



# KARL MARX HISTORICAL WRITINGS

IN TWO VOLUMES

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## PREFACE

THIS volume is a collection of Karl Marx's Historical Writings. All of them were written immediately after the events of which they treat. They contain a masterly analysis of the historical events of the time. On the basis of concrete material, Marx gives striking examples of the materialist explanation of history. Each one of these works is a masterly historical investigation. But the theoretical analysis of the events does not by any means exhaust the significance of these historical works. Marx's work as historical investigator is intimately bound up with the practical struggle of the proletariat. Marx was not only a scientific investigator, he was above all *the leader of the proletariat*, the leader of its vanguard—the Communist Party. Historical research and a scientific explanation of the facts of the class struggle provide the foundation for the strategy and tactics of the proletarian party, the party that leads the struggle of the proletariat for power, for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for the complete transformation of society.

Materials for study of Marx's activity as leader of the Party will also be found by the reader in the Party documents and letters that are included in the present volume. The writings and documents collected in this edition give the reader sufficient material for studying the foundations of the theory and policy of scientific communism as created and developed by Marx and Engels.

The contents of the present volume embrace all periods of Marx's activity as leader of the proletarian party. Corresponding to the course of historical events, the following periods can be distinguished: 1) up to the Revolution of 1848; 2) the Revolution of 1848-49; 3) the period of reaction, which lasted approximately until the beginning of the 'sixties; 4) the new upsurge of the workers' movement—the period of the First International; the climax of this upsurge was the Paris Commune in 1871; 5) the period after the Paris Commune.

Engels' article at the beginning of this volume, *The History of the Communist League*, sketches the early period of the history of the Party and describes Marx's Party work and

activity before the Revolution of 1848, in the year 1848, and in the years immediately after the victory of reaction (1850-52). The years of revolution were of tremendous significance for testing and confirming the correctness of Marx's historical and political views, the working out of which he had essentially concluded in 1845. The revolutionary period contributed a great deal to the working out of the strategy and tactics of the proletarian party. In Engels' article, *Marx and the Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, light is thrown on the activity of this first model Marxist newspaper, and a characterisation is given of the policy conducted by Marx in the years 1848-49. In the *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League*, of 1850, composed jointly by Marx and Engels, and in a number of other works, the results of the experiences of the Revolution of 1848 are summarised. In the articles from *The New York Tribune*, collected under the title *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, a survey is given of the course of the revolution in Germany. These articles were previously ascribed only to Marx but, as was made evident by the correspondence between Marx and Engels they were in the main written by Engels, Marx collaborating, and published in the American newspaper, *The New York Tribune*.

The analysis of the historical events and of the class struggles in France during the Revolution of 1848 and in the following years (up to 1852) is contained in two of Marx's longer writings, *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-50* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. It was precisely the events in France that were of the greatest historical significance, for here the class antagonisms appeared at their sharpest and the class struggle reached its highest form—the armed uprising of the proletariat for the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie. On the basis of his scientific analysis of these events in France and, further, on the basis of the experiences of the Paris Commune, Marx developed and put concretely his theory of the proletarian revolution. As early as 1850 he put forward the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and in 1852 (*The Eighteenth Brumaire*) he drew the conclusion that the proletariat "cannot simply lay hold of the existing state machine" but must "smash" it. In 1871 Marx showed what the proletariat must put in place of the bourgeois state machine, which has been smashed—an organisation of proletarian power of the type of the Paris Commune.

..... The writings of Marx and Engels analysing the lessons of

the Revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune were especially extensively utilised by Lenin both in the period of the 1905 Revolution and later in the struggle with Menshevism and the more recent forms of distortion of Marxism by the renegades, social-chauvinists, Kautskyists, etc.

In the conditions of reaction after the defeat of the Revolution of 1848, Marx, while in emigration in London, continued his scientific work of investigating the laws of the origin, development and downfall of capitalism. Under very difficult conditions, in continual struggle against the most bitter want, Marx worked on *Capital* and created the scientific basis of the Communist Party. But at the same time he also continued his practical activity as leader of the workers' movement. Thus, for example, he kept in touch with the Chartists in England and contributed to Chartist newspapers.<sup>1</sup>

Marx's speech on the occasion of the anniversary celebration of the Chartist newspaper and the letter reprinted with this speech exemplify his attitude to the question of the workers' movement and the proletarian revolution during the period of reaction. Marx had not the slightest doubt of the final victory of the proletariat and spoke as the leader of the proletarian party. He counted on the success of the future revolution, if, as he says, the proletarian revolution is "backed by some second edition of the Peasants' War." Marx attached enormous significance to the role of the peasantry in the revolution. The necessity of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, under the hegemony of the proletariat, constitutes one of the main points of the theory of scientific communism.

The next writings contained in this volume, which relate to the period of the First International, demonstrate Marx's role in this first international proletarian mass organisation, which, as Lenin said, laid "the foundations of the international organisation of the workers for the preparation of their revolutionary onslaught against capital."

Marx held the view that "the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves."

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<sup>1</sup>For example, Marx wrote on November 4, 1864, to Engels: "By an accident a few numbers of E. Jones' *Notes for the People* (1851-52) have again come into my hands, the main points of which, as far as economic articles are concerned, have been written directly under my guidance and in part also with my direct collaboration."—Ed.

For Marx and Engels this proposition was an unassailable truth. It was laid down as the most important principle of the Statutes of the First International. In Marx's view, the task of the leader consists in linking himself with the mass movement at every stage of its development, in guiding it, in leading the masses along the correct path, in teaching them to understand correctly the conditions for the emancipation of the working class, in extending the influence of the Party among the masses not yet embraced by the movement and in ensuring the raising of the movement to a higher level. The only way by which the working class can be convinced of the correctness of the programme of scientific communism is through the experience of the masses, testing Marx's teaching in practice.

This connection with the masses, however, did not signify that Marx departed from his principles or allowed false views to take root. On the contrary, Marx took the revolutionary mass movement as it was, he did not separate himself from it but instead established a close connection with it in order—taking into account the lessons it provided—to learn from it and thereby to destroy the illusions still existing among the masses, and to demonstrate to the masses on the basis of concrete facts the correctness of the theory and practice of the Communist Party.

One of the clearest examples of how Marx led the workers' movement is his activity in the First International. Without departing in the slightest from the principles of scientific communism, he composed the *Inaugural Address* and the Statutes of the First International in such a way that neither the English trade union workers infected by liberalism, nor the workers of France, Belgium, Italy and Spain, under the influence of Proudhonism, nor the German workers under the influence of Lassalleism were barred from entering. By his leadership of the International and constant participation in the work of its General Council, by drawing up all the important manifestoes, addresses and appeals of the International, and by systematic educational work, Marx succeeded, during the existence of the International, in making clear to the wide strata of workers the bankruptcy of all pre-Marxist forms of socialism. In the practice of the day-to-day struggle, the latter convinced themselves of the correctness of the ideas of Marxism. In his preface to the English edition of *The Communist Manifesto* Engels writes: "The International, on its

breaking up in 1874, left the workers quite different men from what it had found them in 1864."

Marx's work of genius, *The Civil War in France*, which appeared as a manifesto of the First International immediately after the overthrow of the Paris Commune, is one of the most brilliant examples of how Marx summarised the results of the historical experience of the revolutionary mass struggle and guided the workers' movement on this basis. The two letters to Kugelmann that follow further supplement the estimate of the Paris Commune. Lenin attached tremendous significance to these documents (both the pamphlet and the letters). In his preface to the Russian translation of Marx's *Letters to Dr. Kugelmann* (1907), Lenin contrasted the revolutionary position of Marx with the philistine opportunism of Plekhanov. (See the present volume, p. 493.) In his famous work, *The State and Revolution* (1917), Lenin, in his struggle against Kautsky and other renegades and falsifiers of Marxism, returns again and again to Marx's masterly work on the Paris Commune. The reader will find a characterisation of the activities of the First International in a number of letters given here, which also describe the struggle conducted by Marx and Engels against the Proudhonists, Bakunin and the Lassalleans.

After the defeat of the Paris Commune, in the new circumstances which had been created as a result of this defeat, Marx and Engels continued to lead the workers' parties in the various countries. The writings, Party documents and letters relating to this period that are collected in the present volume show us new examples of concrete leadership of the revolutionary workers' movement, new examples of the application of Marx's method.

Lenin wrote in his preface to the Russian translation of *The Letters by J. F. Becker, J. Dietzgen, F. Engels, K. Marx and Others to F. A. Sorge and others* (1907) :

"It is exceedingly instructive to compare how Marx and Engels dealt with the questions of the Anglo-American and of the German labour movements. This comparison acquires particularly great significance when we consider that Germany on the one hand, and England and America on the other, represent different stages of capitalist development, different forms of domination of the bourgeoisie as a class, in the whole of the political life of these countries. From a scientific point of view, we observe here an example of materialist dialectics, an ability to bring to the front and to emphasise the various points and various aspects of a question in application to the

concrete peculiarities of one or other of the political and economic conditions. From the point of view of the practical policy and tactics of a workers' party, we see here an example of the way in which the creators of *The Communist Manifesto* defined the tasks of the struggling proletariat in application to the different stages of the national labour movement in various countries."<sup>1</sup>

The characteristic feature of the English and American workers' movements of that period was the circumstance that, as Lenin says, "the workers hitherto had shown no sign of political independence, and in politics dragged and still drag behind the bourgeoisie."<sup>2</sup>

Marx and Engels pointed here to the urgent necessity of creating a really independent workers' party, which would be opposed to all other parties and would sharply differentiate itself from all bourgeois, and petty-bourgeois parties. The union of the workers might at first take place on a theoretical foundation that was not entirely correct, but the experience of the struggle would correct mistakes in theoretical views. Above all, Marx and Engels criticised here sectarianism, separation from the masses, inability to link up with the masses and to dominate their movement.

Marx and Engels devoted especially great attention to the German workers' movement, which after the Franco-Prussian War temporarily became the centre of the workers' movement in Europe. In his Prefatory Note to *The Peasant War in Germany*, Engels gave a general estimate of the position in Germany after the emergence of the German empire in 1871.

Lenin characterises the position which had arisen at the beginning of the 'seventies in the following way

"The worker of England corrupted by imperialist profits; the Commune defeated in Paris; the recent triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany [in 1871]; the age-long sleep of semi-feudal Russia. Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately . . . they realised the approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be slow."<sup>3</sup>

Engels also gives a general estimate of the position in Germany in the epoch of the Second International in his preface to Marx's work, *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-50*.

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<sup>1</sup>*Marx-Engels-Marxism*, p. 99.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 101.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," p. 75.—Ed.

All the utterances of Marx and Engels on the German workers' movement are pervaded by the warning against the "Right" wing of the Workers' Party, which had already come into existence in the shape of the Lassallean General Association of German Workers; the Social-Democratic Party (the Eisenachers) arose later, in the year 1869.<sup>1</sup> Marx and Engels conducted a merciless struggle (Marx described it in 1877-79 as a "raging" struggle) against opportunism in Social-Democracy. They fought here on two fronts: against Right opportunism that repudiates the class struggle, openly preaches an understanding with the bourgeoisie, attempts to destroy the class struggle and "perhaps transform the ultimate catastrophe into a gradual, piecemeal and, so far as is possible, peaceful process of dissolution" (Hochberg, Schramm, E. Bernstein, etc.), and also against "Left" phrase-mongering that conceals its treachery to the cause of the proletariat, its surrender of the real class struggle, by resounding, hollow "revolutionary" phrases (Johann Most, etc.).

On its origin, German Social-Democracy had accepted the theoretical principles of Marx. It would, however, be altogether incorrect to identify Marx and Engels with German Social-Democracy. There was much with which they were in complete disagreement, they even considered the title "Social-Democracy" incorrect. Engels wrote to Marx on November 16, 1864, when Schweitzer named his journal the *Sozialdemokrat*: "What a rotten title!" Marx agreed with him that it was really a "bad" title. In 1894, in the preface to a collection of his articles of 1871-75, Engels declared that this "word remains unsuitable for a party whose economic programme is not merely generally socialist but is directly communist and whose ultimate political goal is to supersede the whole state and hence also democracy." Engels adds: "The names of *real* political parties, however, never quite fit; the party develops, the name remains."<sup>2</sup> When (in the 'forties to the 'sixties) persons called themselves Social-Democrats "who had by no means inscribed on their banner the taking over of all the means of production by society" (such at that time were the democratic republicans of the 'forties of the type of Ledru-Rollin, the Proudhonistically tinged "radical

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<sup>1</sup>The foundation congress of this party took place in Eisenach.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Engels. *International Articles from the "Volksstaat"* (1871-75), Berlin, 1894, p. 6, *et seq.*—*Ed.*

socialists" in 1874, and finally the Lassalleans, who restricted themselves in their programme to demanding producers' co-operatives with state aid), Marx and Engels sharply separated themselves from such political tendencies. They called themselves Communists and considered this name the only theoretically correct one for the party of the proletariat. But when the Eisenach Party which arose in 1869 and which also called itself Social-Democracy, openly proclaimed that its fundamental aim was the socialisation of the means of production, then Marx and Engels considered that the basic obstacle had been removed and found it possible to join this party, tolerating, for the time being, its incorrect title.

We see here a further example of Marx's approach to the workers' movement, of the method of leadership used by Marx and Engels. Lenin says :

"Marx and Engels [at that time, in the 'seventies to the 'eighties] consciously reconciled themselves to the inaccurate, opportunist term 'Social-Democracy.' For *in those days*, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history demanded slow organisational and educational work. Nothing else was possible."<sup>1</sup>

Marx and Engels "reconciled themselves" to the term which did not correctly reflect the essential character of the proletarian party, but they did so on the condition that the party should recognise as its chief goal the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of private property in the means of production, their taking over by the proletariat and the revolutionary transformation of bourgeois society, and that the party should give correct expression to proletarian interests.

Lenin wrote in *The State and Revolution* :

"The dialectician Engels remains true to dialectics to the end of his days. Marx and I, he says, had a splendid, scientifically exact name for the party, but there was no real party, i.e., no proletarian mass party. Now, at the end of the nineteenth century, there is a real party, but its name is scientifically incorrect. Never mind, it will 'pass muster,' if only the party *develops*, if only the scientific inexactness of its name is not hidden from it and does not hinder its development in the right direction!"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," p. 74.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>*The State and Revolution*.—Ed.

The influence of Marx and Engels ensured the development in this direction. Brilliant examples of their struggle against opportunism are the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875) and the *Circular Letter* of 1879, Marx and Engels laid down a logical, systematic revolutionary policy and prepared the masses for the proletarian revolution, the inevitability of which they never for a moment doubted.

The revolution did not take place during the lifetime of Marx or Engels. The period of proletarian revolutions only began with the onset of the epoch of imperialism and during this period the whole international situation fundamentally changed. The breach with the opportunists became inevitable. Marx and Engels, combating all bourgeois influences on the proletariat, steered a course undeviatingly towards this breach.

In his article *The Third International and Its Place in History*, written in 1919, Lenin characterised as follows the situation which had arisen in the international workers' movement of the nineteenth century and the turn which took place towards the second decade of the twentieth century:

"England provided an example of a country in which, as Engels expressed it, the bourgeoisie created alongside of the bourgeoisified aristocracy the most bourgeoisified upper stratum of the proletariat. The leading capitalist country for some decades proved to be backward in respect of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. France had, as it were, exhausted the forces of the proletariat in two heroic working class risings against the bourgeoisie in 1848 and 1871, risings which yielded unusually rich results from the historical point of view. The hegemony in the international workers' movement subsequently passed to Germany, in the seventies of the nineteenth century, when Germany was economically backward compared to either England or France. But when Germany economically overtook these two countries, i.e., towards the second decade of the twentieth century, then there was to be found at the head of the world-exemplary Marxist workers' party of Germany a gang of wily rascals, the filthiest scoundrels, bought by the capitalists, from Scheidemann and Noske to David and Legien, the most disgusting executioners from among the working class, in the service of the monarchy and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. World history is irrevocably proceeding to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it by no means proceeds along smooth, simple, direct paths."<sup>1</sup>

The Second International, which performed a "historically

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<sup>1</sup>Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. XXIV, "The Third International and Its Place in History," p. 249.—Ed.

necessary, useful work,"<sup>1</sup> when preparation of the masses of the workers "within the framework of bourgeois democracy" stood on the order of the day, outlived its day and became transformed from an organisation which promoted the political growth and development of the working class into an organisation for the enslavement of the working class by the bourgeoisie. This degeneration resulted from the bourgeoisie's bribing of the upper strata of the working class by means of the imperialist super-profits derived from plundering the colonial and semi-colonial countries by the capitalists of the various imperialist countries, as well as from the habituation to purely legal "parliamentary" methods of work, when there exists a yellow trade union, etc., bureaucracy consisting of workers who have sold themselves to the capitalists and gone over to their service.

In Marx's epoch the British bourgeoisie had secured a firm hold on the monopoly of colonial exploitation. Marx and Engels observed and repeatedly pointed out the above-mentioned phenomenon of the bribery of sections of the British working class with imperialist super-profits<sup>2</sup>. With the arrival of the epoch of imperialism, the position changed, as Lenin noted, in the sense that monopoly capital developed in all the "big" imperialist states (England, France, the United States, Germany, and then also Japan). The imperialist super-profits from the plundering of the colonies, from the export of capital and from the great monopolies, were in the hands of the big bourgeoisie in each of these countries. Lenin wrote in 1916 :

"Now the 'bourgeois labour party' is *inevitable* and typical for *all* the imperialist countries. But in view of the desperate struggle that is being waged for the division of the booty, it is improbable that such a party will remain victorious for any length of time in a number of countries; for while trusts, the financial oligarchy, high prices, etc., *permit* the bribery of a handful of upper groups, at the same time they oppress, crush, ruin and torture the *masses* of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat more than ever."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This work for the propaganda of socialism among the masses is also mentioned by Engels, in the Introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggles in France*, 1848-50, p. 157 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, "Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement."—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*—Ed.

Under such conditions, as Lenin said, a struggle goes on in the working class between two tendencies.

“On the one hand there is the tendency of the bourgeoisie and opportunists to convert a handful of the richest, privileged nations into ‘eternal’ parasites on the body of the rest of mankind, to ‘rest on the laurels’ of the exploitation of Negroes, Hindus, etc., by keeping them in subjection with the aid of the excellent technique of destruction provided by modern militarism. On the other hand, there is the tendency of the masses, who are more oppressed than formerly and who bear the brunt of misfortune caused by imperialist wars, to throw off that yoke, to overthrow the bourgeoisie.”<sup>1</sup>

The banner of the proletarian revolution, of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat was victoriously upheld by the Bolshevik Party, which under Lenin’s leadership gave consistent expression to this second tendency and waged a struggle against opportunism from the moment of the origin of the Marxist Party in Russia. “The Bolsheviks *grew up* in the struggle against opportunism in the years, 1894-1914,” Lenin wrote at the beginning of 1917, in his notebook, *Marxism on the State*.

In 1914 opportunism achieved an ignominious victory, the Social-Democratic parties of the Second International openly embarked on the path of direct alliance with their respective national bourgeoisies. As soon as the Russian Revolution took place, the question was raised very sharply of the need to revive the correct name of the proletarian party, the name adopted by Marx and Engels when they organised their party at the very beginning of their activity.

In 1917, in his article, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*, Lenin emphasised the incorrectness of the name “Social-Democracy” (both as regards the first and as regards the second part of the name) and pointed out that from the time of the origin of the Soviet state this name had become altogether impermissible since the “the term democracy is . . . a blinker covering the eyes of the revolutionary people and preventing them from boldly and freely, on their own initiative, building up the new: the Soviets of Workers’, Peasants’, and all other Deputies, as the sole power in the state and as the harbinger of the ‘withering away’ of the state in every form.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*—Ed.

. . . Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI. “The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution,” p. 74.—Ed.

In 1918 at its Seventh Congress, the Bolshevik Party altered its name to the Communist Party, and in 1919 under Lenin's leadership the Communist International came into existence. In this way Engels' foresight was completely justified when he wrote to Sorge, in September 1874, that the International would arise in circumstances of intensified class struggle and would be "directly communist."

Following the documents and letters characterising the struggle of Marx and Engels on behalf of the proletarian party, we give documents expounding the views of Marx and Engels on the national and colonial question.

Marx and Engels attached very great significance to the national question; they fought not only against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois chauvinism, but also against the "Left" denial of the significance of the national question. Marx and Engels closely linked up the national question with the proletarian class struggle. They looked for its final solution through the proletarian revolution. "As soon as the working class comes into political power, all excuse for national dissension will be done away with."<sup>2</sup> But they regarded the abolition of national oppression as the first condition for the development of the proletarian class struggle. Engels wrote to Kautsky on February 7, 1882, on the necessity of the liberation of Poland from national oppression:

"An international movement of the proletariat is only possible among independent nations. . . . As long as Poland is divided and enslaved, there can develop neither a powerful socialist party in the country itself, nor can the other proletarian parties, in Germany, etc., develop real international connections *with any Poles other than those in emigration*. Every Polish worker or peasant who rises from degradation to participating in the common interest encounters first of all the fact of national enslavement, he comes up against it everywhere as the first obstacle in his path. To abolish this is the basic condition for a healthy and free development. Polish socialists who do not put the liberation of the country at the head of their programme appear to me like German socialists who do not wish to demand first of all the abolition of the Anti-Socialist Law and the establishment of freedom of press, association and assembly. To be able to fight, one must first have ground, air, light and elbow room. Otherwise everything remains idle talk."

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<sup>2</sup>Victor Adler and F. Engels, Vienna, 1922. Note to Engels' letter to V. Adler of August 30, 1892, p. 46.—Ed.

As an example of the attitude of Marx and Engels to the national question, we give in this volume their views on the Irish question. They upheld the view that "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations." The proletariat is interested above all in abolishing the oppression of the enslaved peoples and colonial robbery, since the exploitation of the enslaved peoples only strengthens the position of the exploiters and weakens the revolutionary proletariat. For this reason Marx and Engels actively supported the struggle for Irish national liberation.

Marx's two articles on India are reproduced here as an example of his judgment on the social order in the oriental agrarian countries and his attitude to British colonial policy, which in Marx's epoch provided a classic example of imperialist plundering. It was natural that Marx should find no expression for the Social-Democrats who supported their imperialist bourgeoisie than that of "venal rabble." This was the term applied by Marx to the English trade union leaders of the 'seventies and 'eighties, representatives of the same policy, who had sold themselves to the bourgeoisie. (See Marx's letter to Sorge, April 4, 1874.)

In conclusion we give some statements by Marx and Engels on Russia. Marx made a close study of Russia and its history. At the beginning of the period of activity of Marx and Engels, the Russian tsarist government played the reactionary role of the international gendarme of Europe. The development of capitalism (especially after 1861) led to the rise of a revolutionary movement in Russia. As early as January 1882, Marx and Engels noted in the preface to the Russian edition of *The Communist Manifesto* that Russia had become the vanguard of revolution in Europe.

In order to be able to judge of Russian conditions with expert knowledge, Marx thoroughly learned the Russian language (Engels also could read Russian) and read in Russian scientific literature as well as the best representatives of Russian literature (Pushkin, Gogol, Shchedrin). Russia interested Marx as an agrarian country. While Marx collected material for the study of industrial capitalism in the classical country of capitalism, England, he collected material on the agrarian question through the study of Russia. Moreover, Russia attracted the attention of Marx and Engels as the country in which, compared with any of the other countries of Europe, a most revolutionary situation was on the point of arising.

The study of the works of Marx and Engels collected in the present edition gives a general idea how the founders of scientific communism created the theoretical foundations for the proletarian party and organised the struggle for communism. Lenin, who continued the work of Marx in masterly fashion, further developed the chief constituents of the latter's theory and pushed forward its practical realisation in the new conditions which had developed after Marx's death. Lenin continued Marx's struggle for the proletarian party and created a party of a new type, in the conditions of the epoch of imperialism. Under his immediate leadership, and thanks to the existence of this party, the proletarian revolution in Russia achieved a brilliant victory. The Soviet Power—the realisation of Marx's ideas of the dictatorship of the proletariat—found in Lenin its brilliant leader and theoretician. In beginning the work of socialist construction, Lenin, on the basis of Marx's theory, and deriving new experience from the revolutionary struggle of the masses, pointed out the path along which the proletariat must lead the masses of the toilers for the building of communism.

The Leninist Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, headed by Comrade Stalin—the best disciple of Lenin, who is continuing the work of the latter—and the millions of the proletariat and toilers led by the C.P.S.U. and the Communist International are bringing to fruition and developing further the work begun by the great leaders of the proletariat, Marx and Engels.

February 6, 1933.

V. ADORATSKY.

## THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE<sup>1</sup>

WITH the sentence on the Cologne Communists in 1852, the curtain falls on the first period of the independent movement of the German workers. Today this period is almost forgotten. Yet it lasted from 1836 to 1852 and, with the increased numbers of German workers abroad, the movement developed in almost all civilised countries. Nor is that all. The present-day international workers' movement is in substance a direct continuation of the German movement of that

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<sup>1</sup>This work of Engels forms the introduction to the third edition (1885) of Marx's pamphlet *Enthuellungen ueber den Kommunistenprozess zu Koeln* (*Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial*). This trial took place in 1852 after the defeat of the Revolution of 1848, and was contrived by the Prussian government in order to suppress the workers' movement and, above all, the Communist League. In connection with this: all possible methods of police provocation were employed. Marx came out with his pamphlet against these contemptible police methods which were employed under the leadership of the chief of police, Stieber, by direct instruction of the king. Marx declares:

"In the person of the accused, the revolutionary proletariat, disarmed, confronted the ruling classes represented by the jury; the accused were therefore condemned because they came before this jury.

". . . Rhenish nobility and Rhenish bourgeoisie with their verdict 'guilty' joined in the cry uttered by the French bourgeoisie after December 2: 'Only theft can now save property; only perjury, religion; only bastardy, the family; only disorder, order!'

". . . Thus superstitious faith in the jury, which was still rife in Rhenish Prussia, was shattered forever. It was realised that the jury is a court of the privileged classes, instituted to bridge over the gaps in the law by the breadth of bourgeois conscience. . . ." (Marx, *Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial*.)

In regard to this trial see also Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. XX, in the present volume.

Engels' introduction to the *Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial* is of independent importance and is of great interest. It gives a sketch of the history of both the German and the international workers' movement and describes the role of Marx and Engels in the creation of a militant proletarian party, the Communist League.—Ed.

time, which was the first international workers' movement at all, and which brought to the fore many of those who took the leading role in the International Working Men's Association.<sup>1</sup> And the theoretical principles that the Communist League had inscribed on its banner in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1847 constitute today the strongest international bond of the entire proletarian movement of both Europe and America.

Up to now there has been only one main source for a coherent history of that movement. This is the so-called Black Book, *The Communist Conspiracies of the Nineteenth Century*, by Wermuth and Stieber, Berlin, two parts, 1853 and 1854. This crude compilation which bristles with deliberate falsifications, fabricated by two of the most pitiful police scoundrels of our century, still serves as the final source today for all non-communist writings about that period.

What I am able to give here is only a sketch and this moreover only in so far as the League itself is concerned; only what is absolutely necessary for understanding the *Revelations*. I hope that I shall be allowed to work up the rich material collected by Marx and myself on the history of that glorious youthful period of the international workers' movement.

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In 1836 the most extreme, chiefly proletarian elements of the democratic-republican secret Outlaws' League, which was founded by German refugees in Paris in 1834, split off and formed the new secret League of the Just. The parent League in which were left only sleepy-headed elements *a la* Jacobus Venedey soon fell asleep altogether; when in 1840 the police scented out a few sections in Germany, it was hardly even a shadow of its former self. The new League, on the other hand, developed comparatively rapidly. Originally it was a German outlier of the French worker communism linked with recollections of Babouvism<sup>2</sup> that was taking shape in Paris at

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<sup>1</sup>The International Working Men's Association is the official title of the First International, founded in London in 1864. (Its *Inaugural Address and Statutes* are given in the present volume.) On the First International see also the letters of Marx and Engels to Kugelmann, Sorge, Bolte, Cuno and Bebel in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Babouvism. The theory of the French communist Gracchus Babeuf (1760-97), during the period of the first

about this time; community of goods was demanded as the necessary consequence of "equality." The aims were those of the Parisian secret societies of the time, viz., half propaganda association, half conspiracy; Paris, however, being always regarded as the central point of revolutionary action, although the preparation of occasional *putsches* in Germany was by no means excluded. Since, however, Paris remained the decisive battleground, the League at that time was not actually much more than the German branch of the French secret societies, especially the *Societe des Saisons*<sup>1</sup> led by Blanqui and Barbes, with which a close connection was maintained. The French went into action on May 12, 1839;<sup>2</sup> the sections of the League marched with them and thus were involved in the common defeat.

Of the Germans, Karl Schapper and Heinrich Bauer were arrested; Louis Philippe's<sup>3</sup> government contented itself with expelling them after a fairly long imprisonment. Both went to London. Schapper came from Weilburg in Nassau and while a student of forestry at Giessen in 1832 was a member of the conspiracy organised by Georg Buchner;<sup>4</sup> he took part

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French bourgeois revolution. Babeuf was at the head of the so-called *Conspiracy of the Equals* (1795-96). The communism of the Babouvists had a crude equalitarian character.

Babeuf's utopia—"equalitarian communism"—arises in the period of the overthrow of feudalism and is a result "of the undeveloped stature of the proletariat itself and of the lack of the material conditions for its liberation" (Marx).—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup>The Society of the Seasons. A communist secret society organised by Blanqui in 1837, which was of a conspiratorial character.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The insurrection of May 12, 1839, was organised by the Society of the Seasons. The municipal building was occupied, a provisional government proclaimed and Blanqui was elected commander-in-chief. Since they were not linked with the mass of the people, the handful of conspirators were speedily routed by the police and the National Guard.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Louis Philippe (1773-1850). King of France; during the "July monarchy" he represented the interests of the banking and financial aristocracy. The July Revolution of 1830 brought him to the throne; the February Revolution of 1848 overthrew him.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>This refers to the attempt at revolutionary propaganda among the Hessian peasants undertaken by the German poet, Georg Buchner (1813-37). In 1834, together with the priest Weidig, the leader of the Hessian liberals, Buchner founded the Society for Human Rights, which carried on agitation among

in the storming of the Frankfort police station<sup>1</sup> on April 3, 1833, escaped abroad and in February 1834 joined Mazzini's expedition to Savoy.<sup>2</sup> Of gigantic stature, resolute and energetic, always ready to imperil bourgeois existence and life, he was a model example of a professional revolutionary such as played a role in the 'thirties. In spite of a certain clumsiness of thought, he was by no means incapable of a better theoretical understanding, as is proved by his development from "demagogue"<sup>3</sup> to Communist, and he held then all the more rigidly to what he once came to recognise. Precisely on that account his revolutionary passion often got the better of his understanding, but he always afterwards saw his mistake and openly acknowledged it. He was fully a man and what he has done for the founding of the German workers' movement will not be forgotten.

Heinrich Bauer from Franconia was a shoemaker ; a lively, alert, witty little fellow, whose little body, however, also contained much shrewdness and determination.

Arrived in London, where Schapper, who had been a compositor in Paris, now tried to earn his living as a teacher of languages, they both set to work gathering up the broken threads and made London the centre of the League. They were joined over here, if not already earlier in Paris, by Joseph Moll, a watch-maker from Cologne, a medium-sized Hercules—how often have Schapper and he victoriously defended the entrance to a hall against hundreds of insistent opponents!—

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the peasants. "Peace to the cottages! War to the palaces!" such was Georg Buchner's slogan. The movement was, however, suppressed by the government at the very beginning.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>The attack on the Frankfort police station was an unsuccessful attempt at a *putsch* on the part of a group of radical elements (about fifty persons), mostly students. The police had been forewarned of the *putsch* planned against the Federal Diet (Bundestag) having its sessions in Frankfort, and utilised the attempt to intensify repressive measures against the bourgeois-liberal movement in Germany.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Mazzini's expedition to Savoy was one of the unsuccessful revolutionary expeditions organised by this Italian bourgeois-republican revolutionary for the unification of Italy and its liberation from Austria and the papal yoke.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>This was the name applied by the German government authorities to the representatives of liberal and democratic ideas from the twenties to the forties of the last century. In 1819, a special commission was appointed to investigate "demagogic intrigues" in all the German states.—Ed.

a man who was at least the equal of his two comrades in energy and determination, and intellectually superior to both of them. Not only was he a born diplomat, as the success of his numerous missions proved; he was also more capable of theoretical insight. I came to know all three of them in London in 1843. They were the first revolutionary proletarians whom I had met, and however far apart our views were at that time in details—for I still owned, as against their narrow-minded equalitarian communism,<sup>1</sup> a goodish dose of just as narrow-minded philosophical arrogance—I shall never forget the deep impression that these three real men made upon me, who was just then wanting to become a man.

In London, as in a lesser degree in Switzerland, they had the benefit of freedom of association and assembly. As early as February 7, 1840, the foundation took place of the open German Workers' Educational Association, which still exists. This Association served the League as a recruiting ground for new members and since, as always, the Communists were the most active and intelligent members of the Association, it was a matter of course that its leadership lay entirely in the hands of the League. The League soon had several local sections or, as they were then still called, "lodges," in London. The same obvious tactics were followed in Switzerland and elsewhere. Where workers' associations could be founded, they were utilised in like manner. Where this was forbidden by law, one entered choral societies, gymnastic clubs, and the like. Connections were to a large extent maintained by members who were continually travelling back and forth; they also, when required, served as emissaries. In both respects the League obtained lively support through the wisdom of the governments which by means of expulsion converted any objectionable worker—and in nine cases out of ten he was a member of the League—into an emissary.

The extent to which the restored League spread was considerable. Notably in Switzerland, Weitling, August Becker (a highly gifted man who, however, like so many Germans came to grief because of innate instability of character) and others created an organisation more or less pledged to Weitling's communist system. This is not the place to criticise the com-

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<sup>1</sup>By equalitarian communism I understand, as stated, only that communism which bases itself exclusively or predominantly on the demand for equality. (Note by F. Engels.)

munism of Weitling. But as regards its significance as the first independent theoretical stirring of the German proletariat, I still today subscribe to Marx's words in the *Paris Vorwärts*<sup>1</sup> of 1844 :

“Where could the German bourgeoisie—including its philosophers and writers—point to a work comparable to Weitling's *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit* [*Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*] in respect to the emancipation of the bourgeoisie—the political emancipation? If one compares the drab dejected mediocrity of German political literature with this boundless and brilliant debut of the German workers, if one compares these gigantic children's shoes of the proletariat with the dwarf proportions of the worn-out political shoes of the bourgeoisie, one must prophesy an athlete's figure for this Cinderella.”

This athlete's figure confronts us today, although still far from being fully grown.

Numerous sections existed also in Germany ; in the nature of things they were of a transient character, but those coming into existence more than made up for those passing away. Only after seven years, at the end of 1846, did the police discover traces of the League in Berlin (Mentel) and Magdeburg (Beck), without being in a position to follow them further.

In Paris, Weitling, who was still there in 1840, likewise gathered the scattered elements together again before he left for Switzerland.

The tailors formed the central force of the League. German tailors were everywhere, in Switzerland, in London, in Paris. In the last-named town, German was so much the prevailing speech in this trade that I was acquainted there in 1846 with a Norwegian tailor who had travelled directly by sea from Drontheim to France, who in the space of eighteen months had learned hardly a word of French but had learned German excellently. Of the local sections in Paris in 1847, two consisted predominantly of tailors, one of cabinet-makers.

After the centre of gravity had been transferred from

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<sup>1</sup>A radical German newspaper published in Paris, the organ of the German emigrants. The contributors included Marx, who was expelled from France on account of his articles printed in the *Vorwärts* against the reactionary Prussian government.—Ed.

Paris to London, a new feature came to the fore: from being German, the League gradually became *international*. In the Workers' Association were to be found also, besides Germans and Swiss, members of those nationalities for whom German served as the chief means of communication with foreigners, notably, therefore, Scandinavians, Dutch, Hungarians, Czechs, Southern Slavs and also Russians and Alsations. In 1847 the regular frequenters included a British grenadier of the Guards in uniform. The Association soon called itself the Communist Workers' Educational Association, and the membership cards bore the inscription "All Men Are Brothers," in at least twenty languages, even if not written without mistakes here and there. Like the open Association, so also the secret League soon took on a more international character; first of all in a restricted sense, practically through the varied nationalities of its members, theoretically through the realisation that any revolution to be victorious must be a European one. It did not go any further as yet; but the foundations were there.

Close connections were maintained with the French revolutionaries through the London refugees, comrades-in-arms of May 12, 1839. Similarly with the more radical Poles. Like Mazzini, the official Polish emigres also were of course opponents rather than allies. The English Chartists,<sup>1</sup> on account of the specific English character of their movement, were disregarded as not revolutionary. The London leaders of the League only came in touch with them later through me.

In other ways also the character of the League had altered with events. Although Paris was still—and at that time quite correctly—looked upon as the mother city of the revolution, dependence on the Paris conspirators had been abandoned. The spread of the League raised its self-confidence. It was felt that roots were being struck more and more in the German working class and that these German workers were historically called upon to be the standard bearers of the workers of the North and East of Europe. In Weitling was to be found a

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<sup>1</sup>Chartism in England during the 'thirties and 'forties was characterised by Lenin as "the first, wide, really mass proletarian-revolutionary movement of a political character." One of the methods adopted by the Chartists in their struggle was the collection of signatures for the workers' "Charter." This charter contained a number of the workers' demands which aimed at obtaining the franchise and conquering political power.—Ed.

communist theoretician who could be boldly placed at the side of his French rivals of that time. Finally, the experience of May 12 had taught that for the time being there was nothing to be gained by attempts at *putsches*. And if one still continued to explain every event as a sign of the approaching storm, if one still preserved intact the old, semi-conspiratorial statutes, that was mainly the fault of the old revolutionary defiance which had already begun to come into collision with the better understanding that was coming to the fore.

On the other hand, the social doctrines of the League, indefinite as they were, contained a very great mistake, but one that had its roots in the conditions themselves. The members, in so far as they were workers at all, were almost exclusively artisans. Even in the big capital cities, the man who exploited them was usually only a smaller master. Even the exploitation of tailoring on a large scale, what is now called *Konfektion*, by conversion of handicraft tailoring into domestic industry run by a big capitalist, was at that time even in London only just making its appearance. On the one hand, the exploiter of these artisans was a small master; on the other hand, they all hoped ultimately to become small masters themselves. In addition, a mass of inherited guild notions still clung to the German artisan at the time. The greatest honour is due to them, in that they, who were themselves not yet even full proletarians, but only an appendage of the petty bourgeoisie, one which was being transformed into the modern proletariat and which did not yet stand in direct opposition to the bourgeoisie, i.e., to large-scale capital—in that these artisans were capable of instinctively anticipating their future development and of constituting themselves, even if not yet with full consciousness, as the party of the proletariat. But it was also inevitable that their old handicraft prejudices should be a stumbling block to them at every moment, whenever it was a question of criticising existing society in detail, i.e., of investigating economic facts. And I do not believe that there was a single man in the whole League at that time who had ever read a book on political economy. But that mattered little; for the time being “equality,” “brotherhood” and “justice” helped them to surmount every theoretical obstacle.

Meanwhile a second, essentially different communism developed alongside that of the League and of Weitling. While in Manchester, I was forcibly brought to realise that economic facts, which have so far played no role or only a contemptible

one in the writing of history, are, at least in the modern world, a decisive historical force; that they form the basis for the origin of the present-day class antagonisms; that these class antagonisms, in the countries where they have become fully developed, thanks to large-scale industry, especially therefore in England, are in their turn the basis of the formation of political parties and of party struggles, and thus of all political history. Marx had not only arrived at the same view, but had already, in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*<sup>1</sup> [*Franco-German Annuals*] (1844), generalised it to reach the thesis that it is not at all the state which conditions and regulates bourgeois society, but bourgeois society which conditions and regulates the state, and consequently that politics and the history of politics are to be explained from the economic conditions and by their development, and not *vice versa*. When I visited Marx in Paris in the summer of 1844, our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became evident and from that time our joint work dates. When, in the spring of 1845, we met again in Brussels, Marx had already fully developed his materialist theory of history in its main features from the above-mentioned basis and we now applied ourselves to working out in detail, in the most varied directions, the newly-won mode of outlook.

This discovery, revolutionising the science of history, which, as is seen, is essentially the work of Marx and in which I can claim for myself only a very insignificant share, was, however, of immediate importance for the contemporary workers' movement. Communism among the French and German, Chartism among the English, now no longer appeared as a matter of chance which could just as well not have occurred. These movements now presented themselves as the movement of a modern oppressed class, the proletariat, as the more or less developed forms of its historically necessary struggle against the ruling class, the bourgeoisie; as forms of the class struggle, but distinguished from all earlier class struggles by this one thing, that the present-day oppressed class, the proletariat, cannot achieve its emancipation without at the same time emancipating society as a whole from division into classes and therefore from class struggles. And communism now no longer

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<sup>1</sup>A journal published in Paris in 1843-44 by Marx in conjunction with the Left Hegelian, Arnold Ruge. See Lenin's article, *Karl Marx*.—Ed.

meant the concoction by means of the imagination of an ideal society as perfect as possible, but the understanding of the nature and conditions, and the general aims resulting therefrom, of the struggle waged by the proletariat.

Now, we were by no means of the opinion that the new scientific results should be confided in large tomes exclusively to the "learned" world. Quite the contrary. We were both of us already deeply involved in the political movement, and possessed a certain following in the educated world, especially of Western Germany, and abundant contact with the organised proletariat. It was our duty to provide a scientific foundation for our view, but it was equally important for us to win over the European and in the first place the German proletariat to our convictions. As soon as we had become clear ourselves, we set about the task. We founded a German Workers' Association in Brussels and took over the *Deutsche Brusseler Zeitung*<sup>1</sup> which served us as an organ up to the February Revolution.<sup>2</sup> We kept in touch with the revolutionary section of the English Chartists through Julian Harney, the editor of the *Northern Star*, the central organ of the movement, to which I was a contributor. We entered likewise into a kind of cartel with the Brussels democrats (Marx was vice-president of the Democratic Society<sup>3</sup>) and with the French Social-Democrats of the *Reforme*,<sup>4</sup> which I furnished with news of the English and German movements. In short, our connections with the radical and proletarian organisations and press organs were quite what one could wish.

With the League of the Just our relations were as follows. The existence of the League was, of course, known to us; in 1843 Schapper had proposed that I should join it, which at

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<sup>1</sup>The organ of the German emigrants, which appeared in Belgium from the beginning of 1847.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the revolution which broke out in France on February 24, 1848. For further information on this see Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* and *The Class Struggles in France* in this volume.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>A society of an international character which united the Belgian democrats with the political emigrants living in Brussels. It was founded in September 1847.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>*La Reforme*, the organ of the French petty-bourgeois radical democratic party, the adherents of which called themselves Social-Democrats. See the Preface to the German edition [1890] of *The Communist Manifesto*.—Ed.

that time I, of course, refused to do. But we remained not only in continuous correspondence with the Londoners but on still closer terms with Dr. Everbeck, the present leader of the Paris sections. Without worrying ourselves about the internal affairs of the League, we were kept informed, however, of every important happening. On the other hand, we influenced the theoretical views of the most important members of the League by word of mouth, by letter and through the press. For this purpose we also made use of various lithographed circulars, which we dispatched to our friends and correspondents throughout the world on particular occasions when it was a question of the internal affairs of the Communist Party in process of formation. In these, the League itself sometimes came to be dealt with. Thus, a young Westphalian student, Hermann Kriege, who went to America, had come forward there as an emissary of the League and associated himself with the crazy Harro Harring in order by means of the League to turn South America upside down. He founded a paper in which, in the name of the League, he preached an extravagant communism of love dreaming, based on "love" and overflowing with love. Against this we let fly with a circular that did not fail of its effect. Kriege vanished from the League platform.

