INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM AND THE WAR

A.W. HUMPHREY

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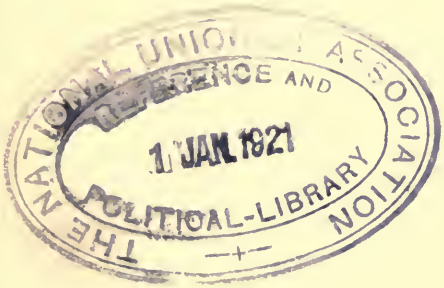

PREFACE

In the following pages there are dealt with only those organisations affiliated to the International Socialist Bureau. No attempt is made to present opinion in any wider sense; nor do any organisations outside the International Bureau come within the scope of this short study. It is for that reason that, in the British section, no reference is made to the Church Socialist League, the University Socialist Federation, the Socialist and Labour Church Union, and other smaller Socialist bodies. These omissions would not, I think, affect any conclusions which might be drawn from the facts contained herein, inasmuch as the organisations dealt with are of a thoroughly representative character, embracing as they do every type of Socialist and people of every social grade. Moreover, the membership of many of the Socialist organisations in this country overlaps to an appreciable

degree. So far as the Continental countries are concerned, in all those of which I have written all the Socialist organisations properly so called are affiliated to the International Bureau.

I have confined myself to the pronouncements of organisations and official organs in the press, and to those of people known to represent a body of opinion. Views which, so far as can be ascertained, are merely the expression of individual opinion have been omitted. This has been done for the sake of clearness and because anything but the general outlook belongs to a more detailed survey, which cannot be made while the war is in progress.

A. W. HUMPHREY.

January 1915.

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Millions of men who ask only to live in peace will be dragged without their consent into the most appalling of butcheries by treaties to which they have not agreed, by a decision with which they have had nothing to do.

Manifesto of the Belgian Socialist Labour Party.

Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the devil is, not the smallest! . . . How then? Simpleton! Their governors had fallen out, and instead of shooting one another had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot.

Carlyle.

I am alone in the whole house and don't know what to do. . . . The Kovascek family came from Pest yesterday crying, because Eugene and Julius were taken by the soldiers. Everybody wishes they were in America. If it lasts much longer I will go crazy. . . . Starvation and privation is in store for me and everybody else if the war continues. Everybody is sad here in Budapest. Everybody is crying; everybody lost somebody.

A Hungarian Woman to friends in New York.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM AND THE WAR

I

INTRODUCTORY

This little volume is not intended as a complete account of the International Socialist movement in connection with the present war, nor as a complete exposition of the motives which have guided the various Socialist bodies to the positions they have taken up. Reliable information is not easily obtainable, and only when the gun-fire has ceased will it be possible to tell the full story. As with other aspects of the war, the bloodshed comes first and the full facts afterwards. The information available, however, is sufficient to reveal the broad principles upon which the Socialists concerned have acted, the main facts which have influenced them, and how they stand in relation to their respective Governments. To sketch those principles, present those facts, and show in what direction Socialist political effort is being directed during the war is all that is aimed at in these pages.

The fact that Socialists are fighting—and, in

some cases, fighting with ardour, for what they hold to be a righteous cause—has been regarded by many as a great apostasy. There appears to have been a popular notion that the Socialists "wouldn't fight," and that, in the case of any war whatever, Socialists—particularly on the Continent —would declare a general strike—a course to which the International has never been committed. At the root of this error is the mistaken idea that the Pacifism of the Socialist movement takes the form of adherence to the doctrine of Non-Resistance; and that because the movement rejects the specious patriotism which consists of shifting the landmark of one's neighbour, the idea of Nationalism has no place in its conceptions. On the other hand it must be confessed that besides a sincere misunderstanding of the Socialists' motives, there has not been lacking deliberate misrepresentation of their attitude to the war. Because of this misunderstanding on the one hand and distortion on the other, it is believed that these pages are not untimely.

To a proper understanding of the actions of the Socialist parties concerned, some account of the past history of International Socialism, its attitude in previous wars, its principles relating to war in general, and the strength of the various organisations is necessary. The most essential facts, therefore, will precede the consideration of the view taken of the present war by the Socialist bodies in the belligerent countries.

II

STRIKING ROOT

The roots of International Socialism extend back to the eighteen-forties. They spring from the Communist League. The Communist League was originally German, but developed into an international secret society, with headquarters in London. It then took the name of International Alliance. Secrecy was unavoidable in view of the political conditions then prevailing on the Continent. The methods favoured by the organisation were conspiracy and insurrection, activities which were varied by the planning of Utopias such as those with which are associated the names of Owen in this country and Fourier in France.

In 1847, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were asked to reorganise the movement. Both were of opinion that such a reorganisation was due, and on lines which would lead to a political movement the aims of which would be frankly acknowledged ; which would work in the open and abandon the old ideas of freedom gained through insurrection or the planting of model communities by bands of

idealists. The sequel to the request to Marx and Engels was the drawing up of the famous Communist Manifesto, on the instruction of a Congress of the International Alliance held in London in November 1847. Henceforward the organisation was known by its old name—the Communist League.[1]

The Manifesto was first issued on January 24th, 1848, the day the revolution broke out in Paris. It appeared first in German, and was translated into French the same year. Not until 1850 did an English version appear, but prior to that Danish and Polish editions had been issued.

The interest of the Manifesto in connection with the subject of these pages is twofold. To begin with, it represents the first expression of a philosophy which was declared to be, and which then, and to an increased extent later on, proved to be, equally applicable to, and acceptable by, the working-class of various nationalities. Here, for the first time, was a platform on which the workmen of the world could unite. And just as the principles of the Manifesto were a rallying-point for the European proletariat so were those principles the object of the common hatred of the governing

[1] It may be explained that time has reversed the relative meanings of Socialism and Communism. When the Manifesto was written Communism stood for a political movement based on economic analysis, while Socialism was the creed of those who planned Utopias and dreamed of persuading all mankind to enter into them. To-day, as is well known, the meaning of the terms is reversed.

classes. As the opening sentences of the Manifesto summed up the position:—

> A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the Powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.
>
> Where is the party in opposition that has not been described as communistic by its opponents in power? Where the Opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of Communism against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?
>
> Communism is already acknowledged by all European Powers to be in itself a Power.

A secondary interest possessed by the Manifesto, in relation to our subject, is that it laid down that Communism—Socialism—was not opposed to the idea of nationality. Socialists were then, as to-day, Internationalists but not anti-Nationalists. The Manifesto answered the reproach that Communists desired "to abolish countries and nationalities." It argued thus. The business of the proletariat was to become politically supreme; "it must constitute itself *the* nation . . . though not in the bourgeois sense of the word." As class antagonism within the nation vanished so would the antagonism of nations. But nations there still would be.

Clearly, this reasoning implies the right of the Communist to defend his country from aggression; against the exploitation by a governing class, not

only of the people within its own borders but also of the people of another land.

The Communist League was short-lived. With the failure of the revolutionary movement in France it was again compelled to revert to the methods of the secret society. Many secret organisations came into existence on the Continent, but they were rigorously repressed. After the arrest of the members of the Central Board of the League, at Cologne, in April 1851, their trial eighteen months later, and the imprisonment of seven of their number, the League was dissolved.

III

THE "OLD INTERNATIONAL"

Twelve years later the International reappeared. On September 28th, 1864, the International Working Men's Association was founded in St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, London. It originated in fraternal gatherings of British trade unionists and French and German artisans, when the latter were sent to visit the International Exhibition which was held in London in 1862. Some of the Frenchmen had been members of the Communist League and were known to Marx, who was mainly responsible for the new movement.

It was through the International Working Men's Association that the European working-class first developed a policy in regard to militarism and war. In the Address issued at the inauguration of the Association and written by Marx, the workmen were urged to take an interest in international politics, to watch diplomacy, and to use their influence on behalf of any nation struggling for self-government. Conquest was an evil. The interests of the workmen lay in peace; in raising their political and economic status; not in going

out to shoot workmen over the frontier in order to extend the dominions of the ruling class and increase the area of exploitation of the capitalist class.

> Let us have a perfect understanding with all men whose prospects are in peace, in industrial development, in freedom and human happiness all over the world; that the strong and brave, instead of being led forth with fire and sword to kill and destroy to satisfy the craving desire of trade for gold, ministers for place and despots for conquest, may live to make their homes happy, and use their strength to assist the weak, the aged, and the destitute, with the consolation of being free from the miseries produced by war.

So ran the Address of the British trade unionists to the foreign visitors at the first meeting in 1862, and such—perhaps crudely expressed—was the spirit of the International.

But the right of nationalities to independent existence was always staunchly maintained. The Frenchmen expressed the idea in their reply when they declared:

> We must have no more Cæsars . . . . dividing among themselves peoples spoiled by the rapine of the great and countries devastated by savage war.
>
> Once more has Poland been stifled in the blood of her children, and we have remained powerless spectators. *One sunk by oppression puts all other peoples in danger.* In the name of his own dignity every free man and every man who wishes to be free is bound to give assistance to his oppressed brothers.

With the general work and development of the International we are not concerned. Suffice it to

say that it grew in influence until 1870; that while its practical work was hampered by lack of funds, it had, according to the late August Bebel, "great moral influence";[1] that it gave the organised section of the European working-class a European outlook. At the Congress at Bâle, in 1869, delegates attended from England, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, and America.

[1] *Autobiography.*

IV

THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR: A PROPHECY

In July 1870 there broke out the Franco-Prussian War. The war contributed considerably to—but was far from being the only factor in—the break-up of the International Working Men's Association, which had little influence after 1871 though it lingered until 1876. But while the war was partly responsible for the break-up of the movement, the movement made its voice heard, and subsequent developments have shown that it spoke on the right side.

War was declared on July 19th, and on the 23rd the General Council of the International issued a Manifesto declaring that the war was one of defence so far as Germany was concerned,[1] but warning the working-class against the danger of its becoming a war of aggression against France to the injury of the working-class of both nations. And when that danger appeared another

[1] When the Manifesto was written the Council would not know what the inner history of the war has since revealed—that Bismarck deliberately engineered the crisis.

Manifesto was issued. The beginning of September brought the French defeat at Sedan, and the 4th of the month the proclamation of the French Republic. Marx wrote on the following day to the Brunswick Committee arguing that then was the time for an honourable peace. Prussia had accomplished her defence; a continuance of the war could only mean aggression on her part. Four days later the authorities dissolved the Brunswick Committee and took its members in chains to the fortress of Boyen.[1]

The letter of Marx is of special interest at the present time inasmuch as in it he foretold the alliance of France and Russia against Germany, the growing militarism of the last-named country, and the present conflict between the three as a result of the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. The passage is as follows:—

> But, we are told, it will be at least necessary that we take Alsace and Lorraine from France. The war camarilla, the professors, the burghers, and the tavern politicians claim that this is the only way to protect Germany for all time from a French war. On the contrary, it is the surest way to transform this war into a European institution.
>
> It is the infallible medium to immortalise the military despotism of the new Germany forced by the necessity of holding a western Poland, that of Alsace and Lorraine.
>
> It is the infallible means of controverting the coming peace into a truce to be broken as soon as France has recuperated sufficiently to recapture the lost territory.

[1] *Karl Marx: His Life and Work.* By John Spargo (New York, 1910).

It is the infallible means to ruin France and Germany through self-slaughter.

The knaves and fools who claim that they have discovered a guarantee for eternal peace should have learned something from Prussian history, from the Napoleonic horse-medicine after the peace of Tilsit—how these violent measures for the pacification of a virile nation produce the exact opposite result. And what is France even after the loss of Alsace and Lorraine as compared with Prussia after the peace of Tilsit?

Whoever is not totally stupefied by the noise of the moment, or has no interest to stupefy others, must realise that the war of 1870 bears within its womb the necessity of a war with Russia, even as the war of 1866 bore within its womb the war of 1870.

I say necessarily inevitably, except in the doubtful event of a Russian revolution.

If this doubtful event does not take place, then the war between Germany and Russia must be treated as an accomplished fact.

If they take Alsace-Lorraine, then Russia and France will make war on Germany. It is superfluous to point out the disastrous consequences.[1]

A few days after this communication to the Brunswick Committee of the International, the General Council issued a Manifesto to all sections. The Manifesto—which was in all probability also the work of Marx—is an equally interesting example of keen political insight. In it the present struggle between united Slav and Latin races against Teutonic Germany was foretold in the following trenchant passage:—

Do the Teutonic patriots seriously believe that the independence, liberty, and peace of Germany may

[1] *Justice*, October 15th, 1914, quoting from *The New York Call.*

be secured by driving France into the arms of Russia?

If the luck of arms, the arrogance of success, and the intrigue of the dynasties lead to the robbing of French territory, then there are only two ways open for Germany.

It either must pursue the dangerous course of a tool for the furtherance of Russian aggrandisement, a policy which coincides with the tradition of the Hohenzollern, or it must, after a short pause, prepare itself for a new defensive war. Not one of those new-fangled "localised" wars, but a race war, a war with the united Slav and Latin races. This is the peace prospect held out by the brainless patriots of the German middle class.

History will not measure her retribution by the circumference of the square miles conquered from France, but by the intensity of the crime of having re-established in the second half of the nineteenth century the policy of conquest.[1]

Mass meetings were held in France, Germany, Austria, England, the United States, and Italy, protesting against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and a policy of conquest generally on the part of Germany. When the war broke out only Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht[2] voted against the war estimates, the other five of the seven Socialists in the North German Reichstag supporting the credits on the grounds of national defence. But now, when Germany was pursuing a policy of conquest, they voted to a man against further supplies for the war.[3] Bebel and Liebknecht were

[1] *Justice*, October 22nd, 1914.

[2] Not to be confused with his son, Dr. Karl Liebknecht, the present leader of the German Socialists.

[3] *Karl Marx: His Life and Work.*

imprisoned for their part in the agitation; the former for two years and nine months, and the latter for two years.

The British trade unionists were very active. At a meeting on September 14th, Robert Applegarth moved a resolution of "protest against any dismemberment of France as likely to lead to future complications in Europe," and George Howell moved one congratulating the French on declaring a Republic and calling on the British Government to recognise it. On September 19th there was a demonstration of trade unionists in Hyde Park, and on the 24th a great gathering at St. James's Hall, where Professor E. S. Beesly—who presided at the inaugural meeting of the International — and Charles Bradlaugh were amongst the speakers. A few days later a deputation from over a hundred working-class organisations in London and the provinces waited on Gladstone in support of the same cause.[1]

Thus did the International seek to save Europe from laying up that store of hatred, rivalry, and lust for revenge which are the common fruits of conquest.

[1] See the present writer's *Robert Applegarth: Trade Unionist, Educationist, Reformer* (Manchester, 1914).

V

THE "NEW INTERNATIONAL"

"Let us give our fellow-workers in Europe a little time to strengthen their national affairs and they will surely soon be in a position to remove the barriers between themselves and working-men of other parts of the world."[1] Thus ran a passage in the valedictory document of the International Working Men's Association, issued at Philadelphia on July 15th, 1876. Twelve years later the movement for international combination was begun again.

From a movement originating almost simultaneously among the Socialists of France, England, Germany, and Holland sprang the International Socialist Congress, which held its first meetings in Paris in 1889. That year there were two rival Congresses convened by the two sections—Marxist and "Possiblist"—of the French Socialists; but a united Congress was held in Brussels in 1891, and united it has continued. It is now held triennially, and at the last, at Bâle, in 1910, the delegation

[1] *Karl Marx: His Life and Work.*

consisted of 887 representatives from thirty-three nations.[1]

In 1900 the International Socialist Bureau was instituted, as a permanent means of communication and co-operation. It meets once a year, but special meetings are called in emergencies. Twenty-six national sections are at present affiliated to the Bureau, and nine other sections keep in touch with the Secretary. The Chairman of the Bureau is M. Emile Vandervelde; the Secretary, M. Camille Huysmans; and its headquarters are at Brussels.

To-day, when the great ideal of a United States of Europe is being brought to the notice of a wider public, it is especially interesting to note that since 1906 a branch of the Socialist International has been the Inter-Parliamentary Committee, on which fourteen nations are represented, including all those involved in the present war. The purpose of this Committee is "to keep the Socialist and Labour Parliamentary groups in European Parliaments in touch with each other, to afford an intimate means of discussing international affairs, and especially to be prepared to take action in the event of disputes or threatenings of war arising between the Governments of any of the nations."[2]

[1] The 1913 Congress was postponed until 1914, when, in Vienna, it was to have celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the "Old International." The war caused it to be abandoned.

[2] *The Socialist Year Book, 1913.*

VI

THE INTERNATIONAL'S ATTITUDE TO WAR

What, to-day, is the attitude of International Socialism to war? The last declaration was that of the Stuttgart Congress, in 1907, which has not since been amended or rescinded. It was carried unanimously, and after a preamble runs:—

> If war threatens to break out it is the duty of the working-class in the countries concerned and of their Parliamentary representatives, with the help of the International Bureau as a means of co-ordinating their action, to use every effort to prevent war by all the means which seem to them the most appropriate, having regard to the sharpness of the class war and to the general political situation.
>
> Should war none the less break out, their duty is to intervene to bring it promptly to an end and with all their energies to use the political and economic crisis created by the war to rouse the populace from its slumbers, and to hasten the fall of capitalist domination.

Mr. H. N. Brailsford in *The War of Steel and Gold* has sketched the main ideas of the debate which led to the passing of this resolution. The French view was that the duty of a Socialist Party

was to attack the aggressive Government, no matter which Government it might be, and that if there were difficulty in deciding which was the aggressive Government, that Government which refused to submit its case to arbitration would stand branded as the aggressor. The Germans, however, took the view that it would not always be the duty of Socialists to throw their weight against the aggressor. Japan was the technical aggressor in the Russo-Japanese War, but it was not the duty of Socialists to support the Czar. In no war over Morocco would it be the duty of Socialists to defend Germany even if she were attacked. "Bebel went so far as to say in the heat of the debate that if Germany attacked Russia he for one would be the first to shoulder a rifle because the event of such a war would be to liberate the working-classes of Russia and to weaken the reaction even in Germany itself." But while these views represent a difference in theory they both imply that the attitude of Socialists in the event of an outbreak of war would be determined, not by national interests, but by the interests of Labour all the world over, and in any specific case they would act in concert through the Socialist Bureau.

It may be noted, in passing, that special meetings of the Bureau were held in Zurich at the time of the Morocco crisis, and at Bâle in November 1912, in connection with the Balkan War. In the former case the war-cloud had passed by the time the delegates met. In the latter case

a resolution was passed demanding the independence of the Balkan States and calling upon the International's organisation to oppose any designs of the Powers for increased territory or political influence in the Balkans. On Sunday, November 17th, simultaneous International demonstrations against war were held in eight European capitals. From that time onward there has been much anti-militarist propaganda throughout Europe, the British effort taking the form of the anti-Conscription campaign of the Independent Labour Party.

VII

STRENGTH OF THE PARTIES

Before proceeding to deal with the part played by the Socialist movement when the war-clouds—since burst with such frightful consequences—gathered over Europe last July, it is necessary to glance at the numerical strength of the Socialist parties in the belligerent countries,[1] and note the extent of their representation in their respective Legislatures. The following are the figures of membership in 1912:[2]—

German Social-Democratic Party	970,112
Austrian Social-Democratic Labour Party / Czech-Slav Social-Democratic Labour Party	289,524
Italian Socialist Party	40,000
Servian Social-Democratic Labour Party	3,000
French Socialist Party	80,000
Russian Social-Democratic Party (1907)	168,000
Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party	Unknown
Belgian Socialist Labour Party	222,000
British Labour Party	1,539,092
British Socialist Party	20,000

[1] Italy is included as a member of the Triple Alliance.

[2] The statistics and other facts concerning the parties are taken mainly from *The Socialist Year Book, 1913*, edited by J. Bruce Glasier.

Some comments on these figures should be helpful. The German Party is famous for the efficiency of its organisation and the loyalty and discipline of the members. It is the best organised political party in the world. The extent of its activities may be gauged from the fact that it owns 89 daily papers and 59 printing establishments. In 1912 the subscribers numbered 1,479,042. It spent, in 1912, £16,082 on "general agitation," apart from £1152 under the head of "education" and £2034 for party schools.

The French Party has only five daily papers, and in organisation and equipment is far behind the German. Yet in proportion to its numbers it exercises a greater influence. At the General Election of 1912 the German Party polled in round figures 4,250,000 votes, or five votes for every enrolled member of the party, whereas the French poll of 1,125,877 at the General Election of 1910 represented about eighteen votes for every party member.

The great variety of races in Austria has been a source of great difficulty in the organisation of the party. Recently, the party split into the two sections indicated above, the Czech-Slav party being the organisation of Bohemia and Moravia. In the Imperial Parliament there are three groups: German, Bohemian, and Polish; but Dr. Victor Adler is recognised as the head of the Parliamentary forces.

The influence of the Italian Party, like that of

the French, is out of all proportion to its numbers. With a membership of 40,000, it polled 328,865 votes at the General Election of 1909 and returned 40 representatives to the House of Deputies. In 130 cities, towns, and communes the Socialists are in a majority on the governing body. A feature of the party is the extent to which it has attracted to its ranks the professional classes, including many distinguished men. When it had 37 representatives in the House of Deputies ten were lawyers, seven were professors and teachers, three were journalists, three commercial men, and three working-men or small traders.

The reason that no figures are available of the membership of the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party illustrates the conditions in which the movement has to carry on its work in that country. When, in 1912, Professor Roubanovich, the representative of the party on the International Socialist Bureau, was asked if he could supply such figures he replied: "The only figures I can give you are the number of members of our party who are prisoners of the Czar and are confined in fortresses, in prisons, and places of exile. We reckon their number at 30,000, among whom are 10,000 women."[1]

In addition to the Social-Democratic parties of Russia there is a Labour Party, which in the Third Duma (1907) had 14 members. It originated in the 107 artisans, peasants, and village teachers who were elected to the First Duma; but its

[1] *The Socialist Year Book, 1913.*

numbers dwindled when the constitution of that assembly was altered to the disadvantage of the working-class movement, and it has now but little organisation. Besides the two main bodies of Russian Socialists there are the separate organisations of the Lettish Socialists, the Polish Socialists, and the Jewish Socialists. The parties, to a considerable extent, have to work secretly. The two main bodies are obliged to have their headquarters in Paris.

