

# Leon Trotsky's

# The War and the International

*(The Bolsheviks and World Peace)*

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by [David Walters](#) in 1996

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## On-Line Editor's Note:

This pamphlet was written in 1914 during Trotsky's two month stay in Zurich. He had arrived there rather hurriedly from Vienna which he left on the evening of August 3rd, the day Germany declared war against France. It was published serially in Russia in Martov's Paris paper *Golos* from November 1914 onwards. Issued in German under the title *Der Krieg und die Internationale*, it earned him a sentence in absentia in Germany.

An English edition was published in America under the title *The Boishéviki and World Peace* by Boni & Liveright, New York, 1918 (With an introduction by Lincoln Steffens.)

In February 1918, the *International Socialist Review*, published by the Socialist Party of America, reproduced Trotsky's Preface with the following note:

"Comrade Trotsky was preparing an article for the Review when the revolution came up in Russia, compelling him to drop everything and return. Review readers will appreciate our disappointment and later on our joy in reading the inspiring record our comrade has made during the past few months."

With regard to the booklet, the editors wrote:

"Every revolutionary socialist in America will want to read and re-read his new book entitled *The*

## ***Boisheviki and World Peace.***"

This issue of the *Review* proved to be the last, for the administration of President Wilson barred the magazine from the post and compelled it to cease publication.[\[1\]](#)

President Wilson had, however, already read the booklet by calling for the proof sheets from the publishers. Some of Trotsky's phraseology (which would sound fine and liberal) he used in his own peace program: No reparations, self-determination of nations, United States of Europe, etc. Trotsky heard of this from Charles Boni himself, in 1931, when the publisher visited Trotsky in exile at Principo.[\[2\]](#)

Much of Trotsky's prolific literary output during the war years remains untranslated into English. We gather that these writings fill many of the volumes of his collected works in Russian.[\[3\]](#)

This does not mean that his views were different from those of the Bolsheviks. Zinoviev wrote in reference to this booklet that it posed the question correctly on all fundamental issues.[\[4\]](#)

This on-line edition contains Lincoln Steffens' introduction to the American Edition, a note by Trotsky on the history of this booklet, The Zimmerwald Manifesto and his Open Letter to Jules Guesde.

In addition this version follows in structure a 1971 uncopyrighted edition published by Wesley Press for the British Young Socialists which in turn follows the Boni & Liveright publication. The Wesley Press edition was entitled only "***The War and the International***" since the Young Socialists wanted to use the original name of the document and Trotsky was not a member of the Bolshevik Party in 1915.

Trotsky's own notes flow throughout the text, are in a slightly smaller print size and colored in a dark maroon so as to easily distinguish it from the document as a whole.

This on-line version of ***The War and the International*** is broken up into 3 parts, each approximately 100K in size to facilitate the downloading from the World Wide Web to your computer. Each section, while containing only those referenced footnotes (all footnotes references are linked to the actual footnote for easy accessibility) from the Wesley Press edition, also contains a glossary (also linked) of names tailored for each of the three parts of this document.

Lastly, each of the three Parts to ***The War and the International*** has a complete table of contents for each individual chapter.

*David Walters*

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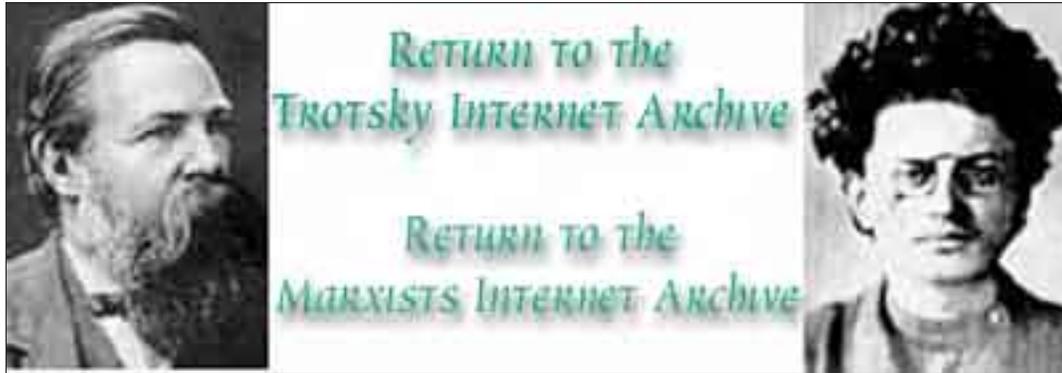
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## **Notes**

1. ***International Socialist Review***, N.Y. Summer 1956. p. 106 (p. iii)
2. **Alfred Rosmer**: Trotsky in Paris During World War 1, ***New International*** Sept-Oct. 1950. p.270. (p. iii)
3. **Gankin and Fisher**: ***The Bolsheviks and the War***, Stanford 1940. p.747 (p. iii)

4. Leon Trotsky: *The Stalin School of Falsification*. p. 152 (p. iv)

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# Leon Trotsky

**Born:** 1879 **Died:** 1940

Lev Davidovich Bronstein. Leader, with V.I. Lenin, of the Russian Revolution. Architect of the Red Army. Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs 1917-1918 and Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs 1918-1924. In 1929:, expelled from the Communist Party by the Stalinist faction of the Party and then deported from the USSR. In 1938 he helped found the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution. In 1940, murdered by a Stalinist assassin at his home in exile, in Mexico

The Trotsky Internet Archive (TIA) hopes to be central clearing house for Trotsky s writings. We encourage others to duplicate this effort by mirroring this site, copying selected writings from the TIA and otherwise disseminating Trotsky s writings. Many of Trotsky s writings remains to be translated from the original Russian. Many of these writings are still buried in the archives of the Russian KGB. Still others reside in various university archives such as the "Trotsky Works" at Harvard. We hope to offer, eventually, ALL these writings in as many languages as possible. This will require the efforts of dozens of volunteer transcribers, translators, etc. To be part of this effort write the Director of the Trotsky Internet Archive at [tia@marxists.org](mailto:tia@marxists.org)



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**The Trotsky Internet Archive Subject Indexes/Collected Writings Series [Selected Works](#)** An index to a collection of writings here on the Trotsky Internet Archive selected by the TIA Director and volunteers as representing Trotsky s most significant political works [note: this is still a work in progress]

**[Leon Trotsky on China:](#)** a complete collection of Trotsky s writings on China covering the years 1925 through 1940

**[Leon Trotsky on Britain:](#)** a complete collection of Trotsky s writings on Britain covering the years 1920

through 1940 with an emphasis on the mid-20s

**[The Rise of German Fascism](#)**: a complete collection of Trotsky's writings on Germany covering the years 1930 through 1940

**[The Spanish Revolution](#)**: a complete (...but under construction) collection of Trotsky's writings on Civil War in Spain covering the years 1931 through 1939

**[Our Revolution: Essays in Working Class and International Revolution, 1904-1917](#)**, A collection of Trotsky's writings Edited by M. Olgin for the Soviet Government.

### **The Trotsky Internet Archive Article Index sorted by date**

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**1917: [Pacifism as the Servant of Imperialism](#)** (essay)

**1917: [After the July Days: WHAT NEXT?](#)** (pamphlet - 156K in one section.)

**1917: [The Struggle for State Power](#)**

**1918: [Trotsky's Military Writings, Volume 1](#)** (collection of articles, essays & lectures)

**1918: [Speech on Brest-Litovsk](#)**

**1918: [Peace Negotiations and the Revolution](#)**

**1918: [Soviet Government documents](#)** (authored by Trotsky as Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs from November of 1917 through March of 1918)

**1919: [Trotsky Military Writings, Volume 2](#)** (collection of articles, essays & lectures)

**1919: [Rallying the Army During the Civil War](#)** (speech)

**1920: [Trotsky Military Writings, Volume 3](#)** (collection of articles, essays & lectures)

**1920: [Terrorism and Communism: An Answer to Karl Kautsky](#)**

**1922: [Between Red and White](#)**(essay)

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**1924: [Perspectives and Tasks in the East](#)**Speech on the Third Anniversary of the Communist University for Toilers of the East

**1924: [The Lessons of October](#)** (essay - 160k-multi-part) [[Click Here for PDF version](#)]

- 1924: [Lenin Dead](#) (essay)
- 1924: [First Five Years of the Communist International](#)
- 1925: [Lenin](#) Book
- 1926: [On The Suppressed Testament of Lenin](#) ( essay - 85K)
- 1927: [Problems of the Chinese Revolution](#) (thesis - 104K)
- 1927: [Platform of the Opposition](#) (in three parts, 260K total)
- 1928: [The Third International After Lenin \(A Draft Criticism of the Communist International\)](#)  
(thesis)
- 1928: [On the Canton Insurrections: Three Letters to Preobrezhensky](#) (letter - 34K)
- 1930: [Trotsky in Norway](#) (essay)
- 1930: [The History of the Russian Revolution](#) (book)
- 1930: [World Unemployment and The First Five Year Plan](#)
- 1930: [My Life](#) (autobiography)
- 1931: [The Permanent Revolution](#) (and [Results & Prospects](#) ) (book)
- 1932: [Prinkipo Letter, 1932](#) (letter)
- 1932: [Vital Questions for the German Proletariat](#) (pamphlet - 300k in 3 parts)
- 1932: [On Lenin s Testament](#) (essay)
- 1932: [In Defense of October](#) (Speech in Copenhagen, Denmark -- 64K)
- 1933: [The Class Nature of the Soviet State](#) (essay)
- 1934: [A Program of Action for France](#) (34K)
- 1934: [On the Kirov Assassination](#) (76k)
- 1935: [If America Should Go Communist](#) (essay -- 22K)
- 1935: [How Did Stalin Defeat the Opposition?](#) (essay)
- 1935: [Luxemberg and the Fourth International](#)
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- 1937: [The Stalin School of Falsification](#) (book)
- 1937: [On Democratic Centralism & The Regime](#)(10K)
- 1938: [Freedom of the Press and the Working Class](#) (Pamphlet --10K)
- 1938: [The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution](#) (Pamphlet --114K) [[Click Here for PDF version](#)]
- 1938: [The USSR and Problems of the Transitional Epoch](#) (abstract from the [Transitional Program](#))
- 1938: [Social-Patriotic Sophistry The Question of the Defense of Czechoslovakia s National Independence](#)
- 1938: [Czechoslovakia: Toward a Decision](#)
- 1938: [Class Relations in the Chinese Revolution](#) (Article - -35K)

1938: [Thermidor and Anti-Semitism](#) (Article - -30K)

1939: [Marxism in Our Time](#) (91K)

1939: [The ABC of Materialist Dialectics](#) (18K) [[Click Here for PDF version](#)]

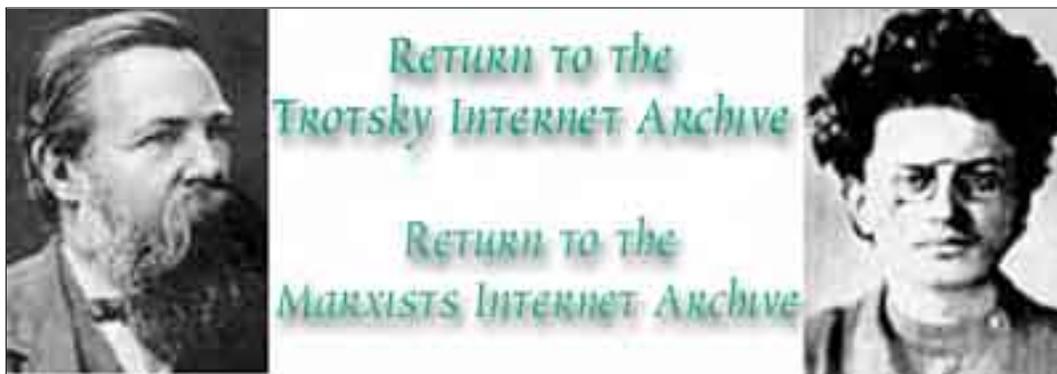
1939: [The USSR and the War](#) (65K)

1940: [Political Profiles](#) (compilation; total:1 meg k)

1942: [In Defense of Marxism](#) (collection of articles, letters, 711K in 7 parts) [[Click Here for PDF version](#)]

1944: [Fascism](#) (pamphlet)

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## PART I

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The forces of production which capitalism has evolved have outgrown the limits of nation and state. The national state, the present political form, is too narrow for the exploitation of these productive forces. The natural tendency of our economic system, therefore, is to seek to break through the state boundaries. The whole globe, the land and the sea, the surface as well as the interior has become one economic workshop, the different parts of which are inseparably connected with each other. This work was accomplished by capitalism. But in accomplishing it the capitalist states were led to struggle for the subjection of the world-embracing economic system to the profit interests of the bourgeoisie of each country. What the politics of imperialism has demonstrated more than anything else is that the old national state that was created in the revolutions and the wars [5] of 1789-1815, 1848-1859, 1864-1866, and 1870 has outlived itself, and is now an intolerable hindrance to economic development.

The present war is at bottom a revolt of the forces of production against the political form of nation and state. It means the collapse of the national state as an independent economic unit.

The nation must continue to exist as a cultural, ideologic and psychological fact, but its economic foundation has been pulled from under its feet. All talk of the present bloody clash being a work of

national defense is either hypocrisy or blindness. On the contrary, the real, objective significance of the War is the breakdown of the present national economic centers, and the substitution of a world economy in its stead. But the way the governments propose to solve this problem of imperialism is not through the intelligent, organized cooperation of all of humanity's producers, but through the exploitation of the world's economic system by the capitalist class of the victorious country; which country is by this War to be transformed from a Great Power into the World Power.

The War proclaims the downfall of the national state. Yet at the same time it proclaims the downfall of the capitalist system of economy. By means of the national state, capitalism has revolutionized the whole economic system of the world. It has divided the whole earth among the oligarchies of the great powers, around which were grouped the satellites, the small nations, who lived off the rivalry between the great ones. The future development of world economy on the capitalistic basis means a ceaseless struggle for new and ever new fields of capitalist exploitation, which must be obtained from one and the same source, the earth. The economic rivalry under the banner of militarism is accompanied by robbery and destruction which violate the elementary principles of human economy. World production revolts not only against the confusion produced by national and state divisions but also against the capitalist economic organizations, which has now turned into barbarous disorganization and chaos.

The War of 1914 is the most colossal breakdown in history of an economic system destroyed by its own inherent contradictions.

All the historical forces whose task it has been to guide the bourgeois society, to speak in its name and to exploit it, have declared their historical bankruptcy by the War. They defended capitalism as a system of human civilization, and the catastrophe born out of that system is primarily their catastrophe. The first wave of events raised the national governments and armies to unprecedented heights never attained before. For the moment the nations rallied around them. But the more terrible will be the crash of the governments when the people, deafened by the thunder of the cannon, realize the meaning of the events now taking place in all their truth and frightfulness.

The revolutionary reaction of the masses will be all the more powerful the more prodigious the cataclysm which history is now bringing upon them.

Capitalism has created the material conditions of a new Socialist economic system. Imperialism has led the capitalist nations into historic chaos. The War of 1914 shows the way out of this chaos by violently urging the proletariat on to the path of Revolution.

For the economically backward countries of Europe the War brings to the fore problems of a far earlier historic origin—problems of democracy and national unity. This is in a large measure the case with the peoples of Russia, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkan Peninsula. But these historically belated questions, which were bequeathed to the present epoch as a heritage from the past, do not alter the fundamental character of the events. It is not the national aspirations of the Serbs, Poles, Rumanians or Finns that has mobilized twenty-five million soldiers and placed them in the battlefields, but the imperialistic interests of the bourgeoisie of the Great Powers. It is imperialism that has upset completely the European status quo, maintained for forty five years, and raised again the old questions which the bourgeois revolution proved itself powerless to solve. Yet in the present epoch it is quite impossible to treat these questions in and by themselves. They are utterly devoid of an independent character. The creation of normal relations of national life and economic development on the Balkan Peninsula is unthinkable if Czarism and Austria-Hungary are preserved. Czarism is now the indispensable military reservoir for the financial

imperialism of France and the conservative colonial power of England. Austria-Hungary is the mainstay of Germany's imperialism. Issuing from the private family clashes between the national Serbian terrorists and the [Habsburg](#) political police, the War very quickly revealed its true fundamental character—a struggle of life and death between Germany and England. While the simpletons and hypocrites prate of the defense of national freedom and independence, the German English War is really being waged for the freedom of the imperialistic exploitation of the peoples of India and Egypt on the one hand, and for the imperialistic division of the peoples of the earth on the other.

Germany began its capitalistic development on a national basis with the destruction of the continental hegemony of France in the year 1870--1871. Now that the development of Germany industry on a national foundation has transformed Germany into the first 'capitalistic power of the world, she finds herself colliding with the hegemony of England in her further course of development. The complete and unlimited domination of the European continent seems to Germany the indispensable prerequisite of the overthrow of her world enemy. The first thing, therefore, that imperialistic Germany writes in her program is the creation of a Middle European League of Nations. Germany, Austria- Hungary, the Balkan Peninsula and Turkey, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Italy, and, if possible, enfeebled France and Spain and Portugal, are to make one economic and military whole, a Great Germany under the hegemony of the present German state.

This program, which has been thoroughly elaborated by the economists, political students, jurists and diplomats of German imperialism and translated into reality by its strategists, is the most striking proof and most eloquent expression of the fact that capitalism has expanded beyond the limits of the national state and feels intolerably cramped within its boundaries. The national Great Power must go and in its place must step the imperialistic World Power.

In these historical circumstances the working class, the proletariat, can have no interest in defending the outlived and antiquated national "fatherland", which has become the main obstacle to economic development. The task of the proletariat is to create a far more powerful fatherland, with far greater power of resistance—the republican United States of Europe<sup>[6]</sup> as the foundation of the United States of the World.

The only way in which the proletariat can meet the imperialistic perplexity of capitalism is by opposing to it as a practical program of the day the Socialist organization of world economy.

War is the method by which capitalism, at the climax of its development, seeks to solve its insoluble contradictions. To this method the proletariat must oppose its own method, the method of the Social Revolution.

The Balkan question and the question of the overthrow of Czarism, propounded to us by the Europe of yesterday, can be solved only in a revolutionary way, in connection with the problem of the United Europe of tomorrow. The immediate, urgent task of the Russian Social Democracy, to which the author belongs, is the fight against Czarism. What Czarism primarily seeks in Austria-Hungary and the Balkans is a market for its political methods of plunder, robbery and acts of violence. The Russian bourgeoisie all the way up to its radical intellectuals has become completely demoralized by the tremendous growth of industry in the last five years, and it has entered into a bloody league with the dynasty, which had to secure to the impatient Russian capitalists their part of the world's booty by new land robberies. While Czarism stormed and devastated Galicia, and deprived it even of the rags and tatters of liberty granted to it by the Habsburgs, while it dismembered unhappy Persia, and from the corner of the Bosphorus strove

to throw the noose around the neck of the Balkan peoples, it left to the liberalism which it despised the task of concealing its robbery by sickening declamations over the defense of Belgium and France. The year 1914 spells the complete bankruptcy of Russian liberalism, and makes the Russian proletariat the sole champion of the war of liberation. It makes the Russian Revolution definitively an integral part of the Social Revolution of the European proletariat.

In our war against Czarism, in which we have never known a "national" truce,[7] we have never looked for help from Habsburg or [Hohenzollern](#) militarism, and we are not looking for it now. We have preserved a sufficiently clear revolutionary vision to know that the idea of destroying Czarism was utterly repugnant to German imperialism. Czarism has been its best ally on the Eastern border. It is united to it by close ties of social structure and historical aims. Yet even if it were otherwise, even if it could be assumed that, in obedience to the logic of military operations, it would deal a destructive blow to Czarism, in defiance of the logic of its own political interests—even in such a highly improbable case we should refuse to regard the [Hohenzollerns](#) as an ally by sympathy or even by identity of immediate aims. The fate of the Russian Revolution is so inseparably bound up with the fate of European Socialism, and we Russian Socialists stand so firmly on the ground of internationalism, that we cannot, we must not for a moment, entertain the idea of purchasing the doubtful liberation of Russia by the certain destruction of the liberty of Belgium and France, and—what is more important still—thereby inoculating the German and Austrian proletariat with the virus of imperialism.

We are united by many ties to the German Social Democracy. We have all gone through the German Socialist school, and learned lessons from its successes as well as from its failures. The German Social Democracy was to us not only a party of the International... It was the Party par excellence. We have always preserved and fortified the fraternal bond that united us with the Austrian Social Democracy. On the other hand we have always taken pride in the fact that we have made our modest contribution towards winning the franchise in Austria and arousing revolutionary tendencies in the German working class.[8] It cost more than one drop of blood to do it. We have unhesitatingly accepted moral and material support from our older brother who fought for the same ends as we on the other side of our Western border.

Yet it is just because of this respect for the past, and still more out of respect for the future, which ought to unite the working class of Russia with the working classes of Germany and Austria, that we indignantly reject the "liberating" aid which German imperialism offers us in a [Krupp](#) munitions box, with the blessing, alas! of German Socialism. And we hope that the indignant protest of Russian Socialism will be loud enough to be heard in Berlin and in Vienna.

The collapse of the Second International[9] is a tragic fact, and it were blindness or cowardice to close one's eyes to it. The position taken by the French and by the larger part of English Socialism is as much a part of this breakdown as is the position of the German and Austrian Social Democracy. If the present work addresses itself chiefly to the German Social Democracy it is only because the German party was the strongest, most influential, and in principle the most basic member of the Socialist world. Its historic capitulation reveals most clearly the causes of the downfall of the Second International.

At first glance it may appear that the social revolutionary prospects of the future are wholly deceptive. The insolvency of the old Socialist parties has become catastrophically apparent. Why should we have faith in the future of the Socialist movement? Such skepticism, though natural, nevertheless leads to quite an erroneous conclusion. It leaves out of account the good will of history, just as we have often been too prone to ignore its ill will, which has now so cruelly shown itself in the fate that has overcome the

International.

The present War signalizes the collapse of the national states. The Socialist parties of the epoch now concluded were national parties. They had become ingrained in the national states with all the different branches of their organizations, with all their activities and with their psychology. In the face of the solemn declarations at their congresses they rose to the defense of the conservative state, when imperialism, grown big on the national soil, began to demolish the antiquated national barriers. And in their historic crash the national states have pulled down with them the national Socialist parties also.

It is not Socialism that has gone down, but its temporary historical external form. The revolutionary idea begins its life anew as it casts off its rigid shell. This shell is made up of living human beings, of an entire generation of Socialists that has become fossilized in the self-abnegating work of agitation and organization through a period of several decades of political reaction, and has fallen into the habits and views of national opportunism or possibilism. All efforts to save the Second International on the old basis, by personal diplomatic methods and mutual concessions, are quite hopeless. The old mole of history is now digging its passageways all too well and none has the ower to stop him.

As the national states have become a hindrance to the development of the forces of production, so the old Socialist parties have become the main hindrance to the revolutionary movement of the working class. It was necessary that they should demonstrate to the full their extreme backwardness, that they should discredit their utterly inadequate and narrow methods, and bring the shame and horror of national discord upon the proletariat, in order that working class might emancipate itself, through these fearful disillusionments, from the prejudices and slavish habits of the period of preparation, and become at last that which the voice of history is now calling it to be the revolutionary class fighting for power.

The Second International has not lived in vain. It has accomplished a huge cultural work. There has been nothing like it in history before. It has educated and assembled the oppressed classes The proletariat does not now need to begin at the beginning. It enters on the new road not with empty hands. The past epoch hagbequeathed to it a rich arsenal of ideas. It has bequeathed to it the weapons of criticism. The new epoch will teach the proletariat to combine the old weapons of criticism with the new criticism or weapons.[10]

This book was written in extreme haste, under conditions far from favourable to systematic work. A large part of it is devoted to the old International which has fallen. But the entire book, from the first to the last page, was written with the idea of the New International constantly in mind, the New International which must rise up out of the present world cataclysm, the International of the last conflict and the final victory.

Leon Trotsky

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## CHAPTER I

# THE BALKAN QUESTION

The above quotation is from the *Nepszava* of August 31, 1914, the official organ of the Socialist party of Hungary. Hungary is the land whose entire inner It was erected upon the high handed oppression of the national minorities, upon the enslavement of the labouring classes, upon the official parasitism and usury of the ruling caste of large landowners. It is the land in which men like [Tisza](#) are masters of the situation, dyed-in-the-wool agrarians, with the manners of political bandits. In a word, Hungary is a country closest of kin to Czar ruled Russia.

So what is more fitting that that the *Nepszava*, the Socialist organ of Hungary, should hail with outbursts of enthusiasm the liberating mission of the German and Austro-Hungarian armies? Who other than Count Tisza could have felt the call to "enforce the democratic program for the liberation of the nations"? Who was there to uphold the eternal principles of law and justice in Europe but the ruling clique of Budapest, the discredited Panamists[[12](#)]. Would you entrust this mission to the unscrupulous diplomacy of "perfidious. Albion",[[13](#)] to the nation of shopkeepers?

Laughter turns away wrath. The tragic inconsistencies of the policies followed by the International not only reach their climax in the articles of the poor *Nepszava*; they disarm us by their humour.

The present series of events began with the ultimatum sent to Serbia by Austria-Hungary. There was not the slightest reason why the international Social Democracy should take under its protection the intrigues of the Serbs or any other of the petty dynasties of the Balkan Peninsula. They were all endeavouring to hide their political adventures under the cloak of national aspirations. We had still less cause to lash ourselves into a state of moral indignation because a fanatic young Serb responded to the cowardly, criminal and wicked national politics of the Vienna and Budapest government authorities with a bloody assassination. [It is noteworthy that these opportunistic Austrian and German Socialists are now writhing with moral indignation over the "treacherous assassination at Sarajavo". And yet they always sympathized with the Russian terrorists more than we, the Russian Social Democrats, did, who are opposed on principle to the terroristic method. Lost in the mist of chauvinism, they can no longer see that the unfortunate Serbian terrorist, Gavrilo Princip, represents precisely the same national principle as the German terrorist, Sand. Perhaps they will even as us to transfer our sympathies from [Sand](#) to Kotzebue? Or perhaps these enuchs will advise the Swiss to overthrow the monuments erected to assassat' Tell and replace them with monuments to the Austrian governor, Geissler, one of the spiritual forerunners of the murdered Archduke? --LT]

Of one thing we have no doubt. In the dealings between the Danube Monarchy and the Serbian government, the historic right, that is to say, the right of free development, rests entirely with Serbia, just as Italy was in the right in the year 1859. Underneath the dud between the imperial police scoundrels and the terrorists of Belgrade, there is hidden a far deeper meaning than merely the breed of the Karageorgevitches or the crimes of the Czar's diplomacy. On one side were the imperialistic claims of a national state that had lost its vitality, and on the other side, the striving of the dismembered Serbian nation to re-integrate itself into a national whole and become a living vital state.

Is it for this that we have sat so long in the school of Socialism to forget the first three letters of the

democratic alphabet? This absolute lapse of memory, moreover, made its appearance only after the 4th of August.<sup>14</sup> Up to that fatal date the German Marxists showed that they knew very well what was happening in South Eastern Europe.

On July 3, 1914, after the assassination at Sarajevo, the *Vorwart* wrote:

"The bourgeois revolution of the South Slavs is in full swing, and the shooting at Sarajevo, however wild and senseless an act in itself is as much a chapter of this revolution as the battles by which the Bulgarians, Serbs, and Montenegrins liberated the peasants of Macedonia from the yoke of Turkish feudal exploitation. Is it a wonder that the South Slavs of Austria-Hungary look with longing to their racial brothers in the kingdom of Serbia? The Serbs in Serbia have attained the highest goal a people can attain in the present order of society. They have attained national independence. Whereas in Vienna or Budapest they treat every one bearing the name of Serb or Croatian with blows and kicks, with court-martial justice and the gallows... There are seven and a half million South Slavs who, as a result of the victories in the Balkans, have grown bolder than ever in demanding their political rights. And if the imperial throne of Austria continues to resist their impact, it will topple over and the entire Empire with which we have coupled our destiny will break to pieces. For it is in line with historic evolution that such national revolutions should march onward to victory."

If the International Social Democracy together with its Serbian contingent, offered it yielding resistance to Serbia's national claims, it was certainly not out of any consideration for the historic rights of Austria-Hungary to oppress and disintegrate the nationalities living within her borders; and most certainly not out of consideration for the liberating mission of the Habsburgs. Until August, 1914<sup>[14]</sup>, no one, except the black and yellow hirelings of the press, dared to breathe a word about that. The Socialists were influenced in their course of conduct by entirely different motives. First of all, the proletariat, although by no means disputing the historic right of Serbia to strive for national unity, could not trust the solution of this problem to the powers then controlling the destinies of the Serbian kingdom. And in the second place—and this was for us the deciding factor—the international Social Democracy could not sacrifice the peace of Europe to the national cause of the Serbs, recognizing, as it did, that, except for a European revolution, the only way such unity could be achieved was through a European war.

