THE COMING PEACE AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

BY

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THE COMING PEACE AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

A new era in the development of mankind is drawing near; we are witnessing one of the greatest evolutions in history, and it is difficult to foresee what will issue from this seething witches' cauldron. It is a certainty that more thans enough blood has flowed already; hundreds of thousands have fallen; a flood of tears has been shed by widows and orphans, by mothers and wives; a large part of Europe is in ruins, and the Old World will be rushing to destruction, if an end be not soon made to this appalling carnage.

This world-war not only affects the warriors who, armed with the most refined instruments of murder, seek like furies to exterminate each other, but also women, the aged, and children, who are treacherously killed by a bomb dropped from the air; likewise peaceful sea voyagers are sent to the bottom of the ocean by an invisible torpedo, whilst millions of fit men are mutilated in body or injured in mind. Death stalks about everywhere in all its shapes and forms; it knocks at every door in every village, and in many a cottage the aged mother lights the consecrated candle before the image of the Mater Dolorosa for the salvation of her son who fell a victim to the most bestial slaughter which mankind has ever beheld.

We are witnessing the bankrupty of Western civilization, human feeling is deadened, the morality of nations has vanished, every sacred right is trodden underfoot. The sword is the God of all, as in the period of barbarism. When will there come an and to this agony of the soul? When will the nightmare pass that oppresses our heart like lead; when, at last, will a time of peace return, and these years merely be a dreadful memory?

Neither the causes of this war nor the men responsible for it will form the subject of discussion at this Conference of the delegates of the neutral sections of the International; history at some future date will pass judgment upon that. But as to the real causes of this violent conflict there is but one opinion among socialists; it was predicted for years by Socialist writers and speakers as the necessary outcome of the passion for imperialistic expansion of the capitalist classes. The "deeper causes of this war are to be found in the economic antagonism of interests", says the Manifesto of the German Social Democratic Party in the Reichstag of December 2nd 1914. The truth of this Socialist criticism has by this time become all too plain, and though organised labour was not able to prevent the outbreak of the war, the time has now arrived to strive for peace, for a peace based on durable and sound foundations. With this noble aim in view the Socialist delegates of neutral countries have come to meet in our midst; from countries which, though not immediately involved in the war, must yet pay a heavy toll to the anarchy and malmanagement of capitalist society.

The fight for Socialism will increasingly become a keen struggle of the working class democracy against Imperialism, for it is this antagonism that will form after the war, as it did before, the basis of the class struggle of the workers in the various countries against the Capital which rules the world, against a social system fraught with terrible consequences.

If common sense could come into its own but for one moment, and the ranks — growing thinner every day — of the workers who are now intent upon taking each others' lives at higher command, would ask themselves: "why do we fight and kill?", peace could not be long in coming. For hatred is the last sentiment that fills the hearts of the French, German, and English workers, either within or without the trenches: "le soldat ne connaît pas la haine". They have little or nothing to gain by the continuation of the war, whereas they have already lost a good deal by it; in their eyes force of arms cannot be the chosen means of ensuring the triumph of right. Looked at from the workers'

point of view, this war is a gigantic mistake, and the conquest of territory an illusion to which they are averse and which, moreover, does not enrich the conquerers — excepting a few capitalists, their exploiters. It is precisely this economic slavery which they have been fighting in lifelong battle, and will have to fight again before long in co-operation with their fellow-sufferers of other countries, at whose breasts they are now forced to aim their murderous bullets.

Should this world-war continue for years, the capitalist system will be defeated owing to its own intenability, if not at the hands of the Social Democracy, and the bourgeois State will be dragged along with it to destruction. Let this be an earnest warning to the ruling classes not to overstrain the bow, and an admonition to the working classes "to be prepared and ready for action when the time comes". [1]) Should the Governments continue to persevere in their merciless bloodshed and ceaseless destruction, then revolutionary resistance of the proletariate (if only it were possible) would be sacred duty and the salvation of mankind. But alas! we must entertain no such hopes after the experiences of the last two years. If, however, every nerve be strained in all countries to compel the Governments by lawful means to make peace, they will hesitate to fill he ocean of misery and wretchedness still deeper, and the unanimous desire of millions of men and women will call halt! to further military violence. May this meeting be an incentive to such action! Such at any rate is our purpose in meeting here: to work in the interests of Peace.

This Peace has a twofold nature according to whether it is regarded from a military, or from a legal, economic and political point of view. The belligerents will pay heed mainly to the former; to them the might of arms constitutes the highest right. Anyone venturing to speak of peace to those seized by the frenzy of war is scoffed at or suspected; but it is the supreme duty of all neutrals to do all that lies in their power to promote an honourable and durable peace, convinced that in their hearts the Socialist

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[1]) P. J. Troelstra, „De Wereldoorlog en de Sociaal-Demokratie" (1915) p. 131. (The World-war and Social Democracy.)

ional disputes. For this purpose there must be established in addition to the existing Court of Arbitration: a. a truly permanent international Court of Justice, and b. an equally permanent International Council of Inquiry and Mediation. The States pledge themselves to take common action — diplomatic, economic, or military — should any State resoft to military measures instead of submitting the dispute to judicial decision or appealing for the intervention of the International Council of Inquiry and Mediation.

4. Reduction of Armaments by international agreement. The measures to be taken for the promotion of this object to include the abolition of the prize right at sea and the safeguarding of the freedom of the seas.

5. Parliament to be given a voice in the direction of foreign affairs. Secret treaties to be null and void.

Is it not as though we were reading the resolution passed at the French Party Congress of January 1915, or of the Copenhagen Conference (January 1915), or of the Conference of Neutrals at Stockholm (April 1916); of the Conférence des Nationalités at Lausanne (July 1916), or of the Socialist Parties of the Entente countries in London (February 1915), of Germany and Austria in Vienna (April 1915), of the Anti-War Council in Holland, or of the Socialist Women at Berne, all of which desire to subordinate the force of arms to international agreements and to the law of nations? On this basis the Social Democratic Parties will therefcre undoubtedly come to an agreement, for in spite of all, national hatred and racial prejudice are entirely alien to them.

NO ANNEXATION.

Every nation—so our best masters taught us—has a right to independence; conquest does not entitle the conqueror to encroach upon the independence of nations, unless the people affected desire it and express their desire by means of a referendum. Every nationality, whether it be based on common origin, language or traditions, even voluntarily united groups of various nationalities have a right to a free arrangement in matters concerning themselves.