The Belgian and British parties are federations of Trade Unions, Socialist societies, Co-operative societies, and other Labour organisations. The Belgian Party, as its name implies, is distinctly Socialistic, but in the British Labour Party the Socialists are in a minority, both in the Parliamentary Party and the general body of members. The two Socialist bodies affiliated to the Labour Party —the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) and the Fabian Society—have an approximate membership of 35,000 and 5000 respectively. The British Socialist Party, which is not affiliated to the Labour Party, has a membership of about 20,000.

The relative influence of the parties under discussion will be gauged best by the following table showing the votes polled at the General Elections indicated and their numbers in the national Legislatures.

	Votes polled.	Number of Socialist Representatives.	Total of Members in Parliament.
Germany . . .	4,250,329 (1912)	110	397
Austria . . .	1,000,000 (1911)[1]	82	516
Italy . . .	338,865 (1909)	42	508
Servia . . .	25,000 (1912)	2	166
France . . .	1,400,000 (1914)	101	595
Russia . . .	800,000 (1912)[2]	8	442
Belgium . . .	600,000 (1912)[3]	39	185
Great Britain[4] . .	370,802 (Dec. 1910)	42	670

[1] The votes of the German and Bohemian groups totalled 925,000. It is estimated that the votes of the four members of the Italian group, the figures of which are not available, would bring the vote to a million.

[2] Estimated from First and Second Duma elections.

[3] Estimated from an election on a proportional ballot, which showed 241,895 Socialist votes and 794,238 joint Liberal and Socialist votes.

[4] The British Socialist Party has no Parliamentary representatives sitting as its nominees, though one of its members—Mr. Will Thorne—sits as a Labour member.

VIII

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONISM

To the foregoing sketch of the International Socialist movement must be added some account of International Trade Unionism. The economic organisation corresponding to the political International Socialist Bureau is the International Federation of Trades Unions. In 1912, twenty-two National Centres, embracing 7,394,461 Trade Unionists, were affiliated to the Federation, the headquarters of which are at Berlin.

While the Federation is much less in the public eye than the political organisation, its influence in developing a sense of solidarity among the European working-class has undoubtedly been very great. In preventing the importation of foreign labour during strikes and lock-outs, and in lending financial aid in trade disputes—to name only two of its activities—it has greatly strengthened the Unions in their struggles.

The rapid growth of International Trade Unionism is itself sufficient evidence of its need and its utility. A world Trade Unionism is bred by a

world market. The modern movement began in the early eighteen-nineties as the outcome of the formation of the International Socialist Congress and extended until, to-day, a large number of trades are federated internationally. In 1913, at the International Miners' Congress, 148 delegates from seven countries, including Great Britain and America, represented 1,373,000 workers; the International Metal Workers' Federation has a membership of 1,106,003; and other trades which are federated internationally are the transport workers, wood workers, factory workers, brewery workers, printers, boot and shoe makers and leather workers, textile workers, carpenters, stone workers, painters, workers in public services, bakers, bookbinders, lithographers, hat workers, glass workers, hotel and restaurant workers, saddlers, potters, diamond workers, farriers, and hairdressers. All the organisations of a particular trade in the various countries are not always affiliated to the International organisation, nor all the Unions of the various countries affiliated to the National Centre, which is linked with the International Federation. For example, there are now close upon 4,000,000 Trade Unionists in this country, but it is the General Federation of Trade Unions which is affiliated to the International Federation, and the General Federation represents only 1,006,904 Trade Unionists. The following table indicates the number of all Trade Unionists in the countries involved in the war in 1912, and the

number among them who were affiliated to the International Federation.[1]

	Total number of all Trade Unionists.	Trade Unionists affiliated to International Federation.
Germany . . .	3,317,271	2,553,162
Austria . . .	649,082	540,662
Italy[2] . . .	860,502	320,912
Servia . . .	5,000	5,000
France . . .	1,064,413	387,000
Russia . . .	No statistics	No statistics
Belgium . . .	231,805	116,082
Great Britain . .	3,023,173	861,482
Total .	9,146,746	4,778,300

[1] The statistics, and other facts relating to the International Federation, are taken from the *Tenth International Report of the Trade Union Movement, 1912.*

[2] Included as member of Triple Alliance.

IX

WAR AND THE GENERAL STRIKE

During recent years, the question of the general strike against war has been increasingly discussed and has met with increasing favour. The British Section and a portion of the French Section were responsible for bringing before the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen, in 1910, the question of whether the workers should adopt the general strike as a method of preventing war, especially in industries which were concerned with furnishing armaments and other supplies for armies and navies. After discussion, the matter was referred back to the sections. It was to have come up again at the Congress which was abandoned last August owing to the war, when it would have been supported by the French Party, which, at its last conference, adopted a resolution in favour of the general strike against war by 1690 to 1174 votes.

The idea of a strike to prevent war is strongly favoured in France. The French miners at the International Miners' Congress at Salzburg in 1907 proposed that an international strike of miners

should be declared in the event of an outbreak of war, but the proposal "was rejected, since same was outside the programme of the Congress."[1] In October 1912—during the Balkan crisis—the General Confederation of Labour of France called a special Congress and arranged for a general 24-hours' strike on the following December 16th as a practical demonstration against war. Reports were received from 41 provinces, and it is estimated that 600,000 workers—more than the membership of the Confederation—"downed tools" on the appointed day.

The same weapon meets with considerable support in Italy, where the whole Socialist and Trade Union movement is characterised by a strong anti-militarism. As a protest against the Italian war in Tripoli a 24-hours' strike was declared, with varying success in different towns. In some places almost all work ceased. Attempts were made to interfere with the railway service, women even throwing themselves across the rails. At one of these disturbances at Langhirano the police fired on the crowd and killed the people.

The idea behind both the French and the Italian strike was that it would make clear the position of the organised workers and educate the people themselves. It was not expected directly and immediately to influence the conduct of Governments.

Then, too, at the British Trade Union Congress

[1] *Report of the International Trades Union Movement, 1912.*

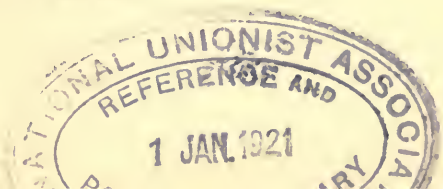
at Manchester, last year, the following resolution was passed:—

> That this Congress strongly condemns any action likely to lead to war between nations, and pledges itself to do everything possible to make war impossible; and further instructs the Parliamentary Committee to confer with the British Miners' Federation, the National Transport Workers' Federation, and the National Union of Railwaymen with a view to opening negotiations with foreign Trade Unions for the purpose of making agreements and treaties as to common international action in the event of war being forced upon us.

The German Party, however, has to be careful in handling this question. When the resolution was before the Copenhagen Congress it was explained that if the German delegates supported it they would run the risk of having their organisations suppressed.

Very knotty indeed is the question of a general strike against war, but the fact that the principle has been approved by the workers of France and Italy and seriously considered in this country—the British Section were unanimous in their decision to bring it before the International Congress — is evidence of an instinctive feeling that Labour has the power to say "No" to the War Lords, and a determination to tackle the practical difficulties.

But last August the question was still in the realms of discussion.



X

THE EVE OF THE WAR

So rapidly moved the events which led to the war that in all the Continental countries which were likely to be involved the Socialist organisations were working for peace before the International Bureau had met. It will be convenient, however, to see first what was done by the Bureau, and then deal separately with the efforts of the affiliated bodies, between the time when war became a grave possibility and the time when it was an awful fact, and with their views of the situation.

Following its usual custom of calling a special meeting in time of emergency, the Bureau met at Brussels on July 29th. The representatives of the British Section were Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., Mr. J. Bruce Glasier, and Mr. Dan Irving. It will be recollected that events were then far advanced. Austria had declared war upon Servia the day previous. The same day Russia ordered a partial mobilisation. On July 31st Russia ordered a general mobilisation, which resulted in Germany's ultimatum to Russia the same day and also the

proclamation of "Kriegsgefahr."[1] The day following that (August 1st) a general mobilisation was ordered by Germany and war was declared by that country against Russia. Two days later, Germany and Austria, Great Britain, France, Russia, and Servia were at war.

The Bureau met on the morning of the 29th, and the members separated early on the following day. The points of the discussion, which are usually made public, it was deemed advisable not to reveal on this occasion. The following statement of conclusions was issued :—

In Assembly of July 29th the International Socialist Bureau has heard declarations from representatives of all nations threatened by a world war, describing the political situation in their respective countries.

With unanimous vote the Bureau considers it an obligation for the workers of all nations concerned not only to continue but even to strengthen their demonstrations against war in favour of peace and a settlement of the Austrian-Servian conflict by arbitration.

The German and French workers will bring to bear on their Governments the most vigorous pressure in order that Germany may secure in Austria a moderating action, and in order that France may obtain from Russia an undertaking that she will not engage in conflict. On their side, the workers of Great Britain and Italy shall sustain these efforts with all the power in their command.

The Congress urgently convoked in Paris will be the

[1] "Imminence of War." It signifies "the taking of certain precautionary measures consequent upon strained relations with a foreign country" (White Paper, No. 112).

vigorous expression of the absolutely peaceful will of the workers of the whole world.[1]

The same evening between six and seven thousand people gathered at an anti-war meeting in the Cirque, over which M. Emile Vandervelde, Chairman of the Bureau, presided. Enthusiasm was at a high pitch. Herr Hugo Haase, who spoke for Germany, was received with a storm of cheers, and Mr. Keir Hardie, Jean Jaurès, and other speakers met with similar receptions. And afterwards thousands paraded the streets bearing banners, singing songs, and displaying the motto "War against War."

Two days later, Jaurès was assassinated in a Paris café by a war fanatic, and Europe and the world lost a personal force for peace and civilisation than which none was greater.

We have seen the decision of the Bureau of the International. A consideration of the activities of the Socialists in the countries concerned will reveal that that decision had been anticipated.

[1] The final paragraph refers to the International Socialist Congress which was to have been held in Vienna in August and the venue of which was changed to Paris when war threatened. Ultimately it was unavoidably abandoned.

XI

THE GERMAN VIEW

It is indicative of the alertness of German Social-Democracy that two days after Austria submitted the now-historic Note to Servia the Executive of the Social-Democratic Party spoke, with no uncertain voice, of the approaching danger. By a Manifesto, issued on July 25th, it called to arms the whole German working-class for the war against war. The following are the Manifesto's terms:—

The fields of the Balkans are not yet dry from the blood of those who have been massacred by thousands; the ruins of the devastated towns are still smoking; unemployed hungry men, widowed women, and orphan children are still wandering about the country. Yet once more, the war-fury, unchained by Austrian Imperialism, is setting out to bring death and destruction over the whole of Europe.

Though we also condemn the behaviour of the "Great Servian" nationalists, the frivolous war-provocation of the Austro-Hungarian Government calls for the sharpest protest. For the demands of that Government are more brutal than have ever been put to an independent State in the world's history, and can only be intended deliberately to provoke war.

In the name of humanity and civilisation the class-conscious proletariat of Germany raises a burning protest against the criminal behaviour of the war-mongers. It dictatorially demands of the German Government that

it use its influence with the Austrian Government for the preservation of peace, and, if the shameful war cannot be prevented, to abstain from any armed interference. No drop of blood from any German soldier must be sacrificed to the lust for power of the Austrian rulers and to the Imperialistic profit-interests.

Comrades, we appeal to you to express at mass meetings without delay the German proletariat's firm determination to maintain peace. A solemn hour has come, more serious than any during the last few decades. Danger is approaching! The world war is threatening! The ruling classes who in time of peace gag you, despise you, and exploit you, would misuse you as food for cannon. Everywhere must sound in the ears of those in power: "We will have no war! Down with war! Long live the international brotherhood of the people!"[1]

The response was widespread and immediate. In every town of any importance the Socialists organised protest meetings, and the crowds assembled in thousands and tens of thousands. On the evening of July 28th no fewer than twenty-seven meetings were held in Berlin alone. Of the attitude of the Government to these meetings we have the testimony of the former Berlin correspondent of *The New Statesman*, who, writing in London to the issue of that journal dated August 15th, states:—

Now that the war is come I can commit an indiscretion, and recount an incident over which before my lips were sealed. There was some agitation in the reactionary

[1] For this and other official statements of the Continental Socialistic parties and for extracts from their Press the writer is indebted to *Justice*, except where otherwise stated.

Press for the suppression of the Socialist peace-meetings on the ground that they weakened the policy of the country. On the morning of the day on which the meetings were held an important official of the Social-Democratic Party was summoned to the office of the Imperial Minister of the Interior and there informed that not only had the Government no intention of forbidding the peace meetings, but that all precautions would be taken against their disturbance, and that the Government hoped that the Socialists would continue their agitation with the utmost energy. And this they did up to the moment when martial law was declared and further action was useless.

Mr. Dudley Ward, former Berlin correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian*, tells the same story in the issue of that journal dated August 15th:—

On the previous Tuesday (July 28th) Socialist meetings of protest against the Austro-Servian War were announced for almost every town in Germany. The Liberal Press spoke of them as unwise, the Conservative organs for the most part demanded their suppression by the authorities. Far from suppressing them, an important official of the party was summoned to meet the Minister of the Interior on the morning of the meetings, and told, at the request of the Chancellor, that not only would the authorities not suppress the meetings, but that they would take full precautions to prevent their being broken up, and that, further, they hoped the party would proceed vigorously with its pacific propaganda. This, of course, was completely unknown to the public at the time.

These accounts have since been confirmed by a leader of the German Socialists, in a letter from Sweden to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald.[1]

Up to the declaration of martial law, on July 31st,

[1] Mr. E. D. Morel in *The Labour Leader*, October 8th, 1914.

the German Socialists worked untiringly for peace. Yet on August 4th the majority of the representatives in the Reichstag voted for the war credits, and during the early days of the conflict Socialists were with those who volunteered for active service. Among them was Dr. Ludwig Frank, a prominent member of the party in the Reichstag, who was wounded at Luneville in the early days of the campaign. The reason is that to the German Socialist the war was a war of self-defence against Russia.

It has been pointed out already that the International has always justified the taking up of arms in national self-defence, and in the case of the German Socialists the act of self-defence was rendered all the more imperative by the character of the aggressor. No body of people has a keener appreciation of the evils of Prussian militarism and autocratic government than the German Socialists. They are the victims of it; they have fought it; they have created a movement which it regards, with good reason, as the greatest menace to its existence. But, in spite of that, the German Socialist knows that there are worse things than Prussian rule, and that one of those things is Russian rule. Before his eyes he has his own movement; a power in the land; working in the open; expressing its opinions every day in its Press and on its platforms. Across the border the corresponding movement is still ruthlessly hunted underground. It is a crime to be a Socialist in

Russia; it is not a crime to be a Socialist in Germany. The knout, the dungeon, exile, are not for the German; they are the lot of his comrade over the frontier. When the membership of Germany's organisation is asked for, the reply has not to be, "I can only give you the number of our members who are confined in fortresses, prisons, and places of exile."[1] The membership is known to the world; its homes are scattered over the land. When Germany's Socialists meet, all may know of it; but when, "after a lapse of five years," the Congress of the Lettish Socialists is held, "for obvious reasons neither the place nor time can be given."[2]

From a political point of view, then, a prospective Russian invasion brought with it the shadow of a tyranny beside which life under the Kaiser's government is free as the air; from a military point of view it meant the sweeping into the Fatherland of a soldiery partly barbarous and bearing as a whole the worst reputation of any army in Europe. M. Marcel Sembat, the French Socialist, since the war Minister of Public Works in the French Cabinet, writing in 1913 of the German view of Russia, states:—

> This haunting terror of Russia is not like the hostility born of defeat which many Frenchmen feel for Germans. That French hostility towards Germany is made up of rancour for the past and anxiety for the future; it was

[1] See p. 22.

[2] See *Justice*, July 23rd, 1914.

entirely unknown before 1870. . . . This other thing is different. Every German has grown up under the unceasing threat of a terrific avalanche hanging over his head; of an avalanche ready to loosen and drop and roll upon him; an avalanche of multitudinous savagery, of brutal and barbarous hordes which will spread over his German soil and bury his civilisation and his ways. Remember that Germany is back-to-back with uncivilised countries, with barbarism, with Asia, with the great tribes, the Cossacks, the Huns.

I find it very difficult to realise all that, I who am a Frenchman, belonging to an old civilisation which has forgotten for centuries the invasions of really barbarous peoples. I find it difficult to imagine the effect which such a neighbourhood would have upon one's feelings. But unless I succeed in thus realising it, I shall never understand the impression made upon the German mind by the Franco-Russian alliance. . . .

For *me*, Russia means this or that revolutionary comrade, like Rubanovitch, a man of science, with nothing of the barbarian about him. For *me* Russia means the heroes of Tourguenieff, of Tolstoi, and Gorki. . . . I find myself secretly counting upon the Russian people as one of the chief elements of an era of Socialism. That Russian I am thinking of is, perhaps, not the real Russian; but he is *my* Russian. He is not the Russian as thought of by the German. The Russian whom the German thinks of is an implacable and cruel savage, servile or tyrannical by turns, giving the lash or receiving it, but always equally uncivilised. And, after all, do the Tsar's dominions not hold all the barbarians of Turkestan and Central Asia? Yes, but they are conquered races! You think so, do you? Why, the day when European Russians, grown too Liberal or too Socialistic, begin to be in the Tsar's way, do you think he will stickle at calling up against them the bands of Cossacks and Turkomans? And when that day shall come, Asia, the barbarous East, will be at the gates of Europe and on the threshold of Germany.

The Franco-Russian alliance and then the Franco-Anglo-Russian *entente* must thus appear to Germans as the compact of two civilised peoples with barbarism. To the eye of the German it looks as if civilisation had been betrayed and handed over, along with Germany, to the barbarians.[1]

That it was a desire for self-defence, made all the stronger by this view of the aggressor, which rallied German Socialists in support of the war is a fact agreed upon, to begin with, by observers in Berlin before the outbreak. Against France there was no hostility. It was regrettable that defence against Russia involved fighting France, but the Socialists could not stand by and see their country invaded because the policy of the French Government, the interests of French financial houses, had compelled the French people to take sides with the invader. To quote again Mr. Dudley Ward, who, for a fortnight before the outbreak of the war, was in close touch with leaders of the Socialist Party and editors of several Socialist journals:—

For the Socialist Party, as for the rest of Germany, the war was a war of aggression from the side of Russia. They condemned the action of Austria, they condemned the bungling diplomacy of their own Government, but they were convinced, like the rest, that their own Government had at this time desired peace.[2]

[1] *Faites un Roi sinon faites la Paix*, by Marcel Sembat (Paris, 1913). The translation is from the article, "Germany's Fear of Russia," by "V. L.," *Labour Leader*, October 15th, 1914.

[2] *Manchester Guardian*, August 15th, 1914.

Similar testimony is borne by the former Berlin correspondent of *The New Statesman* in the article already alluded to:—

> Against France there was no feeling whatever. . . . There was no suggestion that France had egged on Russia to war or had done anything but all within its power to hold its ally back. Russia was the sole enemy, and against Russia the whole of Germany was united down to the last of the Social-Democrats themselves. We in this country, since our friendship with the country of the Czar, have forgotten some of the horrors and barbarities of that country. Germany has not. The Germans are too near Russia not to be continually reminded of what goes on there. . . . The Socialists feel that they are fighting a just war of defence, a war of defence for their own homes and culture against a barbarian horde from the East. They may be mistaken, they may have been misled by military autocrats. But at least they are honourable.

It must be admitted by any person not hopelessly prejudiced that the Socialists had a very plausible reason for believing in the pacific intentions of the German Government, in view of the interview with the Minister of the Interior and the Government's encouragement of the peace movement. No one could have known better than the Socialists of Berlin that the Government would not have hesitated to prohibit or break up the Socialist meetings, if it had suited its purpose to do so. As a matter of fact, the Socialist propaganda in Germany had a fairer field than it met with in France, where some of the early peace-meetings in Paris were attacked by the police, who arrested

M. Bon, the Socialist Deputy for Levallois-Perret.

But though, after Russia had issued her general mobilisation order and Germany had declared war as a consequence, the Socialist Party was prepared to support a war of self-defence, the Socialist Press resisted attempts to stir up war-fever in the people while there was a chance of war being avoided. In the last days of July a cry of "Freedom against Czarism" was raised in the reactionary German Press, a cry the hypocrisy of which was attacked in the Socialist Press. Right up to August 3rd, *Vorwärts*, the central organ of the party, exposed the cant of German Jingoes and the German Government posing as champions of "freedom against Czarism." On July 28th it wrote:—

> Not Czarism is the worst danger to peace at the present moment but the evilly-counselled Austria, that holds the mad illusion that it need only give the signal for the whole of Europe to sound the tocsin and to sacrifice the flower of a young manhood as expiatory sacrifice for the murder of the Archduke.

Before the mobilisation of the German army, on August 2nd, the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* also urged the people not to be deceived by the cry of "war against Czarism," and held that the German governing class's hostility to Russia was on account of the growing revolutionary movement in that country and not because of the character of the Czar's government. Even on August 3rd, when the Socialist members of the Reichstag had decided

to vote for the war credits, *Vorwärts* denounced German "patriotism." It ridiculed the position of the Government, which for years had supported the despotism of the Czar, and persecuted Socialists for insulting Nicholas, and was then taking up the attitude that Marx, Engels, and Bebel had always taken—that Russian despotism would have to be crushed. It went on:—

> Since the above-named leaders of the Social-Democracy expressed their opinion that it was necessary to wage a democratic war against Russian despotism, conditions have changed considerably.
>
> Russia to-day is no longer a stronghold of reaction, but it is a land of revolution. The overthrow of the monarchy and Czarism is now the aim of the Russian people in general and the Russian workers in particular.[1]

From the foregoing account of the views of German Socialists before the war it will be seen that there were two currents of feeling. On the one hand was the hard fact of the general mobilisation of Russia; on the other, distrust of an official cry which was clearly hypocritical. It was not that Czarism was not an evil influence, but that the people did well to be suspicious, and look out for a trap, when the Satan of Kaiserism rebuked the Sin of Czarism. On the one hand was the impulse to rally to the Government for defence against the Russians; on the other, the natural distrust of any action of the War Lords, and the

[1] German Social-Democrats would be aware of the revolutionary rising imminent in Russia in July last. See p. 88.

feeling that the cause of Socialism from an international point of view would suffer from war with Russia. The Russian revolutionary movement would be weakened by the war-fever just as are all democratic movements.

