

PRICE : Threepence.

SPEECHES
From the Dock
OF
New South Wales and
West Australian
I. W. W.
Members
Convicted
OF
TREASON.

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by the Defence and Release Committee.

PREFACE.

The year 1916 is destined to be one of marked interest in Australian working class history.

It will be remembered by workers away in the future, not because of any divine distinguishing feature of the year itself, not because of the great world war, but because in that year the working class of this island continent felt, for the first time in its history, the savagery of modern capitalism when its existence is disputed.

Since the building of the Trade Unions the canker of apathy had bored a way into the ranks of labor in Australia.

This can be largely accounted for by the fact that the unions had been turned into vote-catchers for the benefit of political saviours, and, neglecting to keep abreast of economic progress, had failed to function satisfactorily for the workers.

As the years passed away, and capitalism developed, the Trades Unions became ever more and more powerless, and Labor's caused seemed ever more and more hopeless.

To pull the Union movement from this muck of despair and set it in line with the advance of modern capitalism, the Industrial Workers of the World was formed up in 1911 as a propaganda party.

The I.W.W. propaganda began. Per medium of platform and print, it was drummed into the brains of the working class. The craft unions were examined, and their weaknesses laid bare, the fallacy of depending on politicians and parliaments for anything and everything was analysed and exposed.

One Big Union of, and Direct Action by, an industrially organised working class was untiringly advocated as the only channel through which modern labor will wring anything of value from their masters.

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For some long while the effect of this propaganda seemed a negligible quantity, and then the satraps of the capitalist class took no notice of I.W.W. activities, but a couple of years ago they began to realise that the logic of the arguments was burning a way into the hearts of the unions, and being fearful lest the workers in big numbers should set about pulling down the old structures and erecting the new, they commenced a campaign of propaganda repression against the I.W.W.

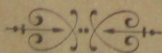
Nothing of this nature could, however, by this time stay the progress of the One Big Union Movement, and on its failure a new line of attack was devised; after months of organised, slanderous comment and misrepresentation, members of the I.W.W. were arrested wholesale, and hurriedly all over Australia, and on charges of treason and conspiracy committed for trial. Although these men were awaiting trial, volumes of abuse and condemnation still emptied out upon their heads from every capitalist sheet in the land.

In the midst of a public sentiment, worked into a foam by prejudice by papers and politicians, the conspiracy trials were brought on; the men were found guilty and sentenced to terms of gaol varying from two to fifteen years.

Among these men are many of Labor's leading pen and platform propagandists, and their speeches from the dock mark an epoch in Labor's age-long tortuous struggle to be free.

With the assurance that these speeches, besides being interesting relics of the most momentous case in Australian Labor history, will prove highly instructive and pleasing to the readers, we have done them into pamphlet form and we send them out, and recommend them to the world.

WORKERS' DEFENCE AND RELEASE
COMMITTEE.



CHARLES REEVE:

Your honor, if I may intrude for a moment, I would like you to explain how the counts ran, and why it is that the Government has now altered the charge from treason felony to treason.

HIS HONOR:

That hardly matters now. You have been found guilty on two counts as stated to the court, and charged in the indictment.

REEVE:

You have asked me if I have anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon me. I have not much to say. Indeed, I only want to say very little. I desire to start by saying that I am entirely innocent of the charges of which I have been found guilty. It is true I am a member of the I.W.W. and that I am what is known as a working-class agitator. I frankly admit that. I have always had a great ideal to fight for—the complete freedom and happiness of all humanity. And that is not to be attained by any such foul work as arson. I would freely give my life, were I to live 200 years in propagating the ideals I have lived for, but to think that my name as an industrialist is to be besmirched with such a foul crime as arson is something that revolts my nature. I am not railing against your class, but I detest the thought that posterity will say that Charles Reeve ever had anything to do with such a dirty crime as arson. I am entirely innocent of this charge of arson. Perhaps, in some of my moments as a speaker, I may have committed myself in what you call seditious conspiracy, but I wish it to be remembered by all who hear me that as for arson, before God, I had nothing to do with it.

