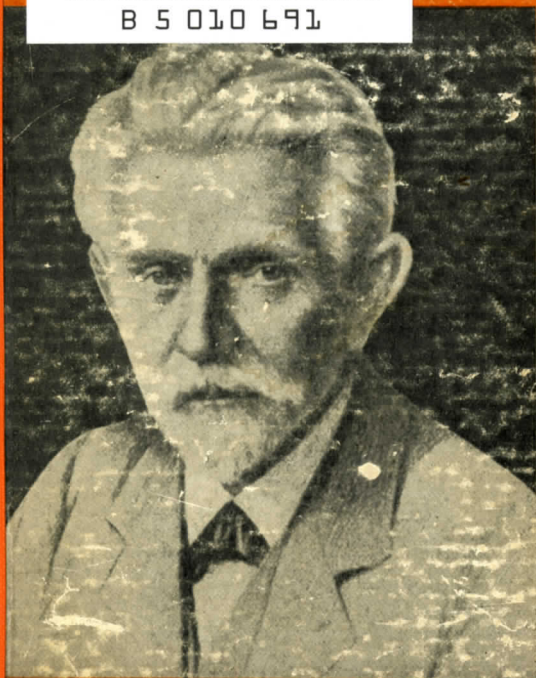


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VOLUME VI



*SPEECHES OF*  
**AUGUST BEBEL**

*WITH A*  
*CRITICAL INTRODUCTION*



NEW YORK

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## FOREWORD

REPORTS reached England in September, 1882, to the effect that Bebel had died; Marx thereupon wrote to Engels: "This is a frightful blow for our party! He was a unique figure in the German (we may even say in the 'European') working class." The reports were not confirmed. Bebel remained alive for more than thirty years, continuing to be the leader of the German Social-Democratic Party, the creation of which he shared with Wilhelm Liebknecht.<sup>1</sup> He led the party in the terrible period of the Socialist Law, conducted it through many difficult internal crises, and after a life of many vicissitudes, he left behind him the mighty battalions of the German workers which, one year after his death, were dissipated by the outbreak of war in August, 1914.

We cannot discuss here the disastrous consequences of Bebel's policy of centrism; but we do not believe that it is possible to determine what would have been Bebel's attitude on the imperialist war and on the immediate struggle against the bourgeois form of society, on the basis of his speeches and writings, which present-day Social-Democrats pretend to be able to do when they invoke Bebel as

<sup>1</sup> A volume in this series is devoted to W. Liebknecht.



the crown witness for their tactics and for the essential alteration in the character of the Social-Democratic Party. We believe that the speeches printed in this volume will prove that Bebel always stood on the foundation of the class struggle, that the bourgeois republic in his eyes was a form of state as much requiring to be combated as monarchy itself, that Bebel never lost sight of the ultimate goal, even though he did not despise the means and took an active part in the petty warfare of every day. We must attempt to understand Bebel on the basis of his period, which had adapted itself to the prospect of decades of evolution, while an actual conflict for the conquest of power in the state seemed far away. Bebel organized the German mass movement of the workers and imbued the proletariat with the idea of Marxism and with an unreserved class consciousness; it was he who pointed out to the German worker his place in society and indicated to him the methods by which he might mount to a platform that would enable him to undertake an attack by storm against the fortress of capitalism. Bebel emphasized again and again that the point was to conquer the State. And Bebel's dreams were surely not black, red and gold in hue. His color was red. Bebel is one of the greatest preparers of the class struggle; he imparted to the German workers' movement its specifically proletarian character; side by side with the evolution of imperialism this proletarian party of the

class struggle attained an international importance. It is for this reason that Lenin admired Bebel's work. Lenin is greater than Bebel because he not only led the Russian proletariat in masses to the platform, but also led the vanguard to the storm in serried ranks. Bebel was a tactician and a practical man of genius; Lenin was both, but he was also a creative theorist and an even greater realist than Bebel. Bebel set the masses in motion. Lenin led them concentrically to victory.

We still have much to learn from Bebel's speeches. We are inspired by their fire, their energy, their temperament, their intoxicating dash, their humor and their sarcasm. His sentences pour forth like mighty streams; they bear one up and carry one along. Their directness and passion are magnificent, their form brilliant, their reasoning masterful and convincing. No such speeches have been delivered in the German language since the days of Lassalle, and it might even seem that this rugged, ironical, popular note had not been struck in Germany since the speeches of Thomas Münzer.

Bebel sprang from the people, his direct forebears having been soldiers; his father was a non-commissioned officer at Deutz, Köln, where Bebel was born in 1840. His father died when the boy was young; his mother when he was thirteen years old; he was obliged to lead the life of a proletarian practically ever since his mental awakening. It is interesting

to note how Bebel gradually was absorbed by the labor movement—at first reluctantly—as a result of his experience, until he becomes its leader and points out the way for it. Few great leaders have been called thus directly out of everyday life, to the assumption of their task. Marxism is always rebuked for being too theoretical; Bebel tested Marxism in the crucible of life; it is a wonderful experience to find theory and life united so thoroughly as in Bebel. Marx and Engels had constructed their theory from actual life; Bebel, as it were, confirms the theory in his own life. Bebel rarely speaks of anything in theoretical terms; the word “Marxism” can be counted in his speeches; Marx’s doctrine has already become flesh, has already become a determining element of life, to such an extent that it needs hardly to be mentioned as such.

In addition, we may note Bebel’s sure instinct, his joy in life, his energy in work, his tirelessness and his immutable faith in the victory of the proletariat as the creator of a new national society; these elements complete the picture of Bebel.

When Bebel still lived and worked and spoke, it once happened that on an occasion when the packed auditorium would admit no more hearers, persons climbed to the roof and removed the tiles in order to be able to see and hear Bebel.

May the following selections from his speeches, extending over a period of forty years, keep awake a living memory of Bebel's activity.

**KURT KERSTEN.**

## WAR ON THE PALACES; PEACE TO THE COTTAGES

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, May 25, 1871.)*

MAY the aspirations of the Paris Commune appear never so reprehensible in your eyes, or—as we were told privately in this very building yesterday—may they be never so accursed, you may rest assured that the whole European proletariat and every heart that still has a feeling for liberty and independence, is now looking to Paris.

Gentlemen, even though Paris may now have been put down, I must remind you that the struggle in Paris is only a small outpost skirmish, that the main affair in Europe is still ahead of us, and that before a few decades have passed, the battle cry of the Paris proletariat: “War on the palaces, peace to the cottages, death to poverty and idleness!” will become the battle cry of the entire European proletariat.

## PATRIOTS AND PERCENTAGES

*(Delivered in the Reichstag November, 1870.)*

GERMAN liberalism, as a representative of the German large-scale bourgeoisie, was particularly responsible for and particularly favored this war (Franco-Prussian War), declaring with the utmost enthusiasm that it was ready to make every possible sacrifice, and what is the actual result insofar as it may be determined materially? Four months ago you voted a loan of 120 million, and of the 100 million which later were offered for sale, hardly 68 million have actually been covered, in spite of the fact that more than fifty thousand persons bought bonds! It is apparent that the patriotism which was so much in evidence in the newspapers, the sessions of the town councils and other local bodies, in the diets, was actually very slight, particularly among the patriotic howlers, when a real spirit of sacrifice was required. The French bourgeoisie subscribed in a few days for 750 millions offered on sale by Napoleon Bonaparte! You have barely raised 68 million. Of course, our government must admit that no reports from the theater of war, or at least no favorable reports, were as yet available. Suppose the reports had been unfavorable; would the

purses of our patriotic friends have been opened the more readily? God forbid! They would not have shown their faces at all; the outcome would have been even more disgraceful; and again it is evident that there is a great gap between talking and acting, and that we have no reason—in this respect, at least—to look down upon the French people. This suggestion should also prevent you from plunging now into new sacrifices, from needlessly prolonging our sacrifices, especially when you remember that these sacrifices can be made in this country, only by first enabling those who are always at the head in the matter of patriotism to ascertain whether the necessary dividends will also accrue to their pockets.

## STOP THE MASS SLAUGHTER

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, November, 1870.)*

It cannot be denied that the sacrifices made by France are tremendous, that the fairest part of its land has been ruined for years to come, that millions of persons have been ruined in their material resources for the rest of their lives; but I should have considered it quite appropriate, if it was felt necessary to emphasize, in the speech from the throne, the misfortunes accruing to the French people from this war, at least to mention also the misfortunes already suffered by the German people in this war and still to be suffered, for it cannot be denied that the sacrifices made by the German people in this war every day must be about the same as those imposed upon the French people, that the German people also have had to make enormous sacrifices, that hundreds of thousands have been crippled, that hundreds of thousands have been deprived of their means of subsistence, that thousands and thousands have been done to death, that the German people also, therefore, in view of the great sacrifices it has made, has a right to ask for peace and the bringing about of a condition that will put an end to this mass slaughter. On the other hand,



when I see and hear 4,000 or more newspapers all over Germany attempting for months without interruption to incite the patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice of the German people, and when I then consider what the allied governments<sup>2</sup> have seen fit to state in the motivation of the new loan that is now proposed, I must indeed feel that the proper thing to say is: Much ado about nothing!

<sup>2</sup> The German states fighting against France did not constitute an empire (the latter was not founded until May 10, 1871, after the signing of the Peace of Frankfort), but a temporary alliance.

## THE QUESTION OF RIGHT IS THE QUESTION OF MIGHT

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, July 3, 1871, in connection with the discussion of the Constitution of the German Empire.)*

WE cannot afford to forget that the interests of the people and the interests of the princes are opposites, that it is the interest of the monarch to rule with as much absolute power as possible, and that he will not relinquish this interest except when obliged to do so by public opinion and—if necessary—by the physical force of the people. But at a moment in which the Prussian State power and the entire German resources are at the disposal of the King of Prussia in his capacity as the Emperor of Germany, at a time when he controls a million bayonets, no one would seriously discuss in Parliament the possibility of demanding absolute freedom of associations, etc., from the King of Prussia, at least, gentlemen, serious political thinkers would not do such a thing, for they know that all political questions, all questions of right, are simultaneously questions of might. In asking for your rights, you may, to be sure, have a theoretical justification; the right, theoretically, is on your side; but the power

to translate right into practice is not in your hands. And a government, particularly a strong government, will adhere to its right, the right of the crown—and the stronger it is, the more rigidly it will cling to this right—and has no desire at all to incorporate theoretical aspirations, limiting its authority, into the Constitution. And I am therefore of the opinion that it is indeed fairly superfluous, on the whole, with things as they are, to discuss fundamental rights, as long as we are not determined—if necessary, to put through these fundamental rights at any cost, even by force. You may put a hundred or a thousand requests to the Crown of Prussia, and deliver speeches eighty or ninety yards long in every session, on the necessity and usefulness of fundamental rights; but you will not achieve these fundamental rights until you state clearly and definitely: if that which we consider to be our right, the right of the people, is not granted us, we shall take it against your resistance.