It is easy to imagine how, with the mass of the people, the prospect of a Russian invasion would overshadow the more theoretical consideration that, from a strictly world-Socialist point of view, a war with Russia was undesirable, because it would set back the Russian Socialist movement. Obviously, the difficulty of the Social-Democratic Party in the Reichstag was great, and it is not surprising that—contrary to common report in this country—the party came to no unanimous decision.

The party met on August 3rd to decide what should be its attitude in the Reichstag on the following day. A minority of fourteen was opposed to voting for the war credits. According to a communication by Herr Liebknecht to the *Bremische Burgerzeitung*, the local Socialist organ, "the issues involved gave rise to diametrically opposite views within our Parliamentary Party, and these opposing views found expression with a violence hitherto unknown in our deliberations." Liebknecht was in the minority. The majority favoured voting for the war budget on the grounds of self-defence against Russia. Dr. Nasmyth, an American Socialist and a founder of the World's Peace Foundation, told *The Labour Leader*,[1] on

[1] October 22nd, 1914.

his arrival in England from Germany, where he had been in the company of Herr Bernstein, Herr Liebknecht, and other Socialists :—

> In Germany I found among the four million members[1] of the Social-Democratic Party a hatred of Imperialism and Militarism more bitter and more intense than in England or in America. "But militarism is the worst possible way to fight militarism," they said. "It has forced us to make this choice: either we must take the side of militarism or we must stand by and see our country overrun by the Russians. Prussianism is bad enough, but we prefer it to Russianism."

To the German Socialists Russia appeared as the aggressor. On July 30th, Austria had "declined to continue the direct exchange of views with the Russian Government," but the British Ambassador at Rome had "reason to believe that Germany was now disposed to give more conciliatory advice to Austria."[2] Germany did so, and was successful; for, on July 31st, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg learnt that "as a result of suggestions by the German Government a conversation has taken place at Vienna between the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Russian Ambassador" and that "the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg has also been instructed that he may converse with the Russian

[1] This is evidently a slip. The voters number four million odd. The party membership in 1912 had nearly reached one million.

[2] British White Paper, No. 106.

Minister for Foreign Affairs."[1] Sir Edward Grey, hearing of the resumption of negotiations, hoped that they "may lead to a satisfactory result."[2] The situation was more hopeful. But on the same day Russia issued orders for a general mobilisation—having already been partially mobilising since July 29th—and that led to the German ultimatum to Russia. Russia refused to demobilise and there was war. It is on these facts that the German Socialists—the majority of them—base their belief that the initial act in blasting hopes of peace was the issue of Russia's general-mobilisation order. It was news of that order which made the war appear to the great mass of the Socialists as a defensive war. That a section could not bring themselves to justify war we have already noted, but Herr Haase unquestionably voiced the view of the majority when he spoke for the party in the Reichstag on August 4th, in justification of the decision to vote for the war credits. Haase himself was with the minority, and tendered his resignation of the Chairmanship of the Parliamentary Group, but it was not accepted.

And here it may be stated that the stories of the Social-Democrats joining in the "Hoch!" for the Kaiser and shaking his hand were merely newspaper fables. During the earlier part of the sitting, when the Emperor requested the party

[1] British White Paper, No. 110.
[2] British White Paper, No. 111.

leaders to shake his hand, the Socialists were not present.

Herr Haase, in the course of the declaration which he read, stated:—

> The present calamity is the result of a universal régime of Imperialist policy. The Socialist Party, which has fought that policy at every point, refuses to accept any responsibility for it. But the Socialist opposition has failed. Before us stands the iron fact of war. We are threatened with the horrors of a hostile invasion. We have not to decide to-day for or against war, but over the question of supplies for the defence of the country. For our people and for the future of their liberty much, if not all, is at stake with the victory of Russian despotism, which has stained itself with the blood of the best of its own people. This danger must be warded off for the sake of our civilisation and the independence of our country. We prove now what we have always said, that in the hour of danger we should not leave our Fatherland in the lurch.[1]

Vorwärts, summing up the same speech, stated that Herr Haase's reference to "our French brethren" who had worked with them for peace was met with a rousing cheer from his followers. While Herr Haase pointed out that the International had always recognised the right of a people to self-defence, he reminded the Reichstag that "just as resolutely, the party was against any war of conquest. It demanded, therefore, that the war should be ended as soon as its object, national safety, had been obtained and the opponents were inclined to make peace."

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, August 15th, 1914.

The hostile attitude to "Czarismus" was taken up by some of the local Socialist papers of Revisionist leanings. The *Volkstimme*, of Chemnitz, held that it was necessary to fight Russia "because, if the Allies should be victorious, not an English Governor or a French Republican would rule over Germany, but the Russian Czar. Therefore, we must defend at this moment everything which means German culture and German liberty against a merciless and barbaric enemy." The *Volksfreund*, of Carlsruhe, wrote in the same strain.

The question now arrives as to the attitude of the Socialists to the German invasion of Belgium. When the Social-Democratic Group on August 3rd drew up the declaration which was read by Herr Haase in the Reichstag, they knew nothing of the violation of Belgian neutrality. They voted for the credits on August 4th. Only after that date were the ultimatum to Belgium and the events which followed it mentioned in the Press. Foreign papers and news from abroad were at that time suppressed as much as possible, and after August 4th the Press was placed under military censorship, public meetings were impossible, and there was no further meeting of the Reichstag.[1]

Even the knowledge of the ultimatum to Belgium would not have dispensed with "the iron fact of

[1] See Pierre Troelstra (leader of the Dutch Socialist Party) in *The Labour Leader*, November 26th, 1914.

war" with Russia. There was no hostile feeling whatever against France, but the German Socialists were not responsible for the Franco-Russian Alliance or the plans of the German General Staff. But it is not our purpose here to speculate as to what any party might have done in certain eventualities. The facts are that the German Socialists voted for defence against Russia, and that when they decided upon their attitude in the Reichstag, and drew up their declaration, they had no knowledge of an ultimatum to Belgium. It is true that, in the Reichstag on August 4th, the Chancellor announced that Belgium had probably already been entered, acknowledging that a wrong had been done and that reparation would be made; but the declaration of the party had then been communicated to the Reichstag. And there was still the war with Russia. Clearly the position of the party was difficult in the extreme. Those disposed to condemn the German Social-Democrats should, in common fairness, reserve their judgment until the full facts of the situation are made plain.

What *Vorwärts* thought of the invasion of Belgium can only be gathered from the following, evidently written under the shadow of the censor:—

> Now, when the war god reigns supreme not only over Time but also over the Press, we cannot say about the invasion of Belgium all we would like to express about it.

There is further evidence from Dr. Nasmyth in the interview already quoted:[1]—

> Quite frankly the German Socialists admit that Germany has committed a great wrong in violating Belgian neutrality, but shall Russia, France, and Britain cast the first stone, they ask, in view of their own actions in Persia, Morocco, and Egypt?

On August 25th, *Vorwärts*, apparently taking the official cry of "freedom against Czardom" at its face value, for the purpose of showing the only way in which the Government could justify the war, wrote:—

> When the war broke out, the word went round: "War against Czarism!" That was the cry that made the war seem inevitable even to those who were against it. . . . To military experts it appeared an unavoidable necessity that France must first be overcome in order to advance with Austria against Russia. And to this necessity even those who mourn the frightful fate which drives two civilised peoples into this murderous struggle must resign themselves. . . . From the *military* point of view the first necessity is to overcome France. On the other hand, *politically* the most urgent necessity is the overthrow and destruction of Czarism! . . . The victory over the allies of Russia is necessary because they are the allies of Czarism. But it is necessary only so far as to prevent their delaying the overthrow of "Czarism." . . . If we should not succeed in overcoming "Czarism," if the strategic necessity should push the political necessity into the background, then, whatever the intention of the rulers, the final result might lead to a return of the "Holy Alliance," in which "Czarism" would once more hold the dominating influence, instead of to a union of the civilised nations. . . . Then the war would lose its justification.

[1] *Labour Leader*, October 22nd, 1914.

To sum up, the position of the German Socialists was this. The great majority were convinced that against Germany Russia was the aggressor and that the war was a war of self-defence against that nation. Fear and hatred of Russia added to the majority's determination to defend their country from invasion, and, it may be reasonably assumed, to their suspicions of the intentions of the Czar's Government. On the other hand, a minority—14 out of 111 in the Parliamentary Party—were not able to convince themselves that Germany's cause was a righteous cause. All their reasons are not yet apparent. Certainly since war was declared, and probably since the declaration of martial law on July 31st, the Press has been subject to the censor, and while the majority have free scope to give their support to the war, Liebknecht, Karl Kautsky, Haase, Bernstein, Rosa Luxembourg, indeed all the minority, cannot freely express their views. Certain it is, however, that the very fact that the War Party set up a cry of "freedom against Czarism" made the Socialist minority suspicious. It appeared to them a case of the Greeks bringing gifts. *Vorwärts* and the *Leipziger Volkzeitung* both declared that the proletariat would not be deceived by the official cry—"anti-Czarist phraseology," as the latter called it. Moreover, as we have seen already, *Vorwärts* on July 28th referred to the "evilly-counselled Austria." If this meant that Germany was the counsellor, it seems reason-

able to deduce that the Socialist minority believed their own Government to have been using Austria as a tool to provoke war.[1]

Since the outbreak of war the Government and the Socialist Party as a body have been on excellent terms. An order has even been issued that Socialist papers may be read in barracks. In fact, everything points to the Government having been of the opinion that it could not prosecute a war in the face of a hostile Social-Democracy.

During the war *Vorwärts* has been conducted in a way which redounds greatly to its honour. It has seized every possible opportunity to minimise, rather than to inflame, national passions, and has persistently fought for fair play for the enemy. As an example: "Hail, and victory to the German armies!" wrote a German prisoner in England to friends at home, and the British censor passed the greeting. Whereat *Vorwärts* called attention to the "broad-mindedness" of the British authorities —or, as some English newspapers stupidly jeered, showed "German surprise." It is well known that the German Press has gobbled up all the stories it could get of "atrocities" by the Allies with an appetite as voracious as that of the British Press for similar strong meat. But *Vorwärts* has resisted

[1] When, in his speech of August 2nd, the Kaiser "pardoned" all opposition parties, the comment of *Vorwärts* was: "This shows the Kaiser's mental make-up. The proletariat will have none of it, but will persist in their desire for peace."

the allegations against French and British troops, and has proved them to be untrue again and again; showing a sanity and love of fair play of which it would be hard to find an equal example in the British daily Press at the present time.

But the outspokenness of *Vorwärts* brought down upon it the heavy hand of authority. It was suspended for three days, and subsequently suspended a second time. When it reappeared it printed a letter in its front page from General von Kessel stating that the publication of the paper would be allowed to continue as the Editorial Board had agreed that, during the war, no reference should be made to "class hatred or the class struggle."

The article for which *Vorwärts* was suspended gives an interesting view of the causes of the distrust between Britain and Germany. It appeared on September 27th, and states:—

Great organisations have been created and far-reaching measures devised by the authorities of the Empire to make known the truth in foreign countries. That means to give the German version an opportunity to find expression beside the British, French, and Russian announcements concerning the war and the general situation. Whether this will succeed everywhere and in the full sense cannot be decided here. In any case, the money which has been spent for the purpose shows how difficult it is to procure confidence in German news.

It may be admitted that this would have been much easier if, after the outbreak of war, for some weeks communications with foreign lands had not been almost entirely interrupted. The military authorities may, of

course, have had military reasons for the interruption. But this cannot explain the actually existing difficulties. One has to go back for an explanation to the days of peace. Germans in foreign countries, including neutral countries, have long ago encountered plenty of distrust, surmise, and antagonism, and now we see the result of that.

Germany has enjoyed an economical prosperity such as no other country has experienced during the last decade. That meant with the capitalist class a revival of strong Imperialist tendencies, which have been displayed often enough. This gave rise to mistrust abroad, at least in capitalist quarters, which did their best to communicate their feelings to the broad masses.

The Chauvinists on the other side of the frontier would scarcely have had such success with their propaganda if they had not been aided by another factor. Germany, which had risen to such great heights, was the country which, after the abolition of the Socialist legislation which she had presented to her workmen, introduced a police regime of chicanery and proclaimed the equality of her citizens merely on the paper of the constitutional charter. Close to Germany was the incomparably worse Russia, but Russia (to others) was far off, pursued her own interests in the Near and Far East, was in a political sense closely attached to the Western Powers, and the revolution of 1905 had shown that the governing circles in Russia were not firmly established.

Thus can be explained the fact that even from among workmen abroad manifestations were received which must be deplored—deplored especially inasmuch as the German people as a whole has been made responsible for what has been the work of a small class. For instance, we read in an Italian paper of the working-classes that the German generals are called robbers, and that the news is spread that the German troops are driving old men and women as living breastworks before them into battle.

The comrades abroad can be assured that the German

working-classes still condemn that robber-like policy, and that they are willing to stand up against the piratical subjugation of foreign nations as far as circumstances will permit. The comrades abroad can be assured that though German workmen are ready to defend their country, they will, above all, not forget that their interests are the same as those of the proletariat in other countries, who also against their will were forced into the war and now do their duty.

The comrades abroad can be assured that the German people are not less human than others, a result to which education through the organisation of workmen has contributed all in its power. If German soldiers in the excitement of war should commit atrocities, it can be said that amongst us—but also in other circles—there will not be a single person to approve of them. Just as little will the atrocities of others be condoned. But this much we can say: that stories like that of the living breastworks cannot be true. For this accusation is not directed against individuals but against large communities, and for them we can give a guarantee.

We cannot demand from other countries that they shall believe all the news about the atrocities of the Russians, Belgians, and French. Some of the Tartar news is rejected by us. But if we admit that on our side unofficial reports are exaggerated, we can demand a similar opinion regarding news from the other side.

It is difficult to be objective in a struggle of peoples such as we now experience, but we should endeavour to be so. That is a wish which should be respected by all who write or speak, whether in our land or abroad.[1]

As to the desirable outcome of the war, Karl Kautsky has expressed his view in an article in the *Neue Zeit*, which is worth outlining.[2]

[1] Quoted from *The Manchester Guardian.*

[2] See *Justice*, October 1st, 1914.

"War," he says, "is carried on not to obtain a victory but an advantageous peace." A peace which would be only a truce would be "absolutely injurious," and would only lead to another race of armaments. "A peace gives the best promise of lasting when its results lie in the direction of historic development." In that direction lies the independence of peoples—"that is, democracy." Democracy to-day is represented in the proletariat and Social-Democracy, and it can only find its best expression in a state which consists of one nation speaking one language. Modern production brings all classes into closer touch with one another; there is closer co-operation in intellectual and political life. In a State of one nationality, speaking one language, such a process is a source of strength; but in a State consisting of various nationalities hostile collisions result and have a paralysing effect on the economic and political process. Kautsky proceeds:—

> It would, therefore, be a sad backward step if the great national States which are at war were to use a victory in order to annex foreign territory, and thus become a nationality State instead of a national State. That would be a great misfortune, not only for the defeated but for the victors. Such action would only be an injury to the independence of nations, and each of the nations involved have sworn that they only wanted to protect their own independence and integrity.
>
> That is not to say that any changes in the map of Europe would contradict this principle. Where nations are now under foreign rule, an overthrow of such rule would be beneficial in the above manner. If, for instance,

Russia being defeated and the inhabitants of Poland, the East Sea provinces and Finland were to claim the right to manage their own affairs without external coercion, that would be quite in accord with the laws of democracy. The same would apply to Egypt and Persia.

Kautsky's view is that "probably the defeated nations will be compelled to disarm," in which case it will be the business of Social-Democrats "to protest against any humiliating, degrading forms that it may assume." Social-Democrats would support disarmament, and with a defeated and disarmed enemy they would have a firm basis in taking up that position.

On the economic side, Kautsky thinks that existing commercial treaties will be dissolved. The victor may force free trade on the defeated nations, or several nations may form themselves into a Zollverein. The latter would mean progress "if it were not used as a means of *drawing free trade countries into a protected area*, which latter must be fought against."

It would be premature, says Kautsky, to speculate on the result of the conflict—"we cannot divide the bear's skin before it is killed"—but this much he could say: "In every country the Social-Democracy will be the first party to demand the conclusion of peace, and will always work in the direction of moderation."

Vorwärts on August 25th argued in the same direction. The Allies must only be fought so far

as "to prevent their delaying the overthrow of Czarism," and then—

Just as Bismarck, in 1866, made a golden bridge over which the conquered might come into an alliance with Germany, so now must the way to an understanding with the great civilised nations remain open. We must, therefore, not adopt a policy which will perpetuate the fatal enmity between the Western Powers by annexations and interference with the unity and independence of other nations, thus making the position of Russia, even after her defeat, into that of arbiter of Europe. . . . No, this war must not be directed to the conquest and building up of a new world Power in the place of the English and Russian Powers, but towards the liberation of the nations. Liberation from Muscovitism, freedom and independence for Poland and Finland, free development for the great Russian people itself, the severance of the unnatural alliance of two civilised nations with Czarist barbarism—that was the goal which roused the enthusiasm of the German people and made them ready for sacrifices.

A similar view has been put forward by Herr Bernstein. Lecturing in Berlin, he protested against the demand for the annexation of Belgium. He thought the German Government would not submit to such a demand. He also ridiculed the report that Germany, if victorious, would demand an indemnity of fifteen hundred to two thousand millions sterling, which would paralyse Germany's export trade and be disastrous to the working-classes.

We all wish for victory (he concluded). The other issue would be dangerous to civilisation, but we still

adhere to our principle, and earnestly hope Germany will not act as a dictator, which would evoke the hatred and envy of other civilised nations. That this will not happen is doubtless the wish of the German workers and the middle classes, who will endeavour to restore German industry and commerce to their former high standard and even higher.[1]

Clara Zetkin has also pleaded the right of peoples to independence in an eloquent article in the New York *Vorwärts* on "The Duty of Working Women in War Time." She appealed for the preservation of the organisations and, above all, their spirit. "War has its own logic, its own laws, its own standards." It roused the beast that slumbered in man. The German papers related horrible atrocities committed upon the German soldiers, even upon those who were wounded. She believed the reports to be enormously exaggerated. But—the bourgeois Press called for similar barbarities to "avenge" the others! For every German maliciously shot a village to be burned. Hand in hand with the advocacy of barbarism went the belittling of foreign peoples and their contributions to humanity's upward march. "It is as though all the standards were broken by which right and justice used to be measured in the life of nations, all the weights falsified with which the value of national things is weighed." Was it possible that the war extinguished not only human lives but human goals?

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, October 29th, 1914.

No, a thousand times no. Let us not allow the working masses to forget that the war has been caused by world-wide economic and political complications, and not by ugly and despicable personal qualities in the peoples with which Germany is fighting. Let us have the courage, when we hear the invectives against "perfidious Albion," the "degenerate French," the "barbaric Russians," etc., to reply by pointing out the ineradicable riches contributed by these peoples to human development, and how they have assisted the fruition of German civilisation. The Germans, who have themselves contributed so much towards the international treasury of civilisation, ought to be able to exercise justice and veracity in judging other peoples. Let us point out that all peoples have the same right to independence and autonomy for the preservation of which the Germans are struggling.

We Socialist women hear the voices which, in this time of blood and iron, still speak softly, painfully, yet consolingly of the future. Let us be their interpreters to our children. Let us preserve them from the harsh, brazen sound of the ideas which fill the streets to-day in which cheap pride-of-race stifles humanity. In our children must grow up the security that this most frightful of all wars shall be the last. The blood of the killed and wounded must not be a stream to divide that which unites the present distress and the future hope. It must be as a cement which shall bind fast for all time.[1]

In any big party such as the German Social-Democratic Party it is not to be expected that, with feeling running so high as during the present war, a proportion of the adherents should not be swept into the tide of popular feeling. Such has certainly been the case in the British Labour Party, for example. Doubtless it has been the case in

[1] Quoted from *Justice*, November 19th, 1914.

every country; and Germany is no exception. But Pierre Troelstra, the leader of the Dutch Socialist Party, has stated—

> I rejoice to declare that the Executive of the German Social-Democratic Party cautiously opposes all Jingoistic utterances, and considers it to be its duty to prevent the national sentiment which has revealed itself in the party from degenerating into the "nationalism" of the bourgeois parties.[1]

Very comprehensive peace proposals have been drafted and agreed upon by the Social-Democratic Party of Munich, and it is known that they have received considerable support from the Socialists of South Germany. There is also reason to believe that they were not regarded unfavourably in certain high official circles in Germany. Moreover, they have met with support in influential quarters in England. The following is this "Draft Basis for Peace Discussion":—

I. Peace on Terms that will heal Fresh Wounds.
   1. No humiliation, no mutual recriminations.
   2. Indemnifications determined by just claims and financial possibilities.
   3. Restitution of territory occupied during the War: Belgium, German Colonies.

II. Peace on Terms that will heal Old Wounds.
   1. Adjustment of States by nationality.
   2. Plebiscite conducted by International Committee, in disputed territories: Alsace-Lorraine, Schleswig, Russian Baltic Provinces, Finland, Poland, Trentino, Balkan.

[1] *Labour Leader*, November 26th, 1914.

III. Peace on Terms that give Lasting Security.
1. Confederacy of European States.
2. Alliance of all against aggressor.
3. International Parliament and International Permanent Committees in place of Secret Diplomacy.
4. International Police and International Law-Courts for minor international offences, espionage, assault, etc.
5. International possession of European Straits: Bosphorus, Dardanelles, Suez Canal, Gibraltar, Kiel Canal.
6. Limitations of Armies and Navies.
7. Guarantees for Democratic Government: Universal Suffrage, Equality of Electoral Districts, Redistribution every ten years, Proportional Representation, Payment of Members.

