

THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

BY
ULYANOV-LENIN.

TRANSLATED BY A. SIRNIS.



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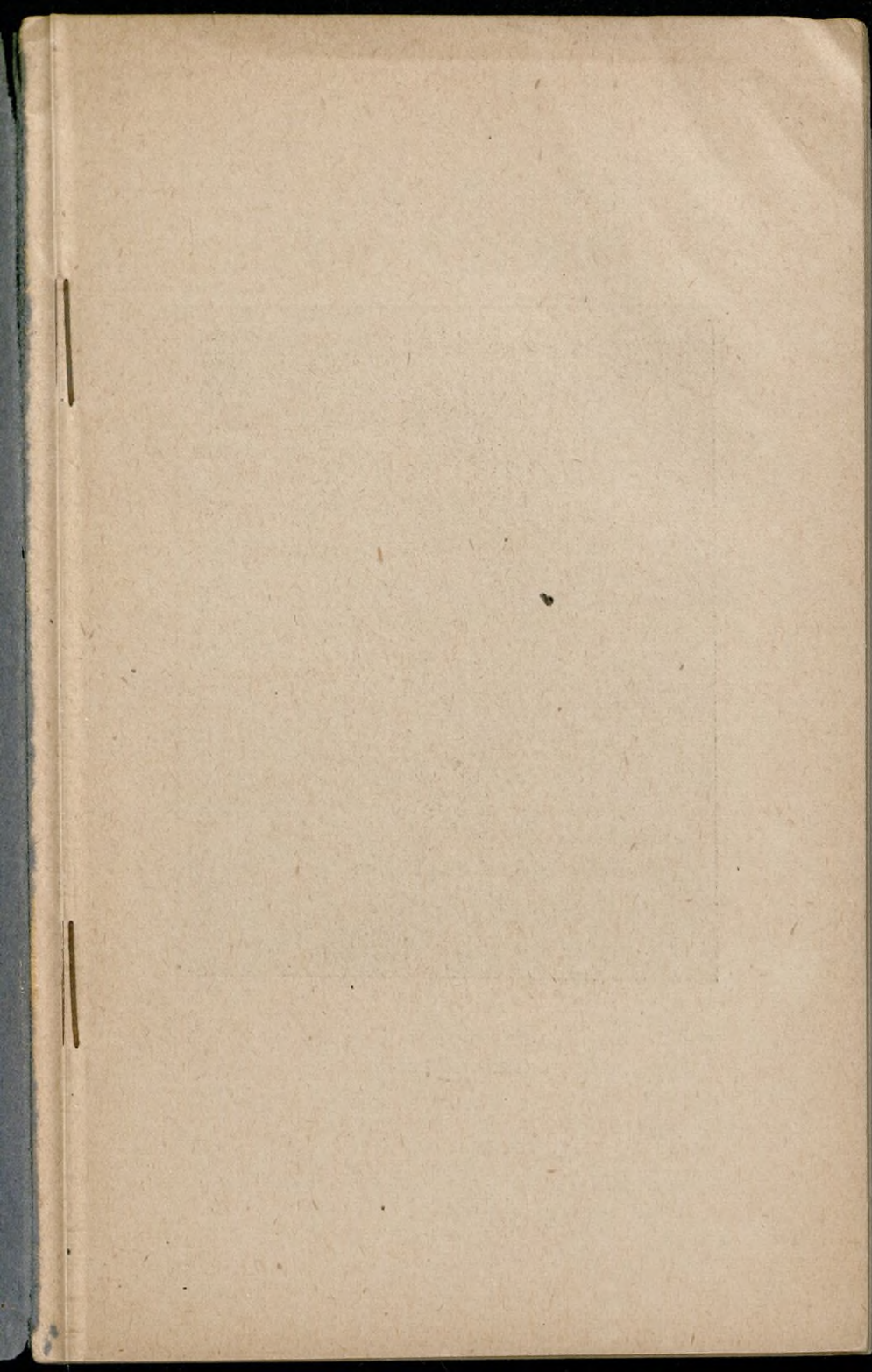
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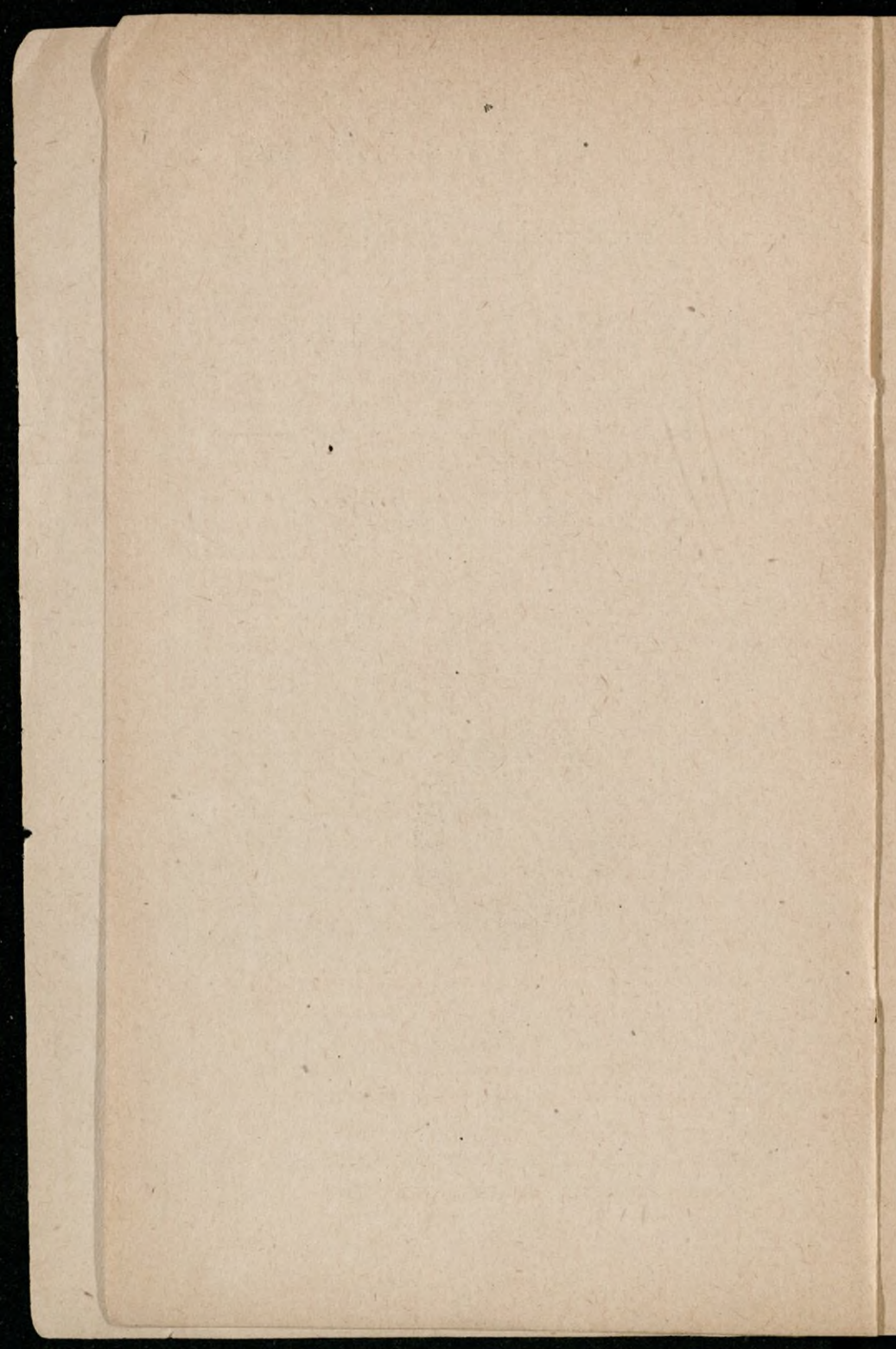
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(1919)



PUBLISHERS' FOREWORD.

We gladly reproduce this little work of Lenin's as a valuable contribution to the literature of International Socialism, especially since discussion upon the causes which led to "the collapse of the second international" have taken place, particularly amongst the "extremists," ever since the war broke out and drove the various Socialist parties back to the confines of their national boundaries. Such a work as the following, coming as it does from the representative head of the proletarian dictatorship, which is extending its grip over Europe, will prove not only interesting because of the personality of the writer, but will provoke discussion upon the tactics as presently pursued by the various sections of International Socialism. It will also aid considerably towards an understanding as to why the second international collapsed.

Undoubtedly, the marvellous capacity of our Russian comrades, not only to maintain their social revolution at home, but to extend it in spite of the tremendous forces of bourgeois reaction and intrigue, will go down in history as one of the world's achievements.

That men and women going through the stress and strain of such a herculean task of social revolution should find time, besides attending to the actual machinery of administration, to make provision for the minutest detail in social life, will assuredly command the admiration and respect of all Socialists whether of the "Right" or "Left," and prove a source of inspiration to International Socialism generally.

To Lenin and Trotsky, as well as the vast numbers of the proletariat in Russia, the Socialist movement is not a mere playground for intellectual dilettantes nor an avenue for unscrupulous place-hunters to achieve a political career. On the contrary, it represents the systematic opposition to all forms of bourgeois institutions and ought to assume the responsibility for social revolution as offered by opportunity.

"Socialist parties are not mere glorified debating clubs, but are fighting organisations of the proletariat," says Lenin, and on this ground his criticism of the leaders of the "Second International" in general and the German S.D.P. in particular is perfectly justified. Every crisis, he maintains, whether of a political or economic character, provides a "revolutionary situation" and should be the signal for energetic action on the part of the Socialist parties to damage or bring about the downfall of their respective bourgeois Governments.

Consequently the great betrayal of the "second international" is seen to consist in a positive failure to take such "energetic action," likewise a failure to adhere to the actual terms of the Basle resolution of 1912 and use the war situation for purposes of proletarian conquest. This failure was a clear indication that the several parties had not yet shed themselves of that "opportunism born of a belief in the bourgeois parliamentarism."

Even yet, particularly here in Great Britain, there is a hesitation to throw off this faith in parliamentarism or "national assemblies." This was conspicuous in the recent attempt made by the S.L.P. to bring about unity between the three parties (S.L.P., B.S.P. and I.L.P.) on the basis of revolutionary mass action.

The decision of the I.L.P. representatives to adhere to parliamentary constitutionalism and moribund craft organisation on the industrial field proves that party to be still wrapped up in the bourgeois opportunist policy which has been characteristic of the I.L.P. since its inception—a policy which has been largely responsible for the creation of the reactionary Labour Party and providing one of the strongest bulwarks in this country against revolutionary Socialism.

Such a policy of "Evolutionary Socialism" is easily understood, especially where no effort is made to encourage Bolshevism, either at home or abroad. But what reason, we ask, is there for the continued existence of an entity like the B.S.P., whose policy, as stated at the Unity Conference, notwithstanding its pose as being Bolshevistic, is identical with the Independent Labour Party?

The Socialist Labour Party has perceived for some time now that "Socialism in Europe has entered the stage of revolutionary action; and that it is high time that complete rupture with opportunism be effected and the latter turned out of the workers' parties."

Such indeed was the spirit in which we entered the discussion upon unity. We have found both the I.L.P. and the B.S.P. are still in "bondage" to bourgeois opportunism and wallowing in the slough of ministerial parliamentarism. We had hoped to create a movement which would be capable of releasing the forces of revolution in this country while building up the machinery of fulfilment. We now know that so far as the "leaders" of these parties are concerned that that time is not yet.

Nevertheless we have faith in the disturbing periods which lie before us that the very intensity of the

struggle will submerge or sweep aside all the forces or parties which cross the path of the oncoming militant proletariat and will create a "situation" favourable to social revolution.

Meanwhile the S.L.P. will help forward the growth of revolutionary mass action, and by combating the "bourgeois Labour opportunism" outside its ranks will seek to bring into line, and harness the elements of revolution here in Great Britain towards the triumph of International Socialism.

In conclusion we have to acknowledge our indebtedness to our late comrade, Alexander Sirnis, for this translation, which was somewhat interrupted by his unexpected decease.

S.L. PRESS.

The Collapse of the Second International.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

By the collapse of the International is sometimes meant the interruption of the intercourse between the Socialist parties of the warring countries, the suspension of the meetings of the International Socialist bureau, International Congresses, and so forth. This is the viewpoint of some Socialists, perhaps of the majority of the official parties and especially of the opportunists and their supporters.

In the Russian press (vide : *The Information Leaflet* of the "Bund")* Kossovsky takes up the defence of this view with a frankness that deserves our heartfelt gratitude. Nevertheless, the editors fail to indicate their disagreement with the author's viewpoint. Kossovsky went so far as to justify the German Social-Democrats who voted the war-credits. Let us hope that his defence of Nationalism will open the eyes of many workmen as to the capitalist-nationalist outlook of the "Bund."

To class-conscious workers, Socialism is a serious conviction and is not a cloak to cover up conciliatory middle-class aspirations or opposition to the Government along Nationalist lines. By the collapse of the International, these workers mean the scandalous betrayal by a majority of the official Social-Democratic parties of their convictions and solemn declarations made at the International Socialist Congresses of Stuttgart and Basle, and embodied in resolutions passed at these congresses. Only those fail to see this treason who do not *wish* to see it. Only those refuse to observe this betrayal whose interests are bound up in not recognising it.

* A Jewish Social-Democratic organisation in Russia and Poland.—
Translator.

Looking at the matter scientifically, *i.e.*, from the viewpoint of the relationship of the different classes in modern society, we are obliged to say that the majority of the social democratic parties went over to the side of the rulers' general staffs and governments in opposition to the working class. The lead in this direction was given by the German social democracy, which was the largest and most influential party in the second International. This event is of world-historic importance, and we propose to subject it to a searching analysis.

We recognise that wars, despite the horrors and calamities which they breed, are more or less useful in so far as they reveal and make for the destruction of much that is rotten and obsolete within social institutions. Further, the European war has done mankind a service, because it has revealed the undoubted weaknesses inherent in organisations of the working class. And the European war has already demonstrated that a loathsome cancer is gnawing at the very vitals of the Labour movement—a cancer as dangerous as it is evil smelling.

CHAPTER II.

THE BETRAYAL OF SOCIALISM BY THE SOCIALIST PARTIES.

Is there evidence that the principal Socialist parties of Europe have betrayed all their convictions and duties? The traitors, and those who know or vaguely guess that they will have to be friends with the former in the future, do not care to discuss the matter at all. But however disagreeable it may prove to various "authorities" of the second International, or to their friends amongst the Russian social democrats, we, who care more for socialism than anything else, must face the question squarely, must call things by their true names, and must not be afraid to tell the workers the truth.

Is there any material evidence showing how the socialist parties viewed their duties and tactics before the present war broke out, or even in anticipation of a world war? Certainly. We have the famous resolution* passed by the International Socialist Congress at Basle in 1912. We reprint that resolution, together with one passed at Chemnitz in the same year by the German Social Democrats.†

The Basle resolution is a reminder of the forgotten words of International Socialism. It sums up the contents of an enormous quantity of propagandist literature circulated in every country prior to the war. It represents a most complete and formal statement of the Socialist view of war, and of Socialist tactics in relation to war. We cannot help characterising as a betrayal the fact that not one of the authorities of the International of yesterday, who are the Socialist jingoes of to-day—men like Guesde, Kautsky, Hyndman and Plekhanov—dare remind his readers of the Basle resolution. They either pass it over in silence, or they only quote passages of secondary importance, and leave everything out that is essential, as is done by Kautsky.

The fact that the most radical and revolutionary resolutions have been shamelessly forgotten, or repu-

* This historic document will be found as an appendix at end of the book on page —.

† This appears on page 72 as No. 2 appendix.

diated, is the most striking sign of the collapse of the second International. It is also a most striking proof that only men who are either hopelessly vain, or who desire to preserve the old hypocritical attitude, can now believe in merely "correcting socialism," or in a policy of "straightening its line."