We live in a time of serious portent, and one of the previous speakers referred to this condition when he said: "The European revolutionary party is now no longer so bold." I have no reason to reject this observation, I am a member of this party. Under the conditions of the present day, in view of the attitude taken for years by our Liberal Party, which shamefully relinquished one human liberty after another, we shall have to refrain from any

attempt in Germany to secure liberty of the people by parliamentary means, and to this extent neither I nor my party will take any great pains to wage such a fruitless struggle. We hope that before the end of the nineteenth century the time may have come for us really to bring about—in one way or another—not only the fundamental rights, but all our other demands.

## THE POWER OF ILLEGALITY

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, opposing the Socialist Law, September 16, 1878.)*

GENTLEMEN, I assure you that in view of the numerous connections we possess, connections we can easily multiply three-fold or ten-fold for purposes like those now at stake, we shall sell our pamphlets not in editions of four or five thousand copies, but in editions of twenty thousand and thirty thousand copies, and not in years but in weeks or months. Furthermore, since our wares will be sold as forbidden fruit, we shall be able to ask prices yielding us such a profit as to defray the expenses of agitation from which we might otherwise have been cut off. In short, gentlemen, governments may do what they will, they cannot really put us down! For instance, can you prevent us from assembling all over the German Empire during the coming winter, in thousands and thousands of families, a few comrades at a time, let us say three, four or five of them, meeting now in one house, now in another, constituting their families as reading circles for the discussion of socialist writings, etc.? Do you know what your law will make of the German Social-Democracy? You are forcing the Social-Democracy,

as the early Christians were forced, by means of the persecution to which you are subjecting it, to exert the utmost zeal, to resort to fanaticism, to a sort of genuine religious ecstasy. Do not doubt that the workers will fight tenaciously for their convictions; they will meet in their workshops, in the factories, in the family, in the beer gardens, on railway trains, on Sunday outings, in many places where no one can practice close surveillance over them. Each one will have his two, three, maybe ten, pamphlets in his pocket; they will visit their friends and acquaintances in the country, and in the most remote parts of the town, handing these pamphlets to them. And you will not be able to cripple this activity.

## POLICE, STOOL PIGEONS AND PROVOCATEURS

(*From the speech "Attempted Assassinations and the Social-Democracy," delivered in Berlin, November 2, 1898.*)

A GREAT portion of the German bourgeoisie has been unable to forget the Socialist Law! Its abolition gave this section great grief, and it yearns for an opportunity to substitute for this law a new exception law, or a new sharpening of the common law. In this effort, its chief support was Prince Bismarck. Differences of opinion on the proper manner of treating the Social-Democracy had been one of the reasons for his dismissal, and, being incapable of ever forgetting this affront, he retained his intense hatred for the Social-Democracy until his death. In his official organ, the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, he frequently caused the statement to be uttered that there was no other means of disposing of the Social-Democracy than to force it into acts of desperation, drive it out on the streets, and there shoot them down. No reason for indignation! Let us rejoice in the frankness of our opponents.

How often were police agents at work in bringing about the crimes and attempted crimes of the last

few decades! When Bismarck was a Minister for the Confederation to Frankfort-on-the-Main, he wrote to his wife: "Owing to lack of material, police agents lie and exaggerate outrageously. These agents are appointed for ascertaining what crimes are being planned. Bad characters among them—good characters do not accept such posts—naturally hit upon the idea that if other people will not attempt any crimes, they must be helped. For if it is impossible for them to report that something is doing, they become superfluous, and of course no one wants to be superfluous. So they help out, 'correcting fortune,' as a French adage has it." Or, they will practice politics on their own hook. I need only to remind you of the memoirs of the former prefect of the Paris police, Andrieux, who boasts with the utmost cynicism, that he financed with police money extremist and anarchistic organs, and organized anarchistic attempts at assassination only in order to keep the bourgeoisie in the necessary attitude of fear.

And now for our good friends under the Socialist-Law. I can speak of this situation from experience, for I had a good deal to do with unmasking them. There was that fellow Schröder-Brennwald at Zurich, who received from the Berlin police, through Police Councillor Krüger, a salary of at first two hundred marks a month, later two hundred fifty marks a month. This Schröder was busy inciting and egging on to deeds of violence at all the Zurich



meetings. And so that the Swiss authorities could not put him out of the country, he had become a Swiss citizen, probably with the aid of Prussian police money. In the summer of 1883, this Schröder, together with the police anarchist Kaufmann, had convoked a conference at Zurich, in which thirteen persons participated. Schröder was chairman. At this conference the murders, later executed by Stellmacher, Kammerer, and Kunitzsch in Vienna, Stuttgart and Strassburg were planned. I do not know whether those conscienceless rascals in spite of the fact that they were in the service of the police, informed their employers that these murders had been planned. Or, is it possible that the police tacitly approved these deeds? Stellmacher and Kammerer expiated their crimes on the gallows. When Johann Most was in prison in England, Schröder had the *Freiheit* printed at Schaffhausen at his own expense, but of course the money did not come from his own pocket.

Those were the lovely days in which police councillor Krüger wrote to the stool pigeon Haupt in Geneva that he knew that the next crime would be directed against the Czar of Russia, and would be conducted from Geneva; Haupt should send in his reports. Was not this instruction a remarkable act?

Furthermore, there is Herr von Ehrenberg, a former Badensian captain of artillery, whom I had the dubious honor of once knowing personally. This

gentleman had incurred suspicion of having betrayed to the Italian General Staff the Swiss fortifications on Mount Saint Gotthard. When his house was searched it came out that Herr von Ehrenberg had also been serving the Prussian police. He had written regular minutes of the conversations he had had with our people, including alleged conversations with me. In these affairs, he had neatly changed his parts. The most desperate plans which he had proposed to us, he now ascribed to us, at the same time playing the part of warner and objector to such desperate plans.

What would have happened if one fine day his so-called minutes had fallen into certain hands—and there is no doubt that was the purpose for which they were written—and if the accused had had no witnesses to prove the perfidy that had been practiced against them? Thus, for example, he had tried to convince me—but in his so-called minutes the plan is ascribed to me—that it would be mere child's play to ascertain the residences of all the higher officials in all the larger cities of Germany, and then in one single night, to send out our most reliable people and assassinate all these military officers on the same day. In the *Züricher Arbeiterstimme* he explained in four articles, and with an almost classical neatness, the manner in which street conflicts should be waged in the future, indicating also particularly how artillery and cavalry might be combated. He also

advised collections, when he addressed meetings, in order to purchase weapons for our people. As soon as a war between Germany and France should break out, our comrades should pass from Switzerland into Baden and Württemberg, should rip up the railway tracks, and take possession of the post-office and railway strong boxes. And this gentleman, who gave us all this advice in writing and by word of mouth, was in the service of the Prussian police.

Another well-known police spy was the notorious Friedemann, who had been banished from Berlin and who provoked, by means of prose and poetic selections, read to the Zurich comrades, deeds of violence. Furthermore, not far from Basel, in Liestal, they arrested a certain Weiss, a journeyman plumber, for having posted bills in which the murders committed by Kammerer and Stellmacher were glorified. His examination by the Swiss guards later showed that he stood in the service of the German police. A certain Schmidt, who had been obliged to leave Dresden because of serious embezzlements, came to Zurich and proposed the establishment of an assassination fund, to which he made the first contribution of twenty francs. As was clearly shown by his correspondence with Police Councillor Weller, of Dresden, which later fell into our hands, he also was in the service of the police, informing them of everything he undertook. And then the unmasked secret service agent Ihring-Mahlow,

right here in Berlin, who declared his willingness to party comrades to give them instruction in the manufacture of explosives and bombs, since the parliamentary path afforded such slow progress!

The things I say here are not mere gossip, mere fabrications; I can prove every statement instantly. These are the disgusting means by which we are fought.

If we picture these conditions to ourselves, we need very little acumen to determine who it is that really is guilty of attempted assassination.

It is not the anarchists from among the people, but the anarchists on the municipal benches that should be held to account. It is they who should go to jail!

## LEST WE FORGET

*(Delivered at the Dresden Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, 1903.)*

To this very day, now that all these persecutions are past, without having done me very much harm, when my thoughts dwell on the state of petty siege, when we were ordered to the police headquarters and our measurements were taken as if we were criminals, when we were photographed and asked our pedigrees, and when we were then told that we must make ourselves scarce within a period of three days—I shall not forget these things as long as I live. And if I should ever live to see the day on which I might say to those who will still be alive: “Now I am going to show you what you did then”—I should go and do it!

## THE CAPITALIST CONGRESS AND ITS SOLUTION

*(From the speech "Our Economic and Political Situation," delivered in Zurich, December, 1892.)*

THE struggle of competition between America and old Europe, which will take place before our eyes on a gigantic scale by the end of this century, cannot result favorably to America unless the American bourgeoisie succeeds in reducing the conditions of life of its workers to a level that will enable it to assume this struggle on a far larger scale than heretofore. But then the protective tariff wall, to which American industry owes its astonishing prosperity, will again have to be eliminated, in order that America may take up the struggle with Europe in the industrial field.

It is only a question of time when the American bourgeoisie will succeed in putting through its plan, and on the day when it succeeds in doing this, the competitive struggle will amount to the annihilation of the industry of Europe. What will be the further consequences of such a condition? First, great unemployment, from which the workers will of course suffer chiefly. When the crisis sets in, the demand

for workers will begin to decrease; wages will go down. The workers, who are obliged to live, will find themselves compelled to wage mortal competition against each other, *i.e.*, they will have to go on competing each other to death by offering their labor power at lower and lower prices. On the other hand, we have seen how industry, by reason of its tremendous advances, is now in a position to substitute unskilled workers for skilled workers. In addition, of course, there is the labor of women and children. We see how all these factors play a deciding part; with the aid of these elements, it will be possible to maintain competition within one's own country, and also in the world market, for a considerable time. But if crises supervene, crises like the one we are now facing, sales will decrease, a great number of workers will be thrown out of work, or must work at more unfavorable conditions. This will injure a great number of small artisans, and lead to the elimination of small-scale industry.