How does the attitude of the German Socialists appear in the eyes of others in the International ranks? We have the opinion of Emile Vandervelde, the Chairman of the International and the leader of the Socialists of Belgium, the most innocent of all the countries involved, and which has suffered most from the army for which the German Socialists voted supplies. M. Vandervelde has stated in *The American Socialist*[1]—

With our whole hearts we render this testimony to our German comrades, that in their efforts for the maintenance of peace they did their duty, their whole duty, and more than their duty.

But this effort has been in vain. The war has become generalised. All direct communication has been rendered impossible between the Socialists of Germany and those of other countries. . . . Similarly with the

[1] *Justice*, October 15th, 1914.

French and Belgian Socialists, who are firmly fixed in the idea that it is a case of legitimate defence, the German Socialists have voted for credits for the war.

We will naturally be careful not to address any reproaches to them on this matter. We take cognisance of the difficulties of the situation. *If they had refused to vote the credits for the war, they would have given over their country to Cossack invasion.* In voting them, they have furnished to the Kaiser arms against Republican France and against the democracies of Western Europe.

Between these two evils they chose the one they considered the lesser. *Again, I repeat, we do not blame them.* . . . We dare to hope that on the day that our German comrades are informed in regard to the horrors that have been committed in Belgium they will join us in denouncing and scourging them.

This statement should, at least, give pause to those who have pointed to the "collapse" of the International and represented the pacific principles of German Social-Democracy as having a foundation of sand.

XII

THE AUSTRIAN VIEW

But little information can be gathered of the views of the whole of the Socialist movement in Austria-Hungary; the reason being the strict Press censorship, the suppression of the right of meeting, and the fact that Parliament was not sitting during the crisis. Those conditions prevailed even before the delivery of Austria's Note to Servia. The issue of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, the principal Socialist newspaper, of July 22nd — before Austria's Note had been delivered to Servia— was heavily censored. Eight long paragraphs in articles relating to militarism and the crisis were struck out.

Such information as is to hand relates only to the Austrian Social-Democratic Labour Party, the members of which constitute the German group of forty-seven in the Imperial Parliament. The party was evidently bitterly opposed to the attitude of the Government to Servia, and especially to the way in which the expression of opinion was restricted while war and peace hung in the balance. "The people cannot decide on peace or war.

Parliament, through which it should express itself, is dumb. Chains have been put upon the freedom of the Press and upon political meetings." This is the statement of the German deputies, and it reflects the helplessness of the party to stem the tide of war. They could only send a message to the people, and this they courageously did. "Conscious of the fateful hour our warning shall loudly go forth," declared the manifesto of the group, of which the following is a portion :—

Was it really necessary? We Social-Democrats, the representatives of the German people, do not shut our eyes to the great injury which the Servian rulers have done to Austria. As we, true to our principles, which repudiate vain deeds of force, condemn the assassination of Serajevo, so also do we condemn those who bear the partial responsibility for it. We recognise that Austria-Hungary is within its rights in asking from the Servian Government the prosecution of the participators in the crime; we can understand that Austria-Hungary demands that the underground agitation against the security and peace of the Austrian Federation of States should be stopped, that the Servian rulers should put an end to the encouraging toleration with which they have hitherto regarded this disruptive movement. But we are convinced that the Servian Government would not have been able to offer any opposition to these demands of Austria-Hungary which are sanctioned by the Right of Peoples, and would, in fact, have suffered none. We are convinced that all that Austria-Hungary asks could have been obtained, and can still be obtained, by peaceful methods, and that no necessities of State, no consideration for its prestige, compel the Great Power to depart from the paths of peaceful agreement. Therefore we declare, in the name of the working-class, as the representatives of the German workers in Austria, that

we cannot take the responsibility for this war, that we lay the responsibility for it, and for all the frightfully serious results which may follow, at the door of those who thought out, supported and encouraged the fatal step which has brought us face to face with war.

We are the more bound to make this declaration in that the peoples of Austria have been for many months robbed of their constitutional rights and are debarred from the tribune from which they could pronounce their will. In the face of a war which demands the utmost sacrifices in blood and treasure from every member of the State, the deliberate violation of the will of the people by keeping Parliament out of action is all the more calculated to embitter and irritate. . . .

We repudiate all responsibility for the war. Solemnly and emphatically we lay it to the charge of those on both sides who have instigated it and wished to let it loose. In this we know we are united with the class-conscious proletariat of the whole world, and not the least with the Social-Democrats of Servia. We hereby solemnly dedicate ourselves to the work of civilisation, to International Social-Democracy, to which we shall remain faithful during life and devoted until death.

Since the issue of this pronouncement there has been little news of the Socialist movement in Austria. As to why the Manifesto was not signed by the members of the Bohemian and Polish groups—the members of the Czech-Slav Social-Democratic Party—we can only speculate. It is possible that the bullying attitude of Austria to Servia roused their racial and national sentiments to an extent which prevented them from condemning Servia's "encouraging toleration" of a "disruptive movement"—a nationalist movement of a Slav people. On the other hand, it will be noticed that the

German Deputies felt sure that the Servian Socialists were united with them in their protest.[1] As Socialists, the German Deputies are opposed to Austrian domination of the Slavs. Their aim, as stated in the Manifesto, is "a free, progressive Austria based on the self-government of all the nations, a federation of free peoples." It is known that the party is divided as to its attitude to the war. The variety of races in the Socialist movement greatly complicates the situation.

[1] See Appendix III.

XIII

THE ITALIAN VIEW

No action was taken by the Italian Socialist Party before the outbreak of the war. National opinion was against participation in the conflict, and the Socialists did not wish to "disturb the attitude of neutrality adopted by the Italian people." Opinion in the party, however, was strongly against Austria and Germany; so much so that later on Dr. Südekum, a prominent Revisionist, as an emissary of Germany, had difficulty in getting an interview with the Socialists of Italy. An interview was refused at Milan, but Dr. Südekum was eventually received by some prominent Socialists of Rome. The object of the mission was to urge the Italian Socialists to do all possible to secure the neutrality of their country. It is stated that a condition of the interview with the Roman Socialists was that the proceedings should be made public; and the Roman Socialists subsequently issued their view of the German arguments. It should be understood that the document was not a declaration of the Italian Socialist Party, and to what

extent it represents the party's view we can only conjecture.

The Roman Socialists characterised the mission from Germany as "smelling of intrigue and offending the dignity and independence of Italian Socialism." They declared that the use by the deputation, in justification of Germany, of the same arguments as were used by the Kaiser, forfeited the right of the deputation's associates in Germany to the title of Internationalists. The people of Italy had made up their minds from the beginning "not to disgrace themselves before the world by coming to the aid of Austria and Germany." The Roman Socialists could keep silence no longer in face of the attitude of German Socialists who were "joining in the dark game of intrigue with the diplomatists of the Imperial Governments of the ex-Triple Alliance." The prayer of the Roman Socialists was for an "immediate cessation of hostilities without victors or vanquished." If that hope was in vain—

> We pray that the war may result in the complete overthrow of those who promoted it—Germany and Austria. We say this because we consider that the German and Austrian Empires constitute the bulwark of reactionary politics in Europe, much more so than Russia, which is shaken by democratic and socialistic currents capable of heroic self-sacrifice. We say this, moreover, because if Germany and Austria come out of the war victorious it will mean the triumph of absolute militarism in its most brutal form; it will mean the eruption of a barbarous horde, massacring, devastating, destroying, and conquering.

If Austria and Germany, on the other hand, are beaten, the opportunity will be given to the German Socialists to emerge from their voluntary impotence and to redeem their reputation by putting an end to the feudal régime of the Empire. Finally, the victory of the French Republic, already largely socialistic, and of England, the home of what is best in democracy, will initiate a political régime in Europe desirous of peace and ready for social reform ; and it will mean an agreement between the various States of Europe, reconstructed on a national basis, for the limitation of armaments.

Therefore it becomes our duty to declare that there remains but one way left open for International Socialists —to range themselves loyally on the side of those fighting against the forces of reaction, and to do what the Italian Socialists resident in Paris have done without in any way abandoning their anti-militarist opinions, namely, to arm themselves and to fight against the militarist Empires.[1]

As feeling grew, in the country, in favour of Italy participating in the war on the side of the Triple *Entente*, the Italian Socialist Party came out

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, September 14th, 1914.

There is reason to believe that Dr. Südekum is one of the extreme supporters of the war, and his arguments probably accounted for the asperity of the Roman Socialists' reply. On September 10th, Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxembourg, Franz Mehring, and Clara Zetkin issued the following statement :—

"Comrades Dr. Südekum and Richard Fischer have made an attempt in the Party Press of the neutral countries (Sweden, Italy, and Switzerland) to give their version of the attitude of the Social-Democracy on the war. We find ourselves compelled in consequence to declare in the same Press that we and certainly many other German Social-Democrats regard the war, its causes, as well as the part played by

definitely on the side of neutrality.[1] The joint manifesto of the Executive of the party and the Socialist Parliamentary Group was issued on September 21st. It begins by calling up a vision of the war.

> On land and on the seas, in battles more murderous than history has recorded, have fallen, and are falling, thousands of young lives; in the fields and in the workshops fruitful work is interrupted, unemployment and misery torment the masses who are not fighting; towns and villages have been destroyed by barbarism born of militarism, which in its blind fury does not stop even before the wonderful products of human genius and labour. Hence arise desolation, famine, ruin, and misery.

And while all this is going on, say the Italians, —"while the terrible massacre continues,"—the Governments involved are busy trying to place the responsibility for it upon the shoulders of their enemies. It is all beside the point. The Governments are responsible in common, and will have to answer for it in common before history. Leaving aside the question of "pacific and heroic Belgium," the settlement of the responsibility for the conflict is of minor interest.

Social-Democracy in the present situation, from a standpoint which in no way corresponds to that of the comrades Südekum and Fischer. The fact that we are under martial law makes it impossible for us at present to defend our views publicly."

[1] It should be pointed out that the Italian Socialist Party —the Social-Democrats—the body affiliated to the International, is distinct from the body known as the "Reform Socialists."

The primary and fundamental responsibility for the war is to be traced back to the present capitalistic system, based on the internal rivalry of the classes and the external rivalry of the States; which creates in its development forces which, at a given moment, it cannot contain and dominate; which in time of peace plunders the proletariat, and demands from it in time of war the utmost sacrifice, the supreme surrender.

The Manifesto claimed that the resolute attitude of the Socialist Party and the proletariat was an influence in determining the neutrality of the Government when war broke out.[1] The declaration of neutrality was unanimously endorsed by public opinion. The Triple Alliance treaty had but a sterile existence as a diplomatic protocol. But agitation had been growing in favour of intervention.

The urgent necessity of a great Ministry of national concentration is pointed out. War against the ally of yesterday and, therefore, also against Germany, is demanded. At the head of the pro-war throng march the Nationalists and those who, after having been inclined towards an intervention of Italy in favour of the allies of the Triple Alliance, would now, with the naked cynicism of adventurers, throw themselves upon Austria, which, after the defeats in Galicia, they reckon to be incapable of effective defence, or nearly so. Then come the Reformists of the Right and the masonic "exhibitionist"

[1] In *The Clarion* of November 27th, 1914, Professor G. D. Herron wrote: "The Italian King and his Foreign Minister were bent on marching Italy beside Austria and Germany. The Socialist Party made it clear that not a train should move, nor a soldier march, nor a king reign in Italy if the Government attempted its programme."

Radicals, anxious to defend French democracy and to realise the advent of a Government *bloc* in Italy; and the rear is brought up by the Republicans, who ascribe to the dynasty of Savoy some "historic task" to fulfil which that House, during the period of regeneration, has always shown itself incapable. Alone against all this crowd stands the Socialist Party, immune from the contagion which is spreading, and against which it calls upon you, proletarians, to take the necessary step for defence.

The Manifesto declared that there was "a profound and unalterable antithesis between war and Socialism," because, apart from other reasons—

War represents the extreme, because compulsory, form of collaboration of classes, the annihilation of individual autonomy and of freedom of thought, sacrificed to the State and militarism, which initiate, conduct, and conclude the war outside all direct control of the people. Further, because war is a diversion which, bringing the backward and parasitic forces of Society to the fore, instigating race hatred and reviving the instincts of primitive man, puts off, instead of bringing nearer, the advent of a better state of society.

A further reason for neutrality put forward by the party was that Italy, as the only great neutral Power, would then be able to adopt the position of mediator. When the day of settlement arrived the votes of the people would have to be appealed to and the abolition of armaments be sought.

On September 27th a joint conference of the Swiss and Italian parties was held at Lugano.[1] It

[1] In 1912 the Swiss Social-Democratic Party had a membership of 45,000; 15 representatives in the Federal National Assembly out of a total of 189; and 218 members of the Cantonal Grand Councils out of 2907.

was agreed that both parties should continue to throw their whole weight in favour of the neutrality of their respective countries, and that a request should be issued to the Socialist parties in neutral countries "to demand of their Government without delay the institution of diplomatic negotiations in order to secure a speedy termination of the murder of peoples."

The statement published by the Conference is interesting as an expression of a detached Socialist view of the war; the view not unbalanced by fear of invasion, not clouded by the predominance of national over international sentiment to which participation in war gives rise, and not warped by an overdose of *ex parte* statements.

The Conference denied that the war was a struggle for either higher culture or more liberty. On both sides it was a struggle of capitalists for new markets in foreign countries and "a criminal attempt to crush the revolutionary movement of the working-classes and of Social-Democracy at home."

The German and the Austrian bourgeoisie have no right to plead the struggle against Tsarism and for the liberty of national culture in defence of the war, for just as Prussian Junkerdom, with William II. at its head, and the German industrial magnates have always followed the policy of supporting and maintaining cursed Tsarism, so have the Governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary suppressed the national culture of their peoples and put in fetters the movement for freedom of their working-classes.

"Neither have the French and the English bourgeoisie

the right to plead the struggle against German Imperialism and for the liberty of the peoples in defence of their countries. Their aim is not the liberation of the peoples from the Capitalist and Militarist oppression, for by their policy of alliance with Tsarist Russia they have increased that oppression and hindered the development to a higher culture.

The true causes and the real character of the present war are clouded by the Chauvinist and Jingoistic intoxication which the ruling classes of all countries have deliberately kindled. Even portions of the working-class have been carried away by this Chauvinist current, and believe that by participation in the war they can serve the emancipation of the proletariat of other countries from the bloody reign of their Governments. But no war can have this effect. Oppressed classes cannot gain their freedom by fighting for their own oppressors against the oppressed classes of other countries.

Such were the principles of the International, and now more than ever was it necessary to proclaim them.[1]

With the growth of war-fever in Italy and the possibility of Roumania joining that country in intervention, the Roumanian Social-Democrats, in October, issued a declaration favouring neutrality. It was stated that a pro-Russian propaganda was being carried on in Roumania by the "so-called independent papers" in conjunction with spies of the Czar. This was being done under the guise of working in the interests of French democracy. "To work for the Czar," declared the Roumanian Socialist, "is to work for the destruction of

[1] *Labour Leader*, October 15th, 1914.

democracy, for the suppression of freedom, for reaction. . . . The Roumanian people must understand that the Russian danger is the greatest danger of all." The propaganda, the efforts of spies and Press should be resisted; and also the "plentiful roubles" which accompanied them.[1]

[1] *Labour Leader*, October 29th, 1914.

XIV

THE FRENCH VIEW

Like their German comrades, the Socialists of France were fighting for peace all through that last week in July. Street meetings were held in Paris —some being attacked by the police, and M. Bon, the Socialist Deputy for Levallois-Perret, being arrested. The Unified Socialist Party of France set forth its views in a manifesto to the people. French Socialists were in agreement with their Austrian comrades; their position in France corresponded with that of the Socialists of Germany. "Both at their posts of action have the same work and the same ends." The party appealed to the citizens of France.

The fundamental anarchy of our social system, the competition of capitalist groups, the colonial lusts, the intrigue and brutalities of Imperialism—the policy of rapine of some, the policy of pride in others—have created a permanent tension in Europe for the last ten years; a constant and growing risk of war.

The peril has been suddenly increased by the aggressive proceedings of Austro-Hungarian diplomacy. Whatever may be the grievances of Austria-Hungary, whatever may be the excuse of National Pan-Serbism, as has been declared by our Austrian comrades, Austria

could have obtained all necessary guarantees without recourse to a brutal and threatening note which suddenly gives rise to the menace of the most revolting and frightful of wars.

Against the policy of violence and brutal methods which may now let loose upon Europe a catastrophe without precedent, the proletariat of all countries must raise their protest. They must express their horror of war and their endeavour to prevent it. The Socialists, the workers of France, make an appeal to the whole country to use all efforts for the maintenance of peace. They know that, in the present crisis, the French Government is most sincerely anxious to avert, or to diminish, the risks of conflict. It is asked to apply itself to securing a policy of conciliation and mediation rendered all the easier by the readiness of Servia to accede the major portion of the Austrian demands. It is asked to influence its ally, Russia, in order that she shall not seek a pretext for aggressive operations under cover of defending the interests of the Slavs. Their efforts, then, correspond with those of the German Social-Democrats, who demand that Germany shall exercise a moderating influence on her ally, Austria. Both at their posts of action have the same work and the same end.

Then followed an appeal for a vigorous agitation against "the abominable crime that now menaces the world." "The possibility of this crime is in itself a condemnation of the whole régime."

And the French Socialists had hopes of peace. Jaurès, in the last of his daily articles in *l'Humanité*, the leading organ of the French Socialists, did not think the situation hopeless on July 31st. He wrote :—

On the one hand it is evident that if Germany had intended to have attacked us she would have proceeded

on the lines of the famous sudden attack. She has, on the contrary, allowed several days to pass, by which delay France, like Russia, has been able to profit: Russia by a partial mobilisation, France by taking all necessary precautions compatible with the maintenance of peace.

On the other hand, Austria and Russia have entered into direct negotiations. . . . Even if there is definite disagreement between the views of Austria and Russia we shall be able to gauge the difference of ideas and employ ourselves in the solution of a problem of which the principles will be determined.

Jaurès sketched the financial disasters which even the possibility of war would bring about, and asked whether "the most stupid and villainous of men are capable of opening up such a crisis." He thought the real danger did not lie in the events themselves; nor in the real disposition of the chancelleries; nor in the real wishes of the people. It lay in "the sudden impulse born of fear, in acute uncertainty and prolonged anxiety." Crowds could give way to mad panic and so could Governments. He urged that it was wrong to imagine that a diplomatic crisis could extend only over a few days. "Even as the battles of modern war, developing along an immense front, continue for seven or eight days"—even Jaurès, apparently, did not conceive the shambles of the Aisne—"so do diplomatic battles extend, necessarily, over several weeks." He pleaded for clearness of understanding, steadiness of will. The peril was great but not invincible if they knew

how to have, at the same time, "the heroism of patience and the heroism of action."

On the day when negotiations between France and Germany were broken off, a deputation from the Socialist Parliamentary Group waited upon the Premier (M. Viviani). The Premier thought the prospects of maintaining peace were very slight, but said nothing would be done on the French side which would impair the prospects of a resumption of negotiations. He instanced the fact that the French troops were being kept six miles from the frontier. A resumption of negotiations was always possible, said M. Viviani, so long as the German Ambassador remained in Paris.

The deputation demanded that the French Government should immediately make a fresh and forcible manifestation of its desire for peace, and that an express demand for further mediation by Britain should be addressed to the British Government, with a declaration of the entire agreement of the French people with the demand.

M. Viviani promised to bring the request of the deputation before the Cabinet the same evening, and the deputation withdrew. Within an hour of its leaving the German Ambassador called for his passports.[1]

It was the view of the French Socialists that the German ultimatums frustrated the prospects of

[1] See the Manifesto of the French and Belgian Socialist parties, *l'Humanité*, September 6th, 1914.

peaceful agreement. Convinced as they were that their own Government desired peace, they did not believe that the French Government had in any way egged on Russia; and neither, we may recall, did the German Socialists. War with Russia meant war with France. The national life of France was threatened; and the Socialist Party rallied to its defence.

When the Government was constituted a Ministry of National Defence, the Unified Socialist Party, "after due deliberation and mature thought," authorised M. Marcel Sembat and M. Jules Guesde to enter it. In the French Cabinet were M. Briand and M. Millerand, ex-members of the Socialist movement, the former ex-Premier of France, and notorious for the way he smashed the railway strike of 1910 by mobolising the Reserves. To these two men the Unified Party was bitterly hostile. Nothing could indicate more strongly the conviction of the French Socialists that their country was the victim of aggression than the entry into the Ministry of Sembat and Guesde, two of the strongest Socialists in France, and the latter the most redoubtable Marxian in the movement.

M. Edouard Vaillant, one of the Parisian Socialist Deputies, was asked by an interviewer: "How can your members work by the side of Briand and Millerand?" and Vaillant replied: "We must only judge them by their actions now and in the future. In the interests of the

country at large we cannot, at this critical moment, consider their actions in the past."

He said that the presence of the members of the party in the Cabinet had the full and entire approval of not only the Socialist Group in Parliament, but of the party itself, and that in sending them there the party was only allowing its Deputies to fight for the country in the same manner that its individual members were fighting for the country on the field of battle.

We are convinced that we must take our responsibility in the management of affairs at this critical time, and we shall use all our endeavours to bring the war to a successful conclusion.[1]

The Socialist Parliamentary Group, the Permanent Administrative Commission, and the Administrative Council of *l'Humanité*, in an explanation of their action, emphasised that only the constitution of a new Ministry of National Defence induced the party to allow its members to enter the Government. It would not have done so had it merely been a case of adding forces to the old Government, and more than ever would it have refrained if the case had been that of "ordinary participation in the bourgeois Government." But—

It is the future of the nation, it is the life of France, that are in the balance to-day. The party, therefore, has not hesitated.

The truth, foreshadowed, announced by us has burst forth. Without being broken through or in any way affected, our armies find themselves, momentarily,

[1] *Justice*, September 10th, 1914.

falling back before superior numbers. One of the richest and most industrious districts of our country is menaced.

The national unity which at the beginning of the war once more revealed itself and comforted our hearts must display all its power.