But from the moment Austria-Hungary carried the question of her own fate and that of Serbia to the battlefield, Socialists could no longer have the slightest doubt that social and national progress would be hit much harder in South Eastern Europe by a Habsburg victory than by a Serbian victory. To be sure, there was still no reason for us Socialists to identify our cause with the aims of the Serbian army. This was the idea that animated the Serbian Socialists, Ljaptchevitch and [Katzlerovitch](#), when they took the manly stand of voting against the war credits. [To appreciate fully this action of the Serbian Socialists we must bear in mind the political situation by which they were confronted. A group of Serbian conspirators had murdered a member of the Hapsburg family, the mainstay of Ausro-Hungarian clericalism, militarism, and imperialism. Using this as a welcome pretext, the military party in Vienna sent an ultimatum to Serbia, which for sheer audacity, has scarcely ever been paralleled in diplomatic history. In reply, the Serbian government made extra-ordinary concessions, and suggested that the solution of the question in dispute be turned over to the Hague tribunal. Thereupon Austria declared war on Serbia. If the idea of a "war of defence" has any meaning at all, it certainly applied to Serbia in this instance. Nevertheless, our friends, Ljaptchevitch and Katzlerovitch, unshaken in their conviction of the course of action that they as Socialists must pursue, refused the government a vote of confidence. The writer was in Serbia at the beginning of the War. In the Skuptchina, in an atmosphere of indescribable national

enthusiasm. a vote was taken on the war credits. The voting was by rollcall Two hundred members had answered "Yes". Then in a moment of deathlike silence came the voice of the Socialist Lptchevitch "No" Every one felt the moral force of this protest, and the scene has remained indelibly impressed upon my memory.—L.T.] But surely we had still less reason to support the purely dynastic rights of the Hapsburgs and the imperialistic interests of the feudal --capitalistic cliques against the national struggle of the Serbs. At all events, the Austro-Hungarian Social Democracy, which now invokes its blessings upon the sword of the Hapsburgs for the liberation of the Pes, the Ukranians, the Finns and the Russian people, must first of all clarify its ideas on the Serbian question, which has gotten so hopelessly muddled.

The question at issue, however, is not confined to the fate of the ten million Serbs. The clash of the European nations has brought up the entire Balkan question anew. The Peace of Bucharest,[15] signed in 1903, has solved neither the national nor the international problems in the Near East. It has only intensified the added confusion resulting from the two unfinished Balkan Wars, unfinished because of the complete temporary exhaustion of the nations participating in it.

Rumania had followed in the path of Austro-Hungarian politics, despite the Romanesque sympathies of its population, especially in the cities. This was due not so much to dynastic causes, to the fact that a [Hohenzollern](#) prince occupied the throne, as to the imminent danger of a pussian invasion. In 1879 the Russian Czar, as thanks for Rumania's support in the Russo-Turkish War of "liberation", cut off a slice of Rumanian territory, the province of Bessarabia. This eloquent deed provided a sufficient backing to the dynastic sympathies of the Hohenzollern in Bucharest. But the MagyarHabsburg clique succeeded in incensing the Rumanian people against them by their denationalizing policy in Transylvania, which has a population of three million Rumanians as against three-fourths of a inillion in the Russian province of Bessarabia; and they further antaonized them by their commercial treaties, which were dictated by the interests of the large Austro-Hungarian landowners. So that Rumania's entrance into Ithe War on the side of the Czar, despite the courageous and active agitation against participation in the War on either side, carried on by the Socialist party under the leadership of my friends Gherea and [Rakovsky](#), is to be laid altogether at the door of the ruling class of Austria-Hungary, who are reaping the harvest they have sown here as well as elsewhere.

But the matter is not disposed of by fixing the historical responsibility. Tomorrow, in a month, in a year or more the War will bring to the foreground the whole question of the destiny of the Balkan peoples and of Austria-Hungary, and the proletariat will have to have its answer to this question. European democracy in the nineteenth century looked with distrust at the Balkan people's struggle for independence, because it feared that Russia might be strengthened at the expense of Turkey. On this subject Karl Marx wrote in 1853, on the eve of the Crimean War:

"It may be said that the more firmly established Serbia and the Serbian nationality is, the more the direct influence of Russia on the Turkish Slavs is shoved into the background. For in order to be able to maintain its position as a state, Serbia had to import its political institutions, its schools.... from Western Europe."

This prophesy has been brilliantly fulfilled in what has actually happened in Bulgaria, which was created by Russia as an outpost on the Balkans. As soon as Bulgaria was fairly well established as a national state, it developed a strong anti-Russian party, under the leadership of Russia's former pupil, [Stambulov](#), and this party was able to stamp its iron seal upon the entire foreign policy of the young country. The whole mechanismof the political parties in Bulgaria is so constructed as to enable it to steer between the

two European combinations without being absolutely forced into the channel of either, unless it chooses to enter it of its own accord. Rumania went with the Austro-German alliance, Servia, since 1903, with Russia, because the one was menaced directly by Russia, the other by Austria. The more independent the countries of South East Europe are from Austria-Hungary, the more effectively they will be able to protect their independence against Czarism.

The balance of power in the Balkans, created by the Congress of Berlin[16] in 1879, was full of contradictions. Cut up by artificial ethnographical boundaries, placed under the control of imported dynasties from German nurseries, bound hand and foot by the intrigues of the Great Powers, the peoples of the Balkans could not cease their efforts for further national freedom and unity. The national politics of independent Bulgaria was naturally directed towards Macedonia, populated by Bulgarians. The Berlin Congress had left it under Turkish rule. On the other hand, Servia had practically nothing to look for in Turkey with the exception of Sanjak, Novy Bazar. Its national interests lay on the other side of the Austro-Hungarian boundary, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. Rumania had no interests in the South, where it is separated from European Turkey by Servia and Bulgaria. Rumania's expansion policy was directed towards the North West and the East, towards Hungarian Transylvania and Russian Bessarabia. Finally, the national expansion of Greece, like that of Bulgaria, collided with Turkey. Austro-German politics, aiming at the artificial preservation of European Turkey, broke down not on account of the diplomatic intrigues of Russia, although these of course were not lacking. It broke down because of the inevitable course of evolution. The Balkan Peninsula had entered on the path of capitalist development, and it was this fact that raised the question of the self-determination of the Balkan peoples as national states to the historical issue of the day.

The Balkan War disposed of European Turkey, and thereby created the conditions necessary for the solution of the Bulgarian and Greek questions. But Servia and Rumania, whose national completion could only be achieved at the expense of Austria-Hungary, found themselves checked in their efforts at expansion Southwards, and were compensated at the expense of what racially belonged to Bulgaria-Servia in Macedonia, and Rumania in Dobrudja. This is the meaning of the second Balkan War and the Peace of Bucharest by which it was concluded. The mere existence of Austria-Hungary, this Turkey of Middle Europe, blocks the way to the natural self-determination of the peoples of the South East. It compels them to keep constantly fighting against each other, to seek support against each other from the outside, and so makes them a tool of the political combinations of the Great Powers. It was only in such chaos that Czarist diplomacy was enabled to spin the web of its Balkan politics, the last thread of which was Constantinople. And only a federation of the Balkan states, both economic and military, can interpose an invincible barrier to the greed of Czarism.

Now that European Turkey has been disposed of, it is Austria-Hungary that stands in the way of a federation of the Balkan states. Rumania, Bulgaria, and Servia would have found their natural boundaries, and would have united with Greece and Turkey, on the basis of common economic interests, into a league of defence. This would finally have brought peace to the Balkan Peninsula, that witches' cauldron which periodically threatened Europe with explosions, until it drew it into the present catastrophe. Up to a certain time the Socialists had to reconcile themselves to the routine way in which the Balkan question was treated by capitalistic diplomats, who in their conferences and secret agreements stopped up one hole only to open another, even wider one. So long as this dilatory method kept postponing the final solution, the Socialist International could hope that the settlement of the Habsburg succession would be a matter not for a European war, but for the European Revolution. But now that the War has destroyed the equilibrium of the whole of Europe, and the predatory Powers are seeking to

remodel the map of Europe—not on the basis of national democratic principles, but of military strength—the Social Democracy must come to a clear comprehension of the fact that one of the chief obstacles to freedom, peace and progress, in addition to Czarism and German militarism, is the Habsburg Monarchy as a state organization. The crime of the Galician Socialist group under [Daszynski](#) consisted not only in placing the Polish cause above the cause of Socialism, but also linking the fate of Poland with the fate of the Austro-Hungarian armies and the fate of the Habsburg Monarchy. The Socialist proletariat of Europe cannot adopt such a solution of the question. For us the question of united and independent Poland is on a par with the question of united and independent Serbia. We cannot and we will not permit the Polish question to be solved by methods which will perpetuate the chaos at present prevailing in South Eastern Europe, in fact through the whole of Europe. For us Socialists the independence of Poland means its independence on both fronts, on the Romanov front and on the Habsburg front. We not only wish the Polish people to be free from the oppression of Czarism. We wish also that the fate of the Serbian people shall not be dependent upon the Polish nobility in Galicia.

For the present we need not consider what the relations of an independent Poland will be to Bohemia, Hungary and the Balkan Federation. But it is perfectly clear that a complex of medium-sized and small states on the Danube and in the Balkan Peninsula will constitute a far more effective bar to the Czarist designs on Europe than the weak, chaotic Austro-Hungarian State, which proves its right to existence only by its continued attempts upon the peace of Europe.

In the article of 1853, quoted above, Marx wrote as follows on the Eastern question:

"We have seen that the statesmen of Europe, in their obdurate stupidity, petrified routine, and hereditary intellectual indolence, recoil from every attempt at answering the question of what is to become of Turkey in Europe. The driving force that favours Russia's advance towards Constantinople is the very means by which it is thought to keep her away from it, the empty theory, never carried out, of maintaining the status quo. What is this status quo? For the Christian subjects of the Porte<sup>[17]</sup> it means nothing else than the perpetuation of their oppression by Turkey. As long as they are under the yoke of the Turkish rule, they look upon the head of the Greek Church, the ruler of 60 million Greek Church Christians, as their natural protector and liberator."

What is here said of Turkey now applies in a still greater degree to Austria-Hungary. The solution of the Balkan question is unthinkable without the solution of the Austro-Hungarian question, as they are both comprised in one and the same formula—the Democratic Federation of the Danube and Balkan Nations.

"The governments with their old-fashioned diplomacy," wrote Marx, "will never solve the difficulty. Like the solution of so many other problems, the Turkish problem, too, is reserved for the European Revolution." This statement holds just as good today as when it was first written. But for the Revolution to solve the difficulties that have piled up in the course of centuries, the proletariat must have its own program for the solution of the Austro-Hungarian question. And this program it must oppose just as strenuously to the Czaristic greed of conquest as to the cowardly and conservative efforts to maintain the Austro-Hungarian status quo.

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## CHAPTER II

# AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

RUSSIAN CZARISM undoubtedly represents a cruder and more barbarian form of state organisation than does the feeble absolutism of Austria-Hungary, which has been mitigated by the weakness of old age. But Russian Czarism and the Russian state are by no means identical. The destruction of Czarism does not mean the disintegration of the state. On the contrary it means its liberation and its strengthening. All such assertions, as that it is necessary to push Russia back into Asia, which found an echo even in certain Social Democratic organs, are based on a poor knowledge of geography and ethnography. Whatever may be the fate of various parts of present Russia -- Russian Poland, Finland, the Ukraine or Bessarabia European Russia will not cease to exist as the national territory of a many-millioned race that has made notable conquests along the line of cultural development during the last quarter century.

Quite different is the case of Austria-Hungary. As a state organization it is identical with the Habsburg Monarchy. It stands or falls with the Habsburgs, just as European Turkey was identical with the feudal-military Ottoman caste and fell when that caste fell.[18] A conglomerate of racial fragments centrifugal in tendency, yet forced by a dynasty to stick together, Austria-Hungary presents the most reactionary picture in the very heart of Europe. Its continuation after the present European catastrophe would not only delay the development of the Danube and Balkan peoples for more decades to come and make a repetition of the present War a practical certainty, but it would also strengthen Czarism politically by preserving its main source of spiritual nourishment.

If the German Social Democracy reconciles itself to the ruin of France by regarding it as punishment for France's alliance with Czarism, then we must ask that the same criterion be applied to the German-Austrian alliance. And if the alliance of the two Western democracies with a despotic Czarism gives the lie to the French and English press when they represent the war as one of liberation, then is it not equally arrogant, if not more so, for the German Social Democracy to spread the banner of liberty over the Hohenzollern army, the army that is fighting not only against Czarism and its allies, but also for the entrenchment of the Habsburg Monarchy?

Austria-Hungary is indispensable to Germany, to the ruling class in Germany as we know it. When the ruling Junker class[19] threw France into the arms of Czarism by the forceful annexation of Alsace-Lorraine,[20] and systematically embittered the relations with England by rapidly increasing naval armaments; when it repulsed all attempts at an understanding with the Western democracies because such an understanding would have implied the democratization of many then this ruling class saw itself compelled to seek support from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as a reserve source of military strength against the enemies in the East and the West.

According to the German point of view the mission of the Dual Monarchy[21] was to place Hungarian, Polish, Rumanian, Czech, Rhenish, Serbian and Italian auxiliaries in the service of the German military and Junker policy. The ruling class in Germany had easily reconciled itself to the expatriation of ten to twelve millions

Germans, for these twelve millions formed the kernel around which the Habsburgs united a non German population of more than forty million. A democratic federation of independent Danube nations would

have made these peoples useless as allies of German militarism. Only a monarchy in Austria-Hungary, a monarchy enforced by militarism, would make that country of any value as an ally to Junker Germany. The indispensable condition for this alliance, sanctified by the *ibelungen troth*[[22](#)] of dynasties, was the military preparedness of Austria-Hungary, a condition to be achieved in no other way than by the mechanical suppression of the centrifugal national tendencies.

Since Austria-Hungary is surrounded on all sides by states composed of the same races as are within its borders, its foreign policy is necessarily intimately connected with its internal policy. To keep seven million Serbs and South Slavs within the frame of its own military state, Austria-Hungary is compelled to extinguish the hearthfire °that kindles their political leanings -- the independent kingdom of Serbia.

Austria's ultimatum to Serbia was the decisive step in this direction. took this step under the pressure of necessity," wrote Eduard [Bernstein](#) in *Die Sozialistische Monatshefte* (No.16). To be sure it did, if political events are considered from the viewpoint of dynastic necessity.

To defend the Habsburg policy on the ground of the low moral standard of the Belgrade rulers is to close one's eyes to the fact that the Habsburgs did make friends with Serbia, but only when Serbia was under the most despicable government that the history of the unfortunate Balkan Peninsula has known, that is, when it had at its head an Austrian agent, Milan. The reckoning with Serbia came a late because the efforts made at self-preservation were too weak in the enfeebled organism of the Dual Monarchy. But after the death of the Archduke, the support and hope of the Austrian military party -- and of Berlin-Austria's ally gave her. a sharp dig in the ribs, insisting upon a demonstration of firmness and strength. Not only was Austria's ultimatum to Serbia approved of in advance by the rulers of Germany, but, according to all information, it was actually inspired from that quarter. The evidence is plainly set forth in the very same White Book which professional and amateur diplomats offer as a document of the [Hohenzollern](#) love of peace.

After defining the aims of Greater Serbian propaganda and the machinations of Czarism in the Balkans, the *White Book states*:

"Under such conditions Austria was forced to the realization that it was not compatible with the dignity or the self-preservation of the Monarchy to look on at the doings across the border and remain passive. The Imperial Government informed us of this view and asked for our opinion. We could sincerely tell our ally that we agreed with his estimate of the situation and could assure him that any action he might find necessary to put an end to the movement in Serbia against the Austrian Monarchy would meet with our approval. In doing so, we were well aware of the fact that eventual war operations on the part of Austria-Hungary might bring Russia into the field and might, according to the terms of our alliance, involve us in a war.

"But in view of the vital interests of Austria-Hungary that were at stake, we could not advise our ally to show a leniency incompatible with his dignity, or refuse him our support in a moment of such grave portet. We were the less able to do so because our own interests also were vitally threatened by the persistent agitation in Serbia. If the Serbs, aided by Russia and France, had been allowed to go on endangering the stability of our neighbouring Monarchy, this would have led to the gradual breakdown of Austria and to the subjection of all the Slavic races to the Russian rule. At this in turn would have made the position of the Germanic race in Central Europe quite precarious. An Austria morally weakened, breaking down before the advance of Russian Pan-Slavism, would not be an ally with whom

we could reckon and on whom we could depend, as we are obliged to depend, in the face of the increasingly threatening attitude of our neighbours to the East and the West. We therefore left Austria a free hand in its action against Serbia."

The relation of the ruling class in Germany to the Austro-Serbian conflict is here fully and clearly defined. It is not merely that Germany was informed by the Austrian Government of the latter's intentions, not merely that she approved them, and not merely that she accepted the consequences of fidelity to an ally. No, Germany looked on Austria's aggression as unavoidable, as a saving act for herself, and actually made it a condition of the continuance of the alliance. Otherwise, "Austria would not be an ally with whom we could reckon."

The German Marxists were fully aware of this state of affairs and of the dangers lurking in it. On June 29th, a day after the murder of the Austrian Archduke, the *Vorwaerts* wrote as follows:

"The fate of our nation has been all too closely knit with that of Austria as a result of a bungling foreign policy. Our rulers have made the alliance with Austria the basis of our entire foreign policy. Yet it becomes clearer every day that this alliance is a source of weakness rather than of strength. The problem of Austria threatens more and more to become a menace to the peace of Europe."

A month later, when the menace was about to culminate in the dread actuality of war, on July 28th, the chief organ of the German Social Democracy wrote in equally definite terms. "How shall the German proletariat act in the face of such a senseless paroxysm?" it asked; and then gave the answer: "The German proletariat is not in the least interested in the preservation of the Austrian national chaos."

Quite the contrary. Democratic Germany is far more interested in the disruption than in the preservation of Austria-Hungary. A disrupted Austria-Hungary would mean a gain to Germany of an educated population of twelve million and a capital city of the first rank, Vienna. Italy would achieve national completion, and would cease to play the role of the incalculable factor that she always has been in the Triple Alliance. An independent Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, and a Balkan Federation including a Rumania of ten million inhabitants on the Russian frontier, would be a mighty bulwark against Czarism. And most important of all, a democratic Germany with a population of 75,000,000 Germans could easily, without the Hohenzollerns and the ruling Junkers, come to an agreement with France and England and could isolate Czarism and condemn its foreign and internal policies to complete impotence. A policy directed towards this goal would indeed be a policy of liberation for the people of Russia as well as of Austria-Hungary. But such a policy requires an essential preliminary condition, namely, that the German people, instead of entrusting the Hohenzollerns with the liberation of other nations, should set about liberating themselves from the Hohenzollerns.

The attitude of the German and Austro-Hungarian Social Democracy in this war is in blatant contradiction to such aims. At the present moment it seems convinced of the necessity of preserving and strengthening the Habsburg Monarchy in the interests of Germany or of the German nation. And it is absolutely from this anti-democratic viewpoint—which drives the blush of shame to the cheek of every internationally minded Socialist that the *Viener Arbeiter Zeitung* formulates the historical meaning of the present War, when it declares "it is primarily a war (of the Allies) against the German spirit".

"Whether diplomacy has acted wisely, whether this has had to come, time alone can decide. Now the fate of the German nation is at stake! And there can be no hesitation, no wavering! The German people are one in the inflexible iron determination not to bend to the yoke, and neither death nor devil can succeed

and so forth and so on. (*Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung*, August 5th). We will not offend the political and literary taste of the reader by continuing this quotation. Nothing is said here about the mission of liberating other nations. Here the object of the war is to preserve and secure "German humanity".

The defence of German culture, German soil, German humanity seems to be the mission not only of the German army but of the Austro-Hungarian army as well. Serb must fight against Serb, Pole against Pole, Ukranian against Ukranian, for the sake of "German humanity". The forty million non-German nationalities of Austria-Hungary are considered as simply historical manure for the field of German culture. That this is not the standpoint of international Socialism, it is not necessary to point out. It is not even pure national democracy in its most elementary form. The AustroHungarian General Staff explains this "humanity" in its communique of September 18th: "All peoples of our revered monarchy, as our military oath says, 'against any enemy no matter whom', must stand together as one, vying with one another in courage."

The *Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung* accepts in its entirety this Habsburg-Hohenzollern viewpoint of the Austro-Hungarian problem as an unnational military reservoir. It is the same attitude as the mihtarists of France have toward the Senegalese and the Moroccans, and the English have toward the Hindus. And when we consider that such opinions are not a new phenomenon among the German Socialists of Austria, we have found the main reason why the Austrian Social Democracy broke up so miserably into national groups, and thus reduced its political importance to a minimum.

The disintegration of the Austrian Social Democracy into national parts fighting among themselves, is one expression of the inadequacy of Austria as a state organization. At the same time the attitude of the German-Austrian Social Democracy proved that it was itself the sorry victim of this inadequacy, to which it capitulated spiritually. When it proved itself impotent to unite the many-raced Austrian proletariat under the principles of Internationalism, and finally gave up this task altogether, the Austro-German Social Democracy subordinated all Austria-Hungary and even its own policies to the "Idea" of Prussian Junker Nationalism. This utter denial of principles speaks to us in an unprecedented manner from the pages of the *Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung*. But if we listen more carefully to the tones of this hysterical nationalism we cannot fail to hear a graver voice, the voice of history telling us that the path of political progress for Central and South Eastern Europe leads over the ruins of the AustroHungarian Monarchy.

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## CHAPTER III

# THE WAR AGAINST CZARISM

BUT HOW ABOUT Czarism? Would not Germany's and Austria's victory mean the defeat of Czarism? And would not the beneficent results of the defeat of Czarism greatly outbalance the beneficent results of a dismembered Austria-Hungary?

The German and Austrian Social Democrats lay much stress upon this question in the arguing they do about the War. The crushing of a small neutral country, the ruin of France—all this is justified by the need to fight Czarism. [Haase](#) gives as the reason for voting the war credits the necessity of "defence against the danger of Russian despotism". Bernstein goes back to Marx and Engels and quotes old texts for his slogan, "Settling with Russia!"

Sudekum, dissatisfied with the result of his Italian mission, says that what the Italians are to blame for is not understanding Czarism. And when the Social Democrats of Vienna and Budapest fall in line under the Habsburg banner in its "holy war" against the Serbians struggling for their national unity, they sacrifice their Socialistic honour to the necessity for fighting Czarism.

And the Social Democrats are not alone in this. The entire bourgeois German press has no other aims, for the moment, than the annihilation of the Russian autocracy, which oppresses the peoples of Russia and menaces the freedom of Europe.

The imperial Chancellor denounces France and England as vassals of Russian despotism. Even the [German Major-General von Morgen](#), assuredly a true and tried "friend of liberty and independence", calls on the Poles to rebel against the despotism of the Czar.

But for us who have gone through the school of historical materialism it would be a disgrace if we did not perceive the actual relations of the interests in spite of these phrases, these lines, this boasting, this foul vulgarity and stupidity.

No one can genuinely believe that the German reactionaries really do cherish such a hatred of Czarism, and are aiming their blows against it. On the contrary, after the War Czarism will be the same to the rulers of Germany that it was before the War --the most closely related form of government. Czarism is indispensable to the Germany of the Hohenzollerns, for two reasons. In the first place, it weakens Russia economically, culturally and militaristically, and so prevents its development as an imperialistic rival. In the second place, the existence of Czarism strengthens the Hohenzollern Monarchy and the Junker oligarchy, since if there were no Czarism, German absolutism would face Europe as the last mainstay of feudal barbarism.

German absolutism never has concealed the interest of blood relationship that it has in the maintenance of Czarism, which represents the same social form though in more shameless ways. Interests, tradition, sympathies draw the German reactionary element to the side of Czarism. "Russia's sorrow is Germany's sorrow". At the same time the Hohenzollerns, behind the back of Czarism, can make a show of being the bulwark of culture "against barbarism", and can succeed in fooling their own people if not the rest of Western Europe.

"With sincere sorrow I see a friendship broken that Germany has kept faithfully," said [Wilhelm II](#) in his speech upon the declaration of war, referring neither to France nor to England, but to Russia, or rather, to the Russian dynasty, in accordance with the Hohenzollern's Russian religion, as Marx would have said.

We are told that Germany's political plan is to create, on the one hand, a basis of rapprochement with France and England by a victory over those countries, and, on the other hand, to utilize a strategic victory over France in order to crush Russian despotism.

The German Social Democrats must either have inspired Wilhelm and his chancellor with this plan, or

else must have ascribed this plan to Wilhelm and his chancellor.

As a matter of fact, however, the political plans of the German reactionaries are of exactly the opposite character, must necessarily be of the opposite character.

For the present we will leave open the question of whether the destructive blow at France was dictated by strategic considerations, and whether "strategy" sanctioned defensive tactics on the Western front. But one thing is certain, that not to see that the policy of the Junkers required the ruin of France, is to prove that one has a reason for keeping one's eyes closed. France-France is the enemy!

Eduard Bernstein, who is sincerely trying to justify the political stand taken by the German Social Democracy, draws the following conclusions: Were Germany under a democratic rule, there would be no doubt as to how to settle accounts with Czarism. A democratic Germany would conduct a revolutionary war on the East. It would call on the nations oppressed by Russia to resist the tyrant and would give them the means wherewith to wage a powerful fight for freedom. (Quite right!). However, Germany is not a democracy, and therefore it would be a utopian dream (Exactly!) to expect any such policy with all its consequences from Germany as she is. (*Vorwaerts*, August 28th.) Very well then! But right here Bernstein suddenly breaks off his analysis of the actual German policy "with all its consequences". After showing up the blatant contradiction in the position of the German Social Democracy, he closes with the unexpected hope that a reactionary Germany may accomplish what none but a revolutionary Germany could accomplish. Credo quia absurdum.[23]

Nevertheless, it might be said in opposition to this that while the ruling class in Germany has naturally no interest in fighting Czarism, still Russia is now Germany's enemy, and, quite independently of the will of the Hohenzollerns, the victory of Germany over Russia might result in the great weakening, if not the complete overthrow of Czarism. Long live [Hindenburg](#), the great unconscious instrument of the Russian Revolution, we might cry along with the Chemnitz Volksstimme. Long live the Prussian Crown Prince also a quite unconscious instrument. Long live the Sultan of Turkey who is now serving in the cause of the Revolution by bombarding the Russian cities around the Black Sea. Happy Russian Revolution how quickly the ranks of her army are growing!

However, let us see if there is not something really to be said on this side of the question. Is it not possible that the defeat of Czarism might actually aid the cause of the Revolution?

As to such a possibility, there is nothing to be said against it. The Mikado and his Samurai were not in the least interested in freeing Russia, yet the Russo-Japanese War gave a powerful impetus to the revolutionary events that followed.[24]

Consequently similar results may be expected from the German-Russian War.

But to place the right political estimate upon these historical possibilities we must take the following circumstances into consideration.

Those who believe that the Russo-Japanese War brought on the Revolution neither know nor understand historical events and their relations. The war merely hastened the outbreak of the Revolution; but for that very reason it also weakened it. For had the Revolution developed as a result of the organic growth of inner forces, it would have come later, but would have been far stronger and more systematic. Therefore, revolution has no real interest in war. This is the first consideration. And the second thing is, that while the Russo-Japanese War weakened Czarism, it strengthened Japanese militarism. The same

considerations apply in a still higher degree to the present German-Russian War.

In the course of 1912-1914 Russia's enormous industrial development once for all pulled the country out of its state of counterrevolutionary depression.[25]

The growth of the revolutionary movement on the foundation of the economic and political condition of the labouring masses, the growth of opposition in broad strata of the population, led to a new period of storm and stress. But in contrast to the years 1902-1905, this movement developed in a far more conscious, systematic manner, and, what is more, was based on a far broader social foundation. It needed time to mature, but it did not need the lances of the Prussian Samurai. On the contrary, the Prussian Samurai gave the Czar the opportunity of playing the role of defender of the Serbs, the Belgians and the French.

If we presuppose a catastrophic Russian defeat, the war may bring a quicker outbreak of the Revolution, but at the cost of its inner weakness. And if the Revolution should even gain the upper hand under such circumstances, then the bayonets of the Hohenzollern armies would be turned on the Revolution. Such a prospect can hardly fail to paralyze Russia's revolutionary forces; for it is impossible to deny the fact that the party of the German proletariat stands behind the Hohenzollern bayonets. But this is only one side of the question. The defeat of Russia necessarily presupposes decisive victories by Germany and Austria on the other battlefields, and this would mean the enforced preservation of the national-political chaos in Central and South Eastern Europe and the unlimited mastery of German militarism in all Europe.

An enforced disarmament for France, billions in indemnities, enforced tariff walls around the conquered nations, and an enforced commercial treaty with Russia, all this in conjunction would make German imperialism master of the situation for many decades.

Germany's new policy, which began with the capitulation of the party of the proletariat to nationalistic militarism, would be strengthened for years to come. The German working class would feed itself, materially and spiritually, on the crumbs from the table of victorious imperialism, while the cause of the Social Revolution would have received a mortal blow.

That in such circumstances a Russian revolution, even if temporarily successful, would be an historical miscarriage, needs no further proof.

Consequently, this present battling of the nations under the yoke of militarism laid upon them by the capitalist classes contains within itself monstrous contrasts which neither the War itself nor the governments directing it can solve in any way to the interest of future historical development. The Social Democrats could not, and can not now, combine their aims with any of the historical possibilities of this War, that is, with either the victory of the Triple Alliance or the victory of the Entente.[26]

The German Social Democracy was once well aware of this. *The Vorwaerts* in its issue of July 28th, discussing the very question of the war against Czarism, said:

""But if it is not possible to localize the trouble, if Russia should step into the field? What should our attitude toward Czarism be then? Herein lies the great difficulty of the situation. Has not the moment come to strike a death blow at Czarism? If German troops cross the Russian frontier, will that not mean the victory of the Russian Revolution?"

And the *Vorwaerts* comes to the following conclusion:

"Are we so sure that it will mean victory to the Russian Revolution if German troops cross the Russian frontier? It may readily bring the collapse of Czarism, but will not the German armies fight a revolutionary Russia with even greater energy, with a keener desire for victory, than they do the absolutistic Russia?"