Later, Weitling came to Brussels. But he was no longer the naive young journeyman-tailor who, astonished at his own talents, was trying to make clear to himself just what a communist society would look like. He was now the great man, persecuted by the envious on account of his superiority, who scented rivals, secret enemies and traps everywhere; the prophet, pursued from country to country, who carried a recipe for the realisation of heaven on earth ready-made in his pocket and who imagined that everybody intended to steal it from him. He had already come into conflict with the members of the League in London, and in Brussels also, where in particular Marx and his wife welcomed him with almost superhuman forbearance; he could not get on with anyone. So soon afterwards he went to America to try out his role of prophet there.

All these circumstances contributed to the revolution that was quietly taking place in the League and especially among the leaders in London. The inadequacy of the previous conception of communism, both the simple French equalitarian communism and that of Weitling, became more and more clear

to them. The derivation of communism from primitive Christianity introduced by Weitling—no matter how brilliant isolated passages to be found in his *Gospel of Poor Sinners*—had resulted in delivering the movement in Switzerland to a large extent into the hands first of fools like Albrecht and then of exploiting swindling prophets like Kuhlmann. The “true socialism” propagated by a few literary writers, a translation of French socialist phraseology into corrupt Hegelian German and the sentimental love dreaming (see the section on German or “True” Socialism in *The Communist Manifesto*) that Kriege and the study of the literature concerned introduced in the League soon disgusted the old revolutionaries of the League, if only on account of its slobbering feebleness. As against the untenability of the previous theoretical views, and as against the practical deviations resulting from them, it became more and more evident in London that Marx and I were correct in our new theory. This understanding was undoubtedly promoted by the fact that among the London leaders there were now two men who were considerably superior to those previously mentioned in their capacity for theoretical knowledge: the miniature painter Karl Pfander from Heilbronn and the tailor George Eccarius from Thuringen.<sup>1</sup>

It suffices to say that in the spring of 1847 Moll visited Marx in Brussels and immediately afterwards he visited me in Paris, in order to invite us in the name of his comrades to enter the League. He reported that they were as much convinced of the general correctness of our mode of outlook as of the necessity of freeing the League from the old conspiratorial traditions and forms. Should we enter, we would be given an opportunity of expounding our critical communism before a congress of the League in a manifesto which would then be published as the Manifesto of the League, and likewise we would be able to contribute our quota towards the replacement of the obsolete League organisation by one in keeping with the new times and aims.

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<sup>1</sup> Pfander died about eight years ago in London (1876). He was a man of peculiarly fine intelligence, witty, ironical and dialectical. Eccarius was later, as is well known, for many years General Secretary of the *International Working Men's Association*, in the General Council of which the following old League members were to be found, among others: Eccarius, Pfander, Lessner, Lochner, Marx and myself. Eccarius later devoted himself exclusively to the English trade union movement. [Note by F. Engels.]

We entertained no doubts that an organisation within the German working class was necessary, if only for propaganda, and that this organisation, in so far as it would be of more than local character, could only be a secret one, even outside Germany. Now, there already existed exactly such an organisation in the shape of the League. What we previously objected to in this League was now relinquished as erroneous by the representatives of the League themselves; we ourselves were invited to contribute to the reorganisation. Could we say no? Certainly not. Therefore, we entered the League; Marx founded a local section of the League in Brussels from among our close friends, while I visited the three sections in Paris.

In the summer of 1847, the first League Congress took place in London, at which W. Wolff represented the Brussels and I the Paris sections. At this congress the reorganisation of the League was carried through first of all. Whatever remained of the old mystical name of the conspiratorial period was now also abolished; the League was organised in local sections, circles, leading circles, Central Committee and congress and from now on called itself the "Communist League."

"The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society based on class antagonisms and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property"

—thus ran the first article of the statutes. The organisation itself was thoroughly democratic with elected committees always subject to dismissal. And by this means alone a barrier was put in the way of all hankerings after conspiracy, which requires dictatorship, and the League converted—during ordinary peace times at least—into a pure propaganda society. These new statutes were placed before the local sections for discussion—so democratic was the procedure now followed, then once again debated at a second congress and finally adopted by the latter on December 8, 1847.

They are to be found reprinted in Wermuth and Stieber, Volume I, p. 239, Appendix X.

The second congress took place during the end of November and beginning of December of the same year. Marx also attended and he expounded the new theory in the course of a fairly long discussion—the congress lasted at least ten days. All contradiction and doubt was finally set at rest, the new basic principles were unanimously adopted, and Marx and I

were commissioned to draw up the Manifesto. This took place immediately afterwards. A few weeks before the February Revolution it was sent to London to be printed. Since then it has travelled round the world, it has been translated into almost all languages and today still serves as the guide for the proletarian movement in the most diverse countries. In place of the old League motto, "All Men Are Brothers," appeared the new battle-cry, "Proletarians of All Countries, Unite," which openly proclaimed the international character of the struggle. Seventeen years later this battle-cry resounded throughout the world as the war-cry of the International Working Men's Association, and today the militant proletariat of all countries has inscribed it on its banner.

The February Revolution broke out. The existing London Central Committee immediately transferred its powers to the leading circles in Brussels. But this decision was taken at the time when an actual state of siege already prevailed in Brussels, and the Germans in particular could not foregather anywhere. We were all of us just on the point of going to Paris, and so the new Central Committee decided likewise to dissolve, to hand over all its powers to Marx and to empower him to constitute immediately a new Central Committee in Paris. Hardly had the five persons who adopted this decision (March 3, 1848) separated, before the police forced their way into Marx's house, arrested him and compelled him to leave for France on the following day, which was just where he was wanting to go.

In Paris we soon all came together again. In Paris also there was drawn up and signed by all the members of the new Central Committee the following document which was distributed throughout Germany and from which even today many a person can still learn something :

#### DEMANDS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN GERMANY<sup>1</sup>

1. The whole of Germany shall be declared a single indivisible republic.

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<sup>1</sup>Engels, not having the full text of the *Demands* at hand, quotes them here in abbreviated form. The following are the points omitted :

2. Every German, on reaching 21 years of age, is eligible to vote and can be a candidate, provided that he has never suffered a criminal sentence.

3. Representatives of the people shall be paid so that workers also can sit in the parliament of the German people.

4. Universal arming of the people.

7. The royal and other feudal estates, all mines, pits, etc., shall be transformed into state property. On these estates, agriculture is to be conducted on a large scale and with the most modern scientific means for the benefit of all society.

8. Mortgages on peasant holdings shall be declared state property; interest on such mortgages shall be paid by the peasants to the state.

9. In the districts where tenant farming is developed, land rent or farming dues shall be paid to the state as a tax.

11. All means of transport: railways, canals, steamships, roads, post, etc., shall be taken over by the state. They are

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4. Universal arming of the people. In future the armies are to be labour armies as well, so that the army will not, as previously, merely consume, but will produce more than the amount of its cost of maintenance.

This is, moreover, a means for the organisation of work.

5. Administration of justice to be gratis.

6. All feudal burdens, all exactions, *corvees*, tithes, etc., such as have hitherto burdened the rural population, will be abolished without any compensation.

All these measures mentioned in points 6, 7, 8 and 9 are drafted in order to decrease the public and other burdens of the peasants and small farmers, without diminishing the means necessary for defraying state expenses and without endangering production itself.

The landowner proper, who is neither peasant nor farmer, takes no part at all in production. Hence his consumption is sheer abuse.

10. All private banks are to be replaced by a state bank, whose notes will have a legal quotation rate.

This measure makes it possible to regulate credit in the interest of the *whole* people and thus undermines the domination of the big financiers. By gradually replacing gold and silver by paper money, it cheapens the indispensable instrument of bourgeois intercourse, the general means of exchange, and permits of gold and silver being used for operations abroad. Finally, this measure is necessary for linking the interests of the conservative bourgeois to the revolution.

12. There will be no distinction in the salaries of all state officials, except that those with families, hence with more requirements, will draw a higher wage than the others.

13. Complete separation of the church from the state. The priests of all denominations will be paid solely by their voluntary parishes.—Ed.

to be transformed into state property and put at the disposal of the non-possessing class.

14. Limitation of the right of inheritance.

15. Introduction of a steeply graded, progressive income tax and abolition of taxes on consumption.

16. Establishment of national workshops. The state guarantees a living for all workers and provides for those unable to work.

17. Universal free elementary education.

It is in the interests of the German proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry to work with all possible energy for the realisation of the above measures. For only by their realisation can the millions in Germany, who up to now have been exploited by a small number of people and whom it will be attempted to keep in further subjection, get their rights and the power that they deserve as the producers of all wealth.

The Committee { KARL MARX, KARL SCHAPPER, H. BAUER,  
F. ENGELS, J. MOLL, W. WOLFF

At that time the craze for revolutionary legions prevailed in Paris. Spaniards, Italians, Belgians, Dutch, Poles and Germans came together in crowds in order to liberate their respective fatherlands. The German legion was led by Herwegh, Bornstedt and Bornstein. Since immediately after the revolution all foreign workers were not only unemployed but in addition harassed by the public, these legions made many recruits. The new government saw in them a means of getting rid of foreign workers and granted them *l'etape du soldat*, i.e., marching quarters and a marching allowance of fifty centimes per day up to the frontier, whereafter the eloquent Lamartine, the Foreign Minister who was so readily moved to tears, quickly found an opportunity of betraying them to their respective governments.

We opposed this playing with revolution in the most decisive fashion. In the midst of the ferment then going on in Germany, to add invasion which was to import the revolution compulsorily from outside meant to put an obstacle in the way of revolution in Germany itself, to strengthen the governments and to deliver the legionaires themselves—Lamartine guaranteed for that—defenceless into the hands of the German troops. When then in Vienna and Berlin the revolution was

victorious,<sup>1</sup> the legion became all the more purposeless ; but having been once begun, the game was continued.

We founded a German communist club, in which we advised the workers to keep away from the legion and to return instead to their homes singly and work there for the movement. Our old friend Flocon, who had a seat in the provisional government, obtained for the workers sent by us the same facilities for their journey as had been granted to the legionaires. In this way we helped three or four hundred workers to return to Germany, the great majority of them being League members.

As could easily be foreseen, the League proved to be much too weak a lever in the face of the popular mass movement that had now broken out. Three-quarters of the League members who had previously lived abroad had changed their domicile by returning to their homeland ; their previous local groups were thereby to a large extent dissolved and they lost all contact with the League. One part, composed of the more ambitious element among them, did not even try to win back this contact, but each one began a small separate movement on his own account in his own locality. Finally, the conditions in each separate small state, each province and each town were so different that the League would have been incapable of giving more than the most general directives ; such directives were, however, much better distributed through the press. In short, from the moment when the causes which had made the secret League necessary ceased to exist, the secret League as such also ceased to mean anything. This, however could least of all surprise the persons who had just deprived this same secret League of the last shadow of its conspiratorial character.

That, however, the League had been an excellent school for revolutionary activity was now shown. On the Rhine, where the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*<sup>2</sup> provided a firm centre in Nassau, in Rhenish Hesse, etc., everywhere members of the League stood at the head of the extreme democratic move-

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<sup>1</sup>For the revolutions in Vienna (March 13, 1848) and in Berlin (March 18, 1848) see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Published in Cologne from June 1, 1848, to May 19, 1849 ; Marx was its editor-in-chief and Engels one of the Editorial Board. See Engels' article, "Marx and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*," in the present volume.—Ed.

ment. The same was the case in Hamburg. In South Germany the predominance of petty-bourgeois democracy stood in the way. In Breslau, Wilhelm Wolff was active with great success until the summer of 1848; in addition he received a Silesian mandate as an alternate representative in the Frankfort parliament.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the compositor Stephan Born, who had worked in Brussels and Paris as an active member of the League, founded a Workers' Brotherhood in Berlin which became fairly widespread and existed until 1850. Born, a very talented young man, who, however, was a little too much in a hurry to become a big political figure, "fraternised" with the most miscellaneous ragtag and bobtail in order to get a crowd together, and was not at all the man who could bring unity into the discordant tendencies, light into the chaos. Consequently, in the official publications of the Association the views represented in *The Communist Manifesto* occur mingled hodge-podge with guild recollections and aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.; in short, they desired to be all things to all men. In particular, strikes, trade unions and producers' co-operatives were set going and it was forgotten that what had to be done above all was, by means of political victories, to conquer the field in which alone such things could be realised on a lasting basis. When, afterwards, the victories of the reaction made the leaders of the Brotherhood realise the necessity of directly entering the revolutionary struggle, they were naturally left in the lurch by the confused mass which they had grouped around themselves. Born took part in the May insurrection of 1849 in Dresden, and had a lucky escape. But the Workers' Brotherhood, as against the great political movement of the proletariat, proved to be a purely separatist body, which to a large extent only existed on paper and played such a subordinate role that the reaction found it necessary to suppress it only in 1850, and its surviving branches some years later. Born, whose real name was Buttermilch, did not become a big political figure but a petty Swiss professor who no longer translates Marx into guild language, but the meek Renan into his own fulsome German.

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<sup>1</sup>For the Frankfort parliament see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. VII and XIX in the present volume.—Ed.

With June 13, 1849,<sup>1</sup> in Paris, the defeat of the May insurrections<sup>2</sup> in Germany and the suppression of the Hungarian revolution by the Russians, an important period of the 1848 Revolution came to a close. But the victory of the reaction was as yet by no means final. A reorganisation of the scattered revolutionary forces was required and hence also of the League. Circumstances again forbade, as in 1848, any open organisation of the proletariat; hence one had to organise again in secret.

In the autumn of 1849 most of the members of the previous Central Committees and congresses came together again in London. The only one who was still missing was Schapper, who was imprisoned in Wiesbaden, but who also came after his acquittal, in the spring of 1850, and Moll, who, after he had accomplished a series of most dangerous missions and agitational journeys—finally he recruited gunners for the Palatinate artillery<sup>3</sup> right in the midst of the Prussian army in the Rhine Province—joined the Besancon Workers' Company of Willich's corps and was killed by a shot in the head at the fight at the Murg in front of the Rotenfels Bridge. His place was taken by Willich. Willich was one of those sentimental communists so common in West Germany since 1845, who on that account alone was in instinctive, hidden antagonism to our critical tendency. More than that, he was entirely the prophet, convinced of his personal mission as the predestined liberator of the German proletariat and as such a direct claimant as much to political as to military dictatorship. Thus, to the primitive Christian communism previously preached by Weitling was added a kind of communist Islam. However, the propaganda of this new religion was first of all restricted to the

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<sup>1</sup>On June 13, 1849, an unarmed protest demonstration organised by the petty-bourgeois party of the Mountain took place in Paris against the violent overthrow of the Roman republic by the French army. The demonstration was dispersed almost without effort and only confirmed the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois democracy in France. See on this Marx, *The Class Struggles in France*, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>See Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. XVIII, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The reference is to the artillery of the revolutionary army that fought against the troops of the Prussian government in the insurrection of the Baden Palatinate in May-June, 1849.—Ed.

refugee barracks under Willich's command.

The League was, therefore, organised afresh; Marx's Address of March 1850 given in the appendix, was issued, and Heinrich Bauer was sent as an emissary to Germany. The Address, composed by Marx and myself, is still of interest today, because petty-bourgeois democracy is even now the party which must certainly first of all come into power in Germany as the saviour of society from the communist workers on the occasion of the next European upheaval, which is now soon due (the European revolutions, 1815, 1830, 1848-52, 1870, occur at intervals of fifteen to eighteen years in our century). Much of what is said there is therefore still applicable today. Heinrich Bauer's mission was crowned with complete success. The trusty little shoemaker was a born diplomat. He brought the former members of the League, who had partly become inactive and partly were acting on their own account, back into the active organisation, and particularly also the leaders of the Workers' Brotherhood. The League began to play the dominant role in the workers', peasants', and athletic associations to a far greater extent than before 1848, so that the next Quarterly Address to the local sections in June 1850 could already report that the student Schurz from Bonn (later on American ex-minister), who was travelling in Germany in the interests of petty-bourgeois democracy, "had found all available forces already in the hands of the League." The League was undoubtedly the only revolutionary organisation that had any significance in Germany.

But what purpose this organisation should serve depended to a very essential degree on whether the prospects of a renewed upsurge of the revolution were realised. And in the course of the year 1850 this became more and more improbable, indeed impossible. The industrial crisis of 1847, which had paved the way for the Revolution of 1848, had been overcome; a new, unprecedented period of industrial prosperity had set in; whoever had eyes to see and could use them must have seen clearly that the revolutionary storm of 1848 was gradually becoming exhausted.

"With this general prosperity, in which the productive forces of bourgeois society develop as luxuriantly as is at all possible within bourgeois relationships, there can be no talk of a real revolution. Such a revolution is only

possible in the periods when both these factors, the modern productive forces and the bourgeois production forms, come in collision with one another. The various quarrels in which the representatives of the individual factions of the Continental Party of Order now indulge and mutually compromise themselves, far from providing the occasion for new revolutions are, on the contrary, only possible because the basis of the relationships is momentarily so secure and (what the reaction does not know) so bourgeois. From it, all attempts of the reaction to hold up bourgeois development *will rebound just as certainly as all moral indignation and all enthusiastic proclamations of the democrats.*"<sup>1</sup>

So Marx and I wrote in the "Revue of May to October 1850" in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung, Politisch-ökonomische Revue*, Nos. V and VI, Hamburg, 1850, p. 153.<sup>2</sup>

This cool estimation of the position, however, was regarded as heresy by many persons, at a time when Ledru-Rollin, Louis Blanc, Mazzini, Kossuth and, among the lesser German lights, Ruge, Kinkel, Gogg and the rest of them crowded in London to form provisional governments of the future not only for their respective fatherlands, but for the whole of Europe, and where the only thing still necessary was to obtain the requisite money from America as a loan for the revolution to realise at a moment's notice the European revolution and the various republics which went with it as a matter of course. Can anyone be surprised that a man like Willich was taken in by this and that Schapper also allowed himself to be fooled owing to his old revolutionary impulse, and that the majority of the London workers, to a large extent refugees themselves, followed them into the camp of the bourgeois-democratic revolution-makers? It suffices to say that the reserve maintained by us was not to the mind of these people; one was supposed to enter into the game of revolution-making; we most decisively refused to do so. The split<sup>3</sup> followed; more about this

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<sup>1</sup>See *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-50*, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The split with the Willich-Schapper fraction occurred in September 1850.—Ed.

is to be read in the revelations<sup>1</sup>. Then came the arrest first of Nothjung, and then of Haupt in Hamburg, who turned traitor by giving the names of the Cologne Central Committee and was intended to be the chief witness in the trial, but his relatives had no wish to endure this shame and sent him to Rio de Janeiro, where he later established himself as a trader and in recognition of his services was appointed first Prussian and then German Consul General. He is now again in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

For better understanding of what followed, I give the list of the Cologne accused: 1) P. G. Roser, cigarmaker; 2) Heinrich Burgers, who later died while progressive deputy to the Landtag; 3) Peter Nothjung, tailor, who died a few years ago as a photographer in Breslau; 4) W. I. Reiff; 5) Dr. Hermann Becker, now chief burgomaster in Cologne and member of the Upper House; 6) Dr. Roland Daniels, physician, who died a few years after the trial as a result of tuberculosis contracted in prison; 7) Karl Otto, chemist; 8) Dr. Abraham Jacoby, now physician in New York; 9) Dr. I. I. Klein, now physician and town councillor in Cologne; 10) Ferdinand Freiligrath,<sup>3</sup> who, however, was at that time already in London; 11) I. L. Ehrhard, clerk; 12) Friedrich Lessner, tailor, now in London. After the public proceedings before the jury, which lasted from October 4 to November 12, 1852, the following were sentenced for attempted high treason: Roser, Burgers and Nothjung to six years, Reiff, Otto, Becker to five years and Lessner to three years' detention in a fortress; Daniels, Klein, Jacoby and Ehrhard were acquitted.

With the Cologne trial the first period of the German communist workers' movement comes to an end. Immediately after the sentence we dissolved our League; a few months later the Willich-Schapper separate organisation also went to its eternal rest.

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<sup>1</sup> *Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial.* On the Cologne trial see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. XX in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Schapper died in London in 1870. Willich took part in the American Civil War with distinction; he became Brigadier-General and was shot in the chest during the battle of Murfreesboro (Tennessee) but recovered and died about ten years ago (1878) in America. Of the other persons mentioned, I will only remark that Heinrich Bauer disappeared in Australia, Weitling and Everbeck died in America. [Note by F. Engels.]

<sup>3</sup> Famous German poet.—Ed.

Between that time and this lies a whole generation. At that time Germany was a country of handicraft and of domestic industry based on hand labour; now it is a big industrial country still undergoing continual industrial transformation. At that time one had to seek out one by one the workers who had an understanding of their position as workers and of their historical economic antagonism to capital, because this antagonism itself was only just beginning to develop. Today the entire German proletariat has to be placed under the Exceptional Law,<sup>1</sup> merely in order to slow up a little the process of its development to full consciousness of its position as an oppressed class. At that time the few persons who had won through to recognition of the historical role of the proletariat had to come together in secret and to assemble clandestinely in groups of three to twenty persons. Today the German proletariat does not need any official organisation any longer, either public or secret; the simple self-evident interconnection of like-minded class comrades suffices, without any statutes, committees, resolutions or other tangible forms, to shake the whole German empire to its foundations. Bismarck is the arbiter in Europe outside the frontiers of Germany, but within them there grows daily more threatening that athlete's stature of the German proletariat that Marx already foresaw in 1844, the giant for whom the narrow imperial edifice adapted to the philistine is already inadequate and whose mighty stature and broad shoulders are growing until the moment comes when by merely rising from his seat he will shatter the whole structure of the Imperial Constitution into ruins. And still

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<sup>1</sup> The Anti-Socialist Law (the Exceptional Law against the Socialists). On October 19, 1878, a law was adopted in the German Reichstag against the "Efforts of Social-Democracy dangerous to the public welfare," on the basis of which all associations, societies and press organs connected with socialist propaganda were forbidden. A special paragraph gave the authorities the right to proclaim a state of siege, etc. The Bismarck government desired to suppress the socialist movement by aid of this law. German Social-Democracy, however, thanks to the combination of illegal and legal work, under the leadership of Marx and Engels, who conducted a struggle on two fronts against opportunism, succeeded in consolidating and extending its influence in spite of the Anti-Socialist Law. The result was that on January 25, 1890, the law, which for twelve years had been periodically renewed again and again, was defeated in Reichstag.—Ed.

more. The international movement of the European and American proletariat has become so much strengthened that not merely its first narrow form—the secret League—but even its second infinitely wider form—the open International Working Men’s Association—has become a fetter for it, so that the simple feeling of solidarity based on the understanding of the identity of class position suffices to create and to hold together one and the same great party of the proletariat among the workers of all countries and tongues. The doctrines which the League represented from 1847 to 1852, and which at that time could be treated by the wise philistine with a shrug of the shoulders as the hallucinations of extreme lunatics, as the secret doctrine of a few scattered sectarians, has now innumerable adherents in all civilised countries of the world, among those condemned to the Siberian mines as much as among those toiling in the gold mines of California ; and the founder of this doctrine, the most hated, most slandered man of his time, Karl Marx, was, when he died, the ever-sought-after and ever-willing counsellor of the proletariat of both worlds.

London, October 8, 1885.

## MARX AND THE NEUE RHEINISCHE ZEITUNG<sup>1</sup>

(1848-49)

ON the outbreak of the February Revolution, the German Communist Party, as we called it, consisted only of a small corps, the Communist League, which was organised as a secret

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<sup>1</sup> Engels' article, *Marx und die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* [*Marx and the New Rhenish Gazette*] (1884) is of special interest, since it describes Marx's role and tactics during the revolution in Germany in 1848. On Marx's tactics in the 1848 Revolution, Lenin wrote: "In the years 1848-49 in Germany, Marx supported the extreme revolutionary democracy and he never subsequently took back what he said then about tactics." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII.) Marx and Engels supported the extreme Democratic Party only in so far as it still played a revolutionary role and they never forgot for a moment to emphasise and to defend the special tasks of the proletariat in the revolution.

In connection with this question, Engels' letter to the Danish Social-Democrat, Trier (December 18, 1889), is of extraordinary importance. In this letter Engels formulates the standpoint of the founders of Marxism in regard to the role of the proletarian party and its relation to other revolutionary or opposition parties:

"...That the proletariat cannot conquer its political domination, the only door into the new society, without violent revolution, on this we are agreed. For the proletariat to be strong enough to conquer on the day of decision, it is necessary, and this view Marx and I have upheld since 1847, that it should form its own party, separated from all others and opposed to them, a class conscious, class party.

"That does not imply that this party cannot for a short time make use of other parties for its aims. Nor does it imply that it cannot support other parties for a short time in measures that are either immediately advantageous to the proletariat or which are advances in the sense of economic development or political freedom... I am, however, for it only if the advantage for us is direct, or if the advantage for the historical development of the country, in the direction of the economic and proletarian revolution, is incontestable and worth the trouble. And presupposed that the proletarian class character of the Party is not put in question thereby. This represents for me the absolute limit. You will find this policy expounded as early as 1847 in *The Communist Manifesto* and we followed it in 1848 in the International and throughout."—*Ed.*

propaganda society. The League was secret only because at that time no freedom of association or assembly existed in Germany. Besides the workers' associations abroad, from which it obtained recruits, it had about thirty local units or sections in the country itself and in addition isolated members in many places. This inconsiderable fighting force, however, possessed a leader to whom all willingly subordinated themselves, a leader of the first rank, in Marx, and thanks to him a programme of principle and tactics that today still has full validity: *The Communist Manifesto*.

It is the tactical part of the programme that concerns us here in the first instance. The general part of this states:

"The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties.

"They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

"They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement.

"The Communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only: 1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

"The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement."<sup>1</sup>

And for the German Party in particular it states:

"In Germany they [the Communist Party] fight with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy and the petty bourgeoisie.

"But they never cease, for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the German workers may straightway use, as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and the political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its

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<sup>1</sup> *The Communist Manifesto*.—Ed.

supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin.

"The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution..."<sup>1</sup>

Never has a tactical programme justified itself as well as this one. Put forward on the eve of a revolution, it stood the test of this revolution; whenever, since this period, a workers' party has deviated from it, the deviation has met its punishment; and today, after almost forty years, it serves as the guiding line of all resolute and class conscious workers' parties in Europe from Madrid to Petersburg.

The February events in Paris precipitated the imminent German revolution and thereby modified its character. The German bourgeoisie, instead of conquering by virtue of its own power, conquered in the tow of a French workers' revolution. Before it had yet conclusively overthrown its old adversaries, the absolute monarchy, feudal landownership, the bureaucracy and the cowardly petty bourgeoisie, it had to confront a new enemy, the proletariat. However, the effects of the economic conditions, which lagged far behind those of France and England, and of the likewise backward class-position of Germany resulting therefrom, immediately showed themselves here.

The German bourgeoisie, which had only just begun to establish its large-scale industry, had neither the power nor the courage, nor the compelling necessity, to win for itself unconditional domination in the state; the proletariat, undeveloped to an equal degree, grown up in complete intellectual enslavement, unorganised and still not even capable of independent organisation, possessed only the vague feeling of the deep antagonism between its interests and those of the bourgeoisie. Hence, although in point of fact the threatening antagonist of the latter, it remained on the other hand its political appendage. Terrified not by what the German proletariat was, but by what it threatened to become and what the French proletariat already was, the bourgeoisie saw its salvation only in some compromise, even the most cowardly, with the monarchy and nobility; the great mass of the proletariat, still unacquainted with its own historical role, had first of all to take on the role of the forward-pressing, extreme Left

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.—Ed.

wing of the bourgeoisie. The German workers had above all to win those rights which were indispensable to their independent organisation as a class party: freedom of the press, association and assembly—rights which the bourgeoisie, in the interests of its own rule, ought to have fought for, but of which it itself in its fear now tried to deprive the workers. The few hundred isolated League members vanished in the enormous mass that had been suddenly hurled into the movement. Thus, the German proletariat appeared on the political stage first of all as the extreme Democratic Party.

In this way, when we founded a great newspaper in Germany, our banner was given us as a matter of course. It could only be that of democracy, but that of a democracy which everywhere emphasised in every point the specific proletarian character which it could not yet inscribe once for all on its banner. If we did not desire that, if we did not desire to take up the movement from its already existing, most advanced, actually proletarian side and to push it further, then nothing remained for us but to preach communism in a little provincial sheet and to found a tiny sect instead of a great party of action. But we had already been spoilt for the role of preachers in the wilderness; we had studied the utopians too well for that. We had not drafted our programme for that.

When we came to Cologne, preparations, partly from the democratic and partly from the communist side, had been made there for a big newspaper; it was desired to make this a purely local Cologne paper and to banish us to Berlin. But in twenty-four hours, especially thanks to Marx, we had conquered the field, and the newspaper became ours, with the concession in return that we took Heinrich Burgers into the editorial board. The latter wrote *one* article (in No. 2) and never another.

We had to go precisely to Cologne and not to Berlin. Firstly, Cologne was the centre of the Rhine province, which had gone through the French Revolution, which had provided itself with *modern* legal conceptions in the *Code Napoleon*,<sup>1</sup> which had developed by far the most important large-scale industry and which was in every respect at that time the most advanced part of Germany. The Berlin of the period we knew only too

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<sup>1</sup>The French bourgeois code of laws drafted while Napoleon I was Consul and adopted in 1804. The *Code Napoleon* applies the bourgeois-individualistic principle logically throughout the sphere of bourgeois law.—Ed.

well from our own observation, with its bourgeoisie, hardly beginning to emerge, with its crawling petty bourgeoisie, audacious in words but cowardly in deeds, with its still totally undeveloped workers, its mass of bureaucrats, aristocratic and court riff-raff, its whole character as a mere "*Residenz*" [seat of a reigning prince]. Decisive, however, was the following: in Berlin the wretched Prussian *Landrecht* prevailed and political trials came before a professional magistrate; on the Rhine the *Code Napoleon* was in force, which knows no press trials, because it presupposes censorship, and if one committed, not a political crime, but only a *misdemeanour*, one came before a jury; in Berlin after the revolution young Schloffel was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for a trifle, on the Rhine we had unconditional freedom of the press—and we used it to the last drop.

Thus we began, on June 1, 1848, with a very limited share capital, of which only a little had been paid up and the shareholders themselves were more than uncertain. Half of them deserted us immediately after the first number and at the end of the month we no longer had any at all.

The editorial constitution was simply the dictatorship of Marx. A big daily paper, which has to be ready at a definite hour and which wishes to put forward definite views, cannot observe a consistent policy with any other constitution. In this case, moreover, Marx's dictatorship was a matter of course, undisputed and willingly recognised by all of us. It was due in the first place to his clear view and his firm attitude that the paper became the most famous German newspaper of the year of the revolution.

The political programme of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* consisted of two main points: a single, indivisible, democratic German republic, and war with Russia, which included the restoration of Poland.

The petty-bourgeois democracy at that time was divided into two sections: the North German which put up with a democratic Prussian emperor, and the South German, at that time almost wholly specifically Baden, which desired to transform Germany into a federated republic after the Swiss model. We had to fight both of them. The interests of the proletariat forbade equally the Prussianisation of Germany and the perpetuation of the policy of petty states. These interests made imperative the definitive unification of Germany into a *nation*, which alone could provide the battlefield, cleared of all tradi-

tional petty obstacles, on which proletariat and bourgeoisie would measure their forces. But they equally forbade the establishment of a Prussian head; the Prussian state with its whole organisation, its tradition and its dynasty was precisely the sole serious internal adversary which the revolution in Germany had to overthrow; and moreover, Prussia could only unify Germany by tearing it apart, by the exclusion of German Austria. Dissolution of the Prussian and the break-up of the Austrian state, real unification of Germany as a republic—we could not have any other revolutionary immediate programme. And this could be realised through war with Russia and only through this means. I will come back to this last point later:

For the rest, the tone of the newspaper was by no means solemn, serious or gushing. We had altogether contemptible opponents and we treated them without exception with the utmost contempt. The conspiring monarchy, the *camarilla*, the nobility, the *Kreuzzeitung*, the entire "reaction," about which the philistines were morally indignant—we treated them only with mockery and derision. Not less so also the new idols that had come to the fore through the revolution; the March ministers,<sup>1</sup> the Frankfort and Berlin Assemblies,<sup>2</sup> both the Rights and the Lefts in them. The very first number began with an article which mocked at the emptiness of the Frankfort parliament, the purposelessness of its long-winded speeches, the superfluity of its cowardly resolutions. It cost us half the shareholders. The Frankfort parliament was not even a debating club; hardly any debates took place there, but for the most part only academic dissertations prepared beforehand were ground out and resolutions adopted which were intended to inspire the German philistines but of which no person took any notice.

The Berlin Assembly was of more importance; it confronted a real power, it did not debate and pass resolutions in the air, as in the Frankfort cloud cuckoo-land. Consequently it was dealt with in more detail. But there also, the idols of the Lefts, Schulze-Delitsch, Behrens, Elsner, Stein, etc., were

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<sup>1</sup> I.e., the liberal ministry of Camphausen-Hanseman, which came to the helm after the March Revolution in Germany.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> For the Frankfort National Assembly see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. VII and XIX; for the Berlin Assembly see chap. XIII, in the present volume.—Ed.

just as sharply attacked as those of Frankfort, their irresolution, hesitancy and petty calculating were mercilessly exposed and it was proved how step by step they compromised themselves into betrayal of the revolution. This, of course, evoked a shudder in the democratic petty bourgeois, who had only just manufactured these idols for his own use. For us this shudder was a sign that we had hit the bull's eye.

We came out likewise against the illusion zealously spread by the petty bourgeoisie that the revolution had come to an end with the March days and that one had only now to pocket the fruits. For us, February and March could only have the significance of a real revolution if they were not the conclusion but, on the contrary, the starting point of a long revolutionary movement in which, as in the Great French Revolution, the people developed further through its own struggles and the parties became more and more sharply divided until they coincided entirely with the great classes, bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie and proletariat, and in which the separate positions were one after another conquered by the proletariat in a series of battles. Consequently we everywhere opposed also the democratic petty bourgeoisie when it tried to blur over its class antagonism to the proletariat with the favourite phrase: We all want the same thing, all the differences rest on mere misunderstandings. But the less we allowed the petty bourgeoisie to misunderstand our proletarian democracy, the more tame and subservient it became to us. The more sharply and resolutely one opposes it the more readily it humbles itself and the more concessions it makes to the workers' party. That is what we observed.

Finally, we exposed the parliamentary cretinism (as Marx called it) of the various so-called National Assemblies. These gentlemen had allowed all means of power to slip out of their hands, in part had voluntarily surrendered them again to the governments. In Berlin, as in Frankfort, alongside newly strengthened, reactionary governments there stood powerless assemblies which nevertheless imagined that their impotent resolutions would have a world-shaking effect. This cretinous self-deception prevailed even among the extreme Lefts. We called to them: Your parliamentary victory will coincide with your real defeat.

And it so happened both in Berlin and in Frankfort. When the "Lefts" obtained the majority, the government dispersed the entire Assembly; it could do so because the Assembly had

forfeited all its credit with the people.

When later I read Bougeart's book on Marat,<sup>1</sup> I found that in more than one respect we had only unconsciously imitated the great model of the genuine "*Ami du peuple*" [Friend of the People] (not the one forged by the royalists) and that the whole outburst of rage and the whole falsification of history, in virtue of which throughout almost a century only an entirely distorted Marat has been known, is only due to the fact that Marat mercilessly removed the veil from the idols of the moment, Lafayette, Bailly and others, and revealed them as already complete traitors to the revolution; and that he, just as we did, wanted to have the revolution declared not as finished but in permanence.

We openly proclaimed that the tendency we represented could only enter the struggle for the attainment of our real party aims if the most extreme of the official parties existing in Germany came to the helm; then we would form the opposition to it.

Events, however, brought it about that besides mockery at our German opponents there also appeared fiery passion. The insurrection of the Paris workers in June 1848<sup>2</sup> found us at our post. From the first shot we stood unconditionally on the side of the insurgents. After their defeat, Marx celebrated the vanquished in one of his most powerful articles.

Then the last remaining shareholders deserted us. But we had the satisfaction of being the only paper in Germany, and almost in Europe, that held aloft the banner of the crushed proletariat at the moment when the bourgeois and petty bourgeois in all countries were overwhelming the vanquished with a torrent of slander.

The foreign policy was simple: to come out on behalf of every revolutionary people, and to call for a general war of revolutionary Europe against the great backbone of European reaction—Russia. From February 24 onwards it was clear to us that the revolution had only *one* really terrible enemy, Russia and that the more the movement took on European dimensions the more was this enemy compelled to enter the struggle. The events of Vienna, Milan and Berlin were bound

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred Bougeart, *Marat, l'Ami du Peuple* [Marat, the Friend of the People], Vol. 1|2, Paris, Lacroix, 1865.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> For the June insurrection of 1848 in Paris, see Marx, *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-50*, chap. I, in the present volume.—Ed.

to delay the Russian attack, but its final coming was the more certain the closer the threat of the revolution to Russia. But if one succeeded in bringing Germany into war against Russia, then it was all up with the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns and the revolution would triumph along the whole line.

This policy pervaded every issue of the newspaper from the moment of the actual invasion of Hungary by the Russians which fully confirmed our forecast and decided the defeat of the revolution.

When, in the spring of 1849, the decisive battle drew nigh, the language of the paper became more violent and passionate with every issue. Wilhelm Wolff reminded the Silesian peasants in the "Silesian Millions" (eight articles), how on being emancipated from feudal services they had been cheated of money and possession of land by the landlords with the help of the government, and he demanded a million talers in compensation.

At the same time, in April, Marx's work on wage labour and capital appeared in the form of a series of leading articles as a clear indication of the social goal of our policy. Every issue, every special number, pointed to the great battle that was in preparation, to the sharpening of the antagonisms in France, Italy, Germany and Hungary. In particular, the special numbers in April and May were so many proclamations to the people to hold themselves in readiness for action.

In the other parts of the German empire, wonder was expressed that we carried on our activities so unconcernedly in a Prussian fortress of the first rank, in the face of a garrison of 8,000 troops and in the face of the police headquarters; but, on account of the eight rifles with bayonets and 250 pointed bullets in the editorial room, and the red Jacobin cap of the compositors, our house was reckoned by the officers also as a fortress which was not to be taken by a mere *coup de main*.

At last, on May 18, 1849 the blow came.

The insurrection was suppressed in Dresden and Elberfeld, in Iserlohn it was encircled, the Rhine Province and Westphalia bristled with bayonets which, after completing the rape of the Prussian Rhineland, were intended to be marched against the Palatinate and Baden. Then at last the government ventured to make an attack on us. One-half of the editorial staff was being prosecuted by court, the other half could be deported as non-Prussians. Nothing could be done against it, as long as a whole army corps stood behind the government. We had to

surrender our fortress, but we withdrew with weapons and baggage, with bands playing and with the flying banner of the last Red issue, in which we warned the Cologne workers against hopeless *putsches* and we called to them :

“The editors of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in taking leave thank you for the sympathy you have shown them. Their last word will always and everywhere be : *The Emancipation of the Working Class!*”

Thus the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* came to an end, shortly before it had completed its first year. Begun almost without financial resources—the little that had been promised it very soon, as we said, was lost to it—by September it had already achieved a circulation of almost 5,000. The state of siege in Cologne suspended it ; in the middle of October it had to begin again from the beginning. But in May 1849, when it was suppressed, it already had 6,000 subscribers again, while the “*Kolnische*” [*Cologne Gazette*] at that time according to its own admission had not more than 9,000. No German newspaper, before or since, has ever had the power and influence or has so understood how to electrify the proletarian masses as the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

And that it owed above all to *Marx*

When the blow fell, the editorial staff dispersed. *Marx* went to Paris where the decision was in preparation which took place on June 13, 1849;<sup>1</sup> *Wilhelm Wolff* now took his seat in the Frankfort parliament—now when the Assembly had to choose between being dispersed from above or joining the revolution ; and I went to the Palatinate and became an adjutant in *Willich's* volunteer corps.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Marx, The Class Struggles in France, 1848-50*, chap. III, in the present volume.—*Ed.*

## GERMANY: REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION<sup>1</sup>

### I. GERMANY AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION<sup>2</sup>

[*New York Daily Tribune*, October 25, 1851]

THE first act of the revolutionary drama on the continent of Europe has closed. The "powers that were," before the hurricane of 1848, are again the "powers that be," and

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<sup>1</sup>This work was written in the main by Engels, Marx collaborating, between September 1851 and September 1852 in the form of a series of articles which were published in the American bourgeois-democratic newspaper, the *New York Daily Tribune*. For a long time Marx was considered the author of these articles, but the correspondence between Marx and Engels makes it clear that, although the *New York Daily Tribune* had proposed the work to Marx, it was in the main carried out by Engels, Marx collaborating. Marx at this time was very much occupied with his *Critique of Political Economy*; he was spending whole days in the British Museum, and Engels, therefore, decided, in order that Marx should not be distracted from his labours, to take his place in compiling a series of articles on the German Revolution of 1848. This work is of great interest. During the German Revolution the activity of Marx and Engels as practical revolutionaries developed on an especially wide scale. On the basis of the experiences of the 1848 Revolutions in general and of the German Revolution in particular, they tested and put in concrete form the strategy and tactics of the working class as elaborated by them. It is quite clear why Lenin and the Bolshevik Party so closely studied the experiences of the German Revolution and the political activity of Marx and Engels during this period. Using the experience of the German Revolution of 1848-49, the Bolsheviks fought against the opportunist falsifications, by Menshevism and the variety of Menshevism termed Trotskyism, of the revolutionary heritage bequeathed by Marx and Engels. Basing themselves on the ideological heritage of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin further developed the strategy and tactics of the proletarian party in accordance with the new conditions and the new epoch.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The titles of the separate chapters are taken from the first English edition of *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, which appeared in London in 1896, the publication of which was prepared by Eleanor Marx Aveling.—Ed.

the more or less popular rulers of a day, provisional governors, triumvirs, dictators, with their tail of representatives, civil commissioners, military commissioners, prefects, judges, generals, officers, and soldiers, are thrown upon foreign shores, and "transported beyond the seas" to England or America, there to form new governments "*in partibus infidelium*,"<sup>1</sup> European committees,<sup>2</sup> central committees, national committees, and to announce their advent with proclamations quite as solemn as those of any less imaginary potentates.