The entire nation must rise for the defence of its soil and its liberty in one of those outbursts of heroism which always repeat themselves in similar hours of our history.

The Chief of the Government felt that in order to win over the nation, to organise it, to support it in a struggle which will be and which must be relentless, he had need of the help of all, and most particularly, perhaps, of those who feared for the emancipation of the proletariat and humanity in the formidable oppression of despotism. He knew that in all grave hours, in 1793 as in 1870, it was in these men, these Socialists, these revolutionists, that the nation placed its confidence.

Spontaneously, without waiting any other demonstration of the popular will, he has appealed to our party. Our party has replied, "Here!"

This is the spirit in which our friends enter the Government. They will enter it also with a clear outlook on the immense task they have to accomplish.

The statement proceeded to detail to what the Socialist members of the Ministry would direct their energies, and it was probably with recollections of 1870 that it was written: "First of all they will see that the country is told the truth."

They will maintain and develop the courage of the people and its will to conquer by giving it entire confidence in the sincerity of the Government.

They will urge vigorously the *levée en masse*. They will act so that no force, no willingness, remains unutilised.

They will inspect the resources of equipment,

provisions and armaments which exist in our forts. They will strive to increase them.

They will render each day more intense by the working together of all available forces, the production of munitions and arms.

In order to bring the service of all the national energies to the maximum standard there must be willingness free from prejudice, guided only by the desire for the safety of the country and the greatest organised effort.

Lastly, and above all, comrades, the presence of our friends in the Government will furnish for all the guarantee that Republican democracy is ready to struggle to the end.

How many times has our great Jaurès, foreseeing even a preliminary French reverse under an attack of superior numbers, insisted upon the necessity of this struggle? He would have wished for France to be prepared in every detail. But no matter what this stubborn resistance costs, it is our duty to organise it, and, further, upon it depends the common success of our allies. Our friends will urge forward the nation to this resistance.

To-day as yesterday, after the first tests, as in the enthusiasm of mobilisation, we know we are struggling not only for the existence of the country, not only for the greatness of France, but for liberty, for the Republic, for civilisation.

We are struggling that the world, freed from the stifling oppression of Imperialism and from the atrocities of war, may finally enjoy peace in respecting the rights of all.

The Socialist Ministers will communicate this conviction to the whole Government. With it they will animate its work. They will share it with the heroic army, where the flower of the nation fights to-day. And, by persevering effort and forceful enthusiasm, they will at the same time assure the safety of the country and the progress of humanity.

The Socialist Cabinet Ministers introduced an innovation into French politics. They appeared

before those to whom they were primarily responsible and gave an account of their doings in the Cabinet. Sembat and Guesde during the first three months of the war addressed, jointly or separately, delegates from all the Paris branches of the party, the Socialist Deputies and the Central Executive Committee, and the *Comité d'Action*, a joint body representing the Socialist Party and the Confederation of Labour. At all the meetings the Socialist Ministers obtained a vote of confidence. Wrote M. Jean Longuet, one of the Deputies:

Amid the uprising of the nation's strength and the increase of its war weapons, it is one of the ironies of history that the presence of pacifists and internationalist members was necessary in the French Government to attain results that bourgeois Ministers had been unable to attain! . . . It is an admirable thing that France should have been saved from the foreign yoke in the last event by the intelligence the initiative, and the pluck of these "anti-patriots," these "friends of all countries but their own," that the Socialists are supposed to be. If the "murderous war," as M. Cambon has so exactly called it, has obliged French Socialists to play this terrible game, they do not in the least forget their much-cherished ideals. All the party members who listened to Guesde and Sembat had the great comfort of hearing from them in their capacity as Cabinet Ministers their constant Socialist declaration. They have always asked, and have always obtained, from their colleagues in the Cabinet the statement that France is waging no war of conquest against the German people, but only defending herself against German Kaiserism. They will demand when the time of peace negotiations comes that general disarmament and universal arbitration should be established.[1]

[1] *Daily Citizen*, November 24th, 1914.

Both the French and Belgian parties, which subsequently issued a joint statement—distributed by French military aeroplanes—to the German Socialists, believed that the working-class of Germany, "deceived by the official news, had no accurate knowledge of the facts." The French and Belgian Socialists were not fighting the German people, whose independence and autonomy they respected. They were defending their own independence against German Imperialism, and were conscious that, "once the truth has been established," their action would be approved and joined in by the German Social-Democrats.

When it became known in France that the I.L.P. of this country had refused to join in the recruiting campaign, M. Augustin Hamon, the Federal Secretary of the Socialist Federation of the Côtes du Nord and a member of the National Council of the Unified Socialist Party, sent an appeal to the I.L.P. in the name of his own organisation. He wrote:

"Neither French Socialists nor Belgian Socialists nor the Socialists of any country wished for the present war. They all opposed the war as best they could. If the French Government wished for peace, and, in order to maintain it, went so far as to keep its troops at six miles from the frontier, it is for a good part due to the influence of our great Jaurès, who spoke in the name of the whole French Socialist Party. Unfortunately, the German Socialists had not enough influence to obtain so pacific an influence from the German Government. The Kaiser and his Junkers wanted war, and they succeeded. We have read since of the atrocities they have committed, the

savage deeds which show what the world would be like if German hegemony was to be.

When Belgium was invaded the Belgian Socialists all took arms to defend their liberty and their autonomy. In France we Socialists all did the same. Our anti-militarism, our internationalism remain intact. Much more, the triumph of such ideals demands that the allied armies triumph over German Kaiserism and militarism. We, French and Belgian Socialists, we fight more for liberty and civilisation than for our soil.

M. Hamon urged that, with Kaiserism defeated, Czarism would have to become liberal or die. The war must put an end to Kaiserism and militarism. It was for the Socialists to show that they could take an important part; to show that they could fight for liberty and civilisation; then, when settling time arrived, their words would have weight in the scale. "And all English, French, Belgian, Dutch and Italian Socialists having the same ideals, will be able to compel their Governments to do away with militarism, and prevent any annexation which would only perpetuate the so-called national hatreds."[1]

[1] *Daily Citizen*, September 7th, 1914.

XV

THE RUSSIAN VIEW

During the days which preceded the outbreak of war, Russia was on the eve of a revolution at least equal to the uprising of 1905. "In every busy manufacturing district Russia was shaking with revolution of a peculiar kind, and a civil war of the most horrible nature was on the point of being declared." In Petrograd, 120,000 workmen were on strike. They asked neither for an increase in wages nor any other amelioration of their lot as employés. No concession from their employers could have sent them back to work. They were dissatisfied with their lot generally; with the life of the workman. They would disorganise the State until there was a change. In the working-class quarters of Petrograd, barricades were in the streets. The Government intended taking the most repressive measures, and "showed their sense of insecurity by actually organising demonstrations to excite the patriotic feelings of the masses." Then it became known that Germany had declared war, and the workmen went "instantly and quietly back to work."[1]

[1] See "Russia and the War," by "Anglitchanin," *Contemporary Review*, November 1914.

It is clear that the temporary swamping of social aspirations by national feeling rallied to the Czar great masses of people who, a few hours before, had been filled with a bitter hostility to the State and all its works. We have been told that "the revolutionaries"—a rather broad term for a country like Russia—are at one with the Government in the prosecution of the war.[1] Professor Milyoukov, the leader of the Russian Liberals, has written that while he does not "pretend to affirm that all Russians without any exception" share in the national point of view, it is a fact that "it does not often happen that Russian public opinion is as nearly unanimous as it is now concerning the origin of the war, its ideal aim, and the desired outcome." He adds that this unanimity of opinion was "reached, somehow at once, at the very first beginning of the war"; and that the exceptions remind one of those that exist in England, except that they are more scarce. They hardly produce any effect on the public mind.[2]

We are considering in these pages the attitude of Socialist parties, without being primarily concerned with their numbers or their influence. After all, a leader of British Liberalism would probably write in a Russian newspaper that public opinion in this country was unanimous in support

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] See the article "Russia and the War," by Professor Milyoukov, *Manchester Guardian*, October 21st, 1914.

of the war; whereas, of the organisations we are dealing with here—the Socialist bodies—the largest, the I.L.P., does not support the war, and the support of the second largest, the British Socialist Party, is only of a qualified nature. What line, then, did Social-Democracy take in Russia when war was declared? The fact is that its representatives in the Duma refused to vote for the war credits.

When the war credits were before the Duma, M. Valentin Khanstoff, speaking for the Social-Democrats, demanded an amnesty for all political prisoners and a general policy of conciliation towards oppressed nationalities. The concessions were refused, whereat Khanstoff read the following declaration:—

> A terrible and unprecedented calamity has broken upon the peoples of the entire world. Millions of workers have been torn away from their labour, ruined, and swept away in a bloody torrent. Millions of families have been delivered over to famine.
>
> War has already begun. While the Governments of Europe were preparing for it, the organised working-class of the entire world, with the Germans at their head, unanimously protested.
>
> The hearts of the Russian workers are with the European working-class. The war is provoked by a policy of expansion for which the ruling classes of all countries alone are responsible.
>
> The organised working-class of the belligerent countries has not been sufficiently powerful to prevent this war and the resulting return to barbarism. But we are convinced that the working-class will find in international solidarity the means to enforce peace at an early date. The terms

of that peace will be dictated by the people themselves and not by the diplomats.

We are convinced that this war will finally open the eyes of the great masses of Europe, and show them the real causes of all the oppression and violence that they endure—that this latest explosion of barbarism will be the last.

The organised working-class, the constant defenders of the freedom and of the interests of the people, will at every moment defend the freedom and interests of the people against aggression, from whatever quarter it should come.

Hostile demonstrations from some of the other parties greeted the reading of this declaration, at the close of which the Socialists followed M. Khanstoff out of the hall, without voting for either the war credits or the resolution of confidence in the Government.[1] Subsequently, the Social-Democrats decided to abstain from voting for any further supplies for which the Government might ask.

We may also judge of the attitude of the Socialists to the war by the treatment meted out to them by the Government since war began. It is to be expected that not even the Russian Government with a great war upon its hands would persecute its own supporters. Yet, when the war broke out, *La Pravda* and *Nasha Rabotchaya Gazeta*, two Social-Democratic daily papers of Petrograd, were suppressed. The plant was shut down, property confiscated, and the editors imprisoned. The papers had uncompromisingly

[1] *Labour Leader*, October 1st, 1914.

opposed the war. Several trade-union journals were also suppressed, and the paper of the Co-operative Union, *Obyedinenye*, was also shut down when it referred to the war.[1] Subsequently, all the Socialist papers were suppressed.

There has been no sign of a political amnesty. The *Rjetch* of September 4th reported the first sitting of the Special Court of the Petrograd Law Courts, before which were "two cases of alleged membership of the Social-Democratic Party." In the first case two young men were charged. One of them had been found to be in possession of 800 manifestoes on an Eight-Hours Bill which the Socialist members of the Duma had introduced, and was suspected of having charge of a branch of the party in Petrograd. The advocate of the prisoner urged that the charge should be altered to one of being in possession of illegal literature; but the request was refused. The prisoners were sentenced to be exiled to Siberia for life—that is, for fifteen years, with subsequent restrictions as to residence. In the second case, seven men were charged. It was alleged that they were members of the Maximal Social-Democratic Committee of Petrograd. They had also been found to possess manifestoes and printing appliances; and they had held meetings and conducted business in the rooms of the Bakers' Union. Two of the seven were

[1] *Justice*, October 8th, 1914, quoting *The New York Call*; also M. Peter Petroff, a Russian journalist, in the *Labour Leader*, October 1st, 1914.

discharged; the remaining five were exiled for "life."[1] Arrests among Socialists and other progressive parties perceptibly multiplied during the two months following the outbreak of the war.[2]

As for subject nationalities, immediately after the war began a severe régime was introduced into Finland, and the Jews still suffered all their old disabilities.[3] "Elementary honesty demands that the truth should be told, and that it should be known that the alleged grant to the Russian Jews of any rights whatever is a legend which has no relation to facts."[4] The *Russian Invalid*, an official army organ, derided the hopes of Jews, Poles, and Finns, and characterised them as an "absurd dream."[5] The Liberal *Rjetch*, when it ventured to express the hope that the Government would consider the aspirations of Finns, Poles, and Jews, was fined 3000 roubles;[6] and *Ruskoje Bogatswo*, a strong Radical organ, was suspended for the duration of the war.[7] Most astonishing of all was the arrest and imprisonment of M. Bourtzeff, the Russian Liberal who exposed the methods of the secret police in the Azeff affair.

[1] *Labour Leader*, October 8th, 1914.

[2] Letter of MM. B. Eliasheff, W. Kerjentsoff, W. Maisky, S. Rapporport, S. Roshin, and Th. Rothstein, Russian journalists, *Labour Leader*, October 1st, 1914.

[3] *Ibid.*; also Appendix II.

[4] *Manchester Guardian*, October 26th, 1914, quoting *La Guerre Sociale* of Paris, October 8th.

[5] Russian journalists' letter.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] See E. J. Zoendelevitch, *Justice*, November 5th, 1914.

M. Bourtzeff, believing in the liberal intentions announced by the Czar, had returned to Russia for the purpose of volunteering for the Russian army! Bourtzeff had committed no offence against the law, and left Russia with a regulation passport.[1]

Even were there not ample evidence to the contrary, it could not be deduced from these facts that the Socialists are at one with the Government during the present time; that they are included in the "unanimous" public opinion. Among the supporters of the war, Socialists and Anarchists are undoubtedly found, notably Prince Kropotkin, the distinguished exile in England; but the Social-Democratic organisation, the Russian battalion of the International, neither has confidence in the Government, nor has it voted for the supplies for the war. The Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party has stated, in a Manifesto, that, of a Russian victory over Germany or a German victory over Russia, the latter is the lesser of the two evils from the point of view of the Russian working-class. During the conflict the party appears to be holding a watching brief for "the freedom and interests of the people," which it will defend against aggression "from *whatever* quarter it should come." Apart from these facts, while it may be true that the war broke up the revolutionary movement which formerly prevailed and caused workmen to return to work, it is very difficult to believe that revolutionary feeling which developed

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, October 7th, 1914.

so far as to express itself in barricades was entirely effaced even by the war.

Through the medium of the Russian Embassy a message from M. Vandervelde—the Belgian Socialist leader—was conveyed to the Russian Socialists through the Russian Press. In the course of his letter, M. Vandervelde said:

> A defeat, not of Germany, but of Prussian Junkerdom, is a question of life and death. . . . If Belgium should be destroyed, France and England defeated, and German militarism prove triumphant, that would erect a big and lasting hindrance to the progress of humanity and to the development of the free life of nations. The democrats, republicans and socialists of Belgium, France and England have resolved to prevent such a disaster by all their power. . . . The democratically-governed countries must count in this horrible fight upon the armed help of the Russian people.[1]

There are two groups of the Russian Social-Democratic Party,—the Minority Group and the Majority Group,—but they are at one in their opposition to the war. Replying for the former group in the Swedish *Social Democraten*, M. Lavin wrote to this effect:

> The Russian Socialists know their Government better than other people do, and they remain the irreconcilable enemies of that Government. The comrades of other countries should not pay any attention to the declarations of people like Bourtzeff or Kropotkin, "who have taken no part in the Russian working-class movement for decades." Should a serious danger threaten the German people from Russian Czarism "not only the Russian

[1] *Labour Leader*, November 19th, 1914.

Socialists but," continues M. Lavin, "all our international comrades and, I am sure foremost among them the Socialists of Belgium, France and England, would consider it their duty to prevent the humiliation and dismemberment of the German people.[1]

The reply of the Majority Group of the party was contained in the following statement of its Central Committee:

The Russian working-class cannot, under any conditions, act hand in hand with the Russian Government, cannot conclude any armistice with it, not even a temporary one, and cannot grant any support to it. We cannot shut our eyes as to the future of Socialism and democracy in Europe. After the war is over, a period for the further development of the European democracy will take place. And then the Russian Government, having gained new influence and authority from the war, will appear as the strongest check upon, and menace to, the democracy. Therefore we consider it our duty, as far as possible, to utilise the difficult position in which the Government is now placed in the interests of Russian liberty. In the end that will prove itself to be the best service to the democracy of which M. Vandervelde speaks.

We recognise the anti-democratic character of the Prussian hegemony, but as Russian Social-Democrats we cannot forget another enemy of the workers, and no less dangerous—Russian absolutism. In home affairs this enemy remains what it has always been, a merciless oppressor and an unceasing exploiter. Even at the present moment, when we should have thought this despotism would be more cautious, it remains the same and continues the political persecution of the democracy and of all subject nationalities. To-day all Socialist journals are stopped, all working-class organisations are

[1] See "Russian Socialists and the War," by S. Dalin (a Russian Socialist journalist), *Labour Leader*, November 19th, 1914.

disbanded, many hundreds of members are arrested, and our brave comrades are sent to exile just as before. Should this war end in victory for our present Government, it will become the centre and mainstay of international reaction. . . .

Our immediate objective should be the convocation of a Constitutional Assembly. We demand this in the interests of the same European democracy on whose behalf you appeal. Our party is a very important section of the world's democracies, and by fighting for our interests we are at the same time fighting for the interests of all democracies, enlarging and strengthening them. We hope that our interests are not considered as opposed to other European democracies which we esteem as highly as our own. We are persuaded that Russian absolutism is the chief support of reactionary militarism in Europe and that it has bred in the German hegemony the dangerous enmity towards European democracy.[1]

This section may be closed with the views of the London branch of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, the members of which, being in this country, would probably get more information on the crisis than would their comrades in Russia and, in addition, would be able to express their opinions quite freely. The London members issued a statement in October. They denied that the war is either a war of liberation or a war of civilisation against militarism. In reality it had been prompted

. . . . as previous wars were; partly by the self-seeking interests of the Capitalist bourgeoisie, fighting for new markets and economic supremacy, and partly by the selfish motives of small cliques of feudal aristocracy,

[1] *Labour Leader*, November 19th, 1914.

supported by dynastic considerations of certain European monarchs. The ruling classes also aim, by means of this fratricidal struggle, to inflict a blow on the working-class movement and to crush the head of Socialism. This war undoubtedly threatens to destroy the fraternal unity of the workers of various countries, to weaken the force of the political parties of the proletariat, to shatter its Trade Union organisations, and, at the same time, to strengthen the hostile power of the possessing classes and to cause a new growth of militarism and Chauvinism. In particular, a victory, either of Russia or of Germany, will only lead to an ascendancy in Europe of the reactionary influences either of Russian Tsarism or of Prussian Junkerdom.

Of the effect of a Russian victory over Germany, or a Germany victory over Russia, the Manifesto stated:—

If it be correct that a victory of Germany threatens Russia with economic social and political stagnation and reaction, it is not less correct to say that the crushing of Germany by Russia would result for the former in a still greater disaster of a precisely similar nature. Russia has already, at the very commencement of the war, proclaimed by the mouth of the Tsar and his Generalissimo her claims upon a portion of German territory, while hypocritically hiding her aggressive aspirations under the deceitful watchword of "the restoration of Poland." The subsequent policy of the Russian Government in the conquered part of Galicia, the appointment as district chief in those territories of the famous Gregus, the head of the secret police and inventor of the famous torture chamber in Riga, the religious intrigues of the representatives of the Russian clergy—all this and much more shows distinctly what the Polish nation and the Polish workers may expect from the arrogant assumption of the rôle of "Liberator of Poland" by the same Tsar whose

sanguinary reign has been strewn with fragments of broken pledges and oaths.

War, it is argued, can bring neither the downfall of militarism nor freedom to small nationalities; and it cannot remedy "the wrongs under which mankind is at present groaning, all of which are rooted in the existing Capitalistic system." Such liberation, such uprooting of militarism, is the aim of not one of the governing classes concerned; these things can only be accomplished by the international Social-Democracy. The business of the international proletariat is to work for an early conclusion of peace, to rally to the banner of the International, and to use the war as a means of hastening the Social Revolution.

XVI

THE BELGIAN VIEW

The position of the Belgian Socialist Labour Party is quite clear. Like the other sections of the International, it led a great protest of the people against war; but when war was a fact the Socialists could only pursue one course—defend their country from foreign aggression. They did this all the more readily because of the quarter whence the aggression came. Just as the German Socialist sees in Czarism a more reactionary force than any in his own land, so does the Belgian Socialist compare his own liberties with the liberties of the people of Germany. When war came, he took up arms, not only in defence of his country—within which he has had to carry on the class war—he took up arms to defend his Socialism from a more powerful foe than any within the Belgian border.

When war broke out, the General Council of the Socialist Labour Party published the following manifesto, "To the People!":—

The European war is declared.

In a few days, a few hours perhaps, millions of men who ask only to live in peace will be dragged without

their consent into the most appalling of butcheries by treaties to which they have not agreed, by a decision with which they have had nothing to do.

The Social-Democracy bears no responsibility for this disaster.

It shrank from nothing to warn the people, to prevent the folly of armaments, to drive back the catastrophe which will strike all European communities.

But to-day the harm is done, and, by the fatality of events, one thought dominates us: that soon, perhaps, we shall have to direct our efforts to stopping the invasion of our territory.

We do so with all the more ardent hearts in that in defending the neutrality and even the existence of our country against militarist barbarism we shall be conscious of serving the cause of democracy and of political liberties in Europe.

Our comrades who are called to the colours will show how Socialist workers can conduct themselves in the face of danger. But whatever the circumstances in which they find themselves, we ask them never to forget, among the horrors they will see perpetrated, that they belong to the Workers' International, and that they must be fraternal and humane as far as is compatible with their legitimate individual defence and that of the country.

When the Belgian Government became a Ministry of National Defence, M. Emile Vandervelde, the Chairman of the Belgian Socialists, entered the Cabinet.