Crises like the present crisis have a seriously weakening effect, and the great danger for the permanence of society is precisely in the fact that these crises keep returning and last longer each time. These crises reduce the resistance of the middle class more and more, which also means a reduction in the resistance of the ruling classes. A life and death struggle necessarily ensues between the two classes, between those who possess and those who have no

possessions. The crisis assumes larger and larger proportions. Hundreds of thousands of workers are without bread; the authorities, the national power, are powerless to comply with the demands of these starving masses since it is obvious in the nature of things that public works cannot be undertaken in sufficient volume to comply with the needs of the immense number of persons who ask for bread.

Then there is the additional fact that thousands will no longer be in a position to perform the kind of work which the communes and the state can provide them with. We have seen this to be the case in Prussia and elsewhere in Germany.

Furthermore, as soon as the state observes that as a consequence of the crisis its receipts are going lower and its expenditures increasing, it will also begin to economize. For instance, we find the state issuing orders that railway conductors and station-masters must now furnish their own fur coats, and that no increase in salary will be provided for this purpose. School teachers are being paid genuine starvation wages. The state pays a million, in order that it may save at least the appearance of doing something for the teachers; but in truth it can do nothing, since each such act merely increases the deficit in the national income and has to be compensated by new taxes.

The communes provide work; but the number of persons who can do this work is so small that this



resort can do but little to counteract the general distress with which we are everywhere faced. This condition becomes more and more acute; finally, in accordance with the extent to which society has developed in the direction indicated, we arrive at a point where every possibility of economic extension is precluded, since the employers are obliged, even in a period of crisis, to keep on producing, even though on a diminished scale, in order that they may continue their existence at all, and since, in the second place, their machinery and tools would suffer more injury through idleness than when operated at low profit or at no profit at all. This condition will last longer each time, until of necessity the day will come when the thing will no longer work at all.

But with the progress of the general distress from which society suffers—and we are having an illustration of this progress at the present moment—men begin to think. In such periods, men forget to resort to prayer; they begin to think and to ask themselves: How is this possible? Whence comes this condition? How can we change it? Just visit the circles of the bourgeoisie and of the state authority and listen to the things that people think and say in these circles, and you will open your eyes. People are convinced in these classes to-day that the existing order of the state and of the economic system is rapidly going to the dogs; it is only a question of how soon they will reach the bottom;

that they are rolling downhill there is no doubt in their minds. Of course, they are all exerting themselves with all their might to retain their grasp of some bush that may retard their descent for a while, but in the long run they keep going down.

The thing that is taking place now is of immense importance in judging that which is to and must occur in the future. The ruling society must first lose its faith in itself; it must have attained the conviction that it is no longer capable of saving society by means of the resources at its disposal. And where are our saviours of society to-day? They all know that they can do nothing to save us.

The filth and corruption which appear in those classes on a large scale are characteristic of the entire system of bourgeois society; if I may be permitted to make use of a crude expression, let me say that it stinks all over, in a monarchy as well as in a republic; there is nothing but corruption, rottenness, swindling, lying and deception. Everywhere, we encounter the effort of the individual to fill his pockets at the cost of the community. The watchword of bourgeois society is

“Sehe jeder, wo er bleibe;  
Sehe jeder wie er's treibe,  
Und wer steht, dass er nicht falle!”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The last stanza of a poem by Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832), entitled *Beherrschung*, printed in 1789 in the eighth volume of the Göschen edition of Goethe's works: “Let each man see to his own acts and to his own place of sojourn; and let him who stands see to it lest he fall.”

Each man says to himself: "I have to fight for myself, to look after myself; you see to it how you can get along." Under these circumstances, where are the limits of that which is permitted and that which is not permitted? Where does swindling begin; when you charge ten per cent, twenty-five, or fifty, or a hundred per cent? I am sure I do not know. Every one will tell you it depends on the nature of the business. But swindling there must be, that is admitted by every one. There is no doubt that this condition dominates all of present-day society, and what is far more important, society is beginning to be conscious of it. Of course, those on top, when they understand this situation, have not the slightest desire to change it; for they cannot change it. Society is a pyramid: the foundation is the great mass of the people; they are the people itself, the working people. Then follow, as we ascend, ever-decreasing numbers representing the various strata of society, and finally, at the very top, in the monarchy, there is a single man. If I am standing at the top of the pyramid, I have a much broader view; but the higher my position the more ticklish a thing it is to fall and the more nervous I become. The stirring of a breeze is very perceptible in such an elevated position and one naturally fears: "If this breeze gets a little stronger, I am headed for down below." It is similar in politics; from one's watch-tower above, one can see the approaching

storm; one can distinctly hear the thunders in the distance, one notices the ground trembling at one's feet; thence the terror one feels, and thence also one's sensation of complete impotence. There one stands, incapable of doing a thing. I should not care to be stationed on such a high eminence.

The same condition of discomfort is present in still higher degree among the great masses. For, those who are obliged to fight a daily struggle for their existence necessarily suffer distress, and those who cannot wage this struggle in the manner in which they are accustomed in normal times, will suffer doubly and trebly in hard times. In these classes, therefore, there is an incipient unrest, an increasing ferment; people begin to ask questions. How does this come? What are we coming to? How will this end? One is inclined to ask why all those on whom we are accustomed to depend are taking no steps to help us. There are our governments, our priests, our officials, all of them are people by whose authority we have sworn until now, to whom we have looked up with veneration, whom we have regarded as our leaders and deliverers; see them stand there, like a child in a certain unmentionable embarrassment, not knowing what they shall do. These circumstances are a favorable breeding ground for the Social-Democracy; for socialism, as every one knows, is a modern product. Then people come along and tell us in their most solemn manner: "The

things you want are things that have been desired at all times; there was Plato, he wanted them; there was Thomas More, he wanted them; and many others, and they all wanted these things; but what has come of it? Nothing, absolutely nothing! The world cannot be changed; things always have been as they are to-day, and so they will always remain." It is with such phrases that people think they can put down the innovators, and in order that every one may believe that these things are true which they are taught in the schools and in the books of history, as the interests of the ruling class require that they should be taught. And these things are being done in a field in which apparently free thought and liberalism have great play, and the poor population is lied to and deceived within an inch of its life.

It is seriously stated that private property and capitalism have existed in the world forever. Every well informed person knows that it is downright folly to say this. If it were in order here to deliver several lectures to you instead of only one, I could prove in detail that all these statements are lies. But these things are taught systematically, in order that the belief in the necessity of the continuance of the present order of society may not be shattered; for, once this belief has gone, it will soon be understood that the existing order can no longer be maintained.

The consequence of this situation will be the

question: And what next? And once one has put this question, one will not be long in finding an answer. For once I have completely grasped the internal nature of a certain condition, the ills from which it suffers, ills that will ultimately result in its destruction, it will not be difficult for me, after some thought, to arrive by a logical process at the remedies that must be applied in order to replace the old condition with a new one, a new condition outlined by the Social-Democracy.

Now, the Social-Democracy is to-day already a political power; bourgeois society has passed beyond the point of its culmination and is on the descending curve; the Social-Democracy will be its heir.

The Social-Democrats are the children of the bourgeoisie; the bourgeoisie is their mother, even though she may be a stepmother; the bourgeoisie brought us forth; without a bourgeoisie there can be no Social-Democracy. The higher the bourgeoisie rises in its expansion, the greater the number of adherents of the Social-Democracy it will bring forth; the latter rise out of the soil like the brood of Cadmus.

Contrasts now become obvious to the observer, who begins to ask questions: Is this condition tenable for any length of time? How can I explain to myself the fact that the millions of poor people must work, men and women and children, from early to late, from morning until late at night, in order not

to perish in distress and poverty, merely in order to keep body and soul together, while, on the other hand, I can see, in spite of the bankruptcy and of the cases of individual ruin, capitalism nevertheless continues expanding to more and more monstrous proportions in society, riches become more and more gigantic, and that there are persons alive who—no matter how much they spend—cannot even get rid of the interest on their capital. There seems to be an enormous capital accumulated, capital which cries to be put to use, or, to use the expression of the capitalist order of society, “is looking for work,” *i.e.*, is looking for workers who may be used and exploited in the service of capital in order that other new capital may be accumulated. The fact that this condition is untenable by its very nature, that, like a gigantic structure imposing to behold but rotten within, it must some day collapse on its own foundation, must be perfectly apparent to any man who thinks. But if this is the case, it follows with certainty that those who have no interest in the continuance of the present order of society will make every effort to deal the final blow to this system of society as soon as possible and as thoroughly as possible.

## THE CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE ENTREPRENEURS

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, June 19, 1899, on the subject of a bill to pass "The law for the protection of the industrial labor status.")*

THE factory owners, as opposed to the workers, have hundreds of methods at their disposal for achieving unity, without enabling the state authority—even if it should so desire—to intervene; their favorable social position affords them this opportunity. It is far more difficult to unite two thousand workers who are working in different establishments, in order to bring about a strike, than to bring under a single head twenty factory owners, who employ these two thousand workers and to make these factory owners come to an understanding. Furthermore, there is another element. The workers' organizations are to-day no longer superior to the employers' organizations: in fact, to-day the employers' organizations are far superior to the workers' organizations. I regret to say—and mark, I *regret* to say—that it cannot be denied that the class consciousness of the employers with regard to their own interests has been developed to a far higher and far more active state than is the case with many



workers. We have now very few employers in Germany, at least among those employing large numbers of workers, who have not been organized in some inclusive body. But unfortunately, we have millions of German workers, in fact, we have the great majority of German workers, who are not organized in any workers' organizations at all. This is the great advantage of the employer as opposed to the worker.

And what are the means at the disposal of the employers? They need not inform the police of their meetings, even if their discussions are to be concerned with political affairs. Herr von der Recke, who is present at this meeting to-day, will bear me out when I declare that probably all year round his subordinate departments never once have occasion to be notified of a meeting of employers, and on far fewer occasions do the police ever consider it necessary to keep such meetings under surveillance. Yet, the trade unions in Prussia are obliged without cessation to move most cautiously between the meshes of Paragraph 8 of the Prussian Law, because they run the greatest risk of being regarded as political organizations and of therefore being dissolved. Here in this very city of Berlin, under the eyes of Herr von der Recke, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, are held the meetings of the Central Association of Industrial Magnates, a central body consisting of several dozen other em-

employers' organizations. In these meetings, they discuss trade agreements, customs tariffs, labor protection, workingmen's insurance, in short, they discuss the most shockingly political matters, but Herr von der Recke and his subordinate officials neither consider it worth while to send an officer to their meetings and observe their transactions, nor do they—although they damned well ought to—apply the provisions of Paragraph 8 of the Prussian Law of Associations in indicting persons for transgressions of this law, although they transgress the law before the very eyes of the authorities. Thus they measure with a double standard; on the one hand, there is the standard for the employers, and on the other hand, the standard for the workers.