A more signal defeat than that undergone by the continental revolutionary party—or rather parties—upon all points of the line of battle cannot be imagined. But what of that? Has not the struggle of the British middle classes for their social and political supremacy embraced forty-eight, that of the French middle classes forty years of unexampled struggles?<sup>3</sup> And was their triumph ever nearer than at the very moment when restored monarchy thought itself more firmly settled than ever? The times of that superstition which attributed revolutions to the ill will of a few agitators have long passed away. Everyone knows nowadays that wherever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background, which is prevented, by outworn institutions, from satisfying itself. The want may not yet be felt as strongly, as generally, as might ensure immediate success, but every attempt at forcible repression will only bring it forth stronger and stronger, until it bursts its fetters. If, then, we have been beaten, we have nothing else to do but to begin again from the beginning. And, fortunately, the probably very short interval of rest, which is allowed us between the close of the first and the beginning of the second act of the movement,

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<sup>1</sup>Literally, in the lands of the heathen, i.e., existing only on paper.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the various committees organised in London (which had become the centre of political emigration after the defeat of the revolution) such as the Central Committee of European Democracy, the Committee for German Affairs in London, etc. The leadership of these organisations was in the hands of representatives of petty bourgeois democracy, former parliamentary deputies, journalists, etc. Their appeals and manifestoes "To the People," which according to Marx were "a direct attempt at swindling precisely the oppressed classes of the people," were subjected to biting and annihilating criticism by Marx and Engels.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>This refers to the period between 1640 and 1688 in England and between 1789 and 1830 in France.—*Ed.*

gives us time for a very necessary piece of work: the study of the causes that necessitated both the late outbreak and its defeat, causes that are not to be sought for in the accidental efforts, talents, faults, errors or treacheries of some of the leaders, but in the general social state and conditions of existence of each of the convulsed nations. That the sudden movements of February and March 1848 were not the work of single individuals, but spontaneous, irresistible manifestations of national wants and necessities, more or less clearly understood, but very distinctly felt by numerous classes in every country, is a fact recognised everywhere; but when you inquire into the causes of the counter-revolutionary successes, there you are met on every hand with the ready reply that it was Mr. This or Citizen That, who "betrayed" the people. Which reply may be very true, or not, according to circumstances, but under no circumstances does it explain anything—not even show how it came to pass that the "people" allowed themselves to be thus betrayed. And what a poor chance stands a political party whose entire stock-in-trade consists in a knowledge of the solitary fact that Citizen So-and-so is not to be trusted.

The inquiry into, and the exposition of, the causes, both of the revolutionary convulsion and its suppression, are, besides, of paramount importance from a historical point of view. All these petty, personal quarrels and recriminations—all these contradictory assertions that it was Marrast, or Ledru-Rollin, or Louis Blanc, or any other member of the Provisional Government, or the whole of them, that steered the revolution amidst the rocks upon which it foundered—of what interest can they be, what light can they afford to the American or Englishman who observed all these various movements from a distance too great to allow of his distinguishing any of the details of operations? No man in his senses will ever believe that eleven men,<sup>1</sup> mostly of very different capacity, either for good or evil, were able in three months to ruin a nation of thirty-six millions, unless those thirty-six millions saw as little of their way before them as the eleven did. But how it came to pass that these thirty-six millions were at once called upon to decide for themselves which way to go, although partly groping in dim twilight, and how then

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<sup>1</sup>The members of the French Provisional Government formed on February 24, 1848.—Ed.

they got lost and their old leaders were for a moment allowed to return to their leadership, that is just the question.

If, then, we try to lay before the readers of the *Tribune* the causes which, while they necessitated the German Revolution of 1848, led quite as inevitably to its momentary repression in 1849 and 1850, we shall not be expected to give a complete history of the events as they passed in that country. Later events, and the judgment of coming generations, will decide what portion of that confused mass of seemingly accidental, incoherent and incongruous facts is to form a part of the world's history. The time for such a task has not yet arrived ; we must confine ourselves to the limits of the possible, and be satisfied, if we can find rational causes based upon undeniable facts, to explain the chief events, the principal vicissitudes of that movement, and to give us a clue as to the direction which the next and perhaps not very distant outbreak will impart to the German people.

And firstly, what was the state of Germany at the outbreak of the revolution ?

The composition of the different classes of the people which form the groundwork of every political organisation was, in Germany, more complicated than in any other country. While in England and France feudalism was entirely destroyed, or at least reduced, as in the former country, to a few insignificant forms, by a powerful and wealthy middle class, concentrated in large towns, and particularly in the capital, the feudal nobility in Germany had retained a great portion of their ancient privileges. The feudal system of tenure was prevalent almost everywhere. The lords of the land had even retained the jurisdiction over their tenants. Deprived of their political privileges, of the right to control the princes, they had preserved almost all their mediaeval supremacy over the peasantry of their demesnes, as well as their exemption from taxes. Feudalism was more flourishing in some localities than in others, but nowhere except on the left bank of the Rhine was it entirely destroyed. This feudal nobility, then extremely numerous and partly very wealthy, was considered, officially, the first "Order" in the country. It furnished the higher government officials, it almost exclusively officered the army.

The bourgeoisie of Germany was by far not as wealthy and concentrated as that of France or England. The ancient manufactures of Germany had been destroyed by the introduction of steam, and by the rapidly extending supremacy of

English manufactures ; the more modern manufactures, started under the Napoleonic continental system,<sup>1</sup> established in other parts of the country, did not compensate for the loss of the old ones, nor suffice to create a manufacturing interest strong enough to force its wants upon the notice of governments jealous of every extension of non-noble wealth and power. If France carried her silk manufactures victorious through fifty years of revolutions and wars, Germany, during the same time, all but lost her ancient linen trade. The manufacturing districts, besides, were few and far between ; situated far inland, and using, mostly, foreign, Dutch or Belgian ports for their imports and exports, they had little or no interest in common with the large seaport towns on the North Sea and the Baltic ; they were, above all, unable to create large manufacturing and trading centres, such as Paris and Lyons, London and Manchester. The causes of this backwardness of German manufactures were manifold, but two will suffice to account for it : the unfavourable geographical situation of the country, at a distance from the Atlantic, which had become the great highway for the world's trade, and the continuous wars in which Germany was involved, and which were fought on her soil, from the sixteenth century to the present day. It was this want of numbers, and particularly of anything like concentrated numbers, which prevented the German middle classes from attaining that political supremacy which the English bourgeois has enjoyed ever since 1688, and which the French conquered in 1789. And yet, ever since 1815, the wealth, and with the wealth, the political importance of the middle class in Germany, was continually growing. Governments were, although reluctantly, compelled to bow, at least to its more immediate material interests. It may even be truly said that from 1815 to 1830, and from 1832 to 1840, every particle of political influence, which, having been allowed to the middle class in the constitutions of the smaller states, was again wrested from them during the above two periods of political reaction—that every such particle was compensated for by some more practical advantage allowed

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<sup>1</sup>A blockade organised in 1806 by Napoleon I for struggle against the competition of English industry and commerce. Besides France, this blockade was participated in by Prussia, Holland, Russia, Spain and other countries. England, however, succeeded in breaking through this so-called continental blockade.—Ed.

to them. Every political defeat of the middle class drew after it a victory on the field of commercial legislation. And, certainly, the Prussian Protective Tariff of 1818, and the formation of the *Zollverein*,<sup>1</sup> were worth a good deal more to the traders and manufacturers of Germany than the equivocal right of expressing in the chambers of some diminutive dukedom their want of confidence in ministers who laughed at their votes. Thus, with growing wealth and extending trade, the bourgeoisie soon arrived at a stage where it found the development of its most important interests checked by the political constitution of the country—by its random division among thirty-six princes<sup>2</sup> with conflicting tendencies and caprices; by the feudal fetters upon agriculture and the trade connected with it; by the prying superintendence to which an ignorant and presumptuous bureaucracy subjected all its transactions. At the same time, the extension and consolidation of the *Zollverein*, the general introduction of steam communication, the growing competition in the home trade, brought the commercial classes of the different states and provinces closer together, equalised their interests, centralised their strength. The natural consequence was the passing of the whole mass of them into the camp of the Liberal Opposition, and the gaining of the first serious struggle of the German middle class for political power. This change may be dated from 1840<sup>3</sup> from the moment when the bourgeoisie of Prussia assumed the lead of the middle class movement of Germany. We shall hereafter revert to this Liberal Opposition movement of 1840-47.

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<sup>1</sup>Since 1818 an ever greater number of German states, which had previously been separated from one another by customs barriers, gradually united under the leadership of Prussia in regard to customs. The North German Customs Union was founded in 1834; Austria did not join it. This Customs Union opened a territory with a population of about thirty millions to free internal trade, a territory projected against foreign competition.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Engels refers to the German Union formed at the Vienna Congress, consisting of various independent kingdoms, principalities, grand duchies and free towns.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The growing dissatisfaction of the Prussian bourgeoisie finally led, for the first time, to a rupture in 1840 after the death of the king of Prussia. His heir, Frederick William IV, on whom the bourgeoisie had set all their hopes, refused, just as his father had done, to grant the constitution that had been promised by the king of Prussia during the war against Napoleon.—*Ed.*

The great mass of the nation, which neither belonged to the nobility nor to the bourgeoisie, consisted, in the towns, of the small trading and shopkeeping class and the working people, and in the country, of the peasantry.

The small trading and shopkeeping class is exceedingly numerous in Germany, in consequence of the stunted development which the large capitalists and manufacturers, as a class, have had in that country. In the larger towns it forms almost the majority of the inhabitants; in the smaller ones it entirely predominates from the absence of wealthier competitors for influence. This class, a most important one in every modern body politic, and in all modern revolutions, is still more important in Germany, where during the recent struggles it generally played the decisive part. Its intermediate position between the class of larger capitalists, traders and manufacturers, the bourgeoisie, properly so-called and the proletarian or industrial class, determines its character. Aspiring to the position of the first, the least adverse turn of fortune hurls the individuals of this class down into the ranks of the second. In monarchical and feudal countries the custom of the court and aristocracy becomes necessary to its existence; the loss of this custom might ruin a great part of it. In the smaller towns, a military garrison, a county government, a court of law with its followers, form very often the base of its prosperity; withdraw these and down go the shopkeepers, the tailors, the shoemakers, the joiners. Thus, eternally tossed about between the hope of entering the ranks of the wealthier class and the fear of being reduced to the state of proletarians or even paupers; between the hope of promoting their interests by conquering a share in the direction of public affairs and the dread of rousing, by ill-timed opposition, the ire of a government which disposes of their very existence, because it has the power of removing their best customers; possessed of small means, the insecurity of the possession of which is in the inverse ratio of the amount; this class is extremely vacillating in its views. Humble and crouchingly submissive under a powerful feudal or monarchical government, it turns to the side of liberalism when the middle class is in the ascendant; it becomes seized with violent democratic fits as soon as the middle class has secured its own supremacy, but falls back into the abject despondency of fear as soon as the class below itself, the proletarians, attempt an independent movement. We shall, by and by, see this class, in Ger-

many, pass alternately from one of these stages to the other.

The working class in Germany is, in its social and political development, as far behind that of England and France as the German bourgeoisie is behind the bourgeoisie of those countries. Like master, like man. The evolution of the conditions of existence for a numerous, strong, concentrated and intelligent proletarian class, goes hand in hand with the development of the conditions of existence for a numerous, wealthy, concentrated, and powerful middle class. The working class movement itself never is independent, never is of an exclusively proletarian character, until all the different factions of the middle class, and particularly its most progressive faction, the large manufacturers, have conquered political power, and remodelled the state according to their wants. It is then that the inevitable conflict between the employer and the employed becomes imminent, and cannot be adjourned any longer; that the working class can no longer be put off with delusive hopes and promises never to be realised; that the great problem of the nineteenth century, the abolition of the proletariat, is at last brought forward fairly and in its proper light. Now, in Germany, the mass of the working class were employed, not by those modern manufacturing lords of which Great Britain furnishes such splendid specimens, but by small tradesmen whose entire manufacturing system is a mere relic of the Middle Ages. And as there is an enormous difference between the great cotton lord and the petty cobbler or master tailor, so there is a corresponding distance from the wide-awake factory operative of modern manufacturing Babylons to the bashful journeyman tailor or cabinet-maker of a small country town, who lives in circumstances and works after a plan very little different from those of the like sort of men some five hundred years ago. This general absence of modern conditions of life, of modern modes of industrial production, of course, was accompanied by a pretty equally general absence of modern ideas, and it is therefore not to be wondered at if, at the outbreak of the revolution, a large part of the working classes should cry out for the immediate re-establishment of guilds and mediaeval privileged trades' corporations. Yet, from the manufacturing districts, where the modern system of production predominated, and in consequence of the facilities of intercommunication and mental development afforded by the migratory life of a large number of the working men, a strong nucleus formed itself, whose ideas about the emancipation of

their class were far clearer and more in accordance with existing facts and historical necessities; but they were a mere minority. If the active movement of the middle classes may be dated from 1840, that of the working class commences its advent by the insurrections of the Silesian and Bohemian factory operatives<sup>1</sup> in 1844, and we shall soon have occasion to pass in review the different stages through which this movement passed.

Lastly, there was the great class of the small farmers, the peasantry, which, with its appendix of farm labourers, constitutes a considerable majority of the entire nation. But this class again subdivided itself into different fractions. There were, firstly, the more wealthy farmers, what is called in Germany *Gross* and *Mittel-Bauern*, proprietors of more or less extensive farms, and each of them commanding the services of several agricultural labourers. This class, placed between the large untaxed feudal landowners and the smaller peasantry and farm labourers, for obvious reasons found in an alliance with the anti-feudal middle class of the towns its most natural political course. Then there were, secondly, the small freeholders, predominating in the Rhine country,<sup>2</sup> where feudalism had succumbed before the mighty strokes of the Great French Revolution. Similar independent small freeholders also existed here and there in other provinces, where they had succeeded in buying off the feudal charges formerly due upon their lands. This class, however, was a class of freeholders by name only, their property being generally mortgaged to such an extent, and under such onerous conditions, that not the peasant, but the usurer who had advanced the money, was the real landowner. Thirdly, the feudal tenants, who could not be easily turned out of their holdings, but who had to pay a perpetual

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<sup>1</sup>The revolt of the Silesian weavers, who were subjected to savage exploitation by the trading firms for whom they worked, took place in 1844. The revolt was suppressed by the use of military force. It was followed in the same year by a revolt of the calico printers in some of the towns of Bohemia.  
—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>In the Rhineland, where the immediate influence of the French Revolution was very great in consequence of its annexation by France during the rule of Napoleon I, feudal relations were abolished at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in 1815, when this territory was annexed to Prussia, they were not restored. In Prussia on the other hand, the feudal relations remained in essentials until the Revolution of 1848.  
—Ed.

rent, or to perform in perpetuity a certain amount of labour in favour of the lord of the manor. Lastly, the agricultural labourers, whose condition, in many large farming concerns, was exactly that of the same class in England, and who, in all cases, lived and died poor, ill-fed, and the slaves of their employers. These three latter classes of the agricultural population, the small freeholders, the feudal tenants, and the agricultural labourers, never troubled their heads much about politics before the revolution, but it is evident that this event must have opened to them a new career, full of brilliant prospects. To every one of them the revolution offered advantages, and the movement once fairly engaged in, it was to be expected that each, in their turn, would join it. But at the same time it is quite as evident, and equally borne out by the history of all modern countries, that the agricultural population, in consequence of its dispersion over a great space, and of the difficulty of bringing about an agreement among any considerable portion of it, never can attempt a successful independent movement; they require the initiatory impulse of the more concentrated, more enlightened, more easily moved people of the towns.

The preceding short sketch of the most important of the classes, which in their aggregate formed the German nation at the outbreak of the recent movements, will already be sufficient to explain a great part of the incoherence, incongruence, and apparent contradiction which prevailed in that movement. When interests so varied, so conflicting, so strangely crossing each other, are brought into violent collision; when these contending interests in every district, every province, are mixed in different proportions; when, above all, there is no great centre in the country, no London, no Paris, the decisions of which, by their weight, may supersede the necessity of fighting out the same quarrel over and over again in every single locality; what else is to be expected but that the contest will dissolve itself into a mass of unconnected struggles, in which an enormous quantity of blood, energy and capital is spent, but which for all that remain without any decisive results?

The political dismemberment of Germany into three dozen of more or less important principalities is equally explained by this confusion and multiplicity of the elements which compose the nation, and which again vary in every locality. Where there are no common interests there can be no unity of purpose,

much less of action. The German Confederation,<sup>1</sup> it is true, was declared everlastingly indissoluble; yet the Confederation, and its organ, the Diet, never represented German unity. The very highest pitch to which centralisation was ever carried in Germany was the establishment of the *Zollverein*; by this the states on the North Sea were also forced into a Customs Union of their own, Austria remaining wrapped up in her separate prohibitive tariff. Germany had the satisfaction to be, for all practical purposes, divided between three independent powers only, instead of between thirty-six. Of course, the paramount supremacy of the Russian tsar,<sup>2</sup> as established in 1814, underwent no change on this account.

Having drawn these preliminary conclusions from our premises, we shall see, in our next, how the aforesaid various classes of the German people were set into movement one after the other, and what character this movement assumed on the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1848.

London, September 1851.

## II. THE PRUSSIAN STATE

[*New York Daily Tribune*, October 28, 1851]

The political movement of the middle class, or bourgeoisie, in Germany, may be dated from 1840. It had been preceded by symptoms showing that the moneyed and industrial class of that country was ripening into a state which would no longer allow it to continue apathetic and passive under the pressure of a half-feudal, half-bureaucratic monarchism. The smaller princes of Germany, partly to insure to themselves a greater independence against the supremacy of Austria and Prussia, or against the influence of the nobility in their own states, partly in order to consolidate into a whole the disconnected provinces united under their rule by the Congress

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<sup>1</sup>The German Confederation, with the Federal Diet (Bundestag), meeting in Frankfort-on-the-Main, was founded in 1815 at the Vienna Congress after the overthrow of Napoleon I. The Confederation was in fact a weapon of political reaction in the hands of Austrian and Prussian despotism.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>After the overthrow of Napoleon I in 1814-15, tsarism played the leading role in the reactionary "Holy Alliance" concluded between Russia, Austria and Prussia in 1815. Tsarism was interested in the dismemberment of Germany.—*Ed.*

of Vienna,<sup>1</sup> one after the other granted constitutions of a more or less liberal character. They could do so without any danger to themselves; for if the Diet of the Confederation, this mere puppet of Austria and Prussia, was to encroach upon their independence as sovereigns, they knew that in resisting its dictates they would be backed by public opinion and the Chambers; and if, on the contrary, these Chambers grew too strong, they could readily command the power of the Diet to break down all opposition. The Bavarian, Wurttemberg, Baden or Hanoverian constitutional institutions could not, under such circumstances, give rise to any serious struggle for political power, and, therefore, the great bulk of the German middle class kept very generally aloof from the petty squabbles raised in the legislatures of the small states, well knowing that without a fundamental change in the policy and constitution of the two great powers of Germany, no secondary efforts and victories would be of any avail. But, at the same time, a race of liberal lawyers, professional oppositionists, sprung up in these small assemblies; the Rottecks, the Welckers, the Roemers, the Jordans, the Stuves, the Eisenmanns, those great "popular men" (*Volksmanner*), who, after a more or less noisy, but always unsuccessful, opposition of twenty years, were carried to the summit of power by the revolutionary springtide of 1848, and who, after having there shown their utter impotency and insignificance, were hurled down again in a moment. These first specimens, upon German soil, of the trader in politics and opposition, by their speeches and writings made familiar to the German ear the language of constitutionalism, and by their very existence foreboded the approach of a time when the middle class would seize upon and restore to their proper meaning the political phrases which these talkative attorneys and professors were in the habit of using without knowing much about the sense originally attached to them.

German literature, too, laboured under the influence of the political excitement into which all Europe had been thrown by the events of 1830. A crude constitutionalism, or a still cruder republicanism, were preached by almost all writers of

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<sup>1</sup>The Vienna Congress met in Vienna in 1814 after the defeat of Napoleon I. This congress of the European powers completely changed the map of Europe to the advantage of the reactionary powers (England, Russia, Prussia, etc.) that had conquered Napoleonic France.—*Ed.*

the time. It became more and more the habit, particularly of the inferior sorts of literati, to make up for the want of cleverness in their productions by political allusions which were sure to attract attention. Poetry, novels, reviews, the drama, every literary production teemed with what was called "tendency," that is with more or less timid exhibitions of an anti-governmental spirit. In order to complete the confusion of ideas reigning after 1830 in Germany, with these elements of political opposition there were mixed up ill-digested university recollections of German philosophy, and misunderstood gleanings from French socialism, particularly Saint-Simonism;<sup>1</sup> and the clique of writers who expatiated upon this heterogeneous conglomerate of ideas, presumptuously called themselves "Young Germany,"<sup>2</sup> or "the Modern School." They have since repented their youthful sins, but not improved their style of writing.

Lastly, German philosophy, that most complicated, but at the same time most sure thermometer of the development of the German mind, had declared for the middle class, when Hegel pronounced in his *Philosophy of Law*, constitutional monarchy to be the final and most perfect form of government. In other words, he proclaimed the approaching advent of the middle classes of the country to political power. His school, after his death, did not stop here. While the more advanced section of his followers, on one hand, subjected every religious belief to the ordeal of a rigorous criticism, and shook to its foundation the ancient fabric of Christianity, they at the same time brought forward bolder political principles than hitherto it had been the fate of German ears to hear expounded, and attempted to restore to glory the memory of the heroes of the first French Revolution. The abstruse philosophical language in which these ideas were clothed, if it obscured the mind of both the writer and the reader, equally blinded the eyes of the censor, and thus it was that the "Young Hegelian" writers enjoyed a liberty of the press unknown in every other branch of literature.

Thus it was evident that public opinion was undergoing a

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<sup>1</sup>For Saint-Simon and his teachings, see Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>*Young Germany*. A literary tendency which arose in the 'thirties under the influence of the poets Heine and Börne. Although this group was only a weak opposition, its works were prohibited by the Federal Diet.—Ed.

great change in Germany. By degrees, the vast majority of those classes whose education or position in life enabled them, under an absolute monarchy, to gain some political information, and to form anything like an independent political opinion, united into one mighty phalanx of opposition against the existing system. And in passing judgment upon the slowness of political development in Germany, no one ought to omit taking into account the difficulty of obtaining correct information upon any subject in a country where all sources of information were under control of the government, where from the Ragged School and Sunday School to the Newspaper and the University nothing was said, taught, printed or published, but what had previously obtained its approbation. Look at Vienna, for instance. The people of Vienna, in industry and manufactures second perhaps to none in Germany, in spirit, courage, and revolutionary energy proving themselves far superior to all, were yet more ignorant as to their real interests, and committed more blunders during the revolution than any others, and this was due in a very great measure to the almost absolute ignorance with regard to the very commonest political subjects in which Metternich's government had succeeded in keeping them.

It needs no further explanation why, under such a system, political information was an almost exclusive monopoly of such classes of society as could afford to pay for its being smuggled into the country, and more particularly of those whose interests were most seriously attacked by the existing state of things—namely, the manufacturing and commercial classes. They, therefore, were the first to unite in a mass against the continuance of a more or less disguised absolutism, and from their passing into the ranks of the opposition must be dated the beginning of the real revolutionary movement in Germany.

The oppositional pronouncement of the German bourgeoisie may be dated from 1840, from the death of the late king of Prussia, the last surviving founder of the Holy Alliance of 1815. The new king was known to be no supporter of the predominantly bureaucratic and military monarchy of his father. What the French middle class had expected from the advent of Louis XVI, the German bourgeoisie hoped, in some measure, from Frederick William IV of Prussia. It was agreed upon all hands that the old system was exploded, worn out, and must be given up; and what had been borne in silence

under the old king now was loudly proclaimed to be intolerable:

But if Louis XVI, "Louis le Desire," had been a plain, unpretending simpleton, half-conscious of his own nullity, without any fixed opinions, ruled principally by the habits contracted during his education, "Frederick William le Desire" was something quite different. While he certainly surpassed his French original in weakness of character, he was neither without pretensions nor without opinions. He had made himself acquainted, in an amateur sort of way, with the rudiments of most sciences, and thought himself, therefore, learned enough to consider final his judgment upon every subject. He made sure he was a first-rate orator, and there was certainly no commercial traveller in Berlin who could beat him either in prolixity of pretended wit or in fluency of elocution. And, above all, he had his opinions. He hated and despised the bureaucratic element of the Prussian monarchy, but only because all his sympathies were with the feudal element. Himself one of the founders of and chief contributors to the *Berlin Political Weekly Paper*,<sup>1</sup> the so-called Historical School<sup>2</sup> (a school living upon the ideas of Bonald, De Maistre, and other writers of the first generation of French Legitimists), he aimed at a restoration, as complete as possible, of the predominant social position of the nobility. The king, first nobleman of his realm, surrounded in the first instance by a splendid court of mighty vassals, princes, dukes and counts; in the second instance, by a numerous and wealthy lower nobility; ruling according to his discretion over his loyal burgesses and peasants, and thus being himself the chief of a complete hierarchy of social ranks or castes, each of which was to enjoy its particular privileges, and to be separated from the others by the almost insurmountable barrier of birth or of a fixed, inalterable social position; the whole of these castes, or "estates of the realm" balancing each other, at the same time, so nicely in power and influence that a complete independence of action should remain to the king—such was the *beau-ideal* which

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<sup>1</sup>*Politisches Wochenblatt*. The most influential conservative newspaper in Germany, published from 1831 to 1840.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>A reactionary school of law in Germany which contributed to the consolidation of political reaction in the country by its literary works. Marx characterises it as follows:

"A school which declares that every outcry of the serfs against the knout is rebellious as long as the knout is a traditional one, sanctioned by years and by history . . ." (Karl Marx, *Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law.*)—Ed.

Frederick William IV undertook to realise, and which he is again trying to realise at the present moment.

It took some time before the Prussian bourgeoisie, not very well versed in theoretical questions, found out the real purport of their king's tendency. But what they very soon found out was the fact that he was bent upon things quite the reverse of what they wanted. Hardly did the new king find his "gift of the gab" unfettered by his father's death, than he set about proclaiming his intentions in speeches without number; and every speech, every act of his, went far to estrange from him the sympathies of the middle class. He would not have cared much for that, if it had not been for some stern and startling realities which interrupted his poetic dreams. Alas, that romanticism is not very quick at accounts, and that feudalism, ever since Don Quixote, reckons without its host! Frederick William IV partook too much of that contempt for ready cash which ever has been the noblest inheritance of the sons of the Crusaders. He found, at his accession, a costly, although parsimoniously arranged system of government, and a moderately filled state treasury. In two years every trace of a surplus was spent in court festivals, royal progresses, largesses, subventions to needy, seedy and greedy noblemen, etc., and the regular taxes were no longer sufficient for the exigencies of either court or government. And thus, His Majesty found himself very soon placed between a glaring deficit on one side, and a law of 1820 on the other, by which any new loan, or any increase of the then existing taxation, was made illegal without the assent of "the future Representation of the People." This representation did not exist; the new king was less inclined than even his father to create it; and if he had been, he knew that public opinion had wonderfully changed since his accession.

Indeed, the middle classes, who had partly expected that the new king would at once grant a constitution, proclaim the liberty of the press, trial by jury, etc., etc.—in short, himself take the lead of that peaceful revolution which they wanted in order to obtain political supremacy—the middle classes had found out their error, and had turned ferociously against the king. In the Rhine provinces, and more or less generally all over Prussia, they were so exasperated that they, being short themselves of men able to represent them in the press, went to the length of an alliance with the extreme philosophical party, of which we have spoken above. The fruit of this alliance was

the *Rhenish Gazette*<sup>1</sup> of Cologne, a paper which was suppressed after fifteen months' existence, but from which may be dated the existence of the newspaper press in Germany. This was in 1842.

The poor king, whose commercial difficulties were the keenest satire upon his mediaeval propensities, very soon found out that he could not continue to reign without making some slight concession to the popular outcry for that "Representation of the People," which, as the last remnant of the long-forgotten promises of 1813 and 1815, had been embodied in the law of 1820. He found the least objectionable mode of satisfying this untoward law in calling together the Standing Committees of the Provincial Diets. The Provincial Diets had been instituted in 1823. They consisted for every one of the eight provinces of the kingdom, 1) Of the higher nobility, the formerly sovereign families of the German empire, the heads of which were members of the Diet by birthright; 2) Of the representatives of the knights or lower nobility; 3) Of representatives of the towns; and 4) Of deputies of the peasantry, or small farming class. The whole was arranged in such a manner that in every province the two sections of the nobility always had a majority of the Diet. Every one of these eight Provincial Diets elected a Committee, and these eight Committees were now called to Berlin in order to form a Representative Assembly for the purpose of voting the much-desired loan. It was stated that the treasury was full, and that the loan was required, not for current wants, but for the construction of a state railway. But the united Committees gave the king a flat refusal, declaring themselves incompetent to act as the representatives of the people and called upon His Majesty to fulfil the promise of a representative constitution which his father had given when he wanted the aid of the people against Napoleon.

The sitting of the united Committees proved that the spirit of opposition was no longer confined to the bourgeoisie. A part of the peasantry had joined them, and many nobles, being

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<sup>1</sup>*Die Rheinische Zeitung*. The organ founded by the Rhenish liberal bourgeoisie, published in Cologne from 1842 to 1843. Marx was one of its chief contributors. From October 15, 1842, he became the editor-in-chief of the paper and under his direction it became revolutionary-democratic. In the beginning of 1843, the paper was suppressed by the government.  
—Ed.

themselves large farmers on their own property, and dealers in corn, wool, spirits and flax, requiring the same guarantees against absolutism, bureaucracy and feudal restoration, had equally pronounced against the government, and for a representative constitution. The king's plan had signally failed; he had got no money, and had increased the power of the opposition. The subsequent sitting of the Provincial Diets themselves was still more unfortunate for the king. All of them asked for reforms, for the fulfilment of the promises of 1813 and 1815, for a constitution and a free press; the resolutions to this effect of some of them were rather disrespectfully worded, and the ill-humoured replies of the exasperated king made the evil still greater.

In the meantime, the financial difficulties of the government went on increasing. For a time, abatements made upon the moneys appropriated for the different public services, fraudulent transactions with the "Seehandlung," a commercial establishment speculating and trading for account and risk of the state, and long since acting as its money-broker, had sufficed to keep up appearances; increased issues of state paper money had furnished some resources; and the secret, upon the whole, had been pretty well kept. But all these contrivances were soon exhausted. There was another plan tried: the establishment of a bank, the capital of which was to be furnished partly by the state and partly by private shareholders, the chief direction to belong to the state, in such a manner as to enable the government to draw upon the funds of this bank to a large amount, and thus to repeat the same fraudulent transactions that would no longer do with the "Seehandlung." But, as a matter of course, there were no capitalists to be found who would hand over their money upon such conditions; the statutes of the bank had to be altered, and the property of the shareholders guaranteed from the encroachments of the treasury, before any shares were subscribed for. Thus, this plan having failed, there remained nothing but to try a loan—if capitalists could be found who would lend their cash without requiring the permission and guarantee of that mysterious "future Representation of the People." Rothschild was applied to, and he declared that if the loan was to be guaranteed by this "Representation of the

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<sup>1</sup>These promises were given by the king of Prussia to his subjects during the war against Napoleon.—*Ed.*

"People," he would undertake the thing at a moment's notice,— if not, he could not have anything to do with the transaction. Thus every hope of obtaining money had vanished, and there was no possibility of escaping the fatal "Representation of the People." Rothschild's refusal was known in autumn 1846, and in February of the next year the king called together all the eight Provincial Diets to Berlin, forming them into one "United Diet." This Diet was to do the work required, in case of need, by the law of 1820; it was to vote loans and increase taxes, but beyond that it was to have no rights. Its voice upon general legislation was to be merely consultative; it was to assemble, not at fixed periods, but whenever it pleased the king; it was to discuss nothing but what the government pleased to lay before it. Of course, the members were very little satisfied with the part they were expected to perform. They repeated the wishes they had announced when they met in the provincial assemblies; the relations between them and the government soon became acrimonious, and when the loan, which was again stated to be required for railway constructions, was demanded from them, they again refused to grant it.

This vote very soon brought their sitting to a close. The king, more and more exasperated, dismissed them with a reprimand, but still remained without money. And, indeed, he had every reason to be alarmed at his position, seeing that the Liberal League, headed by the middle classes, comprising a large part of the lower nobility, and all the manifold discontents that had been accumulated in the different sections of the lower orders—that this Liberal League was determined to have what it wanted. In vain the king had declared, in the opening speech, that he would never, never grant a constitution in the modern sense of the word; the Liberal League insisted upon such a modern, anti-feudal, representative constitution, with all its sequels, liberty of the press, trial by jury, etc.; and before they got it, not a farthing of money would they grant. There was one thing evident: that things could not go on long in this manner, and that either one of the parties must give way, or that a rupture, a bloody struggle must ensue. And the middle classes knew that they were on the eve of a revolution, and they prepared themselves for it. They sought to obtain, by every possible means, the support of the working class of the towns, and of the peasantry in the agricultural districts, and it is well known that there was, in the latter end of 1847, hardly a single prominent political

character among the bourgeoisie who did not proclaim himself a "socialist," in order to insure to himself the sympathy of the proletarian class. We shall see these "socialists" at work by and by.

This eagerness of the leading bourgeoisie to adopt at least the outward show of socialism, was caused by a great change that had come over the working classes of Germany. There had been, ever since 1840, a fraction of German workmen, who, travelling in France and Switzerland, had more or less imbibed the crude socialist and communist notions then current among the French workmen. The increasing attention paid to similar ideas in France ever since 1840 made socialism and communism fashionable in Germany also, and as far back as 1843, all newspapers teemed with discussions of social questions. A school of socialists very soon formed itself in Germany, distinguished more for the obscurity than for the novelty of its ideas; its principal efforts consisted in the translation of French Fourierist, Saint-Simonian, and other doctrines, into the abstruse language of German philosophy. The German communist school entirely different from this sect, was formed about the same time.

In 1845, there occurred the Silesian weavers' riots, followed by the insurrection of the calico printers in Prague. These riots, cruelly suppressed, riots of working men, not against the government but against their employers, created a deep sensation, and gave a new stimulus to socialist and communist propaganda amongst the working people. So did the bread riots during the year of famine, 1847. In short, in the same manner as Constitutional Opposition rallied around its banner the great bulk of the propertied classes (with the exception of the large feudal land-holders), so the working classes of the larger towns looked for their emancipation to the socialist and communist doctrines, although, under the then existing press laws, they could be made to know only very little about them. They could not be expected to have any very definite ideas as to what they wanted—they only knew that the programme of the constitutional bourgeoisie did not contain all they wanted, and that their wants were no wise contained in the constitutional circle of ideas.

There was then no separate republican party in Germany. People were either constitutional monarchists, or more or less clearly defined socialists or communists.

With such elements the slightest collision must have

brought about a great revolution. While the higher nobility and the older civil and military officers were the only safe supports of the existing system ; while the lower nobility, the trading middle classes, the universities, the schoolmasters of every degree, and even part of the lower ranks of the bureaucracy and military officers, were all leagued against the government ; while behind these there stood the dissatisfied masses of the peasantry, and of the proletarians of the large towns, supporting, for the time being, the Liberal Opposition, but already muttering strange words about taking things into their own hands ; while the bourgeoisie was ready to hurl down the government, and the proletarians were preparing to hurl down the bourgeoisie in its turn ; this government went on obstinately in a course which must bring about a collision. Germany was, in the beginning of 1848, on the eve of a revolution, and this revolution was sure to come, even had the French Revolution of February not hastened it.

What the effects of this Parisian Revolution were upon Germany we shall see in our next.

London, September 1851.

### III. THE OTHER GERMAN STATES

[*New York Daily Tribune*, November 6, 1851]

In our last we confined ourselves almost exclusively to that state which, during the years 1840 to 1848, was by far the most important in the German movement ; namely, to Prussia. It is, however, time to pass a rapid glance over the other states of Germany during the same period.

As to the petty states, they had, ever since the revolutionary movements of 1830, completely passed under the dictatorship of the Diet, that is, of Austria and Prussia. The several constitutions, established as much as a means of defence against the dictates of the larger states, as to insure popularity to their princely authors and unity to heterogeneous assemblies of provinces formed by the Congress of Vienna, without any leading principle whatever—these constitutions, illusory as they were, had yet proved dangerous to the authority of the petty princes themselves during the excited times of 1830 and 1831. They were all but destroyed ; whatever of them was allowed to remain was less than a shadow, and it required

the loquacious self-complacency of a Welcker, a Rotteck, a Dahlmann, to imagine that any results could possibly flow from the humble opposition, mingled with degrading flattery, which they were allowed to show off in the impotent Chambers of these petty states.

The more energetic portion of the middle class in these smaller states, very soon after 1840, abandoned all the hopes they had formerly based upon the development of parliamentary government in these dependencies of Austria and Prussia. No sooner had the Prussian bourgeoisie and the classes allied to it shown a serious resolution to struggle for parliamentary government in Prussia, than they were allowed to take the lead of the constitutional movement over all non-Austrian Germany. It is a fact which now will not be any longer contested, that the nucleus of those constitutionalists of Central Germany, who afterwards seceded from the Frankfort National Assembly, and who, from the place of their separate meetings, were called the Gotha party, long before 1848 contemplated a plan which, with little modification, they in 1849 proposed to the representatives of all Germany. They intended a complete exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation, the establishment of a new Confederation, with a new fundamental law, and with a federal parliament, under the protection of Prussia, and the incorporation of the more insignificant states into the larger ones. All this was to be carried out the moment Prussia entered into the ranks of constitutional monarchy, established the liberty of the press, assumed a policy independent from that of Russia and Austria, and thus enabled the constitutionalists of the lesser states to obtain a real control over their respective governments. The inventor of this scheme was Professor Gervinus, of Heidelberg (Baden). Thus the emancipation of the Prussian bourgeoisie was to be the signal for that of the middle classes of Germany generally, and for an alliance, offensive and defensive, of both against Russia and Austria; for Austria was, as we shall see presently, considered as an entirely barbarian country, of which very little was known, and that little not to the credit of its population; Austria, therefore, was not considered as an essential part of Germany.

As to the other classes of society, in the smaller states they followed, more or less rapidly, in the wake of their equals in Prussia. The shopkeeping class got more and more dissatisfied with their respective governments, with the increase of taxa-

tion, with the curtailments of those political sham-privileges of which they used to boast when comparing themselves to the "slaves of despotism" in Austria and Prussia; but as yet they had nothing definite in their opposition which might stamp them as an independent party, distinct from the constitutionalism of the higher bourgeoisie. The dissatisfaction among the peasantry was equally growing, but it is well known that this section of the people, in quiet and peaceful times, will never assert its interests and assume its position as an independent class, except in countries where universal suffrage is established. The working classes in the trades and manufactures of the towns commenced to be infested with the "poison" of socialism and communism, but there being few towns of any importance out of Prussia, and still fewer manufacturing districts, the movement of this class, owing to the want of centres of action and propaganda, was extremely slow in the smaller states.

Both in Prussia and in the smaller states the difficulty of giving vent to political opposition created a sort of religious opposition in the parallel movements of German Catholicism and Free Congregationalism. History affords us numerous examples where, in countries which enjoy the blessings of a state church, and where political discussion is fettered, the profane and dangerous opposition against the worldly power is hid under the more sanctified and apparently more disinterested struggle against spiritual despotism. Many a government that will not allow of any of its acts being discussed, will hesitate before it creates martyrs and excites the religious fanaticism of the masses. Thus in Germany, in 1845, in every state, either the Roman Catholic or the Protestant religion, or both, were considered part and parcel of the law of the land. In every state, too, the clergy of either of those denominations, or of both, formed an essential part of the bureaucratic establishment of the government. To attack Protestant or Catholic orthodoxy, to attack priestcraft, was, then, to make an underhand attack upon the government itself. As to the German Catholics, their very existence was an attack upon the Catholic governments of Germany, particularly Austria and Bavaria; and as such it was taken by those governments. The Free Congregationalists, Protestant Dissenters, somewhat resembling the English and American Unitarians, openly professed their opposition to the clerical and rigidly orthodox tendency of the king of Prussia and his favourite Minister for the Edu-

cational and Clerical Department, Mr. Eickhorn. The two new sects, rapidly extending for a moment, the first in Catholic, the second in Protestant countries, had no other distinction but their different origin; as to their tenets, they perfectly agreed upon this most important point—that all definite dogmas were nugatory. This want of any definition was their very essence; they pretended to build that great temple under the roof of which all Germans might unite; they thus represented, in a religious form, another political idea of the day—that of German unity, and yet they could never agree among themselves

The idea of German unity, which the above-mentioned sects sought to realise at least upon religious ground, by inventing a common religion for all Germans, manufactured expressly for their use, habits, and taste—this idea was, indeed, very widely spread, particularly in the smaller states. Ever since the dissolution of the German empire<sup>1</sup> by Napoleon, the cry for a union of all the *disjecta membra* of the German body had been the most general expression of discontent with the established order of things, and most so in the smaller states, where the costliness of a court, an administration, an army, in short, the dead weight of taxation, increased in a direct ratio with the smallness and impotency of the state. But what this German unity was to be when carried out was a question upon which parties disagreed. The bourgeoisie, which wanted no serious revolutionary convulsions, were satisfied with what we have seen they considered “practicable,” namely, a union of all Germany, exclusive of Austria, under the supremacy of a constitutional government of Prussia; and surely, without conjuring dangerous storms, nothing more could, at that time, be done. The shopkeeping class and the peasantry, as far as these latter troubled themselves about such things, never arrived at any definition of that German unity they so loudly clamoured after; a few dreamers, mostly feudal reactionists, hoped for the re-establishment of the German empire; some

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<sup>1</sup>The old “German empire” founded during the flourishing period of feudalism remained formally in existence until 1806. In this year, after Napoleon had taken possession of an important part of the empire and abolished over a hundred German states, the Austrian emperor—who was at the same time emperor of the “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”—declared that the title of supreme head of the empire no longer existed.—*Ed.*

few ignorant, *soi-disant* radicals, admiring Swiss institutions, of which they had not yet made that practical experience which afterwards most ludicrously undeceived them, pronounced for a federated republic ; and it was only the most extreme party<sup>1</sup> which, at that time, dared pronounce for a German republic, one and indivisible. Thus, German unity was in itself a question big with disunion, discord, and, in the case of certain eventualities, even civil war.

To resume, then ; this was the state of Prussia, and the smaller states of Germany, at the end of 1847. The middle class, feeling its power, and resolved not to endure much longer the fetters with which a feudal and bureaucratic despotism enchained their commercial transactions, their industrial productivity, their common action as a class ; a portion of the landed nobility so far changed into producers of mere marketable commodities, as to have the same interests and to make common cause with the middle class ; the smaller trading class, dissatisfied, grumbling at the taxes, at the impediments thrown in the way of their business, but without any definite plan for such reforms as should secure their position in the social and political body ; the peasantry, oppressed here by feudal exactions, there by money-lenders, usurers, and lawyers ; the working people of the town infected with the general discontent, equally hating the government and the large industrial capitalists, and catching the contagion of socialist and communist ideas ; in short, a heterogeneous mass of opposition, springing from various interests, but more or less led on by the bourgeoisie, in the first ranks of which again marched the bourgeoisie of Prussia, and particularly of the Rhine province. On the other hand, governments disagreeing upon many points, distrustful of each other, and particularly of that of Prussia, upon which yet they had to rely for protection ; in Prussia, a government forsaken by public opinion, forsaken by even a portion of the nobility, leaning upon an army and a bureaucracy which every day got more infected by the ideas, and subjected to the influence of, the oppositional bourgeoisie—a government, besides all this, penniless in the most literal meaning of the word, and which could not procure a single cent to cover its increasing deficit, but by surrendering at

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the Communists with Marx at their head and to the radical Left elements of the Democratic Party under their influence, chiefly in the Rhine province.—*Ed.*

discretion to the opposition of the bourgeoisie. Was there ever a more splendid position for the middle class of any country, while it struggled for power against the established government?

London, September 1851.

#### IV. AUSTRIA

[*New York Daily Tribune*, November 7, 1851]

We have now to consider Austria; that country which, up to March 1848, was sealed up to the eyes of foreign nations almost as much as China before the late war with England.

As a matter of course, we can here take into consideration nothing but German Austria. The affairs of the Polish, Hungarian or Italian Austrians do not belong to our subject, and as far as they, since 1848, have influenced the fate of the German Austrians, they will have to be taken into account hereafter.