More than this. On August 3rd, on the eve of the historical session of the Reichstag, the *Vorwaerts* wrote in an article entitled *The War upon Czarism*:

"While the conservative press is accusing the strongest party in the Empire of high treason, to the rejoicing of other countries, there are other elements endeavouring to prove to the Social Democracy that the impending war is really an old Social Democratic demand. War against Russia, war upon the blood-stained and faithless Czarism—this last is a recent phrase of the press which once kissed the knout—isn't this what Social Democracy has been asking for from the beginning?"

"These are literally the arguments used by one portion of the bourgeois press, in fact the more intelligent portion, and it only goes to show what importance is attached to the opinion of that part of the German people which stands behind the Social Democracy. The slogan no longer is 'Russia's sorrow is Germany's sorrow. Now it is 'Down with Czarism!' But since the days when the leaders of the Social Democracy referred to ([Bebel](#), [Lassalle](#), Engels, Marx) demanded a democratic war against Russia, Russia has quite ceased to be the mere palladium of reaction. Russia is also the seat of revolution. The overthrow of Czarism is now the task of all the Russian people, especially the Russian proletariat, and it is just the last weeks that have shown how vigorously this very working class in Russia is attacking the task that history has laid upon it.... And all the nationalistic attempts of the 'True Russians' to turn the hatred of the masses away from Czarism and arouse a reactionary hatred against foreign countries, particularly Germany, have failed so far. The Russian proletariat knows too well that its enemy is not beyond the border but within its own land. Nothing was more distasteful to these nationalistic agitators, the True Russians and Pan-Slavists, than the news of the great peace demonstration of the German Social Democracy. Oh, how they would have rejoiced had the contrary been the case, had they been able to say to the Russian proletariat, 'There, you see, the German Social Democrats stand at the head of those who are inciting the war against Russia' And the Little Father<sup>[27]</sup> in St. Petersburg<sup>27</sup> would also have breathed a sigh of relief and said, 'That is the news I wanted to hear. Now the backbone of my most dangerous enemy, the Russian Revolution is broken. The international solidarity of the proletariat is torn. Now I can unchain the beast of nationalism. I am saved!'"

Thus wrote the *Vorwaerts* after Germany had already declared war on Russia.

These words characterize the honest manly stand of the proletariat against a belligerent jingoism. The *Vorwaerts* clearly understood and cleverly stigmatized the base hypocrisy of the knoutloving ruling class of Germany, which suddenly became conscious of its mission to free Russia from Czarism. The *Vorwaerts* warned the German working class of the political extortion that the bourgeois press would practise on their revolutionary conscience. "Do not believe these friends of the knout," the *Vorwaerts* said to the German proletariat. "They are hungry for your souls, and hide their imperialistic designs behind liberal-sounding phrases. They are deceiving you, the cannon-fodder with souls that they need. If they succeed in winning you over, they will only be helping Czarism by dealing the Russian Revolution a fearful moral blow. And, if in spite of this, the Russian Revolution should raise its head, these very people will help Czarism to crush it."

That is the sense of what the *Vorwaerts* preached to the working class up to the 4th of August.

And exactly three weeks later the same *Vorwaerts* wrote:

"Liberation from Muscovitism (?) freedom and independence for Poland and Finland, free development for the great Russian people themselves, dissolution of the unnatural alliance between the two cultural nations and Czarist barbarism - these were the aims that inspired the German people and made them ready for any sacrifice, and inspired also the German Social Democracy and its chief organ.

What happened in those three weeks to cause the *Vorwaerts* to repudiate its original standpoint?

What happened? Nothing of importance. The German armies strangled neutral Belgium, burned down a number of Belgian towns, destroyed Louvain,[\[28\]](#) the inhabitants of which had been so criminally audacious as to fire at the armed invaders when they themselves wore no helmets and waving feathers.["How characteristically Prussian," wrote Marx to Engels, "to declare that no man may defend his 'fatherland' except in uniform!" -L.T]

In those three weeks the German armies carried death and destruction into French territory, and the troops of their ally, Austria-Hungary, pounded the love of the Habsburg Monarchy into the Serbs on the Save and the Drina. These are facts that apparently convinced the *Vorwaerts* that the Hohenzollerns were waging the war of liberation of the nations.

Neutral Belgium was crushed, and the Social Democrats remained silent. And Richard [Fischer](#) was sent to Switzerland as special envoy of the Party to explain to the people of a neutral country that the violation of Belgian neutrality and the ruin of a small nation were a perfectly natural phenomenon. Why so much excitement? Any other European government, in Germany's place, would have acted in the same way. It was just at this time that the German Social Democracy not only reconciled itself to the War as a work of real or supposed national defence, but even surrounded the Hohenzollern-Habsburg armies with the halo of an offensive campaign for freedom. What an unprecedented fall for a party that for fifty years had taught the German working class to look upon the German Government as the foe of liberty and democracy!

In the meantime every day of the War discloses the danger to Europe that the Marxists should have foreseen at once. The chief blows of the German Government were not aimed at the East, but at the West, at Belgium, France and England. Even if we accept the improbable premise that nothing but strategic necessity determined this plan of campaign, the logical political outcome of this strategy remains with all its consequences, that is, the necessity for a full and definite defeat of Belgium, France and the English land forces, so that Germany's hands might be free to deal with Russia. Wasn't it perfectly clear that what was at first represented as a temporary measure of strategic necessity in order to soothe the German Social Democracy, would become an end in itself through the force of events? The more stubborn the resistance made by France, whose duty it has actually become to defend its territory and its independence against the German attack, the more certainly will the German armies be held on the Western front; and the more exhausted Germany is on the Western front, the less strength and inclination will remain for her supposedly main task, the task with which the Social Democracy credited her, the "settling with Russia". And then history will witness an "honourable" peace between the two most reactionary powers of Europe, between Nicholas, to whom fate granted cheap victories over the Habsburg Monarchy, "[Russian diplomacy is interested only in such wars," wrote Engels in 1890, "as force her allies to bear the chief burden of raising troops and suffering invasion, and leave to the Russian

troops only the work of reserves. Czarism makes war on its own account only on decidedly weaker nations, such as Sweden, Turkey and Persia."—L.T.] Austria-Hungary must now be placed in the same class as Turkey and Persia, rotten to its core, and Wilhelm, who had his "settling", but with Belgium, not with Russia.

The alliance between Hohenzollern and Romanov—after the exhaustion and degradation of the Western nations --will mean a period of the darkest reaction in Europe and the whole world.

The German Social Democracy by its present policy smoothes the way for this awful danger. And the danger will become an actuality unless the European proletariat interferes and enters as a revolutionary factor into the plans of the dynasties and the capitalist governments.

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## NOTES FOR PART I:

**5. Revolutions and wars: (a) 1789-1815:** The French Revolutionary Wars (led since 1799 by Napoleon Bonaparte established the French nation-state and abolished feudal rights west of the Elbe. (I) 1848-1859: The struggle for the liberation of Italy from Austria and the unification of Italy including the liberation of the City of Rome from the Pope. (c) 1864-1868: Prussia and Austria attacked Denmark in January 1864: Prussia annexed Schleswig, Austria took Holstein. In 1866 Prussia, having secured the neutrality of Russia, France and Italy, declared war on Austria, a war, which in the words of [Moltke](#), Chief of Staff, "was a fight for hegemony... long contemplated and calmly prepared...." On July 3, 1866, at Sadowa (Koniggratz) the Austrians were decisively defeated. This assured the domination of the Hohenzollerns over the North German Confederation and ended the German Confederation. (d) 1870-1871: On July 2, 1869, the Provisional Government of Spain promulgated the candidature of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern to succeed Queen Isabella who had been deposed in 1868. On July 6, France protested and six days later, the candidature was withdrawn. On July 7, the French Ambassador to Germany, Benedetti, demanded an apology from the Kaiser and an undertaking that a Hohenzollern would never again aspire to the Spanish throne. The Kaiser was at Ems, taking the waters. [Bismarck](#) redrafted the Kaisers reply (the now-famous Ems despatch) so as to make war inevitable. On July 19, 1870 France declared war. Prussia scored immediate victories: August 4th at Wissenburg, August 6th at Worth. On October 27, at Metz, 175,000 troops under Marshal Bazaine were surrounded. The main army under Marshal Mac-Mahon and the Emperor Napoleon III himself surrendered at Sedan on September 2. Paris fell after a four month siege: September 19 to January 28th 1871. By the Peace of Frankfurt (10th May 1871) France lost Alsace-Lorraine, Moselle, Haut Rhine, Bas Rhine and had to pay an indemnity of five thousand million francs. The victory of Prussia brought about the union of Germany under Prussian hegemony. Wilhelm I was crowned Emperor of Germany at Versailles on January 18, 1871. The defeat of France led to the Paris Commune and the end of the French monarchy. (p. vii)

**6. The United States of Europe:** This slogan was put forward by the Russian Social Democrats in 1914 and 1915 and was later withdrawn for tactical reasons. It became an official Comintern slogan in 1923 during the Ruhr Crisis. See: Lenin: The Tasks of the Revolutionary Social Democracy in the European War' (August 1914), *"The War & the Russian Social Democracy"* (September 1914); *"The Defeat of*

*Russia...."* (October 1915) *A Few Theses*" October 1915 and *"Two Lines of Revolution"* (Nov-Dec. 1915). Trotsky: *"The First Five Years of the Comintern"* Vol.11 p.341. (p. x)

**7.** The concept of "national truce" (Burgfriede) was based on an old medieval custom that private quarrels should cease when the castle was besieged. in Germany in 1914 it meant the complete cessation of opposition and the class struggle. On August 3. the Kaiser declared: `I no longer know parties, I know only Germans.....The truce between classes was shortlived and on May 1, 1916, with the arrest of [Karl Liebknecht](#), civil peace broke down completely. In France, they had the Union Sacree". M. Deschanel in eulogising Jaures, said: "There are no more adversaries here, there are only Frenchmen.....(p. x) 103

**8.** The impact of the 1905 Revolution: see page 59. (p. xi)

**9. On August 4th, 1914** (a few hours after the German armies had violated the neutrality of Belgium and [Luxemburg](#)) the vote for war credits came up in the Reichstag, and the entire Social Democratic fraction voted for the credits. The date marks the collapse of the German Social Democracy and the Second International. (p. xi)

**10.** The phrase is from Marx: hitodii"tion to a Co,it,il)i'tio,z to the C,itiqi'e of Hegel's PhilO.ph)' (f Right (1844) (See: Marx & Engels: O,z Religioi?, Moscow 1957 p.50) II. A reference to England. (p. I)

**12.** The internationally financed Panama Canal Company (President; Ferdinand de Lesseps) crashed in February 1889. The scandal touched many prominent people, including Clemenceau. (p.2)

**13.** Perfidiotis Albioti: The French La pc,fidc Aigh'tei,e, perfidious England, had become by the time of the French Revolution, shortened to Albio,i peifide. (p. 2)

**14.** 4th August 1914: See note [9](#). On June 28, 1914 a Bosnian student Gavrilo Princip assassinated Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife at Sarajevo. On July 23, Austria delivered an unacceptable ultimatum to Serbia and declared war on July 28.

**15.** Balkan Wars: The first, began October 1912. The Turks were pushed back to Constantinople. It ended with the Treaty of London, May 30, 1913. Turkey was forced to give up all claims to its former European possessions. Albania was created as a new state. In June 1913, the Second war broke out. Bulgaria attacked Serbia and Greece, and Rumania and Turkey opposed Bulgaria. It ended with the Treaty of Bucharest, July 30, 1913. Italy invaded Albania in 1914.

**16.** The Congress of Berlin was held June-July 1878 under the chairmanship of Bismarck, revised the Treaty of San Stefano (March 1878) which ended the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78. At Berlin the Great Powers carved out South Eastern Europe to their advantage.

**17. Porte:** The Sublime or Ottoman Porte was the Turkish Court at Constanti- nople till 1923.

**18.** Trotsky's prediction of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire proved correct. In her `Junius Pamphlet" also written in 1915, Rosa [Luxemburg](#) wrote: "Historically, the liquidation of Austria-Hungary is the logical sequence of Turkish disintegration, and both are in direct line with the process of historical development."

**19. Junkers (from "Jungherr":** young aristocrat or military cadet) were Prussian landlords with large

estates East of the Elbe. They were the dominant conservatives of Germany, retaining their medieval rights until the end of the 1st World War and their estates until the end of the 2nd.

**20. Alsace-Lorraine:** See [note 5](#).

**21.** The Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy was established by the "Ausgleich" (Compromise) between the Austrian government and the Hungarian opposition. It was ruled by the Habsburgs till the revolution of 1918

**22.** Nibeltingen Troth: From the German classical poem Nibelliiigeilied (c. 1200 AD) a troth between the hero and his betrayer.

**23.** Credo quia absurdum: (Latin) I believe that which is absurd.

**24.** The Russo-Japanese War over rival claims to Manchuria and Korea began with an attack on Port Arthur by the Japanese on February 8, 1904. The Russians lost on land, and in May 1905, at the Battle of Tsushima lost all of its navy. Peace was signed at Portsmouth USA in September 1905. The Russian defeat contributed to the Revolution of 1905. (p.19)

**25.** Between 1909 and 1913, Russian industry grew enormously: iron production increased by 60 tons of steel, 20000 km of rails by 200 and sleepers by 87/ (p.20)

**26.** The Triple Alliance: The Dual Alliance of 1879 between Germany and Austria-Hungary was joined by Italy in 1883. Italy broke away in 1906 at the Algeciras Conference and joined the "Entente" nations-Britain, France and Russia in 1915. (p.21)

**27. Little Father:** The Czar of Russia. (p.22)

**28. Louvain,** the seat of the Belgian Military Headquarters in 1914 was burnt by the German Army beginning August 25th 1914. The medieval University and Town Hall, and the Library (established 1426) were lost to posterity. Civilians were summarily executed, The sacking lasted six days. (p.23)

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## GLOSSARY OF NAMES

**Bebel, August (1840-1913):** Marxist of worker origin, Co-founder with [Wilhelm Liebknecht](#) of the German Social Democracy 1869. In Reichstag from 1867. Sentenced with Liebknecht to two years' imprisonment for "treason" (opposition to Franco-German War) in 1872. Leader of the German SD and the 2nd International in pre-war years.

**Bernstein, Eduard (1850-1932):** German Social Democrat; left Germany during the Anti-Socialist laws and edited Sozial Demokrat in Switzerland. Expelled from there in 1888, lived in London till 1900. He was a friend of Engels in the latter's last years and was named his literary executor, in which capacity he censored Engels' works. Reichstag Deputy 1902-1906, 1912-1918, 1920-1928. A pacifist-centrist during

World War I. Founder of the Independent Social Democratic Party (USID) 1916, but returned to the Social Democracy 1919. Chief exponent of revisionism and reformism for over twenty five years, beginning 1896. Author of *Evolutionary Socialism*, 1899 and other works.

**Bismarck, Otto von (1815-1898):** Dominated the German and European political scene 1862-1890 as Chancellor. Unified Germany under the domination of Prussia and the Hohenzollerns. Author of the anti-Socialist laws. Dropped by Emperor Wilhelm II in March 1890.

**Daszynski, Ignacy (1866-1936):** Leader of the Galician Polish Socialists. Member Austrian Reichsrath from 1891. Anti-Russian chauvinist. Later joined Pilsudski.

**Fischer, Richard (1855-1926):** German Social Democrat, Party Secretary 1899. From 1902 member, *Vorwaerts*. During the war in Right Centre Majority with Ebert and Schiedemann. Expelled (anti-war) members from staff of *Vorwaerts*, and won a Court case. Represented Majority at Stockholm Conference 1919. Member of National Assembly 1919-1920. >From 1920 member of Reichstag,

**Haase, Hugo (1863-1919):** Lawyer of Jewish origin. German Social Democrat. Member international Socialist Bureau and Reichstag Deputy 1897-1918. Succeeded Bebel as leader of SD Parliamentary fraction 1913. Opposed voting for war credits within the Party but succumbed to Majority decision. Founder and leader of Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) 1916. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Colonies in Ebert's "Socialist" Coalition November 1918. Resigned. December 29, 1918. Shot on the steps of the Reichstag by a Monarchist officer.

**Habsburg Dynasty:** Ancient feudal ruling family taking its name from the "Habs- tzburg" (Castle of the Hawk) of Alsace. Began with a few acres. Rudolph I (1218-1291) originally a Swiss Count, having defeated Ottokar of Hohenstauffen in 1278, was elected King of the Holy Roman Empire of 400 feudal baronies, thus acquiring Austria and its dependencies. The dynasty ruled over many peoples, but could never knit them into one nation. Between 1298 and 1499 tried to annex Switzerland and failed. In 1806 title of Holy Roman Emperor was abandoned. The male line died out in 1740 and on Maria Theresa's marriage the dynasty was known as the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. After the Ausgleich of 1867, the Habsburgs ruled over Austria-Hungary. With the Austrian Revolution Emperor Karl abdicated on November 12, 1918.

**Hindenburg, Paul von Beneckendorff und von (1847-1934):** Prussian militarist. Fought in war against France 1870-71. General in 1903. Retired 1911. Recalled at beginning of War. Victor at Tannenberg 1914 and the Masurian Lakes 1915. against Russia. Later Field Marshal. Succeeded Ebert as President 1925 Co-existed with Hitler from 1932 till his death.

**Hohenzollern Dynasty:** Frederick of Hohenzollern, Burgrave of Nuremberg was made elector of Brandenburg in 1415. Up to 1609 Brandenburg was a barren region between the Middle Oder and the Middle Elbe. In 1616, the Dukedom of Prussia, a Polish fief since 1466, devolved on Frederick William of Brandenburg, "the Great Elector". The Dynasty rose after the Peace of Westphalia 1648 with the help of France and England who backed the Protestant rulers against the Roman Catholic rulers of Austria. Under Bismarck's leadership, the dynasty emerged as the principal power in the North German Federation. After the victory against France 1870, the King of Prussia became Emperor of Germany. The Dynasty ended with the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II, on November 9th 1918.

**Katzelerovich, Trisa (1879- ):** Lawyer, Founder of Serbian Social Democracy. In Serbian parliament from 1908-1921. Anti-militarist. Attended Kienthal Conference. Founder and Chairman Serbian

Communist Party, and when this was banned, formed the Independent Labour Party.

**Krupp, Alfred (1812-1887):** German industrialist, steel tycoon and munitions manufacturer. Began with his father's iron forge and converted it into the first Bessemer steel plant. In 1871, at the founding of the German Empire, was the leader of German industry. Son, Frederick Alfred Krupp (1854-1902), was a personal friend of the Kaiser.

**Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-1864):** German socialist. Founder of the General Association of German Workers (1863). As the only leading German Socialist of his generation not forced into exile, he was able despite his shortcomings, to exert a great influence on the German working class movement. His followers later helped form the German Social Democracy.

**Liebkecht, Karl (1871-1919):** Left Wing German Social Democrat. Member German Reichstag and Prussian Landtag. Anti-militarist. He was the first, and only, Deputy to oppose war credits in the Reichstag in 1914. Drafted during the war, he was imprisoned for anti-war activity, May 1916 to November 1918. Leader "International Group" and later, "Spartacus League". One of the leaders of the Berlin uprising 1919. Assassinated by counter-revolutionary soldiers, January 15th 1919, with Rosa [Luxemburg](#).

**Liebkecht, Wilhelm (1826-1900):** Friend of Marx, founder and leader of the German Social Democracy. Reichstag Deputy. Jailed 1872 for Opposition to the Franco-Prussian War.

**Luxemburg, Rosa (1870-1919):** Polish Socialist. Joined German Social Democracy 1897. With Karl Liebkecht led Left Wing. Brilliant theoretician (Lenin called her "an eagle"). Imprisoned many times for anti-war activity. Leader of the "Spartacists" and founder of the German Communist Party. Assassinated by reactionary officers January 15th, 1919.

**Moltke, Helmuth von. General. (The Younger) (1848-1916):** Nephew of the Elder Moltke. German Chief of Staff in the early years of World War I.

**Morgen, von Major General:** German Division Commander on the Russian Front.

**Princip, Gavrilo (1895-1918):** Bosnian student member of secret patriotic organization to free country from Austria. Shot Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on 28 June 1914 at Sarajevo. Sentenced to life imprisonment, died in prison.

**Rakovsky, Christian Georgierich (1873-1941?):** Bulgarian by birth. Member Rumanian Social Democracy since the 1890s. Zimmerwaldist. Imprisoned 1916 for anti-war activity. Released by Russian troops 1917, went to Russia and joined the Communists. Held various Government and diplomatic posts. As friend of Trotsky, expelled 1938. Reinstated later. Sentenced to prison 1938. Said to have died 1941.

**Rappoport, Charles (1865-):** Member Russian "People's Will", later the Social Democracy. Emigrated to France, member Socialist Party and later Communist Party.

**Renaudel, Pierre (1871-1935):** Left wing French Socialist. During War led Majority. Deputy 1914-1919 and after 1924.

**Romanovs:** Ruling dynasty of Russia 1613-1917.

**Sand, Karl Ludwig:** Jena theology student who was executed for the assassination of Kotzebue in 1819. For a time young maidens in Mannheim offered wreaths at the place of execution.

**Stambulov, Stefan Nokolov (1854-1895):** Bulgar statesman. Figured in rising of 1875-6 against Great

Powers, Chief of Russophile regency 1886. Premier 1887- 1894. Forced to retire. Assassinated.

**Tisza, Istvan (1861-1918):** Hungarian Premier 1903-5 and 1913-1917. Pro-German. Assassinated 31st October 1918, the first day of the Hungarian Revolution.

**Wilhelm II (1859-1941):** German Emperor 1888-1918. Last Hohenzollern ruler. Overthrown by the November 1918 revolution, retired to Holland. Wilhelm (1882-1951): Son of Wilhelm II, Crown Prince of Germany.

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# Leon Trotsky's

# The War and the International

*(The Bolsheviks and World Peace)*

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## CHAPTER IV

# THE WAR AGAINST THE WEST

ON his return from his diplomatic trip to Italy, Dr. [Sudekum](#) wrote in the *Vorwaerts* that the Italian comrades did not sufficiently comprehend the nature of Czarism. We agree with Dr. [Sudekum](#) that a German can more easily understand the nature of Czarism as he experiences daily, in his own person, the nature of Prussian-German absolutism. The two "natures" are very closely akin to each other.

German absolutism represents a feudal-monarchical organization, resting upon a mighty capitalist foundation, which the development of the last half-century has erected for it. The strength of the German army, as we have learned to know it anew in its present bloody work, consists not alone in the great material and technical resources of the nation, and in the intelligence and precision of the workman-soldier, who had been drilled in the school of industry and his own class organizations. It has its foundations also in its Junker officer caste, with its master class traditions, its oppression of those who are below and its subordination to those who are above. The German army, like the German state, is a

feudal- monarchical organization with inexhaustible capitalist resources. The bourgeois scribblers may chatter all they want about the supremacy of the German, the man of duty, over the Frenchman, the man of pleasure; the real difference lies not in the racial qualities, but in the social and political conditions. The standing army, that closed corporation, that self-sufficing state within the state, remains, despite universal military service, a caste organization that in order to thrive must have artificial distinctions of rank and a monarchical top to crown the commanding hierarchy.

In his work, *The New Army*, [Jaures](#) showed that the only army France could have is one of defence built on the plan of arming every citizen, that is, a democratic army, a militia. The bourgeois French Republic is now paying the penalty for having made her army a counterpoise to her democratic state organization. She created, in [Jaures](#), words, "a bastard regime in which antiquated forms clashed with newly developing forms and neutralized each other." This incongruity between the standing army and the republican regime is the fundamental weakness of the French military system.

The reverse is true of Germany. Germany's barbarian retro

grade political system gives her a great military supremacy. The German bourgeoisie may grumble now and then when the praetorian caste spirit of the officers' corps leads to outbreaks like that of Zabern.<sup>29</sup> They may make wry faces at the crown Prince and his slogan, "Give it to them! Give it to them!" The German Social Democracy may inveigh ever so sharply against the systematic personal ill-treatment of the German soldier, which has caused proportionately twice as many suicides in the German barracks as in the barracks of any other country. But for all that, the fact that the German bourgeoisie has absolutely no political character and that the German Socialist party has failed to inspire the proletariat with the revolutionary spirit has enabled the ruling class to erect the gigantic structure of militarism, and so place the efficient and intelligent German workmen under the command of the Zabern heroes and their slogan, "Give it to them".

Professor Han Delbrück seeks the source of Germany's military strength in the ancient model of Teutoburgerwald<sup>[30]</sup>, and he is perfectly justified.

"The oldest Germanic system of warfare," he writes, "was based on the retinue of princes, a body of specially selected warriors, and the mass of fighters comprising the entire nation. This is the system we have today also. How vastly different are the methods of fighting now from those of our ancestors in the Teutoburgerwald! We have the technical marvels of modern machine guns. We have the wonderful organization of immense masses of troops, and yet our military system is at bottom the same. The martial spirit is raised to its highest power, developed to its utmost in a body which once was small but now numbers many thousands, a body giving fealty to their War Lord, and by him, as by the princes of old, regarded as his comrades; and under their leadership the whole people, educated by them and disciplined by them. Here we have the secret of the warlike character of the German nation."

The French Major, Driant, looks on at the German Kaiser in his White Cuirassier's uniform, undoubtedly the most imposing military uniform in the world, and republican by constraint that he is, his heart is filled with a lover's jealousy. And how the Kaiser spends his time "in the midst of his army, that true family of the [Hohenzollerns](#)!" The Major is fascinated.

The feudal caste, whose hour of political and moral decay had struck long ago, found its connection with the nation once more in the fertile soil of imperialism. And this connection with the nation has taken such deep root that the prophecies of Major Driant, written

several years ago, have actually come true prophecies that until now could only have appeared as either the poisonous promptings of a secret Bonapartist, or the driveling of a lunatic.

"The Kaiser," he wrote is the Commander in Chief and behind him stands the entire working class of Germany as one man .... [Bebel](#)'s Social Democrats are in the ranks, their fingers on the trigger, and they too think only of the welfare of the Fatherland. The ten-billion war indemnity that France will have to pay will be a greater help to them than the Socialist chimeras on which they fed the day before."

Yes, and now they are writing of this future indemnity even in some Social Democratic (!) papers, with open rowdy insolence—an indemnity, however, not of ten billions, but of twenty or thirty billions.

Germany's victory over France—a deplorable strategic necessity, according to the German Social Democrats—would mean not only the defeat of France's standing army; it would mean primarily the victory of the feudal-monarchical state over the democratic-republican state.

For the ancient race of [Hindenburgs](#), [Moltkes](#) and [Klucks](#), hereditary specialists in mass-murder, are just as indispensable a condition of German victory as are the 42 centimeter guns, the last word in human technical skill.

The entire capitalist press is already talking of the unshakable stability of the German Monarchy, strengthened by the War. And

German professors, the same who proclaimed [Hindenburg](#) a doctor of All the Sciences, are already declaring that political slavery is a higher form of social life.

"The democratic republics, and the so-called monarchies that are under subjection to a parliamentary regime, and all the other beautiful things that were so extolled—what little capacity they have shown to resist the storm!"

These are the things that the German professors are writing now. It is shameful and humiliating enough to read the expressions of the French Socialists, who had proved themselves too weak to break the alliance of France with Russia or even to prevent the return to three-years' military service, but who, when the War began, never the less donned their red trousers and set out to free Germany. But we are seized with a feeling of unspeakable indignation on reading the German Socialist party press, which in the language of exalted slaves extols the brave heroic caste of hereditary oppressors for their armed exploits on French territory.

On August 15, 1870, when the victorious German armies were approaching Paris, Engels wrote in a letter to Marx, after describing the confused condition of the French defence:

"Nevertheless, a revolutionary government, if it comes soon, need not despair. But it must leave Paris to its fate, and continued carry on the war from the South. It is then still possible that such a government may hold out until arms and ammunition are brought and a new army organized with which the enemy can be gradually pushed back to the frontier. That would be the right ending to the war for both countries to demonstrate that they cannot be conquered."

And yet there are people who shout like drunken helots, "Onto Paris." And in doing so they have the impudence to invoke the names of Marx and Engels. In what measure are they superior to the thrice despised Russian liberals who crawled on their bellies before his Excellency, the military Commander,

who introduced the Russian knot into East Galicia. It is cowardly arrogance this talk of the purely "strategic" character of the war on the Western front. Who takes any account of it? Certainly not the German ruling classes. They speak the language of conviction and of main force. They call things by their right names. They know what they want and they know how to fight for it.

The Social Democrats tell us that the War is being waged for the cause of national independence. "That is not true," retorted Herr Arthur Dix.

"Just as the high politics of the last century," wrote Dix, "owed its specially marked character to the National Idea, so the political- world events of this century stand under the emblem of the Imperialistic Idea. The imperialistic idea that is destined to give the impetus, the scope and the goal to the striving for power of the great." (*Der Weltwirtschaftskrieg*, 1914, p. 3).

"It shows gratifying sagacity," says the same Herr Arthur Dix, "on the part of those who had charge of the military preparations of the war, that the advance of our armies against France and Russia in the very first stage of the War took place precisely where it was most important to keep valuable German mineral wealth free from foreign invasion, and to occupy such portions of the enemy's territory as would supplement our own underground resources" (Ibid. p. 38).

The "strategy", of these wait and see Socialists now speak in whispers, really begins with the robbery of mineral wealth. The Social Democrats tell us that the War is a war of defence;

But Herr George Irmer says clearly and distinctly:

"People ought not to be talking as through it were a settled thing that the German nation had come too late for rivalry for world economy and world dominion—that the world has already been divided. Has not the earth been divided over and over again in all epochs of history?" (*Los vom englischen Weltjoch*, 1914, p. 42.)