### *The Gentle Sheep is the Ideal of Statesmen*

Now I maintain that every ambitious worker must naturally be imbued with the desire to improve his situation in life. But in bourgeois society, each worker is in a position of dependence as contrasted with his employer. As soon as an individual worker steps up to his employer and asks higher wages or makes some other demands, *out he goes*; he is absolutely powerless in the hands of his employer; he must adapt himself to the employer's decisions. Therefore, it is far more necessary for the worker to organize with his peers than it is for the em-

ployer. The workers can attain nothing except by their unions; divided, they are completely powerless.

I say, therefore, that the workers must see to it that they enhance their condition in life by improving their wages and their working conditions; in pursuing this end, they are aiming at the advancement of civilization; the higher the living conditions of the workers, the greater the general welfare of society; while, the more such improved conditions are refused them, or made impossible for them, the worse will be the general condition of society and the greater the embitterment and the hatred for the established order of things. But what is the attitude of the government's proposal? We read in this proposal that precisely those who are willing to work are peaceful elements who accept the system of the state and the system of law, and who are therefore particularly useful to the state and whom the state authority should therefore consider it an important and urgent task to protect effectively in their personal interests, which coincide with the interests of the state. In other words, when the worker as a *zoon politikon*<sup>4</sup> has the nature of a sheep, then he is the ideal worker. The more stupid, the more frugal, the cheaper the worker is, the more he adapts himself to the demands of his employer, the more will he approach the ideal of our statesmen. That

<sup>4</sup> *Zoon politikon*, "social animal": An expression used by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) in his *Politics*.

is the way they want the worker to be: servile, willing, flexible, obedient to every demand of his employer. Gentlemen, if you think you can maintain your state permanently on the basis of that kind of a working class, you are very much mistaken. It is said of Frederick the Great that, when on his death bed, he uttered the words: "I am tired of ruling over slaves!" But present-day governments desire to rule over slaves and over slaves alone.

## THE CHURCH AS A SERVANT OF THE CLASS STATE

(*From the speech "The Social-Democracy and the Zentrum," delivered at Bamberg, September 24, 1902.*)

IN his speech at Mannheim, Dr. Schädler asserted that the Church had broken the chains of slavery and made the worker a free man having equal rights with others. Every word he used represents an historical untruth. The Church did not break the slavery system; on the other hand, it has always been admirable for its ability to adapt itself to the prevailing economic governmental conditions and has always stood on the side of those in power. For has not slavery continued to maintain itself to the most recent days even in Christian countries? Was not the great War of Emancipation fought in North America only forty years ago, and did not the Church of both creeds stand in this struggle on the side of the slaveholders, and not on that of the emancipators? In Catholic Brazil, slavery was abolished only fourteen years ago, not *by* the Church, but *against* the Church. Wherever slavery has been eliminated, it was as a result not of

religious, but of economic causes. Who was it that fought against serfdom in Germany? The Church? Any one who would maintain such a thing is a monstrous liar. Who was it that opposed the attached and serf-like peasants when at the end of the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth century—and then later in the Great Peasant War of 1525<sup>5</sup>—they rose against their ecclesiastical and secular masters, in order to shake off the yoke of serfdom and forced labor? The whole clergy, including Luther and his followers, were on the side of the masters against the peasants, and aided in the bloody putting down of the movement. Particularly, the Bishops of Bamberg and Würzburg were ferocious in their opposition to the peasants and placed their strongholds at the disposal of the nobility in their struggle against the peasants.

And just as the Church in those days came out in favor of slavery, in favor of serfdom and in favor of forced peasant labor, so it to-day supports the continuance of the wage labor system of the capitalist order of economy.

The Church considers it to be its duty to make the workers willing tools of the state and of their employers. This is the true attitude assumed by the spokesmen of the Church in the present period of our historical evolution, and yet, some persons

<sup>5</sup> See Friedrich Engels: *The Peasant War in Germany*, 1927; Franz Mehring: *Social Forces in German History*, 1928.

have the audacity to speak of the "great benefactions of the Church."

For example, the Zentrum has been trying to organize the workers into trade unions for a number of years; but what is the Zentrum really accomplishing in this activity? It has introduced religion into the trade union movement; it has established specifically Christian trade unions and has sought to divide the workers according to their creed, although their interests are the same and have no connection with religion whatever. Why does it not seek to bring about this condition among the employers, who unite against the aspirations of the workers without regard to religious creed? Yes, my dear yokel, that is another matter; the employers would not consent to any such operation; but the worker still permits himself to be led in leading strings; if the Zentrum should not succeed in its efforts, the worker might be infected with the devil of the Social-Democracy and acquire opinions not at all sympathetic to the gentlemen of the Zentrum. The *Kreuzzeitung* has openly stated the reasons why the Christian organizations are desirable and must be supported by energetic means, by virtue of the commandment: *Divide et impera* ("Divide, in order that you may rule"). Divide the workers, split them, so as to weaken them, and it will be all the easier to rule them. This is a perfectly frank expression of that which is behind the whole move-

ment. And the Catholic workers should put that in their pipes and smoke it.

Herr Schädler also said that it was the desire of the Church to have the worker obtain wages sufficient for the support of his family; even the Pope has declared in an encyclical letter that the worker "has a rightful claim to just wages." The only question is: What is just? What constitutes sufficient wages? Is it a wage of  $1\frac{1}{2}$ , 2 or 3, or 4 marks a day, or more? Neither Herr Schädler nor any one else will venture to give an answer to this question, for his answer would amount to a complete exposure. They tell me that there is a great spinning mill here in Bamberg, employing about two thousand male and female workers, and I am informed that the wages of an adult male worker in this mill is from 1.40 to 1.50 marks per day. Would you call this "sufficient" wages? No, these are miserable starvation wages. The fact that the owner of this factory has risen to the post of an honorary member in a Catholic Trade Union cannot alter this fact. What is the Church—which is so powerful here in Bamberg—doing to prevent the workers from being subjected to such starvation wages? The Church is not interested in wages at all; the Church merely seeks to keep the workers contented.

Now, we do not ask that the Church do anything for the workers; all we ask is that the Church leave to the workers their liberty of regulating their politi-



cal and trade union affairs by themselves, as they consider to be their duty; let not the Church appoint itself to be our guardian. But the Church, unfortunately, is very much interested in the workers, and this interest is due solely to the fact that the Church wishes to maintain the workers in a condition of slavish dependence on the employers. It is this which we are combating to the utmost.

Herr Schädler also said that the Church had never deceived and exploited the workers, but that the Church never says to the workers—on the other hand—that things might be different if things should be turned topsy-turvy—lest you do not know it, I must inform you that Herr Schädler now means the Social-Democracy. This is very cheap talk. If by his “turning things topsy-turvy” he means revolution, let me tell him that the Social-Democracy has not yet made any revolutions, while the bourgeoisie has several to its credit.

The great English revolution, which ended with the beheading of Charles I in 1649; the great French Revolution of 1789-1795, in which Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette had to place their heads on the block; the Revolutions of 1830 and 1848-1849, which even affected Germany, were bourgeois revolutions without exception. And yet, they were very beneficent revolutions, for without them we should never have been where we are to-day.

## WE SPEAK FOR THE MASSES

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, December, 1904.)*

WE do not speak here on your account, for that would be casting pearls before swine, but we speak here for the masses outside, for the millions who have sent us here and sent you here. We still have an opportunity to enlighten those who are outside; we may still gain them; it is to them we would say what we think, and not to you.

## BACK TO THE VILLAGE

*(From the speech "Class Politics and Social Reform," delivered in the Reichstag, December 11, 1897.)*

THERE is no doubt that a portion of the country population is hastening—as it were—to the towns; it is true, furthermore, that the country population, or, to put it more correctly, that portion of the population which lives principally on agriculture, shows a considerable relative decrease as compared with its former status, in fact, also an absolute decrease. It is a fact that the agricultural population has been decreasing for the last twenty years, while the population of the cities, on the other hand, the industrial population, and the population that is occupied in commerce and industry, show a tremendous increase. This means a complete revolutionizing of the population with regard to its social existence and its social situation. Gentlemen, it will be impossible for you in the long run to retard this evolution; it is contrary to the nature of things to expect that you will be able to maintain agrarian conditions by artificial means, conditions that are in contradiction with the general trend of events. You may do what you will, yet the phenomena which

are the cause of your complaints will support me in my contention. You will never again be able to produce in the country those conditions that you desire.

You yourselves will not be able to deny the fact that conditions in the country are in part of such nature that you are forcing your workers with all your might into the industrial districts. Then how can you believe that a man who has some half-hearted claim, after all, to be considered as a human being, will be contented with a situation like the one created by the existing *Gesindeordnung* for the workers in the country? This condition is one which the workers cannot accept in the long run, which they must ultimately attempt to escape. If there is any place in Germany where corporal punishment is still used as an everyday matter against the workers, that place is in Eastern Germany, on the large estates to the east of the Elbe. It is a self-evident matter that no working group will consent to accept such treatment in the long run, particularly if workers of this type have already spent two or three years in the barracks of the cities and have become accustomed to town life. You will never again be able to get these workers to return to the country. The same militarism which you, gentlemen, are supporting with all your might, is playing its part in ruining you, for it impels the workers to remain in the industrial districts after

their discharge from the army, in the large city, and no longer to return to their homes in the country.

I have before me an article by an East Elbian peasant in the *Deutsch-Soziale Blätter*, which states that another very essential element in making the workers unwilling to remain in the country is the fact that they are obliged to work for inhumanly long hours.

If our party should to-day make the demand that you introduce a normal working day in the country districts, you would raise the most powerful opposition to such a motion.