When, before the war—we can almost say yesterday—Hyndman took up the defence of imperialism, every "decent" Socialist regarded him as a crank and spoke of him with undisguised contempt. To day the most prominent leaders of social democracy in all countries have sunk to Hyndman's level, the difference between them and the latter being but one of degree and temperament. It is impossible to use parliamentary language when criticising and condemning the lack of moral courage of the men who write in the *Nashe Slovo* and who speak contemptuously of "Mr." Hyndman, but who pass over in silence the utterances of *Comrade* Kautsky. Is this attitude towards Kautsky one of veneration—or is it servility? If we are convinced that Hyndman's crude jingoism is as false as it is dangerous, then we should be more critical and more severe in our indictment of Kautsky in so far as his subtle and clever apology for imperialism is much more ruinous than the clumsy defence put forward by Mr. Hyndman.

In a pamphlet by Charles Dumas, entitled *What Kind of Peace do we Desire*, the views of Guesde* are set forth in great detail by one of his disciples, who designates himself as the "head of Jules Guesde's Bureau." This author naturally enough "quotes" former patriotic declarations of Socialists. Likewise, the German Socialist-jingo, David, also "quotes" imperialistic statements, in his pamphlet on National Defence, which have been uttered by Socialists. But these writers never "quote" the famous Basle manifesto. Plekhanov, too, passes over the Basle manifesto and soothes himself by quoting, with an air of self-satisfaction, disgusting jingo banalities. And Kautsky follows Plekhanov's example. When either Kautsky or Plekhanov do quote the Basle manifesto, they omit the essential paragraphs of that historic document, which emphasises the true revolutionary position. They may probably plead that these significant passages are omitted out of deference to the censor! Thus the police and

* Jules Guesde, the pre-war leader of Revolutionary Socialism in France, who has since gone over to the imperialists and joined the government.

military authorities render timely assistance to the traitors of Socialism in issuing their censorial decrees, which forbids one to speak of the class struggle and of revolutionary activity.

Perhaps, it may be stated, the Basle manifesto is merely a rhetorical appeal without substance and devoid of either historical significance or tactical value. The reverse is the case. In the Basle resolution there is less rhetoric and more concrete substance than in any other Socialist resolution. In it are references to the war which is now upon us. It speaks definitely of the imperialist conflicts which afterwards burst into open war in 1914-15. It critically examines the Austro-Serbian conflict over Albania. It deals with the Anglo-German struggle for markets and colonies. It analyses the Russo-Turkish quarrel over Armenia and Constantinople. The Basle resolution emphatically refers to the present war between the "great powers of Europe." And it also distinctly points out that such a war cannot be justified by Socialist principles, nor by the supine plea that it is being waged in the interests of the people.

Let us take Plekhanov and Kautsky, two of the most typical Socialist authorities nearest at hand. The former writes in Russian and the latter's works are translated into Russian by our opportunists. They both search—with the assistance of Axelrod—for sundry "national justifications" of the war. These declarations are, to speak more correctly, mere vulgar justifications culled from the capitalist gutter press. With learned mien, backed up by a series of distorted quotations from Marx to serve as "examples," Plekhanov and Kautsky set forth their case. Plekhanov uses Marx where he refers to the wars of 1813 and 1870. Kautsky likewise utilises Marx's references to the wars of 1854, 1871, 1876-7 and 1889. Only men who are devoid of all Socialist conviction and conscience could seriously put forth such arguments. One cannot help protesting against such unheard of jesuitism, hypocrisy and general prostitution of Socialism.

Let the Executive Committee of the German S.D.P. hurl anathema against the *Internazionale*, the new paper issued by Mehring and Rosa Luxemburg, because it exposes Kautsky in his true colours. Let Vandervelde, Hyndman, Plekhanov and Co., with the assistance of the Triple Entente, treat their opponents in a similar fashion. In answer, we retaliate by reprinting the Basle

Manifesto,* which exposes the change of front by the leaders of Socialism, which can only be designated by one word—treason.

The Basle resolution does not speak of a national, or of a people's war. We have examples of such wars during the period 1789-1871. The Basle resolution does not speak of a revolutionary war, which has never been repudiated by Social democrats. It deals with wars such as *the present one*, waged by both groups of the warring powers in the interest of capitalist imperialism and dynasties. Both the Austro-German and the Anglo-Franco-Russian group pursue a policy of conquest. Kautsky, Plekhanov and Co. practice downright deception on the workers when they repeat the interested lies spread by the bourgeoisie of every country, which does its best to represent this predatory imperialist colonial war as a people's defensive war—defensive in some way or other. Kautsky and Plekhanov also practice deception when they seek to justify this war by referring to historical examples of wars of a non-imperialist nature.

The purely predatory imperialist and anti-working class nature of the present war has long since ceased to be a purely theoretical question. Imperialism has been denounced in its main features as the struggle of a perishing, decrepit, and rotten bourgeoisie for the division of the world and seeking to enslave "small" nations. This argument has been presented thousands of times in the vast newspaper press of the Socialist movement in every country. In his pamphlet, *The Impending War*, the Frenchman, Delaise, who represents a nation allied to us, explained in a popular way the predatory nature of this war and of the part to be played by the French bourgeoisie. More than that, representatives of the working class parties in every land unanimously and formally expressed their firm conviction that the impending war would be of an imperialistic character, and accordingly drew certain tactical deductions therefrom.

We must reject, therefore, as sophisms statements to the effect that the difference between national and international tactics has not been sufficiently discussed by the Socialist movement.† This is, we repeat, a mere sophism. A many-sided and scientific discussion of imperialism had begun. The discussion upon

* See appendix, page 66.

† See latest interview with Axelrod in *Nashe Slovo*, Nos. 87 and 90.

imperialism and its relation to capitalism is as endless as the general discussion upon any scientific phenomena. But the discussion regarding the foundation of Socialist tactics against capitalist imperialism is a different matter, because such tactics had already been explained and stated in millions of copies of Socialist newspapers and in the decisions of the International. The Socialist parties are not mere glorified debating clubs, but are the fighting organisations of the proletariat. When a number of battalions pass over to the enemy we cannot term them anything else than traitors. We must not be misled with fallacy that everyone views imperialism from a different standpoint. It is only jingoes like Kautsky and Cunow who can write learned volumes on the subject and plead that "the question has not yet been sufficiently discussed." The study of capitalism in all the ramifications of its historic development, and its national peculiarities, will never be exhausted. Learned men, and particularly pedants, will never cease to discuss the present mode of production in all its little details. But it would be more than ridiculous for Socialists to renounce their struggle against capitalism because many details of the system are capable of standing further discussion. Nevertheless, so far as imperialism is concerned, that is exactly what Kautsky, Cunow and Axelrod are doing. And since the war began, none of the critics have attempted to critically analyse the Basle resolution, or to show wherein it errs.

CHAPTER III.

THE REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION.

DID sincere Socialists stand up for the Balse resolution because they foresaw that the war would create a revolutionary situation? Has the trend of events proved that these Socialists have been wrong?

Cunow, in his pamphlet, *Has the Party Collapsed?* and in a series of articles, tries to justify his passing over to the bourgeois camp by means of arguing from the above proposition. Most of the Socialist jingoes, led by Kautsky, attempt to reinforce their case by a similar line of reasoning. Cunow contends that the expectation that a revolution would break out proved to be an illusion, and it is not the duty of Marxians to defend illusions. Nevertheless, this adherent of Struve* does not say a word about the "illusions" of the men who signed the Basle manifesto; like an "honourable" man he seeks to put the blame on men of the extreme left like Pannehoek and Radek.

Let us examine the argument that the authors of the Basle manifesto sincerely believed in the coming of a revolution, which the actual trend of events did not justify. The Basle manifesto says: (1) That the war will create an "economic and political crisis," (2) that the workers will regard as a crime the participation in the war and "shooting at one another" to swell the profits of the capitalists and to satisfy the ambitions of dynasties, or to carry out the secret diplomatic treaties. The manifesto further says that the war would provoke "indignation and revolt" amongst the working class, (3) that the Socialists must make use of the crisis and of the mental conditions of the workers indicated to "incite the people" and to hasten the downfall of capitalism, (4) that no Government, without exception, could begin the war without imperilling its position, (5) that all Governments fear the oncoming approach of the proletarian revolution, (6) that the Paris Commune and the Russian revolution of 1905 must be borne in mind by the governments. All these thoughts are perfectly clear, though they contain no *guarantee*

* Prof. Struve, a professor of economics at Petrograd and a political opportunist.

that the revolution *will* break out. The manifesto lays stress on clearly defined *facts* and *tendencies*. Those who, when referring to these thoughts and arguments portrayed in the manifesto, say that the expected revolution proved illusory, revealed not a Marxian, but a Struivist and reactionary police attitude towards the revolution. It is plain to Marxists that a revolution is impossible without a *revolutionary situation*. But every revolutionary situation does not lead directly to a revolution.

What are, as a rule, the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly be on the right track in pointing out three main symptoms: (1) A ruling class finds it impossible to retain its domination intact, due to its passing through a crisis which stimulates the oppressed class to revolt against its rule. For revolution to break out it is not enough for those at the bottom to be content to live as they did before, they must also see to it that it becomes impossible for those at the top to continue their old policy; (2) want and suffering are experienced by the oppressed class in a more intense degree than ordinarily; (3) the causes indicated compel increased activity amongst the masses. During "times of peace" they calmly allow themselves to be fleeced, but in times of stress they are stimulated by the staging of the crisis, together with the action of those at the top, to enter the arena as an independent historical force. Without these objective changes independent of the will, not only of the separate groups and parties, but even of separate classes—revolution is, as a rule, impossible. Taken in the sum, these objective changes constitute what is called a revolutionary situation. Such a situation existed in Russia in 1905, and in all the revolutionary periods in the west. Such was also the situation in Germany in the sixties of the 19th century, and in 1859-1861 and 1879-1880 in Russia, though no revolution took place in these cases. And for what reason? Because a revolution is not produced by every revolutionary situation; it is produced when, in addition to the objective changes enumerated above, certain subjective changes take place, viz., *when a revolutionary class shows ability to take revolutionary mass action sufficiently forceful to break, or at least to damage, the existing government. Even in times of crisis, governments do not "tumble down of their own accord," but require a force to "overthrow" them.*

Such is the Marxian view of revolution, elaborated time after time and recognised as indisputable by all Marxists. The correctness of this view was, for us Russians, clearly confirmed by the experiences of 1905. The question now arises as to what was anticipated in this respect by the Basle manifesto in 1912 and what actually took place in 1914 and 1915.

A revolutionary situation was anticipated which was briefly described as an "economic and political crisis." Did such a crisis arise? Undoubtedly it did. Lensch, the Socialist jingo (who is more honest and straightforward in his defence of jingoism than such hypocrites as Cunow, Kautsky, Plekhanov and Co), went as far as to say that "we are passing through a revolution of a peculiar kind" (see his pamphlet "German Social-Democracy and the War," p. 6, Berlin, 1915). The existence of a political crisis cannot be denied: not one of the governments was sure of the morrow; not one of them felt secure against financial collapse, or loss of territory, or even expulsion—as instance the Belgian Government—from its own country. The Governments to-day live on the top of a volcano and they all appeal to the self-activity and heroism of the masses. The political regime of the whole of Europe rocks on its foundations, and he must be blind who would deny that we have entered a period of great social upheavals.*

Kautsky, two months after the outbreak of war, wrote in the *Neue Zeit*, October 2nd, 1914, that "a government is never so strong, nor the parties so feeble as at the beginning of a war." This is one of the instances of Kautsky's falsification of historical science in order to please the opportunists. A government is never so much in need of agreement amongst the parties of the ruling class and never so much in need of the submission of the oppressed classes as during the period of war. That is the first point. The second is, that a government only *appears* to be all-powerful at the outbreak of war, and this is largely due to the fact that the revolutionary situation does not arise simultaneously with the outbreak of war.

The present European war is a bigger affair than any in the past. The misery of the masses is greater, and the toll of life and suffering is frightful. The repercussion of these experiences tend to convulse the political foundations of Europe. Governments and Socialist

* I am writing this on the day of Italy's declaration of war.

opportunists alike pass over these facts in silence. Unrest and a vague desire for peace begins to manifest itself amongst the masses, and the longer the war lasts and the fiercer its character becomes, the quicker will develop the revolutionary activity of the working class—the class that is called upon to make the greatest efforts of self-sacrifice. The experiences of the war, even as the experience of some calamity in a man's life generally tends to stimulate him and make him wiser, will, in the long run, steel, strengthen, and enlighten the majority of the toilers.

The coming of "peace" will not put an end to these intensified antagonisms, but, on the contrary, it will bring home with awful vividness to the most backward section of the population the terrific calamities bred by imperialism and war. In a word, a revolutionary situation is present in most of the progressive countries of Europe. In this respect the anticipation of the Basle^{*} manifesto is fully justified. The jingo Socialists pass over this in silence, a thing tantamount to intent to deceive and mislead the working class.

How long is this revolutionary situation going to last, and how much more acute is it going to become? This we know not. It will only be by experience in the measure that the foremost class—the working class—evolves revolutionary methods and passes to *revolutionary action*. We internationalists have no illusions on the question of the outbreak of immediate revolution, and do not offer to guarantee the happenings of either to-day or to-morrow. But we realise that the fundamental duty of all Socialists is to point out to the workers the presence of a revolutionary situation, to explain its nature, and to awaken by insistent propaganda the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat. Nor do we stop short at theorising, but advocate and help the workers to take up revolutionary action, building up for that purpose an organisation corresponding to the needs of the time.

Without illusions, the Basle manifesto lays down the correct attitude and duty of the Socialist Parties of all lands. That duty is to incite and stir up the working class to a consciousness of its deplorable position in society; not to lull it to sleep by means of jingoism, as has been done by Plekhanov and Axelrod in Russia, Kautsky and Cunow in Germany, Hyndman in England, and Thomas in France, etc., etc. It is the imperative duty of all Socialists to make use of the crisis to

accelerate the collapse of capitalism. Guided by the example of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian revolution of 1905, we must urge on the uprising of the oppressed of all lands. Those "Socialist" parties who have failed in this are guilty of the betrayal of Socialism, and have signed their own political death warrant. Their action constitutes their renunciation of international principles, and signifies their passing over to the side of the master class.

CHAPTER IV.

SOCIALIST JINGOISM : CAN THE WAR BE JUSTIFIED FROM
A WORKING-CLASS POINT OF VIEW.

WHAT is the explanation of the betrayal of Socialism by the "leaders" of the Second International? The two chief apologists for Socialist jingoism are Plekhanov and Kautsky. Plekhanov repeats the bourgeois arguments of Hyndman, etc., but Kautsky is more subtle. Theoretically, Kautsky's arguments appear better founded. The most hackneyed apology for the betrayal of Socialism in the crude excuse of defence against "oppression." "We were attacked and are defending ourselves," therefore, it is argued, that "the interests of the proletariat demand that we oppose those who violate the peace of Europe." This is but a re-hash of the declarations of every government and of the vapourings of the yellow press. "We must find the aggressor and make short shrift of him, postponing all other questions until a further occasion," says Plekhanov in his pamphlet "On War," Paris 1914, and Axelrod echoes this in the *Golos*, No.'s 86 and 87. Plekhanov substitutes sophistry for dialectics. One can find "arguments" to prove anything under the sun, Hegel has rightly said. Sophistry picks out one plausible argument and parades it, but dialectics demand a many-sided investigation of any given subject. To get at the truth we must investigate social phenomena in the course of its development: seek beneath the external surface manifestations of the *driving forces*, and examine their relations to the productive forces and the class struggle.