The government of Prince Metternich turned upon two hinges; firstly, to keep every one of the different nations, subjected to the Austrian rule, in check, by all other nations similarly conditioned; secondly, and this always has been the fundamental principle of absolute monarchies, to rely for support upon two classes, the feudal landlords and the large stock-jobbing capitalists; and to balance, at the same time, the influence and power of either of these classes by that of the other, so as to leave full independence of action to the government. The landed nobility, whose entire income consisted in feudal revenues of all sorts, could not but support a government which proved their only protection against that down-trodden class of serfs upon whose spoils they lived; and whenever the less wealthy portion of them, as in Galicia in 1846, rose in opposition against the government, Metternich in an instant let loose upon them these very serfs, who at any rate profited by the occasion to wreak a terrible vengeance upon their more immediate oppressors. On the other hand, the large capitalists of the exchange were chained to Metternich's government by the vast share they had in the public funds of the country. Austria, restored to her full power in 1815, restoring and maintaining in Italy absolute monarchy ever since 1820, freed of part of her liabilities by the bankruptcy of 1810, had after the peace very soon re-established her credit

in the great European money markets ; and in proportion as her credit grew, she had drawn against it. Thus all the large European money-dealers had engaged considerable portions of their capital in the Austrian funds ; they all of them were interested in upholding the credit of that country, and as Austrian public credit, in order to be upheld, ever required new loans, they were obliged from time to time to advance new capital in order to keep up the credit of the securities for that which they already had advanced. The long peace after 1815, and the apparent impossibility of a thousand year's old empire, like Austria, being upset, increased the credit of Metternich's government in a wonderful ratio, and made it even independent of the goodwill of the Vienna bankers and stock-jobbers ; for as long as Metternich could obtain plenty of money at Frankfort and Amsterdam, he had, of course, the satisfaction of seeing the Austrian capitalists at his feet. They were, besides, in every other respect at his mercy ; the large profits which bankers, stock-jobbers, and government contractors always contrive to draw out of an absolute monarchy were compensated for by the almost unlimited power which the government possessed over their persons and fortunes ; and not the smallest shadow of an opposition was, therefore, to be expected from this quarter. Thus, Metternich was sure of the support of the two most powerful and influential classes of the empire, and he possessed, besides, an army and a bureaucracy, which for all purposes of absolutism could not be better constituted. The civil and military officers in the Austrian service form a race of their own ; their fathers have been in the service of the kaiser, and so will their sons be ; they belong to none of the multifarious nationalities congregated under the wing of the double-headed eagle ; they are, and ever have been, removed from one end of the empire to the other, from Poland to Italy, from Germany to Transylvania ; Hungarian, Pole, German, Rumanian, Italian, Croat, every individual not stamped with "imperial and royal" authority, etc., bearing a separate national character, is equally despised by them ; they have no nationality, or rather, they alone make up the really Austrian nation. It is evident what a pliable and at the same time powerful instrument in the hands of an intelligent and energetic chief, such a civil and military hierarchy must be.

As to the other classes of the population, Metternich, in the true spirit of a statesman of the *ancien regime*, cared little for their support. He had, with regard to them but one policy :

to draw as much as possible out of them in the shape of taxation, and at the same time to keep them quiet. The trading and manufacturing middle class was but of slow growth in Austria. The trade of the Danube was comparatively unimportant; the country possessed but one port, Trieste, and the trade of this port was very limited. As to the manufacturers, they enjoyed considerable protection, amounting even in most cases to the complete exclusion of all foreign competition; but this advantage had been granted to them principally with a view to increase their tax-paying capabilities, and was in a high degree counterpoised by internal restrictions on manufactures, privileges of guilds, and other feudal corporations, which were scrupulously upheld as long as they did not impede the purposes and views of the government. The petty tradesmen were encased in the narrow bounds of these mediaeval guilds, which kept the different trades in a perpetual war of privilege against each other, and at the same time, by all but excluding individuals of the working class from the possibility of raising themselves in the social scale, gave a sort of hereditary stability to the members of those involuntary associations. Lastly, the peasant and the working man were treated as mere taxable matter, and the only care that was taken of them was to keep them as much as possible in the same conditions of life in which they then existed, and in which their fathers had existed before them. For this purpose every old, established, hereditary authority was upheld in the same manner as that of the state; the authority of the landlord over the petty tenant farmer, that of the manufacturer over the operative, of the small master over the journeyman and apprentice, of the father over the son, was everywhere rigidly maintained by the government, and every branch of disobedience punished the same as a transgression of the law, by that universal instrument of Austrian justice—the stick.

Finally, to wind up into one comprehensive system all these attempts at creating an artificial stability, the intellectual food allowed to the nation was selected with the minutest caution, and dealt out as sparingly as possible. Education was everywhere in the hands of the Catholic priesthood, whose chiefs, in the same manner as the large feudal landowners, were deeply interested in the conservation of the existing system. The universities were organised in a manner which allowed them to produce nothing but special men, that might or might not obtain great proficiency in sundry particular branches of

knowledge, but which, at all events, excluded that universal liberal education which other universities are expected to impart. There was absolutely no newspaper press, except in Hungary, and the Hungarian papers were prohibited in all other parts of the monarchy. As to general literature, its range had not widened for a century; it had been narrowed again after the death of Joseph II. And all around the frontier, wherever the Austrian states touched upon a civilised country, a cordon of literary censors was established in connection with the cordon of custom-house officials, preventing any foreign book or newspaper from passing into Austria before its contents had been twice or three times thoroughly sifted, and found pure of even the slightest contamination of the malignant spirit of the age.

For about thirty years after 1815, this system worked with wonderful success. Austria remained almost unknown to Europe, and Europe was quite as little known in Austria. The social state of every class of the population, and of the population as a whole, appeared not to have undergone the slightest change. Whatever rancour there might exist from class to class—and the existence of this rancour was, for Metternich, a principal condition of government, which he even fostered by making the higher classes the instruments of all government exactions, and thus throwing the odium upon them—whatever hatred the people might bear to the inferior officials of the state, there existed, upon the whole, little or no dissatisfaction with the central government. The emperor was adored, and old Francis I seemed to be borne out by facts when, doubting of the durability of this system, he complacently added: "And yet it will hold while I live, and Metternich."

But there was a slow underground movement going on which baffled all Metternich's efforts. The wealth and influence of the manufacturing and trading middle class increased. The introduction of machinery and steam-power in manufactures upset in Austria, as it had done everywhere else, the old relations and vital conditions of whole classes of society; it changed serfs into free men, small farmers into manufacturing operatives; it undermined the old feudal trades corporations, and destroyed the means of existence of many of them. The new commercial and manufacturing population came everywhere into collision with the old feudal institutions. The middle classes, more and more induced by their business to travel abroad, introduced some mythical knowledge of the

civilised countries situated beyond the imperial line of customs; the introduction of railways, finally, accelerated both the industrial and intellectual movement. There was, too, a dangerous part in the Austrian state establishment, *viz.*, the Hungarian feudal constitution, with its parliamentary proceedings, and its struggles of the impoverished and oppositional mass of the nobility against the government and its allies, the magnates. Presburg, the seat of the Diet, was at the very gates of Vienna. All the elements contributed to create among the middle classes of the towns a spirit, not exactly of opposition, for opposition was as yet impossible, but of discontent; a general wish for reforms, more of an administrative than of a constitutional nature. And in the same manner as in Prussia, a portion of the bureaucracy joined the bourgeoisie. Among this hereditary caste of officials the traditions of Joseph II were not forgotten; the more educated functionaries of the government, and who themselves sometimes meddled with imaginary possible reforms, by far preferred the progressive and intellectual despotism of that emperor to the "paternal" despotism of Metternich. A portion of the poorer nobility equally sided with the middle class, and as to the lower classes of the population, who always had found plenty of grounds to complain of their superiors, if not of the government, they in most cases could not but adhere to the reformatory wishes of the bourgeoisie.

It was about this time, say 1843 or 1844, that a particular branch of literature, agreeable to this change, was established in Germany. A few Austrian writers, novelists, literary critics, bad poets, the whole of them of very indifferent ability, but gifted with that peculiar industrialism proper to the Jewish race, established themselves in Leipzig and other German towns out of Austria, and there, out of the reach of Metternich, published a number of books and pamphlets on Austrian affairs. They and their publishers made "a roaring trade" of it. All Germany was eager to become initiated into the secrets of the policy of European China; and the Austrians themselves, who obtained these publications by the wholesale smuggling carried on upon the Bohemian frontier, were still more curious. Of course, the secrets let out in these publications were of no great importance, and the reform plans schemed out by their well-wishing authors bore the stamp of an innocuousness almost amounting to political virginity. A constitution and a free press for Austria were things considered unattainable; administrative reforms; extension of the rights of the Provin-

cial Diets, admission of foreign books and newspapers, and a less severe censorship—the loyal and humble desires of these good Austrians did hardly go any farther.

At all events the growing impossibility of preventing the literary intercourse of Austria with the rest of Germany, and through Germany with the world, contributed much towards the formation of an anti-governmental public opinion, and brought at least some little political information within the reach of part of the Austrian population. Thus, by the end of 1847, Austria was seized, although in an inferior degree, by that political and politico-religious agitation which then prevailed in all Germany; and if its progress in Austria was more silent, it did, nevertheless, find revolutionary elements enough to work upon. There was the peasant, serf or feudal tenant, ground down into the dust by lordly or government exactions; then the factory operative, forced, by the stick of the policeman, to work upon any terms the manufacturer chose to grant; then the journeyman, debarred by the corporative laws from any chance of gaining an independence in his trade; then the merchant, stumbling, at every step in business, over absurd regulations; then the manufacturer, in uninterrupted conflict with trades guilds, jealous of their privileges, or with greedy and meddling officials; then the schoolmaster, the *savant*, the better educated functionary, vainly struggling against an ignorant and presumptuous clergy, or a stupid and dictating superior. In short, there was not a single class satisfied, for the small concessions the government was obliged now and then to make were made not at its own expense, for the treasury could not afford that, but at the expense of the high aristocracy and clergy; and as to the great bankers, and fundholders, the late events in Italy, the increasing opposition of the Hungarian Diet, and the unwonted spirit of discontent and cry for reform, manifesting themselves all over the empire, were not of a nature to strengthen their faith in the solidity and solvency of the Austrian empire.

Thus Austria, too, was marching slowly but surely toward a mighty change, when of a sudden an event broke out in France which at once brought down the impending storm, and gave the lie to old Francis's assertion that the building would hold out both during his and Metternich's lifetime.

London, September 1851.

## V. THE VIENNA INSURRECTION

[*New York Daily Tribune*, November 7, 1851]

On the 24th of February, 1848, Louis Philippe was driven out of Paris and the French Republic was proclaimed. On the 13th of March following, the people of Vienna broke the power of Prince Metternich, and made him flee shamefully out of the country. On the 18th of March the people of Berlin rose in arms, and after an obstinate struggle of eighteen hours had the satisfaction of seeing the king surrender himself over to their hands. Simultaneous outbreaks of a more or less violent nature, but all with the same success, occurred in the capitals of the smaller states of Germany. The German people, if they had not accomplished their first revolution, were at least fairly launched into the revolutionary career.

As to the incidents of these various insurrections, we cannot enter here into the detail of them : what we have to explain is their character, and the position which the different classes of the population took up with regard to them.

The revolution of Vienna may be said to have been made by an almost unanimous population. The bourgeoisie, with the exception of the bankers and stock-jobbers, the petty trading class, the working people one and all, arose at once against a government detested by all, a government so universally hated, that the small minority of nobles and money lords which had supported it made itself invisible on the very first attack. The middle classes had been kept in such a degree of political ignorance by Metternich, that to them the news from Paris about the reign of anarchy, socialism, and terror, and about impending struggles between the class of capitalists and the class of labourers, proved quite unintelligible. They, in their political innocence, either could attach no meaning to these news, or they believed them to be fiendish inventions of Metternich, to frighten them into obedience. They, besides, had never seen working men act as a class, or stand up for their own distinct class interests. They had, from their past experience, no idea of the possibility of any differences springing up between classes that now were so heartily united in upsetting a government hated by all. They saw the working people agree with themselves upon all points : a constitution, trial by jury, liberty of the press, etc. Thus they were, in March 1848, at least, heart and soul with the movement, and

the movement, on the other hand, at once constituted them the (at least in theory) predominant class of the state.

But it is the fate of all revolutions that this union of different classes, which in some degree is always the necessary condition of any revolution, cannot subsist long. No sooner is the victory gained against the common enemy, than the victors become divided among themselves into different camps, and turn their weapons against each other. It is this rapid and passionate development of class antagonism which, in old and complicated social organisms, makes a revolution such a powerful agent of social and political progress ; it is this incessantly quick upshooting of new parties succeeding each other in power which, during those violent commotions, makes a nation pass in five years over more ground than it would have done in a century under ordinary circumstances.

The revolution in Vienna made the middle class the theoretically predominant class ; that is to say, the concessions wrung from the government were such as, once carried out practically and adhered to for a time, would inevitably have secured the supremacy of the middle class. But, practically, the supremacy of that class was far from being established. It is true that by the establishment of a national guard, which gave arms to the bourgeoisie and petty tradesmen, that class obtained both force and importance ; it is true that by the installation of a "Committee of Safety," a sort of revolutionary, irresponsible government in which the bourgeoisie predominated, it was placed at the head of power. But, at the same time, the working classes were partially armed too ; they and the students had borne the brunt of the fight, as far as fight there had been ; and the students, about 4,000 strong, well armed, and far better disciplined than the national guard, formed the nucleus, the real strength of the revolutionary force, and were no ways willing to act as a mere instrument in the hands of the Committee of Safety. Though they recognised it, and even were its most enthusiastic supporters, they yet formed a sort of independent and rather turbulent body, deliberating for themselves in the "aula," keeping an intermediate position between the bourgeoisie and the working classes, preventing, by constant agitation, things from settling down to the old everyday tranquillity, and very often forcing their resolutions upon the Committee of Safety. The working men, on the other hand, almost entirely thrown out of employment, had to be employed in public works at the expense of the state, and the money

for this purpose had, of course, to be taken out of the purse of the taxpayers or out of the chest of the city of Vienna. All this could not but become very unpleasant to the tradesmen of Vienna. The manufactures of the city, calculated for the consumption of the rich and aristocratic courts of a large country, were as a matter of course entirely stopped by the revolution, by the flight of the aristocracy and court; trade was at a standstill, and the continuous agitation and excitement kept up by the students and working people was certainly not the means to "restore confidence," as the phrase went. Thus, a certain coolness very soon sprung up between the middle classes on the one side and the turbulent students and working people on the other; and if for a long time this coolness was not ripened into open hostility, it was because the ministry, and particularly the court, in their impatience to restore the old order of things, constantly justified the suspicions and the turbulent activity of the more revolutionary parties, and constantly made arise, even before the eyes of the middle classes, the spectre of old Metternichian despotism. Thus on the 15th of May, and again on the 29th, there were fresh risings of all classes in Vienna, on account of the government having tried to attack, or to undermine, some of the newly-conquered liberties, and on each occasion the alliance between the national guard or armed middle class, the students, and the working men, was again cemented for a time.

As to the other classes of the population, the aristocracy and the money lords had disappeared, and the peasantry were busily engaged everywhere in removing down to the very last vestiges of feudalism. Thanks to the war in Italy,<sup>1</sup> and the occupation which Vienna and Hungary gave to the court, they were left at full liberty, and succeeded in their work of liberation in Austria better than in any other part of Germany. The Austrian Diet had very shortly after only to confirm the steps already practically taken by the peasantry, and whatever else the government of Prince Schwartzenberg may be enabled to restore, it will never have the power of re-establishing the

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<sup>1</sup>North Italy was at that time a component part of the Austrian monarchy. In the beginning of 1848, the Italians broke out in insurrection against foreign domination, for independence and for the establishment of a United Italy. Austria, however, in 1849 succeeded in suppressing the Italian liberation movement and restoring its rule in Italy. Unification of Italy was only accomplished in 1870.—Ed.

feudal servitude of the peasantry. And if Austria at the present moment is again comparatively tranquil, and even strong, it is principally because the great majority of the people, the peasants, have been real gainers by the revolution, and because whatever else has been attacked by the restored government, these palpable, substantial advantages, conquered by the peasantry, are as yet untouched.

London, October 1851.

## VI. THE BERLIN INSURRECTION

[*New York Daily Tribune*, November 28, 1851]

The second centre of revolutionary action was Berlin. And from what has been stated in the foregoing papers, it may be guessed that there this action was far from having that unanimous support of almost all classes by which it was accompanied in Vienna. In Prussia, the bourgeoisie had been already involved in actual struggles with the government; a rupture had been the result of the "United Diet"; a bourgeois revolution was impending, and that revolution might have been, in its first outbreak, quite as unanimous as that of Vienna, had it not been for the Paris Revolution of February. That event precipitated everything, while at the same time it was carried out under a banner totally different from that under which the Prussian bourgeoisie was preparing to defy its government. The Revolution of February upset, in France, the very same sort of government which the Prussian bourgeoisie were going to set up in their own country. The Revolution of February announced itself as a revolution of the working classes against the middle classes; it proclaimed the downfall of middle class government and the emancipation of the working man. Now the Prussian bourgeoisie had, of late, had quite enough of working class agitation in their own country. After the first *terror* of the Silesian riots had passed away, they had even tried to give this agitation a turn in their own favour; but they always had retained a salutary horror of revolutionary socialism and communism; and, therefore, when they saw men at the head of the government in Paris whom they considered as the most dangerous enemies of property, order, religion, family, and of the other *Penates* of the modern bour-

gois, they at once experienced a considerable cooling down of their own revolutionary ardour. They knew that the moment must be seized, and that without the aid of the working masses they would be defeated; and yet their courage failed them. Thus they sided with the government in the first partial and provincial outbreaks, tried to keep the people quiet in Berlin, who during five days met in crowds before the royal palace to discuss the news and ask for changes in the government; and when at last, after the news of the downfall of Metternich, the king made some slight concessions, the bourgeoisie considered the revolution as completed, and went to thank His Majesty for having fulfilled all the wishes of his people. But then followed the attack of the military on the crowd, the barricades, the struggle, and the defeat of royalty. Then everything was changed; the very working classes which it had been the tendency of the bourgeoisie to keep in the background, had been pushed forward, had fought and conquered, and all at once were conscious of their strength. Restrictions of suffrage, of the liberty of the press, of the right to sit on juries, of the right of meeting—restrictions that would have been very agreeable to the bourgeoisie because they would have touched upon such classes only as were beneath it—now were no longer possible. The danger of a repetition of the Parisian scenes of “anarchy” was imminent. Before this danger all former differences disappeared. Against the victorious working man, although he had not yet uttered any specific demands for himself, the friends and the foes of many years united, and the alliance between the bourgeoisie and the supporters of the overturned system was concluded upon the very barricades of Berlin. The necessary concessions, but no more than was unavoidable, were to be made; a ministry of the opposition leaders of the United Diet was to be formed, and in return for its services in saving the crown, it was to have the support of all the props of the old government, the feudal aristocracy, the bureaucracy, the army. These were the conditions upon which Messrs. Camphausen and Hansemann undertook the formation of a cabinet.

Such was the dread evinced by the new ministers of the aroused masses, that in their eyes every means was good if it only tended to strengthen the shaken foundations of authority. They, poor deluded wretches, thought every danger of a restoration of the old system had passed away; and thus they made use of the whole of the old state machinery for the

purpose of restoring "order." Not a single bureaucrat or military officer was dismissed; not the slightest change was made in the old bureaucratic system of administration. These precious constitutional and responsible ministers even restored to their posts those functionaries whom the people, in the first heat of revolutionary ardour, had driven away on account of their former acts of bureaucratic overbearing. There was nothing altered in Prussia but the persons of the ministers; even the ministerial staffs in the different departments were not touched upon, and all the constitutional place-hunters, who had formed the chorus of the newly-elevated rulers, and who had expected their share of power and office, were told to wait until restored stability allowed changes to be operated in the bureaucratic personnel which now were not without danger.

The king, chap-fallen in the highest degree after the insurrection of the 18th of March, very soon found out that he was quite as necessary to these "liberal" ministers as they were to him. The throne had been spared by the insurrection; the throne was the last existing obstacle to "anarchy"; the liberal middle class and its leaders, now in the ministry, had therefore every interest to keep on excellent terms with the crown. The king, and the reactionary *camarilla* that surrounded him were not slow in discovering this, and profited by the circumstance in order to fetter the march of the ministry even in those petty reforms that were from time to time intended.

The first care of the ministry was to give a sort of legal appearance to the recent violent changes. The United Diet was convoked, in spite of all popular opposition, in order to vote as the legal and constitutional organ of the people a new electoral law for the election of an assembly, which was to agree with the crown upon a new constitution. The elections were to be indirect, the mass of voters electing a number of electors, who then were to choose the representative. In spite of all opposition, this system of double elections passed. The United Diet was then asked for a loan of twenty-five millions of dollars, opposed by the popular party, but equally agreed to.

These acts of the ministry gave a most rapid development to the popular, or as it now called itself, the Democratic Party. This party, headed by the petty trading and shopkeeping class, and uniting under its banner, in the beginning of the revolution, the large majority of the working people, demanded direct and universal suffrage, the same as established in France,

a single Legislative Assembly, and full and open recognition of the Revolution of the 18th of March, as the base of the new government system. The more moderate faction would be satisfied with a thus "democratised" monarchy, the more advanced demanded the ultimate establishment of the republic. Both factions agreed in recognising the German National Assembly at Frankfort as the supreme authority of the country, while the Constitutionals and Reactionists affected a great horror of the sovereignty of this body, which they professed to consider as utterly revolutionary.

The independent movement of the working classes had, by the revolution, been broken up for a time. The immediate wants and circumstances of the movement were such as not to allow of any of the specific demands of the proletarian party to be put in the foreground. In fact, as long as the ground was not cleared for the independent action of the working men, as long as direct and universal suffrage was not yet established, as long as the thirty-six larger and smaller states continued to cut up Germany into numberless morsels, what else could the proletarian party do but watch the—for them all important—movement of Paris, and struggle in common with the petty shopkeepers for the attainment of those rights which would allow them to fight afterwards their own battle?

There were only three points, then, by which the proletarian party in its political action essentially distinguished itself from the petty trading class, or properly so-called Democratic Party: firstly, in judging differently the French movement with regard to which the Democrats attacked, and the proletarian revolutionists defended, the extreme party in Paris;<sup>1</sup> secondly in proclaiming the necessity of establishing a German republic, one and indivisible, while the very extremest ultras among the Democrats only dared to sigh for a federative republic; and thirdly, in showing upon every occasion that revolutionary boldness and readiness for action, in which any party headed by, and composed principally of petty tradesmen, will always be deficient.

The proletarian, or really revolutionary party, succeeded only very gradually in withdrawing the mass of the working people from the influence of the Democrats, whose tail they

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the proletarian clubs which took a very active part in the February revolution and in the June insurrection of 1848. Their leader was communist revolutionary, Blanqui.—Ed.

formed in the beginning of the revolution. But in due time the indecision, weakness and cowardice of the Democratic leaders did the rest, and it may now be said to be one of the principal results of the last years' convulsions, that wherever the working class is concentrated in anything like considerable masses, they are entirely freed from that democratic influence which led them into an endless series of blunders and misfortunes during 1848 and 1849. But we had better not anticipate; the events of these two years will give us plenty of opportunities to show the democratic gentlemen at work.

The peasantry in Prussia, the same as in Austria, but with less energy, feudalism pressing, upon the whole, not quite so hard upon them here, and profited by the revolution to free themselves at once from all feudal shackles. But here, from the reasons stated before, the middle classes at once turned against them, their oldest, their most indispensable allies; the Democrats, equally frightened with the bourgeois by what was called attacks upon private property, failed equally to support them; and thus, after three months' emancipation, after bloody struggles and military executions, particularly in Silesia, feudalism was restored by the hands of the, until yesterday, anti-feudal bourgeoisie. There is not a more damning fact to be brought against them than this. Similar treason against its best allies, against itself, never was committed by any party in history, and whatever humiliation and chastisement may be in store for this middle class party, it has deserved by this one act every morsel of it.

London, October 1851.

## VII. THE FRANKFORT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

[*New York Daily Tribune*, February 27, 1852]

It will perhaps be in the recollection of our readers that in the six preceding papers we followed up the revolutionary movement of Germany to the two great popular victories of March 13 in Vienna, and March 18 in Berlin. We saw, both in Austria and Prussia, the establishment of constitutional governments and the proclamation, as leading rules for all future policy, of liberal, or middle class principles; and the only difference observable between the two great centres of action was this, that in Prussia the liberal bourgeoisie, in the persons

of two wealthy merchants, Messrs. Camphausen and Hanse-mann, directly seized upon the reins of power ; while in Austria, where the bourgeoisie was politically far less educated, the liberal *bureaucratie* walked into office and professed to hold power in trust for them. We have further seen how the parties and classes of society that were heretofore all united in their opposition to the old government, got divided among themselves after the victory, or even during the struggle ; and how that same liberal bourgeoisie that alone profited from the victory turned round immediately upon its allies of yesterday, assumed a hostile attitude against every class or party of a more advanced character, and concluded an alliance with the conquered feudal and bureaucratic interests. It was in fact evident, even from the beginning of the revolutionary drama, that the liberal bourgeoisie could not hold its ground against the vanquished, but not destroyed, feudal and bureaucratic parties except by relying upon the assistance of the popular and more advanced parties ; and that it equally required, against the torrent of these more advanced masses, the assistance of the feudal nobility and of the *bureaucratie*. Thus, it was clear enough that the bourgeoisie in Austria and Prussia did not possess sufficient strength to maintain their power and to adapt the institutions of the country to their own wants and ideas. The liberal bourgeois ministry was only a halting place from which, according to the turn circumstances might take, the country would either have to go on to the more advanced stage of Unitarian republicanism, or to relapse into the old clerico-feudal and bureaucratic *regime*. At all events, the real, decisive struggle was yet to come ; the events of March had only engaged the combat.

Austria and Prussia being the two ruling states of Germany, every decisive revolutionary victory in Vienna or Berlin would have been decisive for all Germany. And as far as they went, the events of March 1848, in these two cities, decided to turn of German affairs. It would, then, be superfluous to recur to the movements that occurred in the minor states ; and we might, indeed, confine ourselves to the consideration of Austrian and Prussian affairs exclusively, if the existence of these minor states had not given rise to a body which was, by its very existence, a most striking proof of the abnormal situation of Germany and of the incompleteness of the late revolution ; a body so abnormal, so ludicrous by its very posi-

tion, and yet so full of its own importance, that history will most likely never afford a pendant to it. This body was the so-called *German National Assembly* at Frankfort-on-the-Main.

After the popular victories of Vienna and Berlin it was a matter of course that there should be a representative assembly for all Germany. This body was consequently elected, and met at Frankfort, by the side of the old Federative Diet. The German National Assembly was expected, by the people, to settle every matter in dispute, and to act as the highest legislative authority for the whole of the German Confederation. But, at the same time, the Diet which had convoked it had in no way fixed its attributions. No one knew whether its decrees were to have force of law, or whether they were to be subject to the sanction of the Diet, or of the individual governments. In this perplexity, if the Assembly had been possessed of the least energy, it would have immediately dissolved and sent home the Diet—than which no corporate body was more unpopular in Germany—and replaced it by a federal government, chosen from among its own members. It would have declared itself the only legal expression of the sovereign will of the German people, and thus attached legal validity to every one of its decrees. It would, above all, have secured to itself an organised and armed force in the country sufficient to put down any opposition on the part of the governments. And all this was easy, very easy, at that early period of the revolution. But that would have been expecting a great deal too much from an Assembly composed in its majority of liberal attorneys and *doctrinaire* professors, an Assembly which, while it pretended to embody the very essence of German intellect and science, was in reality nothing but a stage where old and wornout political characters exhibited their involuntary ludicrousness and their impotence of thought, as well as action, before the eyes of all Germany. This Assembly of old women was, from the first day of its existence, more frightened of the least popular movement than of all the reactionary plots of all the German governments put together. It deliberated under the eyes of the Diet, nay, it almost craved the Diet's sanction to its decrees, for its first resolutions had to be promulgated by that odious body. Instead of asserting its own sovereignty, it studiously avoided the discussion of any such dangerous questions. Instead of surrounding itself by a popular force, it passed to the order of the day over all the violent

encroachments of the governments : Mayence,<sup>1</sup> under its very eyes, was placed in a state of siege, and the people there disarmed, and the National Assembly did not stir. Later on it elected Archduke John of Austria Regent of Germany, and declared that all its resolutions were to have the force of law ; but then, Archduke John was only instituted in his new dignity after the consent of all the governments had been obtained, and he was instituted not by the Assembly, but by the Diet ; and as to the legal force of the decrees of the Assembly, that point was never recognised by the larger governments, nor enforced by the Assembly itself ; it therefore remained in suspense. Thus we had the strange spectacle of an Assembly pretending to be the only legal representative of a great and sovereign nation, and yet never possessing either the will or the force to make its claims recognised. The debates of this body, without any practical result, were not even of any theoretical value, reproducing, as they did, nothing but the most hackneyed commonplace themes of superannuated philosophical and juridical schools ; every sentence that was said, or rather stammered forth, in that Assembly having been printed a thousand times over, and a thousand times better, long before.

Thus the pretended new central authority of Germany left everything as it had found it. So far from realising the long-demanded unity of Germany, it did not dispossess the most insignificant of the princes who ruled her ; it did not draw closer the bonds of union between her separated provinces ; it never moved a single step to break down the custom-house barriers that separated Hanover from Prussia, and Prussia from Austria ; it did not even make the slightest attempt to remove the obnoxious dues that everywhere obstruct river navigation in Prussia. But the less this Assembly did, the more it blustered. It created a German Fleet—upon paper ; it annexed Poland and Schleswig ; it allowed German-Austria to carry on war against Italy, and yet prohibited the Italians from following up the Austrians into their safe retreat in

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<sup>1</sup>In Mayence (a town in the Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt) a collision took place on May 21-22, 1848, between the Civil Guard and the soldiers of the regular army. The Civil Guard was disarmed and democratic associations and workers' associations forbidden. The Lefts in the Frankfort Assembly put forward the motion that the parliament should demand the punishment of the military *camarilla*. However, the majority of the parliament refused to intervene.—Ed.

Germany; it gave three cheers and one cheer more for the French republic, and it received Hungarian embassies, which certainly went home with far more confused ideas about Germany than what they had come with.

This Assembly had been, in the beginning of the revolution, the bugbear of all German governments. They had counted upon a very dictatorial and revolutionary action on its part—on account of the very want of definiteness in which it had been found necessary to leave its competency. These governments, therefore, got up a most comprehensive system of intrigues in order to weaken the influence of this dreaded body; but they proved to have more luck than wits, for this Assembly did the work of the governments better than they themselves could have done. The chief feature among these intrigues was the convocation of local legislative Assemblies, and in consequence, not only the lesser states convoked their Legislatures, but Prussia and Austria also called Constituent Assemblies. In these, as in the Frankfort House of Representatives, the liberal middle class, or its allies, liberal lawyers, and bureaucrats had the majority, and the turn affairs took in each of them was nearly the same. The only difference is this, that the German National Assembly was the parliament of an imaginary country, as it had declined the task of forming what nevertheless was its own first condition of existence, viz., an United Germany; that it discussed the imaginary and never-to-be-carried-out measures of an imaginary government of its own creation, and that it passed imaginary resolutions for which nobody cared; while in Austria and Prussia the constituent bodies were at least real parliaments, upsetting and creating real ministries, and forcing, for a time at least, their resolutions upon the princes with whom they had to contend. They, too, were cowardly, and lacked enlarged views of revolutionary resolutions; they, too, betrayed the people, and restored power to the hands of feudal, bureaucratic, and military despotism. But then, they were at least obliged to discuss practical questions of immediate interest, and to live upon earth with other people, while the Frankfort humbugs were never happier than when they could roam in "the airy realms of dream," *im Luftreich des Traums*. Thus the proceedings of the Berlin and Vienna Constituents form an important part of German revolutionary history, while the lucubrations of the Frankfort collective tomfoolery merely interest the collector of literary and antiquarian curiosities.

The people of Germany, deeply feeling the necessity of doing away with the obnoxious territorial division that scattered and annihilated the collective force of the nation, for some time expected to find, in the Frankfort National Assembly at least, the beginning of a new era. But the childish conduct of that set of wiseacres soon disenchanted the national enthusiasm. The disgraceful proceedings occasioned by the armistice of Malmoe (September 1848) made the popular indignation burst out against a body which, it had been hoped, would give the nation a fair field for action, and which instead, carried away by unequalled cowardice, only restored to their former solidity the foundations upon which the present counter-revolutionary system is built.

London, January 1852.

### VIII. POLES, CZECHS AND GERMANS<sup>1</sup>

[*New York Daily Tribune*, March 5, 1852]

From what has been stated in the foregoing articles, it is already evident that unless a fresh revolution was to follow that of March 1848, things would inevitably return, in Germany, to what they were before this event. But such is the complicated nature of the historical theme upon which we are trying to throw some light, that subsequent events cannot be

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<sup>1</sup>The policy of Marx and Engels on the national question in the year 1848-49 has been frequently distorted by opportunists of all shades. The German social-patriots at the time of the imperialist war tried to justify their treachery ("defence of the fatherland," support of Germany in its war against Russia) by reference to the attitude of Marx and Engels in 1848. On the other hand, the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary, Chernov, looked for the roots of the patriotic standpoint of German Social-Democracy in 1914 in the "German chauvinism" of Marx and Engels at the time of the German Revolution. The real standpoint of Marx and Engels on the national question, however, has nothing in common with the counter-revolutionary interpretation which the German and Russian social-patriots tried to give it. Marx and Engels approached the solution of the national question, as of all other questions of proletarian policy, from the point of view of the interests of the revolution and of the class struggle of the proletariat. The concrete forms of the solution of the national question in 1848 by Marx and Engels must be regarded in connection with the peculiarities of the epoch, with the concrete distribu-

clearly understood without taking into account what may be called the foreign relations of the German revolution. And these foreign relations were of the same intricate nature as the home affairs.

The whole of the eastern half of Germany, as far as the Elbe, Saale, and Bohemian forests, has, it is well known, been reconquered during the last thousand years from invaders of Slavonic origin. The greater part of these territories have been Germanised, to the perfect extinction of all Slavonic nationality and language for several centuries past; and if we expect a few totally isolated remnants, amounting in the aggregate to less than a hundred thousand souls (Kassubians in Pomerania,

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tion of class forces inside and outside Germany in this period. Russian tsarism came forward as the most reactionary power of international politics against the democratic movements in Europe in 1848. Marx and Engels, in connection with the national movements of the various oppressed nations, divided these nations into revolutionary and reactionary ones. In the latter they included the Czechs and the Southern Slavs in so far as these peoples orientated themselves on tsarist Russia in their struggle for independence and thus were in reality the defenders of reaction in Europe. In consequence of this the Pan-Slavist movement played a counter-revolutionary role in relation to the European and German Revolution of 1848. Austrian absolutism, as is well known, utilised the Slav movement for oppressing the German and Hungarian movements. Hence, Marx and Engels in 1848 and 1849 were against the national movement of the Southern Slavs and Czechs. Engels wrote in 1882:

“Only when the collapse of tsardom has liberated the national efforts of this little people from fusion with Pan-Slavist ideas of ruling the world, only then can we let them have free play. . . .”

To another Slav people, namely the Poles, Marx and Engels adopted a different attitude. They were of the opinion that the whole of West European democracy was pledged to active support of the Poles in their struggle for independence. The liberation of the Poles was a blow for the greatest external enemy of the European revolution—for tsarist Russia. “The Poles are the only Slav nation that is free from all Pan-Slavist hankerings” (Engels) and their movement “acquired a gigantic, first-class significance not only from the standpoint of all-Russian and all-Slav democracy, but also of all-European democracy.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII.)

The treatment of the national question from the point of view of the proletarian revolution, seen in the case of Marx and Engels, is characteristic also of the Bolshevik Party.

“The fundamental thing in the Bolshevik treatment of the national question consists in the fact that the Bolsheviks looked

Wends or Sorbians in Lusatia), their inhabitants are, to all intents and purposes, Germans. But the case is different along the whole of the frontier of ancient Poland, and in the countries of the Czechian tongue, in Bohemia and Moravia. Here the two nationalities are mixed up in every district, the towns being generally more or less German, while the Slavonic element prevails in the rural villages, where, however, it is also gradually disintegrated and forced back by the steady advance of German influence.

The reason of this state of things is this: ever since the time of Charlemagne, the Germans have directed their most constant and persevering efforts to the conquest, colonisation, or, at least, civilisation of the east of Europe. The conquests of the feudal nobility between the Elbe and the Oder, and the feudal colonies of the military orders of knights in Prussia and Livonia, only laid the ground for a far more extensive and effective system of Germanisation by the trading and manufacturing middle classes, which in Germany, as in the

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at the national question in indissoluble connection with the revolutionary perspective." (Stalin).

In so far as the epoch of imperialism introduced basic changes in the distribution of the forces of revolution and reaction in the world arena, the estimate of the national movement of the small Slav nations, being connected with it, was bound to change also.

"Tsarism has obviously and incontrovertibly ceased to be the mainstay of reaction, the main bulwark of reaction, first because it is supported by international finance capital, particularly that of France; second, because of 1905. At that time the system of big national states—the democracies of Europe—was bringing democracy and socialism into the world in spite of tsarism. Marx and Engels did not live to see the period of imperialism. At the present time a system of a handful of "great" imperialist nations has come into being (five or six nations) each of which oppresses other nations, and this oppression is one of the causes of the artificial retardation of the collapse of capitalism, of artificial support of opportunism and social-chauvinism in the imperialist nations which dominate the world. At that time, West European democracy, which had liberated the big nations, was opposed to tsarism, which manipulated certain small national movements for reactionary ends. At the present time an *alliance* of tsarist imperialism with advanced capitalist European imperialism on the basis of their general oppression of a number of nations confronts the socialist proletariat, whose ranks are split into a chauvinist, "social-imperialist" section and a revolutionary section." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed-Up.")—Ed.

rest of Western Europe, rose into social and political importance since the fifteenth century. The Slavonians, and particularly the Western Slavonians (Poles and Czechs), are essentially an agricultural race: trade and manufactures never were in great favour with them. The consequence was that, with the increase of population and the origin of cities in these regions, the production of all articles of manufacture fell into the hands of German immigrants, and the exchange of these commodities against agricultural produce became the exclusive monopoly of the Jews, who, if they belong to any nationality, are in these countries certainly rather Germans than Slavonians. This has been, though in a less degree, the case in all the east of Europe. The handicraftsman, the small shopkeeper, the petty manufacturer, is a German up to this day in Petersburg, Pesth, Jassy, and even Constantinople; while the money-lender, the publican, the hawker—a very important man in these thinly populated countries—is very generally a Jew, whose native tongue is a horribly corrupted German. The importance of the German element in the Slavonic frontier localities, thus rising with the growth of towns, trade and manufactures, was still increased when it was found necessary to import almost every element of mental culture from Germany; after the German merchant and handicraftsman, the German clergyman, the German schoolmaster, the German *savant* came to establish himself upon Slavonic soil. And lastly, the iron tread of conquering armies, or the cautious, well-premeditated grasp of diplomacy, not only followed, but many times went ahead of the slow but sure advance of denationalisation by social developments. Thus, great parts of Western Prussia and Posen have been Germanised since the first partition of Poland, by sales and grants of public domains to German colonists by encouragements given to German capitalists for the establishment of manufactories, etc., in those neighbourhoods, and very often, too, by excessively despotic measures against the Polish inhabitants of the country.

In this manner the last seventy years had entirely changed the line of demarcation between the German and Polish nationalities. The Revolution of 1848 calling forth at once the claim of all oppressed nations to an independent existence and to the right of settling their own affairs for themselves, it was quite natural that the Poles should at once demand the restoration of their country within the frontiers of the old Polish republic before 1772. It is true, this frontier, even at that time had

become obsolete, if taken as the delimitation of German and Polish nationality ; it had become more so every year since by the progress of Germanisation ; but then, the Germans had proclaimed such an enthusiasm for the restoration of Poland, that they must expect to be asked, as a first proof of the reality of their sympathies, to give up *their* share of the plunder. On the other hand, should whole tracts of land, inhabited chiefly by Germans, should large towns, entirely German, be given up to a people that as yet had never given any proofs of its capability of progressing beyond a state of feudalism based upon agricultural serfdom ? The question was intricate enough. The only possible solution was in a war with Russia. The question of delimitation between the different revolutionised nations would have been made a secondary one to that of first establishing a safe frontier against the common enemy ; the Poles, by receiving extended territories in the east, would have become more tractable and reasonable in the west ; and Riga and Mitau would have been deemed, after all, quite as important to them as Danzig and Elbing. Thus the advanced party in Germany, deeming a war with Russia necessary to keep up the continental movement, and considering that the national re-establishment even of a part of Poland would inevitably lead to such a war, supported the Poles ; while the reigning middle class party clearly foresaw its downfall from any national war against Russia, which would have called more active and energetic men to the helm, and, therefore, with a feigned enthusiasm for the extension of German nationality, they declared Prussian Poland, the chief seat of Polish revolutionary agitation, to be part and parcel of the German empire that was to be. The promises given to the Poles in the first days of excitement were shamefully broken. Polish armaments got up with the sanction of the government were dispersed and massacred by Prussian artillery ; and as soon as the month of April 1848, within six weeks of the Berlin Revolution, the Polish movement was crushed, and the old national hostility revived between Poles and Germans. This immense and incalculable service to the Russian autocrat was performed by the liberal merchant-ministers, Camphausen and Hansemann. It must be added that this Polish campaign was the first means of reorganising and reassuring that same Prussian army, which afterward turned out the liberal party, and crushed the movement which Messrs. Camphausen and Hansemann had taken such pains to bring about. "Whereby they sinned, thereby

are they punished." Such has been the fate of all the upstarts of 1848 and 1849, from Ledru-Rollin to Changarnier, and from Camphausen down to Haynau.

The question of nationality gave rise to another struggle in Bohemia. This country, inhabited by two millions of Germans, and three millions of Slavonians of the Czechian tongue, had great historical recollections, almost all connected with the former supremacy of the Czechs. But then the force of this branch of the Slavonic family had been broken ever since the wars of the Hussites<sup>1</sup> in the fifteenth century. The province speaking the Czechian tongue was divided, one part forming the kingdom of Bohemia, another the principality of Moravia, a third the Carpathian hill country of the Slovaks, being part of Hungary. The Moravians and Slovaks had long since lost every vestige of national feeling and vitality, although mostly preserving their language. Bohemia was surrounded by thoroughly German countries on three sides out of four. The German element had made great progress on her own territory; even in the capital, in Prague, the two nationalities were pretty equally matched; and everywhere capital, trade, industry and mental culture were in the hands of the Germans. The chief champion of the Czechian Nationality, Professor Palacky, is himself nothing but a learned German run mad, who even now cannot speak the Czechian language correctly and without foreign accent. But as it often happens, dying Czechian nationality, dying according to every fact known in history for the last four hundred years, made in 1848 a last effort to regain its former vitality—an effort whose failure, independently of all revolutionary considerations, was to prove that Bohemia could only exist, henceforth, as a portion of Germany, although part of her inhabitants might yet, for some centuries, continue to speak a non-German language.

London, February 1852.

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<sup>1</sup> The movement in the first half of the fifteenth century of the followers of the religious reformer Johann Huss aiming at church reform and the national independence of the Czechs.  
—Ed.