With Vandervelde's view of the action of the German Socialists we have already dealt—with his statement that they had to choose between voting for the war credits or giving their country over to Cossack invasion, and that they did more than their duty in striving for peace, —and also with the opinion of both the French

and Belgian parties that the German Social-Democracy had been deceived by the official news. M. Vandervelde has also stated that what was particularly odious about the entry of the Germans into Belgium was not the violation of territory so much as "the policy of terrorism and brutality which has been pursued throughout, and which seems to have no other object than that of vengeance on the Belgians because they have defended their territory and barred the way against the invading hosts. The word of command formerly given by Wilhelm II. to his soldiers not to behave like Huns has certainly not been followed."[1] M. Vandervelde also expressed the hope that "on the day that our German comrades are exactly informed in regard to the horrors that have been committed in Belgium they will join us in denouncing and scourging them."[2]

Liège, with the surrounding industrial districts, is a stronghold of Socialism. Many Socialists took part in the defence of the town and the holding of the forts. They sang "The International" as the German troops came on.

[1] *Justice*, September 3rd, 1914.
[2] *Ibid.*, October 15th, 1914.

XVII

THE BRITISH VIEW

During the last week in July, in common with the organised working-class of the Continent, the Labour and Socialist movement of Great Britain was solid for peace. When Austria attacked Servia it was equally solid for the neutrality of this country. After the emergency meeting of the International Socialist Bureau in Brussels on July 29th, the British Section issued a Manifesto, signed by the Chairman, Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., and the Secretary, Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., urging the working-class to agitate vigorously in favour of non-intervention by Britain. After stating that the people had not been consulted concerning the war, the Manifesto continued :—

> Whatever may be the rights and wrongs of this sudden, crushing attack made by the militarist Empire of Austria upon Servia, it is certain that the workers of all countries likely to be drawn into the conflict must strain every nerve to prevent their Governments from committing them to war.
>
> Everywhere, Socialists and the organised forces of Labour are taking this course. Everywhere vehement protests are made against the greed and intrigue of militarists and armament-mongers.

We call upon you to do the same. . . . Compel those of the governing class and their Press, who are eager to commit you to co-operate with Russian despotism, to keep silent and respect the decision of the overwhelming majority of the people, who will have neither part nor lot in such infamy. The success of Russia at the present day would be a curse to the world.

There is no time to lose. Already by secret agreements and understandings of which the democracies of the civilised world know only by rumour, steps are being taken which may fling us all into the fray.

Workers, stand together therefore for peace! Combine and conquer the militarist enemy and the self-seeking Imperialists to-day once for all.

Men and women, you have now an unexampled opportunity of rendering a magnificent service to humanity and to the world!

Proclaim that for you the days of plunder and butchery are gone by; send messages of peace and fraternity to your fellows who have less liberty than you! Down with class rule! Down with the rule of brute force! Down with war! Up with the peaceful rule of the people!

Time was short, and the only big demonstration that could be arranged was one that was held in Trafalgar Square on Sunday, August 2nd. It was held under the auspices of the British Section of the International Socialist Bureau, and was representative of every branch of the Labour and Socialist movement in this country. Fifteen thousand people assembled and expressed their view of the crisis in the following resolution:—

This demonstration, representing the organised workers and citizens of London, views with serious alarm the prospects of a European war, into which every European Power will be dragged owing to the

secret alliances and understandings which in their origin were never sanctioned by the nations nor are even now communicated to them.

We stand by the efforts of the international working-class movement to unite the workers of the nations concerned in their efforts to prevent their Governments from entering upon war, as expressed in the resolution passed by the International Socialist Bureau.

We protest against any step being taken by the Government of this country to support Russia, either directly or in consequence of any understanding with France, as being not only offensive to the political traditions of the country, but disastrous to Europe, and declare that as we have no interest, direct or indirect, in the threatened quarrels which may result from the action of Austria in Servia, the Government of Great Britain should rigidly decline to engage in war, but should confine itself to efforts to bring about peace as speedily as possible.

The meetings which were held throughout the country were sufficient in number and sufficiently widespread to indicate that the Labour and Socialist forces were solid for the neutrality of this country. In South Wales the miners refused to forego two days' holiday in spite of a special request from the Admiralty, and the Executive of the South Wales Miners' Federation urged the immediate calling of a special meeting of the International Miners' Congress to decide what action the miners of Europe should take. Speaking at a demonstration of the Cumberland Miners' Association, Mr. Robert Smillie, the President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, declared that "he did not know if it was possible even yet,

by a cessation of work all over Europe, to stop the war, but so far as he was concerned he would be glad to pledge the British miners to such a course if they could get the others to do it."[1] No man knows the British miners better than Mr. Smillie. But the armies were already marching.

When Sir Edward Grey, in the House of Commons, on August 3rd, described the European situation, the Labour Party stood for neutrality. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Party, in his speech on its behalf, said he thought Sir Edward Grey was wrong; that the Government for which he spoke was wrong; that the verdict of history would be that they were wrong. No crime of that character had been committed by statesmen without such statesmen appealing to their nation's honour. We had fought both the Crimean War and the South African War for our honour. Parliament was being appealed to that day because of the nation's honour. "So far as we are concerned," Mr. MacDonald concluded, "whatever may happen, whatever may be said about us, whatever attacks may be made upon us, we will say that this country ought to have remained neutral, because, in the deepest part of our hearts, we believe that is right, and that that alone is consistent with the honour of the country."

The Daily Citizen, the organ of the Labour

[1] *Labour Leader*, August 6th, 1914.

Party, commenting on Sir Edward Grey's speech, "which amounted in effect to a declaration of war," said :[1]—

Were our land to be attacked by some other Power, were our existence as a nation at stake, it would be necessary to arm and fight. We are not threatened as a nation. Our friendly understandings with other Powers commit us to nothing beyond diplomatic support, and that has been readily given, and should be readily given, but we are asked to imperil gravely our existence as a nation; we are asked to bring famine, suffering, and death to the homes of this country, without being able to pretend that we have a quarrel with any European Power.

We have no love for the German autocracy, though we have a deep and sincere admiration for the German people, for their great and noble achievements in science, art, and literature; but if we do not like Kaiserdom, must we therefore throw ourselves into the arms of the Czar and do all in our power to extend Cossack rule in Eastern Europe? From the standpoint of the civil and political liberties that are dear to us, the prospect is appalling, and if we go into war, let us go in with the full knowledge that we are fighting for a reactionary Russia determined to gratify her territorial ambitions.

Nor did the *Citizen*, on August 5th, consider Germany's invasion of Belgium a sufficient reason —or the real reason—for British intervention. It stated, in its issue of that date, after Britain's declaration of war :—

If war, then, be so terrible a calamity, the justification for war should be sharp and clear. In the present instance, not one man in ten could give a coherent reason as to why we are being dragged into war. The

[1] August 4th, 1914.

Russian political system is the system of all others we are least anxious to extend. It taints and blights whatever it touches. It means death to freedom, to democracy, to nationality. Yet, whatever the immediate pretext of the quarrel, the British sword is assuredly being drawn for Russia, which has cunningly drawn France and Britain into her quarrels.

This view was broadly in accord with the resolution which the National Executive of the Labour Party passed on August 5th, which was its formal declaration as to the causes of the war and the duty of the party during the war's progress. The resolution ran as follows:—

That the conflict between the nations in Europe in which this country is involved is owing to Foreign Ministers pursuing diplomatic policies for the purpose of maintaining a balance of power; that our own national policy, of understandings with France and Russia only, was bound to increase the power of Russia both in Europe and Asia, and to endanger good relations with Germany. Sir Edward Grey, as proved by the facts which he gave to the House of Commons, committed, without the knowledge of our people, the honour of this country to supporting France in the event of any war in which she was seriously involved, and gave definite assurances of support before the House of Commons had any chance of considering the matter.

That the Labour movement reiterates the fact that it has opposed the policy which produced the war, and that its duty is now to secure peace at the earliest possible moment on such conditions as will provide the best opportunities for the re-establishment of amicable feelings between the workers of Europe.

"Without in any way receding from this position," the resolution advised the party, while

"watching for the opportunity of taking the earliest effective action in the interests of peace," to devote itself to preventing and mitigating distress.

The same day (August 5th) there was a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and at this the Chairman (Mr. Ramsay MacDonald) proposed that he should read the above resolution during his speech in the House the same evening. The majority declined to assent to this, whereupon Mr. MacDonald resigned the chairmanship.

The refusal of the Parliamentary Party to allow the declaration of the National Executive to be read in the House was the beginning of a process which ended in the majority of the party taking up a different attitude as to the causes of the war and the sole duty of the party during the war. When, at the end of August, a Parliamentary Recruiting Committee was formed, the Parliamentary Labour Party, with the approval of the majority of the National Executive, agreed to join it, to place its Head-Office organisation at the Committee's disposal, and, with the Liberal and Conservative parties, to hold joint meetings, to appeal for recruits, and—in the words of the Prime Minister, in his letter of invitation—to make clear "the justice of our cause." Those on the National Executive who opposed this decision were the representatives of the I.L.P.

When the Labour Party decided to join the

recruiting campaign, its organ, *The Daily Citizen*, wrote:[1]—

We appeal to all to read carefully, and seriously to consider what will be said by these leaders. . . . They are touched by no jingo effervescence, and their request to the young manhood of the nation would not be made unless they were convinced of the deadly seriousness of the position. Of all the political considerations in respect of the war there is much yet to be heard, but this is no moment for such discussion. . . . There remains the dread necessity for desperate battling with armed forces in defence of the Motherland. . . . Let us have no quibbling with one fact. The United Kingdom cannot and will not be beaten in this struggle, let the war continue one year, or five years, or ten years. Meanwhile we must do all we can to hasten the end of the slaughter. Let us, then, hasten victory.

The recruiting campaign was also entered upon in order to justify the voluntary system of enlistment. Mr. Arthur Henderson, speaking at Walsall, said:—

I am not ashamed to say that we of the Labour Party are opposed, and, I hope, will always be opposed to conscription; and I am opposed to all forms of compulsory military service. . . . Members of the Labour Party were under a treble obligation to make the voluntary system commensurate with the present national needs, and he believed it would meet the needs even if, as was quite possible, another half-million men, and perhaps two more half-million after that, were called for. . . . The voluntary system w s not going to fail.[2]

The Labour Party thus identified itself with the Government's case, so far as the issues immediately

[1] August 31st, 1914.
[2] *Daily Citizen*, September 11th, 1914.

preceding the war were concerned. The line it took was not that England had drawn the sword for Russia, and that the neutrality of Belgium was a "pretext"—as stated in the *Citizen* of August 5th—but that the aggressor was Germany, and that Britain drew the sword for Belgium. Sir Edward Grey, the party urged, had striven to preserve peace. Germany had refused his proposals for a conference, and neglected to put forward any peace proposals of her own. As Britain was a signatory Power to the treaty guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium, the intervention by Britain when Germany—also a signatory Power—invaded Belgium, was the only course consistent with national honour. The invasion of Belgium was a violation of international law, and Britain was in the war to vindicate the sanctity of that law. Apart from that, the descent upon Belgium by a great Power like Germany raised the question of the right of small States to protection from unprovoked aggression. The refusal by Germany of Sir Edward Grey's proposal for a conference in conjunction with Germany's invasion of Belgium, in circumstances which pointed to such an invasion having been deliberately planned, branded Germany as the aggressor in the conflict. Apart, however, from the question of national honour, the need of vindicating international law, and of protecting small nationalities, it was against the interests, the national safety, of this country, that Germany should extend her

dominions to the north-west coast of Europe, a possible outcome of the war should Germany be victorious.

The action of Germany, in the view of the Labour Party, was the result of the military system of that country. The invasion of Belgium was the fruit of a system of government and a theory of the State which was organised for the express purpose of achieving material power, and which considered any means justified in the pursuit of that end. German militarism, which had caused the war, had been a menace to European peace. Its destruction would open the way to a greater security for peace in the future. The triumph of Germany would be disastrous to European democracy.

The Labour Party realised that if England had not kept her pledges to Belgium, and had stood aside, the victory of the German army would have been probable, and the victory of Germany would mean the death of democracy in Europe. Working-class aspirations for greater political and economic power would be checked, thwarted, and crushed, as they have been in the German Empire. Democratic ideas cannot thrive in a State where militarism is dominant; and the military State with a subservient and powerless working-class is the avowed political ideal of the German ruling caste.

The policy of the British Labour movement has been dictated by a fervent desire to save Great Britain and Europe from the evils that would follow the triumph of military despotism. When the time comes to discuss the terms of peace the Labour movement will stand, as it has always stood, for an international agreement among all civilised nations that disputes and misunderstandings

in the future shall be settled not by machine-guns, but by arbitration.[1]

Coming to the attitude of the I.L.P.,[2] it may first be pointed out that when the war began, the hostility of the party to war and militarism was probably greater than it had ever been. For more than a year previous, the efforts of the party had been largely concentrated upon anti-militarist propaganda. The Independent Labour Party had done in this country what Liebknecht had done in Germany: it had exposed the existence and workings of what is now commonly known as the Armaments Ring. By detailed investigation it had shown how firms engaged in the manufacture of armaments, gunpowder, and the munitions of war generally were closely inter-related, nationally and internationally; that there existed throughout Europe, including the United Kingdom, a network of commercial organisation which had a great interest in fomenting international rivalry, hate, and jealousy. With influence over the Press,—German directors on French newspapers, French

[1] Manifesto signed by 25 Labour M.P.'s, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, Mr. W. Stephen Sanders, Secretary of the Fabian Society, and other Labour leaders. See also recruiting and other speeches of Labour M.P.'s.

[2] As the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) and the Labour Party are not infrequently confused one with the other, the writer will perhaps be excused for reminding the reader that the former is a Socialist organisation affiliated to the latter.

directors on German newspapers,—with Ministers of State, members of Parliament, officers in the Army and Navy, high officials, Church dignitaries, and leaders of public opinion as shareholders, with directors who were retired officials of the Military and Naval services on Company Boards, the Armaments Ring was in a position to create a public opinion which called for huge armaments and then have the influence of its shareholders and directors in high places to secure the placing of orders. When Mr. Philip Snowden, the Labour member for Blackburn, brought out some of the facts in the House of Commons, he took for his text, so to speak, the statement of Lord Welby, a former high official of the Treasury: "We are in the hands of an organisation of crooks. They are politicians, generals, manufacturers of armaments, and journalists. All of them are anxious for unlimited expenditure, and go on inventing scares to terrify the public and to terrify Ministers of the Crown."[1]

It must not be assumed, of course, that but for these revelations the attitude of the Independent Labour Party to the war would, necessarily, have been different from what it was; but it is reasonable to suggest that a knowledge of the workings of the Armaments Ring resulted in the members

[1] See *Dreadnoughts and Dividends*, Report of a Speech by Philip Snowden, M.P.; also *The War Trust Exposed*, by J. T. Walton Newbold; *The War Traders*, by G. H. Perris.

being more suspicious than ever before of all calls to war and cases for war. In addition, however, there must be taken into account the fact that the party had consistently opposed the policy of the British Foreign Office. As far back as December 1st, 1911, its organ, *The Labour Leader*, had for the subject of an editorial article "The Failure of Sir Edward Grey." The article alleged that the Foreign Office was anti-German, and as such was out of touch with British sentiment and feeling. The negotiations between Britain and Germany over Morocco had been conducted in "an atmosphere of polite hostility, with a childish readiness on both sides to stand on dignity and take offence." Sir Edward Grey had told the country a great deal it knew, and very little it did not know; but—

> Of what nature were our obligations to France? The secret treaty clauses published the other day are worthless as throwing any light on the question. Had our negotiations with France drifted far beyond the *entente* or friendly understanding and become an entangling alliance? If diplomatic proceedings had broken off and war had broken out between Germany and France, would Great Britain have been dragged in to take the side of France or Germany? If so, why? Sir Edward Grey hedged all round that question without answering it.

In *The Leicester Pioneer*, an Independent Labour Party paper, on December 2nd, 1911, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, dealing with the same question, wrote—

The real fact is, we are heading straight for war, and Sir Edward Grey's speech brought us appreciably nearer to it.

He added that the impression produced upon the German mind by Mr. Lloyd George's famous Mansion House speech was that Britain's attitude amounted to this: "France and Russia (Russia, save the mark!) are our special friends; if you like to shake hands, good and well; we do not mind very much whether you do or not, but if you want to do so, there is my finger."

On December 6th, 1911, Mr. Philip Snowden, a prominent member of the Independent Labour Party, wrote in *The Christian Commonwealth*—

The only possible way of averting a great European war is to bring about a better understanding with Germany. That is clearly impossible so long as Sir Edward Grey is at the head of the Foreign Office.[1]

Finally, the I.L.P. succeeded in getting its views adopted by the Labour Party, which, at its annual conference at Birmingham in 1912, passed the following resolution, which was moved and seconded by Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. W. C. Anderson respectively on behalf of the Independent Labour Party:—

That this Conference, believing the anti-German policy pursued in the name of the British Government by Sir Edward Grey to be the cause of increasing armaments,

[1] The above quotations are from *The Labour Leader*, September 24th, 1914.

international ill-will, and the betrayal of oppressed nationalities, protests in the strongest terms against it. The Conference is of opinion that this diplomacy has led the present Government to risk war with Germany, in the interests of financiers, over Morocco, to condone the Italian outrages in Tripoli, the Russian theft in Mongolia, and, above all, to join hands with Russia in making an assault on the national independence and freedom of Persia. It places on record its deepest sympathy with, and support of, the Persian people, and calls upon the Labour Party in Parliament to fight for a reversal of the present foreign policy.

Thus it will be seen that, when Britain declared war on Germany, the Independent Labour Party had to choose between supporting a war which, for at least three years, it had said was bound to come as a result of British foreign policy, or devoting its energies to pointing the moral to the people, educating and looking to the efficiency of its own organisation, so that, as occasion arose, it might be in a position to make its influence felt, and preventing and relieving distress among the people. It decided upon the latter course.

The general view of the Independent Labour Party of the situation when Britain declared war is expressed in its Manifesto. This document began by attacking the theory of a Balance of Power. Diplomacy had deliberately striven to divide Europe into two armed antagonistic camps, instead of aiming at a federation of States banded together for peace.

Diplomacy has been underground, secret, deceitful, each Power endeavouring by wile and stratagem to get

the better of its neighbour. Diplomats have breathed the very air of jealousy, deception, and distrust. Each country in turn, largely through the influence of its Jingo Press, has been stampeded by fear and panic. Each country has tried to outstrip other countries in the vastness and costliness of its war machinery. Powerful armament interests have played their sinister part, for it is they who reap rich harvest out of havoc and death. When all this has been done, any spark will start a conflagration like the present.

It was difficult, the Manifesto proceeded, and possibly futile, to try to apportion at that moment the exact measure of responsibility and blame. It was as untrue to say that British policy was wholly white and German policy wholly black as to say that German policy was entirely right and British policy entirely wrong. Undiscriminating people in both countries might accept one version or the other, but history would tell a different story.

For the present, Sir Edward Grey issues his White Paper to prove Germany the aggressor, just as Germany issues a White Paper to prove Russia the aggressor, and Russia to prove Austria the aggressor. Even if every word in the British White Paper be admitted, the wider indictment remains. Let it be acknowledged that, in the days immediately preceding the war, Sir Edward Grey worked for peace. It was too late. Over a number of years, together with other diplomats, he had himself dug the abyss, and wise statesmanship would have foreseen, and avoided, the certain result.

It was not the Servian question or the Belgian question that pulled this country into the deadly struggle. Great Britain is not at war because of oppressed nationalities or Belgian neutrality. Even had Belgian neutrality not

been wrongfully infringed by Germany, we should still have been drawn in. . . . Behind the back of Parliament and people, the British Foreign Office gave secret understandings to France, denying their existence when challenged. That is why this country is now face to face with the red ruin and impoverishment of war. Treaties and agreements have dragged Republican France at the heels of despotic Russia, Britain at the heels of France. . . .

We desire neither the aggrandisement of German militarism nor Russian militarism, but the danger is that this war will promote one or the other. Britain has placed herself behind Russia, the most reactionary, corrupt, and oppressive Power in Europe. If Russia is permitted to gratify her territorial ambitions, and extend her Cossack rule, civilisation and democracy will be gravely imperilled. Is it for this that Britain has drawn the sword? . . .

And the working-class abroad?

To us who are Socialists, the workers of Austria and Germany, no less than the workers of France and Russia, are comrades and brothers; in this hour of carnage and eclipse we have friendship and compassion to all victims of militarism. Our nationality and independence, which are dear to us, we are ready to defend; but we cannot rejoice in the organised murder of tens of thousands of workers of other lands, who go to kill and be killed at the command of rulers to whom the people are as pawns. . . .

Out of the darkness and the depth we hail our working-class comrades in every land. Across the roar of guns we send sympathy and greeting to the German Socialists. They have laboured unceasingly to promote good relations with Britain, as we with Germany. They are no enemies of ours, but faithful friends.

In forcing this appalling crime upon the nations, it is the rulers, the diplomats, the militarists, who have sealed their doom. In tears and blood and bitterness the greater Democracy will be born. With steadfast faith

we greet the future; our cause is holy and imperishable, and the labour of our hands has not been in vain.

Looking to the future, the Manifesto stated—

> The people must everywhere resist such territorial aggression and national abasement as will pave the way for fresh wars; and throughout Europe the workers must press for frank and honest diplomatic policies, controlled by themselves, for the suppression of militarism and the establishment of the United States of Europe, thereby advancing towards the world's peace. Unless these steps are taken, Europe, after the present calamity, will be still more subject to the increasing domination of militarism, and liable to be drenched with blood.

The views of leaders of the I.L.P. may be safely taken as representative of the views of the general body of members, who, by resolutions at branch meetings, and at a series of conferences held in various parts of the country, have endorsed them overwhelmingly.

Mr. F. W. Jowett, M.P., the Chairman of the I.L.P., has written of British diplomacy in the years prior to the war. He has pointed out how Britain has successively made Russia, France, and Germany the reason of her armaments. Germany returned the compliment by arming against us; and she did so all the more thoroughly because on each side of her was an ally of Britain. Her position involved the construction "of a vast and swift-moving military machine to take the offensive first on one side, then on the other."

Mr. Jowett explained the growth of the German Navy by the growth of Germany's overseas trade

coupled with Britain's refusal to give up the right of capture of private property at sea in time of war. With a Navy, Germany needed colonies for coaling stations and naval bases. Her attempts to supply those needs had been frustrated by Britain, which had "needlessly aggravated her by aiding and abetting our allies in their annexation schemes." Thus Germany was able to point to a grievance, and the measures of the military caste secured more popular support. To make matters worse, proceedings in connection with annexation schemes had been carried out in secret.