The Socialists try to comfort us by telling us that Belgium has only been temporarily crushed and that the Germany will soon vacate their Belgian quarters. But Herr Arthur Dix, who knows very well what he wants, and who has the right and the power to want it, writes that what England fears most, and expressly so, is that Germany should have an outlet to the Atlantic Ocean.

"For this very reason, he continues, "we must neither let Belgium go out of our hands, nor must we fail to make sure that the coast line from Ostend to the Somme shall not again fall into the hands of any state which may become a political vassal of England. We must see to it that in some form or other German influence is securely established there."

In the endless battles between Ostend and Dunkirk, sacred "strategy" is now carrying out this program of the Berlin stock exchange, also.

The Socialists tell us that the War between France and Germany is merely a brief prelude to a lasting alliance between those countries. But here, too, Herr Arthur Dix shows all the cards. According to him, "there is but one answer: to seek to destroy the English world' trade, and to deal deadly blows at English national economy."

"The aim for the foreign policy of the German Empire for the next decades is clearly indicated," Professor Franz von Liszt announces. "Protection against England,' that must be our slogan". (*Em mitteleuropaischer Staatenverband*, 1914, p. 24.)

"We must crush the most treacherous and malicious of our foes, cries a third. "We must break the tyranny which England exercises over the sea with base self-seeking and shameless contempt of justice and right."

The War is directed not against Czarism, hut primarily against England's supremacy on the sea.

"It may be said," Professor Schiehmann confesses, "that no success of ours has given us such joy as the defeat of the English at Maubeuge and St. Quentin on August 28th."

The German Social Democrats tell us that the chief object of the War is the 'settlement with Russia". But plain, straightforward Herr Rudolf Theuden wants to give Galicia to Russia with North Persia thrown in. Then Russia "would have got enough to be satisfied for many decades to come. We may even make her our friend by it."

"What ought the War to bring us?" asks Theuden, and then he answers:

"The chief payment must be made us by France France must give us Belfort, that part of Lorraine which borders on the Moselle, and, in case of stubborn resistance, that part as well which borders the Maas. If we make the Maas and the Moselle German boundaries, the French will some day perhaps wean themselves away from the idea of making the Rhine a French boundary."

The bourgeois politicians and professors tell us that England is the chief enemy; that Belgium and France are the gateway to the Atlantic Ocean; that the hope of a Russian indemnity is only a Utopian dream, anyway; that Russia would be more useful as friend than as foe; that France will have to pay in land and in gold—and the *Vorwaerts* exhorts the German workers to "hold out until the decisive victory is ours."

And yet the *Vorwaerts* tells us that the War is being waged for the independence of the German nation, and for the liberation of the Russian people. What does this mean? Of course we must look for ideas, logic and truth where they do not exist. This is simply a case of an ulcer of slavish sentiments bursting open and foul pus crawling over the pages of the working men's press. It is clear that the oppressed class which proceeds too slowly and inertly on its way toward freedom must in the final hour drag all its hopes and promises through mire and blood, before there arises in its soul the pure, unimpeachable voice—the voice of revolutionary honor.

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## CHAPTER V

# THE WAR OF DEFENCE

"THE thing for us to do now is to avert this danger (Russian' despotism), and to secure the cukure and independence of our land. Thus we will make good our word, and do what we have always said we would. In the hour of danger we will not leave our Fatherland in the lurch.... Guided by these principles we vote for the war credits."

This was the declaration of the German Social Democratic fraction, read by Haase in the Reichstag

session of August 4th.

Here only the defence of the fatherland is mentioned. Not a word is said of the "liberating" mission of this War in behalf of the peoples of Russia, which was later sung in every key by the Social Democratic press. The logic of the Socialist press, however, did not keep pace with its patriotism. For while it made desperate efforts to represent the War as one of pure defence, to secure the safety of Germany's possessions, it at the same time pictured it as a revolutionary offensive war for the liberation of Russia and of Europe from Czarism.

We have already shown clearly enough why the peoples of Russia had every reason to decline with thanks the assistance offered them at the point of the Hohenzollern bayonets. But how about the "defensive" character of the War?

What surprises us even more than what is said in the declaration of the Social Democracy is what it conceals and leaves unsaid. After Hollweg had already announced in the Reichstag the accomplished violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg as a means of attacking France, Haase does not mention this fact in a single word. This silence is so monstrous that one is tempted to read the declaration a second and a third time. But in vain. The declaration is written as though such countries as Belgium, France and England had never existed on the political map of the German Social Democracy.

But facts do not cease to be facts simply because political parties shut their eyes to them. And every member of the Internatdnal has the right to ask this question of Comrade [Haase](#), "What portion of the five billions voted by the Social Democratic fraction was meant for the destruction of Belgium?" It is quite possible that in order to protect the German fatherland from Russian despotism it was inevi table that the Belgian fatherland should be crushed. But why did the Social Democratic fraction keep silent on this point?

The reason is clear. The English Liberal government, in its effort to make the War popular with the masses, made its plea exclusively on the ground of the necessity of protecting the independence of Belgium and the integrity of France, but utterly ignored its alliance "th Russian Czarism. In like manner, and from the same motives, the German Social Democracy speaks to the masses only about the war against Czarism, but does not mention even by name Belgium, France and England. All this is of course not exactly flattering to the international reputation of Czarism. Yet it is quite distressing that the German Social Democracy should sacrifice its own good name to the call to arms against Czarism. [Lassalle](#) said that every great political action should begin with a statement of things as they are. Then why does the defence of the fatherland begin with an abashed silence as to things as they are? Or did the German Social Democracy perhaps think that this was not a "big politica[ action"?

Anyway, the defence of the fatherland is a very broad and very elastic conception. The world castastrophe began with Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. Austria, naturally, was guided solely by the need of defending her borders from her uneasy neighbour. Austria's rop was Germany. And Germany, in turn, as we already know, was prompted by the need to secure her own state. "It would be senseless to believe," writes Ludwig [Quessel](#) on this point, "that one wall coul be torn away from this extremely complex structure (Europe) without endangering the security of the whole edifice."

Germany opened her "defensive war with an attack upon Belgium, the violation of Belgium's neutrality being allegedly only a means of breaking through to France along the line of least resistance. The military defeat of France also was to appear only as a strategic episode in the defence of the fatherland.

To some German patriots this construction of things did not seem quite plausible, and they had good grounds for disbelieving it. They suspected a motive which squared far better with the reality. Russia, entering upon a new era of military preparation, would be a far greater menace to Germany in two or three years than she was then. And France during that time would have completely carried out her three-year army reform. Is it not clear, then, that an intelligent self-defence demanded that Germany should not wait for the attack of her enemies but should anticipate them by two years and take the offensive at once? And isn't it clear, too, that such an offensive war, deliberately provoked by Germany and Austria, is in reality a preventive war of defence?

Not infrequently these two points of view are combined in a single argument. Granted that there is some slight contradiction between them. The one declares that Germany did not want the War now and that it was forced upon her by the Triple Entente, while the other implies that war was disadvantageous to the Entente now and that for that very reason Germany had taken the initiative to bring on the War at this time. But what if there is this contradiction? It is lightly and easily glossed over and reconciled in the saving concept of a war of defence.

But the belligerents on the other side disputed this advantageous position of being on the defensive, which Germany sought to assume, and did it successfully. France could not permit the defeat of Russia on the ground of her own self-defence. England gave as the motive for her interference the immediate danger to the British Islands which a strengthening of Germany's position at the mouth of the Channel would mean. Finally, Russia, too, spoke only of self-defence. It is true that no one threatened Russian territory. But national possessions, mark you, do not consist merely in territory, but in other, intangible factors as well, among them, the influence over weaker states. Serbia "belongs" in the sphere of Russian influence and serves the purpose of maintaining the so-called balance-of-power in the Balkans, not only the balance of power among the Balkan States but also between Russian and Austrian influence. A successful Austrian attack on Serbia threatened to disturb this balance of power in Austria's favour, and therefore meant an indirect attack upon Russia. Sazonov undoubtedly found his strongest argument in [Quessel](#)'s words: "It would be senseless to believe that one wall could be torn away from the extremely complex structure (Europe) without endangering the security of the entire edifice."

It is superfluous to add that Serbia and Montenegro, Belgium and Luxemburg, could also produce some proofs of the defensive character of their policy. Thus, all the countries were on the defensive, none was the aggressor. But if that is so, then what sense is there in opposing the claims of defensive and offensive war to each other? The standards applied in such cases differ greatly, and are not frequently quite incommensurable.

What is of fundamental importance to us Socialists is the question of the historical role of the War. Is the War calculated to effectively promote the productive forces and the state organizations, and to accelerate the concentration of the working class forces? Or is the reverse true, will it act as a hindrance? This materialistic evaluation of wars stands above all formal or external considerations, and in its nature has no relation to the question of defence or aggression. And yet sometimes these formal expressions about a war designate with more or less truth the actual significance of the war. When Engels said that the Germans were on the defensive in 1870, he had least of all the immediate political and diplomatic circumstances in mind. The determining fact for him was that in that war Germany was fighting for her right to national unity, which was a necessary condition for the economic development of the country and the Socialist consolidation of the proletariat. In the same sense the Christian peoples of the Balkans

waged a war of defence against Turkey, fighting for their right to independent national development against the foreign rule.

The question of the immediate international political conditions leading to a war is independent of the value the war possesses from the historico-materialistic point of view. The German war against the Bonapartist Monarchy was historically unavoidable. In that war the right of development was on the German side. Yet those historical tendencies did not, in themselves, predetermine the question as to which party was interested in provoking the war just in the year 1870. We know now very well that international politics and military considerations induced Bismarck to take the actual initiative in the war. It might have happened just the other way, however. With greater foresight and energy, the government of Napoleon III could have anticipated [Bismarck](#), and begun the war a few years earlier. That would have radically changed the immediate political aspect of the events, but it would have made no difference in the historic estimate of the war.

Third in order is the factor of diplomacy. Diplomacy here has a twofold task to perform. First, it must bring about war at the moment most favourable for its own country from the international as well as the military standpoint. Second, it must employ methods which throw the burden of responsibility for the bloody conflict, in public opinion, on the enemy government. The exposure of diplomatic trickery, cheating and knavery is one of the most important functions of Socialist political agitation. But no matter to what extent we succeed in this at the crucial juncture, it is clear that the net of diplomatic intrigues in themselves signifies nothing either as regards the historic role of the war or its real initiators. [Bismarck's](#) clever manoeuvres forced Napoleon III to declare war on Prussia although the actual initiative came from the German side. Next follows the purely military aspect. The strategic plan operations can be calculated chiefly for defence or attack, regardless of which side declared the war and under what conditions. Finally, the first tactics followed in the carryin out of the plan not infrequently plays a great part in a strategic estimating the war as a war of defence or of aggression.

"It is a good thing," wrote Engels to Marx on July 31, 1870, "that the French attacked first on German soil. If the Germans repel the invasion and follow it up by invading French territory then it will certainly not produce the same impression as if the Germans had marched into France without a previous invasion. In this way the war remains, on the French side, more Bonapartistic."

Thus we see by the classic example of the Franco Prussian War that the standards for judging whether a war is defensive or aggressive are full of contradictions when two nations clash. Then how much more so are they when it is a clash of several nations. If we unroll the tangle from the beginning, we arrive at the following connection between the elements of attack and defence. The first tactical move of the French should at least in Engels' Opinion make the people feel that the responsibility of attack rested with the French. And yet the entire strategic plan of the Germans had an absolutely aggressive character. The diplomatic moves of [Bismarck](#) forced Bonaparte to declare war against his will and thus appear as the disturber of the peace of Europe, while the military-political initiative in the war came from the Prussian government. These circumstances are by no means of slight importance for the historical estimate of the war, but they are not at all exhaustive.

One of the causes of this war was the growing ambition of the Germans for national self-determination which conflicted with the dynastic pretensions of the French Monarchy. But this national "war of defence" led to the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and so in its second stage turned into a dynastic war of conquest.

The correspondence between Marx and Engels shows that they were guided chiefly by historical considerations in their attitude towards the war of 1870. To them, of course, it was by no means a matter of indifference as to who conducted the war and how it was conducted. "Who would have thought it possible," Marx writes bitterly, "that twenty-two years after 1848 a nationalist war in Germany could have been given such theoretical expression." Yet what was of decisive significance to Marx and Engels was the objective consequences of the war. "If the Prussians triumph, it will mean the centralization of the state power - useful to the centralization of the German working class."

[Liebknecht](#) and [Bebel](#), starting with the same historical estimate of the war, were directly forced to take a political position toward it. It was by no means in opposition to the views of Marx and Engels, but, on the contrary, with their perfect acquiescence that [Liebknecht](#) and [Bebel](#) refused, in the Reichstag, to take any responsibility for this war. The statement they handed in read:

"We cannot grant the war appropriations that the Reichstag is asked to make because that would be a vote of confidence in the Prussian government.... As opponents on principle of every dynastic war, as Social Republicans and members of the International Labour Association, which, without distinction of nationality fights all oppressors and endeavours to unite all the oppressed in one great brotherhood, we cannot declare ourselves either directly or indirectly in favour of the present war."

[Schweitzer](#) acted differently. He took the historical estimate of the war as a direct guide for his tactics—one of the most dangerous of fallacies! - and in voting the war credits gave a vote of confidence to the policy of [Bismarck](#). And this in spite of the fact that it was necessary, if the centralization of state power arising out of the War was to prove useful to the Social Democratic cause, that the workingclass should from the very beginning oppose the dynastic-Junker centralization with their own class-centralization filled with revolutionary distrust of the rulers.

[Schweitzer](#)'s political attitude invalidated those very consequences of the War which had induced him to give a vote of confidence to the makers of the War.

Forty years later, drawing up the balance sheet of his life-work, [Bebel](#) wrote:

"The attitude that [Liebknecht](#) and I took at the outbreak and during the continuance of the war has for years been a subject of discussion and violent attack, at first even in the Party; but only for a short time. Then they acknowledged that we had been right. I confess that I do not in any way regret our attitude, and if at the outbreak of the war we had known what we learned within the next few years from the official and unofficial disclosures, our attitude from the very start would have been still harsher. We would not merely have abstained, as we did, from voting the first war credits, we would have voted against them." (*Autobiography*, Part II, p.167.)

If we compare the Liebknecht-Bebel statement of 1870 with [Haase's](#) declaration in 1914, we must conclude that Bebel was mistaken when he said, "Then they acknowledged that we had been right." For the vote of August 4th was eminently a condemnation of Bebel's policy forty-four years earlier, since in Haase's phraseology, Bebel had then left the fatherland in the lurch in the hour of danger. What political causes and considerations have led the party of the German proletariat to abandon its glorious traditions? Not a single weighty reason has been given so far. All the arguments adduced are full of contradictions. They are like diplomatic communiques which are written to justify an already accomplished act. The leader writer of *Die Neue Zeit* writes—with the blessing of Comrade [Kautsky](#)—that Germany's position

towards Czarism is the same as it was towards Bonapartism in 1870. He even quotes from a letter of Engels: "All classes of the German people realized that it was a question, first of all, of national existence, and so they fell in line at once.". For the same reason, we are told, the German Social Democracy has fallen in line now. It is a question of national existence. "Substitute Czarism for Bonapartism, and Engels' words are true today." And yet the fact remains, in all its force, that Bebel and Liebknecht demonstratively refused to vote either money or confidence to the government in 1870. Does it not hold just as well, then, if we "substitute Czarism for Bonapartism"? To this question no answer has been vouchsafed.

But what did Engels really write in his letter concerning the tactics of the labour party?

"It does not seem possible to me that under such circumstances a German political party can preach total obstruction, and place all sorts of minor considerations above the main issue." Total obstruction!—But there is a wide gap between total obstruction and the total capitulation of a political party. And it was this gap that divided the positions between Bebel and [Schweitzer](#) in 1870. Marx and Engels were with Bebel against Schweitzer. Comrade [Kautsky](#) might have informed his leader writer, Hermann [Wendel](#), of this fact. And it is nothing but defamation of the dead for Simplicissimus now to reconcile the shades of Bebel and Bismarck in Heaven. If Simplicissimus and [Wendel](#) have the right to awaken anybody from his sleep in the grave for the endorsement of the present tactics of the German Social Democracy then it is not Bebel, but Schweitzer. It is the shade of Schweitzer that now oppresses the political party of the German proletariat.

But the very analogy between the Franco-Prussian War and the present War is superficial and misleading in the extreme. Let us set aside all the international relations. Let us forget that the War meant first of all the destruction of Belgium, and that Germany's main force was hurled not against Czarism but republican France. Let us forget that the starting point of the War was the crushing of Servia, and that one of its aims was the strengthening and consolidation of the arch-reactionary state, Austria-Hungary. We will not dwell on the fact that the attitude of the German Social Democracy dealt a hard blow at the Russian Revolution, which in the two years before the War had again flared up in such a tempest. We will close our eyes to all these facts, just as the German Social Democracy did on August 4th, when it did not see that there was a Belgium in the world, a France, England, Servia, or Austria-Hungary. We will grant only the existence of Germany.

In 1870, it was quite easy to estimate the historical significance of the war. "If the Prussians win, the centralization of state power will further the centralization of the German working class." And now?

What would be the result for the German working class of a Prussian victory now? The only territorial expansion which the German working class could welcome, because it would complete the national unity, is a union of German Austria with Germany. Any other expansion of the German fatherland means another step towards the transformation of Germany from a national state to a state of nationalities, and the consequent introduction of all those conditions which render more difficult the class struggle of the proletariat.

Ludwig [Frank](#) hoped—and he expressed this hope in the language of a belated Lassallean—that later, after a victorious war, he would devote himself to the work of the "internal building up" of the state. There is no doubt that Germany will need this "internal building up" after a victory no less than before the War. But will a victory make this work easier? There is nothing in Germany's historical experiences

any more than in those of any other country to justify such a hope.

"We regarded the doings of the rulers of Germany (after the victories of 1870) as a matter of course," says e bel in his Autobiography. "It was merely an illusion of the Party Executive to believe that a more liberal spirit would prevail in the new order. And this more liberal regime was to be granted by the same man who had till then shown himself the greatest enemy, I will not say of democratic development, but even of every liberal tendency, and who now as victor planted the heel of his cuirassier boot on the neck of the new Empire." (Vol.11, p. 188)

There is absolutely no reason to expect different results now from a victory from above. On the contrary. In 1870 Prussian Junkerdom had first to adapt itself to the new imperial order. It could not feel secure in the saddle all at once. It was eight years after the victory over France before the anti-Socialist laws<sup>[32]</sup> were passed. In these forty-four years Prussian Junkerdom has become the imperial Junkerdom. And if, after half a century of the most intense class struggle, Junkerdom should appear at the head of the victorious nation, then we need not doubt that it would not have felt the need of [Ludwig Frank's](#) services for the internal building up of the state had he returned safe from the fields of German victories.

But far more important than the strengthening of the class position of the rulers is the influence a German victory would have upon the proletariat itself. The War grew out of imperialistic antagonisms between the capitalist states, and the victory of Germany, as stated above, can produce only one result territorial acquisitions at the expense of Belgium, France and Russia, commercial treaties forced upon her enemies, and new colonies. The class struggle of the proletariat would then be placed upon the basis of the imperialistic hegemony of Germany, the working class would be interested in the maintenance and development of this hegemony, and revolutionary Socialism would for a long time be condemned to the role of a propagandist sect.

Marx was right when in 1870 he foresaw, as a result of the German victories, a rapid development for the German labour movement under the banner of scientific Socialism. But now the international conditions point to the very opposite prognosis. Germany's victory would mean taking the edge off the revolutionary movement, its theoretic shallowing, and the dying out of the Marxist ideas.

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## CHAPTER VI

# WHAT HAVE SOCIALISTS TO DO WITH CAPITALIST WARS?

BUT THE German Social Democracy, we shall be told does not want victory. Our answer must be in the first place that this is not true. What the German Social Democracy wants is told by its press. With two or three exceptions Socialist papers daily point out to the German workingman that a victory of the German arms is his victory. The capture of Maubeuge, the sinking of three English warships, or the fall of Antwerp aroused in the Social Democratic press the same feelings that otherwise are excited by the gain of a new election district or a victory in a wage dispute. We must not lose sight of the fact that the German labour press, the Party press as well as the trade union papers, is now a powerful mechanism that

in place of the education of the people's will for the class struggle has substituted the education of the people's will for military victories. I have not in mind the ugly chauvinistic excesses of individual organs, but the underlying sentiment of the overwhelming majority of the Social Democratic papers. The signal for this attitude seems to have been given by the vote of the fraction on August 4th.

But the fraction was not thinking of a German victory. It made it its task only to avert the danger threatening from the outside, to defend the fatherland. That was all. And here we come back to the question of wars of defence and wars of aggression. The German press, including the Social Democratic organs, does not cease to repeat that it is Germany of all countries that finds itself on the defensive in this War. We have already discussed the standards for determining the difference between a war of aggression and a war of defence. These standards are numerous and contradictory. Yet in the present case they testify unanimously that Germany's military acts cannot possibly be construed as the acts of a war of defence. But this has absolutely no influence upon the tactics of the Social Democracy.

From a historical standpoint the new German imperialism is, as we already know, absolutely aggressive. Urged onward by the feverish development of the national industry, German imperialism disturbs the old balance of power between the states and plays the first violin in the race for armaments.

And from the standpoint of world politics the present moment seemed to be most favourable for Germany to deal her rivals a crushing blow - which however does not lessen the guilt of Germany's enemies by one iota.

The diplomatic view of events leaves no doubt concerning the leading part that Germany played in Austria's provocative action in Serbia. The fact that Czarist diplomacy was, as usual, still more disgraceful, does not alter the case.

From the standpoint of strategy the entire German campaign was based on a monstrous offensive.

And finally from the standpoint of tactics, the first move of the German army was the violation of the Belgian neutrality.

If all this is defence, then what is attack? But even if we assume that events as pictured in the language of diplomacy admit of other interpretations - although the first two pages of the White Book are very clear as to their meaning - has the revolutionary party of the working class no other standards for determining its policy than the documents presented by a government that has the greatest interest in deceiving it:

'Bismarck duped the whole world,' says Bebel, and knew how to make people believe that it was Napoleon who provoked the war, while he himself, the peace-loving Bismarck, found himself and his policy in the position of being attacked.

The events preceding the war were so misleading, that France's complete unpreparedness for the war, that she herself declared, was generally overlooked, while in Germany, which appeared to be the one attacked, preparations for war had been completed down to the very last agon-nail, and mobilization moved with the precision of clockwork. (*Autobiography*, Vol. III, pp. 167-168).

After such an historical precedent one might expect more critical caution from the Social Democracy.

It is quite true that Bebel more than once repeated his assertion that in case of an attack on Germany the Social Democracy would defend its fatherland. At the convention held at Essen, [33] Kautsky answered him:

"In my opinion we cannot promise positively to share the government's war enthusiasm every time we are convinced that the country is threatened by attack. Bebel thinks we are much further advanced than we were in 1870 and that we are now able to decide in every instance whether the war which threatens is really one of aggression or not. I should not like to take this responsibility upon myself. I should not like to undertake to guarantee that we could make a correct decision in every instance, that we shall always know whether a government is deceiving us, or whether it is not actually representing the interests of the nation against a war of attack.... Yesterday it was the German government that took the aggressive, tomorrow it will be the French government, and we cannot know if the day after it may not be the English government. The governments are constantly asking turns. As a matter of fact what we are concerned with in case of war is not a national but an international question. For a war between great powers will become a world war and will affect the whole of Europe, not two countries alone. Some day the German government might make the German proletariat believe they were being attacked; the French government might do the same with its subjects, and then we should have a war in which the French and German workingmen would follow their respective governments with equal enthusiasm, and murder each other and cut each other's throats. Such a contingency must be avoided, and it will be avoided if we do not adopt the criterion of the aggressive or defensive war, but that of the interests of the proletariat, which at the same time are international interests.... Fortunately, it is a misconception to assume that the German Social Democracy in case of war would want to judge by national and not by international considerations, and felt itself to be first a German and then a proletarian party.

With splendid clearness, [Kautsky](#) in this speech reveals the terrible dangers—now a still more terrible actuality—that are latent in—the endeavour to make the position of the Social Democracy dependent upon an indefinite and contradictory formal estimate of whether a war is one of defence or one of aggression. Bebel in his reply said nothing of importance; and his point of view seemed quite inexplicable, especially after his own experience of the year 1870.

Nevertheless, in spite of its theoretical inadequacy, Bebel's position had a quite definite political significance. Those imperialistic tendencies which the danger of war begat excluded the possibility for the Social Democracy's expecting salvation from the victory of either of the warring parties. For that very reason its entire attention was directed to the preventing of war, and the principal task was to keep the governments worried about the results of a war.

'The Social Democracy,' said Bebel, 'will oppose any government which takes the initiative in war.' He meant this as a threat to [Wilhelm II](#)'s government. "Don't reckon upon us if some day you decide to utilize your cannon and your battleships." Then he turned to Petrograd and London: "They had better take care not to attack Germany in a miscalculation of weakness from within on account of the obstructionist policy of the powerful German Social Democr

Without being a political doctrine, Bebel's conception was a political threat, and a threat directed simultaneously at two fronts, the internal front and the foreign front. His one obstinate answer to all historical and logical objections was: "We'll find the way to expose any government that takes the first step towards war. We are clever enough for that."

This threatening attitude of not only the German Social Democracy but also of the International Party was not without results. The various governments actually did make every effort to postpone the outbreak of the war. But that is not all. The rulers and the diplomats were doubly attentive now to adapting their moves to the pacifist psychology of the masses. They whispered with the Socialist leaders,

nosed about in the office of the International, and so created a sentiment which made it possible for [Jaures](#) and Haase to declare at Brussels, a few days before the outbreak of the War, that their particular governments had no other object than the preservation of peace.<sup>34</sup> And when the storms broke loose, the Social Democracy of every country looked for the guilty party -on the other side of the border. Bebel's utterance, which had played a definite part as a threat, lost all weight the instant the first shots were fired at the frontiers. That terrible thing took place which [Kautsky](#) had prophesied.

What at first glance appeared the most surprising thing about it all is, that the Social Democracy had not really felt the need for a political criterion. In the catastrophe that has occurred to the International the arguments have been notable for their superficiality. They contradicted each other, shifted ground, and were of only secondary significance the gist of the matter being that the fatherland must be defended. Apart from considerations of the historical outcome of the War, apart from considerations of democracy and the class struggle, the fatherland that has come down to us historically must be defended. And defended not because our government wanted peace and was "perfidiously attacked", as the international penny-a-liners put it, but because apart from the conditions or the ways in which it was provoked, apart from who was right and who was wrong, war, once it breaks out, subjects every belligerent to the danger of invasion and conquest. Theoretical, political, diplomatic: and military considerations fall into ruins as in an earthquake, a conflagration or a flood. The government with its army is elevated to the position of the one power that can protect and save its people. The large masses of the people in actuality return to a pre-political condition. This feeling of the masses, this elemental reflex of the catastrophe, need not be criticized in so far as it is only a temporary feeling. But is quite a different matter in the case of the attitude of the Social Democracy, the responsible political representative of the masses. The political organizations of the possessing classes and especially the power of the government itself did not simply float with the stream. They instantly set to work most intensively and in very varied ways to heighten this unpolitical sentiment and to unite the masses around the army and the government. The Social Democracy not only did not become equally active in the opposite direction, but from the very first moment surrendered to the policy of the government and to the elemental feeling of the masses. And instead of arming these masses with the weapons of criticism and distrust, if only passive criticism and distrust, it itself by its whole attitude hastened the people along the road to this pre-political condition. It renounced its traditions and political pledges of fifty years with a conspicuous readiness that was least of all calculated to inspire the rulers with respect.

[Bethmann-Hollweg](#) announced that the German government was in absolute agreement with the German people, and after the avowal of the *Vorwaerts*, in view of the position taken by the Social Democracy, he has a perfect right to say so. But he had still another right. If conditions had not induced him to postpone polemics to a more favourable moment, he might have said at the Reichstag session of August 4th, addressing the representatives of the Socialist proletariat:

"Today you agree with us in recognizing the danger threatening our fatherland, and you join us in trying to avert the danger by arms. But this danger has not grown up since yesterday. You must previously have known of the existence and the tendencies of Czarism, and you knew that we had other enemies besides. So by what right did you attack us when we built up our army and our navy? By what right did you refuse to vote for military appropriations year after year? Was it by the right of treason or the right of blindness? If in spite of you we had not built up our army, we should now be helpless in the face of this Russian menace that has brought you to your senses, too. No appropriations granted now could enable us to make up for what we would have lost. We should now be without arms, without cannons, without

fortifications. Your voting today in favour of the war credit of five billions is an admission that your annual refusal of the budget was only an empty demonstration, and, worse than that, was political demagoguery. For as soon as you came up for serious historical examination, you denied your entire past!"

That is what the German Chancellor could have said, and this time his speech would have carried conviction. And what could Haase have replied?

"We never took a stand for Germany's disarmament in the face of dangers from without. Such peace rubbish was never in our thoughts. As long as international contradictions create out of themselves the danger of war, we want Germany to be safe against foreign invasion and servitude. What we are trying for is a military organisation which cannot - as can an artificially trained organisation be made to serve for class exploitation at home and for imperialistic adventures abroad, but will be invincible in national defence. We want a militia. We cannot trust you with the work of national defence. You have made the army a school of reactionary training. You have drilled your corps of officers in the hatred of the most important class of modern society, the proletariat. You are capable of risking millions of lives, not for the real interests of the people, but for the selfish interests of the ruling minority, which you veil with the names of national ideals and state prestige. We do not trust you, and that is why we have declared year after year, Not a single man or a single penny for this class government!"

