was said of the whole matter. Obviously, nothing had been found that could by any stretch of imagination justify the shameful suspicions that were so busily spread by the capitalist press and important government officials, who combine an unusual supply of natural stupidity with an extraordinary lack of understanding and knowledge. That there are people who are honestly opposed to the war passes their weak understanding. That there are human beings who know no nations, but only classes, is so inconceivable to their mental make-up, that they naturally look for more "tangible" and to them more comprehensible reasons. These bureaucratic souls cannot believe that there are people left in this wicked world who would be willing, in such critical times, to endanger themselves and their families without financial gain. There are those among them, too, who are not satisfied with the course that events are taking, who are by no means fully in accord with conditions as they are. But they prefer to be "sensible," to remain quietly under cover until the storm has passed over, until danger is past. In their opinion "daredevils" like these I. W. W. men and the equally unspeakable socialists "probably know why they should be willing to take such chances." It is this mental make-up of a cowardly bureaucracy that is more than anything else responsible that this wordy era of "democracy" is so rich in stupid persecution. Or is it possible that the whole dastardly campaign of press lies was nothing more than a conscious preparation of public opinion for the climax that came in the trial of the 101 men in Judge Landis' court in Chicago?

The verdict is a class verdict of the worst sort. The question to be decided by the jury was not the guilt or innocence of each one of the 101 men before the court, not whether any or all of them had been guilty of sabotage, of initiating strikes,