The vital clauses of the Anglo-French Convention, under cover of which France secured its foothold in Morocco, were kept secret for eight years. Twice this secret agreement with France concerning Morocco has led us to the brink of war with Germany. Our other ally, Russia, has destroyed the independence of Persia with the knowledge and consent of the British Government, although the British Government had, within very few years of the crime, given its solemn assurance to Persia that its independence should be preserved. This solemn assurance to Persia, given by the British Government, has been treated by Russia as a "scrap of paper," and the British Government has supported Russia in so treating it.

It was not Mr. Jowett's view that the British Government declared war because of its regard for the sanctity of treaties generally or because of the German invasion of Belgium.

The great crime of which those who are responsible for British foreign policy have been guilty is that they bound this country in an honourable obligation to take

part in Continental warfare when it should have been their chief concern to keep the country out of Continental warfare. When Sir Edward Grey allowed the British military and naval experts to arrange a joint scheme of warfare with France which left France undefended against a hostile fleet unless Britain went to war at the same time, he entered into an obligation to go to war with France which was as binding as if it had been set forth in a document signed and sealed. Whether Germany would have observed the neutrality of Belgium or not, the obligation would have held good.

Sir Edward Grey had tried to keep the European peace—Mr. Jowett admitted that—but it was too late. Servia called Russia, and Russia insisted on responding. Germany's grievance was only against Russia, but France was bound to that country and so was drawn in. Britain, bound to France, followed. Britain's obligations to France had been kept from the knowledge of Parliament; and Mr. Jowett recalled Lord Rosebery's declaration at Glasgow, in January 1911: "We have entered into liabilities the nature of which I for one do not know, but which are none the less stringent and binding because they are unwritten, and which at any moment, so far as I can discern the signs of the times, may lead us into one of the greatest Armageddons, which must ravage Europe and which will be greater than any war we have known since the fall of Napoleon." Probably Lord Rosebery knew more than Parliament knew.

Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith had repeatedly given assurances that this country was

under no obligations which were not known. It was because they believed those assurances to be true that Mr. Jowett and others had opposed any increase of armaments—armaments which were "miserably inadequate if we were under an obligation to take part in Continental warfare as one of the general combatants."

Mr. Jowett urged that the danger of Belgium being again made Europe's cockpit had been known for some years. Why had not Sir Edward Grey called together the signatory Powers and arranged for the common acceptance of a common obligation? "It is a poor way of helping a small State to pretend to ignore its danger and then use it as an excuse for fighting elsewhere."

It is always the same when either nations or individuals form secret compacts or cabals. The difficulties which might, with patience and plain, straightforward dealing, be cleared away, are not openly referred to, but when the secretly brewed quarrel ensues they emerge as excuses to justify one or other of the disputants. And behind all these secret cabals is the sinister figure of Capitalism, concession-hunting, armament-building, risking the lives of men, women, and children and the fate of nations—for profit. And we are asked to justify this war, which is the result of these influences which have been at work and against which we have warned the country in vain. We can do no such thing.[1]

Mr. MacDonald, like Mr. Jowett, agreed that Sir Edward Grey had worked to the last to prevent war, but argued that when he failed to secure peace between Germany and Russia he "worked

[1] *Socialist Review*, October-December 1914.

deliberately to involve us in the war, using Belgium as his chief excuse."

During the negotiations Germany tried to meet our wishes on certain points so as to secure our neutrality. Sometimes her proposals were brusque, but no attempt was made to negotiate diplomatically to improve them. They were all summarily rejected by Sir Edward Grey. Finally, so anxious was Germany to confine the limits of the war, the German Ambassador asked Sir Edward Grey to propose his own conditions of neutrality, and Sir Edward Grey declined to discuss the matter. *This fact was suppressed by Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith in their speeches in Parliament.*[1]

"We had so mixed ourselves up in the Franco-Russian alliance that Sir Edward Grey had to tell us on August 3rd that though our hands were free our honour was pledged!" It was because the country had been committed to fight for France and Russia that Sir Edward Grey had to "refuse point-blank every overture made by Germany to keep us out of the conflict." The House of Commons had not been told that the German Ambassador pressed Sir Edward Grey as to whether he—Sir Edward—could not formulate conditions upon which Britain would remain neutral, and that the Ambassador had even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed. That was Germany's most important proposal, and had it been reported to the House, a war sentiment could not have been worked up. But Sir Edward Grey was not in a

[1] The italics are Mr. MacDonald's.

position to discuss neutrality. He had pledged the country's honour without the country's knowledge to fight for France and Russia. That was the position on July 20th—the date of the first communication in the White Paper—and was not the outcome of anything Germany did or did not do after that date.

Only by a wide survey of policy, proceeded Mr. MacDonald's argument, was it possible to apportion the blame. Germany's share was a heavy one, and, taking a narrow view, she, with Russia, was mainly responsible for the war. Taking a longer view, Britain was equally responsible.

The conflict between the *Entente* and the alliance had to come, and only two things determined the time of its coming. The first was the relative capacity of the countries to bear the burden of an armed peace. That was reaching its limit in most countries. The second was the question of how the changes which time was bringing were affecting adversely the military power of the respective opponents. The alliance was to receive a great blow on the death of the Austrian Emperor; Russia was building a system of strategic railways up to the German frontier, and this was to be finished in 1916, by which time her army was to be increased greatly. The *Entente*, therefore, was forcing Germany to fight within two years. We can understand the military mind of Germany, faced with these threatening changes, if we remember how scared we were when we were told of German threats against ourselves.

The entry into Belgium by Germany was not the real cause of Britain's entry into the war. It was the excuse of Ministers seeking a "dis-

interested" motive, apart from the obligations of the *Entente*. In August 1870, Mr. Gladstone, referring to the Belgian treaty, had stated that he was "not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House [of Commons] what plainly amounts to an assertion that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it, irrespective altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion of acting on the guarantee arises." Mr. Gladstone would have accepted Germany's guarantees to Belgium to respect her integrity, and had France decided to attack Germany through Belgium, Sir Edward Grey would not have objected, and would have justified his acquiescence by Mr. Gladstone's opinion. The claim that England went to war because of the Belgian treaty was a "pretty little piece of hypocrisy."

Finally—

> It is a diplomatists' war made by about half a dozen men. Up to the moment that Ambassadors were withdrawn, the peoples were at peace. They had no quarrel with each other; they bore each other no ill-will. Half a dozen men brought Europe to the brink of a precipice, and Europe fell over it because it could not help itself.[1]

[1] *Labour Leader*, August 13th, 1914. An explanation, so far as Mr. MacDonald personally is concerned, is necessary. When the war had been in progress for some weeks, he spoke of the necessity for Britain to carry it through to a successful issue, and also said that the sentiment *in the country* concerning Belgium was "clean and fine." These

Mr. W. C. Anderson, a member of the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P., and who is also Chairman of the National Executive of the Labour Party, described the speech which Sir Edward Grey made on August 3rd as "a preparatory prelude to the declaration of war announced next day."

> It was a clever, unconvincing performance, full of his anti-German prejudice. There were gaps in his statement he did not try to fill; wrong impressions he did not try to remove. . . . Of Russia, the real villain of the piece, he had not a word to say. Was he ashamed of his ally? Was he afraid to tell Parliament the truth? —that we are taking upon ourselves a terrible risk out of which no conceivable advantage can come to us in order to fortify and enlarge the crushing, blood-stained rule of Russia in Eastern Europe.
>
> For our plunging into this crime against humanity there was no justification or excuse. Our plain duty was to keep neutral; to exercise friendly pressure for peace among the warring Powers. No obligation or treaty committed us to armed intervention; these

statements led to suggestions, in more than one quarter, that Mr. MacDonald wished to retreat from his original position as put forward in the article quoted above. It must therefore be pointed out that, when questioned concerning these writings at a Leicester meeting, he stated, "I withdraw nothing" (*Leicester Daily Post*, October 19th, 1914). Further, reviewing Mr. M. P. Price's book, *The Diplomatic History of the War*, in *The Labour Leader* of November 12th, 1912, Mr. MacDonald wrote: "When I turn in due course to defend that article and explain in detail why I made the statements which it contains, I shall be able to content myself, if I care, by quoting page after page of the impartial narrative of this book."

treaties in any case are sealed in darkness behind the back of the people, and for my part I agree with the ringing declaration uttered by the valiant Jaurès two days before his death: "Socialists recognise only one treaty —the treaty that binds them in love and peace and service to humanity." We should refuse to take heed of the jargon of the diplomats; their world of mutual suspicion and untruth is not for us. They will speak to us of the honour of our country—honour so keen in time of war, so blunt in times of peace; honour so alive to the neutrality of Belgium, so dead to the hunger of our own children.[1]

The I.L.P. does not believe that the war will crush militarism or enlarge the freedom of the European peoples—nor that it was undertaken with that object. Mr. Keir Hardie has quoted the declaration of Herr Haase in the Reichstag that the future liberty of the German people was at stake; that their hopes would be crushed by a victory of Russia. Wrote Mr. Hardie—

The Social-Democracy of Germany were gradually nearing the time when they would have brought the military class to subjection, and as comrade Haase points out, what is now happening is this—Kaiserism is to be smashed and Czarism installed in its stead. The Social-Democrats of Germany will regard with contempt those Socialists here who are seeking to make it appear that we are engaged in an altruistic war on their behalf. That they must regard as sheer hypocrisy. When the war is over it will be Russia that will carry off the laurels, and, probably, a good instalment of German militarism will have become part of our own institutions.[2]

[1] *Labour Leader*, August 6th, 1914.
[2] *Ibid.*, August 27th, 1914.

Writing on the same aspect of the subject, Mr. MacDonald stated that he was willing to go great lengths to liberate Europe from the German military bureaucracy. He had always held that aiding the birth of liberty wherever it could was a legitimate purpose of British foreign policy. But the country which would play such a part must be careful in the choice of its friends. It must keep its hands clean. "Our chief ally, Russia, will not allow us to claim that good credit." The thought of liberty never entered the minds of the promoters of the Triple *Entente*; the thought of liberty had never inspired the partners of the *Entente*. It was the sacrifice of liberty which had kept the *Entente* in existence. "Russia in arms with us to free Europe from an autocracy, whether political or military, is a grim joke!"

Those who had worked for a good understanding with Germany had done so because they believed that Russian autocracy could not survive such an understanding. The German Social-Democrats had been working to the same end. German autocracy was strong; but German democracy was growing stronger. "The growing life within German society was cracking the shell which encompassed it." For eight years British diplomacy had been strengthening the shell by giving it a reason for its existence: yet now it went to war pretending to break it.

German autocracy could not be broken by the war, and if it could, the price was too dear.

I would rather that militarism had flourished for another ten years than that we should have sent thousands of men along the path of privation, hate, pain and death, that we should have clouded thousands of happy firesides, that we should have undone our social reform work for a generation, that we should have let loose in Europe all the lust of battle, all the brutalities of war.[1]

Mr. MacDonald asked: "When Germany is down, who will be up?"

We can gain little. A colony or two to add to our useless burdens, perhaps. France will also have a colony or two, maybe, and Alsace-Lorraine. It may or may not claim money-payments. This will rankle in the German heart just as the loss of Alsace-Lorraine rankled in the French heart. But with strong democratic movements these things might be adjusted in a lasting scheme of peace. With Russia the case is different. It, too, will want something, but, above all, its autocracy will be rehabilitated, its military system will be strengthened, it will become the dominating power in Europe. No invader can touch it, as Napoleon found to his cost, and as Germany to-day assumes in its scheme of military tactics. It will press in upon us in Asia. Our defence of India will be a much bigger problem than it is now; China will be threatened; Persia will go. It will rivet upon us the Japanese Alliance, one of the greatest political menaces to our Imperial unity. Above all, it will revitalise the Pan-Slav movement; and if ever Europe is to be made the subject of a new barbarism, this movement is to do it. I know that if the Pan-Slav movement could be democratised, it might be harmless.

[1] In reference to the period indicated—ten years—it may be pointed out that the Social-Democrats of Germany had hoped, in co-operation with the next progressive party, to be in a majority in the Reichstag after the general election of 1917.

But the Government of the Slav is just that which will yield last of all to democratic influences . . .

So it comes to this. We are in this conflict in a senseless, blind sort of way, because, years ago, we had not the foresight and common sense to protect ourselves from being drawn into it. France is in it to wipe out 1870–71; Russia is in it to dominate the Old World—Asia as well as Europe.

The war would not be the last war. The view that when the Berlin War Office was destroyed, the Hague Peace Palace would come into real being was "all moonshine."

Far more likely is it that this war is the beginning of a new military despotism in Europe, of new alarms, new hatreds and oppositions, new menaces and alliances; the beginning of a dark epoch dangerous, not only to democracy, but to civilisation itself.[1]

We have noted that the decision of the Labour Party to co-operate with the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee was not unanimous. The I.L.P. declined to take such a course. In coming to that decision the National Administrative Council was of one mind, and it was overwhelmingly backed by the general body of members. The party's reasons for its attitude were—(1) that the recruiting campaign was partially for the purpose of justifying the war; (2) that any appeal for recruits should come from the party's own platforms, preserving the character and traditions of the movement, and should not be made in the company of those who

[1] *Labour Leader*, August 27th, 1914.

were always opposed to Labour; (3) that with rates of Army pay what they were to appeal for recruits was "touting for sweated labour";[1] (4) that the Labour movement had a special duty in looking after working-class interests affected by the economic crisis; (5) that before taking part in any such campaign Labour should obtain an assurance from the Government that those left widowed and fatherless by the war, and men who returned broken from the battlefield, should be better cared for than had been the case after previous wars; (6) a determination "not to get inextricably mixed up and confused with our opponents."[2]

[1] Some weeks after the Labour Party's decision to take part in the recruiting campaign, Mr. G. N. Barnes, Labour member for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow, declined to attend any more meetings until the Government granted £1 a week as a minimum wage for soldiers, and more adequate provision for their dependants. This demand developed into a call for £1 a week for the widow of every soldier or sailor killed, £1 a week for the mother dependent on every soldier or sailor killed, £1 a week for the wife of every soldier or sailor engaged in fighting, £1 a week for every soldier or sailor permanently maimed by fighting, 5 shillings a week for every child dependent on soldiers or sailors fighting or killed. This programme was taken up by *The Daily Citizen*, was everywhere supported by the organised working-class, and was eventually adopted by the Workers' National War Emergency Committee which was formed when the war broke out to look after working-class interests generally.

[2] See the *Statement of the National Administrative Council on Recruiting*; *Our Attitude*, by F. W. Jowett, M.P., Chairman of the Independent Labour Party (*Labour Leader*,

The I.L.P. did not set itself in opposition to recruiting; it considered it could be more usefully and consistently employed in other directions. Joining the army was a matter for the individual conscience.

We now come to the attitude of the British Socialist Party, the Socialist body outside the Labour Party. This organisation took the view that Germany was the aggressor, and that Britain had been drawn into the war "by the declaration of war upon Belgium by Germany because of the refusal of that little State to forego its guaranteed neutrality in the interests of the attacking Power." So ran the party's Manifesto, issued on August 12th, which, however, made an appeal for distinction "between the mass of the German people and the Prussian military caste which dominates the German Empire."

This awful catastrophe, which will turn the greater part of Europe into a vast shambles and send thousands to their death at sea, is the result of the alliances, ententes, and understandings entered into, and "assurances" given by the Governments and Chancelleries of Europe without any reference to the people themselves. . . .

Never again must we entrust our foreign affairs to secret diplomacy. Never again must we regard foreign policy as something with which we have no concern. . . . The war will break down the ententes, understandings, and alliances made without our knowledge

Sept. 3rd, 1914); W. C. Anderson in *The Daily Citizen*, Sept. 8th, 1914; J. Keir Hardie in *The Daily Citizen*, Sept. 7th, 1914.

and consent. Then will come the opportunity for a genuine democratic agreement between the peoples themselves.

Such an agreement between the peoples of France, Germany, and Britain will be a solid guarantee of peace and a powerful bulwark against the encroachments of Russian despotism, a result which may easily come of the present war.

But while the party held that in the events immediately leading up to the war, Germany was the guilty party, and that, once Belgium had been invaded, Britain's only course was to declare war, the party in no sense joined—to use its own phrase—the "official optimists." Its organ, *Justice*, continued to strike as independent a note as ever. In short, it went on the lines laid down by the International's resolution—that, war having been declared, the duty of Socialists is to use the political and economic crisis to hasten the downfall of Capitalism.

We may take as a representative view that expressed in a leading article in *Justice* by Mr. H. M. Hyndman.[1]

When the German military aggressionists deliberately tore up the treaties formally signed by their own country in regard to the neutrality of Belgium; when they declared war against, and attacked, that much ill-used and plucky little nation; when our comrade, Emile Vandervelde, the Chairman of the International Socialist Bureau, a man of peace if ever a man of peace there were, was compelled by the Belgian Socialist Party and

[1] August 13th, 1914.

Belgians at large to join the Belgian Government in order to help to maintain the independence of his country; when the noble Jean Jaurès denounced the outrage committed by Germany and Austria upon civilisation; when the German Government made what Mr. Asquith justly calls its "infamous proposals" in order to secure the neutrality of Great Britain—then it was quite impossible for us to fail to recognise that, as a nation, we were bound, not by secret agreements and private understandings, but by solemn international treaties and international declarations at the Hague (which have never yet been denounced or condemned by those Parliamentary pacifists who are now most vehement for neutrality), to declare war against the disturber of Europe and the deliberate violator of his own undertakings.

While everybody must desire the defeat of Germany, Mr. Hyndman argued, nevertheless the success of Russia, which "must inevitably follow," would be "a misfortune to the civilised world." Still it was useless to repine. All that Social-Democrats could do was to exert all their influence to bring about a reasonable peace as soon as possible, while not hampering in any way the naval and military activities of the Government. Meanwhile the Government had been compelled to resort to Socialist measures in order to save the people from starvation. "The nation will learn a little in war, what it must threateningly demand in time of peace." France obtained a Republic from the war of 1870–71. Perhaps Britain might win the beginnings of a Co-operative Commonwealth in the present war.

That, at any rate, is worth fighting for. By far our worst enemies are the landlords and capitalists of Britain.

Mr. Hyndman's view that Britain should have maintained a greater army and navy is not representative of the party as a whole. For some years there has been a body of opinion—a minority—in the party, headed by Mr. Hyndman, the late Mr. Harry Quelch, and other prominent members, which regarded German militarism as a menace to European peace, and which, in consequence, supported the Big Navy school.

In the article alluded to above Mr. Hyndman wrote:—

> It has been my own personal opinion for many years that, had we acted in the best interests of humanity, Great Britain would have kept up an overwhelming navy, and established long ago a citizen army on democratic lines. The objects at which Germany was aiming were quite clear. Had we pursued this policy and refrained from any secret agreements such as those to which the Czar referred in his letter, I am firmly convinced that peace would have been maintained, that we should not be calling in semi-panic for 500,000 untrained men, that we should not now be engaged in an offensive and defensive war in co-operation with Russia, and that we should have been in a much better position than we are to-day to uphold our treaties, to defend the small Powers, and to prevent France from being crushed.

Mr. Hyndman's views on armaments were never popular with Socialists either in this country or on the Continent, and it is an interesting commentary

on his opinions that, since the outbreak of the war, M. Vandervelde has announced his intention of writing a pamphlet, "Hyndman Proved Right against All."

When the recruiting campaign began, the British Socialist Party issued a statement in which members were advised to accept invitations to speak at recruiting meetings, providing only that they were allowed to advocate from the common platform the programme and policy of the party as set out therein.

The statement ran that the party, "recognising that national freedom and independence were threatened by Prussian militarism," desired to see the nation speedily issue from the war victorious. But recruits must not be cajoled and starved into enlistment, nor should they be called to the colours without adequate provision being made for their dependents. The Government was not offering recruits either adequate rates of pay, insurance against disablement, or employment when, on their return from the war, they were discharged from the army. The Government and municipal authorities were delaying the provision of work in order that men might be starved into the army. With the same object, employers were discharging their employés. "Every able-bodied citizen, high and low, rich as well as poor, should be trained and armed for the purpose of home defence. The nation armed, whilst providing an adequate safeguard against foreign aggression, would secure the

civic rights and liberties of the people, which may be threatened later by the introduction of conscription."

After appealing for measures to meet the economic crisis, the statement proceeded :—

> The Government appeals for the nation's support in a war to maintain "the independence and autonomy of the free States of Europe." Let it, then, proclaim that it will be no party to the vindictive crushing of the German people and that it will strive for a reasonable and honourable peace at the earliest opportunity. When final victory is secured for the Allied Arms, British influence must be used to put an end to militarism and armaments and secret diplomacy, and to initiate a movement for a genuine democratic understanding between the peoples of Europe.
>
> The British Socialist Party once more declares that the workers of Europe have no quarrel with one another. The terrible struggle we are now witnessing, into which this country has been drawn by the invasion of Belgium, is largely the outcome of the rivalries between the capitalists of all countries for the domination of the world market. This competition has resulted in the building up of huge armaments, and has led to treaties and alliances—entered into without any consultation with the peoples themselves—between groups of Powers for the protection of mutual commercial interests.[1]

We may sum up the position of the Labour Party by saying that the Labour—that is, the Radical Trade Unionist—element, as distinct from the Socialist element, accepted the Government's

[1] This manifesto was repudiated by many London branches of the party and by a few in the provinces. It was signed, however, by the whole Executive Committee, which is elected from the whole of Great Britain.

case and whole-heartedly supported the war.[1] Unlike the other parties affiliated to the International Socialist Bureau, the Labour Party is not a Socialist body; the Socialists within it are in a minority. It is accepted by the International Bureau on the grounds that, although its constitution does not recognise the Class War, it is, in reality, carrying it on. The largest and most influential Socialist body in the United Kingdom—the I.L.P.—did not accept the Government's case, and opposed the war. The British Socialist Party, the second largest Socialist organisation, agreed that on August 4th the Government had no alternative but to declare war, and that Germany was the aggressor among the nations. But the party so strongly disapproved of the diplomacy which led to the crisis, and as a Socialist body was so convinced that the main root cause of the war lay in the competitive struggle of nations for economic expansion, that its support of the war was qualified. It preserved its identity and mainly concerned itself with pressing home the Socialist view of the various aspects of the struggle. In no case was there absolute unanimity. On the one hand, for example, some of the Labour M.P.'s who took part in the recruiting campaign are members of the Independent Labour Party. On the other hand, one can point to the

[1] This body of opinion, however, includes the Fabian Society, which is in accord with the majority of the Labour Party, to which it is affiliated.

