

Amsterdam Congress the Year's Great Achievement (January 1, 1905)

The greatest achievement of the year in the field of socialist agitation was the International Socialist Congress, held in Amsterdam,¹ the largest and by far the most important in the history of the international socialist movement.

Every civilized nation on the globe was represented upon the basis of universal equality and fraternity, to which the international movement is irrevocably pledged.

One of the dramatic and inspiring scenes was the handclasp and brotherhood greeting exchanged between the representatives of Russia and Japan.

This congress was is the bona fide peace congress, since there can be no peace as long as industrial exploitation and commercial piracy animate and dominate the nations of the earth. These, and these alone, are responsible for modern warfare and all its unspeakable crimes and horrors.

As long as these continue, larger armies and more powerful navies will be the demand and all pretensions to establish peaceful relations between nations essentially at war with each other for commercial supremacy will be delusions born of hypocrisy and entirely consistent with a system that dare not avow responsibility for its own war-inciting regime. Economic conquest must cease before peace can prevail.

The international socialist movement is based upon the principle of economic freedom and equality, applied to all the nations of the earth, and the triumph of this principle will realize the long hoped-for "Peace on Earth and goodwill toward men."²

In this great world movement the real leaders are the rank and file of the working class, and the men who distinguish themselves by the services they render in the conspicuous positions assigned them are simply the voices of the revolutionary host of labor and are of special value or importance only in proportion to the fidelity with which they discharge their obligations to their constituents.

Among these valiant spirits, Bebel of Germany,³ Jaurès of France,⁴ Ferri of Italy,⁵ and others have served with such exceptional brilliancy and

success during the year just closed as to add fresh laurels to the movement and increase the luster of their own well-earned fame.

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¹ The sixth congress of the Second international was held in Amsterdam from August 14-18, 1904.

² Allusion to *Luke 2:14*.

³ August Bebel (1840-1913) was a founder of the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Germany in 1869, forerunner of the Social Democratic Party (SPD). One of the first socialists elected to the Reichstag, Bebel was a committed antimilitarist who had opposed the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and voted against financial credits for continuation of the war against France.

⁴ Jean Juarès (1859-1914) was a former university lecturer who became a socialist in 1889. The leader of the more moderate of two French socialist parties during the first decade of the twentieth century, Juarès was an antimilitarist who opposed France's entry into World War I. He was murdered by a French nationalist in July 1914.

⁵ Enrico Ferri (1856-1929) was an Italian university professor who joined the Italian Socialist Party in 1893 and later edited the party's official organ, *Avanti*. Ferri favored Italian neutrality during World War I.