THOMAS GLYNN:

I merely wish to say I have no complicity in this crime of which I have been found guilty. The only crime of which I have been guilty is that of loyalty to my class. I am not a criminal, and no verdict of this court and no sentence of this court can make me a criminal so long as my conscience is clear and clean. This whole case has been enshrouded in prejudice and class-hatred. When men like Mr. Hughes and Mr. Hall have such little respect for the offices they hold, when they pronounce us guilty in their speeches while the case is pending and is in progress in the lower court, then we cannot expect anything else from mere nonentities like the jury except a verdict of guilty. Politicians have been responsible for us being where we are to-day, but so far as I am concerned, I know that this verdict and the sentences that are to follow will help the working classes to understand, better than years of talk would do, the ideals for which we fight.

PETER LARKIN:

I stand here as an innocent man—a man only twelve short months in this country, with a record of twenty years as a Labor agitator behind me. I stand here a victim of a prejudiced and class press. The first and foremost charge against me was treason. That dog did not pup, and the charge was altered to treason felony. But that cat did not kitten and then they had to change it to something else. They charged me with conspiracy and committing arson. I am positively certain that I have conspired with no person in my life. I am innocent too of the other two charges. I wish the press of the country could tell the public of the evidence that has been delivered in this court. You ask me have I anything to say! Have I anything to say

against a Star Chamber? Where is the public to-day. Where is my class. Here I stand found guilty by a corrupt jury if the truth were known. My only crime is the heinous one of loyalty to the class to which I belong, and of trying to lift them from the shackles put upon them by the soulless capitalist class that lives on the women of my class and the heart beats of its little children. Why, I ask you, should I bring to this country but a few months ago the wife of my bosom and the child of her womb and then perpetrate the foul crimes with which you charge me. No such thing as crime can be laid at my door or at the doors of any of my ancestors. I am not guilty, even if all the juries in the world say I am. I leave it to my own class who know me. I leave my case to the class to which I belong, and I say again "if my class condemns me I am prepared to take the medicine." And I leave my wife and child in their hands, feeling that they will not be allowed to suffer.

JOHN HAMILTON:

I know absolutely nothing about this crime.

BERNARD BOB BESANT:

I have not much to say. From the evidence I have heard in this court it has not been proved that I am guilty. The only thing proved against me is that I am a working man and if that is all you have to find me guilty of, I am proud to be here where I am to-day. There has been no conspiracy on my part; it has been a conspiracy on the part of the police.

THOMAS MOORE:

So far as this charge is concerned I absolutely know nothing at all about it. All the other men

in the dock are perfect strangers to me. It would seem that I am the victim of circumstances.

DONALD McPHERSON:

I have no knowledge of the crimes with which I am charged.

WILLIAM TEEN:

I have been found guilty of crimes I know nothing at all about. There was a lot of evidence put forward against me, but some of that evidence, I believe, showed conclusively that there was a certain amount of suspicion surrounding it. The men who gave evidence against me were absolute liars. I do not know why the jury found me guilty. Conspiracy and treason! A man seems to be likely to be guilty of those charges even if he does not open his mouth at all. I am innocent. I am a married man with a family and have never had a conviction against, and have never, indeed, been in court before. On the evidence put forward I thought my innocence was clear, and I was surprised when I was found guilty. I have no knowledge of the crimes charged against me, and though the jury has found me guilty, I do not feel guilty at heart.

WILLIAM BEATTY:

I know nothing at all about conspiracy, or arson, or any attempt to defeat the ends of justice. I am absolutely innocent of all those things. The evidence against me rests upon the word of one man—Scully—a drug-fiend and a diabolical liar, as anyone can see. I am a little over 30 years of age. A little over thirty years ago I was condemned to penal servitude for life, so that any sentence you may now impose, troubles me not after that.

MORRIS JOSEPH FAGIN:

I am not guilty of any crime of arson at all. My only crime is that I am a member of the I.W.W., and I am willing to take the consequences of that.