"But five billions!" voices from both the right and the left might interrupt.

"Unfortunately we are now left no choice. We have no army except the one created by the present masters of Germany, and the enemy stands without our gates. We cannot on the instant replace Wilhelm II's army by a people's militia, and once this is so, we cannot refuse food, clothing and materials of war to the army that is defending us, no matter how it may be constituted. We are neither repudiating our past nor renouncing our future. We are forced to vote for the war credits."

That would have been about the most convincing thing that Haase could have said.

Yet, even though such considerations might give an explanation of why the Socialist workers as citizens did not obstruct the military organization, but simply fulfilled the duty of citizenship forced upon them by circumstances, we should still be waiting in vain for an answer to the principal question: Why did the Social Democracy, as the political organization of a class that has been denied a share in the government, as the implacable enemy of bourgeois society, as the republican party, as a branch of the International why did it take upon itself the responsibility for acts undertaken by its irreconcilable; class enemies?

If it is impossible for us immediately to replace the Hohenzollern army with a militia, that does not mean that we must now take upon ourselves the responsibility for the doings of that army. If in times of peaceful normal state-housekeeping we wage war against the monarchy, the bourgeoisie and militarism, and are under obligations to the masses to carry on that war with the whole weight of our authority, then we commit the greatest crime against our future when we put this authority at the disposal of the monarchy, the bourgeoisie and militarism at the very moment when these break out into the terrible, anti-social and barbaric methods of war. Neither the nation nor the state can escape the obligation of defence. But when we refuse the rulers our confidence we by no means rob the bourgeois state of its weapons or its means of defence and even of attack as long as we are not strong enough to wrest its powers from its hands. In war as in peace, we are a party of opposition, not a party of power. In that way we can also most surely serve that part of our task which war outlines so sharply, the work of national independence. The Social Democracy cannot let the fate of any nation, whether its own or another

nation, depend upon military successes. In throwing upon the capitalist state the responsibility for the method by which it protects its independence, that is, the violation of the independence of other states, the Social Democracy lays the cornerstone of true national independence in the consciousness of the masses of all nations. By preserving and developing the international solidarity of the workers, we secure the independence of the nation - and make it independent of the calibre of cannons.

If Czarism is a danger to Germany's independence, there is only one way that promises success in warding off this danger, and that way lies with us - the solidarity of the working masses of Germany and Russia. But such solidarity would undermine the policy that Wilhelm II explained in saying that the entire German people stood behind him. What should we Russian Socialists say to the Russian workmen in face of the fact that the bullets the German workers are shooting at them bear the political and moral seal of the German Social Democracy? "We cannot make our policy for Russia, we make it for Germany," was the answer given me by one of the most respected functionaries of the German party when I put this question to him. And at that moment I felt with particularly painful clearness what a blow had been struck at the International from within.

The situation, it is plain, is not improved if the Socialist parties of both warring countries throw in their fate with the fate of their governments, as in Germany and France. No outside power, no confiscation or destruction of Socialist property, no arrests and imprisonments could have dealt such a blow to the International as it struck itself with its own hands in surrendering to the Moloch of the state just when he began to talk in terms of blood and iron.

\* \* \*

In his speech at the convention at Essen [Kautsky](#) drew a terrifying picture of brother rising against brother in the name of a "war of defence"—as an argument, by no means as an actual possibility. Now that this picture has become a bloody actuality, Kautsky endeavours to reconcile us to it. He beholds no collapse of the international.

"The difference between the German and the French Socialists is not to be found in their standards of judgement, nor in their fundamental point of view, but merely in the difference of their interpretation of the present situation, which, in its turn, is conditioned by the difference in their geographical position(!). Therefore, this difference can scarcely be overcome while the War lasts. Nevertheless it is not a difference of principle, but one arising out of a particular situation, and so it need not last after that situation has ceased to exist." (*Neue Zeit*, 337, p.3.)

When [Guesde](#) and [Semiat](#) appear as aides to [Poincaré](#), [Delcassé](#) and [Briand](#), and as opponents to [Bethmann-Hollweg](#); when the French and German workmen cut each other's throats and are not doing so as enforced citizens of the bourgeois republic and the Hohenzollern Monarchy, but as Socialists performing their duty under the spiritual leadership of their parties, this is not a collapse of the International. The "standard of judgement" is one and the same for the German Socialist cutting a Frenchman's throat as for the French Socialist cutting a German's throat. If [Ludwig Frank](#) takes up his gun, not to proclaim the "difference of principle" to the French Socialists, but to shoot them in all agreement of principle; and if Ludwig Frank should himself fall by a French bullet - fired possibly by a comrade - that is no detriment to "standards" they have in common. It is merely a consequence of the "difference in their geographical position". Truly, it is bitter to read such lines, but doubly bitter when they come from Kautsky's pen.

The International was opposed- to the war.

"If, in spite of the efforts of the Social Democracy, we should have war," says Kautsky, "then every nation must save its skin as best it can. This means for the Social Democracy of every country the same right and the same duty to participate in its country's defence, and none of them may make of this a cause for casting reproaches (!) at each other." (*Neue Zeit*, p.7.)

Of such sort is this common standard to save one's own skin, to break one another's skulls in self-defence, and not to "reproach" one another for doing so. -

But will the question be answered by the agreement in the standard of judgement? Will it not rather be answered by the quality of this common standard of judgement? Among Bethmann-Hollweg, [Sazonov](#), [Grey](#) and [Delcasse](#) you also find agreement in their standards Nor is there any difference of principle between them either. They least of all have any right to cast reproaches at each other. Their conduct simply springs from "a difference in their geographical position." Had Bethmann-Hollweg been an English Minister, he would have acted exactly as did Sir Edward [Grey](#). Their standards are as like each other as their cannon, which differ in nothing but their calibre. But the question for us is, can we adopt their standards for our own?

"Fortunately, it is a misconception to assume that the German Social Democracy in case of war would want to judge by national and not by international considerations, and felt itself to be first a German and then a proletarian party."

So said Kautsky in Essen. And now when the national point of view has taken hold of all the workingmen's parties of the international in place of the international point of view that they held in common, Kautsky not only reconciles himself to this "misconception", but even tries to find in it agreement of standards and a guarantee of the rebirth of the International.

"In every national state the working class must also devote its entire energy to keeping intact the independence and the integrity of the national territory. This is an essential of democracy, that basis necessary to the struggle and the final victory of the proletariat." (*Neue Zeit* , 337, p.4.)

But if this is the case, how about the Austrian Social Democracy" Must it, too, devote its entire energy to the preservation of the nonnational and anti-national Austro-Hungarian Monarchy? And the German Social Democracy? By amalgamating itself politically with the German army, it not only helps to preserve the Austro-Hungarian national chaos, but also facilitates the destruction of Germany's national unity. National unity is endangered not only by defeat but also by victory.

From the standpoint of the European proletariat it is equally harmful whether a slice of French territory is gobbled up by Germany, or whether France gobbles up a slice of German territory. More over the preservation of the European status quo is not a thing at all for our platform. The political map of Europe has been drawn by the point of the bayonet, at every frontier passing over the living bodies of the nations. If the Social Democracy assists its national (or antinational) governments with all its energy, it is again leaving it to the power and intelligence of the bayonet to correct the map of Europe. And in tearing the International to pieces, the Social Democracy destroys the one power that is capable of setting up a program of national independence and democracy in opposition to the activity of the bayonet, and of carrying out this program in a greater or lesser degree, quite independently of which of the national bayonets is crowned with victory.

The experience of old is confirmed once again. If the Social Democracy sets national duties above its class duties, it commits the greatest crime not only against Socialism, but also against the interest' of the nation as rightly and broadly understood.

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## CHAPTER VII

# THE COLLAPSE OF THE INTERNATIONAL

AT their Convention in Paris two weeks before the outbreak of the catastrophe, the French Socialists insisted on pledging all branches of the International to revolutionary action in case of a mobilization. They were thinking chiefly of the German Social Democracy. The radicalism of the French Socialists in matters of foreign policy was rooted not so much in international as national interests. The events of the War have now definitely confirmed what was clear to many then. What the French Socialist Party desired from the sister party in Germany was a certain guarantee for the inviolability of France. They believed that only by thus insuring themselves with the German proletariat could they finally free their own hands for a decisive conflict with national militarism.

The German Social Democracy, for their part, flatly refused to make any such pledge. Bebel showed that if the Socialist parties signed the French resolution, that would not necessarily enable them to keep their pledge when the decisive moment came. Now there is little room for doubt that Bebel was right. As events have repeatedly proved, a period of mobilization almost completely cripples the Socialist Party, or at least precludes the possibility of decisive moves. Once mobilization is declared, the Social Democracy finds itself face to face with the concentrated power of the government, which is supported by a powerful military apparatus that is ready to crush all obstacles in its path and has the unqualified cooperation of all bourgeois parties and institutions.

And of no less importance is the fact that mobilization wakes up and brings to their feet those elements of the people whose social significance is slight and who play little or no political part in times of peace. Hundreds of thousands, nay millions of petty hand-workers, of hobo-proletarians (the riff-raff of the workers), of small farmers and agricultural labourers are drawn into the ranks of the army and put into a uniform, in which each one of these men stands for just as much as the class-conscious workingman. They and their families are forcibly torn from their dull unthinking indifference and given an interest in the fate of their country. Mobilization and the declaration of war awaken fresh expectations in these circles whom our agitation practically does not reach and whom, under ordinary circumstances, it will never enlist. Confused hopes of a change in present conditions, of a change for the better, fill the hearts of these masses dragged out of the apathy of misery and servitude. The same thing happens as at the beginning of a revolution, but with one all-important difference. A revolution links these newly aroused elements with the revolutionary class, but war links them - with the government and the army! In the one case all the unsatisfied needs, all the accumulated suffering, all the hopes and longings find their expression in revolutionary enthusiasm; in the other case these same social emotions temporarily take the form of patriotic intoxication. Wide circles of the working class, even among those touched with Socialism, are carried along in the same current.

The advance guard of the Social Democracy feels it is in the minority; its organizations, in order to complete the organization of the army, are wrecked. Under such conditions there can be no thought of a

revolutionary move on the part of the Party. And all this is quite independent of whether the people look upon a particularly war with favour or disfavour. In spite of the colonial character of the Russo-Japanese war and its unpopularity in Russia, the first half year of it nearly smothered the revolutionary movement. Consequently it is quite clear that, with the best intentions in the world, the Socialist parties cannot pledge themselves to obstructionist action at the time of mobilization, at a time, that is, when Socialism is more than ever politically isolated.

And therefore there is nothing particularly unexpected or discouraging in the fact that the working-class parties did not oppose military mobilization with their own revolutionary mobilization. Had the Socialists limited themselves to expressing condemnation of the present War, had they declined all responsibility for it and refused the vote of confidence in their governments as well as the vote for the war credits, they would have done their duty at the time. They would have taken up a position of waiting, the oppositional character of which would have been perfectly clear to the government as well as to the people. Further action would have been determined by the march of events and by those changes which the events of a war must produce on the people's consciousness. The ties binding the International together would have been preserved, the banner of Socialism would have been unstained. Although weakened for the moment, the Social Democracy would have preserved a free hand for a decisive interference in affairs as soon as the change in the feelings of the working masses came about. And it is safe to assert that whatever influence the Social Democracy might have lost by such an attitude at the beginning of the War, it would have regained several times over once the inevitable turn in public sentiment had come about.

But if this did not happen, if the signal for war mobilization was also the signal for the fall of the International, if the national labour parties fell in line with their governments and the armies without a single protest, then there must be deep causes for it common to the entire International. It would be futile to seek these causes in the mistakes of individuals, in the narrowness of leaders and party committees. They must be sought in the conditions of the epoch in which the Socialist International first came into being and developed. Not that the unreliability of the leaders or the bewildered incompetence of the Executive Committee should ever be justified. By no means. But these are not fundamental factors. These must be sought in the historical conditions of an entire epoch. For it is not a question and we must be very straightforward with ourselves about this-of any particular mistake, not of any opportunist steps, not of any awkward statements in the various parliaments, not of the vote for the budget cast by the Social Democrats of the Grand Duchy of Baden<sup>3</sup>, not of individual experiments of French ministerialism, not of the making or unmaking of this or that Socialist career. It is nothing less than the complete failure of the International in the most responsible historical epoch, for which all the previous achievements of Socialism can be considered merely as a preparation.

A review of historical events will reveal a number of facts and symptoms that should have aroused disquiet as to the depth and solidarity of Internationalism in the labour movement.

I am not referring to the Austrian Social Democracy. In vain did the Russian and Serbian Socialists look for clippings from articles on world politics in the Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung that they could use for Russian and Serbian workingmen without having to blush for the International. One of the most striking tendencies of this journal always was the defence of Austro-German imperialism not only against the outside enemy but also against the internal enemy - and the *Vorwaerts* was one of the internal enemies. There is no irony in saying that in the present crisis of the International the Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung remained truest to its past.

French Socialism reveals two extremes—an ardent patriotism, on the one hand, not free from enmity of Germany; on the other hand, the most vivid anti-patriotism of the Herve type, which, as experience teaches, readily turns into the very opposite.

As for England, Hyndman's Tory-tinged patriotism, supplementing his sectarian radicalism, has often caused the International political difficulties.

It was in far less degree that nationalistic symptoms could be detected in the German Social Democracy. To be sure, the opportunism of the South Germans grew up out of the soil of particularism, which was German nationalism in octavo form. But the South Germans were rightly considered the politically unimportant rear-guard of the party. Bebel's promise to shoulder his gun in case of danger did not meet with a single-hearted reception. And when Noske repeated Bebel's expression, he was sharply attacked in the party press. On the whole the German Social Democracy adhered more strictly to the line of internationalism than any other of the old Socialist Parties. But for that very reason it made the sharpest break with its past. To judge by the formal announcements of the party and the articles in the Socialist press, there is no connection between the Yesterday and Today of German Socialism.

But it is clear that such a catastrophe could not have occurred had not the conditions for it been prepared in previous times. The fact that two young parties, the Russian and the Serbian, remained true to their international duties is by no means a confirmation of the Philistine philosophy, according to which loyalty to principle is a natural expression of immaturity. Yet this fact leads us to seek the causes of the collapse of the Second International in the very conditions of its development that least influenced its younger members.

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## NOTES FOR PART II

**29. Zabern:** (Saverne) A mining town in Alsace which had not been completely Germanized since annexation (1870), was the scene of friction between the army and the people in 1913. Lt. Baron von Forstner had insulted the French flag while drilling recruits. The story leaked out and the recruits were arrested on a charge of betraying military secrets. On November 10, 1913, crowds were fired upon by German troops and Forstner called upon them to give miners a hot time.

On November 28, Forstner said he was insulted in the streets and armed troops were sent out against a crowd of women, children and cripples. Martial law was proclaimed, houses searched and the town judge and public prosecutor locked up for the night with 28 others. On December 3 the matter was taken up by the Reichstag, War Minister Falkenhayn refused to disclose the punishment meted out to Forstner. The Reichstag passed a vote of no-confidence on the Chancellor, Bethmann Hollweg, 293 to 54. On December 19, the Alsatian recruits were sentenced to three weeks for complaining. On January 4, Reuter, the Commanding Officer and Forstner were acquitted by Court Martial. The Crown Prince congratulated Forstner and urged him "to keep it up." Reuter was also awarded the Order of the Red Eagle.

**30. Teutoburgerwald:** In the time of Augustus, 9 AD, a Roman legion led by Varus was completely crushed by the Teutons in the Alpine Teutoburger Forest.

**31. Bismarck's clever manoeuvres:** See note 5.

**32. Anti-Socialist Laws:** Prepared by Bismarck since 1862, were put into operation even before they

were passed by the Reichstag in October 1878. All extra-parliamentary activity of the Socialists was banned. The laws were repealed in 1890, the year Bismarck was dropped.

**33. The Essen Convention of the German Social Democrats** took place in 1907. (p.42)

**34.** On the 29th July 1914, after a meeting of the International Socialist Bureau at Brussels a largely attended public meeting was addressed by [Jaures](#), the recognized leader of the French Socialists and Haase, Chairman of the German Social Democracy and head of its Reichstag fraction. Jaures demonstratively put his arm round Haase, to the applause of the audience.

**35.** In 1904, in the (South German) Baden Landtag, a coalition between the Social Democrats and the Liberals, drafted and voted for a budget. This was the first time that any Socialists had voted for a capitalist budget.

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## GLOSSARY

**Bebel, August (1840-1913):** Marxist of worker origin, Co-founder with **Wilhelm Liebknecht** of the German Social Democracy 1869. In Reichstag from 1867. Sentenced with Liebknecht to two years' imprisonment for "treason" (opposition to Franco-German War) in 1872. Leader of the German SD and the 2nd International in pre-war years.

**Bethmann-Hollweg, Theobald von (1856-1921):** Chancellor of the German Empire 1909-1917. Succeeded von Bulow. Removed on the demand of the Crown Prince, Rindenburg and Ludendorff and dismissed by the Emperor 11th July 1917. Replaced by Georg Michaelis (1857-1936).

**Bismarck, Otto von (1815-1898):** Dominated the German and European political scene 1862-1890 as Chancellor. Unified Germany under the domination of Prussia and the [Hohenzollerns](#). Author of the anti-Socialist laws. Dropped by Emperor Wilhelm II in March 1890.

**Bonaparte, Louis (Napoleon III) (1808-1873):** Nephew of Napoleon I, Emperor of France 1852-1870.

**Briand, Aristide (1862-1932):** Once a militant member of the French Socialist Party; fought Millerand and his "Ministerialism" but later became Minister of Education 1906-1909. Expelled from SP, he founded the Republican Socialist Party with Millerand (1911). Premier several times especially October 1915-March 1917. Delegate to the League of Nations.

**Delcasse, Theophile (1852-1923):** French Foreign Minister 1898-1905, 1914-1916. Promoted Entente Cordiale with British.

**Frank, Ludwig, Dr. (1874-1914):** SD Reichstag member. Revisionist, leader of Baden Socialists. Voted for war credits and volunteered for service as private, after August 4th. Killed at Baccarat in France soon after, was first MP to die in action. In December 1914 his Reichstag seat was occupied by a wreath.

**Grey, Sir Edward (late Viscount) (1862-1933):** Liberal MP from 1885. Foreign Secretary December 1905-May 1916. Author of the oft-quoted remark at the beginning of the war: "The lamps are going out

all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

**Guesde, Jules Basile (1845-1922):** Communard. Founder member of French Workers Party 1879. Left wing socialist. Deputy 1893-1921. Fought reformism and ministerialism. During the War advocated "Sacred Union" with the bourgeoisie. Minister without Portfolio August 1914 to October 1915.

**Haase, Hugo (1863-1919):** Lawyer of Jewish origin. German Social Democrat. Member international Socialist Bureau and Reichstag Deputy 1897-1918. Succeeded Bebel as leader of SD Parliamentary fraction 1913. Opposed voting for war credits within the Party but succumbed to Majority decision. Founder and leader of Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) 1916. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Colonies in Ebert's "Socialist" Coalition November 1918. Resigned December 29, 1918. Shot on the steps of the Reichstag by a Monarchist officer.

**Hindenburg, Paul von Beneckendorff und von (1847-1934):** Prussian militarist. Fought in war against France 1870-71. General in 1903. Retired 1911. Recalled at beginning of War. Victor at Tannenberg 1914 and the Masurian Lakes 1915. against Russia. Later Field Marshal. Succeeded Ebert as President 1925 Co-existed with Hitler from 1932 till his death.

**Hohenzollern Dynasty:** Frederick of Hohenzollern, Burgrave of Nuremberg was made elector of Brandenburg in 1415. Up to 1609 Brandenburg was a barren region between the Middle Oder and the Middle Elbe. In 1616, the Dukedom of Prussia, a Polish fief since 1466, devolved on Frederick William of Brandenburg, "the Great Elector". The Dynasty rose after the Peace of Westphalia 1648 with the help of France and England who backed the Protestant rulers against the Roman Catholic rulers of Austria. Under Bismarck's leadership, the dynasty emerged as the principal power in the North German Federation. After the victory against France 1870, the King of Prussia became Emperor of Germany. The Dynasty ended with the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II, on November 9th 1918.

**Jaures, Jean Auguste (1859-1914):** French Socialist leader. Founder and editor L'Humanite 1904-1914. Right Winger, Leading figure in the 2nd International. Anti-militarist. Assassinated by French officers on 31st July 1914, the eve of the War. Karageorges: The ruling family of Serbia, founded by Karageorge Petrovich who led the 1st Balkan uprising against the Ottoman Empire in 1804. The family feud with the [Obrenoviches](#) led to alternation of rulership between them. Peter Karageorge took power in Belgrade by coup d'etat in 1903. Grandson Peter was the last King of Yugoslavia.

**Kautsky, Karl (1854-1938):** German Social Democrat. Theoretician of German Social Democracy. Leader of the 2nd International. Author of the Erfurt Programme. A pacifist-centrist in World War I. Later Right Winger in the Independent Socialist Party (USPD). Rejoined Social Democracy. Died in exile.

**Kluck, Alexander von (General) (1846-1934):** Commander German First Army in World War I. Invaded Belgium and responsible for numerous atrocities.

**Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-1864):** German socialist. Founder of the General Association of German Workers (1863). As the only leading German Socialist of his generation not forced into exile, he was able despite his shortcomings, to exert a great influence on the German working class movement. His followers later helped form the German Social Democracy.

**Liebkecht, Karl (1871-1919):** Left Wing German Social Democrat. Member German Reichstag and Prussian Landtag. Anti-militarist. He was the first, and only, Deputy to oppose war credits in the

Reichstag in 1914. Drafted during the war, he was imprisoned for anti-war activity, May 1916 to November 1918. Leader "International Group" and later, "Spartacus League". One of the leaders of the Berlin uprising 1919. Assassinated by counterrevolutionary soldiers, January 15th 1919, with Rosa Luxemburg.

**Liebkecht, Willi** (1826-1900): Friend of Marx, founder and leader of the German Social Democracy. Reichstag Deputy. Jailed 1872 for Opposition to the Franco-Prussian War.

**Luxemburg, Rosa** (1870-1919): Polish Socialist. Joined German Social Democracy 1897. With Karl Liebkecht led Left Wing. Brilliant theoretician (Lenin called her "an eagle"). Imprisoned many times for anti-war activity. Leader of the "Spartacists" and founder of the German Communist Party. Assassinated by reactionary officers January 15th, 1919.

**Milan (Obrenovich)** (1854-1901): Serb ruler 1868-89, as King after 1882. Abdicated 1889 but returned to dominate son (Alexander Obrenovich (1876-1903) the last of the dynasty) and the country 1893-95 and 1897-1900. (See Karageorges)

**Moltke, Helmuth von. General. (The Younger)** (1848-1916): Nephew of the Elder Moltke. German Chief of Staff in the early years of World War I.

**Poincare, Raymond Nicholas Landry** (1860-1934): Premier of France 1912, 1922-24, 1926-29. President 1913-1920. Militant.

**Quessel, Ludwig** (1872-193): German Social Democrat of the extreme Right (Imperialist) Wing. Revisionist. Reichstag 1912-18 and 1920-30. Member Weimar National Assembly 1919-20.

**Romanovs:** Ruling dynasty of Russia 1613-1917.

**Sand, Karl Ludwig:** Jena theology student who was executed for the assassination of Kotzebue in 1819. For a time young maidens in Mannheim offered wreaths at the place of execution.

**Sazonov, Sergei D. (1861-1927):** Russian diplomat. Foreign Minister 1910-1916. Ambassador to London 1917. After the Revolution represented counter-revolutionaries (Kolchak, then Denikin) in Paris.

**Schweitzer, Johann Baptist (1833-1875):** President, General Association of German Workers (1867-71). Intrigued with Bismarck. When exposed, 1872, expelled. Schieffelin, Professor: German historian.

**Sembat, Marcel (1862-1922):** French Socialist. Deputy from 1893. Chauvinist in War. Joined Cabinet of National Defence as Minister of Public Works August 1914-September 1917.

**Sudekum, Albert Oskar Wilhelm (1871-1944):** German Right Wing Social Democrat. Revisionist and chauvinist. Reichstag 1900-1918. Visited Italy and Rumania in attempt to win over Socialists to German Imperialism. Minister of Finance of Prussia 1918-1920.

**Wendel, Herman:** Right Wing German Social Democrat.

**Wilhelm II (1859-1941):** German Emperor 1888-1918. Last Hohenzollern ruler. Overthrown by the November 1918 revolution, retired to Holland. Wilhelm (1882-1951): Son of Wilhelm II, Crown Prince of Germany.

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# Leon Trotsky's

# The War and the International

*(The Bolsheviks and World Peace)*

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## PART III

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## CHAPTER VIII

### SOCIALIST OPPORTUNISM

*The Communist Manifesto*, written in 1847, closes with the words:

"Workingmen of all countries, unite!" But this battle cry came too early to become a living actuality at once. The historical order of the day just then was the middle class revolution of 1848. And in this revolution the part that fell to the authors of the Manifesto themselves was not that of leaders of an international proletariat, but of fighters on the extreme left of the national Democracy.

The revolution of 1848 did not solve a single one of the national problems; it merely revealed them. The counter-revolution, along with the great industrial development that then took place, broke off the thread of the revolutionary movement. Another century of peace went by until recently the antagonisms that had not been removed by the revolution demanded the intervention of the sword. This time it was not the sword of the revolution, fallen from the hands of the middle class, but the militaristic sword of war drawn from a dynastic scabbard. The wars of 1859, 1864, 1866 and 1870 created a new Italy and a new Germany. The feudal caste fulfilled, in their own way, the heritage of the revolution of 1848. The political bankruptcy of the middle class, which expressed itself in this historic interchange of roles, became a direct stimulus to an independent proletarian movement based on the rapid development of capitalism...

In 1863 [Lassalle](#) founded the first political labour union in Germany [36]. In 1864 the First International was formed in London under the guidance of Karl Marx. The closing watchword of the Manifesto was taken up and used in the first circular issued by the International Association of Workingmen. It is most characteristic for the tendencies of the modern labour movement that its first organization had an international character. Nevertheless this organization was an anticipation of the future needs of the movement rather than a real steering instrument in the class-struggle. There was still a wide gulf between the ultimate goal of the International, the communist revolution, and its immediate activities, which took the form mainly of international cooperation in the chaotic strike movement of the workers in various countries. Even the founders of the International hoped that the revolutionary march of events would very soon overcome the contradiction between ideology and practice. While the General Council was giving money to aid groups of strikers in England and on the Continent, it was at the same time making classic attempts to harmonize the conduct of the workers in all countries in the field of world politics.

But these endeavours did not as yet have a sufficient material foundation. The activity of the First International coincided with that period of wars which opened the way for capitalist development in Europe and North America. In spite of its doctrinal and educational importance, the attempts of the International to mingle in world politics must all the more clearly have shown the advanced workingmen of all countries their impotence as against the national class state. The Paris Commune, flaring up out of the war, was the culmination of the First International [37.] Just as the Communist' Manifesto was the theoretical anticipation of the modern labour movement, and the First International was the practical anticipation of the labour associations of the world, so the Paris Commune was the revolutionary anticipation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But only an anticipation, nothing more. And for that very reason it was clear that it is impossible for the proletariat to overthrow the machinery of state and reconstruct society by nothing but revolutionary improvisations. The national states that emerged from the wars created the one real foundation for this historical work, the national foundation. Therefore, the proletariat must go through the school of self-education.

The First International fulfilled its mission of a nursery for the National Socialist Parties. After the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune, the International dragged along a moribund existence for a few years more and in 1872 was transplanted to America, to which various religious, social and other experiments had often wandered before, to die there.

Then began the period of prodigious capitalist development, on the foundation of the national state. For

the labour movement this was the period of the gradual gathering of strength, of the development of organization, and of political possibilism, or opportunism.

In England the stormy period of Chartism[38], that revolutionary awakening of the English proletariat, had completely exhausted itself ten years before the birth of the First International. The repeal of the Corn Laws (1846) and the subsequent industrial prosperity that made England the workshop of the world, the establishment of the ten-hour working day (1847), the increase of emigration from Ireland to America, and the enfranchisement of the workers in the cities (1867), all these circumstances, which considerably improved the lot of the upper strata of the proletariat, led the class movement in England into the peaceful waters of trade unionism and its supplemental liberal labour policies.

The period of possibilism, that is, of the conscious, systematic adaptation to the economic, legal, and state forms of national capitalism, began for the English proletariat, the oldest of the brothers, even before the birth of the International, and twenty years earlier than for the continental proletariat. If nevertheless the big English unions joined the International at first, it was only because it afforded them protection against the importation of strike breakers in wage disputes.[39]

The French labour movement recovered but slowly from the loss of blood in the Commune, on the soil of a retarded industrial growth, and in a nationalistic atmosphere of the most noxious greed for "revenge". Wavering between an anarchistic 'denial' of the state and a vulgar-democratic capitulation to it, the French proletarian movement developed by adaptation to the social and political framework of the bourgeois republic.

As Marx had already foreseen in 1870, the center of gravity of the Socialist movement shifted to Germany.

After the Franco-Prussian War, unified Germany entered upon an era similar to the one England had passed through in the twenty years previous: an era of capitalist prosperity, of democratic franchise, of a higher standard of living for the upper strata of the proletariat.