Plekhanov picks out a quotation from the German S.D. press and draws attention to the fact that the Germans themselves, before the war, regarded Austria and Germany as the aggressors—this, in his eyes, caps the argument. He passes over in silence the fact that Russian Socialists have repeatedly exposed the plans of conquest of Tsarism in regard to Galicia, Armenia, and so forth. He makes no attempt to touch upon the economic and diplomatic history of the last three

decades. The history of this period proves irrefutably that it was the seizure of colonies, the plunder of foreign lands, and the struggle between competitors for markets that formed the main pivot upon which turned the policy of the two groups of powers at present at war*

As applied to wars, the fundamental proposition of dialectics, so shamelessly distorted by Plekhanov to please the bourgeoisie, consists in that "*war is merely a continuation of politics by other (namely by violent) means.*" Thus it is formulated by Clausewitz,† one of the great writers on questions of military history, whose ideas have been fructified by Hegel. Such was always the point of view of Marx and Engels, who regarded every war as a continuation of the policy of certain interested powers—and of divers classes within it—at a given time.

* "The War of Steel and Gold," by Brailsford (London, 1914). The book bears the date March, 1914, the English pacifist who is even prone to masquerade as a Socialist, is very instructive. The author recognises clearly that in a general way nationalist questions occupy a secondary place, and that they have already been solved (p. 35); that they do not constitute the main point, and that "the typical question for contemporary diplomacy" (p. 36) is the Bagdad railway, furnishing it with rails, mines in Morocco, and so forth. The author rightly regards as one of the "most instructive" incidents in the latest history of European diplomacy the struggle of the French patriots and English imperialists against the attempts of Caillaux (in 1911 and 1913) to become reconciled to Germany on the basis of an agreement concerning the demarcation of colonial spheres of interest and concerning the admission of German securities to the Paris Stock Exchange. *The English and French bourgeoisie rendered this attempt abortive* (pp. 38-40). The object of imperialism is to export capital to the weaker countries (p. 74). In 1899 the profits on this capital in England amounted to £90,000,000-£100,000,000 (Giffen), and to £140,000,000 in 1909 (Paish). Lloyd George, in a recent speech, reckoned these profits, let us add, at £200,000,000. Shady dealings with, and bribery of, Turkish nobility, soft jobs for sons in India and Egypt—these are things that matter (pp. 85-87). An insignificant majority derives gain from armaments and wars, but it is supported by society and by financiers, whereas the adherents of peace are supported by a divided population (p. 93). A pacifist who, to-day, talks of peace and disarmament, tomorrow turns out to be a member of a party which is completely dependent upon war contractors (p. 161). If the Triple Entente turns out to be the more powerful it will capture Morocco and divide Persia; if the Triple Alliance turns out to be the more powerful it will take Tripoli, consolidate its position in Bosnia, and subdue Turkey (p. 167). London and Paris advanced millions to Russia in 1906, and thus assisted Tsarism to crush the liberation movement (pp. 225-8); at the present time England helps Russia to throttle Persia (p. 229). Russia instigated the Balkan war (p. 230). Of course there is nothing fresh in all this. These facts are known to all and have been repeated a thousand times in the Socialist Press of the whole world. On the eve of the war an English bourgeois sees all these things with surprising clearness. In the face of these simple and commonly known facts, what indecent nonsense, what unbearable hypocrisy, what sickening falsehoods are Plekhanov and Petresov's theories concerning the culpability of Germany, or the theories of Kautsky concerning "possibilities" of disarmament and a lasting peace under capitalism.

† Carl von Clausewitz. "Voin Krieger," works, vol. i., p. 28. See vol. iii., pp. 139-140: "Everyone knows that wars are provoked only by the political relations which exist between governments and nations; generally people imagine that when war begins these relations cease, and that quite a different situation arises, subject to its own special laws. We assert the reverse: war is but a continuation of the political relations; through the employment of other means."

Plekhanov's coarse jingoism occupies the same position as the more refined conciliatory jingoism of Kautsky, when the latter blesses, by the following argument, the passage of the Socialists of all countries over to the side of "their" capitalists.

Everyone has the right, and is bound, to defend his country; true internationalism consists in recognising that the Socialists of all nations, including the nations at war with mine, have this right (see "Neue Zeit," October 2nd, 1914, and other writings of the same author).

This argument, of which there is no like, is such a vulgar mockery of Socialism that the best answer to it would be to strike a medal with the heads of William II. and Nicholas II. on the one side, and of Plekhanov and Kautsky on the other. True internationalism, then, lies in justifying French workmen when they fire at German workmen, and the German workmen when they fire at the French—in the name of "national defence"!

Yet, if we take a closer look at the theoretical premises of Kautsky's arguments we arrive at the view which was laughed out of court by Clausewitz 80 years ago. Kautsky's argument amounts to this: "When a war begins the political relations between nations and classes, evolved historically, cease to exist, and quite a different situation arises! There are simply those who attack and those who defend themselves." The oppression of a whole series of nations, which form more than half the population of the world, by the Great Imperialist Powers, competition between the bourgeoisie of these countries arising out of a division of the booty, the attempt of capital to split and crush the labour movement—all these facts have suddenly vanished from Plekhanov and Kautsky's field of vision, though they themselves, in the course of decades before the war, outlined a policy based upon these facts.

Slandorous references to Marx and Engels constitute the "chief" arguments of these two leaders of Socialist jingoism. Plekhanov recalls the national war of Prussia in 1813, and of Germany in 1870; Kautsky proves, with a learned mien, that Marx weighed the question as to which bourgeoisie side was more desirable in the wars of 1854-1855, 1859, and 1870-1871. Kautsky also proves that the Marxist reflected likewise regarding the wars of 1876-1877 and 1897. The method of all sophists, at all times, has been to quote examples which unmistakably refer to cases different in principle. The former wars pointed out to us were a "continua-

tion of the policy" pursued during many years by the nationalist movement of the bourgeoisie against foreign oppression by some other nationality and against absolutism (Turkish and Russian.) Apart from the question as to whether the success of one or the other bourgeoisie was preferable there could have been no other. There was no reason why Marxists should not have *appealed* to nations *beforehand* to take part in wars of a similar type by inflaming national hatred, as did Marx in 1848 and, later, in the war against Russia; and as Engels incited the national hatred of the Germans in 1859 against their oppressors Napoleon III. and Russian Tsarism.*

To compare a "continuation of the policy" of the bourgeois struggle against feudalism and absolutism—the policy of the bourgeoisie which is liberating itself—with the "continuation of the policy" of a decrepit reactionary imperialist bourgeoisie which has plundered the whole world, and which in close alliance with the feudal elements crushes the proletariat, is like comparing yards with hundredweights. It is like comparing Robespierre, Garibaldi, and Zhelabov, who were representatives of the bourgeoisie," with Millerand, Salandra, and Guchkov, who are also "representatives of the bourgeoisie." One cannot be a Marxist and fail to cherish the deepest regard for the great bourgeois revolutionaries who had a historical right to speak in the name of their bourgeois "fatherlands," which were raising new nations—comprising millions and tens of millions of men—to a civilised level of existence and sending them to battle against feudalism. And one cannot be a Marxist without feeling contempt for the sophistry of Plekhanov and Kautsky, who speak of "national defence" in connection with the throttling of Belgium by German imperialists, or in connection with the deals of the imperialists of England, France, Russia, and Italy concerning the plundering of Austria and Turkey.

* By the way, Mr. Gardenin, in the *Zhizn*, calls it "revolutionary Chauvinism" on the part of Marx who, in 1848, was in favour of a revolutionary war against the European nations, which by their action had proved counter-revolutionary—namely, the Slavs, and the Russians in particular. The fact that Marx is thus reproached merely proves the opportunism (or perhaps, more correctly, complete want of seriousness) of this Socialist Revolutionary of the "Left wing." We Marxists have always been, and still are, in favour of a revolutionary war against counter-revolutionary nations. For instance, if Socialism became victorious in Europe or America, and Japan and China made a move against us we should be in favour of waging an offensive revolutionary war upon these countries. Does this strike you as strange, Mr. Gardenin? You are a revolutionary of the type of Ropshin!

Socialist jingoism has another "Marxian" theory to the effect that Socialism is based on a speedy development of capitalism, that "my country's development will accelerate the evolution which will hasten the advent of Socialism, whereas my country's defeat would retard its economic development and likewise the inauguration of Socialism." Such a theory *à la* Struve, is being developed amongst us Russians by Plekhanov, and among the Germans by Lensch and others. Kautsky argues against this crude theory, in opposition to Lensch, who defends it openly, and against Cunow, who supports it in a more guarded way. But Kautsky argues merely to the end that he may bring about the reconciliation of the Socialist jingoes of all countries on the basis of a more refined and a still more jesuitical jingoistic theory.

We need not tarry over the examination of this crude theory. Struve's "Critical Notes" appeared in 1894, and in the course of twenty years the Russian Socialists had ample time to acquaint themselves with this "method" whereby educated Russians of the middle class propagates their views and desires under the guise of "Marxism" purged of its revolutionary features. Struvism* is not only a Russian, but, as recent events have shown most clearly, it is an international striving of bourgeois theoreticians, to kill Marxism "by kindness"; to strangle it in an embrace and by a would-be recognition of "all the truly scientific" aspects and elements of Marxism, save its "demagogic Utopian-Blanquist propaganda" aspect. To put it in other words, from Marxism is to be taken everything that is acceptable to the Liberal bourgeoisie, including the fight for reforms and the class struggle (without the dictatorship of the proletariat), including a "general" recognition of "Socialist ideals" and the substitution of a "new system" for capitalism. This means the destruction of the living soul of Marxism, its revolutionary character.

Marxism is a theory of the proletariat's march to freedom. It is clear, therefore, that class-conscious workers must pay great attention to the process by which Struvism is being substituted for Marxism. The motive powers of this process are manifold and varied. We shall note the three principal:—

* The teaching of Professor Struve, a well-known Russian Liberal.—*Trans.*

1. The development of science furnishes more and more material to prove that Marxism is right. Therefore, capitalism is obliged to fight it hypocritically, without openly opposing its basis and by pretending to recognise, by means of sophisms, its contentions. By thus castrating Marxism and transforming it into a "holy image," they hope to render it harmless to the bourgeoisie.

2. The development of opportunism amongst social democracy upholds precisely such a "modification" of Marxism and makes it serve the end of justifying all sorts of concessions to opportunism.

3. The period of imperialism means the division of the world between the "great" privileged nations which oppress all the others. Undoubtedly, certain crumbs from the plunder, arising out of these privileges and this oppression, fall to the lot of certain sections of the lower middle class, aristocracy, bureaucracy, and a privileged minority of the working class. This last section, which constitutes an infinitesimal section of the labouring class, has a leaning towards "Struvisism," for it justifies their union with the national bourgeoisie as opposed to the oppressed masses of all nations. We shall have to come back to this question again when we discuss the causes of the collapse of the International.

CHAPTER V.

"ULTRA-IMPERIALISM" *versus* REVOLUTIONARY MASS ACTION.

THE Socialist jingo theory of "ultra-imperialism" put forward by Kautsky is very subtle and most skilfully arranged to bear a scientific and internationalist aspect. The author himself recently formulated the theory with great clearness, as follows:

The weakening of the protectionist movement in England, the lowering of the duties in America, the striving after disarmament, the quick shrinkage of the capital exported from France and Germany during the years before the war, and, finally, the growing interlinking of the various international cliques representing finance-capital—all these factors induced me to weigh the possibility of the present imperialist policy being ousted by a new ultra-imperialist policy which would substitute for the mutual struggle of the various national units of finance-capital, the general exploitation of the world by a united international finance-capital. Such a new phase of capitalism is at all events thinkable. As to whether it be feasible, the premises for solving this question are not yet sound enough. ("Neue Zeit," No. 5, April 30th, 1915, p. 144.)

The trend and the result of the present war may prove to be the deciding factors in this regard. The war may utterly crush the feeble germs of ultra-imperialism by inflaming to the highest degree national hatred, even amongst capitalist financiers, by intensifying the growth of armaments and the desire to outbid each other in this respect, thus rendering inevitable a second world war. In that case the anticipation formulated in my pamphlet "The Path to Power," will to a terrible extent come true. Class antagonisms will become more acute and will at the same time hasten the moral *Abwirtschftung** (downfall) of capitalism.

But the war may end differently. It may bring about a strengthening of the weak germs of ultra-imperialism. Its lessons (note this!) may accelerate a development which might have been slower in times of peace. If things come to such a pitch, if agreement between nations and disarmament becomes a fact, together with a lasting peace, then the worst of the causes which before the war were tending more and more to bring about the moral downfall of capitalism may disappear. The new phase, of course, will bring with it "fresh calamities for the proletariat," which may be even worse than the present one, yet for a time ultra-imperialism could create an era of fresh hopes and expectations within the confines of capitalism" (p. 145).

* We must here note that by this pretentious word Kautsky understands simply "enmity" towards capitalism on the part of "the sections which are placed between the proletariat and finance capital—that is to say, the intellectuals, members of the lower middle class, and even petty capitalists."

How does he deduce a justification of Socialist jingoism from this "theory"?

It is done in the following manner, a strange one for a "theoretician":—Social-Democrats of the Left wing in Germany say that imperialism and the wars produced by it are not an accident but a necessary product of capitalism which has led to the domination of finance capital. Therefore, transition to a revolutionary struggle on the part of the masses is needed, for we have come to the end of the comparatively peaceful period. Social-Democrats of the "Right Wing" declare, crudely, that since imperialism is necessary we must be imperialists, too. Kautsky, who sides with the "Centre," tries to act as conciliator.

"The extreme Left," Kautsky says in his pamphlet, "The National State, the Imperialist State, and a Union of States" (Nuremberg, 1915), "wants to oppose Socialism to inevitable imperialism—that is to say, not merely the propaganda of Socialism which we have opposed to capitalist domination in every form in the course of half a century, but an immediate realisation of Socialism. This appears to be a radical step, but capable of *driving* into the camp of imperialism *all who do not believe* in an immediate practical realisation of Socialism" (p. 17. The italics are ours.)

When speaking of the immediate realisation of Socialism, Kautsky resorts to exaggeration, for he knows that in Germany, especially under military censorship, one cannot speak of revolutionary action. He knows well that those of the Left wing desire the party to do propaganda work forthwith and to prepare for revolutionary action, and not for "the immediate practical realisation of Socialism."

Those of the Left wing deduce the necessity of revolutionary action from the inevitableness of imperialism. "The theory of ultra-imperialism serves Kautsky to *whitewash the opportunists*, to put the whole thing in such a light as if the latter had not gone over to the side of the bourgeoisie, but had merely "no faith" in the immediate realisation of Socialism, or in the expectation that "there may ensue" a new era of disarmament and of a lasting peace. The "theory" merely amounts to this, that by *the expectation of a new peaceful era of capitalism* Kautsky justifies the opportunists and the official S.D. parties which have joined the bourgeoisie and have repudiated revolutionary *i.e., proletarian tactics during the present stormy period*, in spite of the solemn declarations contained in the

Basle resolution! It should be noted that Kautsky does not declare that a new phase is resulting, and must result, from such and such circumstances and conditions. He declares plainly that he cannot even decide the question as to whether such a new phase is "feasible." And, indeed, let us glance at the "tendencies" which pretend the new era pointed out by Kautsky. It is surprising that the author enumerates the "striving for disarmament" as an economic fact! This means to forsake undoubted facts which are compatible with the theory of the weakening of antagonisms, and to take cover under innocent bourgeois chatter and fantasies. Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism" though, by the way, this term does not at all express what the author wishes it to convey—means that under capitalism (class) antagonisms have been greatly weakened. Though they tell us of the weakening of the protectionist movement both in England and America, where do we espy therein the slightest tendency towards a new era? Though protectionism—which in America has reached its highest pitch—has been weakened, it still remains protectionism, as also remain the privileges and preferential tariffs in those of the English colonies which favour England. Let us recall what induced a substitution of the present-day imperialist era for the former "peaceful" era of capitalism. The facts are that free competition has given way to capitalist monopolies, and that the whole globe has been divided up. It is clear that both these facts and factors have a real world significance. Free Trade and peaceful competition were possible and necessary as long as there was nothing to hinder capital from increasing the number of its colonies and from seizing unoccupied lands in Africa and elsewhere; furthermore, the concentration of capital was then weak, and there did not exist monopolies gigantic enough to dominate the whole of a certain branch of industry. The inception and growth of such monopolies (this process has probably not yet been arrested either in England or America, and possibly not even Kautsky will dare to deny that the war has accelerated and intensified it) renders the former free competition impossible, cuts the ground from under its feet, where as the division of the globe *compels* the rivals to pass from peaceful expansion to an armed struggle for a *re-division* of colonies and of spheres of influence. It is ridiculous to imagine that the weakening of protectionism in two countries can

change the essence of the question.