Variety of nationality is a valuable factor of civilization and evolution. Prof. Adolph Wagner describes the principle of nationality as the „natürlichste, dauerhafteste, mächtigste, gerechtigste, woltätigste Prinzip der Staatsbildung und der Abgrenzung der Staatsterritorien". And our lamented Jaurès wrote from the Socialist point of view: "the nation is the treasure-house of human genius and progress"[1]; diverse influences of culture alone make a higher grade of civilization attainable. "Nations — declared Vaillant at the same Congress — are not only useful but indispensable elements of human development", though it is only in a Socialist community that they will display their full power. And numerous names of German, Swedish, Italian, Belgian, English, and Dutch Socialists might be mentioned, all of whom held the same opinion and protested vigorously against all oppression and crushing of nations, pointing out at the same time that "nationalism and internationalism form no antithesis, but are each other's necessary complements" (Hjalmar Branting). Small nations as well as big ones have an important function to fill, and have indeed done so in the past.

The International Social Democracy is, therefore, not a grey, uniform mass, but a many coloured texture of national Parties, each of them with its own history, and by whose experience the whole party profited; whilst each party, striving for increased power in its own country, received moral support from the World Federation called into existence in 1889 in Paris. It is the maintenance of nationality, which lends the working class the greatest power for fighting the ruling classes of their own country, whereas the domination of one nation awakens chauvinism, which inspires opposing classes with a feeling of unity detrimental to the Socialist class struggle.

Maintenance of equal rights for all nations as regards language also; to smooth the way for the free development of national culture; to promote democracy together with autonomy, because by making the will of the people prevail, all incentive to national quarrels is removed; this is what Social Democracy has been striving

[1] International Congress at Stuttgart, 1907.

for in all countries where different nationalities are assembled within the same borders. And it also recognised the right of every nationality to defend its independence with the sword, if need be. Domestic grievances must not be removed by any outside power, but must be combatted by forces from within, so as to create — by the conquest of political power — a stronger factor in the class struggle of the International. Thus the International recognised the right of each country to develop along its own lines.

To any Socialist Party inspired by such principles all ambition for conquest was, therefore, foreign; to their view all desire for annexation was an unmitigated evil; and this attitude still prevails to-day. "Our comrades abroad — so we read in the "Vorwärts" of September 27th 1915 — may rest assured that the German working class oppose any policy of spoliation to-day just as they have always done, and that they desire to set themselves against the subjugation of foreign nations as vigorously as circumstances will at all permit."

Every annexation, such was the lesson they learned from the war of 1870, forms a hotbed for international complications, and sows the seeds of fresh wars. Conquest can never be admitted to furnish a legal claim; any advantage thus secured is merely an "illusion" (vide Norman Angell), since it is no longer the seizure of a country but the investment of capital and financial concessions that ensure to the moneyed classes the advantages which they seek.

While, therefore, vigorously opposing all annexations, in conformity with the Resolutions of the International Congresses that tend to recognise and respect the right of nationalities, the Socialists must likewise reject any demand for indemnities of war. Such indemnities are indeed but another form of conquest, a kind of economic expropriation, sometimes attended with even more far-reaching results than the seizure of territory.

It is, however, a matter of course that Belgium, besides the recognition of her complete political and economic independence, must be compensated for the devastation which, in more forms than one, she has had to endure through no fault of her own. With regard to this question

there is not the slightest difference of opinion among Socialists of all countries in the world. Likewise, as regards Serbia, Poland, Finland, Armenia, Montenegro etc., it will — in striving after autonomy and federation — be easy to arrive at an understanding; not to speak of several other countries, for which it cannot be the task of this Conference to attempt to find the best solution.

This does not, however, refer to the burning question, which for nearly half a century has stirred up the feelings and formed a bone of contention, and must now at last be removed to make a durable peace possible, viz. the question of Alsace-Lorraine. This requires a few words.

According to French Social Democrats the re-conquest of these provinces, of which France was deprived by force, would not be annexation but the redress of a wrong once committed. The German Socialists want "einen Frieden, um den Preis der Abtretung von Elsass-Lothringen, heute so wenig als je; der einhellige Standpunkt der sozialdemokratischen Partie ist: Hände weg!"[1]. They consider that by this time these regions both economically and politically are far too closely tied to Germany; the loss thereof would in their eyes a "tötlicher Schlag sein für mehrere Millionen Arbeiter in der Bergwerks-, Eisen- und Stahlindustrie"[2]. Seemingly we are here confronted with an unbridgeable abyss; and yet agreement on this point is absolutely necessary, if there is to be any probability of a durable peace.

As a historical fact, Alsace-Lorraine has been inhabited by German races, and up to the date of the peace of Münster (1648) it belonged, after many changes of fortune, mainly to the German Empire, to which it was re-annexed by force of arms in 1871. During the last half century the German element had some influence, and immigration across the eastern frontier was considerable. At the present time, out of a population of 1.800.000, scarcely one tenth speak French, and in Upper and Lower Alsace no more than 1/20 and 1/30 of the population respectively.

[1]) H. Wendel, Elsass-Lothringen und die deutsche Sozial-demokratie (1916) p. 14.

[2]) Hue, in the Prussian Diet, February 18th 1916.

The notorious "Diktatur-Paragraph" has been done away with since 1902; universal suffrage has been introduced, and at the last elections for the Reichstag the Socialists gained 110.700 votes or one third of all the votes recorded, and Alsace-Lorraine sent 5 Socialist members (out of a total of 15) to the Reichstag. The demand for recognition as an autonomous Federal State met with increasing favour, but a referendum would not give a true representation of the popular feeling, unless the country were divided into four separate constituencies, permitting the French part of Lorraine round about Metz, German Lorraine with the capital of Forbach, and Lower and Upper Alsace, each to decide its own fate. But the cry: Alsace-Lorraine for the Alsace-Lorrainers!, which is also supported by the German Social Democrats, could only be realised if an Independent Buffer State could be ensured permanence and vitality.

It is a difficult problem, which, however, now calls for a definite solution, if we do not wish to face the prospect of a permanent war in the near future. Perhaps neutral arbitration might afford a way out, whilst the terms of peace below enumerated ought to facilitate the solution of this knotty question. The French Socialists cannot assume an irreconcilable attitude towards such a solution, seeing that they had already proclaimed their willingness to abide by the Treaty of Frankfort, and refused to approve of a war for the sake of Alsace under any circumstances. The war, once broken out, restored their liberty of action; but can it now be their desire to solve this question in a manner that must necessarily result in another and even more formidable war? This can hardly be expected, for by so doing they would give a new lease of life to militarism. This question is, indeed, essentially one of greater interest to chauvinists and capitalists rather than a Socialist question.