Theoretically the German labour movement marched under the banner of Marxism. Still in its dependence on the conditions of the period, Marxism became for the German proletariat not the algebraic formula of the revolution that it was at the beginning, but the theoretic method for adaptation to a national-capitalist state crowned with the 'Prussian helmet'. Capitalism, which had achieved a temporary equilibrium, continually revolutionized the economic foundation of national life. To preserve the power that had resulted from the Franco-Prussian War, it was necessary to increase the standing army. The middle class had ceded all its political positions to the feudal monarchy, but had intrenched itself all the more energetically in its economic positions under the protection of the militaristic police state. The main currents of the last period, covering forty-five years, are:

victorious capitalism, militarism erected on a capitalist foundation, a political reaction resulting from the intergrowth of feudal and capitalist classes—a revolutionizing of the economic life, and a complete abandonment of revolutionary methods and traditions in political life. The entire activity of the German Social Democracy was directed towards the awakening of the backward workers, through a systematic fight for their most immediate needs - the gathering of strength, the increase of membership, the filling of the treasury, the development of the press, the conquest of all the positions that presented themselves, their utilization and expansion. This was the great historical work of the awakening and educating of the "unhistorical" class.

The great centralized trade unions of Germany developed in direct dependence upon the development of national industry, adapting themselves to its successes in the home and the foreign markets, and controlling the prices of raw materials and manufactured products. Localized in political districts to adapt itself to the election laws and stretching feers in all cities and rural communities, the Social Democracy built up the unique structure of the political organization of the German proletariat with its many-branched bureaucratic hierarchy, its one million dues-paying members, its four million voters, ninety-one daily papers and sixty-five party printing presses. This whole many-sided activity, of immeasurable historical importance, was permeated through and through with the spirit of possibilism.

In forty-five years history did not offer the German proletariat a single opportunity to remove an obstacle by a stormy attack, or to capture any hostile position in a revolutionary advance. As a result of the mutual relation of social forces, it was constrained to avoid obstacles or adapt itself to them. In this, Marxism as a theory was a valuable tool for political guidance, but it could not change the opportunist character of the class movement, which in essence was at that time alike in England, France and Germany. For all the undisputed superiority of the German organization, the tactics of the unions were wry much the same in Berlin and London. Their chief achievement was the system of tariff treaties. In the political field the difference was much greater and deeper. While the English proletariat were marching under the banner of Liberalism, the German workers formed an independent party with a Socialist platform. Yet this difference does not go nearly as deep in politics as it does in ideo'logic forms and the forms of organization.

Through the pressure that English labour exerted on the Liberal Party it achieved certain limited political victories, the extension of suffrage, freedom to unionize, and social legislation. The same was preserved or improved by the German proletariat through its independent party, which it was obliged to form because of the speedy capitulation of German liberalism. And yet this party, while in principle fighting the battle for political power, was compelled in actual practice to adapt itself to the ruling power, to protect the labour movement against the blows of this power, and to achieve a few reforms. In other words: on account of the difference in historical traditions and political conditions, the English proletariat adapted itself to the capitalist state through the medium of the Liberal Party; while the German proletariat was forced to form a party of its own to achieve the very same political ends. And the political struggle of the German proletariat in this entire period had the same opportunist character limited by historical conditions as did that of the English proletariat.

The similarity of these two phenomena so different in their forms comes out most clearly in the final results at the close of the period. The English proletariat in the struggle to meet its daily issues was forced to form an independent party of its own, without, however, breaking with its liberal traditions; and the party of the German proletariat, when the War forced upon it the necessity of a decisive choice, gave an answer in the spirit of the national-liberal traditions of the English labour party.

Marxism, of course, was not merely something accidental or insignificant in the German labour movement. Yet there would be no basis for deducing the social-revolutionary character of the party from its official Marxist ideology.

Ideology is an important, but not a decisive factor in politics. Its role is that of waiting on politics. That deep-seated contradiction, which was inherent in the awakening revolutionary class on account of its relation to the feudal-reactionary state, demanded an irreconcilable ideology which would bring the whole movement under the banner of social revolutionary aims. Since historical conditions forced

opportunist tactics, the irreconcilability of the proletarian class found expression in the revolutionary formulas of Marxism. Theoretically, Marxism reconciled with perfect success the contradiction between reform and revolution. Yet the process of historical development is something far more involved than theorizing in the realm of pure thought. The fact that the class which was revolutionary in its tendencies was forced for several decades to adapt itself to the monarchical police state, based on the tremendous capitalist development of the Quntry, in the course of which adaptation an organization of a million members was built up and a labour bureaucracy which led the entire movement was educated—this fact does not cease to exist and does not lose its weighty significance because Marxism anticipated the revolutionary character of the future movement. Only the most naive ideology could give the same place to this forecast that it does to the political actualities of the German labour movement.

The German Revisionists were influenced in their conduct by the contradiction between the reform practice of the party and its revolutionary theories. They did not understand that this contradiction is conditioned by temporary, even if long-lasting circumstances and that it can only be overcome by further social development. To them it was a logical contradiction. The mistake of the Revisionists was not that they confirmed the reformist character of the party's tactics in the past, but that they wanted to perpetuate reformism theoretically and make it the only method of the proletarian class struggle. Thus, the Revisionists failed to take into account the objective tendencies of capitalist development, which by deepening class distinctions must lead to the Social Revolution as the one way to the emancipation of the proletariat. Marxism emerged from this theoretical dispute as the victor all along the line. But Revisionism, although defeated on the field of theory, continued to live, drawing sustenance from the actual conduct and the psychology of the whole movement. The critical refutation of Revisionism as a theory by no means signified its defeat tactically and psychologically. The parliamentarians, the unionists, the comrades continued to live and to work in the atmosphere of general opportunism, of practical specializing and of nationalistic narrowness. Reformism made its impress even upon the mind of August Bebel, the greatest representative of this period.

The spirit of opportunism must have taken a particularly strong hold on the generation that came into the party in the eighties, in the time of [Bismarck's](#) anti-Socialist laws and of oppressive reaction all over Europe. Lacking the apostolic zeal of the generation that was connected with the First International, hindered in its first steps by the power of victorious imperialism, forced to adapt itself to the traps and snares of the anti-Socialist laws, this generation grew up in the spirit of moderation and constitutional distrust of revolution. They are now men of fifty to sixty years old, and they are the very ones who are now at the head of the unions and the political organizations. Reformism is their political psychology, if not also their doctrine. The gradual growing into Socialism - that is the basis of Revisionism - proved to be the most miserable Utopian dream in face of the facts of capitalist development. But the gradual political growth of the Social Democracy into the mechanism of the national state has turned out to be a tragic actuality -- for the entire race.

The Russian Revolution was the first great event to bring a fresh whiff into the stale atmosphere of Europe in the thirty five years since the Paris Commune. The rapid development of the Russian working class and the unexpected strength of their concentrated revolutionary activity made a great impression on the entire civilized world and gave an impetus everywhere to the sharpening of political differences. In England the Russian Revolution hastened the formation of an independent labour party. In Austria, thanks to special circumstances, it led to universal manhood suffrage. In France the echo of the Russian Revolution took the form of Syndicalism, which gave expression, in inadequate practical and theoretical form, to the awakened revolutionary tendencies of the French proletariat. And in Germany the influence

of the Russian Revolution showed itself in the strengthening of the young Left wing of the party, in the rapprochement of the leading Centre to it, and in the isolation of Revisionism. The question of the Prussian franchise, this key to the political position of Junkerdom, took on a keener edge. And the party adopted in principle the revolutionary method of the general strike. But all this external shaking up proved inadequate to shove the party on to the road of the political offensive. In accordance with the party tradition, the turn toward radicalism found expression in discussions and the adoption of resolutions. That was as far as it ever went.

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## CHAPTER IX

# THE DECLINE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT

Six or seven years ago a political ebbtide everywhere followed upon the revolutionary flood-tide. In Russia the counter-revolution triumphed and began a period of decay for the Russian proletariat both in politics and in the strength of their organizations. In Austria the thread of achievements started by the working class broke off, social insurance legislation rotted in the government offices, nationalist conflicts began again with renewed vigour in the arena of universal manhood suffrage, weakening and dividing the Social Democracy. In England, the Labour Party, after separating from the Liberal Party, entered into the closest association with it again. In France the Syndicalists passed over to reformist positions. Gustav Herve changed to the opposite of himself in the shortest time. And in the German Social Democracy the Revisionists lifted their heads, encouraged by history's having given them such a revenge. The South Germans perpetrated their demonstrative vote for the budget. The Marxists were compelled to change from offensive to defensive tactics. The efforts of the Left Wing to draw the party into a more active policy were unsuccessful. The dominating Centre swung more and more towards the Right, isolating the Radicals. Conservatism, recovering from the blows it received in 1905, triumphed all along the line.

In default of revolutionary activity as well as the possibility for reformist work, the party spent its entire energy on building up the organization, on gaining new members for the unions and for the party, on starting new papers and getting new subscribers. Condemned for decades to a policy of opportunist waiting, the party took up the cult of organization as an end in itself. Never was the spirit of inertia produced by mere routine work so strong in the German Social Democracy as in the years immediately preceding the great catastrophe. And there can be no doubt that the question of the preservation of the organizations, treasuries, People's Houses and printing presses played a mighty important part in the position taken by the fraction in the Reichstag towards the War. "Had we done anything else we would have brought ruin upon our organization and our presses, was the first argument I heard from a leading German comrade.

And how characteristic it is of the opportunistic psychology' induced by mere organization work, that out of ninety-one Socialist Democratic papers not one found it possible to protest against the violation of Belgium. Not one! After the repeal of the anti-Socialist laws, the party hesitated long before starting its own printing presses, lest these might be confiscated by the Government in the event of great

happenings. And now that it has its own presses, the party hierarchy fears every decisive step so as not to afford opportunity for confiscation.

Most eloquent of all is the incident of the *Vorwarts* which begged for permission to continue to exist on the basis of a new program indefinitely suspending the class conflict. Every friend of the German Social Democracy had a sense of profound pain when he received his issue of the central organ with its humiliating "By Order of Army Headquarters". Had the *Vorwarts* remained under interdiction, that would have been an important political fact to which the party later could have referred with pride. At any rate that would have been far more honourable than to continue to exist with the imprint of the general's boots on its forehead.

But higher than all considerations of policy and the dignity of the party stood considerations of membership, printing presses, organization. And so the *Vorwarts* now lives as two-paged evidence of the unlimited brutality of Junkerdom in Berlin and in Louvain, and of the unlimited opportunism of the German Social Democracy.

The Right wing stood more by its principles, which resulted from political considerations. Wolfgang Heine crassly formulated these principles of German Reformism in an absurd discussion as to whether the Social Democrats should leave the hall of the Reichstag when the members rose to cheer the Emperor's name, or whether they should merely keep their seats. "The creation of a republic in the German Empire is now and for some time to come out of the range of all possibility, so that it is not really a matter for our present policy." The practical results still not yet achieved may be reached, but only through cooperation with the liberal bourgeoisie. "For that reason, not because I am a stickler for form, I have called attention to the fact that parliamentary cooperation will be rendered difficult by demonstrations that needlessly hurt the feelings of the majority of the House."

But if a simple infringement of monarchical etiquette was enough to destroy the hope of reformist cooperation with the liberal middle class, then certainly the break with the bourgeois "nation" in the moment of national "danger" would have hindered, for years to come, not only all desired reforms, but also all reformist desires. That attitude that was dictated to the routinists of the party centre by sheer anxiety over the preservation of the organization was supplemented among the Revisionists by political considerations. Their standpoint proved in every respect to be more comprehensive and won the victory all over. The entire party press is now industriously acclaiming what it once heaped scorn upon, that the present patriotic attitude of the working class will win for them, after the War, the good will of the possessing classes for bringing about reforms.

Therefore, the German Social Democracy did not feel itself, under the stress of these great events, a revolutionary power with tasks far exceeding the question of widening the state's boundaries, a power that does not lose itself for an instant in the nationalistic whirl but calmly awaits the favourable moment for joining with the other branches of the International in a purposeful interference in the course of events. No, instead of that the German Social Democracy felt itself to be a sort of cumbersome train threatened by hostile cavalry. For that reason it subordinated the entire future of the International to the quite extraneous question of the defence of the frontiers of the class state because it felt itself first and foremost to be a conservative state within the state.

"Look at Belgium!" cries the *Vorwarts* to encourage the workmen-soldiers. The People's Houses there have been changed into army hospitals, the newspapers suppressed, all party life crushed out. [A sentimental correspondent of the *Vorwarts* writes that he was looking for Belgian comrades in the

Maison da Peuple and found a German Army hospital here. And what did the *Vorwärts* correspondent want of his Belgian comrades? "To win them to the cause of the German people" - when Brussels itself had already been won "for the cause of the German people!" ] And therefore hold out until the end, "until the decisive victory is ours. In other words, keep on destroying, let the work of your own hands be a terrifying lesson to you. "Look at Belgium," and out of this terror draw courage for renewed destruction.

What has just been said refers not to the German Social Democracy alone, but also to all the older branches of the International that have lived through the history of the last half century.

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## CHAPTER X

# WORKING CLASS IMPERIALISM

There is one factor in the collapse of the Second International that is still unclarified. It dwells at the heart of all the events that the Party has passed through.

The dependence of the proletarian class movement, particularly in its economic conflicts, upon the scope and the successes of the imperialistic policy of the state is a question which, as far as I know, has never been discussed in the Socialist press. Nor can I attempt to solve it in the short space of this work. So what I shall say on this point will necessarily be in the nature of a brief review.

The proletariat is deeply interested in the development of the forces of production. The national state created in Europe by the revolutions and wars of the years 1789 to 1870 was the basic type of the economic evolution of the past period. The proletariat contributed by its entire conscious policy to the development of the forces of production on a national foundation. It supported the bourgeoisie in its conflicts with alien enemies for national liberation; also in its conflicts with the monarchy, with feudalism and the church for political democracy. And in the measure in which the bourgeois turned to "law and order", that is, became reactionary, the proletariat assumed the historical task the bourgeoisie had left uncompleted. In championing a policy of peace, culture and democracy, as against the bourgeoisie, it contributed to the enlargement of the national market, and so gave an impetus to the development of the forces of production.

The proletariat had an equal economic interest in the democratizing and the cultural progress of all other countries in their relation of buyer or seller to its own country. In this resided the most important guarantee for the international solidarity of the proletariat both in so far as final aims and daily policies are concerned. The struggle against the remnants of feudal barbarism, against the boundless demands of militarism, against agrarian duties and indirect taxes was the main object of working-class politics and served, directly and indirectly, to help develop the forces of production. That is the very reason why the great majority of organized labour joined political forces with the Social democracy. Every hindrance to the development of the forces of production touches the trade unions most closely.

As capitalism passed from a national to an international-imperialistic ground, national production, and with it the economic struggle of the proletariat, came into direct dependence on those conditions of the world market which are secured by dreadnaughts and cannon. In other words, in contradiction of the fundamental interests of the proletariat taken in their wide historic extent, the immediate trade interests of various strata of the proletariat proved to have a direct dependence upon the successes or the failures of the foreign policies of the governments.

England long before the other countries placed her capitalist development on the basis of predatory imperialism, and she interested the upper strata of the proletariat in her world dominion. In championing its own class interests, the English proletariat limited itself to exercising pressure on the bourgeois parties which granted it a share in the capitalist exploitation of other countries. It did not begin an independent policy until England began to lose her position in the world market, pushed aside, among others, by her main rival, Germany.

But with Germany's growth to industrial world-importance, grew the dependence of broad strata of the German proletariat on German imperialism, not materially alone but also ideally. The *Vorwärts* wrote on August 11th that the German workingmen, "counted among the politically intelligent, to whom we have preached the dangers of imperialism for years (although with very little success, we must confess)" denounce Italian neutrality like the extremest chauvinists. But that did not prevent the *Vorwärts* from feeding the German workingmen on "national" and "democratic" arguments in justification of the bloody work of imperialism. (Some writers' backbones are as flexible as their pens.)

However, all this does not alter facts. When the decisive moment came, there seemed to be no irreconcilable enmity to imperialistic policies in the consciousness of the German workingmen. On the contrary, they seemed to listen readily to imperialist whisperings veiled in national and democratic phraseology. This is not the first time that Socialistic imperialism reveals itself in the German Social Democracy. Suffice it to recall the fact that at the International Congress in Stuttgart it was the majority of German delegates, notably the trade unionists, who voted against the Marxist resolution on the colonial policy<sup>[40]</sup>. The occurrence made a sensation at the time, but its true significance comes out more clearly in the light of present events. Just now the trade union press is linking the cause of the German working class to the work of the army with more consciousness and matter-of-factness than do the political organs.

As long as capitalism remained on a national basis, the proletariat could not refrain from cooperation in democratizing the political relations and in developing the forces of production through its parliamentary, communal and other activities. The attempts of the anarchists to set up a formal revolutionary agitation in opposition to the political fights of the Social Democracy condemned them to isolation and gradual extinction. But when the capitalist states overstep their national form to become imperialistic world powers, the proletariat cannot oppose this new imperialism. And the reason is the so-called minimal program which fashioned its policy upon the framework of the national state. When its main concern is for tariff treaties and social legislation, the proletariat is incapable of expending the same energy in fighting imperialism that it did in fighting feudalism. By applying its old methods of the class struggle - the constant adaptation to the movements of the markets - to the changed conditions produced by imperialism, it itself falls into material and ideological dependence on imperialism.

The only way the proletariat can pit its revolutionary force against imperialism is under the banner of Socialism. The working class is powerless against imperialism as long as its great organizations stand by

their old opportunist tactics. The working class will be all-powerful against imperialism when it takes to the battlefield of Social Revolution.

The methods of national-parliamentary opposition not only fail to produce practical results, but also cease to make an appeal to the labouring masses, because the workers find that, behind the backs of the parliamentarians, imperialism, by armed force, reduces the wages and the very lives of the workers to ever greater dependence on its successes in the world market.

It was clear to every thinking Socialist that the only way the proletariat could be made to pass from opportunism to Revolution was not by agitation, but by a historical upheaval. But no one foresaw that history would preface this inevitable change of tactics by such a catastrophic collapse of the International. History works with titanic relentlessness. What is the Rheims Cathedral[41] to History? And what a few hundred or thousand political reputations? And what the life or death of hundreds of thousands or of millions?

The proletariat has remained too long in the preparatory school, much longer than its great pioneer fighters thought it would. History took her broom in hand, swept the International of the epigones apart in all directions and led the slow-moving millions into the field where their last illusions are being washed away in blood. A terrible experiment! On its result perhaps hangs the fate of European civilization.

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## CHAPTER XI

# THE REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH

AT THE close of the last century a heated controversy arose in Germany over the question, What effect does the industrialization of a country produce upon its military power? The reactionary agrarian politicians and writers, like Sehring, Karl Ballod, Georg Hansen and others, argued that the rapid increase of the city populations at the expense of the rural districts positively undermined the foundation of the Empire's military power, and they of course drew from it their patriotic inferences in the spirit of agrarian protectionism. On the other hand Lujo Brentano and his school championed an exactly opposite point of view. They pointed out that economic industrialism not only opened up new financial and technical resources, but also developed in the proletariat the vital force capable of making effective use of all the new means of defence and attack. He quotes authoritative opinions to show that even in the earlier experiences of 1870-71 "the regiments from the preponderatingly industrial district of Westphalia were among the very best." And he explains this fact quite correctly by the far greater ability of the industrial worker to find his bearings in new conditions and to adjust himself to them.

Now which side is right? The present War proves that Germany, which had made the greatest progress along capitalist lines, was able to develop the highest military power. And likewise in regard to all the countries drawn into it the War proves what colossal and yet competent energy the working class

develops in its warlike activities. It is not the passive horde-like heroism of the peasant masses, welded together by fatalistic submissiveness and religious superstition. It is the individualized spirit of sacrifice, born of inner impulse, ranging itself under the banner of the Idea.

But the Idea under whose banner the armed proletariat now stands, is the Idea of war-crafty nationalism, the deadly enemy of the true interests of the workers. The ruling class showed themselves strong enough to force their Idea upon the proletariat, and the proletariat, in the consciousness of what they were doing, put their intelligence, their enthusiasm and their courage at the service of their class foes. In this fact is sealed the terrible defeat of Socialism. But it also opens up all possibilities for a final victory of Socialism. There can be no doubt that a class which is capable of displaying such steadfastness and self-sacrifice in a war it considers a 'just' one, will be still more capable of developing these qualities when the march of events will give it tasks really worthy of the historical mission of this class.

The epoch of the awakening, the enlightenment and the organization of the working-class revealed that it has tremendous resources of revolutionary energy which found no adequate employment in the daily struggle. The Social Democracy summoned the upper strata of the proletariat into the field, but it also checked their revolutionary energy by adopting the tactics it was obliged to adopt, the tactics of waiting, the strategy of letting your opponent exhaust himself. The character of this period was so dull and reactionary that it did not allow the Social Democracy the opportunity to give the proletariat tasks that would have engaged their whole spirit of sacrifice.

Imperialism is now giving them such tasks. And imperialism attained its object by pushing the proletariat into a position of "national defence", which, to the workers, meant the defence of all their hands had created, not only the immense wealth of the nation, but also their own class organizations, their treasuries, their press, in short, everything they had unwearingly, painfully struggled for and attained in the course of several decades. Imperialism violently threw society off its balance, destroyed the sluice-gates built by the Social Democracy to regulate the current of proletarian revolutionary energy, and guided this current into its own bed.

But this terrific historical experiment, which at one blow broke the back of the Socialist International, carries a deadly danger for bourgeois society itself. The hammer is wrenched out of the worker's hand and a gun put into his hand instead. And the worker, who has been tied down by the machinery of the capitalist system, is suddenly torn from his usual setting and taught to place the aims of society above happiness at home and even life itself.

With the weapon in his hand that he himself has forged, the worker is put in a position where the political destiny of the state is directly dependent upon him. Those who exploited and scorned him in normal times, now flatter him and toady to him. At the same time he comes into intimate contact with the cannon, which Lassalle calls one of the most important ingredients of all constitutions.<sup>[42]</sup> He crosses the border, takes part in forceful requisitions, and helps in the transfer of cities from one party to another. Changes are taking place such as the present generation has never before seen.

Even though the vanguard of the working class knew in theory that Might is the mother of Right, still their political thinking was completely permeated by the spirit of opportunism, of adaptation to bourgeois legalism. Now they are learning from the teachings of facts to despise this legalism and tear it down. Now dynamic forces are replacing the static forces in their psychology. The great guns are hammering into their heads the idea that if it is impossible to get around an obstacle, it is possible to destroy it. Almost the entire adult male population is going through this school of war, so terrible in its realism, a

school which is forming a new human type. Iron necessity is now shaking its fist at all the rules of bourgeois society, at its laws, its morality, its religion. "Necessity knows no law", said the German Chancellor on August 4th. Monarchs walk about in public places calling each other liars in the language of marketwomen; governments repudiate their solemnly acknowledged obligations; and the national church ties its God to the national cannon like a criminal condemned to hard labour. Is it not clear that all these circumstances must bring about a profound change in the mental attitude of the working class, curing them radically of the hypnosis of legality in which a period of political stagnation expresses itself?

The possessing classes, to their consternation, will soon have to recognize this change. A working class that has been through the school of war will feel the need of using the language of force as soon as the first serious obstacle faces them within their own country. "Necessity knows no law", the workers will cry when the attempt is made to hold them back at the command of bourgeois law. And poverty, the terrible poverty that prevails during this War and will continue after its close, will be of a sort to force the masses to violate many a bourgeois law. The general economic exhaustion in Europe will affect the proletariat most immediately and most severely. The state's material resources will be depleted by the War, and the possibility of satisfying the demands of the working masses will be very limited. This must lead to profound political conflicts, which, ever widening and deepening, may take on the character of a social revolution, the progress and outcome of which no one, of course, can now foresee.

On the other hand, the War with its armies of millions, and its hellish weapons of destruction can exhaust not only society's resources but also the moral forces of the proletariat. If it does not meet inner resistance, this War may last for several years more, with changing fortunes on both sides, until the chief belligerents are completely exhausted. But then the whole fighting energy of the international proletariat, brought to the surface by the bloody conspiracy of imperialism, will be completely consumed in the horrible work of mutual annihilation. The outcome would be that our entire civilization would be set back by many decades. A peace resulting not from the will of the awakened peoples but from the mutual exhaustion of the belligerents, would be like the peace with which the Balkan War was concluded; it would be a Bucharest Peace extended to the whole of Europe.

Such a peace would seek to patch up anew the contradictions, antagonisms and deficiencies that have led to the present War. And with many other things, the Socialist work of two generations would vanish in a sea of blood without leaving a trace behind.

Which of the two prospects is the more probable? This cannot possibly be theoretically determined in advance. The issue depends entirely upon the activity of the vital forces of society - above all upon the revolutionary Social Democracy.

"Immediate cessation of the War" is the watchword under which the Social Democracy can reassemble its scattered ranks, both within the national parties, and in the whole International. The proletariat cannot make its will to peace dependent upon the strategic considerations of the general staffs. On the contrary, it must oppose its desire for peace to these military considerations. What the warring governments call a struggle for national self-preservation is in reality a mutual national annihilation. Real national self-defence now consists in the struggle for peace.

Such a struggle for peace means for us not only a fight to save humanity's material and cultural possessions from further insane destruction. It is for us primarily a fight to preserve the revolutionary energy of the proletariat.

To assemble the ranks of the proletariat in a fight for peace means again to place the forces of revolutionary Socialism against raging tearing imperialism on the whole front.

The conditions upon which peace should be concluded - the peace of the people themselves, and not the reconciliation of the diplomats - must be the same for the whole International.

## **NO REPARATIONS**

## **THE RIGHT TO EVERY NATION TO SELF-DETERMINATION.**

## **THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE—WITHOUT MONARCHIES, WITHOUT STANDING ARMIES, WITHOUT RULING FEUDAL WITHOUT SECRET DIPLOMACY.**

The peace agitation, which must be conducted simultaneously with all the means now at the disposal of the Social Democracy as well as those which, with a good will, it could acquire, will not only tear the workers out of their nationalistic hypnosis; it will also do the aving work of inner purification in the present official parties of the proletariat. The national Revisionists and the Socialist patriots in the Second International, who have been exploiting the influence that Socialism has acquired over the working masses for national militaristic aims, must be thrust back into the camp of the enemies of the working class by uncompromising revolutionary agitation for peace.

The revolutionary Social Democracy need not fear that it will be isolated, now less than ever. The War is making the most terrible agitation against itself. Every day that the War lasts will bring new masses of people to our banner, if it is an honest banner of peace and democracy. The surest way by which the Social Democracy can isolate the militaristic reaction in Europe and force it to take the offensive is by the slogan of Peace.

We revolutionary Marxists have no cause for despair. The epoch into which we are now entering will be our epoch. Marxism is not defeated. On the contrary: the roar of the cannon in every quarter of Europe heralds the theoretical victory of Marxism. What is left now of the hopes for a "peaceful" development, for a mitigation of capitalist class contrasts, for a regular systematic growth into Socialism?

The Reformists on principle, who hoped to solve the social question by the way of tariff treaties, consumers' leagues, and the parliamentary cooperation of the Social Democracy with the bourgeois parties, are now all resting their hopes on the victory of the "national" arms. They are expecting the possessing classes to show greater willingness to meet the needs of the proletariat because it has proved its patriotism.

This expectation would be positively foolish if there were not hidden behind it another, far less "idealistic" hope - that a military victory would create for the bourgeoisie a broader imperialistic field for enriching itself at the expense of the bourgeoisie of other countries, and would enable it to share some of the booty with its own proletariat at the expense of the proletariat of other countries. Socialist reformism has actually turned into Socialist imperialism.

We have witnessed with our own eyes the pathetic bankruptcy of the hopes of a peaceful growth of proletarian well-being. The Reformists, contrary to their own doctrine, were forced to resort to violence in order to find their way out of the political cul-de-sac - not the violence of the peoples against the ruling classes, but the military violence of the ruling classes against other nations. Since 1848 the German bourgeoisie has renounced revolutionary methods for solving its problems. They left it to the feudal class

to solve their own bourgeois questions by the method of war. Social development confronted the proletariat with the problem of revolution. Evading revolution, the Reformists were forced to go through the same process of historical decline as the liberal bourgeoisie. The Reformists also left it to their ruling classes, that is the same feudal caste, to solve the proletarian problem by the method of war. But this ends the analogy.

The creation of national states did really solve the bourgeois problem for a long period, and the long series of colonial wars coming after 1871 finished off the period by broadening the arena of the development of the capitalist forces. The period of colonial wars carried on by the national states led to the present War of the national states—for colonies. After all the backward portions of the earth had been divided among the capitalist states, there was nothing left for these states except to grab the colonies from each other.

"People ought not to be talking," says Georg Irmer, "as though it were a settled thing that the German nation has come too late for rivalry for world economy and world dominion that the world has already been divided. Has not the earth been divided over and over again in all epochs of history?"

But a redivision of colonies among the capitalist countries does not enlarge the foundation of capitalist development. One country's gain means another country's loss. Accordingly a temporary mitigation of class-conflicts in Germany could only be achieved by an extreme intensification of the class struggle in France and in England, and vice versa. An additional factor of decisive importance is the capitalist awakening in the colonies themselves, to which the present War must give a mighty impetus. Whatever the outcome of this War, the imperialistic basis for European capitalism will not be broadened, but narrowed. The War, therefore, does not solve the labour question on an imperialistic basis, but, on the contrary, it intensifies it, putting this alternative to the capitalist world: Permanent War or Permanent Revolution.