Then there is the export of capital from two countries for a number of years. These two countries, France and Germany, according to Harms's statistics of 1912, had capital invested abroad to the amount of about 35 milliard marks (about £1,700,000,000) each. England has double that amount invested.*

The growth of the capital exported never was, and never could be, uniform under capitalism. Kautsky cannot possibly imply that the growth of capital has been checked or that, for instance, the home market has absorbed more capital because a considerable improvement in the condition of the masses has been effected. It is impossible under such circumstances to deduce the advent of a new era from a decrease in the capital exported in a given number of years from two countries.

"The growing interlinking of the international cliques representing finance-capital"—this is indeed the only universal and undoubted tendency which manifests itself, not in the course of a few years, nor in two countries alone, but under capitalism throughout the whole world. But why should there arise from it a striving for disarmament and not for armaments, as heretofore? Let us take a gun-manufacturing firm (or any firm manufacturing military supplies), such as that of Armstrong, for instance. The English *Economist* for May, 1915, recently stated that the firm's profits amounted to £606,000 for 1905-6, and rose to £856,000 in 1913, and to £940,000 in 1914. The interlinking of finance capital in his industry is very great, and continues to grow; German capitalists "take part" in the business of the English firm; the English firms build submarines for Austria, and so forth. Capital interlinked internationally does splendid business in armaments and wars. To induce an economic tendency towards disarmament from the amalgamation and interlinking of various units of capital into a single international whole means the substitution of goody-goody lower middle-class desires for a weakening of class antagonisms, for the real fact that such antagonisms are actually becoming more acute.

* See Bernhard Harms: "Probleme der Weltwirtschaft," Jena, 1912.—George Paish: "Great Britain's Capital Investments in Colonies, etc." in the "Journal of the Royal Statistical Society," vol. lxxv., 1910-11, p. 167. Lloyd George, in his speech at the beginning of 1915, considered that British capital invested abroad amounted to about £4,000,000,000.

CHAPTER VI.

KAUTSKY ON THE GRIDIRON.

KAUTSKY speaks of the "lessons" of the war in the vulgar sense. He presents these lessons in the sense of a moral horror which seizes one at the sight of the calamities of the war. In his pamphlet, "The National State," he argues as follows:—

There is no doubt, and no proof is needed, that there exist sections which are keenly interested in universal peace and in disarmament. Members of the lower middle class and small peasants, even many capitalists and intellectuals, are not linked to imperialism by interests powerful enough to counter-balance the harm inflicted upon these sections by the war and armaments (p. 21).

This was written February, 1915! The facts show that a stampede towards the imperialists took place by all the possessing classes, including the lower middle class and the "intellectuals." Kautsky, however, with a self-satisfied air, and acting like a being from another planet, ignores facts and gives us honeyed words. He judges the interests of the petty bourgeoisie not by its *conduct* but by the *statements* of certain men of the lower middle class, though at every step these men refute their statements by their deeds. It is as though we were to judge the "interests" of the bourgeoisie in general not by its deeds but by the *loving* speeches of middle-class priests who swear that the social order of to-day is permeated by Christian ideals. Kautsky applies Marxism in such a manner that it is purged of its substance and there remains only the word "interest," which is used in a supernatural, spiritualist sense, for it is not real *economics* that he has in view, but merely innocent desires for the general welfare.

Marxism examines "interests" on the basis of class contradictions and the class struggle, which come to the fore in millions of facts in everyday life. The lower middle class dreams and babbles of the weakening of (class) contradictions, and puts forward the "argument" that the intensification of class antagonisms brings in its wake "harmful consequences." Im-

perialism is the submission to finance-capital of all sections of the possessing class. It means the division of the world between five or six "Great" Powers, most of which are taking part in the present war. The division of the world by the Great Powers is proof that all their propertied sections are interested in possessing colonies, spheres of interest, in oppressing other nations; it is proof that they are interested in places which yield more or less profit, and in receiving privileges which arise out of belonging to a "Great" Power and an oppressor nation.*

It is no longer possible for capitalism to evolve smoothly, in comparatively peaceful, cultural surroundings, and to go on extending by degrees to fresh countries. A new era has arrived! Finance capital ousts, and will oust, a given country from amongst the Great Powers. It will deprive it of its colonies and spheres of influence (as Germany, which made war on England, threatens to do), and it will deprive the lower middle class of its "Great Power" privileges and its subsidiary income. This is a fact which is being proved by the war brought about through an intensification of the contradictions—an intensification which has been recognised by every one, including Kautsky himself in his pamphlet, "The Path to Power."

And when the present struggle, caused by jealousy among the Powers, has become a fact, Kautsky begins to persuade the capitalists and the lower middle class that war is a dreadful thing and disarmament a good thing. He does this with the same manner and with the same result as that with which a Christian priest, from the pulpit, persuades capitalists that love of man is a command of God, a striving of the soul and the moral law of civilisation. What Kautsky terms economic tendencies towards "ultra-imperialism" really amounts to lower middle-class pleadings that financiers should do no wrong.

* E. Schulze says that in 1915 the securities of the whole world amounted to £29,280,000,000, including State and communal loans, as well as mortgages and shares of commercial and industrial companies, etc. Of this sum England held £5,200,000,000, the United States of America £4,600,000,000, France £4,000,000,000, and Germany £3,000,000,000—that is to say, these four Great Powers held £16,800,000,000, or more than one-half of the total. From this we may judge how great are the advantages and privileges of the nations which are Great Powers and which have outstripped other nations by oppressing and plundering them. (Dr. Emil Schultze: "Das französische Kapital in Russland" in the "Finanz-Archiv," Berlin, 1915, vol. xxxii., p. 127.) For the Great Powers, "national defence" signifies defence of the right to the booty obtained by plundering other nations. In Russia, as we know, capitalist imperialism is weaker, but feudal militarism is more powerful.

What about the export of capital? More capital is being exported to independent countries, such as the United States of America, than to colonies. What about the seizure of colonies? These have all been seized, and they are all striving to liberate themselves. Kautsky says:—

India may cease to be an English possession, but it will never come in the shape of an undivided empire, under foreign domination. (See the pamphlet quoted above, p. 49.) The striving of any industrial capitalist state to acquire for itself a colonial empire, which would enable it to dispense with drawing raw materials from other countries, would unite against itself all the other capitalist states; in addition, it would be drawn into endless exhausting wars without being brought nearer its aim. Such a policy would be the surest way to bring about the bankruptcy of the whole economic life of a State^s (pp. 72-73).

Does not this amount to a vulgar appeal to the financiers to renounce imperialism? To frighten capitalists with the bugbear of bankruptcy amounts to advising members of the Stock Exchange not to gamble, because "many of them lose all they possess." Capital gains and concentrates in the same measure that bankruptcy overtakes competing capitalists or a competing nation. Therefore, the more pronounced and keen the economic competition *i.e.*, the more others are driven into bankruptcy on the economic field, the stronger the desire of capitalists to drive their national rival into bankruptcy by applying military pressure. The fewer countries there are, like Turkey, to which it is as profitable to export capital as it is to export it to colonies and independent states—these cases where the financier gets a three-fold return in comparison with capital exported to a free and independent civilised country, like the United States of America—the fiercer is the struggle for the subjugation and division of Turkey, China, and so forth. Thus speaks the economic theory concerning the era of finance-capital and imperialism; and thus speak facts.

But Kautsky turns everything into a banal middle-class "morality": "Why," he asks, "should they become so excited and go to war to divide Turkey or to seize India?" "They will not be able to enjoy these things for long. Besides, it is better to develop capitalism according to the peaceful method. . . . Of course, it would be still better to develop capitalism and to expand the market by increasing wages, for such a thing is quite 'thinkable.'" To

appeal like this to financiers would form the best text for a parson to preach from. The good Kautsky almost succeeded in persuading the German financiers that it was not worth while to go to war with England over her colonies, since these colonies would, in any case, soon free themselves! England's exports to and imports from Egypt from 1872 to 1912 rose at a slower rate than her imports and exports as a whole. Where from the "Marxist" Kautsky deduces the following moral:—

We have no reason to suppose that England's trade with Egypt would have increased at a slower rate, under the influence of economic factors alone, without a military occupation (p. 72). The aspirations of capital after expansion can best be attained, not by the coercive methods of imperialism but by those of a *peaceful democracy* (p. 70).

What a wonderfully grave, scientific "Marxist" analysis! Kautsky "has put this foolish episode in the right light," and has proved that the English had no need to deprive the French of Egypt, and that the German financiers had no need whatsoever to begin the war, nor to organise the Turkish campaign, hand in hand with other undertakings, in order to drive the English out of Egypt! All this, claims Kautsky, is a mere misunderstanding. The English have not yet realised that it were far better to give up coercing Egypt and to adopt the methods of a "peaceful democracy" in order to increase the amount of capital exported. . . .

"Of course it was purely an illusion of middle-class Free Traders," Kautsky argues, "when they thought that Free Trade entirely does away with the economic contradictions produced by capitalism. Neither Free Trade nor democracy can remove them. Nevertheless, it is to our interest to see these contradictions overcome by a struggle assuming such forms as impose least suffering and sacrifice upon the labouring masses" (p. 73).

"Oh, Lord, tell us what is a Philistine?" asked Lassalle, and in reply quoted the well known words of a poet: "A Philistine is an empty gut filled with fear, who hopes that God will take pity on him."

Kautsky has prostituted Marxism in an unheard of manner and has become a real priest. This priest exhorts capitalists to resort to peaceful democratic methods by what he calls dialectics. If at the commencement there was Free Trade and subsequently monopolies and imperialism, then why should there not

be an "ultra-imperialism" and again Free Trade? Thus argues Kautsky, the priest, who *consoles* the oppressed masses by depicting for their benefit the blessing of this "u.ltra-imperialism," though he is not ready to say whether such a thing is "feasible" or not! Feuerbach was right when he said, in reply to those who defend religion by the argument that it is soothing to a man that such comfort has a reactionary significance, for he who comforts a slave, instead of inciting him to rebel against slavery, lends a helping hand to the slave-owners.

Every class of oppressor requires two social functions to defend his domination—the function of a hangman and that of a priest. The hangman must crush the protests and the revolts of the oppressed; the priest must picture to them perspectives (it is especially convenient to do this without guaranteeing that such perspectives can be realised) of their misery being alleviated and their sacrifices lessened, while leaving class domination intact. Thus are the oppressed reconciled to this domination and led away from taking revolutionary action. Their revolutionary frame of mind is impaired and their revolutionary resoluteness shaken. Kautsky has turned Marxism into a most loathsome and stupid counter-revolutionary theory, and into the dirty sermonising of a priest.

In 1909, in his pamphlet: "The Path to Power," Kautsky recognised that under capitalism contradictions were becoming more acute, a fact which is indisputable and which has been refuted by no one. He also recognised that an era of wars and revolutions and a new "revolutionary period" were drawing nigh. And, again, he declares that no revolution can take place "prematurely," and calls it "downright treason to our cause" if we refuse to reckon with the possibility of victory during an insurrection, though before the struggle has commenced we may realise that defeat is in store for us.

The war came, and these contradictions did indeed become *more acute*. The misery of the masses increased enormously. The war is dragging on, and its scope is extending, but Kautsky writes pamphlet after pamphlet. Submissively following the dictates of the censor, he quotes no data concerning the pillage of lands and the horrors of war; he mentions neither the scandalous profits of war contractors, nor the high cost of living, nor the military enslavement of the mobilised

workers; on the contrary, he consoles and soothes the proletariat by quoting instances of wars when the bourgeoisie was revolutionary and progressive; or when "Marx himself" desired the victory of this or that bourgeoisie. Kautsky consoles the proletariat by quoting whole rows and columns of figures to prove the "possibility" of capitalism, without colonies and pillage, without wars and armaments, to prove that the methods of a "peaceful democracy" are preferable to all others. Lacking courage to deny that the misery of the masses is becoming more acute and that a revolutionary situation has arisen before our very eyes (the censorship will not permit this to be spoken of!). Kautsky cringes before the capitalists and the opportunists by picturing the possibility (though it is impossible to guarantee its feasibility) of certain forms of struggle, in a new phase, when there will be "less suffering and less sacrifice."

Franz Mehring and Rosa Luxemburg are right in having dubbed Kautsky a prostitute (*Maedchen fuer alle*).

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In August, 1905, there existed a revolutionary situation in Russia. The Tsar promised a Duma, à la Bulygin, to "console" the seething masses. Bulygin's legislative consultative regime could be termed an "ultra-absolutism," if one may use the term, "ultra-imperialism" in regard to the renunciation of armaments by financiers and an agreement between them to observe a "lasting peace." Let us suppose for a moment that to-morrow a hundred of the biggest financiers of the world, whose interests are interlinked in a hundred different gigantic concerns *promise* the nations to uphold disarmament after the war. (We must make this supposition for a moment in order to follow out to the end the political deductions from Kautsky's half-baked theory.) Even in such a case would it not be treason to the proletariat to counsel it to refrain from revolutionary action, without which action all promises and fine schemes are but a mirage.

The war has not only brought the capitalist class enormous profits and splendid prospects of fresh plunder—Turkey, China, etc.—it has brought new orders running into hundreds of millions and new loans at a higher rate of interest. *More than that, it has brought the capitalist class even still greater political gains in that*

the proletariat has been split and corrupted! Kautsky aids this corruption and gives his blessing to the international cleavage in the ranks of the proletarians who fight *in the name of unity*—a unity with the opportunists of the various nations, the Suedekums! Yet we come across persons who do not understand that the war cry of unity amongst the old parties means the “unity” of a nation’s proletariat with its national bourgeoisie. Neither do they realise that this form of national unity is based upon the wrecking of the international unity of the world wide working class!

CHAPTER VII.

KAUTSKY SLANDERS REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISTS AND
WHITEWASHES OPPORTUNISTS.

The preceding pages were already written when No. 9 of the *Neue Zeit*, of May 28th, appeared with the concluding portion of Kautsky's argument on "The Collapse of Social Democracy" (paragraph 7 of his reply to Cunow). Kautsky briefly formulates all his old sophisms as well as a fresh one in defence of Socialist Chauvinism as follows:

"It is untrue that the war is a purely Imperialist war, that at the commencement of the war the choice lay between Imperialism and Socialism, or that the Socialist Parties and the proletarian masses of Germany, France, and in many respects even of England, threw themselves headlong into the arms of imperialism at the mere beck and call of a handful of Parliamentarians, thus betraying Socialism and bringing about a collapse unparalleled in history."

The new sophism and fraud perpetrated upon the workers consists in this, that the war, you see, is not a "purely" imperialist war!

On the question of the character and meaning of the present war Kautsky wavers terribly, while he circumvents the precise declarations of the Basle and Chemnitz conferences as carefully as does a thief the spot where his last theft was committed. In the pamphlet "The National State," written in February, 1915, Kautsky asserted that "in the last degree the war is an imperialist one" (p. 64). Now a fresh reservation is being made to the effect that it is not a *purely* imperialist war. What sort of war is it, then?