Everywhere a demand is raised for a Peace that will form the basis of a durable world-peace, but this is only attainable if powerful strides are taken in the direction of freedom of trade and of the open sea.

FREE TRADE.

The capitalist method of production, that is the great-industry, expands with irresistible force all over the

world; and unless an international regulation can be found for this development, the war of arms will be succeeded by an economic war, which is in itself a rich source of violent conflicts. Free trade alone will make the development of the productive forces of the various countries possible, separately and jointly, and to the good of mankind.

In order to ensure the supply of raw materials, to find markets for the manufactured products and favourable spheres for the investment of capital, the Powers strive for an expansion of their colonial possessions, and the power of the State is used to gain economic advantages for national capitalism. The State is thus enlisted in the service of Imperialism, the gun always having the last word. Were the theory of the open door applied, as indeed it already is in most British and all Dutch colonies, this race for colonies would cease to have a reason for existence, and this source of wars would gradually disappear. Free trade and a free ocean must therefore be striven for; and whilst the immediate abolition of all protective laws may still be a difficult task owing to the many conflicting interests involved, it can perfectly well be carried out in the case of colonial possessions, which would thereby lose much of their value. Any attempt to introduce wholesale free trade all of a sudden, would be Utopian, if only for reasons of State finance. For free trade as the symbol of the solidarity of mankind, such as was the hope of the pacifists of the last century (from Adam Smith onwards), is still in the distant future, though its realisation in oversea territories would support in an increasing degree a sentiment of international interdependence, in anticipation of a future wherein such interdependence will have become a reality. In the colonial sphere especially economic competition invariably assumes a political form, conjuring up the danger of violent colisions. Give everyone a chance of deriving advantage from the colonies without the necessitiy of conquering them, and the danger of war will be considerably diminished. There would no longer be any inequality of treatment between various nations as regards commerce, agriculture, mining concessions, public works, or railways; and this could be arranged by means of an International Convention placing all nations on an equal footing. That

done, the possession of colonies, — by which indeed even now only small sections of the people benefit, to the exclusion of the working classes — will no longer involve any appreciable interest, and the start the rulers could secure would be too slight to compensate for the burdens connected with the possession, and especially with the conquest of colonies. The development of capitalism along peaceful lines would no doubt thereby be stimulated, and, even as through the development of machinery and of technical science, conditions would thereby be called into being in favour of the coming of Socialism, when competition for the profit of the few will yield place to co-operation for the benefit of all.

With the abolition of the prize right at sea, which implies the application of the customs of war on land to the sea, a powerful factor for the increase of navies will be removed; "economic rivalry" in this sphere was, indeed, one of the principal causes of the present terrible war.

Another basis of the coming peace, upon which all Socialists and an overwhelming majority of our fellow-citizens are agreed, is

COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.

Sad experience has shown the imperative necessity of international disputes being compulsorily submitted to peaceful settlement. Peace Conferences may provide the conditions and organisation therefor (see Minimum Programme sub 3).

Item 5, which is directed against secret diplomacy, now universally condemned, requires no further elucidation. Its abolition would facilitate arbitration.

There are numerous disputes that readily lend themselves to judicial decision; but there are exceptions. As regards disputes concerning Manchuria or Corea, Persia or Morocco, a court of justice could do nothing but state that all parties concerned were simply intruders, none of whom possessed a shadow of right. In cases of this kind, which apparently offer no scope for arbitration, recourse may fortunately be had to mediation, the decision being left to a Permanent Council of Inquiry which in proposing a compromise would be guided by a

desire for the general welfare. Should any Power attempt to escape such control by refusing to submit to the decision of such a Conference, it would be lawful for the others to combine against and isolate it, thus depriving it of the power to do mischief. Indeed no important limitation of armaments will be possible until the policy of armed Imperialism has been superseded by one of pacific expansion which will substitute co-operation, mutual respect and confidence for jealousy and distrust. Compulsory arbitration of all international disputes must, therefore, be our aim, together with genuine guarantees ensuring compliance with the decisions arrived at.

This aspiration may count upon support even among the wealthy classes. Capitalism, being actuated by its own true interests, is not by nature bent on war. It prefers to expand and to gain profit without the use of armed force, which always entails heavy sacrifices of every kind, and involves the repelling, weakening or killing of many of its best customers, and the destruction of many millions of capital difficult to recover. It would be a rash assertion — and ,besides, dangerous to peace — that there can be no question of arbitration and gradual disarmament so long as the class struggle remains necessary. The abhorrence engendered in hundreds of thousands of people who have preserved some human feeling in their hearts cannot but exert a powerful influence.

Militarism, on the other hand, to which Imperialism is so quick to resort, is the negation of all morality and all humanity. It is opposed to democracy, which is perpetually growing and striving after justice, not in the least inclined to bend ist neck to violence of arms, and knowing now better than ever it did before that true prosperity can only be achieved by peace. What has already been attained in the internal life of each country — the rule of right over brute force — must sooner or later be arrived at in the mutual relations between States.

A FEDERATION OF STATES.

Another far-reaching reform — almost a revolution in the European interstate relations — which all Socialists

also look forward to with more or less confidence, is the establishment of a closer alliance between the various States. The present war will also have contributed to diffusing this idea — another instance of the force of the antithesis. Some future day will bring us the United States of Europe, though its image may now be concealed behind a fog of gunpowder. Once no change of territory is possible without the consent of the European Powers, and the ever closer contact and mutual intercourse make their influence felt, the establishment of a pacific federation will be merely a question of time. The Resolution of London, wherein the Socialist Parties of France, England, Russia, and Belgium, laid down their peace programme, is in harmony with this aspiration. One of our greatest thinkers, Karl Kautsky, also pleads for a federation of States of free, self-governing nations with complete free trade, and discribes this as "the world-policy at which Social Democracy aims". The Socialist Minister Sembat, too, declared that we must strive for a closer federation of States.