If the War got beyond the control of the Second International, its immediate consequences will get beyond the control of the bourgeoisie of the entire world. We revolutionary Socialists did not want the War. But we do not fear it. We do not give in to despair over the fact that the War broke up the International. History has already disposed of the International.

The revolutionary epoch will create new forms of organization out of the inexhaustible resources of proletarian Socialism, new forms that will be equal to the greatness of the new tasks. To this work we will apply ourselves at once, amid the mad roaring of the machineguns, the crashing of cathedrals, and the patriotic howling of the capitalist jackals. We will keep our clear minds amid this hellish death music, our undimmed vision. We feel ourselves to be the only creative force of the future. Already there are many of us, more than it may seem. Tomorrow there will be more of us than today. And the day after tomorrow, millions will rise up under our banner, millions who even now, sixty seven years after the Communist Manifesto, have nothing to lose but their chains.

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## APPENDIX: ON THE HISTORY OF THIS BOOK

### Excerpts from Leon Trotsky's, *My Life*, (1930) Chap. XVIII, "The Beginning of the War").

The booklet, *The War and the International*, like all my other books, had its own peculiar destiny, first in Switzerland, then in Germany and France, later in America, and finally in Soviet Russia. A few words must be said about all this. My work was translated from the Russian manuscript by a Russian whose command of German was far from perfect. A professor in Zurich, Ragaz, took it upon himself to edit the translation, and this gave me an opportunity to know an original personality

But the book, thanks to Ragaz, came out in good German. From Switzerland it found its way, as early as December, 1914, to Austria and Germany. The Swiss Left-wingers F. Platten and others saw to that. Intended for German countries, the pamphlet was directed first of all against the German Social Democracy, the leading party of the Second International. I remember that a journalist named Heilmann, who played first-violin in the orchestra of chauvinism, called my book mad, but quite logical in its madness. I could not have wished for greater praise. There was, of course, no lack of hints that my book was an artful tool of Entente propaganda.

Later on, in France, I came unexpectedly across a report in the French papers, by way of Switzerland, that one of the German courts had sentenced me in a state of contumacy to imprisonment for the Zurich pamphlet. From this I concluded that the pamphlet had hit the mark. The Hohenzollern judges did me a very good turn by their sentence, a sentence that I was not in any hurry to serve. For the slanderers and spies of the Entente, this German court-sentence was always a stumbling-block in their noble efforts to prove that I was nothing more than an agent of the German general staff.

This did not keep the French authorities, however, from holding up my book at the frontier on the strength of its "German origin". An ambiguous note defending my pamphlet against the French censorship appeared in the newspaper published by Herve. I believe that it was written by Ch. [Rappaport](#), a man of some note, who was almost a Marxist; at any rate, he was the author of the greatest number of puns ever invented by any man who has devoted a long life to them.

After the October revolution, an enterprising New York publisher brought out my German pamphlet as an imposing American hook. According to his own statement, President Wilson asked him, by telephone from the White House, to send the proofs of the book to him; at that time, the President was composing his Fourteen Points, and, according to reports from people who were informed, could not get over the fact that a Bolshevik had forestalled him in his best formulae. Within two months the sales of the book in America reached 16,000 copies. Then came the days of the Brest-Litovsk peace. The American press raised a furious campaign against me, and the book instantly disappeared from the market.

In the Soviet Republic my Zurich pamphlet had by that time gone through several editions, serving as a text-book for the study of the Marxist attitude toward the war. It disappeared from the "market" of the Communist International only after 1924, the year when "Trotskyism" was discovered. At present, the pamphlet is still under a ban, as it was before the revolution.

Indeed, it would seem that books have their own destiny....

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

THE VOICE that speaks in this book is the voice of Leon Trotsky, the Bolshevik Minister of Foreign Affairs for Revoluttinary Russia.[43] It is expressing ideas and views which lighted him on the course of his policy toward the War, Peace and the Revolution. It throws light, therefore, on that policy; it helps to an understandin of it, if one wishes to understand. But that isn't all. The spirit that flames and casts shadows upon these pages is not only Trotsky's. It is the spirit also of the Bolsheviki; of the red left and the left wing of the revolutionary movement of New Russia. It flashed from Petrograd to Vladivostok, in the first week of the revolt; it burned all along the Russian front before Trotsky appeared on the scene. It will smoulder long after he is gone. It is a hot Fact which has to be picked up and examined, this spirit. Whether we like it or don't, it is there; in Russia; it is elsewhere; it is everywhere today. It is the spirit of war; class war, but war. It is in this book.

Nor is that all. The mind in this book—the point of view from which it starts, the views to which it points - Trotsky's mind is the international mind. We have heard before of this new intelligence; we have read books, heard speeches, witnessed acts demonstrative of thought and feelings which are not national, but international; not patriotic, but loyal only to the lower-class-conscious war aims of the workers of the world. The class warrior is as familiar a figure to us as the red spirit is of the red left of revolution. But the voice which utters here the spirit and the mind, not only of the Russian, but of the world revolution is the voice of one having authority.

And Trotsky, in power, has been as red as he is in this book. The Minister of Foreign Affairs practised in Petrograd what he preached in Switzerland, where he wrote most of the chapters of his book. And he practised also what all the other great International Socialist leaders talked and wrote.

That's what makes him so hard to understand, him and his party and the Bolshevik policy. We are accustomed to the sight of Socialists and Radicals going into office and being "sobered by the responsibilities of power." French and Italian Socialists in the Liberal ministries of their countries; British Labour leaders in Parliament in England or in the governments of their Colonies; and the whole Socialist Party in Germany and Austria (except Liebknecht in prison) are examples of the effect of power upon the International Mind.

The phenomenon of compromise and surrender is so common that many radicals oppose the taking of any responsible office by any member of their parties; and some of the extremists are advocating no political action whatsoever, nothing but industrial, economic or what they call "direct action". (Our IWW's [44] don't vote, on principle.) This is anarchism.

Leon Trotsky is not an anarchist; except in the ignorant sense of the word as used by educated people. He is a Socialist; an orthodox Marxian Socialist. But he has seen vividly the danger of political power. The body of this book was addressed originally to the German and 'Austrian Socialists, and it is a reasoned, but indignant reproach of them for letting their political position and their nationalistic oyalty carry them away into an undemocratic, patriotic, politicalL policy which betrayed the weaker nations in their empires, helped break up the Second (Socialist) International and led the Socialist parties into the support of the War.

Clear upon it, Trotsky himself does not illustrate his own thesis. He only detests intellectually the secrecy and the sordid wickedness of the "old diplomacy"; when he came as minister into possession of the

archives of the Russian Foreign Office, he published the secret treaties.

That hurt. And so with the idea of a people's peace. All the democratic world had been talking ever since the War began of a peace made, not by diplomats in a private room, but by the chosen representatives of all the people meeting in an open congress. The Bolsheviki worked for that from the moment the Russian Revolution broke; and they laboured for the Stockholm Conference<sup>[45]</sup> while Pau Milyukov and Alexander Kerensky were negotiating with the allied governments. When the Bolsheviki succeeded to power, Lenin and Trotsky formally authorized and officially proposed such a congress. Moreover Trotsky showed that they were willing, if they could, to force the other countries to accept the people's peace conference.

This hurt. This hurt so much that the government united in extraordinary measures to prevent the event. And when they succeeded, and it was seen that no people's peace could be made openly and directly, Trotsky proceeded by another way to get to the same end. He opened negotiations with the Kaiser's government and allies:

arranged an armistice and agreed tentatively upon terms of peace. This act not only hurt; it stunned the world, and no wonder!

It was like a declaration of war against a whole world at war. It was unbelievable. The only explanation offered was that Trotsky and Lenin were pro-German or dishonest, or both, and these things were said in high places; and they were said with conviction, too. More-over this conviction coloured, if it did not determine, the attitude the Allies took toward New Russia and the peace proposals Trotsky got from the German government. Was this assumption of the dishonesty of Trotsky the only explanation of his act?

This book shows, as I have said, that Trotsky saw things from the revolutionary, international point of view, which is not that of his judges; which is incomprehensible to them. He wrote it after the War began; he finished the main part of it before the Russian Revolution. It is his view of the War, its causes and its effects, especially upon international Socialism and "the" Revolution. These are the things he holds in his mind all through all these pages: "the" Revolution and world democracy. Also I have shown that, like the Russians generally, his mind is literal. The Russians mean what they say, exactly; and Trotsky not only means, he does what he writes. Putting these considerations together, we can make a comprehensible statement of the motive and the purpose of his policy; if we want to comprehend.

To all the other secretaries of state or of foreign affairs in the world, the Russian Revolution was an incident, an interruption of the War. To Minister Trotsky it was the other way around.

The World War was an incident, an effect, a check of "the" Revolution. Not the Russian Revolution, you understand. To Trotsky the Russian Revolution is but one, the first of that series of national revolutions which together will become the Thing he yearns for and prophesies: the World Revolution.

His peace policy therefore is a peace drive directed, not at a separate peace with the Central Powers; and not even at a general peace, but to an ending of the War in and by "the" Revolution everywhere.

Especially in Germany and Austria. He said this. The correspondent of the London Daily News cabled on January 2, right after the armistice and the agreement upon peace terms to be offered the Allies, that "Trotsky is doing his utmost to stimulate a revolution in Germany... Our only chance to defeat German designs is to publish terms (from the Allies). to help the democratic movement in Germany.

Trotsky is not pro-German. He certainly was not when he wrote this book. He hates here both the Austrian and the German dynasties, and his ill-will toward the [House of Habsburg](#) is so bitter that it sounds sometimes as if there were something personal about it.

And there is. He shows a knowledge of and a living sympathy with the small and subject nations which Austria rules, exploits and mistreats. He blames his Austrian comrades for their allegiance to a throne which is not merely undemocratic, but "senile" and tyrannical. That he, the literal Trotsky, would turn right around and, as the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, do what he had so recently criticized the Austrian Socialists for doing is unlikely.

Trotsky is against all the present governments of Europe, and the "bourgeois system" everywhere in the world. He isn't pro Allies; he isn't even pro-Russian. He isn't a patriot at all. He is for a class, the proletariat, the working people of all countries, and he is for his class only to get rid of classes and get down or up to humanity. And so with his people.

The Russians have listened to the Socialist propoganda for generations now. They have learned the chief lessons it has taught:

liberty, land, industrial democracy and the class-war the world over. This War was not their war; it was the Czar's war; a war of the governments in the interests of their enemies, the capitalists of their several countries, who, as Trotsky says, were forcing their states to fight for the right to exploit other and smaller peoples. So when we they overthrow the Czar, the Russians wanted to drop his war and go into their own, the class war. Kerensky held them at the front in the name of "the" Revolution; he would get peace for them by arrangement with the allies. He didn't; he couldn't; he was dismissed by them. Not by the Bolsheviki, but by the Russian people who know the three or four things they want: land and liberty at home; the Revolution and Democracy for all the world.

I heard a radical assert one day that that was the reason Trotsky could be such an exception to the rule about radicals in power. He came to the head of the Russian Revolution when his ideas were the actual demands of the Russian people and that it was not his strength of character, but the force of a democratic public opinion in mob power, which made him stick to his philosophy and carry out his theories and promises. I find upon inquiry here in New York that while he was living and working as a journalist on the East Side,<sup>[46]</sup> he refused to write for any paper to the editorial policy of which he could not conform. He would not compromise. He was "stiffnecked", "obstinate", "unreasonable". In other, kinder words, Trotsky is a strong man, with a definite mind and purpose of his own, which he has the will and the nerve to pursue.

Also, however, Trotsky is a strong man who is ruled by and represents a very simple-minded people who are acting like him, literally upon the theory that the people govern now, in Russia; the common people; and that, since they don't like the War of the Czar, the Kaiser, the Kings and the Emperors, their government should make peace with the people of the world, a democratic peace against imperialism and capitalism and the state everywhere, for the establishment in its stead of a free, world-wide democracy.

That may be the true explanation of Trotsky's Bolshevik peace policy in the world crisis of the World War. That is the explanation which is suggested by this book.

"Written in extreme haste," he says at the close of his preface, "under conditions far from favourable to systematic work.... the entire book, from the first page to the last, was written with the idea of the New

International constantly in mind - the New International which must rise out of the present world cataclysm, the International of the last conflict and the final victory."

[Lincoln Steffens](#)

New York, January 4th, 1918

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## THE ZIMMERWALD MANIFESTO [[47](#)]

# Workers of Europe!

The war has lasted for more than a year. Millions of corpses lie upon the battlefields; millions of men have been crippled for life. Europe has become a gigantic human slaughter-house. All science, the work of many generations, is devoted to destruction. The most savage barbarity is celebrating its triumph over everything that was previously the pride of mankind.

Whatever may be the truth about the immediate responsibility for the outbreak of the war, one thing is certain: the war that has occasioned this chaos is the outcome of Imperialism, of the endeavours of the capitalist classes of every nation to satisfy their greed for profit by the exploitation of human labour and of the treasures of Nature.

Those nations which are economically backward or politically feeble are threatened with subjugation by the great Powers, which are attempting by blood and iron to change the map of the world in accordance with their exploiting interests. Whole peoples and countries, such as Belgium, Poland, the Balkan states, and Armenia, either as units or in sections, are menaced by annexation as booty in the bargaining for compensations.

As the war proceeds its real driving forces become apparent in all their baseness. Piece by piece the veil which has hidden the meaning of this world catastrophe from the understanding of the peoples is falling down. In every country the Capitalists who forge the gold of war profits from the blood of the people are declaring that the war is for national defence, democracy, and the liberation of oppressed nationalities.

### **THEY LIE**

In reality they are actually burying on the fields of devastation the liberties of their own peoples, together with the independence of other nations. New fetters, new chains, new burdens are being brought into existence, and the workers of all countries, of the victorious as well as of the vanquished, will have to bear them. To raise civilization to a higher level was the aim announced at the beginning of the war: misery and privation, unemployment and want, underfeeding and disease are the actual results. For decades and decades to come the cost of the war will devour the strength of the peoples, imperil the work of social reform and hamper every step on the path of progress.

Intellectual and moral desolation, economic disaster, political reaction—such are the blessings of this horrible struggle between the nations.

Thus does the war unveil the naked form of modern Capitalism, which has become irreconcilable, not

only with the interests of the working masses, not only With the circumstances of historic development, but even with the first conditions of human communal existence.

The rilling forces of Capitalist society, in whose hands were the destinies of the nations, the monarchical and the Republican Governments, secret diplomacy, the vast employers' organizations, the middleclass parties, the Capitalist Press, the Church—all these forces must bear the full weight of responsibility for this war, which has been produced by the social order nourishing them and protecting them and which is being carried on for the sake of their interests.

## **Workers!**

Exploited, deprived of your rights, despised - you were recognized as brothers and comrades at the outbreak of the war before you were summoned to march to the shambles, to death. And now, when militarism has crippled, lacerated, degraded, and destroyed you, the rulers are demanding from you the abandonment of your interests, of your aims, of your ideals - in a word, slavish submission to the "national truce." You are prevented from expressing your views, your feelings, your pain; you are not allowed to put forth your demands and to fight for them. The press is muzzled, political rights and liberties are trampled upon - thus is military dictatorship ruling today with the iron hand.

We cannot, we dare not, any longer remain inactive in the presence of a state of things that is menacing the whole future of Europe and of mankind. For many decades the Socialist working class has carried on the struggle against militarism. With growing anxiety its representatives at their national and international conferences have devoted themselves to the war peril, the outcome of an Imperialism which was becoming more and more menacing. At Stuttgart, Copenhagen, and Basle the International Socialist Congresses indicated the path that the workers should follow. [48]

But we Socialist Parties and working-class organizations which had taken part in determining this path have since the outbreak of war disregarded the obligations that followed therefrom. Their representatives have invited the workers to suspend the working class struggle, the only possible and effective means of working class emancipation. They have voted the ruling classes the credits for carrying

on the war. They have put themselves at the disposal of their Governments for the most varied services. They have tried through their press and their envoys to win over the neutrals to the Government policies of their respective countries. They have given to their Government Socialist Ministers as hostages for the observance of the national truce, and thus have taken on themselves the responsibility for this war, its aims, its methods. And just as Socialist Parties failed separately, so did the most responsible representative of the Socialists of all countries fail: the International Socialist Bureau.[49]

These facts constitute one of the reasons why the international workingclass movement, even where sections of it did not fall a victim to the national panic of the first period of the war, or where it rose above it, has failed, even now, in the second year of the butchering of nations, to take up simultaneously in all countries an active struggle for peace.

In this intolerable situation we have met together, we representatives of Socialist Parties of Trade Unions, or of minorities of them, we Germans, French, Italians, Russians, Poles, Letts, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Swedes, Norwegians, Dutch and Swiss, we who are standing on the ground, not of national solidarity with the exploiting class, but of the international solidarity of the workers and the working-class struggle. We have met together in order to join anew the broken ties of international

relations and to summon the working class to reorganize and begin the struggle for peace.

This struggle is also the struggle for liberty, for Brotherhood of nations, for Socialism. The task is to take up this fight for peace for a peace without annexations or war indemnities. Such a peace is only possible when every thought of violating the rights and liberties of the nations is condemned. There must be no enforced incorporation either of wholly or partly occupied countries. No annexations, either open or masked, no forced economic union, made still more intolerable by the suppression of political rights. The right of nations to select their own government must be the immovable fundamental principle of international relations.

### **Organized Workers!**

Since the outbreak of the war you have put your energies, your courage, your steadfastness at the service of the ruling classes. Now the task is to enter the lists for your own cause, for the sacred aims of Socialism, for the salvation of the oppressed nations and the enslaved classes, by means of the irreconcilable working-class struggle.

It is the task and the duty of the Socialists of the belligerent countries to begin this struggle with all their power. It is the task and duty of the Socialists of the neutral countries to support their brothers by all effective means in this fight against bloody barbarity.

Never in the history of the world has there been a more urgent, a more noble, a more sublime task, the fulfilment of which must be our common work. No sacrifice is too great, no burden too heavy, to attain this end: the establishment of peace between the nations.

Working men and women! Mothers and fathers! Widows and orphans! Wounded and crippled! To all who are suffering from the war or in consequence of the war, we cry out over the frontiers, over the smoking battlefields, over the devastated cities and hamlets:

### **"Workers of all countries unite"**

In the name of the International Socialist Conference:

For the German Delegation: George Ledebour, Adolph Hoffman.

For the French Delegation: A. Merrheim, [Bourderon](#)

For the Italian Delegation: G. E. Modigijani, Consanino Lazzari

For the Russian Delegation: N. Lenin, Paul Axeirod, M. Bobrov.

For the Polish Delegation: St. Lapinski, A. Warski, Cz. (Jacob) Hanecki.

For the Inter-Balkan Socialist Federation.

(For the Rumanian Delegation) G. [Rakovsky](#)

(For the Bulgarian Delegation) Vasil Kolaro.

For the Swedish and Norwegian Delegation: Z. Hogiund, Ture Nerman.

For the Dutch Delegation: H. Roland-Hoist.

For the Swiss Delegation: Robert Grimm.

September 1915.

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## TWO DECLARATIONS ON THE ZIMMERWALD MANIFESTO

### I

The undersigned declare as follows:

The manifesto adopted by the Conference does not give us complete satisfaction. It contains no pronouncement on either open opportunism, or opportunism that is hiding under radical phraseology, the opportunism which is not only the chief cause of the collapse of the International, but which strives to perpetuate that collapse. The manifesto contains no clear pronouncement as to the methods of fighting against the war.

We shall continue, as we have done heretofore, to advocate in the Socialist press and at the meetings of the International, a clearcut Marxian position in regard to the tasks with which the epoch of imperialism has confronted the proletariat.

We vote for the manifesto because we regard it as a call to struggle and in this struggle we are anxious to march side by side with the other sections of the International.

We request that our present declaration be included in the official proceedings.

Signed: *N. Lenin, G. Zinoviev, Radek, Nerman, Hogiund, Winter.*

### II

The other declaration, which was signed in addition to the group that had introduced the resolution of the Left, by Roland Hoist and Trotsky, reads as follows:

"Inasmuch as the adoption of our amendment (to the manifesto) demanding the vote against war appropriations might in any way endanger the success of the Conference, we do, under protest, withdraw our amendment and accept Ledebour's statement in the commission to the effect that the manifesto contains all that is implied in our proposition."

It may be added that Ledebour, as an ultimatum, demanded the rejection of the amendment, refusing to sign the manifesto otherwise.

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# AN OPEN LETTER TO JULES GUESDE

PARIS

30, October, 1916

To M. the Minister of State, Jules Guesde:

Before quitting the soil of France, under the escort of a police officer, who personifies the liberties over whose defence you stand guard in the National Cabinet, I deem it my duty to express to you a few thoughts which, while they will most likely not be of any use to you, will at least be of use against you. In expelling me from France, your colleague, the Minister for War, did not think fit to indicate the causes for prohibiting the Russian Newspaper *Nashe Slovo* [50], one of whose editors I was, and which had for two years, suffered all the torments of a censorship, operating under the aegis of this same Minister for War.

Still, I shall not conceal from you the fact that for me there is no mystery about the reasons for my expulsion. You feel the need for adopting repressive measures against an international socialist, against one of those who refuse to accept the part of defender or ready slave of the imperialist war.

But while the reasons for this measure have not been communicated to me, who am the one concerned and at whom it is directed, they have been stated by M. Briand and to the deputies and to the journalists.

In Marseilles last August, a group of mutinying Russian soldiers killed their colonel. The investigation is alleged to have disclosed that a number of these soldiers were in possession of a number of copies of *Nashe Slovo*. In any case, this is the explanation given by M. Briand in an interview with Deputy and with the President of the Chamber Committee of Foreign Affairs, M. Leysgues, who in turn, transmitted this version to the Russian bourgeois press.

To be sure, M. Briand did not dare to assert that *Nashe Slovo*, which was subject to his own censorship, was directly responsible for the killing of this officer. His thoughts may be expressed as follows: In view of the presence of Russian soldiers in France, it is necessary to sweep *Nashe Slovo* and its editors off the soil of the Republic. For a Socialist newspaper that refuses to spread illusions and lies may - in the memorable phrase of M. Renaudel - "put bees in the bonnets" of the Russian soldiers and lead them into the dangerous path of reflection.

Unfortunately, however, for M. Briand, his explanation is based upon a scandalous anachronism. A year ago, Gustave Herve, at that time still a member of the permanent Administrative Commission of your party, said that if Malvy were to kick out of France those Russian refugees guilty of revolutionary internationalism, he, Herve, guaranteed that the public opinion of his janitors would accept such a measure without any objection. Obviously, there can be no doubt that Herve quaffed his inspiration in a ministerial closet.

At the end of July the same Herve whispered, semi-officially, that I was to be expelled from France.

At about the same time—i.e., still before the killing of the colonel at Marseilles—Prof. Durkheim, the President of the Commission for Russian refugees, appointed by the Government, informed a representative of the refugees, of the impending suppression of *Nashe Slovo* and the expulsion of the editors.

Thus everything had been arranged in advance, even the public opinion of M. Herve's janitors. They waited only for a pretext to strike the final blow. And the pretext was found at the moment the unfortunate Russian soldiers - acting in somebody's interests—killed their colonel.

This providential coincidence invites an assumption which, I fear, may offend your still virginal ministerial modesty. The Russian journalists who have made a special investigation into the Marseilles incident have established the fact that in this affair, as almost always in such cases, an active role was played by an agent provocateur. It is easy to understand what was his aim, or rather what was the aim of the blackguards who directed him. They required some excess on the part of the Russian soldiers, first, to justify the regime of the knout which is still somewhat offensive to the French authorities, and then to create a pretext for measures to be taken against Russian refugees who take advantage of French hospitality in

order to demoralize Russian soldiers in wartime.

It is not hard to acknowledge that the instigators of this scheme did not themselves believe that the affair would go so far or such was their intention. It is probable that they hoped to achieve ampler results by smaller sacrifices. But undertakings of this sort involve an element of professional risk. In this case, however, the victim was not the provocateur himself but Col. Krause and those who killed him. Even the patriotic Russian journalists, who are hostile to *Nashe Slovo*, have advanced the theory that copies of our paper may have been given to the soldiers, at the right moment by the same agent provocateur.

Try, M. Minister, just try to institute, through the services of M. Malvy an investigation along this line! You do not see that anything could be gained by such an investigation? Neither do I Because -- let us speak frankly—agents provocateur are at least as valuable for the alleged "national defence" as Socialist ministers.. And you, Jules Guesde, after you assumed responsibility for the foreign policy of the Third Republic, for the Franco-Russian alliance,. and its consequences, for the territorial ambitions of the Czar, and for the aims and methods of this war—it remains for you to accept, along with the symbolic detachments of Russian soldiers, the in no way symbolic exploits of the provocateurs of His Majesty the Czar. At the beginning of the war, when promises were spread with a lavish hand, your closest companion, [Sembat](#) , gave the Russian journalists a glimpse of the highly beneficial influence , to be exerted' by the allied democracies upon the internal regime in Russia. Mor over, this was the supreme argument used persistently but without success by the government socialists of France and Belgium to reconcile the Russian revolutionists with the Czar.

Twenty six months of constant collaboration, of communion with generalissimos, diplomats and parliamentarians, the visits of Viviani and Thomas to Tsarkoe-Selo, in short, twenty six months of incessant "influence" exerted by the allied democracies upon Czarism, have only served to strengthen the most arrogant reaction, moderated only by chaos in the administration and have succeeded in transforming the internal regime of England and France until they have become very similar to that of Russia. As may be seen the generous promises of M. Sembat are cheaper than his coal.[51] The luckless fate of the right of asylum is thus but a striking symptom of police and martinet rule prevalent on both sides of the Channel.

[Lloyd George](#) and M. Astride Briand, for whose characterization I beg to refer you, Jules Guesde, to your articles of earlier days - these two figures best express the spirit of the present war, its rectitude, its morality, with its appetite both class and individual. Can there be a worthier partner for Messrs. Lloyd George and Briand than M. Sturmer, this truly Russian-German, who has made a career by clinging on to the cassocks of the Metropolitans and the skirts of the court bigots? What an incomparable trio! Decidedly, history could have found no better colleagues and chieftains for Guesde the Minister.

How is it possible for an honest socialist not to fight you? You have transformed the Socialist Party into a docile choir which accompanies the choris-masters of capitalist brigandage in an epoch when bourgeois society—whose deadly enemy you, Jules Guesde, used to be—has disclosed its true nature to the very core. From all the events which were prepared by a whole period of world-wide depredation and whose consequences we so often predicted, from all the blood that has been shed, from all the suffering and the misfortune, from all the crimes, from all the rapaciousness and felonies of governments, you, Jules Guesde, you draw but one single lesson for the French proletariat: that Wilhelm II and Franz Joseph are two criminals, who, contrary to Nicholas II and M. [Poincare](#) fail to respect the rules and regulations of international law.

An entire new generation of French working youth, new millions of workers morally awakened for the first time by the thunderbolts of the war, learn about the causes of this catastrophe of the Old World, what the Yellow Book of MM. , [Delcasse](#), Poincare, Briand, want to tell them. And you, old chief of the proletariat, you sink to your knees before this Evangel of the peoples, and you renounce all that you learnt and thought in the school of the class struggle.

French Socialism, with its inexhaustible past, with its magnificent phalanx of fighters and martyrs, has at last found - what a fall, what a disgrace!—a Renaudel to translate, during the most tragic period in the world's history, the lofty thoughts of the Yellow Book into the language of a press of the same colour.

The socialism of [Babeuf](#), of [Saint-Simon](#), of [Blanqui](#), of [Fourier](#) of the Commune, of [Jaures](#), and of Jules Guesde—yes, of Jules Guesde too—has at last found its to consult with [Albert Thomas](#) Romanov concerning the surest ways of capturing Constantinople; has found its Marcel Sembat to promenade his dilettante nonchalance over the corpses and ruins of French

civilization; it has found its Jules Guesde to follow -- he too—the chariot of the triumphant Briand.

And you believed, you hoped that the French proletariat, which has been bled white in this senseless and hopeless war by the crime of the ruling classes, would continue to tolerate quietly, to the end, this shameful pact between official socialism and the worst enemies of the proletariat. You were mistaken. An opposition has come forward. In spite of the martial law and the frenzy of nationalism 'which whatever its form, be it royalist, radical or socialist, always preserves its capitalistic substance—the revolutionary opposition is gaining ground every day.

*Nashe Slovo*, the paper that you have strangled, lived and breathed in the atmosphere of awakening French socialism. Torn from the soil of Russia by a counter-revolution which triumphed thanks to the aid of the French bourgeoisie—which you, Jules Guesde, are now serving—the group of *Nashe Slovo* was privileged to echo even if in the incomplete form imposed upon it by the censorship—the voice of the French section of the new International which is raising its head amidst the horrors of fratricidal war.

In our capacity as "undesirable foreigners" who linked our fate with that of the French Opposition, we are proud of having sustained the first blows of the French Government—your government, Jules Guesde!

We have the honour together with Monatte, Merheim, Soumoneau, [Rosmer](#), Bourderon, Lorient, Guilbeaux and so many others, to be accused, all of us, of being pro-German. The Paris weekly of your friend, who [Plekhanov](#) shared with you your glory as he shares with you your fall, denounced us week after week to the police of M. Malvy, as agents of the German General Staff. Time was when you knew the value of such accusations, for you yourself had the honour of being their target. Now you stamp your approval upon M. Malvy, for the government of national defence, the reports of the stool-pigeons. Yet my political files contain a very recent prison sentence pronounced upon me, in contumacium, during the war, by a German court, for my pamphlet *The War and the International*.