It is, it appears, also a national war! Kautsky has talked and argued until he has actually put forward the following defence, and in doing so, makes use of Plekhanov's dialectics:

"The present war is not only an off-shoot of imperialism, but also of the Russian Revolution." As early as 1904 Kautsky foresaw that the Russian Revolution would resurrect Pan-Slavism in a new form, and that "a democratic Russia must needs powerfully influence the efforts of the Austrian and Turkish Slavs after the attainment of their national independence. In such a case the Polish question would also become acute. . . Austria is bound to collapse, for with the downfall

of Tsarism the iron hoop which now binds together diverse and hostile Nationalist elements, will break." (This last quotation is now quoted by Kautsky himself from his article written in 1904.) . . . "The Russian Revolution . . . has given a mighty impetus to the Nationalist aspirations of the East, and has added Asiatic problems to those of Europe. *All these problems* rendered more acute by the present war, loudly clamour for solution and exert a tremendous influence over the minds of the masses, including the *proletarian* masses, whilst the ruling classes are chiefly possessed of Imperialist aspirations." (Page 273; the italics are ours.)

Here we have another instance of the prostitution of Marxism! Because of the fact that "democratic Russia" would kindle a desire in the nations of Eastern Europe to strive after freedom (which fact is indisputable), therefore, the present war, which frees no nation, but, whatever its outcome, will enslave many, is not a "purely" imperialist struggle. Because the "collapse of Tsarism" would mean the downfall of Austria, due to its undemocratic national structure, therefore counter-revolutionary Tsarism (which has temporarily gathered strength, is plundering Austria and has in store still greater oppression for the peoples of Austria) has taken away from the "present war" its *purely* imperialist character, and has given it, to a certain extent, a national one. Because the ruling classes deceive dull witted men of the lower middle class and down-trodden peasants by means of tales concerning nationalist aims of the imperialist war, therefore a man of science, an authority on "Marxism," a representative of the Second International, has the right to reconcile the masses with this deception by means of the "formula" that the ruling classes are possessed of imperialist aspirations while the "common people" and the proletarian masses are possessed of "nationalist" ones.

Here we see dialectics turned into sophistry of the meanest and basest kind!

The national element in the present war is represented only by the struggle of Serbia against Austria, a fact which was noted, by the way, in the resolution of our party's conference at Berne. Only in Serbia and amongst the Serbs have we a national liberation movement of many years standing, and one which embraces millions of the masses. The war between Serbia and Austria is a "continuation" of this movement. Had this been an isolated phase of the war, having no connection with the general European war, *i.e.*, with the covetous and plundering aims of England, Russia, etc.,

all Socialists would have been bound to wish success to the Serbian bourgeoisie; this would have been a naturally correct and absolutely necessary inference to draw from the nationalist phase in the present war. But Kautsky, the sophist, who is at present in the service of the Austrian bourgeois, clerics and generals, fails to draw this inference!

More than that. Marx's dialectics, the last word as regards the scientific evolutionary method, forbids an isolated, that is to say, a one-sided and distorted examination of a subject. The national phase in the Austro-Serbian war has and can have no serious significance as compared with the general aspect of the European war. If Germany is victorious she will strangle Belgium, a portion of Poland, and perhaps a portion of France, etc. If Russia is victorious she will strangle Galicia, also a portion of Poland, and Armenia, etc. If the war ends in a draw the former oppression of nationalities will remain in force. To Serbia, which constitutes about one-hundredth of the participants in the present war, the war represents a "continuation of the policy" of a bourgeois liberation movement. But for the other 99% of the participants, the war represents a continuation of the imperialist policy; that is to say, the struggle of the decrepit bourgeoisie capable of *depraving*, not liberating, nations. The Triple Entente, in "freeing" Serbia, sold the interests of Serbian freedom to Italian imperialism for its help in plundering Austria.

Although these facts are known to everyone, Kautsky distorts them shamelessly so as to whitewash the opportunists. "Pure" phenomena cannot, and do not, exist either in nature or in society. This is precisely what Marx's dialectics teach whilst showing us that the very conception of purity implies that human investigation has been applied in a narrow, one-sided manner, and not with the object of thoroughly examining a given subject in all its complexity. "Pure" capitalism does not and cannot exist in this world; it always contains an admixture of feudal, lower middle class, and other elements. Hence, to say that the war is not a "purely" imperialist war—when it is a question of the masses being flagrantly deceived by the imperialists who purposely screen the objects of their naked robbery by "nationalist" phraseology—proves that one is either hopelessly dull and pedantic or a trickster.

The whole matter lies in that Kautsky supports the fraud which the imperialists perpetrate upon the common people in saying that "for the masses, including the proletarian masses," national problems "were the decisive factor," and for the ruling classes "imperialist tendencies" were this factor (p. 273). Kautsky upholds this fraud when he pretends to "confirm" his statement by a dialectical reference to "infinitely varied reality" (p. 274). Reality is no doubt infinitely varied; this is a sacred truth! But just as certain is it that in this infinite variety there manifest themselves two principal and basic currents: (1) that the objective contents of the war are a "continuation of the policy" of imperialism, that is to say, of the plunder of other nations by the decrepit bourgeoisie of the "Great Powers" (and their governments); and (2) that the prevailing subjective ideology consists of "nationalist" phrases scattered broadcast to stupefy the masses.

We have already examined Kautsky's old sophism, repeated afresh, alleging that those of the "Left" had made out that "when the war broke loose" the choice lay between "imperialism and socialism." This is a shameless exaggeration, for Kautsky knows well that the men of the Left had put forward a *different* alternative: that the party should either join in the imperialist plunder and deception or preach, and prepare for revolutionary action. Kautsky also knows that only the German censorship prevents the men of the Left from exposing this idle tale which he spreads in order to pander to the Suedekums.

As regards the relation between the "proletarian masses" and the "handful of parliamentarians," Kautsky here puts forward one of the most hackneyed objections:

"Let me leave the Germans aside, that we may not be defending ourselves. But who would asert in all seriousness that in one day men such as Vaillant and Guesde, Hyndman and Plekhanov had become imperialists and betrayed Socialism? Let us leave aside the parliamentarians and the committees which direct the activity of the Party.* . . . But who will dare to assert that it sufficed for a handful of parliamentarians to give an order to four million class-conscious German proletarians for them to veer right round within 24 hours and go against their former aims? If this were true, it would prove, of course, that not our Party alone, but also *the masses*, had

* Kautsky is here hinting, obviously, at the *Internazionale*, the paper conducted by Rosa Luxemburg and F. Mehring, where they shower well-deserved contempt upon the policy of the Executive Committee of the German S.D. Party, its parliamentary fraction, etc., that is to say, the official bodies which direct the party policy.

collapsed. (The italics are Kautsky's.) If the masses were indeed such a vacillating flock of sheep our time would have come to die and be buried" (p. 274).

Karl Kautsky, the former political and scientific authority, has buried himself by his conduct in seeking to employ such pitiable subterfuges. He who does not understand this is hopeless as regards Socialism. It is for this very reason that Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg and their adherents refer in the *Internazionale* to Kautsky and Co. as most despicable fellows; and this is the only correct tone to adopt.

Only think of it! It was but a "handful of parliamentarians,"* of officials, journalists, and so on, who were in a position to speak with a certain amount of freedom of their attitude towards the war. That is to say, to speak without making themselves liable to being seized on the spot and marched off to the barracks, or without running the danger of being shot forthwith. Kautsky now ignominiously blames the masses for the treason and fickleness of this social stratum! Kautsky himself had written dozens of times, in the course of years, to show that the tactics and ideology of this stratum were connected with opportunism. The first and fundamental rule of scientific investigation in general, and of Marx's dialectics in particular, is that the writer should examine *the connection* between the present struggle of *the currents* within Socialism (the struggle between the current which speaks of treason, indeed shouts it from the house top, and the one which perceives no treason) and the struggle which, prior to this, had been going on for whole decades. Kautsky does not even hint at this, nor does he desire to put the question of tendencies and *currents*. Hitherto there existed currents, but now they are no more. Now there exists only the big names of "authorities," which are always used by servile people as trump-cards. And these authorities find it very convenient to quote each other and to cover up each other's "sins" in friendly fashion on the principle of one dirty hand washing the other.*

* They voted of their own accord and had a perfect right to vote for the credits—but they could also have voted against them; even in Russia men were not flogged or ill-treated for this.

* "How can this be opportunism?" exclaimed L. Martov when giving a paper at Berne (vide the "Social-Democrat," No. 36), "when . . . Guesde, Plekhanov, Kautsky, etc!" "We must be more careful when we accuse of opportunism such men as Guesde," wrote Axelrod (the *Golos*, Nos. 86 and 87).

"I am not going to defend myself." Kautsky in Berlin seconds them, "but . . . Vaillant and Guesde, Hyndman and Plekhanov!"

The cuckoo praises the cock because the cock praises the cuckoo!

In his servile ardour Kautsky even goes so far as to kiss the hem of Hyndman's garment, making out that the latter but yesterday went over to the side of imperialism. Yet, for many years articles have appeared in the same *Neue Zeit* and in dozens of S.D. papers of the whole world which told of Hyndman's imperialism!* Had Kautsky been sincerely interested in the political biographies of the men he names, he would have had to recall whether or not these biographies contained traits and events which, not "in one day," but in the course of a decade prepared such a transition to imperialism. He would have recalled whether or not Vaillant had been captured by the adherents of Jaurès, and Plekhanov by the Minimalists and the revisionists. He would have recalled whether or not Guesde's revolutionary current died before the eyes of everyone in the Guesdist paper, *Socialism*—a model of lifelessness and incapacity, a paper which could take up no independent line on any important question. Kautsky would have recalled whether or not he himself had manifested indecision (let us add—for those who place him, and rightly so, side by side with Hyndman and Plekhanov) on the question of Millerandism, at the beginning of the struggle with Bernstein, and so forth.

But we do not see even the least attempt made to investigate, scientifically, the biographies of the leaders mentioned. No attempt is even made to examine whether these leaders defend themselves by their own arguments or by repeating the arguments of the opportunists and capitalist class, or whether, for example the actions of these leaders acquired a serious political significance in consequence of their being especially influential, or in consequence of the fact that they joined a foreign and really "influential" current supported by the military organisation, namely, the bourgeois current. Kautsky makes no attempt to investigate the question; he is merely concerned with throwing dust in the eyes of the masses and with deafening them with the sound of authoritative names; and with preventing them from putting clearly

* The S.L.P. since its inception has consistently shown that Hyndman has been an opportunist for over 15 years. It was only when his betrayal of Socialism stank that the B.S.P. opposed him.—*Trans.*

and thoroughly examining the question in dispute.*

“ . . . The masses, to the number of four millions, turned to the right about at the command of a handful of parliamentarians. . . . ”

Every word of this contains an untruth. There were not four, but one million members in the German party organisation, and the common will of this mass organisation (as of any organisation) was expressed only by its one political centre, *i.e.*, by the “handful” which betrayed Socialism. This handful was consulted and called upon to vote; it was in a position to vote, write articles, and so forth. No one, however, even consulted the masses. Not only were they prevented from voting, they were rent asunder and driven, not “at the command” of a handful of parliamentarians, but at the command of the military authorities. The military organisation was in existence and its leaders committed no treason; it called upon the “masses” *one by one* and confronted them with the ultimatum—enter the army (as your leaders advise you) or you will be shot. The masses could not act in an organised way, for their previously created organisation, incarnated in the “handful” of Legiens, Kautskys, and Schieder-manns had betrayed them.

For the creation of a new organisation time is needed as well as courage to cast aside the old one that is rotten and has outlived its usefulness.

Kautsky tries to defeat his opponents of the Left by alleging that they advocated what was nonsensical, that they put the question as though “in reply to the command to go to war the masses should have revolted within twenty-four hours”; should have led “socialism” against imperialism, since in the opposite case the masses would have shown “lack of courage and would have committed treason.” This is pure nonsense by which compilers of badly written bourgeois booklets sanctioned by the police “defeated” the revolutionaries; and Kautsky now prides himself on

* Kautsky's reference to Vaillant and Guesde, Hyndman and Plekhanov is characteristic from another point of view. Frank imperialists, such as Lensch and Haenisch (not to mention the opportunists), refer mainly to Hyndman and Plekhanov in order to justify their own policy. They have a perfect right to refer to them, and they speak the truth in this respect that it is, indeed, one and the same policy. But Kautsky speaks with contempt of Lensch and Haenisch, these radical Socialists who have gone over to imperialism. Kautsky thanks God that he is not like these publicans, and that he disagrees with them and remains a revolutionary. The last is not meant as a joke! But, in reality, Kautsky's position is the same. Kautsky, the hypocritical Chauvinist, with his goody-goody phrases, is much more loathsome than such simple-minded Chauvinists as David and Heine, Lensch and Haenisch.

trotting out this nonsense. Kautsky's opponents of the Left know full well that revolutions cannot be "made"; that they grow out of crises and breaks in history—crises which have become objectively ripe (apart from the will of parties and classes). Kautsky's opponents know that masses without an organisation are deprived of a single will, that the struggle with a powerful terrorist military organisation of the centralised states is both a slow and a difficult process. In view of the treason committed by the leaders the masses could do nothing at the critical moment; the "handful" of leaders, however, could and should have voted against the credits, should have opposed the "political and industrial truce" and refrained from justifying the war. They should have spoken in favour of their own governments being defeated and should have set up an international apparatus for the promotion of fraternisation in the trenches; they should have organised the publication of illegal literature,* and to preach the need for passing to revolutionary action, and so forth.

Kautsky knows full well that in Germany those of the Left have such action or, more correctly speaking, similar action in view, and that they cannot speak of it openly and plainly, in view of the military censorship. The desire to defend the opportunists at all costs leads Kautsky to commit an unrivalled baseness: while sheltering himself behind the back of the military censor he ascribes pure nonsense to those of the Left, assured that the censor will see to it that he is not exposed.

* Amongst other things, it was not at all necessary to close down all the S.D. papers in reply to the prohibition to write upon class hatred and the class struggle. It was a base and pusillanimous thing to consent to the condition that they should abstain from writing upon it, as in the case of *Vorwaerts*. *Vorwaerts* died a political death when it did this. L. Martov was quite right when he pointed this out. Some legal papers could have been preserved by making a declaration to the effect that they were not party or S.D. papers, but merely papers which were ministering to the technical needs of a portion of the workers, that is to say, that they were non-political papers. But why could there not have existed illegal S.D. literature criticising the war, as well as legal literature omitting such criticism—legal literature which would have omitted to speak the truth yet refrained from uttering falsehoods?

CHAPTER VIII.

OPPORTUNISM OF YESTERDAY BECOMES SOCIALIST
JINGO OF TO-DAY.

The serious scientific and political question which, by means of all sorts of tricks, Katusky deliberately shirked, thus affording immense pleasure to the opportunists, consists in this: What caused the most prominent representatives of the second International to betray Socialism?

Naturally we must not put this question as though we were concerned with the personal conduct of such and such authorities. Their future biographers will have to examine the matter from the personal standpoint; but for the present the Socialist movement is not at all interested therein. It is interested, however, in an investigation of the historical origin, the significance, and the force of the Socialist Jingo current. 1. What was the origin of Socialist Jingoism? 2. Whence was its force derived? 3. How are we to combat it? Only by putting the question in this way are we able to show that we are in earnest. To discuss the problem in the terms of "personalities" simply means making use of a trick—the trick of a sophist.

To answer the first question we must examine (1) whether the Ideological and political basis of Socialist Jingoism is not connected with some former current in working-class history; (2) in what relation does the present division of Socialists into opponents and defenders of Socialist Jingoism stand to the historical divisions which preceded the war, viewing the matter from the standpoint of *de facto* political divisions.