A second reason assigned by the peasant I have just mentioned for the exodus of workers to the cities is the bad food they obtain in the country. He says the food given the workers in the country is most monotonous, and of such character that the workers soon get tired of it. In this connection, I could place a large amount of very interesting material before you, tending to prove that the conditions of life, particularly the sleeping accommodations of the working men and working women in the country, represent a state of affairs that is truly shocking

The document that has been submitted to you by the Prussian Government, in which measures are pointed out that have been taken in order to encourage agriculture, expressly emphasizes the fact that there are in the eastern provinces numerous

workers' dwellings which do not satisfy even the most modest demands of comfort.

These houses are for the most part in the most wretched and primitive state, with practically not a trace of planking or regular windows. In the Province of Prussia it was ascertained that numerous families on the estates of that region live in what are practically caves, having nothing but holes in the walls for windows, to permit a little light to enter; these caves can hardly be called human habitations.

In the face of such conditions, gentlemen, you need hardly marvel that matters have taken the turn with the workers that they have taken. In fact, these conditions will become even worse for you.

The fact that the conditions in the eastern part of Germany are as horrible as possible is furthermore proved by the situation that—although effort has been made for some time past to employ chiefly Galician, Polish and Russian workers, who indeed have not become accustomed to making very high demands on life—even these workers leave their places of employment in hosts after a short time and either return to their old homes or travel into the west of Germany.

Under these circumstances it will never be possible for you to consolidate the rural conditions. In fact, these conditions will, of necessity, become worse and worse all the time.

## THE VICTIMS OF MARCH DAYS

*(From a speech delivered in the Reichstag on March 18, 1898, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Berlin uprising of March 18, 1848.)*

GENTLEMEN, if anything in the world is true at all, it is the fact printed in a newspaper which appeared to-day—and not a Social-Democratic paper either—which describes the edifice of the German Reichstag as the finest monument to the March Revolution. This building stands as an embodiment of the thoughts and ideas for which the so-called “rabble” fought on the barricades at Berlin in 1848, exactly fifty years ago, at about this very hour of the day. And you will hear more of this “rabble”; we shall not forgive you that for a long time. It is an infamy without parallel to designate the men who then offered up their lives and fought for their ideals with such a term as “rabble.” I repeat it, it was an outrage to call these people “rabble.” You may shout as much as you like! You called them a “rabble.” Have you read through the list of names of the men who were massacred by the soldiers during the night between March 17 and March 18? Have you gone through the list of these names?

Here they are; I hold the list in my hands; there is not a single foreign name in all the list of the 185 corpses whose blood reddened the pavement of Berlin that night, together with the blood shed by many hundreds of wounded men. Not a single foreigner; no Frenchman, no so-called Pole! It is disgusting, gentlemen of the Right, that you have the impudence—in view of this historical fact—to speak under these circumstances of a “rabble!” These men did in the year 1848 what you pretend to have done in 1870, and what you still boast of having done. If the events of 1848 had developed as the people’s champions of that year intended they should develop, the events of 1870 would have been unnecessary; the German Empire would have been founded in 1848 in a far more powerful and splendid form than that in which we behold it to-day; it would never have been possible for a Bonaparte to draw Germany into war.



## DISCIPLINE

*(Delivered at the Magdeburg Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, 1910.)*

IF I, as a Social-Democrat, enter into an alliance with the bourgeois parties, you may wager a thousand to one that it will not be the Social-Democrats, but the bourgeois parties who are the winners; we shall be the losers. It seems to be a law of politics that wherever Right and Left unite, the Left loses and the Right wins. The best evidence of this you have had yourselves in the much derided (by you) Bülow Bloc. This was the same thing on a large scale that you have attempted in Baden on a small scale. What is the necessary consequence of such an alliance between me and my sworn enemies, who necessarily think and act differently from the way in which a Social-Democrat thinks and acts? If I enter into a political relation of friendship with a party fundamentally opposed to mine, I must necessarily adapt my tactics, *i.e.*, my mode of conflict, in such a way as to prevent the alliance from going to pieces. In other words, I cannot criticize as I like, I can no longer fight in accordance with rigid principles, for this would offend my new allies; I am forced to be silent, to cover many things with the

mantle of charity, to justify many acts that cannot be justified, to whitewash what should not be whitewashed. These are the necessary consequences of a bloc, and they have been apparent in other fields, too. . . . *Videant consules!* Let the consuls see to it that the commonwealth suffer no ill—this was a principle generally accepted in Rome. I say, let our party members see to it that the party leaders inflict no harm upon the party. Let there be a democratic mistrust, and I say it again, a democratic mistrust of every one, without exception, without excepting even me. Keep your eyes on your leaders; and keep your eyes on your dangers, too. . . .

Now, it is self-evident that the party members will not consent to have a section of the party treat with contempt a measure adopted by the majority, a measure of fundamental importance for their practical activity in the Diet; it will not permit this section to act as if this measure did not exist at all. It is inadmissible to have a group of deputies pursue their own way, possibly because they consider themselves to be creatures of a higher order. For I must tell you that there are persons among us who believe that they have become men of a higher type as soon as they hold a parliamentary mandate. If these men imagine that they can trifle with the party at their own whim, I see no reason why every member of the party should not have the same right. If our much lauded personal liberty is to be the final

criterion, where shall we land, what is to become of us, if every man shall have the right to say: "I feel that a certain resolution oppresses my conscience, and therefore I take the liberty of acting contrary to it?" Such a condition would preclude the possibility of any party life at all. Even if a much more insignificant party member has transgressed on a much smaller scale against a party measure than these men of Baden have done, he is kicked out of the party; we show him the door.

## THE GRANTING OF THE BUDGET

*(Delivered at the Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, Nürnberg, 1908.)*

YET, in spite of this, we must actually ask ourselves this question: "What is the present-day state in the last analysis? Surely there can be no doubt on this point. The present-day state is the political organization for the protection of bourgeois society and for the maintenance of bourgeois property; the present-day state is the protector of the bourgeois mode of production, *i.e.*, the right of the exploitation of man by man, the maintenance of the wage system, the maintenance of wage slavery in present-day society. This is the task to be fulfilled by the state, the task the state defends with all its resources as soon as it is assailed in any way, with all its might, with all its armed power. Well, comrades of the party, what is the main point in our eyes: our petty social success or our ultimate goal? Surely our main object is to abolish capitalist society, to transform the present-day state into a socialist state. It is this which we must keep before our eyes all the time. It is this aspiration which the governments most emphatically oppose, since they are the representatives of bourgeois society.

Our voting for the budget, under these circumstances, is equivalent not only to a recognition, but also to a support and to a maintaining of the system which it is your duty to oppose according to your platform.

## A CHILDISH CONCEPTION

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, February 26, 1907.)*

THERE is nothing in common between the Zentrum and us. No doubt we have been forced, on numerous occasions, in the social-political arena, after our own propositions had been rejected, to vote for the motions of the Zentrum, in order to save at least something. But, gentlemen, we have voted together with every party, now on one side, now on the other side, and I even remember cases in which the extreme Left and the extreme Right have stood together alone, although I admit this was only when we were in the minority. Such a condition is a self-evident consequence of parliamentary life. Parliamentary life is based on compromise, and when you find a parliament like the German Reichstag, which consists of so great a number of parties of all kinds that no single party can count on constituting a permanent majority, either by itself alone, or in conjunction with other parties, it is of course evident that, depending on the nature of the bill considered, there will result the most motley agreements between the various parties, agreements which often are incomprehensible to those who stand outside. We have had this condition in the German Empire as

long as we have had a German Reichstag, and it is truly a childish conception of our internal political conditions, and of the conditions in the Reichstag, to make of such a situation a charge to be raised against this party or that.

## THE SWAMP

*(Delivered at the Dresden Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, against the Reformists, 1903.)*

It is always the same old struggle; on one hand you have the Left, on the other is the Right, and in the middle is the Swamp. The Swamp means the elements who never know what they want, or, to put the matter more correctly, who never say what they want. They are the "wise guys" who always prick their ears as if to say: "Which way is the wind blowing now?", who always try to ascertain which side has the majority, whereupon they move in that direction. We have men of that stamp in our party also. The great number of them have revealed themselves in the course of these transactions. We must denounce these party members, yes I repeat it, we must denounce them so that our comrades may know what half-hearted wretches these fellows are. When a man will at least declare his point of view openly, I know where I am at; I am then in a position to fight him; either he or I will win the upper hand; but these rotten characters who always worm their way out and evade every opportunity for a clear decision, who keep telling you all the time: "Are we not all united, are we not all brothers?"—these fellows are the worst of all! It is they whom I fight hardest!



## THE MORTAL ENEMY OF BOURGEOIS SOCIETY

*(Delivered at the Dresden Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, 1903, against the Reform Socialists.)*

I INTEND to remain the mortal enemy of this bourgeois society and of this order of the state in order to undermine it in the very conditions of its existence and—if I can—to eliminate it.

Revisionism distinguishes itself chiefly by its quality of extreme modesty. . . . This movement will be satisfied with the least possible accomplishment; it will not push matters to a head, it seeks to avoid excitement, to avoid dragging in the masses. . . . The revisionists think thus: "The more modest we are, the more easily shall we carry off the victory," but I say, "The more modestly we express ourselves, the less we shall get." In his *Capital*, Karl Marx has said: "While it is impossible to eliminate any of the necessary phases of evolution, it is quite possible to shorten their duration." Oh, I tell you, there never was a greater *realpolitiker* than Karl Marx, who is so little understood in our ranks. You cannot eliminate an essential phase of evolution, but you can cut it short. Our entire

activity has the purpose of shortening the duration of the phases of evolution, with the object of bringing about the socialist order of society. But the revisionists pursue precisely the opposite aim: "Oh, do not go so fast! Do not push so!" These may not be their words, but the sense is there: the masses are not yet mature for action! They tell us "How can you imagine that these masses would be able to utilize the government power, if it should fall into our hands this very day?"

I should answer them, as follows: "Please, do not rack your brains over the troubles of others! How can you know how much intelligence we shall have on our side, once we get the masses on our side?" In fact, what do you know about the intelligence of the masses at all? You have absolutely no suspicion of it! In every great popular movement, the right men have always been forthcoming at the proper time. And if there ever has been a great cultural movement in the world's history, which has always produced its right men and its right women, too,—it is the Social-Democratic movement. If, as a result of some circumstance or other, we should succeed in forcing our opponents from their seats and occupying them ourselves, you need not worry as to whether we should know what to do or not!