One may call all this "ideology", but Switzerland is herself a practical demonstration of the possibility of a federation of free States under the most unfavourable circumstances, notwithstanding great differences of language, religion, customs, and economic development, that is, notwithstanding centrifugal influences of all kinds. Grouping of Powers in one form or another has now become unavoidable. The establishment of a Central European Federation of States would merely be the erection of a funeral pile for peace. But the grouping of an increasing number of Powers, not in the form of dynastic alliances, but in a manner more like a coalition of Parliaments, might afford a solid foundation of the principles of peace now generally accepted as just, and become a potent instrument for the preservation of peace. When the working classes will have conquered political power, "the United States of Europe will be not merely possible but certain"[1]). But meanwhile, a much less close unity would suffice to abolish war and to put a stop to the madness of the race of

[1]) K. Kautsky, "Nationalität und Internationalität". "Neue Zeit", January 18th 1908. p. 36.

armaments. The minimum necessary to achieve that object is an organisation based on the model of the London Conference, but less limited in scope and more permanent in object [1]).

This achieved, the principal motive for armaments will have dissappeared, for no expansion will be possible except with the concurrence of the Congress or the Council of Powers. An international agreement for the limitation of the war budget, which indeed will be enforced by the shortage of money, will then be the obvious course, and an increasing measure of disarmament will be only a question of time and of the growing influence of democracy in the various countries, and that notwithstanding the bitterness now prevailing between the belligerents. The resistance of the military castes and of armament manufacturers and war contractors — these industries should in any case be nationalised — will be powerless to prevent this, because these efforts will be supported by numerous groups of capitalists who must already bear their share of the greatly increased burden, and wish to save the European States from bankruptcy. For unless the coming peace is succeeded by systematic disarmament, and unless that peace will rest on sound foundations, it will yield place to an even stronger militarism, and the economic downfall of Europe may be the result.

If the Socialists of all countries succeed in carrying through these terms of peace, the destruction of Germany (which some may still be hoping for, but which we ourselves merely regard as madness) is no longer necessary, for then militarism in all countries will have received a fatal blow. These are terms on which peace might be concluded to-morrow, and the nation which, in the midst of the present war, will be the first to raise the Palm of Peace, will have the blessings of the present and of future generations.

With this object in view, international Social Democracy will have to close its ranks; indeed it will be forced thereto by the heavy class struggle awaiting it owing to the economic consequences which this war of destruction will entail.

[1]) H. N. Brailsford, "The War of Steel and Gold" (Dutch Edition, 1914, p. 271).

THE ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE PRESENT WAR.

The economic consequences of the present war will weigh chiefly upon the working classes. Whereas not a few among the possessing classes draw huge profits from this war, the masses of the people live in dire misery, food is getting scarce and dear, hundreds of thousands of workers are losing their employment and their means of existence, and in the end death and destruction is awaiting them in the wet and cold trenches.

Many a small trader and shopkeeper has gone to the wall; house-owners have been unable to pay their mortgage interest, because the rent was not forthcoming; and working men await with dread the call of the furniture dealers for the instalments that are due. After the war agriculture will feel grievously the lack of men and horses; many a small farmer will see his land disappear into the hands of moneylenders, and this will stimulate the passing of the land into the ownership of big landlords.

If many have suffered heavy blows, there are some who have derived great benefits and have known how to draw huge profits from the misery of the masses. The manufacturers of ammunition, shipowners, big landlords, food contractors, and traders catering for the luxuries of the rich have made millions. The lower middle classes and the poor have only had increased cares, misery and sorrow from this war — which is but another proof of the injustice of the capitalist system. Both from a material and moral point of view this war has been a disaster for the working classes of all countries, neutral as well as belligerent, and vigorous co-operation of the non-possessing classes will be more than ever necessary to preserve them from further ruin. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of International Social Democracy, in spite of all that has temporarily divided them, to revert to that which permanently binds them, and to unite for a new and more difficult class struggle.

A large part of the national wealth has been squandered; the savings of centuries have been lost; enormous capital has been destroyed; industry has been uprooted, trade put out of gear. This world-conflagration has consumed the

fruits of the laborious work of millions of hands. And after the war, the most terrible disaster that has ever beset mankind, increased taxation and cost of living, the higher rate of interest, the consuming desire to recover the losses sustained, will strain competition to an unprecedented pitch. Diminished purchasing power will hinder sales, and capitalists, it is to be feared, will attempt to find compensation in an even more intense exploitation of labour, resulting in economic conflicts. Gigantic sums will be needed to make good the expenditure and the devastation caused by this war, to pay the interest on the inflated national debts, to resume the interrupted commercial relations and shipping. But all the attempts to escape from the increasing pressure of economic difficulties will prove mere palliatives, though they are sure to weigh heavily on the working classes. The class war will flare up fiercer than ever.

Even now, in the midst of the war, there is ill-will and distrust between workmen and employers, and strikes have occurred. What will be the position later on, when any number of fresh differences will crop up? Wages will be low, compared with the cost of living [1]); the screw of taxation squeezes the last drop out of the workers; the spirit of violence has grown among high and low. The State interferes ever more intimately in national life; parties and classes will confront each other more bitterly than ever before. Internal political economic struggles will be more violent than ever; the fight against capitalism and militarism will force itself upon the workers, and often they will have to sacrifice individual interests for the sake of the ideal.

The Trade Unions will find it hard to recover their former power, to re-introduce their previous rules, or to find a solution for the question of unskilled and female

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[1]) Prof. Verrijn Stuart calculated the increase of the cost of living at the end of 1915 — compared with July 1914 — at 30 % in Holland, 43 % in England, 78 % in Berlin, and 86 % in Vienna; it has become even worse since! The German working classes as a whole have been much more impoverished by the war than their British comrades and it is an indisputable fact that their losses in dead and maimed have been on a gigantic scale.

labour. Now that the war has withdrawn hundreds of thousands of hands from industry, those who remain find sufficient work at satisfactory wages, but what is to happen when the legions of soldiers return and demand work? "This activity during the war — Wibaut justly wrote [1]) — "is an economic disaster the like of which has never visited capitalism before", because instead of creating values or increasing wealth, it is merely concerned with destroying values as rapidly as possible, and with diminishing wealth; it therefore amounts to sheer and wanton impoverishment.

When more normal times return, are the old and young who have properly fulfilled the task imposed upon them, to be driven from their work, and the women to be deprived of the numerous callings that, under the pressure of want, they have filled with credit? If the finding of work for the millions of men returning from the trenches is to be left to free competition, to the law of supply and demand, wages will sink to starvation level, and a cruel injustice will be perpetrated upon the men who have sacrificed life and health to the country, where they can find neither work nor bread. The war has worked great havoc among the more intelligent and the most vigorous section of the population. Healthy workmen, who have got used to an open-air life, will perhaps be reluctant to return to the stifling atmosphere of factories and look out for other employment. Women und children are undeniably underfed. [2]) The productiveness of labour has been affected, and this will depress wages still further, and may lead to an increase in the hours of labour. The Government will, therefore, have to interfere very vigorously in this matter; they will have to demand sacrifices from the employers, and not leave the fate of the workers to the "free play of economic forces". State Socialism is in a fair way towards being realised. Numerous concerns will, partly owing to the exigencies of national finance, be managed by the Government; the number of State monopolies will go on increasing.