By Socialist Jingoism we understand the doctrine which recognises the idea of national defence in the present imperialist war; which justifies a union of Socialists with the bourgeoisie and the governments of "their" respective countries in this war, and which refuses to preach or to support proletarian revolutionary action against "their own" bourgeoisie, and so forth. It is perfectly clear that the fundamental ideological and political contents of Socialist Jingoism fully coincides with the principles of opportunism,

seeing that it is one and the same current. Opportunism, placed in the conditions of the war of 1914-15, produces Socialist Jingoism. The main idea running through opportunism is the co-operation of all classes. The war carries this idea to a logical conclusion, adding also to the usual factors and stimuli a whole series of extraordinary ones. By means of special threats and violence, for example, the war compels disunited masses to co-operate with the bourgeoisie. This circumstance naturally increases the circle of those who support opportunism and thus fully explains the reason for the radicals of yesterday passing over into that camp.

Opportunism means the surrender of the *basic* interests of the masses for the *temporary* interests of a small minority of workers, or in other words, it means the union of a portion of the workers with the bourgeoisie in opposition to the mass of the proletariat. The war renders such a union, from the opportunist standpoint, imperative and plainly visible. Opportunism, which took decades to develop, owes its birth to the peculiarities of that period in the development of capitalism, during a comparatively peaceful and cultural existence, when one section of privileged workers were "rendered bourgeois" because a few crumbs of the profits derived from the national capital saved them from the acute misery, the sufferings and revolutionary moods of the destitute masses whose ruin was being wrought. The imperialist war is a direct continuation and completion of this state of things. seeing that it is a war for the *privileges* of the Great Powers, for a re-division of the colonies between them, and for their domination over other nations. To defend and to consolidate the privileged position of the "higher middle class" and of the aristocracy (and bureaucracy) of the working class—this is the natural continuation of the petty bourgeois-opportunist aspirations of this privileged section, and of its tactics during the war, corresponding to such aspirations; this is the economic basis of Socialist Imperialism of our day.

* Here are a few examples showing how highly the Imperialists and the bourgeois value the "Great Power" and national privileges for the purpose of splitting the workers and leading them away from Socialism. Lucas, an English imperialist, in his work, "Great Rome and Great Britain" (Oxford, 1912), recognises that the Redskins possess no equal rights in the British Empire of to-day (pp. 96-97), and remarks: "In our Empire, when white workmen labour side by side with the Redskins, they labour not as comrades: the white worker plays rather the rôle of overseer over the Redskin" (p. 98). Erwin Belger, ex-secretary of the "Imperial Anti-Social-Democratic Union," in his pamphlet, "Social

Of course, the force of habit, the routine of a comparatively "peaceful" and slow evolution, nationalist prejudices, the fear of abrupt breaks and disbelief in them—all these played a secondary rôle in strengthening opportunism and in leading "Socialists" to effect a hypocritical and cowardly reconciliation with it, presumably only for a time and only for special reasons and on special occasions. The war changed the shape of opportunism which had been reared in the course of decades, raised it to a high rung and increased the number and variety of its shades. The war brought fresh adherents to the ranks of opportunism, and added to their arguments heaps of fresh sophisms; it caused many new streams and rivulets to flow into its main current, so to speak, but the main current itself has not disappeared; on the contrary, it is more apparent than ever.

Socialist Jingoism is opportunism which has become so mature that the existence of this continued bourgeois abcess within the Socialist parties has become impossible.

Men who do not wish to see the close and indissoluble bond which exists between Socialist Jingoism and opportunism, clutch at individual cases and incidents, saying, for instance, that such and such an opportunist has become an internationalist, or that such and such a radical Socialist has become a Jingo. But this is not a serious argument on the question of the development of *currents*. (1) The economic basis of Jingoism and opportunism in the Labour movement is one and the same—it is the union of the upper strata

Democracy After the War" (1915), praises the conduct of Social-Democracy, declaring that it must become a "pure Labour party" (p. 43), a "national," a "German Labour party" (p. 45), without "international, Utopian, or revolutionary ideas" (p. 44). The German imperialist, Sartorius von Waltershausen, in his work on the investment of capital abroad (1907), condemns the Social-Democrats for "ignoring national welfare" (p. 438), which consists in the seizure of colonies, and praises the English workers for their "grasp of realities," as is seen, for instance, in their fight against immigration. The German diplomat, Ruedorfer, in his book on the foundations of a world policy, underlines the generally known fact that the internationalisation of capital in no way abolishes an intensified struggle of national capitalists for power, influence, for a "majority of the shares" (p. 161), and remarks that this intensified struggle draws the workers into it (p. 175). The book is dated October, 1913, and the author speaks with complete clearness of the "interests of capital" (p. 157) being the cause of the wars of to-day, and of the fact that the question of the "nationalist tendency" becomes an impediment to Socialism (p. 176), and that the governments need not fear the internationalist demonstrations of Social-Democrats (p. 177), who are becoming more and more "nationalist" (pp. 103, 110, 176). He further says that international Socialism will be victorious if it manages to free the workers from the influence of nationalism—seeing that nothing can be effected by violence alone—and that it will suffer a defeat if the nationalist feeling attains the upper hand (pp. 173-174).

of the proletariat, numerically not large, with the lower middle class, both benefiting by the crumbs which fall from the privileges enjoyed by "their" national capital, in opposition to the mass of proletarians who labour and who are generally oppressed. (2) The ideological and political contents of both currents are the same. (3) Taken as a whole, the old division of Socialists into opportunists and revolutionaries—as was the case during the existence of the Second International (1889-1914)—corresponds to the new division into Jingoese and Internationalists.

To become convinced of the truth of the last proposition we must remember the rule that the science of Sociology (as Science in general) is concerned with mass phenomena, and not with individual cases. Take the following ten European countries: Germany, England, Russia, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Switzerland, France and Belgium. In the First eight countries the new division of Socialists (according to internationalism) corresponds to the old (according to opportunism): in Germany the monthly *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, a stronghold of opportunism, has become a stronghold of Chauvinism. The idea of internationalism is supported by those of the extreme Left. In the British Socialist Party in England the internationalists comprise about 3-7 (66 voted for an internationalist resolution and 84 against, according to the latest account), whereas in the opportunist block (the Labour Party plus the Fabian Society and the Independent Labour Party) the internationalists comprise less than 1-7.* In Russia the revisionist "Nasha

* It is customary to compare only the I.L.P. with the B.S.P., but this is wrong. We must take into consideration not the outward form of the organisation, but the essence of the matter. Take the daily papers: there were two, the B.S.P. had the *Daily Herald*, and the opportunist block the *Daily Citizen*. Daily papers express the actual work of propaganda, agitation and organisation.—LENIN.

[It will be seen that Lenin divides British Socialism into two sections in accordance with the two daily papers which were then published, viz., the *Daily Herald* and the *Daily Citizen*. Lenin correctly shows that the *Citizen* was reactionary, whereas the *Herald* struck a more rebellious note.

The *Herald's* policy corresponded very much to the principles of the B.S.P. but was not owned by that organisation. It seems strange that revolutionaries like Lenin seldom refer to the work of the S.L.P. it is well to remember three points. (1) The British S.L.P. had no opportunity to attend the last two International Congresses, due to the action of the larger parties, and was consequently unknown to students of the International. (2) The larger parties in Britain made it impossible for the S.L.P. to attend the International Congresses. (3) And, finally the S.L.P. was the victim of an organised policy of boycott by the opportunist parties which prevented the S.L.P. from receiving any merit in other countries for its splendid revolutionary work.

Also note that the B.S.P. is affiliated to the reactionary Labour Party.—Trans.]

Zarya," around which the opportunists grouped, became the Jingo centre. Plekhanov and Alexinsky make more noise, but we know by the experience of the years 1910-14--if by nothing else--that they are incapable of carrying on systematic propaganda amongst the masses in Russia. The main internationalist centre in Russia is Pravdism and the Russian S.D. Workers' Fraction; the later represents the progressive workers who re-established the party in January, 1912.

In Italy the purely opportunist party of Bissolati and Co. has turned Jingo. Internationalism is represented by the Labour Party. While the mass of the workers stand behind this party, the opportunists, the parliamentarians and the lower middle class back up Jingoism. In Italy during a number of months one had the opportunity of making a free choice, and the choice was not accidental, but dependent upon the difference between the class position of a proletarian who believes in mass action and that of a member of the lower middle class.

In Holland the opportunist party of Troelstra tolerates Jingoism in general. (We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the fact that in Holland members of the lower as well as the upper middle class cherish a special hatred against Germany, which is more capable than any other country of "swallowing them up." It is the Marxist party, with Gorter and Pannekoek at its head, which has produced sincere and consistent internationalists. In Sweden Branting, the opportunist leader, is incensed because the German Socialists are accused of treason, but Hoeglund, leader of the Left, declares that amongst his supporters are men who also look upon them as traitors (vide *Social Democrat*, No. 36). In Bulgaria the opponents of opportunism accuse the German Social Democrats in their organ (*Novoye Vremya*) of "having committed an abomination."

In Switzerland the adherents of Grenlich, the opportunist, are inclined to justify the German Social Democrats (vide their organ, the *Zurich Volksrecht*), whereas the adherents of the more radical R. Grimm have turned the *Berner Tagwacht* into an organ of the German Left. Only two of the ten countries: namely, France and Belgium, form an exception, though even there it is not the absence of internationalists that we

observe, but rather the fact that they are excessively weak and disheartened (partly owing to causes that are quite apparent). Let us not forget that even Vailant admitted in *L'Humanité* having received from his readers letters of an internationalist tendency, *none of which* he had printed in full

If we take the currents and tendencies as a whole, we cannot help recognising that it was the opportunist wing of European Socialism which betrayed it and went over to Jingoism. Whence did it derive its strength and its apparent omnipotence in the official parties? Kautsky, who is an adept at dealing with historical questions when concerned with ancient Rome and matters which have no close bearing upon the life of to-day, hypocritically pretends not to understand this, now that the matter concerns himself. But the thing is as clear as daylight. The gigantic force of the opportunists and Jingoism was supplied by *their union with the bourgeoisie*; the governments and the general staffs.

Here in Russia people are often apt to forget this and to consider opportunists as a *bona-fide* section of the Socialist parties. Many are tempted to think that there always have been, and always will be, two extreme wings in these parties, and that the main thing is to avoid "going to extremes," and so on, as some write in their shallow manuals.

Though the opportunists belong formally to the workers' parties, in reality we cannot get away from the fact that, objectively, they are a political contingent of the bourgeoisie and are its agents who extend its influence in the Labour movement. When the opportunist, Suedekum, notorious after the manner of Flerostratus,* demonstrated in a palpable way this social class truth, many good people were taken aback. The French Socialists, as well as Plekhanov, began to point at Suedekum; but had Vandervelde. Sembat or Plekhanov looked in a mirror they would have beheld Suedekum—only with a slightly different national face. Members of the German Party Executive, who praise, and are praised by Kautsky, have hastened to declare modestly and politely (without mentioning the name of Suedekum) that they disagree with the line taken by Suedekum.

* A Greek who in the year 356 B.C. set fire to the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, Asia Minor, to gain notoriety.—Trans.

This is ridiculous, seeing that with regard to the practical policy of the German S.D. Party, Suedekum alone turned out at the decisive moment to be more powerful than thousands of Haases and Kautskys put together, just as the "Nasha Zarya" is more powerful than all the other currents in the Brussels block, which are afraid to break away from it.

And why? Because Suedekum is backed up by the bourgeoisie, the government and the general staff of a Great Power. They support the policy of Suedekum in a thousand different ways, and they obstruct the policy of his opponents by every means, including imprisonment and shooting. The voice of Suedekum is carried by millions of copies of bourgeois papers (as is the voice of Vandervelde and Plekhanov), whereas the voices of his opponents cannot be heard in the legal press, for there exists what is termed military censorship!

All are agreed that opportunism is not something accidental, or a sin, or a mistake; it is not treason committed by individuals; it is the social product of a whole historical epoch. But not every one makes an attempt to grasp the meaning of this truth. It was the possibility of acting within the law that reared opportunism. The Labour parties of the years 1889-1914 had to make use of bourgeois legality. When the crisis came they had to resort to illegal activity—but the greatest energy and resoluteness, combined with a whole series of military tricks, were needed to effect such a transition. To hinder such a transition *one* Suedekum sufficed because, to speak historico-philosophically, he was backed up by the whole of the "old world"—because, to put it in practical political language, he betrayed, as he will always betray, to the bourgeoisie all the militant plans of its class enemy—the working class.

It is a fact that the whole of the German S.D. Party (and the same refers to the French and other parties) does only what pleases or will be tolerated by Suedekum. Nothing else can be done in a legal manner. Everything of an honest and really Socialist character done in the German S.D. Party is done in opposition to its centres by circumventing its Executive Committee and its central organ. All real revolutionary work is done by means of the infringement of party discipline, and by factions in the name of anonymous centres of a new party. Thus the appeal of the Ger-

man Left Wing was published anonymously, for instance, in the *Berner Tagwacht* on May 31st, 1915. It is a new party, a really revolutionary Socialist Democratic Workers' Party that is in the act of growing and becoming strong, and not the old, rotten National-Liberal Party of Legien, Suedekum, Kautsky, Haase, Scheidmann and Co.*

Hence, Monitor, the opportunist, let out a profound historical truth in the Conservative *Preussische Jahrbuecher* when he declared it would do no harm to the opportunists (he should have said "to the bourgeoisie") if the Social Democracy of to-day moved further to the Right, since in that case the workers would forsake it. The opportunists (and the bourgeoisie) need the present Social Democratic Party, which includes both Right and Left wings, and which is officially represented by Kautsky, who knows how to reconcile everything in the world by fluent and "thoroughly Marxist" phrases. In words he advocates Socialism and revolutionary action on the part of the workers, but in deeds he is in favour of Suedekum's tactics, that is to say, of joining the bourgeoisie at any serious crisis. We say at any crisis, for not only in cases of war, but also in every case when a serious political strike is on both "feudal" Germany and "free parliamentary" England or France will immediately introduce martial law under one name or the other. No man in his senses can doubt this.

From this follows the reply to the question put above: "How are we to combat Socialist-Jingoism?" The latter is opportunism which has become ripe, strong, and impudent, during the long, comparatively "peaceful" era of capitalism. It has so well defined its ideological and political theories and has so linked itself up with the bourgeoisie and the governments that we cannot tolerate such a current inside S.D. Workers' parties. One can put up with thin, weak soles for walking on the civilised pavements of a small provin-

* What happened before the historical voting of the 4th of August is very characteristic. The official party covered the incident with the veil of hypocrisy, saying that the majority had decided to vote and had voted unanimously for the credits. But in the paper, *Die Internationale*, Stroebel exposed this hypocrisy and stated the truth. In the S.D. party there were two groups, which both came with their ultimata ready, that is to say, with fractional or dissenting decisions. One group, the opportunists, comprising about 30 men, decided to vote for the credits come what may; the other group—those of the Left, comprising about 15 men—had decided, but less resolutely, to vote against the credits. When the Centre, or the "Swamp," which has no firm position, sided with the opportunists those of the Left suffered a crushing defeat and . . . submitted! Unity in German Social-Democracy is a hollow sham which in practice inevitably means submission to opportunist ultimata.

cial town, but one cannot dispense with strong soles studded with nails for climbing mountains. Socialism in Europe has emerged from the comparatively peaceful stage limited by narrow national boundaries. With the war of 1914-15 Socialism in Europe has entered the stage of revolutionary action; it is high time then that a complete rupture with opportunism be effected and that the latter be turned out of the workers' parties.