## IX. PAN-SLAVISM—THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN WAR

[*New York Daily Tribune*, March 15, 1852]

Bohemia and Croatia (another disjected member of the Slavonic family, acted upon by the Hungarian, as Bohemia by the German) were the homes of what is called on the European continent "Pan-Slavism." Neither Bohemia nor Croatia was strong enough to exist as a nation by herself. Their respective nationality, gradually undermined by the action of historical causes that inevitably absorbs it into a more energetic stock, could only hope to be restored to something like independence by an alliance with other Slavonic nations. There were twenty-two millions of Poles, forty-five millions of Russians, eight millions of Serbians and Bulgarians—why not form a mighty confederation of the whole eighty millions of Slavonians, and drive back or exterminate the intruder upon the holy Slavonic soil, the Turk, the Hungarian, and above all the hated, but indispensable *Niemetz*, the German? Thus, in the studies of a few Slavonian *dilettanti* of historical science was this ludicrous, this anti-historical movement got up, a movement which intended nothing less than to subjugate the civilised West under the barbarian East, the town under the country, trade, manufactures, intelligence under the primitive agriculture of Slavonian serfs. But behind this ludicrous theory stood the terrible reality of the *Russian Empire*; that empire which by every movement proclaims the pretension of considering all Europe as the domain of the Slavonic race, and especially of the only energetic part of this race, of the Russians; that empire which, with two capitals such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, has not yet found its centre of gravity, as long as the "city of the tsar" (Constantinople, called in Russian Tsarigrad, the tsar's city), considered by every Russian peasant as the true metropolis of his religion and his nation, is not actually the residence of its emperor; that empire which, for the last one hundred and fifty years, has never lost, but always gained territory by every war it has commenced. And well known in Central Europe are the intrigues by which Russian policy supported the new-fangled system of Pan-Slavism, a system than which none better could be invented to suit its purposes. Thus, the Bohemian and Croatian Pan-Slavists, some intentionally, some without knowing it, worked in the direct interest of Russia; they betrayed the revo-

lutionary cause for the shadow of a nationality which, in the best of cases, would have shared the fate of the Polish nationality under Russian sway. It must, however, be said for the honour of the Poles, that they never got to be seriously entangled in these Pan-Slavistic traps, and if a few of the aristocracy turned furious Pan-Slavists, they knew that by Russian subjugation they had less to lose than by a revolt of their own peasant serfs.

The Bohemians and Croatians called, then, a general Slavonic Congress at Prague, for the preparation of the universal Slavonian Alliance. This Congress would have proved a decided failure even without the interference of the Austrian military. The several Slavonic languages differ quite as much as the English, the German and the Swedish, and when the proceedings opened, there was no common Slavonic tongue by which the speakers could make themselves understood. French was tried, but was equally unintelligible to the majority, and the poor Slavonic enthusiasts, whose only common feeling was a common hatred against the Germans, were at last obliged to express themselves in the hated German language, as the only one that was generally understood! But just then, another Slavonic Congress was assembling in Prague, in the shape of Galician lancers, Croatian and Slovak grenadiers, and Bohemian gunners and cuirassiers; and this real, armed Slavonic Congress, under the command of Windischgratz, in less than twenty-four hours drove the founders of an imaginary Slavonian supremacy out of the town, and dispersed them to the winds.

The Bohemian, Moravian, Dalmatian, and part of the Polish deputies (the aristocracy) to the Austrian Constituent Diet, made in that Assembly a systematic war upon the German element. The Germans, and part of the Poles (the impoverished nobility), were in this Assembly the chief supporters of revolutionary progress; the mass of the Slavonic deputies, in opposing them, were not satisfied with thus showing clearly the reactionary tendencies of their entire movement but they were degraded enough to tamper and conspire with the very same Austrian government which had dispersed their meeting at Prague. They, too, were paid for this infamous conduct; after supporting the government during the insurrection of October 1848, an event which finally secured to them the majority in the Diet, this now almost exclusively Slavonic Diet was dispersed by Austrian soldiers, the same as the Prague

Congress, and the Pan-Slavists threatened with imprisonment if they should stir again. And they have only obtained this, that Slavonic nationality is now being everywhere undermined by Austrian centralisation, a result for which they may thank their own fanaticism and blindness.

If the frontiers of Hungary and Germany had admitted of any doubt, there would certainly have been another quarrel there. But, fortunately, there was no pretext, and the interests of both nations being intimately related, they struggled against the same enemies, *viz.*, the Austrian government and the Pan-Slavistic fanaticism. The good understanding was not for a moment disturbed. But the Italian revolution entangled a part at least of Germany in an internecine war; and it must be stated here, as a proof how far the Metternichian system had succeeded in keeping back the development of the public mind, that during the first six months of 1848, the same men that had in Vienna mounted the barricades, went, full of enthusiasm, to join the army that fought against the Italian patriots. This deplorable confusion of ideas did not, however, last long.

Lastly, there was the war with Denmark about Schleswig and Holstein. These countries, unquestionably German by nationality, language and predilection, are also from military, naval and commercial grounds necessary to Germany. Their inhabitants have, for the last three years, struggled hard against Danish intrusion. The right of treaties, besides, was for them. The Revolution of March brought them into open collision with the Danes, and Germany supported them. But while in Poland, in Italy, in Bohemia, and later on, in Hungary, military operations were pushed with the utmost vigour, in this the only popular, the only, at least partially, revolutionary war, a system of resultless marches and counter-marches was adopted, and an interference of foreign diplomacy was submitted to, which led, after many an heroic engagement, to a most miserable end. The German government betrayed during the war the Schleswig-Holstein revolutionary army on every occasion, and allowed it purposely to be cut up, when dispersed or divided, by the Danes. The German corps of volunteers were treated the same.

But while thus the German name earned nothing but hatred on every side, the German constitutional and liberal governments rubbed their hands for joy. They had succeeded in crushing the Polish and Bohemian movements. They had everywhere revived the old national animosities, which hereto-

fore had prevented any common understanding and action between the German, the Pole, the Italian. They had accustomed the people to scenes of civil war and repression by the military. The Prussian army had regained its confidence in Poland, the Austrian army in Prague; and while the superabundant patriotism ("*Die Patriotische Ueberkraft*," as Heine has it) of revolutionary but short-sighted youth was led, in Schleswig and Lombardy, to be crushed by the grapeshot of the enemy, the regular army, the real instrument of action, both of Prussia and Austria, was placed in a position to regain public favour by victories over the foreigner. But we repeat: these armies, strengthened by the liberals as a means of action against the more advanced party, no sooner had recovered their self-confidence and their discipline in some degree, than they turned themselves against the liberals, and restored to power the men of the old system. When Radetzky, in his camp behind the Adige, received the first orders from the "responsible ministers" at Vienna, he exclaimed: "Who are these ministers? They are not the government of Austria! Austria is now nowhere but in my camp; I and my army, we are Austria; and when we shall have beaten the Italians we shall reconquer the empire for the emperor!" And old Radetzky was right—but the imbecile "responsible" ministers at Vienna heeded him not.

London, February 1852.

## X. THE PARIS RISING—THE FRANKFORT ASSEMBLY

[*New York Daily Tribune*, March 18, 1852]

As early as the beginning of April 1848, the revolutionary torrent had found itself stemmed all over the continent of Europe by the league which those classes of society that had profited by the first victory immediately formed with the vanquished. In France, the petty trading class and the republican faction of the bourgeoisie had combined with the monarchist bourgeoisie against the proletarians; in Germany and Italy, the victorious bourgeoisie had eagerly courted the support of the feudal nobility, the official bureaucracy and the army, against the mass of the people and the petty traders. Very soon the united conservative and counter-revolutionary parties again regained the ascendant. In England, an untimely and

ill-prepared popular demonstration (April 10)<sup>1</sup> turned out in a complete and decisive defeat of the movement party. In France, two similar movements (16th April and 15th May)<sup>2</sup> were equally defeated. In Italy, King Bomba<sup>3</sup> regained his authority by a single stroke on the 15th of May. In Germany, the different new bourgeois governments and their respective constituent assemblies consolidated themselves, and if the eventful 15th of May gave rise, in Vienna, to a popular victory, this was an event of merely secondary importance, and may be considered the last successful flash of popular energy. In Hungary the movement appeared to turn into the quiet channel of perfect legality, and the Polish movement, as we have seen in our last, was stifled in the bud by Prussian bayonets. But as yet nothing was decided as to the eventual turn which things would take, and every inch of ground lost by the revolutionary parties in the different countries only tended to close their ranks more and more for the decisive action.

The decisive action drew near. It could be fought in France only; for France, as long as England took no part in the revolutionary strife, or as Germany remained divided, was,

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<sup>1</sup> On April 10, 1848, the Chartists organised a meeting in London and at the same time a demonstration was planned in connection with the submission to parliament of a petition with five and a half million signatures. The demonstration was prohibited and troops were concentrated in London. Under these circumstances, the Chartist convention abandoned the demonstration, and parliament rejected the petition. After the failure of the demonstration of April 10, the Chartist movement began to decline.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> On April 16 a meeting of workers took place on the Champs de Mars in connection with the election of officers for the National Guard. Following it, a peaceful demonstration to the city hall was organised in order to submit a petition which contained the demands for a democratic and social republic. The demonstration was dispersed by armed National Guards.

On May 15 a demonstration of the Parisian workers took place. They demanded the proclamation of a revolutionary war for the liberation of Poland, the adoption of measures for the abolition of poverty, etc. An unsuccessful attempt was made to dissolve the Constituent Assembly. The movement was crushed and a number of its leaders, headed by Blanqui, were arrested.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Ferdinand II of Naples was given the nickname of King Bomba on account of a furious bombardment of the town of Messina (on September 1848). May 15 was the day of the dissolution of the parliament in Naples.—Ed.

by its national independence, civilisation and centralisation, the only country to impart the impulse of a mighty convulsion to the surrounding countries. Accordingly, when, on the 23rd of June, 1848, the bloody struggle began in Paris, when every succeeding telegraph or mail more clearly exposed the fact to the eyes of Europe that this struggle was carried on between the mass of the working people on the one hand, and all the other classes of the Parisian population, supported by the army, on the other; when the fighting went on for several days with an exasperation unequalled in the history of modern civil warfare, but without any apparent advantage for either side—then it became evident to every one that this was the great decisive battle which would, if the insurrection were victorious, deluge the whole continent with renewed revolutions, or, if it was suppressed, bring about an at least momentary restoration of counter-revolutionary rule.

The proletarians of Paris were defeated, decimated, crushed with such an effect that even now they have not yet recovered from the blow. And immediately, all over Europe, the new and old conservatives and counter-revolutionists raised their heads with an effrontery that showed how well they understood the importance of the event. The press was everywhere attacked, the rights of meeting and association were interfered with, every little event in every small provincial town was taken profit of to disarm the people, to declare a state of siege, to drill the troops in the new manoeuvres and artifices that Cavaignac had taught them. Besides, for the first time since February, the invincibility of a popular insurrection in a large town had been proved to be a delusion; the honour of the armies had been restored; the troops, hitherto always defeated in street battles of importance, regained confidence in their efficiency even in this kind of struggle.

From this defeat of the *ouvriers* of Paris may be dated the first positive steps and definite plans of the old feudal bureaucratic party in Germany, to get rid even of their momentary allies, the middle classes, and to restore Germany to the state she was in before the events of March. The army again was the decisive power in the state, and the army belonged not to the middle classes but to themselves. Even in Prussia, where before 1848 a considerable leaning of part of the lower grades of officers toward a constitutional government had been observed, the disorder introduced into the army by the revolution had brought back those reasoning young men to their allegi-

ance ; as soon as the private soldier took a few liberties with regard to the officers, the necessity of discipline and passive obedience became at once strikingly evident to them. The vanquished nobles and bureaucrats now began to see their way before them ; the army, more united than ever, flushed with victory in minor insurrections and in foreign warfare, jealous of the great success the French soldiers had just attained—this army had only to be kept in constant petty conflicts with the people, and, the decisive moment once at hand, it could with one great blow crush the revolutionists, and set aside the presumptions of the middle class parliamentarians. And the proper moment for such a decisive blow arrived soon enough.

We pass over the sometimes curious, but mostly tedious, parliamentary proceedings and local struggles that occupied, in Germany, the different parties during the summer. Suffice it to say that the supporters of the middle class interest in spite of numerous parliamentary triumphs, not one of which led to any practical result, very generally felt that their position between the extreme parties became daily more untenable, and that, therefore, they were obliged now to seek the alliance of the reactionists, and the next day to court the favour of the more popular fractions. This constant vacillation gave the finishing stroke to their character in public opinion, and according to the turn events were taking, the contempt into which they had sunk, profited for the movement principally to the bureaucrats and feudalists.

By the beginning of autumn the relative position of the different parties had become exasperated and critical enough to make a decisive battle inevitable. The first engagements in this war between the democratic and revolutionary masses and the army took place at Frankfort. Though a mere secondary engagement, it was the first advantage of any note the troops acquired over the insurrection, and had a great moral effect. The fancy government established by the Frankfort National Assembly had been allowed by Prussia, for very obvious reasons, to conclude an armistice with Denmark, which not only surrendered to Danish vengeance the Germans of Schleswig, but which also entirely disclaimed the more or less revolutionary principles which were generally supposed in the Danish war. This armistice was, by a majority of two or three, rejected in the Frankfort Assembly. A sham ministerial crisis followed this vote, but three days later the Assembly reconsidered their vote, and were actually induced to cancel it and

acknowledge the armistice. This disgraceful proceeding roused the indignation of the people. Barricades were erected, but already sufficient troops had been drawn to Frankfort, and after six hours fighting the insurrection was suppressed. Similar but less important movements connected with this event took place in other parts of Germany (Baden, Cologne), but were equally defeated.

This preliminary engagement gave to the counter-revolutionary party the one great advantage, that now the only government which had entirely—at least in semblance—originated with popular election, the imperial government of Frankfort, as well as the National Assembly, was ruined in the eyes of the people. This government and this Assembly had been obliged to appeal to the bayonets of the troops against the manifestation of the popular will. They were compromised, and what little regard they might have been hitherto enabled to claim, this repudiation of their origin, the dependency upon the anti-popular governments and their troops, made both the lieutenant of the empire, his ministers and his deputies, to be henceforth complete nullities. We shall soon see how first Austria, then Prussia, and later on the smaller states too, treated with contempt every order, every request, every deputation they received from this body of impotent dreamers.

We now come to the great counter-stroke in Germany of the French battle of June, to that event which was as decisive for Germany as the proletarian struggle of Paris had been for France; we mean the revolution and subsequent storming of Vienna, in October 1848. But the importance of this battle is such, and the explanation of the different circumstances that more immediately contributed to its issue will take up such a portion of the *Tribune's* columns, as to necessitate its being treated in a separate letter.

London, February 1852.

## XI. THE VIENNA INSURRECTION

[*New York Daily Tribune*, March 19, 1852]

We now come to the decisive events which formed the revolutionary counter-part in Germany to the Parisian insurrection of June, and which, by a single blow, turned the scale in favour of the counter-revolutionary party: the insurrection of October 1848, in Vienna.

We have seen what the position of the different classes was, in Vienna, after the victory of the 12th of March. We have also seen how the movement of German-Austria was entangled with and impeded by the events in the non-German provinces of Austria. It only remains for us, then, briefly to survey the causes which led to this last and most formidable rising of German-Austria.

The high aristocracy and the stock-jobbing bourgeoisie, which had formed the principal non-official support of the Metternichian government, were enabled, even after the events of March, to maintain a predominating influence with the government, not only by the court, the army and the bureaucracy, but still more by the horror of "anarchy," which rapidly spread among the middle classes. They very soon ventured a few feelers in the shape of a press law, a nondescript aristocratic constitution and an electoral law based upon the old division of "estates."<sup>1</sup> The so-called constitutional ministry, consisting of half liberal, timid, incapable bureaucrats, on the 14 of May even ventured a direct attack upon the revolutionary organisations of the masses by dissolving the Central Committee of Delegates of the National Guard and Academic Legion,<sup>2</sup> a body formed for the express purpose of controlling the government, and calling out against it, in case of need, the popular forces. But this act only provoked the insurrection of the 15th of May by which the government was forced to acknowledge the Committee, to repeal the constitution and the elect-

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<sup>1</sup> The Press Law demanded the deposit of a large security in money for the right to publish a newspaper. The constitution of April 25 denied the franchise to the workers, created a second chamber, left the representative regional bodies based on estates in existence and restored to the emperor the right of veto.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The Academic Legion was an organisation composed of university students; it was the most radical of all bourgeois military organisations.—*Ed.*

oral law, and to grant the power of framing a new fundamental law to a Constitutional Diet, elected by universal suffrage. All this was confirmed on the following day by an imperial proclamation. But the reactionary party, which also had its representatives in the ministry, soon got their "liberal" colleagues to undertake a new attack upon the popular conquests. The Academic Legion, the stronghold of the movement party, the centre of continuous agitation, had, on this very account, become obnoxious to the more moderate burghers of Vienna; on the 26th a ministerial decree dissolved it. Perhaps this blow might have succeeded, if it had been carried out by a part of the National Guard only, but the government, not trusting them either, brought the military forward, and at once the National Guard turned round, united with the Academic Legion, and thus frustrated the ministerial project.

In the meantime, however, the emperor and his court had, on the 16th of May left Vienna and fled to Innsbruck. Here, surrounded by the bigoted Tyroleans, whose loyalty was roused again by the danger of an invasion of their country by the Sardo-Lombardian<sup>1</sup> army; supported by the vicinity of Radetzky's troops, within shell range of whom Innsbruck lay, here the counter-revolutionary party found an asylum, from whence, uncontrolled, unobserved and safe, it might rally its scattered forces, repair and spread again all over the country the network of its plots. Communications were reopened with Radetzky, with Jellachich, and with Windischgratz, as well as with the reliable men in the administrative hierarchy of the different provinces; intrigues were set on foot with the Slavonic chiefs, and thus a real force at the disposal of the counter-revolutionary *camarilla* was formed, while the impotent ministers in Vienna were allowed to wear their short and feeble popularity out in continual bickerings with the revolutionary masses, and in the debates of the forthcoming Constituent Assembly. Thus, the policy of leaving the movement of the capital to itself for a time, a policy which must have led to the omnipotence of the movement party, in a centralised and homogeneous country like France, here, in Austria, in a heterogeneous political conglomerate, was one of the safest means of reorganising the strength of the reactionists.

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<sup>1</sup> The Italian revolutionary army, the kernel of which was the Sardo-Lombardian army, at that time successfully pushed the Austrians, who were under the command of Marshal Radetzky, to the north.—Ed.

In Vienna the middle class, persuaded that after three successive defeats, and in the face of a Constituent Assembly based upon universal suffrage, the court party was no longer an opponent to be dreaded, fell more and more into that weariness and apathy, and the eternal outcry for order and tranquillity, which has everywhere seized this class after violent commotions and consequent derangement of trade. The manufactures of the Austrian capital are almost exclusively limited to articles of luxury, for which, since the revolution and the flight of the court, there had necessarily been little demand. The shout for a return to a regular system of government and for a return of the court, both of which were expected to bring about a revival of commercial prosperity—this shout became now general among the middle classes. The meeting of the Constituent Assembly in July was hailed with delight as the end of the revolutionary era ; so was the return of the court, which, after the victories of Radetzky in Italy,<sup>1</sup> and after the advent of the reactionary ministry of Doblhoff, considered itself strong enough to brave the popular torrent, and which at the same time was wanted in Vienna in order to complete its intrigues with the Slavonic majority of the Diet. While the Constituent Diet discussed the laws on the emancipation of the peasantry from feudal bondage and forced labour for the nobility, the court completed a master stroke. On the 19th of August the emperor was made to review the National Guard ; the imperial family, the courtiers, the general officers, outbid each other in flatteries to the armed burghers, who were already intoxicated with pride at thus seeing themselves publicly acknowledged as one of the important bodies of the state ; and immediately afterward a decree, signed by M. Schwarzer, the only popular minister in the cabinet, was published, withdrawing the government aid, given hitherto to the workmen out of employ. The trick succeeded ; the working classes got up a demonstration ; the middle-class National Guards declared for the decree of their minister ; they were launched upon the "Anarchists," fell like tigers on the unarmed and unresisting workpeople, and massacred a great number of them on the 23rd of August. Thus the unity and strength of the revolutionary force was broken ; the class struggle between bourgeois and proletarian had come in Vienna, too, to a bloody outbreak, and the coun-

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<sup>1</sup>Radetzky achieved his victories in August. The Doblhoff Ministry came to power in the middle of July 1848.—*Ed.*

ter-revolutionary *camarilla* saw the day approaching on which it might strike its grand blow.

The Hungarian affairs very soon offered an opportunity to proclaim openly the principles upon which it intended to act. On the 5th of October an imperial decree in the *Vienna Gazette*—a decree countersigned by none of the responsible ministers for Hungary—declared the Hungarian Diet dissolved, and named the Ban Jellachich, of Croatia, civil and military governor of that country—Jellachich, the leader of South Slavonian reaction, a man who was actually at war with the lawful authorities of Hungary. At the same time orders were given to the troops in Vienna to march out and form part of the army which was to enforce Jellachich's authority. This, however, was showing the cloven foot too openly; every man in Vienna felt that war upon Hungary was war upon the principle of constitutional government, which principle was in the very decree trampled upon by the attempt of the emperor to make decrees with legal force, without the countersign of a responsible minister. The people, the Academic Legion, the National Guard of Vienna, on the 6th of October rose in mass, and resisted the departure of the troops; some grenadiers passed over to the people; a short struggle took place between the popular forces and the troops; the Minister of War, Latour, was massacred by the people, and in the evening the latter were victors. In the meantime, Ban Jellachich, beaten at Stuhlweissenburg by Perczel, had taken refuge near Vienna on German-Austrian territory; the Viennese troops that were to march to his support now took up an ostensibly hostile and defensive position against him; and the emperor and court had again fled to Olmutz, on semi-Slavonic territory.

But at Olmutz the court found itself in very different circumstances to what it had been at Innsbruck. It was now in a position to open immediately the campaign against the revolution. It was surrounded by the Slavonian deputies of the constituent, who flocked in masses to Olmutz, and by the Slavonian enthusiasts from all parts of the monarchy. The campaign, in their eyes, was to be a war of Slavonian restoration, and of extermination against the two intruders upon what was considered Slavonian soil, against the German and the Magyar. Windischgratz, the conqueror of Prague, now commander of the army that was concentrated around Vienna, became at once the hero of Slavonian nationality. And his army concentrated rapidly from all sides. From Bohemia,

Moravia, Styria, Upper Austria, and Italy, marched regiment after regiment on routes that converged at Vienna, to join the troops of Jellachich and the ex-garrison of the capital. Above sixty thousand men were thus united towards the end of October, and soon they commenced hemming in the imperial city on all sides, until, on the 30th of October, they were far enough advanced to venture upon the decisive attack.

In Vienna, in the meantime, confusion and helplessness was prevalent. The middle class, as soon as the victory was gained, became again possessed of their old distrust against the "anarchic" working classes; the working men, mindful of the treatment they had received, six weeks before, at the hands of the armed tradesmen, and of the unsteady, wavering policy of the middle class at large, would not trust to them the defence of the city, and demanded arms and military organisation for themselves. The Academic Legion, full of zeal for the struggle against imperial despotism, were entirely incapable of understanding the nature of the estrangement of the two classes, or of otherwise comprehending the necessities of the situation. There was confusion in the public mind, confusion in the ruling councils. The remnant of the Diet, German deputies, and a few Slavonians acting the part of spies for their friends at Olmutz, besides a fear of the more revolutionary Polish deputies, sat in permanency, but instead of taking part resolutely, they lost all their time in idle debates upon the possibility of resisting the imperial army without overstepping the bounds of constitutional conventionalities. The Committee of Safety, composed of deputies of almost all the popular bodies of Vienna, although resolved to resist, was yet dominated by a majority of burghers and petty tradesmen, who never allowed it to follow up any determined, energetic line of action. The Council of the Academic Legion passed heroic resolutions, but was no ways able to take the lead. The working classes distrusted, disarmed, disorganised, hardly emerging from the intellectual bondage of the old regime, hardly awaking, not to a knowledge, but a mere instinct of their social position and proper political line of action, could only make themselves heard by loud demonstrations, and could not be expected to be up to the difficulties of the moment. But they were ready—as ever they were in Germany during the revolution—to fight to the last, as soon as they obtained arms.

That was the state of things in Vienna. Outside, the

reorganised Austrian army, flushed with the victories of Radetzky in Italy; sixty or seventy thousand men, well armed, well organised, and if not well commanded, at least possessing commanders. Inside, confusion, class division, disorganisation; a National Guard of which part was resolved not to fight at all, part irresolute, and only the smallest part ready to act; a proletarian mass, powerful by numbers but without leaders, without any political education, subject to panic as well as to fits of fury almost without cause, a prey to every false rumour spread about, quite ready to fight, but unarmed, at least in the beginning, and incompletely armed and barely organised when at last they were led to battle; a helpless Diet, discussing theoretical quibbles while the roof over their heads was almost burning; a leading committee without impulse or energy. Everything was changed from the days of March and May, when, in the counter-revolutionary camp all was confusion, and when the only organised force was that created by the revolution. There could hardly be a doubt about the issue of such a struggle, and whatever doubt there might be, was settled by the events of the 30th and 31st October and the 1st November.

London, March 1852.

## XII. THE STORMING OF VIENNA—THE BETRAYAL OF VIENNA

[*New York Daily Tribune*, April 9, 1852]

When at last the concentrated army of Windischgratz commenced the attack upon Vienna, the forces that could be brought forward in defence were exceedingly insufficient for the purpose. Of the National Guard only a portion was to be brought to the entrenchments. A Proletarian Guard it is true, had at last been hastily formed, but owing to the lateness of the attempt to thus make available the most numerous, most daring and most energetic part of the population, it was too little inured to the use of arms and to the very first rudiments of discipline to offer a successful resistance. Thus the Academic Legion, three to four thousand strong, well exercised and disciplined to a certain degree, brave and enthusiastic, was militarily speaking, the only force which was in a state to do its work successfully. But what were they, together with

the few reliable National Guards and with the confused mass of the armed proletarians, in opposition to the far more numerous regulars of Windischgratz, not counting even the brigand hordes of Jellachich, hordes that were, by the very nature of their habits, very useful in a war from house to house, from lane to lane? And what but a few old, out-worn ill-mounted and ill-served pieces of ordnance had the insurgents to oppose to that numerous and perfectly appointed artillery, of which Windischgratz made such an unscrupulous use?

The nearer the danger drew, the more grew the confusion in Vienna. The Diet, up to the last moment, could not collect sufficient energy to call in for aid the Hungarian army of Perczel, encamped a few leagues below the capital. The Committee passed contradictory resolutions, they themselves, being like the popular armed masses floated up and down with the rising and alternately receding tide of rumours and counter-rumours. There was only one thing upon which all agreed—to respect property; and this was done in a degree almost ludicrous for such times. As to the final arrangement of a plan of defence, very little was done. Bem, the only man present who could have saved Vienna, if any could, then in Vienna an almost unknown foreigner, a Slavonian by birth, gave up the task, overwhelmed as he was by universal distrust. Had he persevered, he might have been lynched as a traitor. Messenhauser, the commander of the insurgent forces, more of a novel writer than even of a subaltern officer, was totally inadequate to the task; and yet, after eight months of revolutionary struggles, the popular party had not produced or acquired a military man of more ability than he. Thus the contest began. The Viennese, considering their utterly inadequate means of defence, considering their utter absence of military skill and organisation in the ranks, offered a most heroic resistance. In many places the order given by Bem when he was in command, "to defend that post to the last man," was carried out to the letter. But force prevailed. Barricade after barricade was swept away by the imperial artillery in the long and wide avenues which form the main streets of the suburbs; and on the evening of the second day's fighting the Croats occupied the range of houses facing the glacis of the Old Town. A feeble and disorderly attack of the Hungarian army had been utterly defeated; and during an armistice, while some parties in the Old Town capitulated, while others hesitated and spread confusion, while the

remnants of the Academic Legion prepared fresh entrenchments, an entrance was made by the imperialists, and in the midst of this general disorder the Old Town was carried.

The immediate consequences of this victory, the brutalities and executions by martial law, the unheard-of cruelties and infamies committed by the Slavonian hordes let loose upon Vienna, are too well known to be detailed here. The ulterior consequences, the entire new turn given to German affairs by the defeat of the revolution in Vienna, we shall have reason to notice hereafter. There remain two points to be considered in connection with the storming of Vienna. The people of that capital had two allies: the Hungarians and the German people. Where were they in the hour of trial?

We have seen that the Viennese, with all the generosity of a newly-freed people, had risen for a cause which, though ultimately their own, was, in the first instance and above all, that of the Hungarians. Rather than suffer the Austrian troops to march upon Hungary, they would draw their first and most terrific onslaught upon themselves. And while they thus nobly came forward for the support of their allies, the Hungarians, successful against Jellachich, drove him upon Vienna, and by their victory strengthened the force that was to attack that town. Under these circumstances it was the clear duty of Hungary to support, without delay and with all disposable forces, not the Diet of Vienna, not the Committee of Safety or any other official body at Vienna, but the *Viennese Revolution*. And if Hungary should even have forgot that Vienna had fought the first battle of Hungary, she owed it to her own safety not to forget that Vienna was the only outpost of Hungarian independence, and that after the fall of Vienna nothing could meet the advance of the imperial troops against herself. Now, we know very well all the Hungarians can say and have said in defence of their inactivity during the blockade and storming of Vienna: the insufficient state of their own force, the refusal of the Diet or any other official body in Vienna to call them in, the necessity to keep on constitutional ground, and to avoid complications with the German Central Power. But the fact is, as to the insufficient state of the Hungarian army, that in the first days after the Viennese revolution and the arrival of Jellachich, nothing was wanted in the shape of regular troops, as the Austrian regulars were very far from being concentrated; and that a courageous, unrelenting following up of the first advantage over Jellachich,

even with nothing but the *Landsturm* that had fought at Stuhlweissenburg, would have sufficed to effect a junction with the Viennese, and to adjourn to that day six months every concentration of an Austrian army. In war, and particularly in revolutionary warfare, rapidity of action until some decided advantage is gained is the first rule, and we have no hesitation in saying that upon *merely military grounds*, Perczel ought not to have stopped until his junction with the Viennese was effected. There was certainly some risk, but who ever won a battle without risking something? And did the people of Vienna risk nothing when they drew upon themselves—they, a population of four hundred thousand—the forces that were to march to the conquest of twelve millions of Hungarians? The military fault committed by waiting until the Austrians had united, and by making the feeble demonstration at Schwechat which ended, as it deserved to do, in an inglorious defeat—this military fault certainly incurred more risks than a resolute march upon Vienna against the disbanded brigands of Jellachich would have done.

But, it is said, such an advance of the Hungarians, unless authorised by some official body, would have been a violation of the German territory, would have brought on complications with the Central Power at Frankfort, and would have been, above all, an abandonment of the legal and constitutional policy which formed the strength of the Hungarian cause. Why, the official bodies in Vienna were nonentities! Was it the Diet, was it the popular Committees, who had risen for Hungary, or was it the people of Vienna, and they alone, who had taken to the musket to stand the brunt of the first battle for Hungary's independence? It was not this nor that official body in Vienna which it was important to uphold—all these bodies might, and would have been, upset very soon in the progress of the revolutionary development—but it was the ascendancy of the revolutionary movement, the unbroken progress of popular action itself, which alone was in question, and which alone could save Hungary from invasion. What forms this revolutionary movement afterward might take, was the business of the Viennese, not of the Hungarians, so long as Vienna and German-Austria at large continued their alliance against the common enemy. But the question is, whether in this stickling of the Hungarian government for some quasi-legal authorisation, we are not to see the first clear symptom of that pretence to a rather doubtful legality of proceeding, which,

if it did not save Hungary, at least told very well, at a later period, before the English middle-class audiences.<sup>1</sup>

As to the pretext of possible conflicts with the Central Power of Germany at Frankfort, it is quite futile. The Frankfort authorities were *de facto* upset by the victory of the counter-revolution at Vienna; they would have been equally upset had the revolution there found the support necessary to defeat its enemies. And lastly, the great argument that Hungary could not leave legal and constitutional ground, may do very well for British free traders,<sup>2</sup> but it will never be deemed sufficient in the eyes of history. Suppose the people of Vienna had stuck to "legal and constitutional" means on the 13th of March and on the 6th of October, what then of the "legal and constitutional" movement, and of all the glorious battles which, for the first time, brought Hungary to the notice of the civilised world? The very legal and constitutional ground upon which it is asserted the Hungarians moved in 1848 and 1849 was conquered for them by the exceedingly illegal and unconstitutional rising of the people of Vienna on the 13th of March. It is not to our purpose here to discuss the revolutionary history of Hungary, but it may be deemed proper if we observe that it is utterly useless to professedly use merely legal means of resistance against an enemy who scorns such scruples; and if we add, that had it not been for this eternal pretence of legality which Gorgey seized upon and turned against the government, the devotion of Gorgey's army to its general, and the disgraceful catastrophe of Villagos,<sup>3</sup> would have been impossible. And when, at last, to save their honour, the Hungarians came across the Leitha, in the latter end of October 1848—was that not quite as illegal as any immediate and resolute attack would have been?

We are known to harbour no unfriendly feeling toward Hungary. We stood by her during the struggle; we may be allowed to say that our paper, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*,

<sup>1</sup>An allusion to Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian Revolution, who during his agitation in England in 1851 tried to win the sympathy and purse of the bourgeois public by continually emphasising that the Hungarian revolutionary government was acting on a legal basis and that it was the King who was acting illegally.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Kossuth's agitation enjoyed the moral and material support of the British Liberal free traders headed by Cobden.

<sup>3</sup>Irconditionally surrendered to Paskev y laid down its weapons.—Ed.

has done more than any other to render the Hungarian cause popular in Germany, by explaining the nature of the struggle between the Magyar and Slavonian races, and by following up the Hungarian war in a series of articles which have had paid them the compliment of being plagiarised in almost every subsequent book upon the subject, the works of native Hungarians and "eye-witnesses" not excepted. We even now, in any future continental convulsion, consider Hungary as the necessary and natural ally of Germany. But we have been severe enough upon our own countrymen to have a right to speak out upon our neighbours; and then we have here to record facts with historical impartiality, and we must say that in this particular instance, the generous bravery of the people of Vienna was not only far more noble, but also more far-sighted than the cautious circumspection of the Hungarian government. And, as a German, we may further be allowed to say, that not for all the showy victories and glorious battles of the Hungarian campaign would we exchange that spontaneous, single-handed rising and heroic resistance of the people of Vienna, our countrymen, which gave Hungary the time to organise the army that could do such great things.<sup>1</sup>

The second ally of Vienna was the German people. But they were everywhere engaged in the same struggle as the Viennese, Frankfort, Baden, Cologne, had just been defeated and disarmed. In Berlin and Breslau the people were at daggers-drawn with the army, and daily expected to come to blows. Thus it was in every local centre of action. Everywhere questions were pending that could only be settled by the force of arms; and now it was, that for the first time, were severely felt the disastrous consequences of the continuation of the old dismemberment and decentralisation of Germany. The different questions in every state, every province, every town, were fundamentally the same; but they were brought forward everywhere under different shapes and pretexts, and had everywhere attained different degrees of maturity. Thus it happened that while in every locality the decisive gravity of the events at Vienna was felt, yet nowhere could an important blow be struck with any hope of bringing the

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<sup>1</sup>In the spring of 1849, the Hungarian revolutionary army after a number of victories cleared the whole territory of Hungary of Austrian forces and compelled the Austrian emperor to have recourse to the assistance which had long been offered him by the Russian tsar.—*Ed.*

Viennese succour or making a diversion in their favour ; and there remained nothing to aid them but the Parliament and Central Power of Frankfort ; they were appealed to on all hands, but what did they do ?

The Frankfort Parliament and the bastard child it had brought to light by incestuous intercourse with the old German Diet, the so-called Central Power, profited by the Viennese movement to show forth their utter nullity. This contemptible assembly, as we have seen, had long since sacrificed its virginity, and young as it was, it was already turning grey-headed and experienced in all the artifices of prating and pseudo-diplomatic prostitution. Of the dreams and illusions of power, of German regeneration and unity, that in the beginning had pervaded it, nothing remained but a set of Teutonic claptrap phraseology that was repeated on every occasion, and a firm belief of each individual member in his own importance, as well as in the credulity of the public. The original naivete was discarded ; the representatives of the German people had turned practical men, that is to say, they had made it out that the less they did, and the more they prated, the safer would be their position as the umpires of the fate of Germany. Not that they considered their proceedings superfluous ; quite the contrary. But they had found out that all really great questions, being to them forbidden ground, had better be let alone, and here, like a set of Byzantine doctors of the Lower Empire, they discussed, with an importance and assiduity worthy of the fate that at last overtook them, theoretical dogmas long ago settled in every part of the civilised world, or microscopical practical questions which never led to any practical result. Thus, the Assembly being a sort of Lancastrian School<sup>1</sup> for the mutual instruction of members, and being, therefore, very important to themselves, they were persuaded it was doing even more than the German people had a right to expect, and looked upon everyone as a traitor to the country who had the impudence to ask them to come to any result.

When the Viennese insurrection broke out, there was a host of interpellations, debates, motions and amendments upon it, which, of course, led to nothing. The Central Power was to interfere. It sent two commissioners, Welcker, the ex-liberal,

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<sup>1</sup>A school in which mutual instruction played a great role, the better scholars helping the weaker ones.—Ed.

and Mosle, to Vienna. The travels of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza form matter for an Odyssey in comparison to the heroic feats and wonderful adventures of these two knight-errants of German unity. Not daring to go to Vienna, they were bullied by Windischgratz, wondered at by the idiot emperor, and impudently hoaxed by the Minister Stadion. Their despatches and reports are perhaps the only portion of the Frankfort transactions that will retain a place in German literature; they are a perfect satirical romance, ready cut and dried, and an eternal monument of disgrace for the Frankfort Assembly and its government.

The left side of the Assembly had also sent two commissioners to Vienna, in order to uphold its authority there—Messrs. Froebel and Robert Blum. Blum, when danger drew near, judged rightly that here the great battle of the German Revolution was to be fought, and unhesitatingly resolved to stake his head on the issue. Froebel, on the contrary, was of opinion that it was his duty to preserve himself for the important duties of his post at Frankfort. Blum was considered one of the most eloquent men of the Frankfort Assembly; he certainly was the most popular. His eloquence would not have stood the test of any experienced parliamentary assembly; he was too fond of the shallow declamations of a German dissenting preacher, and his arguments wanted both philosophical acumen and acquaintance with practical matter of fact. In politics he belonged to "Moderate Democracy," a rather indefinite sort of thing, cherished on account of this very want of definiteness in its principles. But with all this Robert Blum was by nature a thorough, though somewhat polished, plebeian, and in decisive moments his plebeian instinct and plebeian energy got the better of his indefinite and therefore indecisive political persuasion and knowledge. In such moments he raised himself far above the usual standard of his capacities.

Thus, in Vienna, he saw at a glance that here, not in the midst of the would-be elegant debates of Frankfort, the fate of his country would have to be decided; he at once made up his mind, gave up all idea of retreat, took a command in the revolutionary force, and behaved with extraordinary coolness and decision. It was he who retarded for a considerable time the taking of the town, and covered one of its sides from attack by burning the Tabor Bridge over the Danube. Everybody knows how after the storming he was arrested, tried by

a court-martial, and shot. He died like a hero. And the Frankfort Assembly, horrorstruck as it was, yet took the bloody insult with a seeming good grace. A resolution was carried, which, by the softness and diplomatic decency of its language, was more an insult to the grave of the murdered martyr than a damning stain upon Austria. But it was not to be expected that this contemptible Assembly should resent the assassination of one of its members, particularly of the leader of the Left.

London, March 1852.

### XIII. THE PRUSSIAN ASSEMBLY—THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

[*New York Daily Tribune*, April 17, 1852]

On the 1st of November Vienna fell, and on the 9th of the same month the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in Berlin showed how much this event had at once raised the spirit and the strength of the counter-revolutionary party all over Germany.

The events of the summer of 1848 in Prussia are soon told. The Constituent Assembly, or rather "the Assembly elected for the purpose of agreeing upon a constitution with the crown,"<sup>1</sup> and its majority of representatives of the middle-class interest, had long since forfeited all public esteem by lending itself to all the intrigues of the court, from fear of the more energetic elements of the population. They had confirmed, or rather restored, the obnoxious privileges of feudalism, and thus betrayed the liberty and the interest of the peasantry. They had neither been able to draw up a constitution, nor to amend in any way the general legislation. They had occupied themselves almost exclusively with nice theoretical distinctions, mere formalities, and questions of constitutional etiquette. The Assembly, in fact, was more a school of parliamentary *savoir vivre* for its members, than a body in which the people could take any interest. The majorities were, besides, very nicely balanced, and almost always decided by the wavering "centres" whose oscillations from Right to Left, and *vice versa*, upset first the ministry of Camphausen, then that of Auerswald and Hansemann.<sup>2</sup> But while thus the liberals, here

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<sup>1</sup>The Assembly began its activities on May 22, 1848.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The Camphausen Ministry was overthrown on June 20.

as everywhere else, let the occasion slip out of their hands, the court reorganised its elements of strength among the nobility, and the most uncultivated portion of the rural population, as well as in the army and bureaucracy. After Hansemann's downfall, a ministry of bureaucrats and military officers, all staunch reactionists, was formed,<sup>1</sup> which, however, seemingly gave way to the demands of the parliament; and the Assembly, acting upon the commodious principle of "measures, not men," were actually duped into applauding this ministry, while they, of course, had no eyes for the concentration and organisation of counter-revolutionary forces, which that same ministry carried on pretty openly. At last, the signal being given by the fall of Vienna, the king dismissed his ministers, and replaced them by "men of action," under the leadership of the present premier, M. Manteuffel. Then the dreaming Assembly at once awoke to the danger; it passed a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet, which was at once replied to by a decree removing the Assembly from Berlin, where it might, in case of a conflict, count upon the support of the masses, to Brandenburg, a petty provincial town dependent entirely upon the government. The Assembly, however, declared that it could not be adjourned, removed, or dissolved, except with its own consent. In the meantime, General Wrangel entered Berlin at the head of some forty thousand troops. In a meeting of the municipal magistrates and the officers of the National Guard, it was resolved not to offer any resistance. And now, after the Assembly and its constituents, the liberal bourgeoisie, had allowed the combined reactionary party to occupy every important position, and to wrest from their hands almost every means of defence, began that grand comedy of "passive and legal resistance" which they intended to be a glorious imitation of the example of Hampden<sup>2</sup> and of the first efforts of the Americans in the War

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The Auerswald Ministry, in which the finance minister, Hansemann, had in fact the leading role, was dismissed in the middle of September 1848.—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup> The head of the new ministry installed on September 21 was General Pfuel.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Hampden was one of the leaders of the opposition in the English parliament in the thirties and forties of the seventeenth century. He came out against payments of taxes that had not been voted by parliament. Charles I, who appeared in the House of Commons with some hundreds of soldiers in

of Independence. Berlin was declared in a state of siege, and Berlin remained tranquil; the National Guard was dissolved by the government, and its arms were delivered up with the greatest punctuality. The Assembly was hunted down during a fortnight, from one place of meeting to another, and everywhere dispersed by the military, and the members of the Assembly begged of the citizens to remain tranquil. At last the Government having declared the Assembly dissolved, it passed a resolution to declare the levying of taxes illegal, and then its members dispersed themselves over the country to organise the refusal of taxes. But they found that they had been woefully mistaken in the choice of their means. After a few agitated weeks followed by severe measures of the government against the opposition, everyone gave up the idea of refusing the taxes in order to please a defunct Assembly that had not even had the courage to defend itself.