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[1]) "Weekblad" of "Het Volk", October 1st 1915.

[2]) An inquiry instituted in Stuttgart revealed the alarming fact that the number of miscarriages was no less than 50 to 60 % ("Socialistische Gids", June 1916, p. 462).

National Debts have risen to unprecedented figures and are still increasing. Apart from the merciless destruction of property, bridges, ships, buildings, railways, agricultural values, machines, etc., the loss of human capital and of gold is appalling.

The total war expenditure up to January 1st 1916 has been estimated by the "Association of Inquiry into the Social Effects of the war" at Copenhagen at about 160 million francs, whereas the war of 1870/'71, which lasted 210 days, cost less than one fortieth of that amount.

Germany alone had spent some 18 milliards of florins at the end of last year, that is 1½ times the value of her entire railway system, including stations and rolling stock. When Mr. Asquith was granted a war credit by Parliament for the sixth time, on February 21st 1916, the total had mounted up to over 17 milliards of florins, whilst the daily expenditure of Great Britain alone had risen to 52.8 million florins, and has since been far exceeded.

The following table is taken from "The Economist" of December 18th 1916, the figures being given in million florins:

	National Wealth	National Income	National Savings p. a.	Cost of War up to March 31st. 1916	Cost of War in % of		
					Wealth	Income	Savings
Great Britain.....	216000	27000	4500	19080	8.8	71	424
France.....	146000	18000	3000	22980	14.7	128	766
Russia.....	144000	18000	3000	20340	14.7	113	678
Italy.....	84000	10200	1500	4920	5.9	48	328
Belgium and Servia	33000	4200	720	3180	9.6	76	442
Allies total.....	623000	77400	12720	70500	11.3	93	564
Germany	192000	25200	4200	30540	15.9	121	727
Austria-Hungary ...	108000	14400	2400	17220	15.9	120	717
Turkey and Bulgaria	21000	2400	360	2520	12.0	105	700
Cent. Eur. All. total	321000	42000	6960	50280	15.7	120	722
Total of all belligerents	944000	119400	19680	120780	12.8	102	620

Much of the national wealth, the fruit of many years of labour and energy, has ended in smoke and powder, and at the end of the war the nations will be at their wits' end as to how to make good this huge waste of wealth.

The drop in the rate of exchange in most belligerent countries is in direct relation to the war expenditure. It is intensified by large quantities of paper money being thrown upon the market, and by the adverse balance of trade of most countries concerned. In April last the exchanges of England, France, Germany, Austria, and Russia were 3.5, 12.0, 24.0, 37.0, and 40.0 pt. respectively below the normal rate, involving a considerable diminution of purchasing power. The chief sufferers are the consumers and the working population, because the cost of living increases whilst wages are, in effect, decreasing. The manufacturers who made large war profits invested that money (some of them under compulsion) in Government securities which they will sell after the war. The result will be a further fall in the quotations, and the national credit will be undermined. A miracle will have to happen in more than one State, if its financial ruins can be patched up without repudiation of debt or declaration of bankruptcy. Even England and France, so strong financially before the war, will find it difficult to recover the interest on the 75 and 46 milliard marks respectively which they have advanced, largely to foreign countries [1]). War in days of yore was the father of national debt; the present war may very well mean sheer financial ruin to many States.

In the six largest countries the national debt has already been more than trebled. At the present moment the debt of the German Empire has risen to 49 milliard marks, against 5 milliards before the war, that is to say it has increased almost tenfold. At the end of 1915 the consolidated debts of the European Powers, compared with the state of the debts at the beginning of the war, had increased as follows: Italy by 14 %; Russia by 34 %; France by 62 %; Austria by 74.5 %; England by 16.5 %; and Germany by 515.5 % [2]). Their total debt during those few months increased from 110

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[1]) Lohmann. "Die Wirtschaftlichen Folgen des Weltkrieges", (1914) p. 15.

[2]) Report of the Swiss Bankverein, quoted in the "Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant" of January 15th 1916.

to 211 milliard francs, which (on the basis of 5 % interest and $^1/_2$ % for sinking fund) amounts to an annual liability of 16.6 milliards francs. As regards Germany, which before the war paid 170 million marks interest per annum, it already amounts to 2280 millions, which with pensions for maimed soldiers will be increased to something like 2800 millions. This will involve the payment of interest amounting to five eighths of the average annual increase of the national income during the years 1908 up to and including 1911.

The cost of the war up to March 31st 1916, expressed in percentages of the average annual increase of capital, was 280 % in Italy, 420 in England, 570 in Russia, 600 in Germany, and 680 in France; expressed in months of national income the figures were 6, 9, 14, 14$^1/_2$, and 15 mounths respectively. The tremendous taxation, which owing to the increase of the interest due on the national debt will have to be raised by 750, 825, 1000, and 1250 million florins respectively in Austria-Hungary, England, France, and Germany alone, will hinder the recovery of the National wealth. Looked at purely from the capitalist point of view, this war has proved an appalling madness; States have been spending beyond their capacity like wanton wastrels over whom trustees must be appointed. The heavy expenditure still to be expected even though peace were concluded to-morrow, cannot possibly be met by taxation, so that State monopolies will have to be resorted to. And the working classes, near breaking point under the burden of taxation and groaning under the inflated cost of living, have, with weakened organisations, to try conclusions with the capitalist class which, in its eagerness to cover its losses by big profits, will try with all its might to extract increased surplus value from its wage slaves. The more so, because the industries of Europe and, in particular, of Germany, will find excellent overseas markets closed to them, and because they will be confronted with powerful competitors, — the United States of America and Japan — who have assumed the part of the laughing heirs. New industrial countries are coming into being, especially in the Far East, leading us more and more in the direction of a "world economy" or world concern.

The working classes will thus have to wage their class struggle under much more difficult circumstances, whilst the capitalists, grown in power by the formation of big trusts and syndicates even during the war, will be able to offer stronger resistance than ever.