Of course, from our analysis of the problems imposed upon Socialism by a new era in world development, we cannot infer directly with what speed and in what forms the process of separation of the workers of the revolutionary S.D. parties from the petty bourgeois-opportunist parties will take place in the different countries. But from our analysis follows the necessity for realising clearly that such a separation is inevitable and that the whole policy of the workers' parties must be directed from this angle of vision. The war of 1914-15 is such a great break in History that our attitude towards opportunism cannot remain the same. We cannot undo what has been done. The fact that the opportunists, in a moment of crisis, turned out to be the rallying point of those elements inside the workers' parties which went over to the side of the bourgeoisie—this fact cannot be effaced from the political experience of our epoch, nor can the workers and the master class be made to forget it. Prior to the war, opportunism throughout Europe was, so to say, in its youth. The war brought it to maturity and it cannot again be rendered "innocent" and youthful. A whole social stratum comprising parliamentarians, journalists, officials in the Labour movement, privileged servants and other hangers on of the proletariat, has become bound up with its national bourgeoisie; and the latter has known how to appraise and to adapt this stratum to its own ends. The wheel of History can be neither stopped nor turned back. But we can, and must, forge fearlessly ahead, passing from the preparatory, legal organisations of the working class—at present controlled by the opportunists—to revolutionary organisations of the proletariat, which do not limit themselves to legal activity and which are capable of safeguarding themselves against being betrayed by opportunists. The proletariat is embarking upon the "struggle for power," upon the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

From this it is clear, amongst other things, how wrongly the matter is being viewed by those who obscure their own consciousness and that of the workers with the question of what is to become of such prominent authorities of the Second International as Guesde, Plekhanov, Kautsky, etc. Indeed there is no need for such a question. If these persons fail to understand the new problems, they will either have to stand aside or remain, as at present, in bondage to the opportunists. If these people free themselves from their "bondage" there will scarcely exist a *political* obstacle to their returning to the camp of the revolutionaries. In any case, it is absurd to substitute the question of the part played by individuals for the question of the struggle of currents and of successive stages in the Labour movement.

CHAPTER IX.

EXISTING ORGANISATIONS TO BE SACRIFICED AND
REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATIONS SET UP IN
THE STRUGGLE WITH THE BOURGEOISIE.

Legal mass organisations of the working class are, perhaps, the most important distinguishing mark of the Socialist parties during the existence of the Second International. They were strongest in the German party, and there the war of 1914-15 caused a great break and forced a new problem to the fore. It was clear that passing to revolutionary action meant dissolution of the legal parties by the police. It meant that the old party, from Legien down to Kautsky, sacrificed the revolutionary aims of the proletariat for the sake of preserving the existing legal organisations. However much we may deny the fact, it is nevertheless true. The revolutionary right of the proletariat was sold for a mess of pottage as represented by the present legal organisations sanctioned by the police.

Take the pamphlet by Carl Legien, leader of the S.D. Trade Unions of Germany, entitled: "Why Should Trade Union Officials Take a Greater Part in the Inside Life of the Party?" (Berlin, 1915). This is a paper given by the author on January 27, 1915, to a conference of trade union officials. In his paper (which subsequently appeared in pamphlet form) Legien quoted a most interesting document which had not been suppressed by the censor for the reason that it formed part of Legien's paper. This document, so-called "material for the lecturers of the Niederbarnim (a suburb of Berlin) district," is a statement of the views of the German Social-Democrats of the Left and the protest they directed against the party. Revolutionary Social-Democrats, so says this document, did not and could not foresee one factor, namely:

"That the whole organised force of the German S.D. Party and of the trade unions would go over to the side of the government which was waging war, and that the whole of this force would be applied to crush the revolutionary energy of the masses." (Legien's pamphlet, p. 34.)

This is perfectly true. The following assertion in the same document is also true :

"The way the S.D. faction voted on August 4th meant that the revolutionary and anti-militant view, even had it been deeply rooted in the masses, could only have forced its way through against the will of the party centres, and not under the tried leadership of the party. The internationalist view could only have forced its way through by overcoming the opposition of the party and the trade unions." (Ibid.)

This again is perfectly true.

"If the S.D. faction had done its duty on August 4th the external form of the party would probably have been destroyed, but its spirit would have remained, that spirit which animated the party during the period of the Exceptional Law and helped it to overcome all difficulties. (Ibid.)

In Legien's pamphlet we find it noted that the gathering of "leaders"—whom he had brought together to hear his paper and who styled themselves trade union leaders and officials—*burst out laughing* when they heard this. The idea struck them as ridiculous that one can, and must, create illegal revolutionary organisations at a time of crisis, as was done at the time of the Exceptional [Anti-Socialist] Law. And Legien, a most devoted watchdog of the bourgeoisie, beat his breast and exclaimed: "To disrupt organisations in order that questions may be decided by the masses is a purely anarchist thought. I have not the least doubt that this is an anarchist idea."

"True," exclaimed the chorus (Ibid., p. 37) of flunkeys of the bourgeoisie, who styled themselves leaders of the S.D. organisations and of the working class.

Here we have an instructive object lesson. Leaders have been so depraved and stupified by activity under bourgeois legality that they are incapable of even grasping the thought of the necessity for any other form of organisation; they cannot see the need for illegal organisations for directing the revolutionary struggle. Men have come to such a pitch that they imagine that legal unions sanctioned by the police are organisations which cannot be surpassed; they imagine that during a time of crisis these unions can be preserved to supply the [revolutionary] directing force! Here you have a concrete instance of the manner in which opportunist dialectics work out in practice. Thus, the ordinary growth of legal unions and the simple

habit of dull but conscientious Philistines* who limit themselves to book-keeping, brought it about that in a moment of crisis these conscientious lower middle class men turned traitors and strangled the revolutionary energy of the masses. And this was not done accidentally. We must set up a revolutionary organisation, for both the changed historical situation and the era of revolutionary action on the part of the proletariat demand it. But such a transition is possible only *over the heads* of the old leaders who strangled revolutionary energy; *over the head* of the old party, and along the path of its destruction.

Counter-revolutionary men of the lower middle class naturally cry out: "This is anarchism," just as the opportunist, E. David, shouted "Anarchism" when taking Liebknecht to task. It is evident that in Germany the only leaders who remain honest are those whom the opportunists slander as "Anarchists."

Take the army of to-day. It is a model of good organisation. And this organisation is good solely because it is flexible and at the same time able to imbue millions of men with a single will. To-day these millions are in their homes in various parts of the country. On the morrow the order is given to mobilise, and they assemble at given points. To-day they lie in trenches where they may possibly remain for months. To-morrow, in different order, they go into attack. To-day they work miracles in evading bullets and shrapnel. To-morrow they do wonders in open fights. To-day their advanced detachments lay mines underground. To-morrow they advance over dozens of miles as directed by aviators. This is what is called organisation—when enthused by a single aim and animated by one will, millions of men change their mode of intercourse and action; change the place and the methods of their activity; change their instruments and tools in accordance with a change in circumstances and the requirements of the struggle.

The same relates to the struggle of the working class with the bourgeoisie. If no revolutionary situation is in existence to-day, or conditions which breed discontent amongst the masses and increase their activity; if to-day you are handed a voting paper, take it and organise so that you may beat your enemy, but do not

* Matthew Arnold applied this term of contempt to the middle class of Great Britain, which he called ignorant, narrow-minded and deficient in great ideas.—Trans.

use it for the purpose of sending men to parliament for the sake of soft jobs, at which they clutch, for fear they may be sent to prison. If on the morrow they take away your voting paper and hand you a rifle, a magnificent quick-firing gun, built in accordance with the latest requirements of machine technique—take these instruments of death and destruction, don't listen to sentimental whimperers who fear war. In this world there still remain many things which must be destroyed by fire and iron before the working class may be free. And if exasperation and despair are on the increase amongst the masses; if there exists a revolutionary situation, be ready to create fresh organisations and *to employ the useful instruments of death and destruction against your own government and bourgeoisie.*

To be sure, this is no easy matter. Much difficult preparatory work will have to be done and many painful sacrifices will be required. It is a new method of organisation and of struggle, which we must also learn, and no science can be learnt without making mistakes and suffering defeat. This form of the class struggle bears the same relation to participation in elections as does an attack to manœuvres, marches, or lying in trenches. This form of struggle in History does not frequently become the order of the day—yet its significance and effects extend over decades. During such intense periods when these methods become necessary each day is equivalent to twenty years of normal development.

Let us compare C. Legien with K. Kautsky, who writes as follows :

“As long as the party was small, every protest directed against the war acted as a courageous propagandist act. . . . The recent conduct of our Russian and Serbian comrades has been universally approved. The stronger a party becomes, the more propaganda considerations, and the motives of its decisions, become interwoven with considerations as to practical consequences, the more difficult it becomes to give to the motives of both kinds their just and equal due; nevertheless, we should try to do justice to both. Hence, the more powerful we become the more easily arises disagreement between us when we are confronted by any new and complex situation.” (Internationalism and War,” p. 30.)

Kautsky's arguments differ from those of Legien only by their cowardice and hypocrisy. Kautsky, in substance, supports and justifies the base renunciation of revolutionary activity by the Legiens, but does it stealthily, without expressing himself definitely,

getting over it by means of hints and bowing low before Legien as well as before the revolutionary conduct of the Russians. We Russians are accustomed to meet with this sort of attitude only amongst the Liberals, who are always ready to acknowledge the "courage" of the revolutionaries, but who at the same time would not, for anything in the world, give up their arch-opportunist tactics. Self-respecting revolutionaries will not accept "expressions of recognition" from Kautsky, but will reject such a manner of putting the question with indignation. If a revolutionary situation did not exist, if it was not binding to preach revolutionary action, then the conduct of the Russians and the Serbians was wrong and their tactics were wrong. Such knights-errant as Legien and Kautsky should have at least the courage of their opinions, and express them openly.

If the tactics of the Russian and Serbian Socialists deserve recognition, then it is not only unlawful but even criminal to justify the opposite tactics of powerful parties: such as the German, the French and other parties. By means of an expression such as "practical consequences," which is purposely wanting in clearness, Kautsky has veiled the simple truth that the big parties took fright at the prospect of having their organisations dissolved and their leaders arrested by the government. This means that Kautsky justifies the betrayal of Socialism by considerations of the disagreeable "practical consequences" of revolutionary tactics. Does this not mean the prostitution of Marxism?

One of the S.D. Deputies, who voted for the war credits on August the 4th, speaking at a workers' meeting said: "We should have been arrested!" And the workers shouted in reply: "That would not have mattered!"

If there is no other signal for transmitting to the working masses of Germany and of France the revolutionary frame of mind and the idea of the need to prepare for revolutionary action, the arrest of a deputy for a bold speech would have played a useful part as a battle-cry addressed to the proletarians of different countries *to unite* for carrying on revolutionary work. It is no easy matter to effect such a union, and the more binding was it on the deputies to take the initiative, for they stood above the masses and understood the ins and outs of politics.

Not only in time of war, but each time the political situation becomes strained—quite apart from any revolutionary action on the part of the masses—the government of *the freest* bourgeois country will not fail to threaten the dissolution of legal organisations, seizure of funds, arrest of leaders and other “practical consequences” of the kind. What is to be done? Should we acquit the opportunists on that account, as Kautsky does? That would mean giving one’s blessing to the transformation of S.D. parties into National Liberal-Labour parties.

For the Socialist there can be but one inference: action of a purely legal kind as practised by the European parties, has outlived its time and has become the foundation of a bourgeois-Labour policy, in consequence of capitalist development having reached the imperialist stage. It is necessary to supplement this action by the creation of an illegal foundation, an illegal organisation, illegal S.D. work without the surrender of a single legal position. Just how this is to be done experience will show; would that there were the readiness to enter upon this path and the consciousness of its need! The revolutionary Social-Democrats of Russia demonstrated in the years 1912-1914 that this problem can be solved. Muranov, the Labour deputy, whose bearing in court was better than that of all the others, and whom Tsardom sent to Siberia, showed clearly that apart from *ministerial* parliamentarism there is also *illegal and revolutionary* parliamentarism. (Henderson, Sembat, Vandervelde, down to Suedekum and Scheidemann, believe themselves to be quite fit to occupy “ministerial posts” though they are not given a chance to enter further than the anteroom!) Let the Kosovskys and Potresovs go into raptures over the “European” parliamentarism of flunkeys or grow reconciled to it. We shall never cease to repeat to the workers that legal action of that kind and the Social-Democracy of the Legiens, Kautskys and Scheidemanns deserve only our contempt.

CHAPTER X.

THE IMPERIALIST ERA CALLS FOR INTERNATIONALIST
TACTICS AND REVOLUTIONARY MASS ACTION.

Let us now sum up.

The collapse of the Second International was expressed most clearly in the scandalous betrayal by a majority of the official S.D. parties of Europe of their convictions and their solemn resolutions passed at Stuttgart and Basle. But this collapse, which meant a complete victory for opportunism, turning, as it did, the S.D. parties into National Liberal and Labour parties, is merely the outcome of the whole historical period during which the Second International functioned—from the latter part of the 19th to the beginning of the 20th century. The objective conditions of that period created and nurtured opportunism, for it was a transition period which witnessed the completion of bourgeois and nationalist revolutions in Western Europe and the commencement of Socialist revolutions. In some European countries we observe, during this period, splits in the Labour and Socialist movements, which, on the whole, follow along the line of opportunism (England, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria, Russia). In other countries we observe a long and persistent struggle of currents fought on the same lines (Germany, France, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland). The crisis created by the great war tore off the coverings, brushed aside conventionalities, laid bare the abscess which had long since come to a head, and revealed opportunism in its true rôle—that of an ally of the bourgeoisie. It is now indispensable that this element, as regards organisation, become completely separated from the [revolutionary] working class parties. The imperialist epoch will not tolerate the existence in one party of two elements comprising the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat and of another element composed of a semi-lower middle class aristocracy of the working class, availing itself, as it does, of the crumbs which fall from the privileges enjoyed by “its” nation swaggering as one of the “Great Powers.” The old

theory of opportunism as a lawful current in a united party, a party adverse to "going to extremes," now means a gross deception practised on the workers and the greatest obstacle to the forward march of the Labour movement. Open opportunism which immediately repels the mass of the workers is not so dreadful and harmful as this theory of the "golden mean," which justifies, by Marxist phraseology, opportunist practices and proves, by a series of sophisms, that revolutionary action and the like is not advisable. The most prominent representative of this theory and, at the same time, one of the most prominent authorities of the Second International, Kautsky, has proved himself a first-class hypocrite and a genius in the matter of prostituting Marxism. All those who are in the least degree honest, class-conscious, and revolutionary in the German S.D. party turn away with indignation from an "authority" eagerly defended by the Suedekums and Scheidemanns.

The proletarian masses—nine-tenths of whose old leaders have probably gone over to the bourgeoisie—turned out to be disunited and helpless when met face to face with the orgy of Jingoism, the pressure of military regulations, and the censorship. But the objective revolutionary situation created by the war and ever gaining in depth and extension will inevitably create a revolutionary frame of mind; it also steels and enlightens all the best and most class-conscious proletarians. A quick change in the mood of the masses is not only possible but becomes more and more probable—a change similar to that connected with "Father Gapon's movement" in Russia at the beginning of 1905, when from backward proletarian strata in a few months, and sometimes weeks, grew an army millions strong, which followed the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat. It is impossible to know or say whether a mighty revolutionary movement will develop soon after this war or in the course of it, but one thing is certain—nothing but work in this direction deserves to be called Socialist work. The battle-cry of civil war is the one which unifies and directs this work; it is the battle-cry which helps to unite and to link up those wishful to help in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against its government and its bourgeoisie.