Whether it was, in the beginning of November 1848, already too late to try armed resistance, or whether a part of the army, on finding serious opposition, would have turned over to the side of the Assembly, and thus decided the matter in its favour, is a question which may never be solved. But in revolution as in war, it is always necessary to show a strong front, and he who attacks is in the advantage; and in revolution as in war, it is of the highest necessity to stake everything on the decisive moment, whatever the odds may be. There is not a single successful revolution in history that does not prove the truth of these axioms. Now, for the Prussian Revolution, the decisive moment had come in November 1848; the Assembly, at the head, officially, of the whole revolutionary interest, did neither show a strong front, for it receded at every advance of the enemy; much less did it attack—for it chose even not to defend itself; and when the decisive moment came, when Wrangel, at the head of forty thousand men, knocked at the gates of Berlin, instead of finding, as he and all his officers fully expected, every street studded with barricades, every window turned into a loop-hole, he found the gates open, and the streets obstructed only by peaceful Ber-

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order to arrest the leaders of the opposition, including Hampden, encountered strong resistance. This breach of the rights of parliament aroused a storm of indignation in the country. The rupture between the House of Commons and the king led to open war which ended with the establishment of the republic headed by Cromwell.—Ed.

liner burghers, enjoying the joke they had played upon him, by delivering themselves up, hands and feet tied, unto the astonished soldiers. It is true, the Assembly and the people, if they had resisted, might have been beaten; Berlin might have been bombarded, and many hundreds might have been killed, without preventing the ultimate victory of the royalist party. But that was no reason why they should surrender their arms at once. A well-contested defeat is a fact of as much revolutionary importance as an easily-won victory. The defeats of Paris in June 1848, and of Vienna in October, certainly did far more in revolutionising the minds or the people of these two cities than the victories of February and March. The Assembly and the people of Berlin would, probably, have shared the fate of the two towns above named; but they would have fallen gloriously, and would have left behind themselves, in the minds of the survivors, a wish of revenge, which in revolutionary times is one of the highest incentives to energetic and passionate action. It is a matter of course that, in every struggle, he who takes up the gauntlet risks being beaten; but is that a reason why he should confess himself beaten, and submit to the yoke without drawing the sword?

In revolution he who commands a decisive position and surrenders it, instead of forcing the enemy to try his hands at an assault, invariably deserves to be treated as a traitor.

The same decree of the king of Prussia which dissolved the Constituent Assembly also proclaimed a new constitution, founded upon the draft which had been made by a committee of that Assembly, but enlarging in some points the powers of the crown, and rendering doubtful in others those of the parliament. This constitution established two chambers, which were to meet soon for the purpose of confirming and revising it.

We need hardly ask where the German National Assembly was during the "legal and peaceful" struggle of the Prussian constitutionalists. It was, as usual, at Frankfort, occupied with passing very tame resolutions against the proceedings of the Prussian Government, and admiring the "imposing spectacle of the passive, legal, and unanimous resistance of a whole people against brutal force." The Central Government sent commissioners to Berlin to intercede between the Ministry and the Assembly; but they met the same fate as their predecessors at Olmutz, and were politely shown out. The Left of the Na-

tional Assembly, i.e., the so-called Radical Party, sent also their commissioners; but after having duly convinced themselves of the utter helplessness of the Berlin Assembly, and confessed their own equal helplessness, they returned to Frankfort to report progress, and to testify to the admirably peaceful conduct of the population of Berlin. Nay, more: when M. Bassermann, one of the Central Government's commissioners, reported that the late stringent measures of the Prussian ministers were not without foundation, inasmuch as there had of late been seen loitering about the streets of Berlin sundry savage-looking characters such as always appear previous to anarchical movements (and which ever since have been named "Bassermannic characters"), these worthy deputies of the Left and energetic representatives of the revolutionary interest actually arose to make oath and testify that such was not the case! Thus within two months the total impotency of the Frankfort Assembly was signally proved. There could be no more glaring proofs that this body was totally inadequate to its task; nay, that it had not even the remotest idea of what its task really was. The fact that both in Vienna and in Berlin the fate of the revolution was settled, that in both these capitals the most important and vital questions were disposed of, without the existence of the Frankfort Assembly ever being taken the slightest notice of—this fact alone is sufficient to establish that the body in question was a mere debating-club, ~~taken the slightest notice of—this fact alone is sufficient to establish~~ that the body in question was a mere debating-club, keepers and petty tradesmen of petty states and petty towns, as long as it was considered convenient to divert the attention of these parties. How long this was considered convenient we shall soon see. But it is a fact worthy of attention that among all the "eminent" men of this Assembly there was not one who had the slightest apprehension of the part they were made to perform, and that even up to the present day ex-members of the Frankfort club have invariably organs of historical perception quite peculiar to themselves.

London, March 1852.

#### XIV. THE RESTORATION OF ORDER—DIET & CHAMBER

[*New York Daily Tribune*, April 24, 1852]

The first months of the year 1849 were employed by the Austrian and Prussian governments in following up the advantages obtained in October and November last. The Austrian Diet, ever since the taking of Vienna, had carried on a merely nominal existence in a small Moravian country town named Kremsir. Here the Slavonian deputies, who, with their constituents, had been mainly instrumental in raising the Austrian government from its prostration, were singularly punished for their treachery against the European revolution; as soon as the government had recovered its strength, it treated the Diet and its Slavonian majority with the utmost contempt, and when the first successes of the imperial arms foreboded a speedy termination of the Hungarian War, the Diet, on the 4th of March, was dissolved and the deputies dispersed by military force. Then at last the Slavonians saw that they were duped, and then they shouted: Let us go to Frankfort and carry on there the opposition which we cannot pursue here! But it was then too late, and the very fact that they had no other alternative than either to remain quiet or to join the impotent Frankfort Assembly—this fact alone was sufficient to show their utter helplessness.

Thus ended for the present, and most likely for ever, the attempts of the Slavonians of German to recover an independent national existence. Scattered remnants of numerous nations, whose nationality and political vitality had long been extinguished, and who in consequence had been obliged, for almost a thousand years, to follow in the wake of a mightier nation, their conqueror, the same as the Welsh in England, the Basques in Spain, the Bas-Bretons in France, and at a more recent period the Spanish and French Creoles in those portions of North America occupied of late by the Anglo-American race—these dying nationalities, the Bohemians, Carinthians, Dalmatians, etc., had tried to profit by the universal confusion of 1848, in order to restore their political *status quo* of A.D. 800. The history of a thousand years ought to have shown them that such a retrogression was impossible; that if all the territory east of the Elbe and Saale had at one time been occupied by kindred Slavonians, this fact merely proved the historical tendency, and at the same time the physical and

intellectual power of the German nation, to subdue, absorb, and assimilate its ancient eastern neighbours; that this tendency of absorption on the part of the Germans had always been, and still was, one of the mightiest means by which the civilisation of Western Europe had been spread in the east of that continent; that it could only cease whenever the process of Germanisation had reached the frontier of large, compact, unbroken nations, capable of an independent national life, such as the Hungarians and in some degree the Poles; and that, therefore, the natural and inevitable fate of these dying nations was to allow this progress of dissolution and absorption by their stronger neighbours to complete itself. Certainly this is no very flattering prospect for the national ambition of the Pan-Slavistic dreamers who succeeded in agitating a portion of the Bohemian and South Slavonian people; but can they expect that history would retrograde a thousand years in order to please a few phthisical bodies of men, who in every part of the territory they occupy are interspersed and surrounded by Germans, who from times almost immemorial have had for all purposes of civilisation no other language but the German, and who lack the very first conditions of national existence, numbers and compactness of territory? Thus, the Pan-Slavistic rising, which everywhere in the German and Hungarian Slavonic territories was the cloak for the restoration to independence of all these numberless petty nations, everywhere clashed with the European revolutionary movements, and the Slavonians, although pretending to fight for liberty, were invariably (the democratic portion of the Poles excepted) found on the side of despotism and reaction. Thus it was in Germany, thus in Hungary, thus even here and there in Turkey. Traitors to the popular cause, supporters and chief props to the Austrian government's cabal, they placed themselves in the position of outlaws in the eyes of all revolutionary nations. And although nowhere the mass of the people had a part in the petty squabbles about nationality raised by the Pan-Slavistic leaders, for the very reason that they were too ignorant, yet it will never be forgotten that in Prague, in a half-German town, crowds of Slavonian fanatics cheered and repeated the cry: "Rather the Russian knout than German liberty!" After their first evaporated effort in 1848, and after the lesson the Austrian government gave them, it is likely that another attempt at a later opportunity will be made. But if they should try again under similar pretexts to ally themselves

to the counter-revolutionary force, the duty of Germany is clear. No country in a state of revolution and involved in external war can tolerate a Vendee<sup>1</sup> in its very heart.

As to the constitution proclaimed by the emperor at the same time with the dissolution of the Diet, there is no need to revert to it, as it never had a practical existence and is now done away with altogether. Absolutism has been restored in Austria to all intents and purposes ever since the 4th of March, 1849.

In Prussia, the Chambers met in February for the ratification and revision of the new charter proclaimed by the king. They sat for about six weeks, humble and meek enough in their behaviour towards the government, yet not quite prepared to go the lengths the king and his ministers wished them to do. Therefore, as soon as a suitable occasion presented itself, they were dissolved.

Thus both Austria and Prussia had for the moment got rid of the shackles of parliamentary control. The governments now concentrated all power in themselves, and could bring that power to bear wherever it was wanted: Austria upon Hungary and Italy, Prussia upon Germany. For Prussia, too, was preparing for a campaign by which "order" was to be restored in the smaller states.

Counter-revolution being now paramount in the two great centres of action of Germany, in Vienna and Berlin, there remained only the lesser states in which the struggle was still undecided, although the balance there, too, was leaning more and more against the revolutionary interest. These smaller states, we have said, found a common centre in the National Assembly at Frankfort. Now, this so-called National Assembly, although its reactionist spirit had long been evident, so much so that the very people of Frankfort had risen in arms against it, yet its origin was of a more or less revolutionary nature; it occupied an abnormal, revolutionary position in January; its competence had never been defined, and it had at last come to the decision—which, however, was never recognised by the larger states—that its resolutions had the

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<sup>1</sup> A Department of Western France, the seat of counter-revolution at the time of the first bourgeois revolution in France. The adherents of the king relied for support on the backward strata of the peasantry and repeatedly organised revolt in the Vendee against the revolutionary government.—Ed.

force of law. Under these circumstances, and when the constitutionalist-monarchical party saw their positions turned by the recovering absolutists, it is not to be wondered that the liberal, monarchical bourgeoisie of almost the whole of Germany should place their last hopes upon the majority of this Assembly, just as the petty shopkeeping interest, the nucleus of the Democratic Party, gathered in their growing distress around the minority of that same body, which indeed formed the last compact parliamentary phalanx of democracy. On the other hand, the larger governments, and particularly the Prussian Ministry, saw more and more the incompatibility of such an irregular elective body with the restored monarchical system of Germany, and if they did not at once force its dissolution, it was only because the time had not yet come, and because Prussia hoped first to use it for the furthering of its own ambitious purposes.

In the meantime, that poor Assembly itself fell into a greater and greater confusion. Its deputations and commissaries had been treated with the utmost contempt, both in Vienna and Berlin; one of its members, in spite of his parliamentary inviolability, had been executed in Vienna as a common rebel. Its decrees were nowhere heeded; if they were noticed at all by the larger powers, it was merely by protesting notes which disputed the authority of the Assembly to pass laws and resolutions binding upon their governments. The representative of the Assembly, the central executive power, was involved in diplomatic squabbles with almost all the cabinets of Germany, and, in spite of all their efforts, neither Assembly nor Central Government could bring Austria or Prussia to state their ultimate views, plans and demands. The Assembly, at last, commenced to see clear, at least so far, that it had allowed all power to slip out of its hands, that it was at the mercy of Austria and Prussia, and that if it intended making a federal constitution for Germany at all, it must set about the thing at once and in good earnest. And many of the vacillating members also saw clearly that they had been egregiously duped by the governments. But what were they, in their impotent position, able to do now? The only thing that could have saved them would have been promptly and decidedly to pass over into the popular camp; but the success, even of that step, was more than doubtful; and then, where in this helpless crowd of undecided, shortsighted, self-conceited beings who, when the eternal noise

of contradictory rumours and diplomatic notes completely stunned them, sought their only consolation and support in the everlastingly repeated assurance that they were the best, the greatest, the wisest men of the country, and that they alone could save Germany—where, we say, among these poor creatures, whom a single year of parliamentary life had turned into complete idiots, where were the men for a prompt and decisive resolution, much less for energetic and consistent action?

At last the Austrian government threw off the mask. In its Constitution of the 4th of March, it proclaimed Austria an indivisible monarchy, with common finances, system of customs duties, of military establishments, there effacing every barrier and distinction between the German and non-German provinces. This declaration was made in the face of resolutions and articles of the intended federal constitution which had been already passed by the Frankfort Assembly. It was the gauntlet of war thrown down to it by Austria, and the poor Assembly had no other choice but to take it up. This it did with a deal of blustering, but which Austria, in the consciousness of her power, and of the utter nothingness of the Assembly, could well afford to allow to pass. And this precious representation, as it styled itself, of the German people, in order to revenge itself for this insult on the part of Austria, saw nothing better before it than to throw itself, hands and feet tied, at the feet of the Prussian government. Incredible as it would seem, it bent its knees before the very ministers whom it had condemned as unconstitutional and anti-popular, and whose dismissal it had in vain insisted upon. The details of this disgraceful transaction, and the tragical events that followed, will form the subject of our next.

London, April 1852.

## XV. THE TRIUMPH OF PRUSSIA

[*New York Daily Tribune*, July 27, 1852]

We now come to the last chapter in the history of the German Revolution: the conflict of the National Assembly with the governments of the different states, especially of Prussia; the insurrection of Southern and Western Germany, and its final overthrow by Prussia.

We have already seen the Frankfort National Assembly at work. We have seen it kicked at by Austria, insulted by Prussia, disobeyed by the lesser states, duped by its own impotent Central "Government," which again was the dupe of all and every prince in the country. But at last things began to look threatening for this weak, vacillating, insipid legislative body. It was forced to come to the conclusion that "the sublime idea of German unity was threatened in its realisation," which meant neither more nor less than that the Frankfort Assembly and all it had done, and was about to do, were very likely to end in smoke. Thus it set to work in good earnest in order to bring forth as soon as possible its grand production, the "Imperial Constitution." There was, however, one difficulty. What executive government was there to be? An executive council? No; that would have been, they thought in their wisdom, making Germany a republic. A "president"? That would come to the same. Thus they must revive the old imperial dignity. But—as of course a prince was to be emperor—who should it be? Certainly none of the *dii minorum gentium*, from Reuss-Schleiz-Greiz-Lobenstein-Ebersdorf up to Bavaria; neither Austria nor Prussia would have borne that. It could only be Austria or Prussia. But which of the two? There is no doubt that, under otherwise favourable circumstances, this august Assembly would be sitting up to the present day, discussing this important dilemma without being able to come to a conclusion, if the Austrian government had not cut the Gordian knot, and saved them the trouble.

Austria knew very well that from the moment in which she could again appear before Europe with all her provinces subdued, as a strong and great European power, the very law of political gravitation would draw the remainder of Germany into her orbit, without the help of any authority which an imperial crown, conferred by the Frankfort Assembly, could give her. Austria had been far stronger, far freer in her movements, since she shook off the powerless crown of the German empire—a crown which clogged her own independent policy, while it added not one iota to her strength, either within or without of Germany. And supposing the case that Austria could not maintain her footing in Italy and Hungary—why then she was dissolved, annihilated in Germany too, and could never pretend to re-seize a crown which had slipped her hands while she was in the full possession of her strength.

Thus Austria at once declared against all imperialist resurrections, and plainly demanded the restoration of the German Diet, the only Central Government of Germany known and recognised by the treaties of 1815; and on the 4th of May, 1849, issued that constitution which had no other meaning than to declare Austria an indivisible, centralised and independent monarchy, distinct even from that Germany which the Frankfort Assembly was to reorganise.

This open declaration of war left, indeed, the Frankfort wiseacres no other choice but to exclude Austria from Germany, and to create out of the remainder of that country a sort of Lower Empire,<sup>1</sup> a "Little Germany," the rather shabby imperial mantle of which was to fall on the shoulders of His Majesty of Prussia. This, it will be recollected, was the renewal of an old project fostered already some six or eight years ago by a party of South and Middle German liberal *doctrinaires*, who considered as a godsend the degrading circumstances by which their old crotchet was now again brought forward as the latest "new move" for the salvation of the country.

They accordingly finished, in February and March 1849, the debate on the Imperial Constitution, together with the Declaration of Rights and the Imperial Electoral Law; not, however, without being obliged to make, in a great many points, the most contradictory concessions—now to the conservative or rather reactionary party—now to the more advanced factions of the Assembly. In fact, it was evident that the leadership of the Assembly, which had formerly belonged to the Right and Right Centre (the conservatives and reactionists), was gradually, although slowly, passing towards the Left or democratic side of that body. The rather dubious position of the Austrian deputies in an Assembly which had excluded their country from Germany, and in which yet they were called upon to sit and vote, favoured the derangement of its equipoise; and thus, as early as the end of February, the Left Centre and the Left found themselves, by the help of the Austrian votes, very generally in a majority, while on other days the conservative fraction of the Austrians, all of a sudden, and for the fun of the thing, voting with the Right, threw the balance again on the other side. They intended,

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<sup>1</sup>The name given to the East Roman (Byzantine) empire in the period of its decline.—*Ed.*

by these sudden *soubresauts*, to bring the Assembly into contempt; which, however, was quite unnecessary, the mass of the people being long since convinced of the utter hollowness and futility of anything coming from Frankfort. What a specimen of a Constitution, in the meantime, was framed under such jumping and counter-jumping, may easily be imagined.

The Left of the Assembly—this *elite* and pride of revolutionary Germany, as it believed itself to be—was entirely intoxicated with the few paltry successes it obtained by the good will, or rather the ill will, of a set of Austrian politicians, acting under the instigation and for the interest of Austrian despotism. Whenever the slightest approximation to their own not very well-defined principles had, in a homoeopathically diluted shape, obtained a sort of sanction by the Frankfort Assembly, these Democrats proclaimed that they had saved the country and the people. These poor, weak-minded men, during the course of their generally very obscure lives, had been so little accustomed to anything like success, that they actually believed their paltry amendments, passed with two or three votes' majority, would change the face of Europe. They had, from the beginning of their legislative career, been more imbued than any other fraction of the Assembly with that incurable malady *parliamentary cretinism*, a disorder which penetrates its unfortunate victims with the solemn conviction that the whole world, its history and future, are governed and determined by a majority of votes in that particular representative body which has the honour to count them among its members, and that all and everything going on outside the walls of their house—wars, revolutions, railway-constructing, colonising of whole new continents, California gold discoveries, Central American canals, Russian armies, and whatever else may have some little claim to influence upon the destinies of mankind—is nothing compared to the incommensurable events hinging upon the important question, whatever it may be, just at that moment occupying the attention of their honourable House. Thus it was the Democratic Party of the Assembly, by effectually smuggling a few of their nostrums into the "Imperial Constitution," first became bound to support it, although in every essential point it flatly contradicted their own oft-proclaimed principles; and at last, when this mongrel work was abandoned and bequeathed to them by its main authors, accepted the inheritance, and held out for this *monarchical* constitution, even in opposition to

everybody who then proclaimed their own republican principles.

But it must be confessed that in this the contradiction was merely apparent. The indeterminate, self-contradictory, immature character of the Imperial Constitution was the very image of the immature, confused, conflicting political ideas of these democratic gentlemen. And if their own sayings and writings—as far as they could write—were not sufficient proof of this, their actions would furnish such proof; for among sensible people it is a matter of course to judge of a man, not by his professions, but by his actions; not by what he pretends to be, but by what he does and what he really is; and the deeds of these heroes of German democracy speak loud enough for themselves, as we shall learn by and by. However, the Imperial Constitution, with all its appendages and paraphernalia, was definitely passed, and on the 28th of March, the king of Prussia was, by 290 votes, against 248 who abstained and some 200 who were absent, elected emperor of Germany minus Austria. The historical irony was complete; the imperial farce executed in the streets of astonished Berlin, three days after the Revolution of March 18, 1848,<sup>1</sup> by Frederick William IV, while in a state which elsewhere would come under the Maine Liquor Law—this disgusting farce, just one year afterward, had been sanctioned by the pretended Representative Assembly of all Germany. That, then, was the result of the German Revolution!

London, July 1852.

## XVI. THE ASSEMBLY AND THE GOVERNMENTS

[*New York Daily Tribune*, August 19, 1852]

The National Assembly of Frankfort, after having elected the King of Prussia Emperor of Germany (*minus* Austria), sent a deputation to Berlin to offer him the crown, and then adjourned. On the 2nd of April, Frederick William received the deputies. He told them that, although he accepted the right of precedence over all the other princes of Germany,

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<sup>1</sup>On March 18, 1848, the king in a half drunken condition rode through the streets of the town and declared to the people that he was ready to put himself at the head of the movement for the creation of a United Germany.—*Ed.*

which this vote of the people's representatives had given him, yet he could not accept the imperial crown as long as he was not sure that the remaining princes acknowledged his supremacy, and the Imperial Constitution conferring those rights upon him. It would be, he added, for the governments of Germany to see whether this constitution was such as could be ratified by them. At all events, emperor or not, he always would be found ready, he concluded, to draw the sword against either the external or the internal foe. We shall soon see how he kept his promise in a manner rather startling for the National Assembly.

The Frankfort wiseacres, after profound diplomatic inquiry, at last came to the conclusion that this answer amounted to a refusal of the crown. They then (April 12) resolved: That the Imperial Constitution was the law of the land, and must be maintained; and not seeing their way at all before themselves, elected a Committee of Thirty to make proposals as to the means how this constitution could be carried out.

This resolution was the signal for the conflict between the Frankfort Assembly and the German governments which now broke out. The middle classes, and especially the smaller trading class, had all at once declared for the new Frankfort Constitution. They could not await any longer the moment which was "to close the revolution." In Austria and Prussia the revolution had, for the moment, been closed by the interference of the armed power; the classes in question would have preferred a less forcible mode of performing that operation but they had not had a chance; the thing was done and they had to make the best of it, a resolution which they at once took and carried out most heroically. In the smaller states, where things had been going on comparatively smoothly, the middle classes had long since been thrown back into that showy, but resultless, because powerless, parliamentary agitation, which was most congenial to themselves. The different states of Germany, as regarded each of them separately, appeared thus to have attained that new and definitive form which was supposed to enable them to enter henceforth the path of peaceful constitutional development. There only remained one open question, that of the new political organisation of the German Confederacy. And this question, the only one which still appeared fraught with danger, it was considered a necessity to resolve at once. Hence the pressure

exerted upon the Frankfort Assembly by the middle classes, in order to induce it to get the constitution ready as soon as possible; hence the resolution among the higher and lower bourgeoisie to accept and to support this constitution, whatever it might be, in order to create a settled state of things without delay. Thus from the very beginning the agitation for the Imperial Constitution arose out of a reactionary feeling, and sprung up among those classes which were long since tired of the revolution.

But there was another feature in it. The first and fundamental principles of the future German constitution had been voted during the first months of spring and summer, 1848—a time when popular agitation was still rife. The resolution then passed—though completely reactionary *then*—now, after the arbitrary acts of the Austrian and Prussian governments, appeared exceedingly liberal, and even democratic. The standard of comparison had changed. The Frankfort Assembly could not, without moral suicide, strike out these once-voted provisions, and model the Imperial Constitution upon those which the Austrian and Prussian governments had dictated, sword in hand. Besides, as we have seen, the majority in that Assembly had changed sides, and the Liberal and Democratic Party were rising in influence. Thus the Imperial Constitution not only was distinguished by its apparently exclusive popular origin, but at the same time, full of contradiction as it was, it yet was the most liberal constitution of all Germany. Its greatest fault was, that it was a mere sheet of paper, with no power to back its provisions.

Under these circumstances it was natural that the so-called Democratic Party, that is, the mass of the petty trading class, should cling to the Imperial Constitution. This class had always been more forward in its demands than the liberal monarchico-constitutional bourgeoisie; it had shown a bolder front, it had very often threatened armed resistance, it was lavish in its promises to sacrifice its blood and its existence in the struggle for freedom; but it had already given plenty of proofs that on the day of danger it was nowhere, and that it never felt more comfortable than the day after a decisive defeat, when, everything being lost, it had at least the consolation to know that somehow or other the matter *was* settled. While, therefore, the adhesion of the large bankers, manufacturers and merchants was of a more reserved character, more like a simple demonstration in favour of the Frankfort

Constitution, the class just beneath them; our valiant democratic shopkeepers, came forward in grand style, and, as usual, proclaimed they would rather spill their last drop of blood than let the Imperial Constitution fall to the ground.

Supported by these two parties, the bourgeois adherents of constitutional royalty, and the more or less democratic shopkeepers, the agitation for the immediate establishment of the Imperial Constitution gained ground rapidly, and found its most powerful expression in the parliaments of the several states. The Chambers of Prussia, of Hanover, of Saxony, of Baden, of Wurttemberg, declared in its favour. The struggle between the governments and the Frankfort Assembly assumed a threatening aspect.

The governments, however, acted rapidly. The Prussian Chambers were dissolved, anti-constitutionally, as they had to revise and confirm the constitution; riots broke out at Berlin, provoked intentionally by the government; and the next day, the 28th of April, the Prussian Ministry issued a circular note, in which the Imperial Constitution was held up as a most anarchical and revolutionary document, which it was for the governments of Germany to remodel and purify. Thus Prussia denied, pointblank, that sovereign constituent power which the wise men at Frankfort had always boasted of, but never established. Thus a Congress of Princes, a renewal of the old Federal Diet, was called upon to sit in judgment on that constitution which had already been promulgated as a law. And at the same time Prussia concentrated troops at Kreuznach, three days' march from Frankfort, and called upon the smaller states to follow its example by also dissolving their chambers as soon as they should give their adhesion to the Frankfort Assembly. This example was speedily followed by Hanover and Saxony.

It was evident that a decision of the struggle by force of arms could not be avoided. The hostility of the governments, the agitation among the people, were daily showing themselves in stronger colours. The military were everywhere worked upon by the democratic citizens, and in the south of Germany with great success. Large mass meetings were everywhere held, passing resolutions to support the Imperial Constitution and the National Assembly, if need should be, with force of arms. At Cologne, a meeting of deputies of all the municipal councils of Rhenish Prussia took place for the same purpose. In the Palatinate, at Bergen, Fulda, Nuremberg, in the Oden-

wald, the peasantry met by myriads and worked themselves up into enthusiasm. At the same time the Constituent Assembly of France dissolved, and the new elections were prepared amid violent agitation, while on the eastern frontier of Germany, the Hungarians had within a month, by a succession of brilliant victories, rolled back the tide of Austrian invasion from the Theiss<sup>1</sup> to the Leitha, and were every day expected to take Vienna by storm. Thus, popular imagination being on all hands worked up to the highest pitch, and the aggressive policy of the governments defining itself more clearly every day, a violent collision could not be avoided, and cowardly imbecility only could persuade itself that the struggle was to come off peaceably. But this cowardly imbecility was most extensively represented in the Frankfort Assembly.

London July 1852.

## XVII. INSURRECTION

[*New York Daily Tribune*, September 18, 1852]

The inevitable conflict between the National Assembly of Frankfort and the states' government of Germany at last broke out in open hostilities during the first days of May 1849. The Austrian deputies, recalled by their government, had already left the Assembly and returned home, with the exception of a few members of the Left or Democratic Party. The great body of the conservative members, aware of the turn things were about to take, withdrew even before they were called upon to do so by their respective governments. Thus, even independently of the causes which in the foregoing papers have been shown to strengthen the influence of the Left, the mere desertion of their posts by the members of the Right, sufficed to turn the old minority into a majority of the Assembly. The new majority, which at no former time had dreamt of ever obtaining that good fortune, had profited by their places on the opposition benches to spout against the weakness, the indecision, the indolence of the old majority and of its imperial lieutenancy. Now all at once, *they* were

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<sup>1</sup>Theiss—a river dividing old Hungary, running from north to south. Leitha—a river on the western frontier of Hungary separating it from Austria.—*Ed.*

called on to replace that old majority. *They* were now to show what they could perform. Of course, *their* career was to be one of energy, determination, activity. *They*, the elite of Germany, would soon be able to drive onwards the senile Lieutenant of the Empire and his vacillating ministers, and in case that was impossible they would—there could be no doubt about it—by force of the sovereign right of the people, depose that impotent government, and replace it by an energetic, indefatigable executive, who would assure the salvation of Germany. Poor fellows! *Their* rule—if rule it can be named where no one obeyed—was a still more ridiculous affair than even the rule of their predecessors.

The new majority declared that, in spite of all obstacles, the Imperial Constitution must be carried out, and *at once*; that on the 15th of July ensuing the people were to elect the deputies for the new House of Representatives, and that this House was to meet at Frankfort on the 15th of August following. Now, this was an open declaration of war against those governments that had not recognised the Imperial Constitution, the foremost among which were Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, comprising more than three-fourths of the German population; a declaration of war which was speedily accepted by them. Prussia and Bavaria, too, recalled the deputies sent from their territories to Frankfort, and hastened their military preparations against the National Assembly; while, on the other hand, the demonstrations of the Democratic Party (out of parliament) in favour of the Imperial Constitution and of the National Assembly acquired a more turbulent and violent character, and the mass of the working people, led by the men of the most extreme party, were ready to take up arms in a cause which, if it was not their own, at least gave them a chance of somewhat approaching their aims by clearing Germany of its old monarchical encumbrances. Thus everywhere the people and the governments were at daggers drawn upon this subject; the outbreak was inevitable; the mine was charged and it only wanted a spark to make it explode. The dissolution of the Chambers in Saxony, the calling in of the Landwehr (military reserve) in Prussia, the open resistance of the government to the Imperial Constitution, were such sparks; they fell, and all at once the country was in a blaze. In Dresden, on the 4th of May, the people victoriously took possession of the town and drove out the king, while all the surrounding districts sent reinforcements to the insurgents. In Rhenish

Prussia and Westphalia the Landwehr refused to march, took possession of the arsenals and armed itself in defence of the Imperial Constitution. In the Palatinate the people seized the Bavarian government officials and the public moneys, and instituted a Committee of Defence, which placed the province under the protection of the National Assembly. In Wurttemberg the people forced the king to acknowledge the Imperial Constitution ; and in Baden the army, united with the people, forced the Grand Duke to flight and erected a provincial government. In other parts of Germany the people only awaited a decisive signal from the National Assembly to rise in arms and place themselves at its disposal.

The position of the National Assembly was far more favourable than could have been expected after its ignoble career. The western half of Germany had taken up arms in its behalf ; the military everywhere were vacillating ; in the lesser states they were undoubtedly favourable to the movement. Austria was prostrated by the victorious advance of the Hungarians and Russia, that reserve force of the German governments, was straining all its powers in order to support Austria against the Magyar armies. There was only Prussia to subdue ; and with the revolutionary sympathies existing in that country, a chance certainly existed of attaining that end. Everything then depended upon the conduct of the Assembly.

Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them. Those rules, logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances one has to deal with in such a case, are so plain and simple that the short experience of 1848 had made the Germans pretty well acquainted with them. Firstly, never play with insurrection, unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play. Insurrection is a calculus with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day ; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organisation, discipline and habitual authority ; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising ; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily ; keep up the moral ascendant which the

first successful rising has given to you; rally thus those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace!*<sup>1</sup>

What, then, was the National Assembly of Frankfort to do if it would escape the certain ruin which it was threatened with? First of all, to see clearly through the situation and to convince itself that there was now no other choice than either to submit to the governments unconditionally, or take up the cause of the armed insurrection without reserve or hesitation. Secondly, to publicly recognise all the insurrections that had already broken out, and to call the people to take up arms everywhere in defence of the national representation, outlawing all princes, ministers and others who should dare to oppose the sovereign people represented by its mandatories. Thirdly, to at once depose the German Imperial Lieutenant, to create a strong, active, *unscrupulous* Executive, to call insurgent troops to Frankfort for its immediate protection, thus offering at the same time a legal pretext for the spread of the insurrection, to organise into a compact body all the forces at its disposal, and, in short, to profit quickly and unhesitatingly by every available means for strengthening its position and impairing that of its opponents.<sup>2</sup>

Of all this the virtuous Democrats in the Frankfort Assembly did just the contrary. Not content with letting things take the course they liked, these worthies went so far as to suppress by their opposition all insurrectionary movements which were preparing. Thus, for instance, did Mr. Karl Vogt

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<sup>1</sup>These statements of Marx and Engels, which have been confirmed by all the experience of the struggle of the working class, retain their validity to this day. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party in their leadership of the October struggle in 1917 realised in the most brilliant manner these rules, enriched by the experience of the later struggle of the proletariat and particularly by the experience of the December rising in Moscow in 1905. See Lenin, *Marxism and Insurrection, Advice from an Onlooker*, and other articles of the year 1917.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>All these tactical directives were communicated by Marx and Engels personally to the leaders of the Frankfort Lefts when they came to Frankfort after the suppression of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. Engels even drew up a whole military strategical plan of insurrection.—Ed.

at Nuremberg. They allowed the insurrections of Saxony, of Rhenish Prussia, of Westphalia to be suppressed without any other help than a posthumous, sentimental protest against the unfeeling violence of the Prussian government. They kept up an underhand diplomatic intercourse with the South German insurrection but never gave them the support of their open acknowledgment. They knew that the Lieutenant of the Empire sided with the governments and yet they called upon *him*, who never stirred, to oppose the intrigues of the governments. The ministers of the empire, old conservatives, ridiculed this impotent Assembly in every sitting, and they suffered it. And when William Wolff, a Silesian deputy, and one of the editors of the *New Rhenish Gazette*, called upon them to outlaw the Lieutenant of the Empire—who was, he justly said, nothing but the first and greatest traitor to the empire—he was hooted down by the unanimous and virtuous indignation of those democratic revolutionists! In short, they went on talking, protesting, proclaiming, pronouncing, but never had the courage or the sense to act; while the hostile troops of the governments drew nearer and nearer, and their own Executive, the Lieutenant of the Empire, was busily plotting with the German princes their speedy destruction. Thus even the last vestige of consideration was lost to this contemptible Assembly; the insurgents who had risen to defend it ceased to care any more for it, and when at last it came to a shameful end, as we shall see, it died without anybody taking any notice of its unhonoured exit.

London, August 1852.

## XVIII. PETTY TRADERS

[*New York Daily Tribune*, October 2, 1852]

In our last we showed that the struggle between the German governments on the one side, and the Frankfort Parliament on the other, had ultimately acquired such a degree of violence that in the first days of May a great portion of Germany broke out in open insurrection; first Dresden, then the Bavarian Palatinate, parts of Rhenish Prussia, and at last Baden.

In all cases, the *real fighting body* of the insurgents, that body which first took up arms and gave battle to the troops,

consisted of the *working classes of the towns*. A portion of the poorer country population, labourers and petty farmers, generally joined them after the actual outbreak of the conflict. The greater number of the young men of all classes, below the capitalist class, was to be found, for a time at least, in the ranks of the insurgent armies, but this rather indiscriminate aggregate of young men very soon thinned as soon as the aspect of affairs took a somewhat serious turn. The students, particularly those "representatives of intellect," as they liked to call themselves, were the first to quit their standards, unless they were retained by the bestowal of officer's rank, for which they, of course, had very seldom any qualification.

The working class entered upon this insurrection as they would have done upon any other which promised either to remove some obstacles in their progress toward political dominion and social revolution, or, at least, to tie the more influential but less courageous classes of society to a more decided and revolutionary course than they had followed hitherto. The working class took up arms with a full knowledge that this was, in the direct bearings of the case, no quarrel of its own; but it followed up its only true policy, to allow no class that has risen on its shoulders (as the bourgeoisie had done in 1848) to fortify its class government, without opening, at least, a fair field to the working classes for the struggle for its own interests; and, in any case, to bring matters to a crisis, by which either the nation was fairly and irresistibly launched in the revolutionary career or else the *status quo* before the revolution restored as near as possible, and, thereby, a new revolution rendered unavoidable. In both cases the working classes represented the real and well-understood interest of the nation at large, in hastening as much as possible that revolutionary course which for the old societies of civilised Europe has now become a historical necessity, before any of them can again aspire to a more quiet and regular development of its resources.

As to country people that joined the insurrection, they were principally thrown into the arms of the revolutionary party, partly by the relatively enormous load of taxation, and partly of feudal burdens pressing upon them.

Without any initiative of their own, they formed the tail of the other classes engaged in the insurrection, wavering between the working men on one side, and the petty trading class on the other. Their own private social position in almost

every case, decided which way they turned ; the agricultural labourer generally supported the city artisan ; the small farmer was apt to go hand in hand with the small shopkeeper.

This class of petty tradesmen, the great importance and influence of which we have already several times adverted to, may be considered as the leading class of the insurrection of May 1849. There being, this time, nine of the large towns of Germany among the centre of the movement, the petty trading class, which in middling and lesser towns always predominates, found the means of getting the direction of the movement into its hands. We have, moreover, seen that, in this struggle for the Imperial Constitution, and for the rights of the German parliament, there were the interests of this peculiar class at stake. The provisional governments formed in all the insurgent districts represented in the majority of each of them this section of the people, and the length they went to, may therefore be fairly taken as the measure of what the German petty bourgeoisie is capable of—capable, as we shall see, of nothing but ruining any government that entrusts itself to its hands.

The petty bourgeoisie, great in boasting, is very impotent for action, and very shy in risking anything. The *mesquin* character of its commercial transactions and its credit operations is eminently apt to stamp its character with a want of energy and enterprise ; it is, then, to be expected that similar qualities will mark its political career. Accordingly the petty bourgeoisie encouraged insurrection by big words and great boasting as to what it was going to do ; it was eager to seize upon power as soon as the insurrection, much against its will, had broken out ; it used this power to no other purpose but to destroy the effects of the insurrection. Wherever an armed conflict had brought matters to a serious crisis, there the shopkeepers stood aghast at the dangerous situation created for them ; aghast at the people who had taken their boasting appeals to arms in earnest ; aghast at the power thus thrust into their own hands ; aghast, above all, at the consequences for themselves, for their social positions, for their fortunes, of the policy in which they were forced to engage themselves. Were they not expected to risk "life and property," as they used to say, for the cause of the insurrection ? Were they not forced to take official positions in the insurrection, whereby, in case of defeat, they risked the loss of their capital ? And in case of victory, were they not sure to be immediately turned out of office and [ of ] seeing their entire policy subverted by

the victorious proletarians who formed the main body of their fighting army? Thus placed between opposing dangers which surrounded them on every side, the petty bourgeoisie knew not to turn its power to any other account than to let everything take its chance, whereby, of course, there was lost what little chance of success there might have been, and thus to ruin the insurrection altogether. Its policy, or rather want of policy, everywhere was the same, and, therefore, the insurrections of May 1849, in all parts of Germany, are all cut out to the same pattern.

In Dresden, the struggle was kept on for four days in the streets of the town. The shopkeepers of Dresden, the "communal guard," not only did not fight, but in many instances favoured the proceedings of the troops against the insurgents. These again consisted almost exclusively of working men from the surrounding manufacturing districts. They found an able and cool-headed commander in the Russian refugee, *Michael Bakunin*, who afterward was taken prisoner, and now is confined in the dungeons of Munkacs, Hungary. The intervention of numerous Prussian troops crushed this insurrection.

In Rhenish Prussia the actual fighting was of little importance. All the large towns being fortresses commanded by citadels, there could be only skirmishing on the part of the insurgents. As soon as a sufficient number of troops had been drawn together, there was an end to armed opposition.

In the Palatinate and Baden, on the contrary, a rich, fruitful province and an entire state fell into the hands of the insurrection. Money, arms, soldiers, warlike stores, everything was ready for use. The soldiers of the regular army themselves joined the insurgents; nay, in Baden, they were among the foremost of them. The insurrections in Saxony and Rhenish Prussia sacrificed themselves in order to gain time for the organisation of this South German movement. Never was there such a favourable position for a provincial and partial insurrection as this. A revolution was expected in Paris; the Hungarians were at the gates of Vienna in all the central states of Germany, not only the people, but even the troops, were strongly in favour of the insurrection, and only wanted an opportunity to join it openly. And yet the movement, having got once into the hands of the petty bourgeoisie, was ruined from its very beginning. The petty-bourgeois rulers, particularly of Baden—*M. Brentano* at the head of them—never

forgot that by usurping the place and prerogatives of the "lawful" sovereign, the Grand Duke, they were committing high treason. They sat down in their ministerial arm-chairs with the consciousness of criminality in their hearts. What can you expect of such cowards? They not only abandoned the insurrection to its own uncentralised, and therefore ineffective, spontaneity, they actually did everything in their power to take the sting out of the movement, to unman, to destroy it. And they succeeded, thanks to the zealous support of that deep class of politicians, the "democratic" heroes of the petty bourgeoisie, who actually thought they were "saving the country," while they allowed themselves to be led by their noses by a few men of a sharper cast, such as Brentano.

As to the fighting part of the business, never were military operations carried on in a more slovenly, more stolid way than under the Badish General-in-Chief Sigel, an ex-lieutenant of the regular army. Everything was got into confusion, every good opportunity was lost, every precious moment was loitered away with planning colossal but impracticable projects, until, when at last the talented Pole Miraslawski took up the command, the army was disorganised, beaten, dispirited, badly provided for, opposed to an enemy four times more numerous and withal he could do nothing more than fight, at Waghausel, a glorious though unsuccessful battle, carry out a clever retreat, offer a last hopeless fight under the walls of Rastatt,<sup>1</sup> and resign. As in every insurrectionary war where armies are mixed of well-drilled soldiers and raw levies, there was plenty of heroism and plenty of unsoldierlike, often unconceivable panic, in the revolutionary army; but, imperfect as it could not but be, it had at least the satisfaction that four times its number were not considered sufficient to put it to the rout, and that a hundred thousand regular troops, in a campaign against twenty thousand insurgents, treated them, militarily, with as much respect as if they had had to fight the Old Guard of Napoleon.

In May the insurrection had broken out; by the middle of July 1849, it was entirely subdued, and the first German Revolution was closed.

London (undated).

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<sup>1</sup>This was at the end of June. The Rastatt fortress was still in the possession of the revolutionary army but capitulated on July 23.—Ed.

## XIX. THE CLOSE OF THE INSURRECTION

[*New York Daily Tribune*, October 23, 1852]

While the south and west of Germany was in open insurrection, and while it took the governments from the first opening of hostilities at Dresden to the capitulation of Rastatt, rather more than ten weeks, to stifle this final blazing up of the first German Revolution, the National Assembly disappeared from the political theatre without any notice being taken of its exit.

We left this august body at Frankfort, perplexed by the insolent attack of the governments upon its dignity, by the impotency and treacherous listlessness of the Central Power it had itself created, by the risings of the petty trading class for its defence, and of the working class for a more revolutionary ultimate end. Desolation and despair reigned supreme among its members; events had at once assumed such a definite and decisive shape that in a few days the illusions of these learned legislators as to their real power and influence were entirely broken down. The conservatives, at the signal given by the governments, had already retired from a body which, henceforth, could not exist any longer, except in defiance of the constituted authorities. The liberals gave the matter up in utter discomfiture; they, too, threw up their commissions as representatives. Honourable gentlemen decamped by hundreds. From eight or nine hundred members the number had dwindled down so rapidly that now one hundred and fifty, and a few days after one hundred, were declared a quorum. And even these were difficult to muster, although the whole of the Democratic Party remained.