And if one desires to survey this awful hecatomb, this slaughter of men on a gigantic scale, the loss of human capital, the following figures, bringing up the total to March 31st, 1916, will suffice:

	Number of Wounded and Missing	Killed and permanently Disabled	Human Capital per head	Loss of Human Capital in Dutch florins
Great Britain	800000	235000	f 7200	f 1680
France	2000000	515000	„ 6000	„ 3120
Russia	5000000	980000	„ 3300	„ 3240
Italy	500000	140000	„ 4200	„ 600
Belgium and Servia	550000	130000	„ 4200	„ 540
Allies total	8850000	2000000	f 4584	f 9180
Germany	3700000	990000	„ 5400	„ 5340
Austria-Hungary	3100000	840000	„ 4800	„ 4020
Turkey and Bulgaria	600000	150000	„ 3300	„ 480
Centr. Eur. Alliance tot.	7400000	1980000	f 4968	f 9840
Total of all belligerents	16250000	3980000	—	„ 19020 or 19 milliard.

The "Economist" remarks in this connection, that the figures referring to dead and permanently disabled are here given much smaller than is generally estimated: 0.7 % of the total population in the case of the Allies, and 1.4 % in the case of the Allied Central Powers.

Since then the stream of blood has flown in increasing volume, and hundreds of thousands of fresh fellow-men have sunk down dying or maimed for life upon the ground already soaking in blood for so many months [1]).

[1]) Corvini has calculated in the "Revista Popolare" — on the assumption of peace being concluded before October 1916 — the total expenditure on the army and navy, on pensions, indemnifications, re-erection of destroyed buildings, relief of destitutes, maintenance

International trade has been completely disorganised and forced into totally different lines, because industries that had formerly been working for export, have become contractors for the army and navy. The total foreign trade of England, for instance, amounted to £ 1430 million in 1913, 55 % thereof being imports and 45% exports. In 1915 (according to the provisional figures) it amounted to 1270 millions, but of this total 69 % were accounted for by imports, and exports had dropped to 31 %. The foreign trade of France, Russia and Austria-Hungary during these years declined by 27, 50, and 44 % respectively [1]). There was a great decline of exports everywhere, in the case of Germany and Austria it has of course sunk to a minimum. On the other hand, the balance of trade of neutral countries is becoming active to an increasing extent. This applies, in particular, to the United States, whose exports between the years 1913/1914 and 1914/1915 alone rose from 55 to 62 % of the total. From being a debtor State the United States have already become the moneylenders of Europe, whilst Japan has for the first time in her history been able to redeem her debts to a considerable extent and even intends to lend money to China.

To remedy the most pressing troubles, the Governments, even of neutral countries, have found it necessary to interfere in the most drastic manner with the free play of economic forces. Foodstuffs have been commandeered, prices fixed, and the quantities anyone is permitted to consume have been regulated. Imports and exports have been placed under State control; Stock Exchanges were closed for a time, and dealings in securities prohibited. Compulsory rates of exchange have been fixed, and compulsory loans issued; private railways, factories and workshops have been placed under Government administration; the quantity and the kind of goods to be produced have been prescribed, and shipping freights forced to a certain level. In short, trade, commerce and industry have been "national-

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of prisoners, repayment of the debts within 50 years, loss of human producers through killing and maiming, and through diminution of production, at some 290 milliard francs. Such are the material losses caused by the war.

[1]) Parvus' "Glocke", 3rd Part. p. 95 etc.; 1916.

ised"; State Socialism forced its way through everything with a strong hand; and when capitalism proved its impotence to regulate production rationally, a step was made in the direction of the nationalisation of the means of production. And this line of development will undoubtedly make further strides after the war.

Even this bureaucratic regulation by the Class State has been a great step in advance in comparision with the anarchistic competition of the capitalists, and will after the war assist the efforts made on behalf of the Socialist co-operation of the future. Thus far we may welcome these measures. But International Social Democracy must resist with all its might the attempts of the dominating Powers to follow the struggle of arms by an economic war, by the formation of mutually hostile federations of States, by the waging of a commercial war "to the finish".

THE ECONOMIC WAR.

There is a tendency to make the coming peace "a continuation of the war with different means", and to follow up the war of arms by an even more violent struggle on the economic field. It is however, the task of Social Democracy to resist these efforts by an indefatigable and irreconcilable opposition. Even among Socialists voices have been raised favouring the formation (according to the proposal of Franz von Liszt) of a "Central European Federation of States" with Asia Minor, directed against England, Russia, and America [1]). This proposal went even further than that which the partizans of a "Central Europe", who have many powerful supporters among the wealthy classes of Germany, commonly contemplated, because it would involve an indirect encroachment upon the independence of the Scandinavian States, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

By way of counteracting this scheme, an "Economic Entente" of the Allied Powers is contemplated, and voices have even been heard demanding the destruction of Germany's trade and industry. The well-known free-

[1]) Paul Lensch, "Die Deutsche Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg", 1915, p. 61.

trader Monk has spoken of withholding from Germany the enjoyment of civil and commercial rights and of her former markets, and the Cabinet Minister Mr. Runciman desired "to keep Germany's trade out of the countries which she compelled to make such heavy sacrifices for the preservation of their free existence".

This would mean a systematic revenge, which would, moreover, prove a boomerang, for modern capitalism has made trade so complicated a business that damage done to another must necessarily recoil upon the perpetrator. British trade and industry are scarcely conceivable without re-establishment of relations with Germany, their best customer (next to British India) and their best supplier.

Two federations of States confronting each other, seeking to destroy each other economically in the midst of peace, breathing mutual hostility and engendering unrest, and with a fierce militarism as a permanent heritage — such would be the sad picture presented by Europe. It is, therefore, the task of Social Democracy to set its face against all these disastrous schemes. And it will be supported in this policy by the laws of economic development, thus making Social Democracy the bearer of civilization[1]).

Fortunately our French comrades are quite in agreement with us on this point. This is what Renaudel, chief editor of the "Humanité", writes:

"The temptation was indeed great to project measures of compulsion or prohibition — under pressure of great capitalistic interests — which would practically establish a permanent economic war throughout the world. In contradistinction to the dreams of annexations proclaimed with such singular impudence in Germany, we must be on our guard not to contemplate schemes equally monstrous".

And he wholeheartedly welcomes the words with which the Minister de Broqueville, as President, concluded the Economic Conference of the Quadruple Alliance in Paris:

"We are not taking measures for the continuation of the war after peace; we do not contemplate aggression but merely defence. We are preparing an Alliance that will be directed against War."

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[1]) "Het Volk", July 5th. 1916.