Norwich Trades Council, which represents 10,000 Trade Unionists, and which declined to consider the Labour Party circular advocating recruiting. In a third direction we see that while the Fabian Society was with the Labour Party, which backed the Government's case, one of its leading members, Mr. Shaw, declared that Britain said "the day is bound to come" before Germany drank to "the Day," and that while there were very good democratic reasons for fighting Germany, who had let Austria throw "the match into the magazine," the British official case was just so much hypocrisy. And, presumably, Mr. Shaw has a following.

XVIII

THE TIME FOR PEACE

At the end of October the Socialist Party of America suggested that a special International Socialist Congress should be held for the purpose of discussing a way to peace. It was proposed that the Congress should be held at Copenhagen or the Hague, or in America, and in the event of its taking place in the United States, the American Socialists offered generous contributions towards the expenses.

The American party issued its invitation to the organisations affiliated to the International, with a reminder that, under the Stuttgart resolution of 1907, it was the duty of Socialists, not only to strive against an outbreak of war, but, in the event of war having been let loose, to work for its speedy termination. It also stated :—

> We are not now concerned as to which Government was the aggressor in this terrible conflict, nor is that the question of greatest importance. History will sit in judgment on this also. We appeal to you in the name of Socialism, and acting in agreement with your own proclamations, we ask you to help us to stop this mass murder. You, yourselves, in every country have declared

that this war was not of your choice. Your noble and eloquent declarations still hold good. We know that no nation can gain by the continuation of this war. Whatever rewards and advantages will come from it will go to the ruling classes. . . . And every day that the slaughter continues thousands of our comrades and brothers are killed.

The Socialists of the war-stricken European countries have worked faithfully and heroically in the spirit of this [the International Congress] resolution. But their voices were silenced by the cannon of the hostile armies. Capitalist militarism proved stronger than the young spirit of Socialist brotherhood.

The Dutch Socialist Party also suggested a Peace Congress, and we have already seen how the Italian and Swiss parties urged the Socialists of the countries engaged in war to press their respective Governments to bring an end to the conflict.

The idea of a Peace Congress met with a varying reception.[1] Mr. H. W. Lee, in a leading article of *Justice*, argued that nothing in the way of peace negotiations could be effective until the German troops were driven out of France and Belgium. Further—

The Allies have agreed to accept peace terms only in common agreement. While such agreement renders it impossible for Russia to conclude anything in the shape of peace with Germany separately, it means also that the western area of military operations cannot be dealt with by itself. Taking all things into consideration, therefore, we are sure that just now is not the time to put forward

[1] See Appendix IV.

proposals for peace. We think this view will be found to be also that of our comrades in the neutral countries of Europe. . . .

While the situation is as it is, we have frankly to confess that all talk of peace is futile. The less it is indulged in at the moment the better. We must husband our efforts for a more favourable opportunity. We have therefore regretfully to say that we do not think the Conference suggested by our American comrades is at all opportune, and we hope they will reserve the suggestion for a later date.[1]

The view that while the Germans were in France and Belgium peace was impossible was also expressed by M. Jean Longuet, a foremost member of the Unified Socialist Party of France. Dealing in *l'Humanité* with the American suggestion, on October 9th, M. Longuet wrote that while the American Socialists, the Italian and the Swiss Socialists were animated by "the most sincere and most noble international spirit," they did not understand that there was not the opportunity for their initiative to be acted upon. They did not take account of the exact position of the problem. Germany had thrown the most formidable military machine into innocent Belgium and into France, which was peaceful from one end to the other. It was the Borinage, the districts of Liège and Charleroi, industrial centres and nurseries of Socialism, and the densely populated regions of the departments of the Nord, the Ardennes and the Pas-de-Calais, the Aisne and

[1] October 8th, 1914.

the Somme—districts in which Socialist effort had had the greatest effect—that had been "devastated to the full, bruised and cruelly ravaged."

In the face of so much ruin and mourning it is Germany which has remained intact, whose territory, at least, has not yet known the horrors of invasion. It is the abominable pride of the military caste, the great Pan-German industrialists and the Bismarckian professors, rendered anxious certainly by the "untamable resistance" of our admirable little soldiers, to which the *Times* alludes, which is still unbeaten.

What peace negotiations could be entered upon under these conditions, after so much blood has been spilt, so many tears shed, and no definite result obtained?

In order to crush German militarism the struggle would have to be continued until there was a definite result.

We must continue it without savage hatred, without stupid Chauvinism, without any spirit of barbaric revenge, but with force and dignity, to safeguard our Republican France, and to create a new Europe.

Only after that will we be able to speak of common action by the Socialists of all countries to establish international peace on definite foundations. Then International Socialism will make its voice heard.

Meanwhile the headquarters of the International Socialist Bureau have been transferred from Brussels to Amsterdam, the headquarters of the Dutch Socialist Party, which through its leader, Troelstra, has appealed to the various parties to remain true to the International and not to show

irritation because the power of the organisations was not sufficient to prevent war.

From all the utterances of the different parties and representative leaders immediately preceding and since the war, it seems probable that a representative International Socialist Congress would agree upon the following principles as a basis of peace:—(1) National divisions should determine the frontiers of States. (2) Self-government should be granted subject peoples if after a plebiscite they preferred suzerainty to complete independence. (3) The Balance of Power policy should be superseded by that of a Concert of Europe. (4) Parliaments should have a real control over foreign policy. (5) The reduction of armaments. (6) Foreign policy should have as its ideal a United States of Europe, with all seas neutral and navies supplanted by an international police.

XIX

CONCLUSION

The hands of the International are clean. It has only one thing to regret; and that is that it was not strong enough to restrain the war-mongers. The crisis was but a matter of days. Everywhere the parties had to work in the dark, ignorant—like the rest of the public—of what were the points at issue between a handful of men distributed over half-a-dozen European capitals, and with only such information as the Foreign Offices chose to divulge. Socialism stands alone as a force which, in every country concerned, worked to the last hour for peace. It was the only international peace party; the only party which worked for the interests of humanity and civilisation at large. The International's connected history does not extend over half a century, yet what a part it played compared with that of the Christian Church, a growth of nearly two thousand years, and with place and power in every State concerned! Looking with sorrow on the bloody wreckage of Europe's civilisation, International Socialism can say with truth: "This is not our doing; it is in spite of our

years of effort; it is the fruit of a political policy and an economic system which we have opposed."

The fact that war was not prevented is a test only of the strength of the International, not of its loyalty to its principles. The International may regret that, owing to the bitter opposition to their growth of the governing class in every country, the various working-class movements, when the critical hour arrived, proved powerless to avert the holocaust; but it has no cause for shame. Defeated in its main purpose it may have been; disgraced and disbanded it decidedly was not. The real test of the soundness and sincerity of the International's pacifism lies in the extent to which it tried to prevent war, the attitude of the parties once war had broken out, their motives in supporting it, and the way they will use their influence when hostilities cease.

We have seen that, in every country concerned, the Socialists worked untiringly for peace; and that they agreed everywhere as to the root causes of the war—capitalist production and the political domination of a privileged class. Everywhere was it recognised that the common people across the frontier were not responsible for the crisis, and that all had a common interest in averting hostilities. And even when war came there were still battalions of the International who refused to justify it; who "across the roar of guns" sent greetings to the working-class "enemy"; who sought, as far as lay in their power, to carry out the mandate of

the Stuttgart Congress—"to use the political and economic crisis created by the war to rouse the populace from its slumbers and to hasten the downfall of capitalist domination."

In four of the principal countries involved—France, Belgium, Germany, and Austria—the Socialists, or the majority of them, are supporting the war.

The German Socialists were placed in a position of enormous difficulty, inasmuch as while Germany was opposed in the East by the most reactionary government in Europe, the ally of that government in the West was the most liberal. The majority supported the war as a war of defence against Russia. Those who are not satisfied by the available evidence that the German Socialists were right in regarding Russia as the aggressor should, at least, reserve judgment until the full story is told and it is known exactly what version of affairs the German Socialists had in the days immediately preceding the war. What body of opinion the minority represents and what are that minority's views it is impossible to tell, owing to the strict censorship and the untrustworthiness, the misrepresentation and exaggeration which are characteristics of the bulk of the Press in all countries during war. It is significant, however, that the minority included Hugo Haase, the Chairman of the Parliamentary group, such world-famed Socialists as Liebknecht, Kautsky, Bernstein, and the courageous and popular Rosa Luxembourg.

The French and Belgian Socialists supported

the war on the grounds of national defence. If Britain's cause be just, they are gloriously vindicating International principles!

In Russia the Social-Democratic Party, at the risk of liberty and perhaps life, refused support to their Government in the prosecution of the war. They only refrained from demanding a cessation of hostilities because the Germans were on Russian territory.

In Great Britain the largest Socialist body, the I.L.P., uncompromisingly opposed the war; the support of the second largest body, the British Socialist Party, was only of a qualified nature. For British diplomacy in the years preceding the war it had no defence. The bulk of British Socialist opinion is against the war. This is none the less true because the general Press continually insists that everybody looks at affairs from the same point of view, or because the Radical Trade Unionists, as a body, are backing the war. We are not here primarily concerned with the numbers and influence of the Socialist parties—were there but a single Socialist in Britain, and he against the war, we should say that British Socialism was against it—but it may be pointed out in passing that it is a matter of history that the Labour Party is the child of the I.L.P., that the I.L.P. has given it its most prominent leaders, and that the I.L.P. is the most virile element within it. When the Press speaks of the "insignificant minority," the "little handful" of men who are against the war, it blinks

these facts but does not dispose of them. The I.L.P. has held many meetings, including many big gatherings, at which its case against the war has generally received a patient hearing and an impression has been made. But these things do not interest the newspapers. There are none so blind . . .

What is the motive of the Socialists who support the war? It is the furtherance of Socialism and Democracy; it is everywhere the same; it is the guarantee of the future life of the International. The French Socialists joined their Government, and so did the Belgian Socialists; but they did not do so because their interests and those of Governments are common. In both countries their cause has been met with the persistent opposition of the ruling class. But their view is that, should their nation be beaten in the war, an even stronger barrier would be erected to the progress of their movement. It is the same with the German Socialists. Inch by inch they have won liberty and built up their movement. The victory of Russia, they argued, would mean that much of the ground won would be lost and would have to be fought over again. In the same way the Russian Socialists opposed the war because they saw that the triumph of their own Government would strengthen it as a despotism. British Socialists opposed the war because they saw that forces were let loose in England which might lead to the introduction of

that militarism against which we claim to be fighting, and because they feared the effects of a victorious Russia, and especially of a Russia at the end of the war in relatively the strongest position of the Powers. The majority of the Labour Party took a different view and supported the war—but their aim was the same; the keeping of Britain free from the curse of militarism, and so keeping the path clear for democratic advance.

To have Socialists supporting with the same object both sides in a campaign, appears to be an inconsistent position. It arises because the two worst Governments in Europe are ranged on opposite sides. With the Alliance is Kaiserism; with the *Entente* Czarism; and Socialists everywhere fear the increased influence of either. To urge that a common policy should have been agreed upon in view of the way in which the war was sprung upon the world, and the secrecy of the Foreign Offices during those last critical days, is perilously near a counsel of perfection.

When, however, the peace terms are being discussed, it will be found that the Socialists will be able to pursue their object from a common platform. The Russian Socialists have bravely said that they will resist the German people being brought under the yoke of the Czar, and that, in resisting, they would have with them the Socialists of France, Belgium, and Britain. And they are right. "No conquest" will be the watchword of the International. And why? Because a conquered people

is so concerned with getting the conqueror off its back that it does not lift its eyes to the larger vision. The German Socialists have found that Alsace-Lorraine and Prussian Poland are stony ground for the seed of Socialism; and at our own doors we have the example of Ireland. If there is to be any change in frontiers, it will have to be with the consent of the population involved. That will be the position of the International. "One sunk by oppression puts all other peoples in danger," declared the Frenchmen at the birth of the "Old International" fifty years ago, and in his speech in the Reichstag on August 4th, Haase said the German Socialists would oppose any annexation. That is a principle which the Socialists in all the countries concerned will strive to enforce when the guns cease firing. "We respect the independence and autonomy of the German people," declared the Socialist Party of France when the war broke out. And they do—undoubtedly. The French and Russian Governments will find it out should the Allies be victorious and any vindictiveness be shown, a Franco-Russian alliance notwithstanding. And Belgium? Backing the independence and integrity of Belgium is the Red International of Europe.

The International will also be united in demanding the limitation of armaments or the transfer of that industry from private hands to the State. It will be ranged against the sinister influence of the Ring—Capital's International!—the "Universal

Death Providers." Then, too, the Socialists will everywhere seek to abolish diplomacy as we now know it; to bring the conduct of national relationships into the daylight. This will probably be the hardest fight of all. The governing classes will nowhere lightly surrender their power to gamble with the lives and happiness of millions for the gratification of their own ambitions or the right to wring wealth from a particular patch of the earth's surface. It will be pleaded that such affairs are beyond the common folk, though before the eyes of the "specialists" in foreign politics will be the awful results of their own criminal incompetence. Everywhere will the forces of the International seek to create the conditions of a lasting peace; everywhere will they be met with powerful influences which will seek to lay the foundations of another war—which will mean continued militarism and the power to keep the people's eyes on the enemy across the border while the enemy within the gate waxes fat upon their poverty.

The work of the International as it relates to the war is not finished. There is the precedent of 1870; the precedent of the five Socialists in the North German Parliament who voted for the war credits in July but were against them after Sedan. On a larger scale, for greater ends and more lasting results, will that spirit find expression at the close of the present war. No section of the International is under the impression that any Government directed its foreign policy in the interests of the

common people; all sections have had brought home to them how terrible is the logical outcome of an economic organisation which is a game of grab between States as between individuals, and how perilous is a Government—or any department of Government—which is beyond popular control. As the French Socialists have said, the very possibility of such a war as that now raging is in itself "a condemnation of the whole régime."

The Socialists of France, Germany, and Belgium fight with ardour in self-defence; but they all know, and have all stated, that the cause of their being pitted against one another lies in the pride and ambition of their rulers on the one hand and the competition of capitalists for fruitful fields for capital on the other. The International will make a great and united stand to see that never again are the people sent to so inglorious a thing as war because of the ambition, intrigue, and criminal blundering of diplomats and Courts. In the International's eyes the "specialists" in the conduct of foreign affairs are to be politically damned.

These are the discoveries which, when the war is over, or when peace may be usefully discussed, will be made by those who hope or believe the International to have crashed to ruin.

Back in 1848, after the heroic Robert Blum, the Frankfort Democrat, had been executed at Vienna, Ferdinand Freiligrath commemorated his death in

a poem. Round the grave of Blum he fancied he heard a voice whisper:—

> A dirge of death is no revenge, a song of sorrow is not rage,
> But soon the dread avenger's foot shall tramp across the black-stoled stage;
> The dread avenger, robed in red, and smirched and stained with blood and tears,
> Shall yet proclaim a ceaseless war through all the coming tide of years;
> Then shall another requiem sound, and rouse again the listening dead—
> Thou dost not call for vengeance due, but time will bring her banner red.
> The wrongs of others cry aloud; deep tides of wrath arise in flood—
> And woe to all the tyrants then whose hands are foul with guiltless blood!

And the International *has* proclaimed a ceaseless war. To-day the International sorrows; but it will rise and demand reparation; reparation for a far greater crime than the execution of Blum. There will be the multitudes left dead on the battle-fields and the wrongs of those left behind crying aloud. Smirched and stained with blood and tears, the Internationalists play what they conceive to be the wisest part in the situation as it is. But they do not forget; they will not forgive. Time will bring her banner red.

APPENDICES

I

THE SECOND GERMAN WAR CREDITS

WHEN the second war credits were before the Reichstag, on December 2nd, the number of Social-Democrats who refrained from voting for them was seventeen. Dr. Liebknecht, however, went so far as to vote against them, thereby breaking the party rule which forbids a member of the Parliamentary group from casting a vote contrary to the decision of the majority. Liebknecht had no opportunity to speak during the debate, so he handed in a written declaration to be included in the official Parliamentary report. The declaration, which was held by the President to be out of order, was as follows :—

My vote against the War Credit Bill of to-day is based on the following considerations :

This war was desired by none of the peoples involved, nor is it being waged for the well-being of the German or any other people. It is an Imperialist war, a war for the rule of the world market, for political domination

over important territories, of exploitation for industrial capitalists and financiers. From the standpoint of the competition in the armaments of war, it is a war provoked by the war parties of Germany and Austria jointly, in the darkness of semi-feudalism and secret diplomacy, to gain an advantage over their opponents. At the same time the war is a Bonapartist effort to disnerve and to split the growing movement of the working-class which, despite remorseless and unsparing attempts to create confusion in its ranks, has developed greatly of late.

The German watchward "Against Tsarism" is proclaimed for the purpose—just as the present British and French watchwords are proclaimed—to exploit the noblest inclinations and the revolutionary traditions and ideals of the people in stirring up hatred of other peoples. Germany, the accomplice of Tsarism, the model of political reaction until this very day, has no standing as the liberator of the peoples. The liberation of both the Russian and the German people must be their own work.

The war is no German war of defence. Its historical basis and its course at the start make the pretension of our Capitalist Government that the purpose for which it demands credits is the defence of the country unacceptable.

The early conclusion of a peace without conquests must be urged, and all efforts to this end must be supported. Only by strengthening, jointly and continuously, the currents in all the belligerent countries which have such a peace as their object, can this bloody slaughter be brought to an end before the entire exhaustion of the peoples has occurred. Only a peace based on the ground of the international solidarity of the working-class and the freedom of all peoples can be lasting. Therefore, it is the duty of the proletariat of all countries to carry through during the war a common Socialistic work in favour of peace.

I support the *relief* credits with the reserve that the sum demanded appears to me far from sufficient. No

less willingly I vote for everything which may relieve the hard fate of our brothers on the battlefield as well as that of the wounded and diseased, for whom I feel the deepest compassion. But as a protest against the war, against those who are responsible for it, and who have caused it, against the Capitalist purposes for which it is being used, against the annexation schemes, against the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg, against the unlimited rule of martial law, against the neglect of social and political duty of which the Government and the ruling classes are guilty, I vote against the demanded war credits.

KARL LIEBKNECHT.

December 2, 1914,
BERLIN.

Herr Haase, addressing the Reichstag, stated that the party was unanimously of the opinion, as a result of facts which had come to light since the outbreak of the war, that the evidence was not sufficient to show that the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg was justified by military reasons. The party "had agreed that the violation of Luxemburg and Belgium must be regarded as a violation of justice."[1]

This statement was suppressed by the German Press and by the Censor; but a verbatim report of the speech reached this country through Holland. In the course of it, Haase repeated the protest of August 4th against any annexation, and the demand for peace at the earliest possible moment.

The majority voted for supplies because the country was threatened with invasion.

[1] *Labour Leader*, December 10th, 1914.

II

THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT'S DOMESTIC POLICY

Early in December the Constitution of Finland was practically suppressed, all the public services, the banks, schools and the Press being brought under the control of the Russian Government. The Speaker of the Finnish Diet was arrested and exiled by "administrative order" and other prominent Finns met with a similar fate.

On November 17th the Russian Social-Democratic Party held a council meeting for the purpose of considering how best to set to work to obtain for the country a democratic constitution. The eleven leaders of the party who were present, including five members of the Duma, were arrested, and news arrives as this work goes to press that they will be tried by martial law. The arrest of the Duma members was illegal.

III

THE SERVIAN VIEW

The two Social-Democratic members in the Servian Parliament voted against the war credits. Lapshewitz, the party leader, declared that while

the Socialists agreed that the Austrian Note was an outrage, it was partly a consequence of the policy of the Servian Government. Therefore, the Socialists could not support the war.

IV

PEACE PROPOSALS

To the proposal of the American Socialist Party for a peace conference, replies were received from the parties of France, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Argentine, Turkey, and the British Socialist Party. The replies of the last-named body and the French party were in accordance with the views expressed in Section XVIII. Portugal, Argentine, Turkey, and Italy approved of the idea of a Congress, and the Scandinavian Socialists announced that they were themselves convening a Congress of the Socialists of neutral countries.

This Congress was arranged to be held in Copenhagen on January 15th and 16th, 1915, and it was expected that representatives of Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, America, and probably Switzerland would be present. It was officially stated that—

> The object of the conference will be as follows: To influence the opinion of the peoples in neutral

countries in such a way that it shall be exerted in favour of a settlement which will guarantee a lasting peace, and, further, to strive for a united effort to secure: (i) That no changes of frontiers shall take place at the end of the war by which the right of self-government by the nations shall be lessened, (ii) the restriction of military armaments, and (iii) the establishment of a responsible International Arbitration Court.

The Parliamentary groups of the Socialist parties which take part in the conference will be asked to lay addresses before the Governments of their respective countries urging that they should take steps to bring about the finish of the war, perhaps through the joint action of all the Governments of neutral States.

The Swiss Social-Democratic Party petitioned the President of the Republic to intervene between the belligerent Powers. He promised in reply to do what he could "to get the neutral States to bring collective pressure to bear in favour of an armistice as a preliminary step towards peace."[1]

V

WOMEN AND THE WAR

Messages of sympathy and expressing opposition to the war have been exchanged by the British and German and Austrian sections of the Women's International Council of Socialist and Labour Organisations. In Germany, *Gleicheit*, a paper

[1] *Labour Leader*, November 26th, 1914.

edited by Clara Zetkin, has been suppressed, and copies of her "Appeal to Socialist Women" have been confiscated. In this country, the Women's Labour League issued a manifesto which gave no support to the war, and no woman signed the general Labour manifesto issued in its favour.

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