DONALD GRANT:

If I am any judge of psychology I think I am right in saying that the verdict of the jury was astounding. There was not a man in the court who was not more or less affected by the verdict, and I think it was because the verdict, so far as the different counts are concerned, was not in accordance with the evidence. I may have been guilty of sedition, individually, in my Domain speeches, but I have never acted in any way that could implicate me in seditious conspiracy. I have expressed my own mind. I have never conspired with anyone as to what I should say or he should say. I feel my position keenly, because this jury has associated me with a crime I know nothing about. The people of Sydney know that Grant, at all events, and the rest of these men, for the matter of that, do not believe in such a foully fiendish crime as is alleged to have been committed. I took no part in it. I dissociate myself from such a fiendish crime. I am supposed to be guilty of stirring up class war. I admit that what I have said may be open to that construction, but I repeat that what I have said on my own account. You are making the same mistake with us as they did with Bruno, who, when he said the world was round, they gaoled to prove that it was not. You are putting us in gaol to prove there is no class war. But there is, and it is not of our making. I am not guilty of any of these crimes so far as conspiracy is concerned. I have never conspired to stir up strife. I have merely made statements of facts as they exist to-day. I have not even associated with the members at the

I.W.W. Hall, and have not been there once in six months. Individually, at the Domain, I have taken part, but not as a conspirator. Indeed, I have always recognised that conspiracy must fail. Conspiracy implies you have something to hide—we have nothing to hide. We want the workers to have all the light there is. I can only add that I will take the sentence of the court, backed by the fortitude that my clear mind gives me.

JOHN BENJAMIN KING:

I have always expected to conflict with the laws in advocating for my class. I have known that the moment I made the slightest attempt to better the conditions of the working class, that moment I was conflicting with the laws of the pirates—the capitalists. We are charged with stirring up class strife. I am not the cause of class strife; I am a product of it. I agree with what Reeve has said. If I was released to-day I would go right straight away to some place and speak to my class as I have spoken in the past, for their uplift. I should certainly advise them to organise their might and make the capitalist class of some use to society."

(Then follows Mr. Justice Pring's remarks.)

Next morning sentences were imposed as follow:—

THOMAS GLYNN, 35 years, Ireland; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

JOHN HAMILTON, 42 years, Victoria; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

DONALD M'PHERSON, 29 years, Scotland; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

WILLIAM BEATTY, 30 years, England; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

MORRIS JOSEPH FAGIN, 40 years, Russia; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

DONALD GRANT, 27 years, Scotland; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

WILLIAM TEEN, 30 years, Tasmania; 15 years in Parramatta Gaol.

CHARLES REEVE, 30 years, England; 10 years in Bathurst Gaol.

PETER LARKIN, 46 years, Ireland; 10 years in Bathurst Gaol.

BERNARD BOB BESANT, 25 years, England; 10 years in Bathurst Gaol.

THOMAS MOORE, 34 years, New Zealand; 10 years in Bathurst Gaol.

JOHN BENJAMIN KING, 46 years, Canada; 5 years in Bathurst Gaol.

The I.W.W. Cases in W.A. Conspiracy Charges.

Eleven fellow-workers, among them the old Eureka warrior, Monty Miller, were recently charged in Perth with conspiring together "to carry into execution an enterprise having for its object to raise discontent and dissatisfaction amongst the subjects

of our Lord, the King, to promote feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes of the subjects of our said Lord, the King.”

The hearing of the case lasted seven days, and resulted in eight fellow-workers—Sawtell, Miller, Auwert, Johnson, Horrocks, Lunn, Hanscombe and Goller being committed for trial to the Quarter Sessions. All were, however, allowed bail. The other three fellow-workers, O'Neill, Sidoti, and Sarr, were discharged.

The I.W.W. organisation, its preamble, and its methods were again apparently on trial, as the clever defiant speeches—here reproduced from “The West Australian”—of Fellow-Workers Mick Sawtell and Monty Miller will indicate:—

SAWTELL'S SPEECH.