Whatever may have been decided upon at this Secret Conference, all is not based on firm foundations, and the hard law of necessity will make many a scheme vanish into smoke. For the countries of the Entente, which in 1913 exported to Germany goods to the value of no less than 3200 million marks, and imported from that country 3500 millions worth of goods, cannot carry through such a boycott. Russia will needs have to resume her commercial relations with Germany, France already views the protectionist schemes of England with suspicion, and all concerned will eventually abandon the mediaeval conception that sale of goods is profitable to the vendor only.

The Central European Federation, too, has, already met with the opposition of the great industrialists of Austria, and would nip in the bud the young, rising industry of Hungary.

There is, therefore, no cause for uneasiness in this respect (especially in view of the great influence of the French Socialists upon their Government) as far as the Entente is concerned, though a harder task is awaiting our German comrades, not only in this, but in another, even much more important matter.

However ferociously the Governments may be confronting each other during the war, no sooner will peace be concluded than the economic and political interests will again be all-decisive. The alliance now publicly concluded between Japan and Russia is a striking proof thereof and the fear of a resumption of closer relations between Russia and Germany is by no means a fancy so long as Autocracy lords it over both countries.

A durable treaty with Russia would be a brilliant success for the German capitalists and imperialists: Germany would find in her immediate vicinity a market (with 160 million people) for her industrial products, and in exchange Russia would supply corn, minerals, and other raw materials. From a military point of view such an alliance of the two most powerful armies of the world would be desirable and advantageous, but then Europe would be delivered to the most dangerous reactionary forces! Then the establishment of a hegemony over Europe, which has now failed, would indeed have succeeded, and the workers would be crushed

by a real tyranny. Then this imperialist war would have been but the beginning of the establishment of a stronger Tsarism in the service of organised capital and finance. We must therefore seriously face the question, whether "nicht am Ende des Ringens eine neue und engere Verbindung des deutschen Imperialismus mit dem Zarismus stehen wird" [1]). Should Japan, after imposing her will on China, join in, then the calamity to the working classes will be great beyond conception, and the never-ceasing war between Imperialism and Democracy will be decided, for the time being, by the victory of the former. For then — it is not presumptious to predict — the next war will be fought for the hegemony of the Pacific, wherein Germany, Russia, and Japan will be ranged against England and North America which, after its former rejection of all militarism, is now increasing its army and navy with feverish haste.

International Social Democracy must therefore exert its influence to the utmost, in order to prevent the war of arms from being succeeded by an economic war which, in its turn, would only be the forerunner of another armed conflict. It must resist every attempt to hinder commercial relations between belligerent countries, and it must oppose all duty on imports from such countries, under any pretext whatsoever.

Whilst combatting militarism and demanding the submission of all international conflicts to compulsory arbitration — Social Democracy must also strive to further good economic relations between the nations, so as to prevent as far as possible any differences from arising.

And all must collaborate in order to increase the power of Democracy and to avert the threatening reaction.

We must also strive for the maintenance of the f r e e d o m o f t h e s e a. For its "maintenance", because there w a s freedom of the sea before the war, and it will return automatically with the coming of peace. It is inconceivable that belligerent Powers who seek to destroy each other on land, should live at peace at sea; in time of war the sea will never be free to the weaker party. But that the sea

[1]) **Heinrich Laufenberg and Fritz Wolfheim, "Imperialismus und Demokratie", p. 14.**

should not be open to anyone in time of peace, would be an impossible state of things in modern society [1]).

Free nations — with free international intercourse, and engaged in economic competition based on varying degrees of technical perfection, with an international intellectual development, and mutually influencing one another — therein lies the future, but not in separation and mutual exclusion. This is what the Conference of Neutrals, too, must strive for, whose task it is to strike a blow for terms of peace in accordance with the principles of Social Democracy.

CONCLUSION.

Socialist criticism of the present social order has proved correct, for in the last resort the cause of this world war is to be found in the economic class antagonism pervading the capitalist countries. For this reason it by no means signified the collapse of the Socialist system — as its opponents assert — when the working classes, after having fought for peace with all their might to the very last moment, with insufficently strong organisations, did not prove powerful enough to prevent the war forced upon them by the ruling classes.

There is, therefore, no need to change any of the principles governing our attitude, but now it is our duty to limit as far as possible the terrible evil perpetrated by the Governments, and to see to it that it is not repeated in the future. It is now the sacred task of Social Democracy to expose the true character of this war, and by its indefatigable and irreconcilable fight to pave the way for the time when true human society will be established, and when personal and social, national and international freedom, will be one and indivisible.

International Social Democracy has ever been and will ever remain an organisation of Peace, an enemy to all militarist imperialism, the antagonist of brute force in the service of injustice and greed. The progress of civilization in the coming century is to no small extent entrusted to its care.

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[1]) W. Vliegen, "Geestesraadselen" in "Socialistische Gids", April 1916, p. 458.

For this reason it is not permissible to consider the matter from the point of view of the military situation, but we must take our stand "au dessus de la mêlée". The war has been going on for two years, with approximately equal forces, to the detriment of justice and humanity. But still each party hopes to conquer its adversary or to exhaust him by loss of blood, while all are bleeding from a thousand wounds. And though everyone knows that violence always breeds violence, yet it seems to have become the great aim of this war to find some safeguard against its repetition. They are fighting with such fierceness, we are told, so as to make an end of all wars in the future! This can only be described as a terrible bankruptcy for all its originators, but nevertheless it is the only good — though purchased at what a price! — which this catastrophe has brought about. But the war will not be overcome by the victory of any one group of belligerent Powers. Permanent peace will only be achieved by the victory of Socialism and of international right.

To demand the continuation of the war "until the territory is cleared of the enemy" is a narrow chauvinistic point of view, if this (otherwise justified) demand is contemplated not as the result peace, but as a success of war. Hatred and rancour against the enemy are bad counsellors in this as in all other cases, for the first thing that is necessary in the momentous times that are approaching, is unity amongst the real Socialists. United, the international organised working classes may conquer the world; torn by fratricidal conflict, they will prove impotent in spite of all their numbers, an object of derision to their adversaries. The lofty aim of Socialism can only be realised by harmonious co-operation in all countries where capitalism still rules, and it is against capitalism that the fight must be resumed, as well as against brute force and barbarism. We wholeheartedly endorse the words of the manifesto of the British Socialists which — notwithstanding all the mistakes and weaknesses that have been committed — does not doubt the victory of Socialism:

"We are told that international Socialism is dead, that all our hopes and ideals are wrecked by the fire and pestilence of European war. This is not true.