## WILHELM'S HUNS

*(Delivered in the Reichstag at the time of the  
Boxer War in China, 1900.)*

HISTORY still considers it to have been one of the greatest crimes perpetrated by Charlemagne, to have caused five thousand captured Saxon warriors to be slaughtered at Verdun. It now appears, to judge by all the data at our disposal, that far more than five thousand Chinese—not counting women and children—have been murdered, not only by the German troops, but by all the armies gathered on the spot, although these persons had not been captured with arms in their hands. In fact, it seems to have been a veritable man-hunt. As soon as a Chinese is caught sight of within a military line, he is shot down like a hare, like a hunted beast. Merely to read of these things makes your heart freeze in your body. And the worst part of it is that you must ask in vain: where are all the teachers of Christianity, the hundreds of thousands of men, whose professional duty it is to spread the Christian doctrine, where are they and where is their protest against such Christian barbarities? I have not heard a single voice thus far. Has the Christian lust for revenge not yet been satisfied? Has the Christian

God not yet had enough offerings of thanks in the form of slaughtered men, women and children? Have we not yet burned down and devastated enough towns and villages? Must we continue to destroy more such villages? Winter is now at hand; hundreds of thousands of human beings have been deprived of the most necessary resources and are now wandering about homeless and starving in the fields. There is no doubt that thousands upon thousands of them will die without finding mercy. And all this is the result of a murderous punitive expedition, sent forth in the name of Christianity.

## THE CROWN PRINCE SPEAKS

(*Delivered in the Reichstag, 1907.*)

It is not sufficient that the Emperor should speak thus against us; now his son, the Crown Prince of the German Empire, comes out, too, and emulates his worthy Sire. This young gentleman of twenty summers comes out and speaks of our party as a party of *wretches*. Let me ask, what has this young gentleman done in the world to consider himself entitled to speak in this tone of the Social-Democratic Party? If they speak of us as a "party of wretches," we might let that pass; we shall not become angry at that; this name will ultimately become an honorable distinction for us, just as the name *Gueuses*, or beggars, became an honorable distinction for the Dutch nobility and the Dutch bourgeoisie when the Spanish conqueror was devastating the country and was being fought by the Dutch nobility and the Dutch bourgeoisie. These men accepted the approbrious epithet of *Gueuses* as a name of honor. Perhaps some party congress of the Social-Democratic Party in the near future will adopt a resolution that we shall henceforth call ourselves "the party of the wretches." If we did this, we should be throwing the gauntlet into the faces of

these gentlemen. But I should think that, for the present, this young man might find better tasks to occupy himself with than to deliver speeches and indulge in such attacks against us.

This young man who, according to all human probability, may still have to wait a very long time before he ascends the throne, ought to choose a better part than to stamp himself at so early an age as a most vicious enemy of the German Social-Democratic Party. I mean this: Such an attitude might not even be entirely profitable to his career as a future German Emperor; for in the meantime the German Social-Democratic movement might have gained even far greater power than it has to-day, and perhaps it might not be possible for him to continue to speak of us as "wretches."

## WILHELM'S RETINUE

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, 1902.)*

WE have all the Cæsarism and Byzantinism in our country that we need. Certain conditions and situations in the German Empire to-day can only be paralleled by similar situations and conditions in the Rome of the Cæsars or in Byzantium, during the period of decline. We have in our country a system of climbers, a practice of servility such as never has been found in worse degree in any nation; particularly is this the case among the upper classes in Germany. Any one who has even the slightest acquaintance with these circles, who has even a modicum of information of their goings on, will be able to tell you the degree to which cowardice, lack of character, base ambition and servility are prevalent in those strata of society. There is a complete absence of courage in the expression of convictions which might arouse any objection from those higher up.

## THE POLITICAL MASS STRIKE

*(Delivered at the Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, Jena, 1905.)*

WE Social-Democrats are therefore in the favorable situation in which we continue to grow regardless of all the attempts of our enemies against us. We must continue to grow because the capitalist order of society is growing and is continuing to produce in higher measure the conditions that give birth to new socialists. Just as little as it was possible to gain the mastery over us under the Socialist Law, just so little will it be possible to control us by resorting, on some future occasion, to new deeds of violence. I know many persons in our ranks who even long for the day on which this may come. Then we should have an opportunity to show once more the manner of men we are. We succeeded in showing the police power quite a number of things during the twelve years in which we were subject to the rule of the Socialist Law; how we did dupe and fool them! But it is not only the economic class contrasts that are constantly growing; the political class contrasts are also becoming sharper. The ruling class, the bourgeoisie, by virtue of its resources of power and its social position, considers it



self-evident, in fact, it considers it to be—and it says this in spite of the fact that it does not believe in God—a divinely ordained condition that it should hold the state power in its hands, that it—to use Bismarck's words—has its hand on the doorknob of legislation, in order that it may influence the laws passed, according to its own will, *i.e.*, according to its own interests. The bourgeoisie says to itself: "We possess all the huge fortunes and we pay the taxes; therefore we also must constitute the state." Yes, I suppose if these gentlemen had earned these fortunes with the sweat of their brows, we might consent to negotiate on this basis. But these fortunes were earned with the sweat of *your* brows; it is with the immense surplus that you create for them that they pay their taxes! This humbug, this hocus pocus, which would assign all manner of rights to the rich, merely because they are rich, has always been resorted to, and great masses have been duped by it, otherwise there would now be nothing but Social-Democrats. The economic power of the bourgeoisie has grown enormously during the past fifteen years, particularly during the past ten years. You cannot have any idea of the tremendous proportions of the fortunes that have been made during the past ten years by the syndicates, cartels and trusts of the class of factory owners and capitalists. It would be interesting for you to know what this bourgeoisie squanders, lavishes and wastes because

it no longer knows what to do with its money. What is spent to-day among the bourgeoisie—and this may be best observed in Berlin—is hardly out-distanced by the riches that were lavished in the most corrupt periods of the Roman Empire, when guests were served with peacock's tongues and *murænae*, that had been fed on the flesh of slaves. I have been assured repeatedly by people who are well acquainted with the facts that it is not a rare thing to pay for a single meal in a big banquet in Berlin as much as twenty thousand marks, or thirty, or forty, or even fifty thousand. These are sums compared with which the salaries of our ministers are insignificant. And for this reason you find that the bourgeoisie frequently buys up the able officials by tempting them to leave the service of the nation and the state and offering them salaries triple and quadruple as much as their official salaries, and compensating them for their lost pension rights by endowing them with funds, the interest of which far exceeds anything they might have expected in the way of a pension by continuing their official careers. Through these former officials, it is then quite possible to exercise a very large influence on their former colleagues in the ranks of the government and the ministers. Thus they gradually gain a hold on the legislation and on the government. This is a mode of influence exerted by the junkers and the industrial magnates of which the great masses have

not the slightest idea. It is these conditions which we must cry out in the land; it is these conditions which we must post on all the doors; so that the people may know how it is being deceived and exploited.

If you believe that the Zentrum has any political principles, you are mistaken. It has no other principle than that of strengthening the Church and thereby strengthening itself. The Zentrum advocates only the divinely ordained order of society. But this divinely ordained order, in the Zentrum's eyes, never means anything more nor less than the order of society useful to the Zentrum, the order of society that strengthens the power of the Church and the Zentrum. In the course of centuries, the Church has managed to adapt itself to every possible form of state and to every possible order of economy, and I tell you, comrades, if ever the time should come for the final decision, and the Zentrum should be obliged to admit to itself that it can no longer hope for victory over socialism, I will wager a thousand to one that these preachers of Christian charity, who now advocate the bourgeois order of society, as they once favored the feudal and the ancient slave order, will be found advocating socialism. And I tell you they will go about it with a severity and a clarity of purpose, compared with which you are mere amateurs; they will prove that the New Testament, in such and such a passage,

unequivocally and outspokenly advocates communism, in fact, that there never has been any such thing as a difference between the Catholic Church and socialism. That is what the Zentrum will do one day, if it cannot do otherwise; but, of course, it will not find very ready listeners in us. Elm says that the political leaders would be by no means embarrassed if exception laws should again be abolished, for such laws could only lead to the tactics we resorted to in 1878! This statement is entirely correct. During that period, secret organizations grew like mushrooms, out of the ground: we played with the police as a cat plays with a mouse. It was a delight, almost a vice, the way in which many of our comrades trifled with the police. And when we are among ourselves, our favorite theme of conversation is our reminiscences of the beautiful days in which we led the police about by the nose, in which we hoodwinked the police at every step. And even though quite a number of our comrades had to go to jail—well, we shall soon all have been in jail, and we may yet live to see the day in which any one of us that has not been in jail at least once will not be considered quite reliable. What a wretched party it would be that would permit itself to be intimidated by the prosecuting attorney and by the penal laws into relinquishing its duty to defend its rights as citizens and human beings. At this very moment we are reading of cases in con-

nection with the Russian Revolution, in which thousands of our comrades—men as well as women—risk their all, including their lives, and shall we not have the courage to suffer a few months of prison or even worse, in order to retain those rights which we already have? It would be foolish to accuse us of desiring to bring about a revolution when it is recalled that all previous revolutions have been made by the bourgeoisie. To be sure, the bourgeoisie did yield a few rights to the workers, but the most decisive right, the right of suffrage, is still denied them as long as it is possible still to withhold it. According to the same logic, therefore, by which all oppressed classes in the course of history have attempted to seize the state power, with the purpose of transforming state and society according to the dictates of its class interest, the proletariat, the last of the oppressed classes, will also ultimately seize the political power, in order, with the aid of this power, to create such institutions in the social field as will make its authority indestructible. And finally, even the state will find itself superfluous, for in the new society there will be no longer any class distinctions, and the state, being a ruling and dominating authority, will have lost both the reason for its existence, and the possibility of its existence. But, until things come to this point—and it may still be a long time before then—we must aim to secure the state power at any cost. Comrades, it

would be contrary to all logic, it would be a spectacle of the most unparalleled kind, if so powerful a class as the modern working class has now become—mentally, physically and morally—would permit itself to be deprived, without a struggle, of that which all oppressed classes before it have always claimed as a self-evident right. We also must succeed in this; the question of the manner will depend on the political situation created not by us, but by our opponents. We can only say to our opponents: have a care; since you live in the twentieth century, you should at last have learned from history how far things may come if you think you may continue to rule forever against the will of the great majority of the nation. You cannot do it. Now, it has been proposed that as a last resort we should also have recourse to the general strike. Schiller says:

“Nichtswürdig ist die Nation, die nicht  
Ihr Alles freudig setzt an ihre Ehre.”<sup>6</sup>

Yes, but also a working class is worthless if it permits itself to be treated as a pack of dogs, who will not fight their oppressors. Just consider the case of Russia; consider the June (1830) struggle; consider the Paris Commune! By the shades of these martyrs, are you going to be incapable of suffering a few weeks of hunger in order to defend your high-

<sup>6</sup> “Worthless is the nation that will not gladly sacrifice its all for its honor.”—*Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, Act I, Scene 5.

est rights as human beings! I tell you, you do not know the German workers, if you will not trust them to do as much! What would Comrade Heine have said at Wyden in 1880, when the motion was put to strike the word "legal" out of our program? And yet, we passed this motion at that time, unanimously and without debate. (*Heine*: "You were right to do so!") Then we are right now, too, if we do the same thing when the case comes up again. We are not provoking an attack, we are defending ourselves. The political mass strike is not only a theoretical question, but an immensely practical one, it is the question of taking up a means of struggle which in a certain given case should and must be put to application.

