



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!"

This drawing—featuring a "Warplant"—was a political cartoon which ran during the World-War-I era. It was a workers' protest against the "Great War" which was raging in Europe.

"Big Business," in this leaflet, has a discussion with "Labor," as follows:

*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!"*

Socialists and Communists—in the U.S. and in other places, such as Britain—were opposed not just to drafting soldiers, to fight in World War I, but to the very war itself.

To prevent agitation against the war, in America, the U.S. Congress passed Alien and Sedition Laws, making it a crime to speak one's mind on the subject.

It wasn't just a matter of graphics which anti-war protestors used. At their 1916 convention, the Industrial Workers of the World passed this anti-war resolution:

*We, the Industrial Workers of the World, in convention assembled, hereby re-affirm 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.*

Members of the "Industrial Workers of the World" organization supported this resolution, whether they lived in America, in Britain or elsewhere.

Credits:

WWI-era cartoon, online courtesy IWW (Industrial Workers of the World). PD

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Workers-Protest-Against-WWI-War-Poster>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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