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

"In forcing this appalling crime upon the nations, it is the rulers, the diplomatists, the militarists who have sealed their doom. In tears and blood and bitterness the greater Democracy will be born. With steadfast faith we greet the future; our cause is holy and imperishable, and the labour of our hands has not been in vain.

"Long live Freedom and Fraternity. Long live International Socialism!"

When the war has run its course and the peoples gaze upon its results in dismay and full of horror, the judgment pronounced upon brethren by each other will be less harsh than it is sometimes now. Social Democracy will resume in all countries its task as the Party of Peace in the real sense of the word. The spirit of working-class solidarity, the sentiment of common interests will re-awaken, and the International will arise afresh in its full splendour, "for it has not ceased to live within our hearts"[1]).

It is, therefore, very necessary to inquire into the terms of peace that deserve its support. For the Socialist Parties will have to pay more attention and devote more of their energies than hitherto to international problems, to the policy of capitalist Governments who have been allowed for too free a hand. At the world-congress that is approaching the Socialist ideas and ideals will have to be given expression in a definite form.

And that is not difficult, though it may call for reflection and study. A "common tendency to arrive at an agreement"[2]) is plainly visible; numerous facts point to the good will to resume former relations, and to piece together the thread that has been temporarily broken. There is

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[1]) Speech of Vandervelde, President of the International Socialist Bureau, in Geneva (see "Het Volk" February 5th 1916).

[2]) Jules Destrée, "Les Socialistes et la Guerre Européenne", p. 106.

complete unanimity as to the principles of the peace programme as sketched in the foregoing. All that is required is the settlement of details by negotiation, and this Conference may strike a good blow in that direction. The fundamental ideas have met with warm approval and strong support even in wide circles outside our own ranks, and this considerably improves the prospects of their realisation.

Certain questions which have hitherto attracted little attention likewise deserve examination. Some of the best among us will have to devote their attention to colonial policy, one of the most momentous factors in the history of the world in the near future. The capitalist method of production diffuses itself with growing rapidity throughout the whole universe. The negation of colonial policy, which found so strong an expression at the International Congress at Stuttgart, can no longer be maintained [1]).

None should possess the mastery of the sea. For otherwise new fleets will be built again to challenge such supremacy. The prize right must be abolished, and the way must be paved for the time when free trade will be the basis of economic relations, for that alone can make peaceful expansion possible. But free trade must be realised very speedily at least in the colonies, and by internationalising some of them a mainspring of discord between Governments might be removed. The widespread prejudice against coloured races must have been weakened by this common war, and ought to be combatted. Schools ought to inculcate an aversion to chauvinism and chauvinistic spirit into the young, and this might, if necessary, be included among the terms of peace. The demoralisation of the young, which has been one of the effects of this war, must be combatted with vigour. It will be possible to win women in increasing numbers for the cause of peace. The international regulation of labour legislation might be imposed, and even the fixing of minimum wages in the various countries taken into con-

[1]) The German Socialists, who opposed all colonial possessions on that occasion, may congratulate themselves on the fact that their wish is practically fulfilled so far as Germany is concerned. But will they be content to leave it at that?

sideration. It will depend on the influence of the working classes whether any of the useful Government measures that interfered to some extent with the anarchistic state of the present system of production, will be preserved and developed.

In this and in many another field useful and fruitful work awaits the Socialists. They must not allow the favourable opportunity to pass by. They must act at once, without exclusive regard for the interests of their own country, but for the benefit of all. If that is done, the coming peace may prove to be a turning point in history, a milestone on the road of progress.

Under no circumstances must the conclusion of peace again be left to the discretion of militarists and diplomatists. The terms of peace set forth here must be popularised, and millions of adherents must fight for their realisation with all their might. The coming peace must bring security to the peoples and must set the mind at rest. Never again shall blood flow to satisfy the craving of tyranny and violence. Too deeply has the misery of war been felt to permit its recurrence. The whole world has suffered from its abomination. Non-belligerent countries are also entitled to raise their voices, to defend their injured or threatened rights, to express their opinion. And above all, the working classes whose vital interests are at stake, must demand admission to the discussions of peace, not as a favour, but as a partner with equal rights. The judgment of both — of the neutrals and of the workers — must be heard, for the working class must fight its own battle in the interests of all mankind.

A Conference of Neutral Powers, or — if any Governments should decline — an official Congress of Delegates of various Parliaments should assemble without delay, to offer its mediation to the belligerents, to re-establish international law, and to take a step in the direction of a World Parliament of Peace. The Socialists have shown by their International Bureau and by their Inter-Parliamentary Commission that the realisation of that idea is possible, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union could act with vigour to attain this object.

The madness of war must be put an end to, and the

nfluence of the Socialists inside and outside Parliaments nd through the trade unions is strong enough to make tself felt.[1] And in playing their part in foreign policy, the vorking class will fulfill a special and glorious mission.

After this terrible war the flood of Socialism will rise higher than ever, and the more powerfully the longer this abonimable slaughter continues. The blood which has been shed will shake the seemingly so strong pillars of the present social order to its foundations. It is, therefore, the duty of all to strengthen the power of the International, and to call to arms against the monster of war all the working classes, which abhor in their heart this fratricide to which they have been forced.

A new world is in the making, and we are witnessing its travail. A new epoch of world policy is approaching, in which the right of the strongest will no longer rule, and where the power of arms will have to bow to the majesty of right.

To promote this ideal, is the beautiful and worthy, though difficult task imposed upon International Social Democracy. Amidst the turmoil of arms, it will raise the palm of peace with a strong hand, by proposing reasonable terms of peace, by striving to recall the raving ones to their senses, and by putting a stop to the carnage. We may await the fruit of our work with full confidence, and if we succeed we shall have earned the gratitude of the present generation and of future ages. For the people want Peace. And to us belongs the future!

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[1] According to Jules Destrée (l. c, p. 8) the Socialists of the belligerent countries received over 8.870.000 votes at the last elections, and have altogether 435 representatives in their Parliaments. In France they had 18, and in Germany 27% of all members of Parliament.

If the Parliamentarians of the other countries and of the German, Swiss, and American States are added, we arrive at a total of 903 Socialist deputies and 24 Senators, whilst the number of Socialist Cabinet Ministers now amounts to 7, and is sure to grow considerably in the near future.

The membership of Socialistic Trade Unions before the war amounted to a total of something like 9 millions.