The course to be followed by the remnants of a parliament was plain enough. They had only to take their stand openly and decidedly with the insurrection, to give it, thereby, whatever strength legality could confer upon it, while they themselves at once acquired an army for their own defence. They had to summon the Central Power to stop all hostilities at once; and if, as could be foreseen, this power neither could nor would do so, to depose it at once and put another more energetic government in its place. If insurgent troops could not be brought to Frankfort (which, in the beginning when the state governments were little prepared and still hesitating, might have been easily done), then the Assembly could have

adjourned at once to the very centre of the insurgent district. All this done at once, and resolutely, not later than the middle or end of May, might have opened chances both for the insurrection and for the National Assembly.

But such a determined course was not to be expected from the representatives of German shopocracy. These aspiring statesmen were not at all freed from their illusions. Those members who had lost their fatal belief in the strength and inviolability of the parliament had already taken to their heels; the Democrats who remained were not so easily induced to give up dreams of power and greatness which they had cherished for a twelvemonth. True to the course they had hitherto pursued, they shrank back from decisive action until every chance of success, nay, every chance to succumb with, at least, the honours of war, had passed away. In order, then, to develop a factitious, busy-body sort of activity, the sheer impotence of which, coupled with its high pretensions, could not but excite pity and ridicule, they continued insinuating resolutions, addresses and requests to an Imperial Lieutenant, who not even once noticed them, to ministers who were in open league with the enemy. And when at last William Wolff, member for Striegau, one of the editors of the *New Rhenish Gazette*, the only really revolutionary man in the whole Assembly, told them that if they meant what they said, they had better give over talking and declare the Imperial Lieutenant, the chief traitor to the country, an outlaw at once, then the entire compressed virtuous indignation of these parliamentary gentlemen burst out with an energy which they never found when the government heaped insult after insult upon them.

Of course—for Wolff's proposition was the first sensible word spoken within the walls of St. Paul's Church;<sup>1</sup> of course, for it was the very thing that was to be done—and such plain language, going so direct to the purpose, could not but insult a set of sentimentalists, who were resolute in nothing but irresolution, and who, too cowardly to act, had once for all made up their minds that in doing nothing, they were doing exactly what was to be done. Every word which cleared up, like lightning, the infatuated but intentional nebulosity of their minds, every hint that was

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<sup>1</sup>The building in which the Assembly held its sessions.—Ed.

adapted to lead them out of the labyrinth where they obstinately themselves to take up as lasting an abode as possible, every clear conception of matters as they actually stood, was, of course, a crime against the majesty of this Sovereign Assembly.

Shortly after the position of the honourable gentlemen in Frankfort became untenable, in spite of resolutions, appeals, interpellations and proclamations, they retreated, but not into the insurgent districts; that would have been too resolute a step. They went to Stuttgart, where the Wurttemberg government kept up a sort of expectative neutrality. There, at last, they declared the Lieutenant of the Empire to have forfeited his power, and elected from their own body a Regency of five. This Regency at once proceeded to pass a Militia Law, which was actually in all due force sent to all the governments of Germany.

They, the very enemies of the Assembly, were ordered to levy forces in its defence! Then there was created—on paper, of course—an army for the defence of the National Assembly. Divisions, brigades, regiments, batteries, everything was regulated and ordained. Nothing was wanting but reality, for that army, of course, never was called into existence.

One last scheme offered itself to the National Assembly. The democratic population from all parts of the country sent deputations to place itself at the disposal of the parliament, and to urge it on to a decisive action. The people, knowing what the intentions of the Wurttemberg government were, implored the National Assembly to force that government into an open and active participation with their insurgent neighbours. But no. The National Assembly, in going to Stuttgart, had delivered itself up to the tender mercies of the Wurttemberg government. The members knew it, and repressed the agitation among the people. They thus lost the last remnant of influence which they might yet have retained. They earned the contempt they deserved, and the Wurttemberg government, pressed by Prussia and the Imperial Lieutenant, put a stop to the democratic farce by shutting up, on the 18th June, 1849, the room where the parliament met, and by ordering the members of the Regency to leave the country.

Next they went to Baden, into the camp of the insurrection, but there they were now useless. Nobody noticed them. The Regency, however, in the name of the sovereign German

people, continued to save the country by its exertions. It made an attempt to get recognised by foreign powers, by delivering *passports* to anybody who would accept them. It issued proclamations, and sent commissioners to insurge those very districts of Wurttemberg whose active assistance it had refused when it was yet time ; of course, without effect. We have now under our eye an original report, sent to the Regency by one of these commissioners, Mr. Roessler (member for Oëls), the contents of which are rather characteristic. It is dated Stuttgart, 30th June, 1849. After describing the adventures of half a dozen of these commissioners in a resultless search for cash, he gives a series of excuses for not having yet gone to his post, and then delivers himself of a most weighty argument respecting possible differences between Prussia, Austria, Bavaria and Wurttemberg, with its possible consequences. After having fully considered this, he comes, however, to the conclusion that there is no more chance. Next he proposes to establish relays of trustworthy men for the conveyance of intelligence, and a system of espionage as to the intentions of the Wurttemberg Ministry and the movements of the troops. This letter never reached its address, for when it was written the "Regency" had already passed entirely into the "foreign department," *viz.*, Switzerland ; and while poor Mr. Roessler troubled his head about the intentions of the formidable ministry of a sixth-rate kingdom, a hundred thousand Prussian, Bavarian and Hessian soldiers had already settled the whole affair in the last battle under the walls of Rastatt.

Thus vanished the German parliament, and with it the first and the last creation of the revolution. Its convocation had been the first evidence that there actually *had been* a revolution in January ; and it existed as long as this, the first modern German revolution, was not yet brought to a close. Chosen under the influence of the capitalist class by a dismembered, scattered, rural population, for the most part only awaking from the dumbness of feudalism, this parliament served to bring in one body upon the political arena all the great popular names of 1820-48, and then to utterly ruin them. All the celebrities of the middle-class liberalism were here collected ; the bourgeoisie expected wonders ; it earned shame for itself and for its representatives. The industrial and commercial capitalist class were more severely defeated in Germany than in any other country ; they were first worsted,

broken, expelled from office in every individual state of Germany, and then put to rout, disgraced and hooted in the Central German parliament. Political liberalism, the rule of the bourgeoisie, be it under a monarchical or republican form of government, is forever impossible in Germany.

In the latter period of its existence, the German parliament served to disgrace forever that section which had ever since March 1848 headed the official opposition, the Democrats representing the interests of the small trading, and partially of the farming class. That class was, in May and June 1849, given a chance to show its means of forming a stable government in Germany. We have seen how it failed; not so much by adverse circumstances as by the actual and continual cowardice in all trying movements that had occurred since the outbreak of the revolution; by showing in politics the same short-sighted, pusillanimous, wavering spirit, which is characteristic of its commercial operations. In May 1849, it had, by this course, lost the confidence of the real fighting mass of all European insurrections, the working class. But yet, it had a fair chance. The German parliament belonged to it, exclusively, after the reactionists and liberals had withdrawn. The rural population was in its favour. Two-thirds of the armies of the smaller states, one-third of the Prussian army, the majority of the Prussian Landwehr (reserve or militia), were ready to join it, if it only acted resolutely, and with that courage which is the result of a clear insight in the state of things. But the politicians who led on this class were not more clear-sighted than the host of petty tradesmen which followed them. They proved even to be more infatuated, more ardently attached to delusions voluntarily kept up, more credulous, more incapable of resolutely dealing with facts than the liberals. Their political importance, too, is reduced below the freezing-point. But [they] not having actually carried their commonplace principles into execution, they were, under *very* favourable circumstances, capable of a momentary resurrection, when this last hope was taken from them, just as it was taken from their colleagues of the "pure democracy" in France, by the *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte.

The defeat of the southwest German insurrection, and the dispersion of the German parliament, bring the history of the first German Revolution to a close. We have now to throw [show] a parting glance upon the victorious members of the

counter-revolutionary alliance ; we shall do this in our next letter.<sup>2</sup>

London, September 24, 1852.

## XX. THE LATE TRIAL AT COLOGNE

[*New York Daily Tribune*, December 22, 1852]

You will have ere this received by the European papers numerous reports of the Communist Monster Trial at Cologne, Prussia, and of its result. But as none of the reports is anything like a faithful statement of the facts, and as these facts throw a glaring light upon the political means by which the continent of Europe is kept in bondage, I consider it necessary to revert to this trial.

The Communist or Proletarian Party, as well as other parties, had lost, by suppression of the rights of association and meeting, the means of giving to itself a *legal* organisation on the Continent. Its leaders, besides, had been exiled from their countries. But no political party can exist without an organisation ; and that organisation which both the liberal-bourgeois and the democratic shopkeeping class were enabled more or less to supply by the social station, advantages, and long-established, everyday intercourse of their members, the proletarian class, without such social station and pecuniary means, was necessarily compelled to seek in secret association. Hence, both in France and Germany, sprung up those numerous secret societies which have, ever since 1849, one after another, been discovered by the police, and prosecuted as conspiracies ; but if many of them were really conspiracies, formed with the actual intention of upsetting the government for the time being—and he is a coward that under certain circumstances would not conspire, just as he is a fool who, under other circumstances, would do so—there were some other societies which were formed with a wider and more elevated purpose, which knew that the upsetting of an existing government was but a passing stage in the great impending struggle, and which intended to keep together and to prepare the party, whose nucleus they formed, for the last decisive combat which

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<sup>2</sup>This article has not been found.—Ed.

must, one day or another, crush forever in Europe the domination, not of mere "tyrants," "despots" and "usurpers," but of a power far superior, and far more formidable than theirs; that of capital over labour.

The organisation of the advanced Communist Party in Germany was of this kind. In accordance with the principles of its *Manifesto* (published in 1848), and with those explained in the series of articles on "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany," published in the *New York Daily Tribune*, this party never imagined itself capable of producing, at any time and at its pleasure, that revolution which was to carry its ideas into practice. It studied the causes that had produced the revolutionary movements in 1848, and the causes that made them fail. Recognising the social antagonism of classes at the bottom of all political struggles, it applied itself to the study of the conditions under which one class of society can and must be called on to represent the whole of the interests of a nation, and thus politically to rule over it. History showed to the Communist Party how, after the landed aristocracy of the *Middle Ages*, the *monied power of the first capitalists* arose and seized the reins of government; how the social influence and political rule of this *financial* section of capitalists was superseded by the rising strength, since the introduction of steam, of the *manufacturing* capitalists, and how at the present moment two more classes claim their turn of domination, the petty trading class and the industrial working class. The practical revolutionary experience of 1848-49 confirmed the reasonings of theory, which led to the conclusion that the democracy of the petty traders must first have its turn, before the communist working class could hope to permanently establish itself in power and destroy that system of wages-slavery which keeps it under the yoke of the bourgeoisie. Thus the secret organisation of the Communists could not have the direct purpose of upsetting the *present* governments of Germany. Being formed to upset not these, but the insurrectionary government which is sooner or later to follow them, its members might, and certainly would, individually lend an active hand to a revolutionary movement against the present *status quo* in its time; but the *preparation* of such a movement, otherwise than by secret spreading of communist opinions by the masses, could not be an object of the association. So well was this foundation of the society understood by the majority of its members, that when the place-hunting ambi-

tion of some<sup>1</sup> tried to turn it into a conspiracy for making an *ex tempore* revolution, they were speedily turned out.

Now according to no law upon the face of the earth, could such an association be called a plot, a conspiracy for purposes of high treason. If it was a conspiracy, it was one against, not the existing government, but its probable successors. And the Prussian government was aware of it. That was the cause why the eleven defendants were kept in solitary confinement during eighteen months, spent, on the part of the authorities, in the strangest judicial feats. Imagine that after eight months' detention the prisoners were remanded for some months more, "there being no evidence of any crime against them"! And when at last they were brought before a jury, there was not a single overt act of a treasonable nature proved against them. And yet they were convicted, and you will speedily see how.

One of the emissaries of the society was arrested in May 1851, and from documents found upon him, other arrests followed. A Prussian police officer, a certain *Stieber*, was immediately ordered to trace the ramifications, in London, of the pretended plot. He succeeded in obtaining some papers connected with the above-mentioned seceders from the society, who had, after being turned out, formed an actual conspiracy in Paris and London. These papers were obtained by a double crime. A man named Reuter was bribed to break open the writing desk of the secretary of the society, and steal the papers therefrom. But that was nothing yet. This theft led to the discovery and conviction of the so-called Franco-German plot, in Paris, but it gave no clue as to the great Communist Association. The Paris plot, we may as well here observe, was under the direction of a few ambitious imbeciles and political *chevaliers d'industrie* in London, and of a formerly convicted forger, then acting as a police spy in Paris; their dupes made up, by rabid declamations and bloodthirsty rantings, for the utter insignificance of their political existence.

The Prussian police, then, had to look out for fresh discoveries. They established a regular office of secret police at the Prussian Embassy in London. A police agent, Greiff by name, held his odious vocation under the title of an *attache* to the Embassy—a step which would suffice to put all Prussian

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the Willich-Schapper fraction which was expelled from the League in September 1850.—*Ed.*

embassies out of the pale of international law, and which even the Austrians have not yet dared to take. Under him worked a certain Fleury, a merchant in the city of London, a man of some fortune and rather respectably connected, one of those low creatures who do the basest actions from an innate inclination to infamy. Another agent was a commercial clerk named Hirsch, who, however, had already been denounced as a spy on his arrival. He introduced himself into the society of some German Communist refugees in London, and they, in order to obtain proofs of his real character, admitted him for a short time. The proofs of his connection with the police were very soon obtained, and Mr. Hirsch, from that time, absented himself. Although, however, he thus resigned all opportunities of gaining the information he was paid to procure, he was not inactive. From his retreat in Kensington, where he never met one of the Communists in question, he manufactured every week pretended reports of pretended sittings of a pretended Central Committee of that very conspiracy which the Prussian police could not get hold of. The contents of these reports were of the most absurd nature; not a Christian name was correct, not a name correctly spelt, not a single individual made to speak as he would be likely to speak. His master, Fleury, assisted him in this forgery, and it is not yet proved that "Attache" Greiff can wash his hands of these infamous proceedings. The Prussian government, incredible to say, took these silly fabrications for gospel truth, and you may imagine what a confusion such depositions created in the evidence to be brought before the jury. When the trial came on, Mr. Stieber, the already mentioned police officer, got into the witness-box, swore to all these absurdities, and, with no little self-complacency, maintained that he had a secret agent in the very closest intimacy with those parties in London who were considered the prime movers in this awful conspiracy. This secret agent was very secret indeed, for he had hid his face for eight months in Kensington, for fear he might actually see one of the parties whose most secret thoughts, words and doings he pretended to report week after week.

Messrs. Hirsch and Fleury, however, had another invention in store. They worked up the whole of the reports they had made into an "original minute book" of the sittings of the Secret Supreme Committee, whose existence was maintained by the Prussian police; and Mr. Stieber, finding that this book

wondrously agreed with the reports already received from the same parties, at once laid it before the jury, declaring upon his oath that after serious examination, and according to his fullest conviction, that book was genuine. It was then that most of the absurdities reported by Hirsch were made public. You may imagine the surprise of the pretended members of that Secret Committee when they found things stated of them which they never knew before. Some who were baptised William were here christened Louis or Charles ; others, at the time they were at the other end of England, were made to have pronounced speeches in London ; others were reported to have read letters they never had received, they were made to have met regularly on a Thursday, when they used to have a convivial reunion, once a week, on Wednesdays ; a working man, who could hardly write, figured as one of the takers of minutes, and signed as such ; and they all of them were made to speak in a language which, if it may be that of Prussian police stations, was certainly not that of a reunion in which literary men, favourably known in their country, formed the majority. And, to crown the whole, a receipt was forged for a sum of money, pretended to have been paid by the fabricators to the pretended secretary of the fictitious Central Committee for this book ; but the existence of this pretended secretary rested merely upon a hoax that some malicious Communist had played upon the unfortunate Hirsch.

This clumsy fabrication was too scandalous an affair not to produce the contrary of its intended effect. Although the London friends of the defendants were deprived of all means to bring the facts of the case before the jury—although the letters they sent to the counsel for the defence were suppressed by the post—although the documents and affidavits they succeeded in getting into the hands of these legal gentlemen were not admitted in evidence, yet the general indignation was such that even the public accusers, nay, even Mr. Stieber—whose oath had been given as a guarantee for the authenticity of that book—were compelled to recognise it as a forgery.

This forgery, however, was not the only thing of the kind of which the police was guilty. Two or three more cases of the sort came out during the trial. The documents stolen by Reuter were interpolated by the police so as to disfigure their meaning. A paper, containing some rabid nonsense, was written in a handwriting imitating that of Dr. Marx, and for a time it was pretended that it had been written by him, until

at last the prosecution was obliged to acknowledge the forgery. But for every police infamy that was proved as such, there were five or six fresh ones brought forward, which could not, at the moment, be unveiled, the defence being taken by surprise, the proofs having to be got from London, and every correspondence of the counsel for the defence with the London Communist refugees being in open court treated as complicity in the alleged plot!

That Greiff and Fleury are what they are here represented to be has been stated by Mr. Stieber himself, in his evidence; as to Hirsch, he has before a London magistrate confessed that he forged the "minute book," by order and with the assistance of Fleury, and then made his escape from this country in order to evade a criminal prosecution.

The government could stand few such branding disclosures as came to light during the trial. It had a jury such as the Rhenish provinces had not yet seen. Six nobles, of the purist reactionist water, four lords of finance, two government officials. These were not the men to look closely into the confused mass of evidence heaped before them during six weeks, when they heard it continually dinned into their ears that the defendants were the chiefs of a dreadful communist conspiracy, got up in order to subvert everything sacred—property, family, religion, order, government and law! And yet, had not the government, at the same time, brought it to the knowledge of the privileged classes that an acquittal in this trial would be the signal for the suppression of the jury; and that it would be taken as a direct political demonstration—as a proof of the middle-class liberal opposition being ready to unite even with the most extreme revolutionists—the verdict would have been an acquittal. As it was, the retroactive application of the new Prussian code enabled the government to have seven prisoners convicted, while four merely were acquitted, and those convicted were sentenced to imprisonment varying from three to six years, as you have, doubtless, already stated at the time the news reached you.

London, December 1, 1852.

## ADDRESS OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL TO THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE<sup>1</sup>

### THE CENTRAL COUNCIL TO THE LEAGUE

**BROTHERS!** In the two revolutionary years 1848-49, the League has proved itself in double fashion: firstly, in that its members have energetically taken part in the movement in all places, that in the press, on the barricades and in the battle-fields, they have stood in the front ranks of the only decisively revolutionary class, the proletariat. The League has further

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<sup>1</sup>When in the beginning of 1850 the Communist League was counting on a new upsurge of the revolution, it adopted a series of energetic measures in order to establish illegal organisations in Germany and to strengthen those already existing. The address of the Central Council to the League, here reprinted, was dispatched to Germany by a special plenipotentiary or emissary. In it Marx gave an exact analysis of the prospects of the revolution in Germany and sketched the fundamental tactical principles of the Communists on the basis of the experiences of the Revolution of 1848. This address of the Central Council to the League is one of the most important historical documents of Marxism formulating the strategy and tactics of the proletariat. Marx's theory of permanent revolution, expounded in this document, found its further development and embodiment in new concrete conditions in the strategy and tactics of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party defended Marx's revolutionary strategy and tactics from innumerable distortions and class-conciliatory interpretations by opportunists of all shades—German revisionists, Russian Mensheviks, Trotskyists, etc. It is well known that Trotsky attempted to conceal his capitulatory views in regard to the prospects, the character and the driving forces of the Russian Revolution by an appeal to Marx, to the latter's theory of permanent revolution. But the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution has in reality nothing in common with the theory of Marx.

“Lenin was the only Marxist who correctly understood and developed the idea of permanent revolution. What distinguishes Lenin from the ‘permanentists’ on this question is that these latter distorted Marx's idea of permanent revolution and transformed it into a lifeless, bookish wisdom, whereas Lenin took it in its pure form and made it one of the bases of his own theory of revolution. It should be remembered that

proved itself in that its conception of the movement as laid down in the circulars of the congresses and of the Central Council of 1847 and in *The Communist Manifesto* has proved to be the only correct one, that the expectations expressed in those documents have been completely fulfilled and the conception of present-day social conditions, previously only propagated in secret by the League, is now on everyone's lips and is openly preached in the market places. At the same time the former firm organisation of the League has been consider-

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the idea of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into the socialist revolution, propounded by Lenin as long ago as 1905, is one of the forms of the embodiment of the Marxist theory of permanent revolution. Here is what Lenin wrote about this in 1905 :

"...from the democratic revolution we shall at once, according to the degree of our strength, the strength of the class conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass over to the socialist revolution. *We stand for continuous revolution* [my italics—J. S.] we shall not stop halfway.... Without indulging in any adventurism or betraying our scientific conscience, without striving after cheap popularity, we can and do say *only one thing*: we shall with all our might help the whole of the peasantry to make the democratic revolution *in order that it may be easier* for us, the party of the proletariat, to pass on as quickly as possible to the new and higher task, the socialist revolution." (Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, "Problems of Leninism." pp. 265-66.)

In his lectures, "Foundations of Leninism," Stalin points out the essence of the differences of opinion in this question between the Bolsheviki and the Trotskyists. He also answers the question of why Lenin had ruthlessly to combat the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution :

"Because Lenin proposed that the revolutionary capacities of the peasantry be utilised 'to the utmost' and that full use be made of their revolutionary energy for the complete liquidation of tsarism and the transition to the proletarian revolution ; whereas the adherents of 'permanent revolution' did not understand the important role of the peasantry in the Russian Revolution, underestimated the revolutionary energy of the peasantry, under-estimated the strength and capacity of the Russian proletariat to lead the peasantry, and so hampered the work of emancipating the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeoisie, the work of rallying the peasantry around the proletariat.

"Because Lenin proposed to crown the revolution with the coming into power of the proletariat, while the adherents of 'permanent' revolution wanted to begin at once by establishing the power of the proletariat, not realising that by so doing they were closing their eyes to such 'trifles' as the existence of survivals of serfdom and overlooking, in their calculations

ably slackened. A large part of the members who directly participated in the revolutionary movement believed the time for secret societies to have gone by and public activities alone sufficient. The individual circles and local sections allowed their connections with the Central Council to grow slack and gradually die away. Consequently, while the Democratic Party, the party of the petty bourgeoisie, organised itself more and more in Germany, the Workers' Party lost its only firm foothold, remained organised at the most in separate localities

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so important a force as the Russian Peasantry; nor did they realise that this policy would retard the winning over of the peasantry to the side of the proletariat.

"Lenin, then fought the adherents of 'permanent' revolution not over the question of 'uninterruptedness,' because he himself held the point of view of uninterrupted revolution, but because they underestimated the role of the peasantry, the proletariat's greatest reserve power, and because they failed to grasp the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat." (*Ibid.*, "Foundations of Leninism," pp. 37-38.)

And further, in his analysis of the *Address*, Comrade Stalin proves that :

"a) The plan of our 'permanentists' *notwithstanding*, Marx did not at all propose to *begin* the revolution in the Germany of the 'fifties with the direct establishment of the proletarian power.

"b) Marx proposed the establishment of proletarian state power merely as the *crowning event* of the revolution, after hurling step by step one section of the bourgeoisie after another from its heights of power, in order to ignite the torch of the revolution in every country after the proletariat had come to power. Now, this is *perfectly consistent* with all that Lenin taught, with all that he did in the course of our revolution in pursuit of his theory of the proletarian revolution in an imperialist environment....

"It turns out that our Russian 'permanentists' have not only underestimated the role of the peasantry in the Russian Revolution and the importance of the conception of the hegemony of the proletariat, but have modified (for the worse) the Marxian idea of 'permanent' revolution and deprived it of all practical value." (*Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.)

Since the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution rested on lack of faith in the forces of the proletariat, on denial of the hegemony of the proletariat and its capacity to lead the peasantry, and on the non-understanding of the revolutionary character of the peasant movement, all this inevitably led Trotsky and his adherents to a defeatist position in regard to the fate of the Russian Revolution, to denial of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, to a conception of the inevitable downfall and degeneration of the Soviet power in the Soviet Union inasmuch as the world revolution had not

for local purposes and thereby in the general movement came completely under the domination and leadership of the petty-bourgeois Democrats. An end must be put to this state of affairs, the independence of the workers must be restored. The Central Council realised this necessity and, therefore, already in the winter of 1848-49 it sent an emissary, Joseph Moll, to Germany for the reorganisation of the League. Moll's mission, however, remained without lasting effect, partly because the German workers at that time had not acquired sufficient experience, and partly because it was interrupted by the insurrection of last May. Moll himself took up the musket, entered the Baden-Palatinate army and fell on July 19 in the encounter at the Murg. The League lost in him one of its oldest, most active and most trustworthy members, one who had been active in all the Congresses and Central Councils and had already previously carried out a series of missions with great success. After the defeat of the revolutionary parties of Germany and France in July 1849, almost all the members of the Central Council came together again in London, supplemented their numbers with new revolutionary forces, and set about the reorganisation of the League with renewed zeal.

Reorganisation can only be carried out by an emissary and the Central Council considers it extremely important that the emissary should leave precisely at this moment when a new revolution<sup>1</sup> is imminent, when the Workers' Party, there-

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yet led to the victory of the proletariat in the West. The transformation of Trotskyism into a vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie is the most convincing proof of the correctness of the ruthless struggle waged by Lenin, Stalin, the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International against the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution, in defence of Marx's revolutionary strategy and tactics, developed in application to the concrete conditions of the epoch of imperialism.  
—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> When the Address of the Central Council to the Communist League was written in March 1850, Marx still believed that a new upsurge of the revolutionary wave was imminent. However, in September 1850, after a careful analysis of the world economic situation, he had already come to the conclusion that an upward movement in the development of capitalism had set in. This upward movement is the "mother of counter-revolution" just as "the world trade crisis of 1847 has been the real mother of the February and March Revolutions." On these errors of Marx and Engels in timing the approach of the

fore, must act in the most organised, most united and most independent fashion if it is not to be exploited and taken in tow again by the bourgeoisie as in 1848.

Brothers! We told you as early as 1848 that the German liberal bourgeois would soon come to power and would immediately turn their newly acquired power against the workers. You have seen how this has been fulfilled. In fact, it was the bourgeois who, after the March movement of 1848, immediately took possession of the state power and used this power at once to force back the workers, their allies in the struggle, into their former oppressed position. If the bourgeoisie was not able to accomplish this without uniting with the feudal party which had been defeated in March, without finally even surrendering power once again to this feudal absolutist party, still it has secured conditions for itself which, in the long run, owing to the financial embarrassment of the government would have placed power in its hands and would have safeguarded all its interests, if it were possible that the revolutionary movement was already passing into a so-called peaceful development. The bourgeoisie would not even have found it necessary, in order to safeguard their domination, to make themselves obnoxious to the people by violent measures since all such violent steps had already been taken by the feudal counter-revolution. Developments, however, will not take this peaceful course. On the contrary, the revolution which will accelerate this development is near at hand, whether it will be called forth by an independent upheaval of the French proletariat or by the invasion of the Holy Alliance<sup>1</sup>

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revolution, Lenin wrote as follows:

"But such mistakes of the giants of revolutionary thought, who tried to raise and did raise the proletariat of the whole world above the level of petty, common and farthing tasks, are a thousand times more noble, magnificent and *historically* more valuable and more truthful than the wisdom of official liberalism singing, shouting, appealing and speaking about the vanity of revolutionary vanities, the uselessness of revolutionary struggle and the charm of counter-revolutionary 'constitutional' nonsense." (Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, p. 112.)—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup>The Holy Alliance was the alliance concluded between the emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia in Paris in 1815 after the victory over Napoleon I, and in 1818 was also joined by France. It was a tool of European reaction which aimed at the suppression of the revolutionary movement.—*Ed.*

against the revolutionary Babylon.<sup>1</sup>

And the role, this so treacherous role, which the German liberal bourgeois of 1848 have played against the people, will in the coming revolution be taken over by the democratic petty bourgeois, who at present occupy the same position in the opposition as the liberal bourgeois before 1848. This party, the Democratic Party, which is far more dangerous to the workers than the previous liberal one, consists of three elements.

I. Of the most advanced sections of the big bourgeoisie; which pursue the aim of the immediate, complete overthrow of feudalism and absolutism. This section is represented by the one-time Berlin compromisers, by the tax resisters.<sup>2</sup>

II. Of the democratic-constitutional petty bourgeois whose main aim during the previous movement was the establishment of a more or less democratic federal state as striven for by their representatives, the Lefts in the Frankfort Assembly,<sup>3</sup> and later by the Stuttgart parliament, and by themselves, in the campaign for an Imperial Constitution.<sup>4</sup>

III. Of the republican petty bourgeois whose ideal is a German Federated Republic after the manner of Switzerland and who now call themselves "Red" and "Social-Democratic" because they cherish the pious desire of abolishing the pressure of big capital on small, of the big bourgeois on the

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<sup>1</sup>By the revolutionary Babylon is meant the French capital, Paris, which after the first French bourgeois revolution at the end of the eighteenth century was looked upon as the seat of revolution.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the bourgeois deputies of the Berlin Constituent Assembly, who answered the declaration of martial law in Berlin and the threatened dispersal by force of the Constituent Assembly, not with a call for insurrection, but only with "passive and legal resistance" and with the proposal "to organise the refusal of taxes." See Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. XIII, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The Frankfort National Assembly—the constituent assembly for the whole of Germany which, after the victory of the March Revolution, was convened in Frankfort on May 18, 1848, and was in session there until May 30, 1849. It was later removed to Stuttgart where it was dispersed by the Württemberg government on June 18, 1849. For further details, see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. VII and XIX.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>On the campaign for the Imperial Constitution, see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. XVIII.—Ed.

small bourgeois. The representatives of this section were the members of the democratic congresses and committees, the leaders of the democratic associations, the editors of the democratic newspapers.

All these fractions now, after their defeat, call themselves "republicans" or "Reds," just as the republican petty bourgeois in France now call themselves socialists. Where, as in Wurtemberg, Bavaria, etc., they find opportunity to pursue their aims along the constitutional path they seize the occasion to retain their old phrases and to prove by deeds that they have not altered in the least. It is evident, moreover, that the altered name of this party does not make the slightest change in relation to the workers, but merely proves that they are now obliged to turn against the bourgeoisie, which is united with absolutism, and to support themselves on the proletariat.

The petty-bourgeois Democratic Party in Germany is very powerful; it comprises not only the great majority of the bourgeois inhabitants of the towns, the small industrial businessmen and guild masters, it numbers among its following the peasants and the rural proletariat, in so far as the latter has not yet found a support in the independent proletariat of the towns.

The relation of the revolutionary workers' party to petty-bourgeois democracy is this: it marches together with it against the section which it aims at overthrowing, it opposes the petty-bourgeois in everything by which they desire to establish themselves.

The democratic petty bourgeois far from desiring to revolutionise all society for the revolutionary proletarians, strive for a change in social conditions by means of which existing society will be made as tolerable and comfortable as possible for them. Hence they demand above all diminution of state expenditure by restricting the bureaucracy and shifting the chief taxes on to the big landowners and bourgeois. Further, they demand the abolition of the pressure of big capital on small, through public credit institutions and laws against usury, by which means it will be possible for them and the peasants to obtain advances, on favourable conditions, from the state instead of from the capitalists; and, further, they demand the establishment of bourgeois property relations in the countryside by the complete abolition of feudalism. In order to accomplish all this, they require a democratic state constitution, whether constitutional or republican, giving a

majority to them and their allies, the peasants, as well as a democratic local government which would give them control over municipal property and over a series of functions now performed by the bureaucrats.

The domination and speedy increase of capital is further to be counteracted partly by limiting the right of inheritance and partly by transferring as many works as possible to the state. As far as the workers are concerned, it remains certain above all that they are to remain wage workers as before ; the democratic petty bourgeois only desire better wages and a secure existence for the workers and hope to achieve this through partial employment by the state and through charity measures, in short, they hope to bribe the workers by more or less concealed alms and to break their revolutionary force by making their position tolerable for the moment. The demands of petty-bourgeois democracy here summarised are not put forward by all of its fractions at the same time and as a whole are held in view as a definite goal by a very small section of them. The further separate persons or sections among them go, the more of these demands will they make their own, and those few who see their own programme in what has been outlined above would believe that thereby they have put forward the utmost that can be demanded from the revolution. But these demands can in no wise suffice for the party of the proletariat. While the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible and with the achievement at most of the above demands, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been displaced from domination, until the proletariat has conquered state power, and the association of proletarians, not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians of these countries has ceased and that at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. For us the issue cannot be the alteration of private property but only its abolition, not the smoothing over of class antagonisms but the abolition of classes, not the improvement of existing society but the foundation of a new one. That, during the further development of the revolution, petty-bourgeois democracy will for a moment obtain predominating influence in Germany is not open to doubt. The question, therefore, arises as to what the attitude of the proletariat and in particular of the League will be in relation to it :

1. During the continuance of the present conditions where the petty-bourgeois democrats are likewise oppressed ;

2. In the next revolutionary struggle which will give them the upper hand ;

3. After this struggle, during the period of preponderance over the overthrown classes and the proletariat.

1. At the present moment, when the democratic petty-bourgeois are everywhere oppressed, they preach in general unity and reconciliation to the proletariat, they offer them their hand and strive for the establishment of a large opposition party which will embrace all shades of opinion in the Democratic Party, *i.e.*, they strive to involve the workers in a party organisation in which general Social-Democratic phrases predominate, behind which their special interests are concealed and in which the particular demands of the proletariat may not be brought forward for the sake of beloved peace. Such a union would turn out solely to their advantage and altogether to the disadvantage of the proletariat. The proletariat would lose its whole independent, laboriously obtained position and once more sink down to being an appendage of official bourgeois democracy. This union must, therefore, be most decisively rejected. Instead of once again stooping to serve as the applauding chorus of the bourgeois democrats, the workers, and above all the League, must strive to establish an independent, secret and open, organisation of the Workers' Party alongside the official democrats and make each local section the central point and nucleus of workers' associations in which the attitude and interests of the proletariat will be discussed independently of bourgeois influences. How little serious the bourgeois democrats are in regard to an alliance in which the proletarians would stand side by side with them with equal power and equal rights is shown, for example, by the Breslau democrats who, in their organ, the *Neue Oderzeitung*, most furiously attack the independently organised workers, whom they call socialists. In the case of a struggle against a common opponent no special union is required. As soon as such an opponent has to be fought directly, the interests of both parties, for the moment, coincide, and, as previously, so also in the future, this union calculated only for the moment will arise of itself. It is self-evident that in the coming bloody conflicts, as in all earlier ones, it is the workers who, in the main, will have to win the victory by their courage, determination and self-sacrifice. As previously, so also in this struggle, the mass of the petty

bourgeois will behave as long as possible in a hesitating, undecided and inactive manner, and then, as soon as the victory has been decided, take possession of it for themselves, call upon the workers to maintain tranquillity and return to their work, guard against so-called excesses and exclude the proletariat from the fruits of victory. It is not in the power of the workers to restrain the petty-bourgeois democrats from doing this, but it is in their power to make it difficult for them to push forward in the face of the armed proletariat and to dictate such conditions to them that the rule of the bourgeois democrats from the outset bears within it the seeds of its downfall, and their later supplanting by the rule of the proletariat will be considerably facilitated. Above all things, the workers must counteract, as much as is at all possible during the conflict and immediately after the struggle, the bourgeois endeavours to allay the storm, and must compel the democrats to carry out their present terrorist phrases. They must act so as to prevent the immediately revolutionary excitement from being suppressed again immediately after the victory. On the contrary, they must maintain it as long as possible. Far from opposing so-called excesses, instances of popular revenge against hated individuals or public buildings that are only associated with hateful recollections, such instances must not only be tolerated but the leadership of them must be taken in hand. During the struggle and after the struggle the workers must at every opportunity put forward their own demands alongside of the demands of the bourgeois democrats. They must demand guarantees for the workers as soon as the democratic bourgeois set about taking over the government. If necessary they must obtain these guarantees by force and in general they must ensure that the new rulers pledge themselves to all possible concessions and promises—the surest way to compromise them. In general, they must in every way restrain as far as possible the intoxication of victory and the enthusiasm for the new state of things, which make their appearance after every victorious street battle, by a calm and cold-blooded estimate of the conditions and by unconcealed mistrust in the new government. Alongside of the new official governments they must establish simultaneously their own revolutionary workers' governments, whether in the form of municipal committees and municipal councils or in the form of workers' clubs or workers' committees, so that the bourgeois-democratic governments not only immediately lose their backing by the work-

ers but from the outset see themselves supervised and threatened by authorities which are backed by the whole mass of the workers. In a word, from the first moment of victory mistrust must be directed not against the conquered reactionary party, but against the workers' previous allies, against the party that wishes to exploit the common victory for itself alone.

2. But in order to be able energetically and threateningly to oppose this party whose treachery to the workers will begin from the first hour of victory, the workers must be armed and organised. The arming of the whole proletariat with rifles, muskets, cannon and munitions must be put through at once, the revival of the old Citizens' Guard directed against the workers must be opposed. However, where the latter cannot be achieved the workers must attempt to organise themselves independently as a proletarian guard with a commander elected by themselves and with a general staff of their own choosing and put themselves at the command not of the state authority but of the revolutionary local council set up by the workers. Where workers are employed at the expense of the state they must see that they are armed and organised in a special corps with commanders of their own choosing or as part of the proletarian guard. Weapons and munitions must not be surrendered on any pretext ; any attempt at disarming must if necessary be frustrated by force. Destruction of the influence of the bourgeois democrats on the workers, immediate independent and armed organisation of the workers and the bringing about of conditions as difficult and compromising as possible for the immediately inevitable rule of bourgeois democracy, these are the main points which the proletariat and hence the League must keep in view during and after the coming insurrection.

3. As soon as the new governments have consolidated themselves to some extent, their struggle against the workers will immediately begin. In order here to oppose the democratic petty bourgeois by force it is above all necessary that the workers shall be independently organised and centralised through their clubs. After the overthrow of the existing government, the Central Council will, as soon as it is at all possible, betake itself to Germany, immediately convene a congress and put before the latter the necessary provisions for the centralisation of the workers' clubs under a leadership established in the chief seat of the movement. The speedy organisation of at least a provincial union of the workers' clubs is one of the

most important points for the strengthening and development of the Workers' Party; the immediate consequence of the overthrow of the existing governments will be the election of a National Assembly. Here the proletariat must see to it:

1. That under no pretext are numbers of workers excluded by any kind of trickery on the part of local authorities or government commissioners.

II. That everywhere workers' candidates are put up alongside of the bourgeois-democratic candidates, that they should consist as far as possible of members of the League, and that their election is promoted by all possible means. Even where there is no prospect whatsoever of their being elected, the workers must put up their own candidates in order to preserve their independence, to count their forces and to bring before the public their revolutionary attitude and party standpoint. In this connection they must not allow themselves to be seduced by the phrases of the democrats, such as, for example, that by this action they are splitting the Democratic Party and giving the reaction the possibility of victory. The final intention of all such phrases is that the proletariat shall be duped. The advance which the proletarian party is bound to make by such an independent action is infinitely more important than the disadvantage that might be caused by the pressure of a few reactionaries in the representative body. If the democracy from the outset comes out decisively and with the use of terror against the reaction, then the influence of the latter in the elections will be destroyed in advance.

The first point on which the bourgeois democrats will come into conflict with the workers will be the abolition of feudalism. As in the first French Revolution, the petty bourgeois will give the feudal lands to the peasants as free property, that is to say, try to leave the rural proletariat in existence and form a petty-bourgeois peasant class which will go through the same cycle of impoverishment and indebtedness which the French peasant is now going through.

The workers must oppose this plan in the interests of the rural proletariat and in their own interests. They must demand that the confiscated feudal property remain state property and be converted into labour colonies cultivated by the associated rural proletariat with all the advantages of large-scale agriculture, through which the principle of common property immediately obtains a firm basis in the midst of the tottering bourgeois property relations. Just as the democrats combine with

the peasants so must the workers combine with the rural proletariat. Further, the democrats will work either directly for the federated republic or, at least, if they cannot avoid the single and indivisible republic, they will attempt to cripple the central government by the utmost possible autonomy and independence on the part of the municipalities and provinces. The workers, in opposition to this plan, must not only strive for the single and indivisible German republic, but also strive in it for the most decisive centralisation of power in the hands of the state authority. They must not allow themselves to be led astray by the democratic talk of freedom for the municipalities, of self-government, etc. In a country like Germany where there are so many relics of the Middle Ages<sup>1</sup> to be abolished, where there is so much local and provincial obstinacy to be broken, it must under no circumstances be permitted that every village, every town, and every province should put a new obstacle in the path of revolutionary activity, which can proceed in all its force only from the centre. It is not to be tolerated that the present state of things should be renewed, whereby Germans must fight separately for one and the same advance in every town and in every province. Least of all is it to be tolerated that there should be perpetuated by a so-called free municipal constitution a form of property, namely municipal property, which still lags behind modern private property and which everywhere is necessarily passing into the latter, together with the quarrels resulting from it between poor and rich municipalities, as well as the municipal civil law, with its trickery against the workers, that exists alongside of state civil law. As in France in 1793 so today in Germany the carrying through of the strictest centralisation is the task of the really revolutionary party.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On the relics of the Middle Ages in Germany, see Marx and Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, chap. I.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> It must be recalled today that this passage is based on a misunderstanding. At that time it was considered—thanks to the Bonapartists and liberal falsifiers of history—as established that the French centralised machine of administration had been introduced by the Great Revolution and in particular that it had been operated by the Convention as an inevitable and decisive weapon for overcoming the royalist and federalist reaction and the external enemy. It is now, however, a well-known fact that throughout the whole revolution up to the eighteenth Brumaire the whole administration of the departments, arrondissements and municipalities consisted of author-

We have seen how the democrats will come to power with the next movement, how they will be compelled to propose more or less socialist measures. It will be asked what measures the workers ought to propose in reply. At the beginning of the movement, of course, the workers cannot yet propose any directly communist measures. But they can:

1. Compel the democrats to interfere in as many spheres as possible of the existing social order, to disturb its regular course and to compromise themselves, as well as to concentrate the utmost possible productive forces, means of transport, factories, railways, etc., in the hands of the state;

2. They must drive the proposals of the democrats, who in any case will not act in a revolutionary but in a merely reformist manner, to the extreme and transform them into direct attacks against private property; thus, for example, if the petty bourgeois propose purchase of the railways and factories, then the workers must demand that the railways and factories shall be simply confiscated by the state without compensation as being the property of reactionaries. If the democrats propose proportional taxes, the workers must demand progressive taxes; if the democrats themselves put forward a moderate progressive tax, the workers must insist on a tax with rates which rise so steeply that large-scale capital is ruined by it; if the democrats demand the regulation of state debts, the workers demand state bankruptcy. Thus, the demands of the workers must everywhere be governed by the concessions and measures of the democrats.