The party congress should adopt a resolution accepting in principle the condition that, under certain circumstances, if certain preliminary conditions are fulfilled—and of course this means also the condition that the strike is feasible—our party leaders shall consult with the trade union leaders on the question of whether we shall carry out in practice what we have accepted in theory. If Heine says that the blood of the people is too precious in his eyes, I think I may answer that we should have sufficient confidence in every man present in this hall to be able to say that there is no one here who would trifle with the blood of the people. There is none of us who will shout carelessly for bloodshed. But if it

should come about, without our having sought it, that bloodshed should ensue, I tell you that on the day when this thing should come to pass, you would find me not in the rear guard but in the vanguard, as I have stood all my life in the first ranks. Comrade Robert Schmidt, replying to my observation that under certain circumstances the workers might have to starve along for a few weeks, sarcastically said: "It is all very well to hear Bebel say that!" I suppose he means that Bebel needs not to starve in such a case; but I assume that Schmidt also, even though he does not occupy the elevated position in society which I hold, is nevertheless in a sufficiently secure position to make it unnecessary for him to starve either. (*Schmidt*: "I do not want to see others starve either.") But, my dear Robert Schmidt, in every big strike that lasts for any time, there is lots of hunger, and in this bourgeois world of ours, hundreds of thousands suffer hunger all their lives. When I was a boy, I suffered hunger, too, and for many years it was a great ideal of mine to have a whole slice of bread and butter to eat. For many years I worked for the most wretched pay, which then amounted to not one-third of the wages paid to-day. And during the ten years in which I worked as an independent lathe-worker, there were often moments when I did not know when I would see anything to eat. If things should go to the point where we workingmen should have to starve,



those among us who occupy the higher positions would be miserable dogs if they did not dig as deep down in their own pockets as possible in order to help out. He who would mislead the masses and refrain from telling them what is at stake would be a wretch indeed! And if we ever purpose really to make use of the mass strike, we shall not only inform the masses what it is they are facing, but we shall also tell them why we are making use of these means; for otherwise, we shall not be able to win over the masses to our view at all. It would mean an immense underestimate of the great mass of the workers if we should assume that the German working class would permit itself to be led blindly into a trap, even if one should go so far as to make the erroneous assumption that there exist men in the German Social-Democracy who could be so low as to entice the masses into a trap. Comrade Robert Schmidt also said: "Bebel's method of fighting the general strike reminds me of the method of a cavalry general." No doubt a hussar attack is quite useful at certain times, but if Robert Schmidt imagines that I should engage in a cavalry attack when facing rifles of small caliber, permit me to answer him in the words of old Wrangel: "You don't know me, not at all!" I do not know from what episodes of my political life Schmidt thinks he may infer the right to believe that I could be such an ass. No doubt I have many a stupid act on my conscience, but so has

Comrade Schmidt, but I suppose we should have to draw up a balance sheet to determine whose account would be the greater in a comparison of the two. The idea of a mass strike was a very important one among you young fellows at that time; Kampfmeier particularly advocated the strike with all his might, but now he considers the mass strike to be inappropriate even as a defense against an attack on the general suffrage right. He says that if the workers are to be deprived in the Diet of their suffrage right, they must emigrate to the South German States, a most remarkable view, and a still more remarkable modesty. With due respect to my South German comrades, I should like to say that if the general suffrage right to the Reichstag is to be jeopardized, I have my own ideas as to what will happen in the southern part of Germany. And what would be the use of still having ten million persons in the South German states entitled to vote for their diets, if the entire population of fifty million Germans is to be deprived of its general suffrage right?

As long as there have been revolutions in human history, there has never been a popular movement in which the great mass of the participants and interested persons were so enlightened, so well informed, so perfectly versed in the nature of the state and of society, and in the laws governing them, as is now the case in the modern socialist movement. This is

a condition that has never been witnessed in the world before. One must really have known the bourgeoisie of the years 1848 and 1849 in their incredible ignorance to appreciate the contrast. My hair stood on end when I heard even old people, who had fought in the Revolution, who had themselves spent four or five years, or even more, in prison, when I heard them express their complete ignorance and their complete lack of clarity as to the nature of the state and of government. How different is the case with the mass of the class-conscious workers! For instance, if we should have a competitive examination to-day, of the members of our party and the members of the bourgeoisie, on questions concerning political and economic matters, you would find the latter subjected to a severe defeat. This comparatively advanced mental level of the masses included in the social political movement is a powerful and significant factor of might, which is still much—very much—underestimated; but our opponents do not underestimate it. These men well know the mental nucleus which is contained in the Social-Democracy, and . . . we can confidently shout to our opponents: "If you think you can take up the struggle, we are ready for you!"

## PACIFISM AND THE ARMAMENT INDUSTRY

*(Delivered at the Congress of the Social-Democratic  
Party, Essen, 1907.)*

It is self-contradictory—in accordance with the self-contradictions characteristic of the entire bourgeois world—that while the diplomats are sitting in conference at The Hague, and while the monarchs and ministers are paying so many mutual visits to each other this summer, the situation is nevertheless more tense than at practically any time in the past. Armaments are proceeding apace. They have been doing nothing at The Hague thus far than threshing empty straw; the diplomats themselves obviously do not know how they are to kill the time. On the very day when King Edward VII and Emperor Wilhelm met at Kassel and fell into each other's arms, the English Government placed an order for three new battleships of the Dreadnought type. At about the same time, the United States Senate orders four great armored cruisers of immense size; all the resources of war are strengthened and improved as if war were to be loosed in Europe to-morrow: and yet, in spite of all these armament activities, we hear again and again the empty words: "We are peace-

loving; we do not want war!" The reason assigned for the armaments is the maintenance of peace. But in the course of time one really gets the impression that all these armaments are being created only for the purpose of providing a continuous flow of new business for the shipbuilders and munitions manufacturers, and of guaranteeing them additional millions in the form of profit.

## AMERICA'S VICTORY

*(From a state speech delivered January 22, 1903.)*

At the moment in which the Americans are beginning to enter into competition with ancient Europe in the military and naval fields, ancient Europe's position in these matters is precisely like its position in the economic and industrial fields. Just as the Americans managed to overshadow old Europe in this field by means of their inventions and improvements of every type, and just as it is precisely this immense technical evolution which is giving America its tremendous preponderance on the world market and will continue to impart such preponderance to America in the future, so we may rest assured that in view of the extraordinary energy and initiative of the Americans, and in view of the colossal, almost inexhaustible financial resources at their disposal, they will also be in a position to achieve hitherto unheard of things in the military and the naval fields also, once they make up their minds to go in seriously for such things, and, unfortunately, they are beginning to take up such matters quite seriously, for the devil of world politics has also taken hold of the Americans, and for the present they have begun with the creation of a tremendous

navy, with which they may engage England, or Germany, or France, etc., in successful combat.

The possible proportions of the American accomplishment in this field were shown early in the sixties of the last century, in the great Civil War, which lasted about four years and led to the final result that the Americans were able to exert an outright revolutionary influence on all the realms of military technology, the tactics of maneuvers, the art of siegecraft, naval construction, etc., and that all the immense steps in advance then taken by the Americans were later adopted, one by one, by the standing armies of Europe, becoming their permanent acquisitions. Such was the rapidity with which these improvements spread in those days; things will be even more interesting in the future.

We thus observe how, in this bourgeois world, each nation pushes out the other, in rapid succession, each one creating more and more means of destruction; how this makes necessary enormous armies, how it demands huge navies, until one day, of necessity, if ever there should be a great collision, a great collapse will also ensue, and I remember that you often have smiled at my remarks concerning this great collapse in the future. Yes, indeed, I tell you, gentlemen, such is the necessary goal of this evolution!

## THE GREAT COLLAPSE

*(Delivered in the Reichstag, in the debate concerning the Morocco Agreement, November 11, 1911.)*

THIS Agreement will enter into force, since we shall—we regret to say—have nothing to say about it. This new possession will be annexed to the German Colonial Empire. But I fear that France will not forget that in the midst of a condition of peace a strip of colonial territory of such great size was torn from its possession, and the German chauvinists will not forget that their wished-for booty in Morocco this time escaped them. I understand that they hold England responsible for their loss. And the nations will continue arming themselves, and arming themselves again, until one of the parties concerned will some day come out and say: “Let us rather have an end with terror, than a terror without end!” The same thing may happen as happened between Japan and Russia; either party may some day say: “Look here, if we wait any longer, things will go badly with us, for then we shall be the weaker, whereas now we are the stronger.” And then will come the catastrophe. Orders for mobilization will be given all over Europe and some sixteen or eighteen million men, the flower of the



manhood of the various nations, will be equipped with the most approved instruments of murder and set marching against each other in the field of battle.

But, in my opinion, this great mobilization will be followed by the great collapse. Oh, you have laughed at this remark before; but the collapse will come—it has only been postponed. It will not be we who will bring it about; it will be you! You are pushing matters to the brink; you are forcing us into a catastrophe; you will live to see what we have lived to see on a very small scale to-day (*a shout from the Right: "Oh, come off! The old problems are dead; there will be new problems"*). You have only one method, Herr von Oertzen; you can play no other string. You will live to feel the result; you will harvest what you have sown. The Dusk of the Gods, the downfall of bourgeois society is approaching. Be sure of that! It is coming! You are at present engaged in the act of undermining your own form of government and society, you are signing the death warrant of your own order of the state, your own social order. What will be the outcome? Behind this war stands general bankruptcy, universal impoverishment, universal unemployment, the great famine. Would you deny this? (*Shout from the Right: "Things are always better after any war!"*) Of course, I cannot enter into any private conversation from the floor. Any one who has an

objective view of things will not fail to see the correctness of my remarks. Just think of the trouble that has been aroused this summer by this miserable little Moroccan affair. Do not forget the well-known runs on the savings banks, the drop in the values of securities, the commotion in the commercial banks. This was a mere beginning; this was nothing compared to the real condition. But what do you think will happen when matters really become serious? You will then see conditions which no doubt are not according to your will, but these conditions will come of necessity—I repeat: not through our fault but through yours! *Discite moniti.*<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Virgil: *Æneid*, vi, 620. *Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere divos*: "Learn—having been warned—to do right and not despise the gods."