Sawtell was the first man addressed by the Bench, and, in reply, he said that now that the decision of the Court had been delivered, he desired to make a few observations. “I would not feel called upon,” he said, “to say anything at this stage were it not for the fact that this is the first great working class case in the history of Western Australia. As you yourself have admitted, a good deal of the case revolved round the word ‘sabotage.’ You will understand that the word sabotage does not appear in any English dictionary, and consequently persons who are unacquainted with the Labour movement and terminology are likely to place a sinister construction upon it. Another word of which but little is known is ‘anarchy.’ I would like to make special reference to the word ‘sabotage,’ however. It means, as you have seen in our pamphlets, the conscious withdrawal of the workers’ industrial efficiency. Labour is a commodity, and the employing class use sabotage to suit their ends. Remember the

trusts and the rings! The employing class would restrict the output of sugar and put up the price of beef, and we workers are forced to organise our labour power to make it scarce so that the price of labour will increase. That is what I desire to call the attention to, so that the erroneous impressions regarding the I.W.W. may be removed. Were the workers of the world organised on the I.W.W. plan, there would be no such thing as a down tools’ strike. Such a strike as the present coal strike is regarded by the I.W.W. as a craft union move. The I.W.W. never cause a hunger strike, because they know that the women and children are the greatest sufferers and there is misery all round. We would proceed in a different fashion. We would organise the workers on our lines—that is, sabotage. We would

GET THE MEN TO GO SLOW.

and the output of coal would be less, making supplies less, and the workers’ object would be soon achieved. It was stated that they were endeavouring to stir up discontent. The I.W.W. did not cause discontent. There was sufficient discontent consequent upon the high cost of living, which, during the last three years had gone up 30 per cent.

The I.W.W. Desire to Rectify the Position by Education.

These are our three objects—education, organisation and emancipation. Education in the laws of life make for enterprise and happiness. I do not think that even counsel for the prosecution would deny that fact. We intelligent and revolutionary

workers are doing much to relieve the economic discontent to-day. Another word—revolution—has occurred often in the case. By revolution we do not mean bloodshed. We workers have seen enough of that business in the French Revolution and in the Commune. We want a revolution of thought, consequent upon the better education of the workers to-day. Mr. Walker has anticipated me in one argument.

IF OUR DOCTRINES ARE WRONG, WHY NOT
COME INTO THE OPEN AND REFUTE THEM?

At every meeting we have had there has been the utmost publicity. We have asked for debate and questions. Our objects have never meant violence or personal animosity against any particular capitalists. I and some of my fellow-workers have intimate friends in the capitalistic class, but that does not mean that we intend to differentiate in the present conflict with their class. We realise the conflict between our interests and theirs, and if the I.W.W. is guilty of conspiracy, then the Employers' Federation is equally guilty of the same offence.

MILLER'S ADDRESS.

In reply to the formal intimation from the Bench, the accused Miller made an emotional speech, in which he said that no man desired more than he to vindicate the position in which he stood that day. "I am no party," he continued, "to quibbles or foibles. I say it with pride, with no loss of personal dignity, and with no sense of loss of self-respect, or of any feeling derogatory to myself—

I AM A MEMBER OF THE I.W.W.

If I am not a member by right of payment of subscription, I am a member in heart, in brain, and in power of spirit in righting during the short span of life left to me, after long years of suffering born in toil and hardship, wrongs which exist. I feel elated here to stand or fall by the side of such comrades as these."

Miller accompanied his expression of elation with a resounding pat on Sawtell's back, and proceeding with feeling, said: "I would sacrifice the little character and reputation I have gained through my long life of over three-quarters of a century for such a cause. In my long life I have known the hardships, the adversity and the struggles of the present system, with sometimes only a thin tissue paper between me and the lives of those I love for want of bread in times of poverty and want of employment. I would go through that misery ten times over rather than shrink from the position I am placed in to-day, when I know that the noble principles we hold dear have only been maintained by the sacrifice of other's liberty. I would be a traitor to those who paid that price in the past if I did not stand for that now, and through the remaining little space left for me in life. I shall repeat what I say here in the Higher Court, as well as everywhere else. I

DO NOT WISH TO SHIRK

the slightest responsibility attaching to being a member of the I.W.W. As for the learned counsel for the prosecution, I am quite well aware that I could have secured his services before the Crown had I been able to place a few more sovereigns on

his brief than the Crown, in which case he would have pleaded my cause as earnestly as he has urged it against me in this Court. He has tried to prove that I am a member of the I.W.W.