But aside from this brutal fact, which ought to make an impression even upon the police brain of M. Malvy, I believe I have the right to assert that we revolutionary internationalists are far more dangerous enemies of German reaction than all the go-r-r-ents of the Allies taken together.

Their hostility to Germany is, at the bottom, nothing but the simple rivalry of the competitor; whereas our revolutionary hatred of its ruling class is indestructible.

Imperialist competition may unite again the enemy brethren of today. Were the plans for the total destruction of Germany to be realized, England and France, after a decade, would again approach the Empire of the Hohenzollerns to defend themselves against the excessive powers of Russia. A future Poincaré would exchange telegrams of congratulation with Wilhelm or with his heir; Lloyd George, in the peculiar language of the clergyman and the boxer, would curse Russia as the bulwark of barbarism and militarism; Albert Thomas, as French ambassador to the Kaiser, would receive lilies of the valley from the hands of the court ladies of Potsdam, as he did do recently' from the Grand Duchesses of Tsarkoe-Selo. All the banalities of present day speeches and articles would be warmed over, and M. Renaudel would have to change, in his articles, only the proper names, a task entirely within his capacities.

As for us—we shall remain what we have been and are, sworn enemies of Germany's rulers, for we hate German reaction with the same revolutionary hatred that we have vowed against Czarism or against French plutocracy. And when you dare, you and your newspaper lackeys to applaud [Liebknecht](#), [Merhing](#), [Luxemburg](#) and [Zetkin](#) as the intrepid enemies of the Hohenzollerns, you cannot deny that they are of our own stripe, our comrades-in-arms. We are allied with them against you and your masters by the indissoluble unity of the revolutionary struggle.

Perhaps you will console yourself with the thought that we are few in number? Yet we are greater in number than the police of every grade believe. In their professional myopia, they do not see the spirit of revolt that is rising from every hearth of suffering and spreading throughout France, though all of Europe in the workmen's suburbs and in the countryside, in the shops and in the trenches.

You have incarcerated Louise Soumoneau in one of your prisons; but have you thereby diminished the despair of the women in the land? You can arrest hundreds of Zimmerwaldists after having ordered your press to besmirch them again with police calumnies. But can you return husbands to their wives? Can you restore sons to their mothers, fathers to their children, strength and health to the sick? Can you return to a duped and debilitated people the trust in those who have deceived them?

Jules Guesde, get out of your military automobile, leave the cage in which the capitalist state has imprisoned you. Look about! Perhaps, fate will have pity, for the last time upon your wretched old age, and let you hear the muted rumble of approaching events. We expect them, we summon them, we prepare for them! The fate of France would be too frightful if the Calvary of its working class did not lead to a great revenge, where there will be no room for you, Jules Guesde, and for yours.

Expelled by you, I leave France with a profound faith in our triumph. Over and above your head, I send fraternal greetings to the French proletariat, which is awakening to its grand destiny.

Without you and against you.

**LONG LIVE SOCIALIST FRANCE!**

*Leon Trotsky*

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## GLOSSARY OF NAMES

**Babeuf, Francois Noel (Gracchus) (1760-1797):** Egalitarian, utopian Socialist in the French Revolution. Planned the "final revolution" called the "Conspiracy of the Equals" for 11th May 1796. Arrested on its eve, was executed a year later.

**Ballod, Karl (1864-1931):** Bourgeois economist. Professor University of Berlin from 1905. "Expert" on Russian statistics.

**Bebel, August (1840-1913):** Marxist of worker origin, Co-founder with **Wilhelm Liebknecht** of the German Social Democracy 1869. In Reichstag from 1867. Sentenced with Liebknecht to two years' imprisonment for "treason" (opposition to Franco-German War) in 1872. Leader of the German SD and the 2nd International in pre-war years.

**Bernstein, Eduard (1850-1932):** German Social Democrat; left Germany during the Anti-Socialist laws and edited Sozial Demokrat in Switzerland. Expelled from there in 1888, lived in London till 1900. He was a friend of Engels in the latter's last years and was named his literary executor, in which capacity he censored Engels' works. Reichstag Deputy 1902-1906, 1912-1918, 1920-1928. A pacifist-centrist during World War I. Founder of the Independent Social Democratic Party (USID) 1916, but returned to the Social Democracy 1919. Chief exponent of revisionism and reformism for over twenty five years, beginning 1896. Author of Evolutionary Socialism, 1899 and other works.

**Bismarck, Otto von (1815-1898):** Dominated the German and European political scene 1862-1890 as Chancellor. Unified Germany under the domination of Prussia and the Hohenzollerns. Author of the anti-Socialist laws. Dropped by Emperor [Wilhelm II](#) in March 1890.

**Blanqui, Louis Auguste (1805-1881):** French revolutionary, a romantic and colourful character, who believed in the dictatorship of the proletariat through a conspiratorial putsch. He was twice condemned to death and spent 33 of his 76 years in prison.

**Bonaparte, Louis (Napoleon III) (1808-1873):** Nephew of Napoleon I, Emperor of France 1852-1870.

**Bourderon, Albert (1858- )::** French Socialist and trade unionist. Joined the Zimmerwald movement, later moved to the Centre and advocated coalition with bourgeois governments

**Brentano, Lujo (1844-1931):** German economist, one of the "State" or "Professorial Socialists" (of the Chair), who founded the Society for Social Politics in 1873 opposed to the Social Democracy.

**Briand, Aristide (1862-1932):** Once a militant member of the French Socialist Party; fought Millerand and his "Ministerialism" but later became Minister of Education 1906-1909. Expelled from SP, he founded the Republican Socialist Party with Millerand (1911). Premier several times especially October 1915-March 1917. Delegate to the League

of Nations.

**Delcasse, Theophile (1852-1923):** French Foreign Minister 1898-1905, 1914-1916. Promoted Entente Cordiale with British.

**Fourier, Francois Marie Charles (1772-1837):** Great French Utopian Socialist. Geissler:

**Gherea, Dobrogeanu:** Rumanian Marxist. Founder and Leader of Rumanian Social Democracy.

**Guesde, Jules Basile (1845-1922):** Communard. Founder member of French. Workers Party 1879. Left wing socialist. Deputy 1893-1921. Fought reformism. and ministerialism. During the War advocated "Sacred Union" with the bourgeoisie. Minister without Portfolio August 1914 to October 1915.

**Henri (Guilbeaux 1885-1938):** Originally anarcho-syndicalist. Later French Socialist. In War, a pacifist, later left Zimmerwaldist. Supported Russian Revolution and attended Comintern Congresses (1st, 2nd and 5th). Sentenced to death in absentia 1919, amnestied 1924. Later turned anti-Soviet and anti-Semite..

**Habsburg Dynasty:** Ancient feudal ruling family taking its name from the "Habsburg" (Castle of the Hawk) of Alsace. Began with a few acres. Rudolph I (1218-1291) originally a Swiss Count, having defeated Ottoker of Hohenstauffen in 1278, was elected King of the Holy Roman Empire of 400 feudal baronies, thus acquiring Austria and its dependencies. The dynasty ruled over many peoples, but could never knit them into one nation. Between 1298 and 1499 tried to annex Switzerland and failed. In 1806 title of Holy Roman Emperor was abandoned. The male line died out in 1740 and on Maria Theresa's marriage the dynasty was known as the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. After the Ausgleich of 1867, the Habsburgs ruled over Austria-Hungary. With the Austrian Revolution Emperor Karl abdicated on November 12, 1918.

**Frederick of Hohenzollern,** Burgrave of Nuremberg was, made elector of Brandenburg in 1415. Up to 1609 Brandenburg was a barren region between the Middle Order and the Middle Elbe. In 1616, the Dukedom of Prussia, a Polish fief since 1466, devolved on Frederick William of Brandenburg, "the Great Elector". The Dynasty rose after the Peace of Westphalia 1648 with the help of France and England who backed the Protestant rulers against the Roman Catholic rulers of Austria. Under Bismarck's leadership, the dynasty emerged as the principal power in the North German Federation. After the victory against France 1870, the King of Prussia became Emperor of Germany. The Dynasty ended with the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II, on November 9th 1918.

**Jaures, Jean Auguste (1859-1914):** French Socialist leader. Founder and editor L'Humanite 1904-1914. Right Winger, Leading figure in the 2nd International. Anti-militarist. Assassinated by French officers on 31st July 1914, the eve of the War. Karageorges: The ruling family of Serbia, founded by Karageorge Petrovich who led the 1st Balkan uprising against the Ottoman Empire in 1804. [Obrenoviches](#) alternation of rulership between them. Peter Karageorge took power in Belgrade by coup d'etat in 1903. Grandson Peter was the last King of Yugoslavia.

**Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-1864):** German socialist. Founder of the General Association of German Workers (1863). As the only leading German Socialist of his generation not forced into exile, he was able despite his shortcomings, to exert a great influence on the German working class movement. His followers later helped form the German Social Democracy.

**Liebkecht, Karl (1871-1919):** Left Wing German Social Democrat. Member German Reichstag and Prussian Landtag. Anti-militarist. He was the first, and only, Deputy to oppose war credits in the Reichstag in 1914. Drafted during the war, he was imprisoned for anti-war activity, May 1916 to November 1918. Leader "International Group" and later, "Spartacus League". One of the leaders of the Berlin uprising 1919. Assassinated by counterrevolutionary soldiers, January 15th 1919, with Rosa Luxemburg.

**Liebkecht, Willi (1826-1900):** Friend of Marx, founder and leader of the German Social Democracy. Reichstag Deputy. Jailed 1872 for Opposition to the Franco-Prussian War.

**Lloyd-George, David (1863-1945):** Welsh M.P. Premier of Great Britain 1916- 1922.

**Longuet, Jean (1876-1938):** Marx's grandson. French Socialist. Led Party minority 1914-1918. Member Chamber of Deputies 1914-1919. Editor Le Populaire, later L'Humanite. One of the organizers of the Two-and-a-half International. Later rejoined the Second. Trotsky had occasion to call him "Marx's physical grandson."

**Luxemburg, Rosa (1870-1919):** Polish Socialist. Joined German Social Democracy 1897. With Karl Liebknecht led Left Wing. Brilliant theoretician (Lenin called her "an eagle"). Imprisoned many times for anti-war activity. Leader of the "Spartacists" and founder of the German Communist Party. Assassinated by reactionary officers January 15th, 1919.

**Mehring, Franz (1846-1919):** German scholar and historian. In later life joined the Social Democracy and was leading member of the left wing. Spartacist and founder German CP. Author of biography of Karl Marx, and history of Social Democracy. Died soon after assassination of Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

**Obrenovich:** Alternative ruling family of Serbia (to the Karageorges). Dynasty founded by Milos (1780-1860) who ruled 1830-39 and 1858-1860. Son, Milan ruled 1868-89. Grandson Alexander (1876-1903), the last of the dynasty was assassinated with his wife 1903.

**Plekhanov, George Valentinovich (1856-1918):** Pioneer Russian Marxist. Patriot in World War I, and opposed Russian Revolution 1917.

**Poincare, Raymond Nicholas Landry (1860-1934):** Premier of France 1912, 1922-24, 1926-29. President 1913-1920. Militant.

**Rakovsky, Christian Georgierich (1873-1941?):** Bulgarian by birth. Member Rumanian Social Democracy since the 1890s. Zimmerwaldist. Imprisoned 1916 for anti-war activity. Released by Russian troops 1917, went to Russia and joined the Communists. Held various Government and diplomatic posts. As friend of Trotsky, expelled 1938. Reinstated later. Sentenced to prison 1938. Said to have died 1941.

**Rappoport, Charles (1865- )::** Member Russian "People's Will", later the Social Democracy. Emigrated to France, member Socialist Party and later Communist Party. Renaudel, Pierre (1871-1935): Left wing French Socialist. During War led Majority. Deputy 1914-1919 and after 1924.

**Romanovs:** Ruling dynasty of Russia 1613-1917.

**Rosmer, Alfred (1877-1964):** French syndicalist. Leader CGT minority. Zimmerwaldist. Joined French CP 1920. Member ECCI, 1920. Close friend of Trotsky till the end.

**Saint-Simon, Claude Henri (1760-1825):** French Utopian Socialist.

**Sand, Karl Ludwig:** Jena theology student who was executed for the assassination of Kotzebue in 1819. For a time young maidens in Mannheim offered wreaths at the place of execution.

**Sembat, Marcel (1862-1922):** French Socialist. Deputy from 1893. Chauvinist in War. Joined Cabinet of National Defence as Minister of Public Works August 1914-September 1917.

**Steffens, Lincoln (1866-1936):** American journalist. Came into prominence with his exposure of St. Louis in McClure's Magazine in October 1902. Theodore Roosevelt borrowing the description from the Pilgrim's Progress called him a "muckraker". Visited Russia in May 1917, and was enthusiastic about the Revolution. In his last years was also enthusiastic about Mussolini.

**Thomas, Albert (1878-1932):** French Socialist. Deputy 1910-1914, 1919-1921. Minister 1914-1917. Visited Russia in Spring 1917 in attempt to get revolutionary Russia to resume the War.

**Wilhelm II (1859-1941):** German Emperor 1888-1918. Last Hohenzollern ruler. Overthrown by the November 1918 revolution, retired to Holland. Wilhelm (1882-1951): Son of Wilhelm II, Crown Prince of Germany.

**Zetkin, Clara (1857-1933):** Left Wing German Social Democrat. Organizer of women's movement. Founder German CP. Active in Comintern Executive Member Reichstag.

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## NOTES FOR PART III

**36. The General Association of German Workers** was founded at Leipzig on 23rd March 1863. President: Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864), Vice-President: Dr. Otto Dammer, Secretary: Karl Julius Valteich, a shoemaker,(1839-1915) .

**37. The Paris Commune:** Following France's defeat in the war of 1870-71, the workers of Paris seized power. On March 28, 1871 the Commune was declared. It was drowned in blood May 21-28, 1871. Some 20,000 to 30,000 Communards, including women and children, were killed, 270 executed after "trial", 400 jailed, 7000 transported from the country. The Commune marked the end of monarchy in France and the beginning of the Third Republic. The International Workingmen's Association (the First International) was founded by Marx and Engels in 1864. In its "first phase" it served as the rallying point of various European national sections. After the Paris Commune, in 1872, the centre was moved to New York. It was dissolved in 1876.

**38. Chartism:** An English movement for parliamentary reform (universal male suffrage, annual parliaments, vote by ballot, payment of MPs, equal electorate, abolition of property qualification, etc.) began in 1838 as a campaign to collect signatures to the People's Charter. it had some violent episodes (24 killed at Manchester and Newport on November 3, 1839). had its ups and downs and flared up finally in April 1848.

**39. In the Summer of 1866** British Railways tried to import cheap Belgian labour. The First International committed itself to stop blacklegging. (See Minutes of the General Council 1866-68, p. 333).

**40. Although the Stuttgart Conference of the Second International (1907)** was able to achieve unanimity on the attitude to war, on the colonial question it was sharply divided. An anti-colonial resolution was passed 127 to 108, with the Germans (though divided among themselves) voting solidly for the 'colonialists'.

**41. In September 1914,** the Cathedral of Rheims, where ever; French King from Clovis to Louis XVI had been crowned, was shelled by German gun.

**42. Lassalle** made his famous analysis of the essence of constitutions in a speech to a Berlin audience on April 16, 1862.

**43.** In the first allocation of commissariats after the October Insurrection Trotsky was appointed Commissar of Foreign Affairs. He resigned at the end of February 1918 after the Brest crisis. The next month he was appointed Commissar for War.

**44. The Industrial Workers of the World,** a militant anarcho-syndicalist union, formed in 1905. Members include Eugene V. Debs, Daniel De Leon, John Reed, James P. Cannon and Mother Jones.

**45. The Stockholm Peace Conference** was the last of the Zimmerwald series and took place in 1917. The Bolsheviks boycotted it.

**46. Trotsky was in New York** from 13th January 1917 to 27th March 1917.

**47. The Zimmerwald (anti-war) Conference** was held in Switzerland in September 1915. Though only 42 delegates attended, (four coaches held them all, Trotsky relates) the Conference laid the foundations for a new, the Third International.

**48. The Stuttgart Conference of the Second International** took place in 1907, (See Note 40): the Copenhagen Conference in 1910, and the Basle Conference in November 1912.

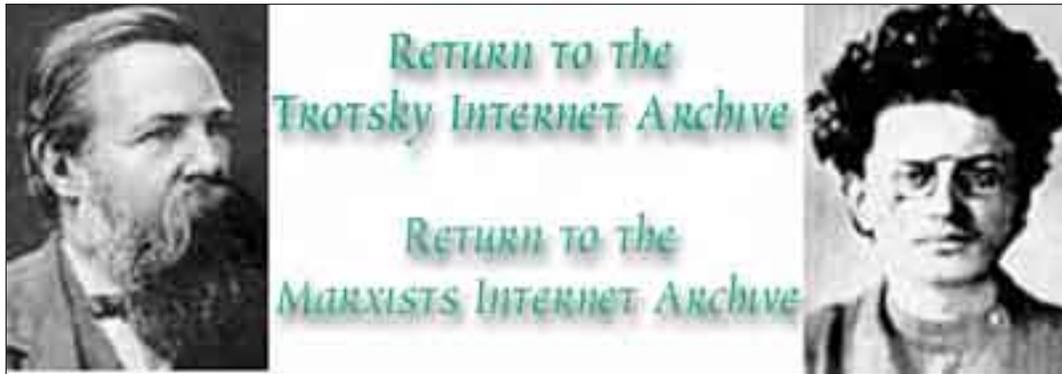
**49. The International Socialist Bureau** was the executive of the Second international established by the Paris Congress of 1900 with Headquarters in Brussels.

**50. Nashe Slovo (Our Word)** published in Paris by unemployed Russian printers from January 29, 1915 to October 15, 1916, succeeded *Gobs (The Voice)* and was succeeded by *Nacizalo (The Beginning)*. It ran 213 numbers. Trotsky arrived in France from Switzerland late in November 1914.

**51. Marcel Sembat** was French Minister of Public Works 1914-1916.

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## 1820-1910

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[Karl Marx & Fredrick Engels](#) (1819-1893) 1,000+ ★

Founders of Marxist practice and philosophy. Established the ground work of Marxism through an examination of the rise of capitalism, the history of society, and critique of many prevalent philosophies. Established the First International Workers' organisation.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Joseph Dietzgen](#) (1828-1888) < 5

Created dialectical materialism independently of Marx & Engels, but on seeing their writings became their most ardent supporter. His main contributions were using dialectics to elaborate epistemology.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[William Morris](#) (1834-1896) 100+

Helped create the Socialist League (with E. Marx). An artist who became a revolutionary communist through his search to address the lack of creative and artistic freedom allowed in the capitalist work process. Wrote fiction on far in the future Communist societies.

[August Bebel](#) (1840-1913) < 5 ★

Co-founder of the German Social Democracy with Wilhelm Liebknecht in 1869. Part of the Reichstag from 1867. Outstandingly argued for the emancipation of women's rights before capitalism could be overthrown. Wrote about the workings of future Socialist society.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Antonio Labriola](#) (1843-1904) < 5

Among the first Italian Marxists, he was a writer and philosopher. Criticized the theories of Hegel, Nietzsche, Croce, and neo-Kantiansim.

[Jenny Marx Longuet](#) (1844-1883) < 5

Fought for Irish independence from England. Detailed the atrocities against Irish political prisoners in England. Braved a narrow escape from France after the massacres of the Paris Commune. Marx's eldest daughter.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Franz Mehring](#) (1846-1919) < 5

A leader of the German Social Democrats, literary critic, writer and historian. Thoroughly critiqued and dismantled capitalist philosophies. Later a member of the Spartacist League and then helped found the Communist Party of Germany.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Daniel DeLeon](#) (1852 - 1914) 40+

Helped create the IWW. Developed one of the most detailed outlines of how Socialist society should function. Believed that democratic control of all industries and services must be held by workers organised into industrial unions.

[Paul Lafargue](#) (1841-1911) 5+

A member of the [Paris Commune](#). Staunch advocate of Women's rights, wrote also on the history of religion, morals, literature, language, and comedy. Married to Marx's second daughter, Laura.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

## 1850-1930

[Karl Kautsky](#) (1854-1938) 10+

Helped create the German Social-Democracy, one of the best-known theoreticians of the Second International, and a leading proponent of Marx & Engels after their death. During and after World War I he became a pacifist.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Eugene Debs](#) (1855-1926) 20+

Helped build the American Railway Union, and later the American Socialist Party. Arrested for his political criticism of WWI, he ran for U.S. President while a political prisoner and received almost a million votes.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Eleanor Marx](#) (1855-1898) 10+

Helped formed the Socialist League (with W. Morris), and wrote extensively in its paper. Wrote extensively on women's issues. Organizing, writer, record-keeper, and speaker for militant trade unions such as the Gasworkers, and the Dockers Union.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Georgi Plekhanov](#) (1856-1918) 5+

Helped create the Russian Social-Democratic party, becoming a Menshevik after the split in the party, but he tried to keep the party united. Believed that capitalism need to grow up before socialism was possible; thus he opposed the Soviet government.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Clara Zetkin](#) (1857-1933) < 5

Leader of the international women's movement. National Executive member of the German Social Democratic party. Long time comrade of Rosa Luxemburg, helped create the Spartacists and German Communist Party. Supported the Soviet government.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[James Connolly](#) (1868-1916) 150+

Helped create the Irish Socialist Republican Party in 1896; served as Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union. Executed for his leading role in the Easter Rising.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Maxim Gorky](#) (1868-1936) 5+

World-renown writer of fiction, Gorky first focused on the plight of societal outcasts in Russia, then turned his attention to the struggles of the working class.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Christopher Hill](#) (1912-) 1

English Marxist historian.

[Nadezhada Krupskaya](#) (1869-1939) < 5

Bolshevik Revolutionary. Writer, educator and Secretary of the Party. Wife and advisor to V.I. Lenin. Secretary to the Board of Iskra beginning in 1901. Brought recognition of International Women's day

to Russia.  
[\[Full Biography\]](#)

## 1870-1960

[Vladimir Lenin](#) (1870-1924) 500+ ★

Helped create the Bolshevik party. Led the Soviets to power in the [Russian Revolution](#). Elected to the head of the Soviet government until 1922, when he retired due to ill health. Created the Communist International. Created the theory of Imperialism, emphasised the importance of the political party as vanguard in the revolution.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[David Riazanov](#) (1870-1938) < 5

Historian and Archivist of Marxism, helped create the Marx-Engels Institute. Political prisoner of Stalinism, died in prison.

[Rosa Luxemburg](#) (1871-1919) 20+ ★

Championed the idea of the mass strike. Tireless opponent of WWI, she renounced the German Social Democracy, helped to create the Spartacus League, and later the German Communist Party. Critical of the Soviet government. Assassinated by the German military.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Alexandra Kollontai](#) (1872-1952) 30+ ★

Bolshevik Revolutionary. Led the Workers' Opposition, which opposed party control of trade unions and believed in industrial unionism. First woman ambassador in history. Proponent of free love, she wrote extensively on women's and other social issues.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Christian Rakovsky](#) (1873-1941) 5+

President of Soviet Ukraine, worked to make the Soviet Ukrainian identity independent of Russia. Helped create the [Left Opposition](#),

[Leon Trotsky](#) (1879-1940) 100+ ★

First Menshevik, later Bolshevik Revolutionary. As commissar of war led the Red Army to defeat the Entente in their invasion of Soviet Russia. Helped create the [Left Opposition](#) to overthrow Stalin and stop the monstrous atrocities he'd soon commit. Created the theory of the Permanent Revolution, and the Fourth International.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Anton Pannekoek](#) (1873-1960) < 5

Dutch astronomer. Helped form a Marxist party in the Netherlands. Member of the German Social Democratic party.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Anatoly Lunacharsky](#) (1875-1933) 5+

Bolshevik Revolutionary, outstanding orator. Commissar for Education in the Soviet government. Historian and archivist of Russia, he wrote extensive, personal biographical portraits on the leaders of the revolution.

[John MacLean](#) (1879-1923) 15+

Scottish schoolteacher and Marxist educator. His evening-classes produced many of the activists who became instrumental in the Clyde revolts during and after WWI. Soviet Consul to Scotland.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Henri Wallon](#) (1879-1962) 5+

European Psychologist who elaborated a systematic Marxist psychology.

seen as its ideological leader. Explained Socialist economics. Political prisoner of Stalinism, died in prison.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

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## 1880-1970

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[Natalia Sedova](#) (1882-1962) < 5

Russian Revolutionary. Worked with Lenin and Trotsky on pre-revolutionary Bolshevik newspaper Iskra. Publicly split with Fourth International in 1951. Wife of Leon Trotsky.

[Gregory Zinoviev](#) (1883-1936) < 5

Bolshevik. With Kamenev, opposed the plans for a revolution. Allied with Stalin and Kamenev against Trotskyism. Later, allied with Trotsky against Stalin. Wrote about the history of the party. Executed by Stalin.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Louise Bryant](#) (1885 - 1936) < 5

American Revolutionary, supporter of the Soviet government. Historian of the revolution. Tireless advocate to stop U.S. invasion of Soviet Russia. Wife of John Reed.

[Georg Lukacs](#) (1885-1971) 5+ ★

Hungarian philosopher, writer, and literary critic. Commissar for Culture and Education in Hungary's short-lived Socialist government (1919). Helped lead the Hungarian uprising of 1956 against Stalinist repression. Created Marxist theory of aesthetics that opposed political control of artists, defended humanism, elaborated alienation.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[John Reed](#) (1887-1920) 20+

American Revolutionary, supporter of the Soviet government. Historian of the revolution. Tireless advocate to stop U.S. invasion of Soviet Russia. Husband of Louise Bryant.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Nikolai Bukharin](#) (1888-1938) 5+

Bolshevik Revolutionary. Editor of Pravda (1928-29). Joined Stalin against Trotsky, then led the Right Opposition against Stalin. A theoretical leader of the party, focused heavily on economics, and wrote on market socialism. Executed by Stalin.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[James Cannon](#) (1890-1974) < 5

American, IWW organiser, later helped create the US Communist Party. In the 1920s became a Trotskyist, and helped create the US Socialist Workers Party.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Antonio Gramsci](#) (1891-1937) 50+ ★

Helped create the Italian Communist Party. Arrested in 1926 for his revolutionary activities and sentenced by a fascist court to 20 years imprisonment. Theorized key concepts such as hegemony, base and superstructure, organic intellectuals, and war of position.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[José Carlos Mariátegui](#) (1894 - 1930) 5+

Peruvian Professor. Self-educated. Historian of European Marxism and movements in South America.

[Lev Vygotsky](#) (1896-1934) 5+

Soviet Psychologist who founded the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) school of human development.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

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## 1900-1980

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[Erich Fromm](#) (1900-1980) 5+

German-born U.S. psychoanalyst and social philosopher who explored the interaction between psychology and society. By applying Freudian principles to social problems, Fromm helped show the way to a psychologically balanced, "sane society."

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Pandelis Pouliopoulos](#) (1900-1943) < 5

Italian Trotskyist. Lead mass movements of veterans and defended workers in court. Wrote extensively about Trotsky. Shot dead by fascists while in prison.

[CLR James](#) (1901 - 1989) 15+

African American. Lucid dialectician, historian, novelist, & playwright. Stressed the importance of Afro-American workers to the revolutionary movement, for saw the civil rights movement decades before it got underway.

[Alexander Luria](#) (1902-1977) < 5

The creator of neuropsychology. Soviet Psychologist who made advances in cognitive psychology, the processes of learning and forgetting, and mental retardation. Charted the way in which damage to specific areas of the brain affect behavior.

[Alexei Leont'ev](#) (1904-1979) < 5

Soviet Psychologist who developed his own theory of activity which linked social context to development.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Max Shachtman](#) (1904-1872) 20+

American Communist Party, then helped create the American Trotskyist movement. Left the SWP and joined the Socialist Party.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[George Novack](#) (1905-198?) < 5

American Trotskyist....

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Raya Dunayevskaya](#) (1910-1987) < 5

American Russian Trotskyist, Humanist. Secretary to Trotsky, translated many Marx, Engels and Lenin. Critiqued Lenin's theory of the Party being the vanguard.

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Michel Pablo](#) (1911-1996) 5+

International Secretary of Fourth International after WWII. Minister in Ben Bella's Socialist government of Algeria. Developed theory of "centuries of deformed workers states".

[\[Full Biography\]](#)

[Hal Draper](#) (1914-1990) 5+

American Trotskyist....

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## 1920-2000

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[Evald Ilyenkov](#) (1924 - 1979) 5+  
Soviet philosopher. Charted the materialist development of Hegel's dialectics. Wrote extensively on dialectics, the Metaphysics of Positivism, and The Dialectics of the Abstract and Concrete in Marx's Capital.  
[[Full Biography](#)]

[Che Guevara](#) (1928-1967) 10+ ★  
International Revolutionary. Helped create and maintain the Cuban Revolution. Creatively tried to establish socialism in Cuba, worked tirelessly to create revolutions throughout Africa and South America. Created the guerilla foco theory -- building a revolutionary movement through militant resistance instead of party building.  
[[Full Biography](#)]

[István Mészáros](#) (1930-) < 5  
Economist....

[Felix Mikhailov](#) (1930-) < 5  
Soviet Psychologist. Carried on the work begun by Lev Vygotsky, specifically in the area of epistemology.  
[[Full Biography](#)]

[Geoff Pilling](#) (1940-1997)

...

[Daniil El'konin](#) (unknown)  
Soviet Psychologist who developed Activity Theory along the lines of cultural-historical leading activities such as emotional contact, play, learning, social contact, and work.

[Lucien Seve](#) (unknown) < 5  
French psychologist. Developed a science of human personality based on historical-materialism.

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