## THE BRIGADE OF THE WAR MONGERS

*(Delivered at the Congress of the Social-Democratic Party, Jena, 1911.)*

IF we should have war, I should propose that a special brigade be organized of these war mongers, to be named the "Brigade for Saving the Honor of the Fatherland!" And on their caps these brave warriors should bear the words: "Saviour of the Fatherland." The order in which I should send them into battle would be the following: first, the inciting editors and parliamentary deputies, the inciting big business men, in short, all persons who participate in the war promotion. These would have to be sent into battle first, in order that their rather corpulent bodies might serve as a sufficient screen for the honor of their country. This would have a tremendous effect upon us. But I am convinced not only that these persons will not go to war, but that they will even show considerable hesitation when they are asked to subscribe the necessary millions from their own pockets.

## THE BOURGEOIS REPUBLIC IS A CLASS STATE

*(Delivered at Amsterdam, 1912.)*

OF course we are republicans, socialist republicans. It has always been one of the most serious accusations brought against us, and this accusation was pronounced by Prince Bismarck and is now being pronounced by Count Bülow, as well as the entire German press, that we are republicans, that we oppose the monarchy. But do not think that we are violently enthusiastic over the bourgeois republic. Much though we envy you Frenchmen your republic and would like one for ourselves, we have not the slightest desire to have our heads bashed in for the possession of such a blessing!

But whether it be a monarchy or a bourgeois republic, both are class states, both are equivalent to a form of the state calculated to maintain the class domination of the bourgeoisie, both are destined to protect the capitalist order of society. Therefore, under both forms of the state, the legislation will be shaped chiefly in accordance with the interests of the possessing classes; the workers' interests will be considered only to the extent that this can be done without seriously jeopardizing the interests of the

governing classes. For, the moment the ruling classes run the risk of losing their political power, their economic and social authority will also be endangered. Yet, a republic has many advantages, as far as we are concerned, over the monarchy. But do not forget, that monarchy is not as bad as you paint it, nor is the republic as good as you paint it.

I tell you once more: we envy you in France your republic, but we envy you still more the general right of suffrage for all representative bodies; but I do say this: if we had had the suffrage right and the liberty to the extent that you have had them, we could have done a lot more with it than you have succeeded in doing thus far! And yet, when workers and factory owners come in conflict, even in your country, even the radical cabinets of your state will apply the state power in order to keep down the workers in the most brutal manner!

## WE SHALL PUT THEM DOWN

*(Delivered in the Reichstag during the operation of  
the Socialist Law.)*

GENTLEMEN, it is your desire to destroy us—you have not succeeded in doing so, and you will never succeed in doing so. Instead of destroying us, you have provided us with the conviction that our party in the course of future events will only be more and more strengthened. I am convinced, gentlemen, that the Social-Democracy will still exist after the last one of the sponsors of the Socialist Law has been gathered to his fathers. And I am convinced that the Social-Democratic Party will not only continue to exist, but that it will flourish and expand long after the time that the system which to-day torments and oppresses us has passed away. You planned to destroy us; but we will defeat you!

THE END

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

**Andrieux, Louis** (born 1840): Living French politician; police prefect of Paris, 1879; author of *Souvenirs d'un ancien préfet de police* (2 vols., 1885).

**Bismarck, Prince Otto von** (1815-1898): German statesman; founder of the German Empire; famous for his "Exception Laws" directed against the Socialist movement in Germany.

**Bamberg**: Railroad center in Northern Bavaria; important woolen mills; population (1919): 49,000.

**Boxers**: A Chinese secret order which took a leading part in the Chinese uprising against foreigners in 1900; the rebellion was put down by foreign troops, headed by a German military officer.

**Centrum**: *See* Zentrum.

**Commune**: *See* Paris Commune.

**Christian Communism**: For evidences of Communism in early Christianity, *see* Karl Kautsky: *Foundations of Christianity*, second edition, 1928.

**Congo**: Without a war, but probably under pressure of a threat of war, France ceded to Germany in 1911 certain portions of the French Congo territory (*see* Bebel's speech: "The Great Collapse"), the boundaries of which were fixed in 1912, affording connection at two points between the German colony of Kamerun and the Congo-Ubangi river system.

**Bülou, Bernhard Fürst von** (born 1849): Living German diplomat and author; Chancellor of the German Empire, 1900-1909.

**Dusk of the Gods** (*Götterdämmerung*): a music drama by Richard Wagner (1813-1883), depicting the ruin of the ancient German gods as a result of their own avarice and weakness.

**Engels, Friedrich** (1820-1895): Co-founder with Karl Marx of Scientific Socialism; *see* Marx, Karl.

**Freiheit** (German: "liberty"): organ of the expatriated German Social-Democrats in England.

**Frederick II** ("The Great," 1712-1786): King of Prussia, 1740-1786.

**Gesindeordnung**: Ordinances regulating the relations between masters and servants, and requiring the latter to show a "character-book" of testimonials on request. The provincial *Gesindeordnungen* were abolished by the Council of People's delegates (*Rat der Volksbeauftragten*) at Berlin on November 12, 1918.

**Hamburger Nachrichten** ("Hamburg News"): a newspaper appearing twice a day in Hamburg, founded 1792; "*deutsch-national*"

(National-German) in policy; used by Bismarck as his press organ after his dismissal from the Chancellorship (1890).

**Gueux:** The patriot nobles who from 1665 resisted the Inquisition and Philip II in the Netherlands. The word signifies "beggars," and was assumed by the league as a party from a chance epithet applied to them by one of the court party in addressing the regent, Margaret of Parma. They adopted as their insignia a beggar's bowl and wallet.

**Heine, Heinrich** (1797-1856): German lyricist, also the most fluent prose writer of Germany. While not a member of any revolutionary movement, Heine was impelled by his ardent hatred of tyranny to favor many indications of political discontent.

**Ihring-Mahlow:** Famous Prussian police-spy, entered Socialist Party as "Beltmaker Mahlow," unmasked as a stool-pigeon named "Ihring" and expelled from labor unions in February, 1886. He was largely responsible for the expulsion of the Socialist leader Paul Singer from Berlin on July 3, 1886. Interesting details on many Prussian police machinations during the "Socialist Law" will be found in Edward Bernstein: *Die Geschichte der Berliner Arbeiterbewegung*, Part II: *Die Geschichte des Sozialistengesetzes in Berlin*, Berlin, 1907.

**Heine, Wolfgang** (born 1861): Living German Socialist leader; member of the Reichstag (1898-1918).

**Kreuzzeitung** (Neue Preussische Zeitung): So named from the iron cross printed in its title, a reactionary daily organ of the old Prussian nobility and the Lutheran Church; founded in 1848 to oppose the rising tide of revolution. It still appears with unchanged policy at Berlin.

**Lassalle, Ferdinand** (1825-1864): A volume of this series is devoted to his writings and speeches.

**Liebkecht, Wilhelm** (1826-1900): One of the organizers of the German Social-Democratic Party; a volume of this series is devoted to his speeches; father of Karl Liebkecht (1872-1919), who is also represented by a volume in this series.

**Marx, Karl** (1818-1883): For an account of his life and work, see D. Riazanov: *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, 1927.

**March Revolution in Germany** (1848): see Karl Marx: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*.

**More, Sir Thomas** (1478-1535): English statesman and author; beheaded on a charge of constructive treason; see Karl Kautsky: *Thomas More and his Utopia*, 1927.

**Morocco Crisis:** See note (p. 92) of our Karl Liebkecht volume; also, in the present volume: Congo.

**Muræna:** An eel, considered a great delicacy in ancient Rome (*muræna helena*).

**Plato** (427-347 B.C.): Greek philosopher, pupil of Socrates; author of a political treatise: *The Republic*.



**Recke von Horst, Erberhard von der** (born 1847): living German statesman; Minister of the Interior, 1895-1899.

**Most, Johann** (died at Cincinnati, Ohio, Marh 17, 1906): German Socialist leader, who later developed anarchist tendencies; active in the American anarchist movement; see the volume on Liebknecht (Wilhelm) in this series; also, Franz Mehring: *Social Forces in German History*, 1928.

**Münzer, Thomas** (1489-1525): German Anabaptist; as contrasted with Luther (1483-1546), who was more or less of an opportunist, Münzer remained, in the Reformation struggles, a radical of stern revolutionary integrity. He was executed by a military court in the Peasant War. See Friedrich Engels: *The Peasant War in Germany*, 1926.

**Napoleon Bonaparte**: Bebel does not mean, in the text, the great Napoleon (1769-1821), but Louis Napoleon (1808-1873), the nephew of the first Emperor. This Louis Napoleon was the President of the Second French Republic, later Emperor of France (until 1871).

**Paris Commune**: A revolutionary proletarian dictatorship set up at Paris after the Franco-Prussian War, in March, 1871; it was put down with great slaughter of men and women by the reactionary General Galliffet in May, 1871.

**Realpolitiker** (German compound noun): A statesman who is proud of the fact that, though he may be governed by ideals in general, he nevertheless faces the *real* situation as it is. A realist in politics.

**Schaedler, Franz** (born 1852): Living German Catholic theologian and politician; made Deacon of the Cathedral of Bamberg in 1901.

**Socialist Law** (also "Exception Laws", 1878-1890): See Bismarck.

**Wrangel, Friedrich Heinrich Ernst** (1784-1877): Prussian counter-revolutionary general; entered Berlin, November 9, 1848, to put down the popular "excesses" and restore the authority of the monarchy.

**William II** (born 1859): third and last emperor of the German Empire; he is the "Crown Prince" mentioned in the text, and, curiously enough, his difficulties as emperor, as predicted by Bebel, were many; still living, in Holland.

**Zentrum**: The Catholic Party in Germany; one of the most powerful organizations in the country, frequently holding the balance of power in the Reichstag.

**Züricher Arbeiterstisnme**: Radical labor daily, published in Zurich, Switzerland.

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