I GIVE HIM THAT INFORMATION FREELY—I
AM A MEMBER.

He must, with his trained and educated mind, however, know that an admission of one fact of an entirely different character to another, does not necessarily prove the existence of that other fact. Membership of the I.W.W. does not go to prove that I am guilty of conspiracy of any type. I have never conspired. That is secret; it is mean; it is detestable. I and my colleagues have taken the open path before the whole world.

WE WANT EVERYTHING TO BE KNOWN.

We want the people to know what manner of men we are, and what trend of thought we hold. If this could be done, and if the world understood, instead of misunderstanding our aim, we would not be here to-day. Personally, I do hope that there will be no counsel at the higher Court. These gentlemen are trained in the point of view of the law. I know nothing—less than nothing, if that be possible, of the law, but I do know, as one of the founders of I.W.W.-ism in Australia, as one of the members of the first I.W.W. Club formed in Chicago to secure a charter in which respect we were unsuccessful, and as one of the foundation members of the I.W.W. in this State, what its objects are. I do not wish to absolve myself of any complicity whatever in the foundation and institution of the I.W.W., I say

again with pride that

I ESTEEM IT THE HIGHEST HONOR AS AN
OLD BATTLER IN THE CAUSE OF LABOUR,

to be permitted an opportunity to advocate on the platform, and as a writer for our little paper, the principles we hold, and to stress in public our object of improving the position of the working class.”

It is reported that while the old man—the 85 years old working class warrior, Monty Miller—was speaking, his comrades in the dock several times broke into applause.

The man who can look back and connect two remarkable events in Australian history by 62 years of agitation deserves a cheer!

The man who can clasp Eureka of 1854 in one hand, and the conspiracy charges of 1916 in the other, is worth a cheer!

He does not deserve “the cell,” and with a live working class he will not get it!

More Convictions. Contrast in Sentences.

Nine members of the I.W.W. were found guilty of conspiracy at the conclusion of their trial at

Perth, W.A., on Dec. 16. The sentences imposed on them by Judge Burnside was in remarkable contrast to the savage sentences recently inflicted on I.W.W. men at Sydney by Judge Pring.

The accused were:—Michael Sawtell, single (34), South Australian, agnostic, laborer; Montague Miller, widower, (85), Tasmanian, agnostic; Alexander Auwart, single (29), Russian, no religion; Alexander Horrocks, married (40), Victorian, Church of England, miner; William Johnston, single (48), Queensland, no religion, laborer; Frederick Hugh Lunn (33), Victorian, no religion, enginedriver; John Goller, single (38), German, no religion, laborer; George W. Hanscombe, married (31), Englishman, atheist, no occupation; and Christopher Parkinson (46), laborer.

The charge was that between June and December, 1916, they conspired together in West Australia, and with McLoughlin and P. J. Daley, of Broken Hill, and Thomas King, Chas. Reeve, and Thos. Glynn, of Sydney, to carry into execution an enterprise for raising discontent and dissatisfaction and promoting ill-will and enmity between different classes and subjects of the King.

Mr. Justice Burnside sentenced the accused to two years' imprisonment, which was suspended on their entering into two recognisances of £25 each, to be of good behaviour for the term of the sentence.

Workers, insist upon their release.

PREAMBLE.

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of people and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth, and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centreing of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the evergrowing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage war. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto: A fair day's wages for a fair day's work, we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watch word: "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with Capitalism. The army of production must be organised, not only for the every-day struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organising industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