In Russia a complete separation of the revolutionary S.D. proletarian elements from the lower middle class

opportunist elements has been prepared by the whole history of the Labour movement. Those who cast aside this history and declaim against "splitting the movement" render this movement the worst possible service and deprive themselves of the possibility of grasping the process of the formation of a real proletarian party in Russia. This party has been evolving in a struggle with different forms of opportunism, a struggle lasting many years. Of all the "Great" Powers taking part in the present war Russia is the only country which has recently passed through a revolution. The bourgeois basis of the revolution—in which the leading rôle was being played by the proletariat—could not fail to separate the bourgeois and the proletarian currents in the Labour movement. During the whole period, lasting approximately twenty years (1894-1914), in the course of which Russian Social-Democracy existed as an organisation, linked up with the mass movement of Labour (and not merely as an ideal current as it existed during the years 1883-1894), a struggle went on between the revolutionary proletariat and the petty bourgeois opportunist currents. The "economic tendency" of the years 1894-1902 was undoubtedly a current of the latter order. A whole series of arguments and traits of its ideology, distortion of Marxism *à la* Struve, reference to the "masses" to justify opportunism, and so on. All these forcibly remind one of the present-day vulgarised Marxism of Kautsky, Cunow, Plekhanov and others. It would be a grateful task to remind the present generation of the parallel that runs between the old S.D. papers, the *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Delo*, and Kautsky of to-day.

The "Minimalism" of the following period (1903-1908) was the immediate successor to the "economic tendency," not only as regards ideology, but also organisation. During the Russian revolution it pursued tactics objectively implying the dependence of the proletariat on the Liberal bourgeoisie and giving expression to petty bourgeois opportunist tendencies. When, during the subsequent period (1908-1914), the main stream of the Minimalist current produced the "liquidator movement," the class significance of this current became so obvious that the best representatives of Minimalism continually protested against the policy of the "Nasha Zarya" group. And this group, the

only one which had performed systematic work amongst the masses during the last five or six years—in opposition to the revolutionary Marxist party of the working class—turned Socialist-Chauvinist when the war 1914-5 broke out! And this in a country where autocracy still exists, where a bourgeois revolution is far from being completed, where 43 per cent. of the (truly Russian) population oppressed the majority belonging to peoples of other nationalities. The European type of development under which certain strata of the lower middle class, especially the intellectuals and an insignificant portion of the aristocracy of Labour can “benefit by” the privileges derived from the position of “their” nation as a “Great Power”—could not help manifesting itself in Russia. The Russian working class and the Russian S.D. Labour Party have been prepared by the whole of their past history for “internationalist” tactics, that is to say, tactics which are consistently revolutionary.

LENIN.

P.S.—This sketch was already in type when Kautsky and Haase jointly with Bernstein published in the papers their manifesto. They had perceived that the masses were moving in the direction of the Left. Thus, these gentlemen are now ready to “make peace” with those of the Left at the price, of course, of keeping “peace” with the Suedekums. Indeed, they are “Maedchen fuer alle” (prostitutes)!

APPENDIX I.

FORGOTTEN WORDS.

MANIFESTO OF THE BASLE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS.*

At the Stuttgart and Copenhagen Congresses the following basic principles of Socialism were outlined by the International:—

If war threatens to break out the working class and its Parliamentary representatives in all the countries affected bind themselves—with the assistance of the International Socialist Bureau, whose activity should promote unity—to do all they can to prevent the outbreak of war, by the use of such means as they find most effective; these means, naturally, will differ in accordance with the degree of acuteness of the class struggle and of the general political situation.

Should war nevertheless break out, it is the duty of Socialists to intervene with the object of putting a speedy end to it; it is their duty to make use of the economic and political crisis in the fullest possible measure to rouse the common people and thus accelerate the downfall of the domination of capital.

Recent events impose upon the proletariat more than ever the duty to pursue its activity—directed according to a general plan—with a maximum of force and energy. On the one hand the general craze for armaments has sent up the prices of articles of prime necessity and thereby rendered class antagonisms more acute, and imbued the working class with the indomitable spirit of revolt and with the desire to put an end to this system of unrest and useless waste. On the other hand, the menace of war, which constantly makes itself felt, is the cause of even greater unrest. At any moment the great European nations may hurl themselves at one another, which crime against humanity and reason cannot be justified by *any pretext as to its being committed in the interests of the people.*

The Balkan crisis which has already brought in its wake such frightful misery, would become, should it spread, the greatest danger to civilisation and to the proletariat; and it would at the same time, be the most shameful deed in the world's history, because the contrast between the magnitude of the catastrophe and the insignificance of the interests involved is enormous.

For this reason the Congress gladly puts on record the fact that there exists between the Socialist parties and the Trade Unions of all countries the fullest unanimity in the matter of waging war against war.

Co-operation on an imposing scale between the workers of all countries has been established by the fact that the proletarians of all countries have simultaneously taken up the fight against imperialism; each section of the International has opposed to the Government of its country the resistance of the proletariat, and mobilised the public opinion of its nation

* Nov. 24-25, 1912.

against military ventures of every sort. This co-operation has hitherto done much to safeguard international peace, which is being threatened by ever greater dangers. The fear of the ruling class that a proletarian revolution might break out as the consequence of a world war has turned out to be a material guarantee of peace.

Therefore, the Congress proposes to the Social-Democratic Parties to continue this activity, *to make use of every means which they consider expedient*. In indicating this general activity it outlines the special task of each Socialist Party.

The Social-Democratic Parties of the Balkan Peninsula are faced by a difficult problem. By systematically hindering every reform the Great Powers of Europe have, in a large measure, furthered the establishment in Turkey of an unbearable economic national and political system which was bound to lead to insurrection and war. To prevent this situation from being exploited in the interests of dynasties and the bourgeoisie, the Balkan Social Democratic Parties have put forward, with heroic courage, the demand for a Democratic Federation. The Congress proposes that they maintain their former position, which is worthy of admiration; it expects that Balkan Social Democracy after the war to make every effort to prevent dynasties, the military caste, and the bourgeoisie, of the Balkan States—which thirsts after expansion—from exploiting in their own class interests the results of the Balkan war bought at such a cost. And the Congress calls especially upon the Balkan Socialists to prevent the old enmity between the Serbs, Bulgarians, and Rumanians and Greeks from re-appearing, and to prevent all oppression of these Balkan peoples which at the present time are in the military camp of the opposite side—that is to say, of Turkey and Albania.

Therefore it is the duty of the Balkan Socialists to wage a struggle against these people being deprived of their rights; it is also their duty to oppose to the nationalist jingoism which is rampant, the brotherhood of all the Balkan nations, including the Albanians, Turks, and Rumanians.

It is the duty of the Social-Democratic Parties of Austria, Hungary, Croatia and Slavonia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina to continue with all their strength their fruitful activity against any attempts on the part of the dual monarchy to encroach upon Serbia. To-day, as has been the case in the past, and will be again in the future, their task is to resist the plan of Serbia being deprived, by force of arms, of the fruits of the war, of being turned into an Austrian colony, and of the peoples of Austria-Hungary itself, as well as all the European nations being exposed to the greatest dangers for the sake of dynastic interests. In an equal manner the Social-Democratic Parties of Austria-Hungary must, in the future, wage a struggle to secure for that portion of the Southern Slav people, which is under the domination of the House of Hapsburg, the right of democratic self-government within the limits of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

The Social-Democratic Parties of Austria-Hungary, as well as the Socialists of Italy, must give their special attention to the Albanian question. The Congress recognises the right of a nation to its independence. It does not, however, admit that under the cloak of independence Albania should become the

victim of Austro-Hungarian and Italian aspirations and domination. Therein the Congress perceives not only a danger to Albania itself, but also, in the near future, a menace to peace between Austria-Hungary and Italy. Albania can have a real independent existence only when it becomes a self-governing member of the Balkan Federation. In view of this the Congress proposes to the Social-Democrats of Austria-Hungary and Italy to fight every attempt on the part of their governments to draw Albania into their sphere of influence. It proposes that they continue their work of cementing the peaceful relations existing between Austria-Hungary and Italy.

With great joy the Congress greets the protest strikes of the Russian workers; it greets them as a proof of the fact that the proletariat of Russia and Poland is beginning to recover from the blows inflicted upon it by the Tsarist counter-revolution. In this the Congress sees the greatest guarantee against criminal intrigues of Tsarism which, having steeped in blood the peoples of its own country, and having treacherously betrayed the Balkan peoples to their enemies, is now alternately swayed by the fear of the consequences which the war may bring in its wake, and by the fear of the nationalist movement which it has called into life.

If Tsarism, however, is successful in making its appearance as the liberator of the Balkan peoples, this will be done merely for the purpose of having a pretext for gaining supremacy in the Balkans by means of a bloody war. The Congress hopes that both the town and the village proletariat of Russia, Finland, and Poland, which is growing strong, will rend asunder this web of lies, will resist every military adventure, will struggle against every attempt of Tsarism to encroach upon Armenia, Constantinople, etc., and will concentrate all its strength on taking up afresh the revolutionary struggle of liberation. For Tsarism is the hope of all the reactionary forces in Europe; it is the most dreaded enemy of democracy in general and of the peoples over which it dominates in particular. The whole of the International must look upon its overthrow as one of the most important tasks.

But the most important duty within the limits of the International devolves upon the working class of Germany, France, and England. At the present moment the task of the workers of these countries consists in demanding from their governments that they refuse to support in any way either Austria-Hungary or Russia; that they refrain from all interference with the Balkan turmoil and observe an absolute neutrality. War between the three great progressive civilised nations, in consequence of the Austro-Serbian dispute over seaports would be criminal folly. The workers of Germany and France cannot recognise the existence of any obligation whatsoever, determined by secret treaties, to join in the Balkan conflict.

Should, however, the military collapse of Turkey lead to an Ottoman domination in Asia Minor being shaken in its foundations, the task of the Socialists of England, France and Germany must consist in counteracting everywhere the policy of conquest in Asia Minor which will inevitably lead directly to a world war. The Congress regards the artificially nurtured antagonism between Great Britain and the German Empire as the greatest menace to peace. Therefore, the Congress welcomes every effort of the working class in both these

countries to overcome this antagonism. It regards as the best means of attaining this aim the conclusion of an agreement between Germany and England in regard to the limitation of naval armaments and of the right of capture at sea. The Congress proposes to the Socialists of England and Germany to continue their agitation in favour of such an agreement.

If the antagonisms between Germany on the one side and England and France on the other were overcome, this would do away with the greatest menace to peace and would also weaken the power of Tsarism which exploits this antagonism; it would also render impossible Austria-Hungary's attack upon Serbia and would guarantee peace to the world. Consequently all efforts of the International must be directed to this end.

The Congress places upon record that the whole of the Socialist International is unanimous as regards these fundamental principles of foreign policy. It proposes that the workers of all countries oppose to capitalist imperialism the power of the international solidarity of the proletariat. It warns the ruling classes of all states in regard to the consequences that will arise if the wretched condition of the masses, brought about by the capitalist mode of production, be rendered still worse by military action. It makes a most peremptory demand for peace. Let the governments not forget that with the present state of Europe and together with the frame of mind of the working class they cannot let loose the fury of war without creating a danger for themselves; let them remember that the Franco-German war was followed by the Commune, that the Russo-Japanese war put in motion the revolutionary forces of the peoples of the Russian Empire, and that the growth of military and naval armaments has rendered the class conflicts in England and on the Continent extremely acute and has led to colossal strikes. The governments must be totally blind, or mad, if they have not yet grasped the fact that the mere suggestion of a monstrous world-war must call forth the indignation and revolt of the working class. The proletarians regard as a *A CRIME SHOOTING AT ONE ANOTHER for the sake of increasing the profits of the capitalists, satisfying the ambitions of dynasties, or doing it for the glory of the secret treaties of diplomacy.*

If the ruling classes, by destroying every possibility of a normal development, impel the proletariat to take desperate steps, they themselves will bear the whole responsibility for the crisis provoked by them.

The International will double its efforts to prevent the advent of this crisis; its protest will resound with ever greater force; it will carry on its propaganda with greater energy and on an ever-increasing scale. The Congress entrusts, therefore, the International Socialist Bureau to watch events more and more closely, and, come what may, maintain and strengthen the link which unites the proletarian parties.

At this moment the proletariat is conscious of being the bearer of the future of all mankind. To prevent the destruction of the flower of all the nations—threatened by the horrors of mass-murders, hunger, and epidemics—the proletariat will apply the whole of its energy.

The Congress appeals to you, proletarians and Socialists of all countries—let your voice be heard at this fateful hour! Announce your will everywhere *and in every possible form.*

Let your mighty protest resound in parliaments; congregate in large masses to announce your intentions to the world. Make use of every means at your disposal—by your organisations and by the strength of the proletariat! See to it that the governments have before their eyes the constantly vigilant and passionate desire of the whole proletariat for peace! In this manner oppose to the capitalist world of exploitation and mass murders the proletarian world of peace and the brotherhood of all nations!

APPENDIX II.

RESOLUTION OF THE CHEMNITZ CONFERENCE OF THE GERMAN
SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY.*

IMPERIALISM.

PRODUCTION, which is developing at a fast rate, calls for the extension of market, but the conditions of existence of the exploited proletariat have only become worse. And following on the colossal accumulations of capital, new spheres for investment are being sought, as well as new possibilities for intensifying the process of increasing and producing economic wealth.

Hand in hand with the growing exports of commodities and capital, of means of production and transportation, the world interchange of commodities is carried on on an ever larger scale. Thus the profit-making system which is embracing the whole world is being more and more extended. The employers' organisations, such as the cartells and trusts, which are energetically supported by protective tariffs and which more and more tend to dominate economic life will make effective use of their influence over the policy of their respective States, so that governmental power may be placed at the service of their aspirations for foreign expansion, in order that large portions of the world's economic regions be included in the sphere of their influence and domination, and that foreign rivals be excluded. To achieve this end coercion of the grossest kind is regarded as permissible as long as there is a guarantee of success. The unblushing policy of plunder and annexation, whose anti-national character was branded by the Party Conference at Mainz as long ago as 1900, is a consequence of these imperialistic aspirations for expansion. In order that marauding expeditions may be carried out successfully and booty be secured, instruments of murder are being multiplied and perfected in an unheard-of degree.

Between States whose capitalist class has the same need for expansion and which, to satisfy this need, pursues the same aims, arise grievous conflicts and sharp antagonisms which in their turn stimulate the present mad growth of armaments.

The danger thus created and which bears in its womb the countless miseries of a world war is being rendered still more acute by the shameless agitation on the part of the capitalist magnates and junkers who have a special interest in supplying war materials, in enlarging the bureaucratic apparatus, and in filling the leading posts in the army and navy.

Imperialism increases the power of the jingo firebrands, threatens the right of trade union organisation, and retards the advance of a social policy. The expenditure on armaments piles upon the masses an unbearable burden, while their health is undermined in the increased cost of articles of prime necessity.

* Moved by Haase, and passed on September 20th, 1912. Only 3 votes against with 2 abstentions.

All the bourgeois parties have entered upon the path of imperialism; they agreed unanimously to satisfy all demands of the army and navy. Social Democracy struggles most persistently against all imperialist and jingoistic aspirations wherever they make their appearance and, on the other hand, unflinchingly creates the international solidarity of the proletariat which nowhere cherishes hostile feelings for other nations.

And though imperialism, which is an effect of the capitalist economic system, can be overthrown only together with the capitalist system, we must not lose a single opportunity of nullifying its actions, which are dangerous to all.

The Party Conference declares its resolute will to do all in its power to establish mutual understanding between nations and to safeguard peace.

The Party Conference demands that by means of international agreements an end be put to the mad rivalry of armaments which threatens peace and brings mankind so quickly to the brink of the most terrible catastrophe.

The Party Conference demands that for the policy of greed for annexations and conquests be substituted the policy of a free world interchange of commodities and the abolition of the system of protective tariffs, which latter serves merely to enrich capitalist magnates and large landowners.

The Party Conference expects the members of the Party to apply tirelessly their whole strength to building up the political, trade union, and co-operative organisations of the class-conscious proletariat to the end that imperialism may be fought with more and more energy until it be overthrown. For the task of the proletariat is to turn capitalism, which has reached the highest degree of development, into socialist society, and thus to safeguard a lasting peace and the independence and freedom of nations.

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W. W. W. W. W.

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