If the German workers are not able to attain power and achieve their own class interests without completely going

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ities elected by the respective inhabitants themselves, which acted with complete freedom within the general state laws; that this provincial and local self-government, similar to the American, was precisely the most powerful lever of the revolution and indeed to such an extent that Napoleon, immediately after his *coup d'état* of the eighteenth Brumaire, hastened to replace it by the administration through prefects, which still exists and which, therefore, was a pure instrument of reaction from the beginning. But just as little as local and provincial self-government is in contradiction to political, national centralisation, so is it to an equally little extent necessarily bound up with that narrow-minded, cantonal or communal self-seeking which appears so repulsive in Switzerland, and which all the South German federal republicans wanted to make the rule in Germany in 1849. [Note by F. Engels to the Zurich edition of 1885.]

through a lengthy revolutionary development, they have at least the certainty this time that the first act of this approaching revolutionary drama coincides with the direct victory of their own class in France and will be very much accelerated by it.

But they themselves will have to do the most for their final victory by becoming enlightened as to their class interests, by taking up their own independent party position as soon as possible and by not allowing themselves for a single moment to be led astray from the independent organisations of the party of the proletariat by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeois. Their battle-cry must be: the permanent revolution.

London, March 1850.

## THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN FRANCE 1848-50

### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup> BY FREDERICK ENGELS

THIS newly republished work was Marx's first attempt to explain a section of contemporary history with the aid of his materialist conception, on the basis of the given economic situation. In *The Communist Manifesto*, the theory was applied in

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<sup>1</sup>This introduction of Engels to *The Class Struggles in France* has a history of its own. On its publication in the *Vorwärts* in 1895, the text was subjected to such cuts that Engels' arguments were completely distorted. Engels wrote about this to Lafargue on April 3, 1895, as follows:

"X. [Engels has in mind Wilhelm Liebknecht] has played a pretty trick on me. From my *Introduction* to the articles of Marx about France of 1848 to 1850, he has taken everything which could serve to defend the tactics of peace and anti-violence at all costs, which he has found it convenient to preach for some time past, especially at the present moment when the Exceptional Law is being prepared in Berlin. But I recommend these tactics only for the *Germany of the present time*, and that too with essential reservations. In France, Belgium, Italy and Austria it is impossible to follow this tactic in its entirety and in Germany it can become unsuitable tomorrow."

Indignant at the unceremonious "editorial" work performed on his *Introduction*, Engels also wrote to Kautsky on April 1, 1895:

"To my astonishment I see today in *Vorwärts* an extract from my *Introduction* printed without my knowledge and dealt with in such a fashion that I appear as a peaceful worshipper of legality *quand meme* (at all costs). I am therefore so much the more glad that the whole is appearing in its entirety in the *Neue Zeit* so that this disgraceful impression will be wiped out.

"I shall very definitely express my opinion about this to Liebknecht and also to those, whoever they may be, who have given him this opportunity to distort my opinion."

Nevertheless, the *Neue Zeit* also, although it gave a more complete text, did not give the *Introduction* in full.

It was no accident that German Social-Democracy has never found time up to now to publish the full text of Engels' *Introduction*. It is the case rather that Eduard Bernstein in his *Prerequisites of Socialism* opportunistically attempted to represent the *Introduction* published in the *Neue Zeit* in an incomplete form as a "political testament" in which Engels is supposed to have broken with his revolutionary past. The

broad outline to the whole of modern history, while in the articles by Marx and myself in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*<sup>1</sup> it was constantly used to interpret political events of the day. Here, on the other hand, the question was to demonstrate the inner causal connection in the course of a development which extended over some years, a development as critical, for the whole of Europe, as it was typical; that is, in accordance with the conception of the author, to trace political events back to the effects of what are, in the last resort, economic causes.

In judging the events and series of events of day-to-day history, it will never be possible for anyone to go right back to the final economic causes. Even today, when the specialised technical press provides such rich materials, in England itself it still remains impossible to follow day by day the movement of industry and trade in the world market and the changes which take place in the methods of production in such a way as to be able to draw the general conclusion, at any point of time, from these very complicated and ever changing factors. Of these factors, the most important, into the bargain, generally operate a long time in secret before they suddenly and violently make themselves felt on the surface. A clear survey of the economic history of a given period is never contemporaneous; it can only be gained subsequently, after collecting and sifting of the material has taken place. Statistics are a necessary help here, and they always lag behind. For this reason, it is only too often necessary, in the current history of the time, to treat the most decisive factor as constant, to treat the economic situation existing at the beginning of the period concerned as given and unalterable for the whole period, or else to take notice only of such changes in this situation as themselves arise out of events clearly before us, and as, therefore, can likewise be clearly seen. Hence the materialist method has here often to limit itself to tracing political conflicts back to the struggles between the interests of the social classes and fractions of classes encountered as the result of economic development, and to show the particular political parties as the more or less

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full text of Engels' Introduction was only published for the first time in the U.S.S.R. by the Bolshevik Party, the genuine guardian of the traditions of revolutionary Marxism.

The passages omitted in the first edition are given here in italics and square brackets.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> On the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, see Engels' article, "Marx and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" in the present volume.—Ed.

adequate political expression of these same classes and fractions of classes.

It is self-evident that this unavoidable neglect of contemporaneous changes in the economic situation, of the very basis of all the proceedings subject to examination, must be a source of error. But all the conditions of a comprehensive presentation of the history of the day unavoidably imply sources of error—which, however, keeps nobody from writing contemporary history.

When Marx undertook this work, the sources of error mentioned were to a still greater degree impossible to avoid. It was quite impossible during the period of the Revolution of 1848-49 to follow the economic transformations which were being consummated at the same time, or even to keep a general view of them. It was just the same during the first months of exile in London, in the autumn and winter of 1849-50. But that was just the time when Marx began this work. And in spite of these unfavourable circumstances, his exact knowledge both of the economic situation in France and of the political history of that country since the February Revolution made it possible for him to give a picture of events which laid bare their inner connections in a way never attained since, and which later brilliantly withstood the double test instituted by Marx himself.

The first test resulted from the fact that after the spring of 1850 Marx once again found leisure for economic studies and first of all took up the economic history of the last ten years. In this study, what he had earlier deduced, half *a priori*, from defective material, was made absolutely clear to him by the facts themselves, namely, that the world trade crisis of 1847 had been the true mother of the February and March Revolutions and that the industrial prosperity which had been returning gradually since the middle of 1848, and which attained full bloom in 1849 and 1850, was the revitalising force of the newly strengthened European reaction. That was decisive. Whereas in the three first articles (which appeared in the January, February and March numbers of the *N. Rh. Z.,<sup>1</sup> politisch-ökonomische Revue*, Hamburg, 1850) there was still the expectation of an imminent new upsurge of revolutionary energy, the historical review written by Marx and myself for the last number, which was published in the autumn of 1850 (a double

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<sup>1</sup> *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.—Ed.

number, May to October), breaks once and for all with these illusions: "A new revolution is only possible as a result of a new crisis. It is just as certain, however, as this." But that was the only essential change which had to be made. There was absolutely nothing to alter in the interpretation of events given in the earlier chapters, or in the causal connections established therein, as the continuation of the narrative from March 10 up to the autumn of 1850, in the review in question, proves. I have therefore included this continuation as the fourth article in the present new edition.

The second test was even more severe. Immediately after Louis Bonaparte's *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851, Marx worked out anew the history of France from February 1848, up to this event, which concluded the revolutionary period for the time being. (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Third edition, Meissner, Hamburg, 1885). In this brochure the period which we had depicted in our present publication is again dealt with, although more briefly. Compare this second production, written in the light of decisive events which happened over a year later, with our present publication, and it will be found that the author had very little to change.

The thing which still gives our work a quite special significance is that, for the first time, it expresses the formula in which, by common agreement, the workers' parties of all countries in the world briefly summarise their demand for economic reconstruction: the appropriation by society of the means of production. In the second chapter, in connection with the "right to work," which is characterised as "the first clumsy formula wherein the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat are summarised," it is said: "But behind the right to work stands the power over capital; behind the power over capital, the *appropriation of the means of production*, their subjection to the associated working class and, therefore the abolition of wage labour as well as of capital and of their mutual relationships." Thus, here, for the first time, the proposition is formulated by which modern working class socialism is equally sharply differentiated both from all the different shades of feudal, bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc., socialism<sup>1</sup> and also from the confused community

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<sup>1</sup> On the feudal bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois socialism see *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, chap. III.—Ed.

of goods of utopian and spontaneous worker-communism. If, later, Marx extended the formula to appropriation of the means of exchange also, this extension, which in any case was self-evident after *The Communist Manifesto*, only expressed a corollary to the main proposition. A few wiseacres in England have of late added that the "means of distribution" should also be handed over to society. It would be difficult for these gentlemen to say what these economic means of distribution are, as distinct from the means of production and exchange; unless *political* means of distribution are meant, taxes, poor relief, including the *Sachsenwald*<sup>2</sup> and other endowments. But, first, these are means of distribution now already in collective possession, either of the state or of the municipality and, secondly, it is precisely these we wish to abolish.

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When the February Revolution broke out, we all of us, as far as our conception of the conditions and the course of revolutionary movements was concerned, were under the spell of previous historical experience, namely that of France. It was, indeed, the latter which had dominated the whole of European history since 1789, and from which now once again the signal had gone forth for general revolutionary change. It was therefore natural and unavoidable that our conceptions of the nature and the path of the "social" revolution proclaimed in Paris in February 1848, of the revolution of the proletariat, were strongly coloured by memories of the models of 1789-1830.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, when the Paris upheaval found its echo in the victorious insurrections in Vienna, Milan and Berlin; when the whole of Europe right up to the Russian frontier was swept into the movement; when in Paris the first great battle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was fought; when the very victory of their class so shook the bourgeoisie of all countries that they fled back into the arms of the monarchist-feudal reaction which had just been overthrown—for us under the circumstances of the time, there could be no doubt that the great decisive struggle had broken out, that it would have to be fought out in a single, long and changeful period

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<sup>2</sup>An extensive estate presented to the German Chancellor Bismarck.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>i.e., the French bourgeois revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, and the July Revolution in France in 1830.—*Ed.*

of revolution, but that it could only end with the final victory of the proletariat.

After the defeats of 1849 we in no way shared the illusions of the vulgar democracy grouped around the would-be provisional governments *in partibus*.<sup>1</sup> This vulgar democracy reckoned on a speedy and finally decisive victory of the "people" over the "usurpers"; we looked to a long struggle after the removal of the "usurpers," between the antagonistic elements concealed within this "people" itself. Vulgar democracy expected a renewed outbreak from day to day; we declared as early as autumn 1850 that at least the first chapter of the revolutionary period was closed and that nothing further was to be expected until the outbreak of a new world crisis. For this reason we were excommunicated, as traitors to the revolution, by the very people who later, almost without exception, made their peace with Bismarck—so far as Bismarck found them worth the trouble.

But we, too, have been shown to have been wrong by history, which has revealed our point of view of that time to have been an illusion. It has done even more: it has not merely destroyed our error of that time; it has also completely transformed the conditions under which the proletariat has to fight. The mode of struggle of 1848 is today obsolete from every point of view, and this is a point which deserves closer examination on the present occasion.

All revolutions up to the present day have resulted in the displacement of one definite class rule by another; all ruling classes up to now have been only minorities in relation to the ruled mass of the people. A ruling minority was thus overthrown; another minority seized the helm of state and remodelled the state apparatus in accordance with its own interests. This was on every occasion the minority group, enabled and called to rule by the degree of economic development, and just for that reason, and only for that reason, it happened that the ruled majority either participated in the revolution on the side of the former or else passively acquiesced in it. But if we disregard the concrete content in each case, the common form of all these revolutions was that they were minority revolutions. Even where the majority took part, it did so—whether wittingly or not—only in the service of a minority; but because of this, or simply because of the passive, unresisting atti-

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<sup>1</sup>*In partibus (infidelium)*. See note 1 on p. 36.—Ed.

tude of the majority, this minority acquired the appearance of being the representative of the whole people.

As a rule, after the first great success, the victorious minority became divided; one half was pleased with what had been gained, the other wanted to go still further, and put forward new demands, which, to a certain extent at least, were also in the real or apparent interests of the great mass of the people. In individual cases these more radical demands were realised, but often only for the moment; the more moderate party again gained the upper hand, and what had eventually been won was wholly or partly lost again; the vanquished shrieked of treachery, or ascribed their defeat to accident. But in truth the position was mainly this: the achievements of the first victory were only safeguarded by the second victory of the more radical party; this having been attained, and, with it, what was necessary for the moment, the radicals and their achievements vanished once more from the stage.

All revolutions of modern times, beginning with the Great English Revolution of the seventeenth century,<sup>1</sup> showed these features, which appeared inseparable from every revolutionary struggle. They appeared applicable, also, to the struggles of the proletariat for its emancipation; all the more applicable, since in 1848 there were few people who had any idea at all of the direction in which this emancipation was to be sought. The proletarian masses themselves, even in Paris, after the victory, were still absolutely in the dark as to the path to be taken. And yet the movement was there, instinctive, spontaneous, irrepressible. Was not this just the situation in which a revolution had to succeed, led certainly by a minority, but this time not in the interests of the minority, but in the real interests of the majority? If, in all the longer revolutionary periods, it was so easy to win the great masses of the people by the merely plausible and delusive views of the minorities which are thrusting themselves forward, how could they be less susceptible to ideas which were the truest reflex of their economic position, which were nothing but the clear, comprehensible expression of their needs, of needs not yet understood by themselves, but only vaguely felt? To be sure, this revolutionary mood of the masses had almost

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<sup>1</sup>On the English Revolution, see Engels' article *On Historical Materialism*.—Ed.

always, and usually very speedily, given way to lassitude or even to a revulsion to its opposite, so soon as illusion evaporated and disappointment set in. But here it was not a question of delusive views, but of giving effect to the very special interests of the great majority itself, interests, which at that time were certainly by no means clear to this great majority, but which must soon enough become clear in the course of giving practical effect to them, by their convincing obviousness. And if now, as Marx showed in the third article, in the spring of 1850, the development of the bourgeois republic that had arisen out of the "social" revolution of 1848 had concentrated the real power in the hands of the big bourgeoisie—monarchistically inclined as it was—and, on the other hand, had grouped all the other social classes, peasants as well as petty bourgeoisie, round the proletariat, so that, during and after the common victory, not they, but the proletariat grown wise by experience must become the decisive factor—was there not every prospect here of turning the revolution of the minority into the revolution of the majority?

History has proved us, and all who thought like us, wrong. It has made it clear that the state of economic development on the Continent at that time was not, by a long way, ripe for the removal of capitalist production; it has proved this by the economic revolution which, since 1848, has seized the whole of the Continent, has really caused big industry for the first time to take root in France, Austria, Hungary, Poland and, recently, in Russia, while it has made Germany positively an industrial country of the first rank—all on a capitalist basis, which in the year 1848, therefore, still had great capacity for expansion. But it is just this industrial revolution which has everywhere for the first time produced clarity in the class relationships, which has removed a number of transition forms handed down from the manufacturing period and in Eastern Europe even from guild handicraft, and has created a genuine bourgeoisie and a genuine large-scale industrial proletariat and has pushed them into the foreground of social development. But owing to this, the struggle of these two classes, which, apart from England, existed in 1848 only in Paris and, at the most, in a few big industrial centres, has been spread over the whole of Europe and has reached an intensity such as was unthinkable in 1848. At that time the many obscure evangels of the sects, with their panaceas; today the one generally recognised, transparently clear theory

of Marx, sharply formulating the final aims of the struggle. At that time the masses, sundered and differing according to locality and nationality, linked only by the feeling of common suffering, undeveloped, tossed to and fro in their perplexity from enthusiasm to despair; today a great international army of socialists, marching irresistibly on and growing daily in number, organisation, discipline, insight and assurance of victory. If even this mighty army of the proletariat has still not reached its goal, if, a long way from winning victory with *one* mighty stroke, it has slowly to press forward from position to position in a hard, tenacious struggle, this only proves, once and for all, how impossible it was in 1848 to win social transformation by a simple surprise attack.

A bourgeoisie split into two monarchist sections<sup>1</sup> adhering to two dynasties, a bourgeoisie, however, which demanded, above all, peace and security for its financial operations, faced with a proletariat vanquished, indeed, but still a constant menace, a proletariat round which petty bourgeois and peasants grouped themselves more and more—the continual threat of a violent outbreak, which, nevertheless, offered no prospect of a final solution—such was the situation, as if created for the *coup d'état* of the third, the pseudo-democratic pretender, Louis Bonaparte. On December 2, 1851, by means of the army, he put an end to the tense situation and secured for Europe the assurance of domestic tranquillity, in order to give it the blessing of a new era of wars.<sup>2</sup> The period of revolutions from below was concluded for the time being; there followed a period of revolutions from above.

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<sup>1</sup>The parties referred to are the Legitimists, the supporters of the "legitimate" monarchy of the Bourbons who were in power in France up to the Revolution of 1789 and also during the epoch of the Restoration (1814-30), and the Orleanists, the supporters of the Orleans dynasty who came to power during the July Revolution of 1830 and who were overthrown by the Revolution of 1848. The first represented the interests of the big landowners, the second those of the bankers and financial aristocracy.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>During the period of Napoleon III, France took part in the Crimean War (1854-56), carried on war with Austria on account of Italy (1859), organised an expedition into Syria (1860), took part together with England in the war against China, conquered Cambodia (Indo-China), waged war against the Mexican republic in 1867, and finally in 1870 made war against Prussia.—Ed.

The imperial reaction of 1851 gave a new proof of the unripeness of the proletarian aspirations of that time. But it was itself to create the conditions under which they were bound to ripen. Internal tranquillity ensured the full development of the new industrial boom; the necessity of keeping the army occupied and of diverting the revolutionary currents outwards produced wars, in which Bonaparte, under the pretext of asserting "the principle of nationality," sought to sneak annexations for France. His imitator, Bismarck, adopted the same policy for Prussia; he made his *coup d'état*, his revolution from above, in 1866,<sup>1</sup> against the German Confederation and Austria, and no less against the Prussian *Konfliktskammer*.<sup>2</sup> But Europe was too small for two Bonapartes and historical irony so willed it that Bismarck overthrew Bonaparte, and King William of Prussia not only established the Little German empire, but also the French republic.<sup>3</sup> The general result, however, was that in Europe the autonomy and internal unity of the great nations, with the exception of Poland, had become a fact. Within relatively modest limits, it is true, but, for all that, on a scale large enough to allow the development of the working class to proceed without finding national complications any longer a serious obstacle. The grave-diggers of the Revolution of 1848 had become the executors of its will. And alongside of them rose threateningly the heir of 1848, the proletariat, in the *International*.

After the war of 1870-71, Bonaparte vanishes from the stage and Bismarck's mission is fulfilled, so that he can now sink back again into the ordinary *Junker*. The period, however, is brought to a close by the Paris Commune. An underhand attempt by Thiers to steal the cannon of the Paris National Guard called forth a victorious rising. It was shown once more that in Paris none but a proletarian revolution is

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<sup>1</sup>On the events of 1866 in Prussia, see Engels' Prefatory Note to *The Peasant War in Germany*, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>*Konfliktskammer*, i.e., the Prussian Chamber then in conflict with the Government.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>As a result of the victories over France during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, there arose the German empire from which, however, Austria was excluded. (Hence the term "Little German empire.") The defeat of Napoleon III gave an impulse to the revolution in France which overthrew Louis Bonaparte and which led, on September 4, 1870, to the establishment of the republic.—Ed.

any longer possible. After the victory power fell, wholly of its own accord and quite undisputed, into the hands of the working class. And once again, twenty years after the time described in this work of ours, it was proved how impossible, even then, was this rule of the working class. On the one hand, France left Paris in the lurch, looked on while it bled from the bullets of MacMahon; on the other hand, the Commune was consumed in unfruitful strife between the two parties which divided it, the Blanquists (the majority) and the Proudhonists (the minority), neither of which knew what was to be done<sup>1</sup>. The victory which came as a gift in 1871 remained just as unfruitful as the surprise attack of 1848.

It was believed that the militant proletariat had been finally buried with the Paris Commune. But, completely to the contrary, it dates its most powerful advance from the Commune and the Franco-Prussian War. The recruitment of the whole of the population able to bear arms into armies that could be counted in millions, and the introduction of firearms, projectiles and explosives of hitherto undreamt of efficacy created a complete revolution in all warfare. This, on the one hand, put a sudden end to the Bonapartist war period and insured peaceful industrial development, since any war other than a world war of unheard of cruelty and absolutely incalculable outcome had become an impossibility. On the other hand it caused military expenditure to rise in geometrical progression and thereby forced up taxes to exorbitant levels and so drove the poorer classes of people into the arms of socialism. The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine,<sup>2</sup> the most immediate cause of the mad competition in armaments, might set the French and German bourgeoisie chauvinistically at each other's throats; for the workers of the two countries it became a new bond of unity. And the anniversary of the Paris Commune became the first universal commemoration day of the whole proletariat.

The war of 1870-71 and the defeat of the Commune had

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<sup>1</sup>On the Paris Commune, the Blanquists and Proudhonists, see Engels' Introduction to *The Civil War in France*, and Marx, *The Civil War in France*, in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>On the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War, Germany, by the Peace Treaty of 1871, took Alsace-Lorraine from France and compelled the latter to pay an indemnity of five milliard francs.—Ed.

transferred the centre of gravity of the European workers' movement for the time being from France to Germany, as Marx foretold. In France it naturally took years to recover from the bloodletting of May 1871.<sup>1</sup> In Germany, on the other hand, where industry was, in addition, furthered in (positively hot-house fashion) by the blessing of the French milliards and developed more and more quickly, Social-Democracy experienced a much more rapid and enduring growth. Thanks to the understanding with which the German workers made use of the universal suffrage introduced in 1866 the astonishing growth of the Party is made plain to all the world by incontestable figures: 1871, 102,000; 1874, 352,000; 1877, 493,000 Social-Democratic votes. Then came recognition of this advance by high authority in the shape of the Anti-Socialist Law: the Party was temporarily disrupted; the number of votes sank to 312,000 in 1881. But that was quickly overcome, and then, though oppressed by the Exceptional Law, without press, without external organisation and without the right of combination or meeting, the rapid expansion really began: 1884, 550,000; 1887, 763,000; 1890, 1,427,000 votes. Then the hand of the state was paralysed. The Anti-Socialist Law disappeared; socialist votes rose to 1,787,000, over a quarter of all the votes cast. The government and the ruling classes had exhausted all their expedients—uselessly, to no purpose, and without success. The tangible proofs of their impotence, which the authorities, from night watchman to the imperial chancellor, had had to accept—and that from the despised workers—these proofs were counted in millions. The state was at the end of its Latin, the workers only at the beginning of theirs.

But the German workers rendered a second great service to their cause in addition to the first, which they performed by their mere existence as the strongest, best disciplined and most rapidly growing Socialist Party. They supplied their comrades of all countries with a new weapon, and one of the sharpest, when they showed them how to use universal suffrage.

There had long been universal suffrage in France, but it had fallen into disrepute through the misuse to which the

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<sup>1</sup>The Paris Commune was suppressed with unprecedented ferocity during May 21-28, 1871.—Ed.

Bonapartist government had put it. After the Commune there was no workers' party to make use of it. Also in Spain it had existed since the republic, but in Spain boycott of the elections was ever the rule of all serious opposition parties. The Swiss experiences of universal suffrage, also, were anything but encouraging for a workers' party. The revolutionary workers of the Latin countries had been wont to regard the suffrage as a snare, as an instrument of government trickery. It was otherwise in Germany. *The Communist Manifesto* had already proclaimed the winning of universal suffrage, of democracy, as one of the first and most important tasks of the militant proletariat, and Lassalle had again taken up this point. When Bismarck found himself compelled to introduce the franchise<sup>1</sup> as the only means of interesting the mass of the people in his plans, our workers immediately took it in earnest and sent August Bebel to the first, constituent Reichstag. And from that day on, they have used the franchise in a way which has paid them a thousandfold and has served as a model to the workers of all countries. The franchise has been, in the words of the French Marxist programme,<sup>2</sup> "*transforme, de moyen de duperie qu'il a ete jusqu'ici, en instrument d'emancipation*"—they have transformed it from a means of deception, which it was heretofore, into an instrument of emancipation. And if universal suffrage had offered no other advantage than that it allowed us to count our numbers every three years; that by the regularly established, unexpectedly rapid rise in the number of votes it increased in equal measure the workers' certainty of victory and the dismay of their opponents, and so became our best means of propaganda; that it accurately informed us concerning our own strength and that of all hostile parties, and thereby provided us with a measure of proportion for our actions second to none, safeguarding us from untimely timidity as much as from untimely foolhardiness—if this had been the only advantage we gained from the suffrage, then it would

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<sup>1</sup> Universal suffrage was introduced by Bismarck in 1866 for the elections to the North German Reichstag, and in 1871 for the elections to the Reichstag of the united German Empire.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the programme of the French Workers' Party drawn up by Guesde and Paul Lafargue the introductory portion of which was drafted by Marx. On this, see Engels' letter Bernstein of Oct. 25, 1851.—Ed.

still have been more than enough. But it has done much more than this. In election agitation it provided us with a means, second to none, of getting in touch with the mass of the people, where they still stand aloof from us; of forcing all parties to defend their views and actions against our attacks before all the people; and, further, it opened to our representatives in the Reichstag a platform from which they could speak to their opponents in parliament and to the masses without, with quite other authority and freedom than in the press or at meetings. Of what avail to the government and the bourgeoisie was their Anti-Socialist Law when election agitation and socialist speeches in the Reichstag continually broke through it?

With this successful utilisation of universal suffrage, an entirely new mode of proletarian struggle came into force, and this quickly developed further. It was found that the state institutions, in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is organised, offer still further opportunities for the working class to fight these very state institutions. They took part in elections to individual Diets, to municipal councils and to industrial courts; they contested with the bourgeoisie for every post in the occupation of which a sufficient part of the proletariat had a say. And so it happened that the bourgeoisie and the government came to be much more afraid of the legal than of the illegal action of the Workers' Party, of the results of elections than of those of rebellion.

For here, too, the conditions of the struggle had essentially changed. Rebellion in the old style, the street fight with barricades, which up to 1848 gave everywhere the final decision, was to a considerable extent obsolete.

Let us have no illusions about it: a real victory of an insurrection over the military in street fighting, a victory as between two armies, is one of the rarest exceptions. But the insurgents, also, counted on it just as rarely. For them it was solely a question of making the troops yield to moral influences, which, in a fight between the armies of two warring countries do not come into play at all, or do so to a much less degree. If they succeed in this, then the troops fail to act, or the commanding officers lose their heads, and the insurrection wins. If they do not succeed in this, then, even where the military are in the minority, the superiority of better equipment and training, of unified leadership, of the planned employment of the military forces and of discipline makes itself

felt. The most that the insurrection can achieve in actual tactical practice is the correct construction and defence of a single barricade. Mutual support; the disposition and employment of reserves; in short, the co-operation and harmonious working of the individual detachments, indispensable even for the defence of one quarter of the town, not to speak of the whole of a large town, are at best defective, and mostly not attainable at all; concentration of the military forces at a decisive point is, of course impossible. Hence the passive defence is the prevailing form of fight: the attack will rise here and there, but only by way of exception, to occasional advances and flank assaults; as a rule, however, it will be limited to occupation of the positions abandoned by the retreating troops. In addition, the military have, on their side, the disposal of artillery and fully equipped corps of skilled engineers, resources of war which in nearly every case, the insurgents entirely lack. No wonder, then, that even the barricade struggles conducted with the greatest heroism—Paris, June 1848; Vienna, October 1848; Dresden, May 1849—ended with the defeat of the insurrection, so soon as the leaders of the attack, unhampered by political considerations, acted from the purely military standpoint, and their soldiers remained reliable.

The numerous successes of the insurgents up to 1848 were due to a great variety of causes. In Paris in July 1830 and February 1848, as in most of the Spanish street fights, there stood between the insurgents and the military a citizens' guard,<sup>1</sup> which either directly took the side of the insurrection, or else by its lukewarm, indecisive attitude caused the troops likewise to vacillate, and supplied the insurrection with arms into the bargain. Where this citizens' guard opposed the insurrection from the outset, as in June 1848 in Paris, the insurrection was vanquished. In Berlin in 1848, the people were victorious partly through a considerable accession of new fighting forces during the night and the morning of the 19th, partly as a result of the exhaustion and bad victualling of the troops, and, finally, partly as a result of the paralysed commands. But in all cases the fight was won because the troops failed to obey, because the officers lost their power of decision or because their hands were tied.

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<sup>1</sup> This civic militia arose in the period of the first French bourgeois revolution. During the July monarchy (1830-48), the National Guard consisted of various bourgeois elements.—*Ed.*

Even in the classic time of street fighting, therefore, the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect. It was a means of shaking the steadfastness of the military. If it held out until this was attained, then victory was won; if not, there was defeat. [*This is the main point, which must be kept in view, likewise when the chances of contingent future street fights are examined.*]

The chances, however, were in 1849 already pretty poor. Everywhere the bourgeoisie had thrown in its lot with the governments, "culture and property" had hailed and feasted the military moving against the insurrections. The spell of the barricade was broken; the soldier no longer saw behind it "the people," but rebels, agitators, plunderers, levellers, the scum of society; the officer had in the course of time become versed in the tactical forms of street fighting, he no longer marched straight ahead and without cover against the improvised breastwork, but went round it through gardens, yards and houses. And this was now successful, with a little skill, in nine cases out of ten.

But since then there have been very many more changes, and all in favour of the military. If the big towns have become considerably bigger, the armies have become bigger still. Paris and Berlin have, since 1848, grown less than fourfold, but their garrisons have grown more than that. By means of the railways, the garrisons can, in twenty-four hours, be more than doubled, and in forty-eight hours they can be increased to huge armies. The arming of this enormously increased number of troops has become incomparably more effective. In 1848 the smooth-bore percussion muzzle-loader, today the small-calibre magazine breech-loading rifle, which shoots four times as far, ten times as accurately and ten times as fast as the former. At that time the relatively ineffective round-shot and grape-shot of the artillery; today the percussion shells, of which one is sufficient to demolish the best barricade. At that time the pick-axe of the sapper for breaking through walls; today the dynamite cartridge.

On the other hand, all the conditions on the insurgents' side have grown worse. An insurrection with which all sections of the people sympathise will hardly recur; in the class struggle all the middle sections will never group themselves round the proletariat so exclusively that the reactionary parties gathered round the bourgeoisie well-nigh disappear. The "people" therefore, will always appear divided, and with this

a powerful lever, so extraordinarily effective in 1848, is lacking. If more soldiers who have seen service came over to the insurrectionists, the arming of them would become so much the more difficult. The hunting and luxury guns of the munitions shops—even if not previously made unusable by removal of part of the lock by the police—are far from being a match for the magazine rifle of the soldier, even in close fighting. Up to 1848 it was possible to make the necessary ammunition oneself out of powder and lead; today the cartridges differ for each rifle, and are everywhere alike only in one point, that they are a special product of big industry, and therefore not to be prepared *ex tempore*,<sup>1</sup> with the result that most rifles are useless as long as one does not possess the ammunition specially suited to them. And, finally, since 1848 the newly built quarters of the big towns have been laid out in long, straight, broad streets, as though made to give full effect to the new cannons and rifles. The revolutionary would have to be mad, who himself chose the working class districts in the North and East of Berlin for a barricade fight. [*Does that mean that in the future the street fight will play no further role? Certainly not. It only means that the conditions since 1848 have become far more unfavourable for civil fights, far more favourable for the military. A future street fight can therefore only be victorious when this unfavourable situation is compensated by other factors. Accordingly, it will occur more seldom in the beginning of a great revolution than in its further progress, and will have to be undertaken with greater forces. These, however, may then well prefer, as in the whole Great French Revolution or on September 4 and October 31, 1870,<sup>2</sup> in Paris, the open attack to the passive barricade tactics.*]

Does the reader now understand, why the ruling classes decidedly want to bring us 'to where the guns shoot and the sabres slash? Why they accuse us today of cowardice, because we do not betake ourselves without more ado into the street, where we are certain of defeat in advance? Why they so

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<sup>1</sup> At a moment's notice.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> On September 4, 1870, the government of Louis Bonaparte was overthrown and the republic proclaimed, and on October 31 of the same year there took place the unsuccessful attempt of the workers' battalions, led by Blanquists, to make an insurrection against the government of national defence. For further details see Marx, *The Civil War in France*.—Ed.

earnestly implore us to play for once the part of cannon fodder'?

The gentlemen pour out their prayers and their challenges for nothing, for nothing at all. We are not so stupid. They might just as well demand from their enemy in the next war that he should take up his position in the line formation of old Fritz,<sup>1</sup> or in the columns of whole divisions *a la* Wagram and Waterloo,<sup>2</sup> and with the flintlock in his hands at that. If the conditions have changed in the case of war between nations, this is no less true in the case of the class struggle. The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for [*with body and soul*]. The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long persistent work is required, and it is just this work which we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair.

In the Latin countries, also, it is being more and more recognised that the old tactics must be revised. Everywhere [*the unprepared onslaught has gone into the background (except where the government has openly provoked it)*] everywhere] the German example of utilising the suffrage, of winning all posts accessible to us, has been imitated. In France, where for more than a hundred years the ground has been undermined by revolution after revolution, where there is no single party which has not done its share in conspiracies, insurrections and all other revolutionary actions; in France, where, as a result, the government is by no means sure of the army and where, in general, the conditions for an insurrectionary *coup de main*<sup>3</sup> are far more favourable than in Germany—even in France the Socialists are realising more and

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick II, King of Prussia (1712-86).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> At the battle of Wagram in 1809 Napoleon I defeated the Austrian army, while at Waterloo on July 18 he suffered a decisive defeat at the hands of the allied armies (the British, Prussian, etc.)—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> The words in parentheses were deleted by Engels himself.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> Sudden attack.—Ed.

more that no lasting victory is possible for them, unless they first win the great mass of people, i.e., in this case, the peasants. Slow propaganda work and parliamentary activity are being recognised here, too, as the most immediate tasks of the Party. Successes were not lacking. Not only have a whole series of municipal councils been won; fifty Socialists have seats in the Chambers, and they have already overthrown three ministries and a president of the republic. In Belgium last year the workers enforced the franchise, and have been victorious in a quarter of the constituencies. In Switzerland, in Italy, in Denmark, yes, even in Bulgaria and Rumania the Socialists are represented in the parliaments. In Austria all parties agree that our admission to the Reichsrat<sup>1</sup> can no longer be withheld. We will get in, that is certain, the only question still in dispute is: by which door? And even in Russia, when the famous *Zemsky Sobor* meets, that National Assembly to which young Nicholas offers such vain resistance, even there we can reckon with certainty on also being represented in it.

Of course, our foreign comrades do not renounce their right to revolution. The right to revolution is, after all, the only real "historical right" the only right on which all modern states without exception rest, Mecklenburg included, whose aristocratic revolution was ended in 1755 by the "hereditary settlement," the glorious charter of feudalism still valid today. The right to revolution is so incontestably recognised in the general consciousness that even General von Boguslawski derives the right to a *coup d'état*, which he vindicates for his Kaiser, solely from this popular right.

But whatever may happen in other countries, German Social Democracy has a special situation and therewith, at least in the first instance, a special task. The two million voters whom it sends to the ballot box, together with the young men and women who stand behind them as non-voters, form the most numerous, most compact mass, the decisive "*shock force*" of the international proletarian army. This mass already supplies over a fourth of the recorded votes; and as the by-elections to the Reichstag, the diet elections in individual states, the municipal council and industrial court elections demonstrate, it increases uninterruptedly. Its growth proceeds as spontaneously, as steadily, as irresistibly, and at the same time as tranquilly as a natural process. All government interven-

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<sup>1</sup> Austrian Parliament.—Ed.

tion has proved powerless against it. We can count even today on two and a half million voters. If it continues in this fashion, by the end of the century we shall conquer the greater part of the middle section of society, petty bourgeois and small peasants, and grow into the decisive power in the land, before which all other powers will have to bow, whether they like it or not. To keep this growth going without interruption until of itself it gets beyond the control of the ruling governmental system [*not to fritter away this daily increasing shock force in advance guard fighting, but to keep it intact until the day of the decision*] that is our main task. And there is only one means by which the steady rise of the socialist fighting forces in Germany could be momentarily halted, and even thrown back for some time: a clash on a big scale with the military, a bloodbath like that of 1871 in Paris. In the long run that would also be overcome. To shoot out of the world a party which numbers millions—all the magazine rifles of Europe and America are not enough for this. But the normal development would be impeded [*the shock force would, perhaps, not be available at the critical moment*], the decisive struggle<sup>1</sup> would be delayed, protracted and attended by heavy sacrifices.

The irony of world history turns everything upside down. We, the "revolutionaries" the "rebels"—we are thriving far better on legal methods than on illegal methods and revolt. The parties of order, as they call themselves, are perishing under the legal conditions created by themselves. They cry despairingly with Odilon Barrot: *la legalite nous tue*, legality is the death of us; whereas we, under this legality, get firm muscles and rosy cheeks and look like eternal life. And if we are not so crazy as to let ourselves be driven into street fighting in order to please them, then nothing else is finally left for them but themselves to break through this legality so fatal to them.

Meanwhile they make new laws against revolution. Again everything is turned upside down. These anti-revolt fanatics of today, are they not themselves the rebels of yesterday? Have we perchance, evoked the civil war of 1866? Have we driven the King of Hanover, the Elector of Hesse, the Duke

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<sup>1</sup> In the falsified text, the words "*die Entscheidung*" (the decision) have been substituted for "*der Entscheidungskampf*" (the decisive struggle).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> On this, see Engels' Prefatory Note to the *Peasant War in Germany*.—Ed.

of Nassau from their hereditary, lawful domains, and annexed these hereditary domains? And do these rebels against the German Confederation and three crowns by the grace of God complain of overthrow? *Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?*<sup>1</sup> Who could allow the Bismarck worshippers to rail at revolt?

Let them nevertheless, put through their anti-revolt bills, make them still worse, transform the whole penal law into india-rubber, they will achieve nothing but a new proof of their impotence. In order seriously to hit Social-Democracy, they will have to resort to quite other measures. They can only hold in check the Social-Democratic revolt which is just now doing so well by keeping within the law, by revolt on the part of the parties of order, which cannot live without breaking the laws. Herr Roessler, the Prussian bureaucrat, and Herr von Boguslawski, the Prussian general, have shown them the only way in which the workers, who refuse to let themselves be lured into street fighting, can still, perhaps, be held in check. Breach of the constitution, dictatorship, return to absolutism, *regis voluntas suprema lex!*<sup>2</sup> Therefore, only courage, gentlemen; here is no backing out of it, here you are in for it!

But do not forget that the German empire, just as all small states and generally all modern states, is a *product of contract*; of the contract, firstly, of the princes with one another and, secondly, of the princes with the people. If one side breaks the contract, the whole contract falls to the ground; the other side is then also no longer bound [*as Bismarck showed us so beautifully in 1866. If, therefore, you break the constitution of the Reich, then Social-Democracy is free, can do and refrain from doing what it will with regard to you. But what it will do then it will hardly give away to you today!*].

It is now, almost to the year, sixteen hundred years since a dangerous party of revolt made a great commotion in the Roman empire. It undermined religion and all the foundations of the state; it flatly denied that Caesar's will was the supreme law; it was without a fatherland, international; it spread over all countries of the empire from Gaul to Asia, and beyond the frontiers of the empire. It had long carried on an underground agitation in secret; for a considerable time, how-

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<sup>1</sup> Who would suffer the Gracchi to complain of sedition?—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The king's will is the supreme law.—*Ed.*

ever, it had felt itself strong enough to come out into the open. This party of revolt, of those known by the name of Christians, was also strongly represented in the army; whole legions were Christian. When they were ordered to attend the sacrificial ceremonies of the pagan-established church, in order to do the honours there, the rebel soldiers had the audacity to stick peculiar emblems—crosses—on their helmets in protest. Even the wonted barrack cruelties of their superior officers were fruitless. The Emperor Diocletian could no longer quietly look on while order, obedience and discipline in his army were being undermined. He intervened energetically, while there was still time. He passed an anti-Socialist, I should say anti-Christian, law. The meetings of the rebels were forbidden, their meeting halls were closed or even pulled down, the Christian badges, crosses, etc., were, like the red handkerchiefs in Saxony, prohibited. Christians were declared incapable of holding offices in the state, they were not to be allowed even to become corporals. Since there were not available at that time judges so well trained in “respect of persons” as Herr von Koller’s anti-revolt bill<sup>1</sup> assumes, the Christians were forbidden out of hand to seek justice before a court. This exceptional law was also without effect. The Christians tore it down from the walls with scorn; they are even supposed to have burnt the Emperor’s palace in Nicomedia over his head. Then the latter revenged himself by the great persecution of Christians in the year 303, according to our chronology. It was the last of its kind. And it was so effective that seventeen years later the army consisted overwhelmingly of Christians, and the succeeding autocrat of the whole Roman Empire, Constantine, called the Great by the priests, proclaimed Christianity as the state religion.

F. ENGELS

London, March 6, 1895.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft of the new law against the Socialists was introduced in the Reichstag on December 5, 1894; the bill was handed over to a commission which discussed it up to April 25, 1895. On May 11, the bill was rejected.—*Ed.*

# THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE

## I

### FROM FEBRUARY TO JUNE 1848

With the exception of a few short chapters, every important part of the annals of the revolution from 1848 to 1849 carries the heading: *Defeat of the revolution!*

But what succumbed in these defeats was not the revolution. It was the pre-revolutionary traditional appendages, results of social relationships, which had not yet come to the point of sharp class antagonisms—persons, illusions, conceptions, projects, from which the revolutionary party before the February Revolution was not free, from which it could be freed, not by the *victory of February*, but only by a series of *defeats*.

In a word: revolutionary advance made headway not by its immediate tragi-comic achievements, but on the contrary by the creation of a powerful, united counter-revolution, by the creation of an opponent, by fighting whom the party of revolt first ripened into a real revolutionary party.

To prove this is the task of the following pages.

#### I. *The Defeat of June 1848*

After the July Revolution, when the Liberal banker Laffitte, led his godfather, the Duke of Orleans, in triumph to the Hotel de Ville,<sup>1</sup> he let fall the words: "*From now on the bankers will rule.*" Laffitte had betrayed the secret of the revolution.<sup>2</sup>

It was not the French bourgeoisie that ruled under Louis Philippe, but a *fraction* of it, bankers, stock exchange kings, railway kings, owners of coal and iron works and forests, a part of the landed proprietors that rallied round them—the so-called *finance aristocracy*. It sat on the throne, it dictated laws in the Chambers, it conferred political posts from cabinet portfolios to the tobacco bureau.

The real *industrial bourgeoisie* formed part of the official opposition, i.e., it was represented only as a minority in the Chambers. Its opposition was expressed all the more decisively, the more unalloyed the autocracy of the finance aristocracy.

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<sup>1</sup> Town Hall.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> After the victory of the July Revolution, the Duke of Orleans (Louis Philippe) was proclaimed "vice-regent" and afterwards king.—Ed.

cracy became, and the more it itself imagined that its domination over the working class was ensured after the mutinies of 1832, 1834 and 1839,<sup>1</sup> which had been drowned in blood. *Grandin*, the Rouen manufacturer, the most fanatical instrument of bourgeois reaction in the Constituent Assembly, as well as in the legislative National Assembly,<sup>2</sup> was the most violent opponent of Guizot in the Chamber of Deputies. *Leon Faucher*, later renowned for his impotent endeavours to push himself forward as the Guizot of the French counter-revolution, in the last days of Louis Philippe, waged a war of the pen for industry against speculation and its train bearer, the government. *Bastiat* agitated against the ruling system in the name of Bordeaux and the whole of wine-producing France.

The *petty bourgeoisie* of all degrees, and the *peasantry* also, were completely excluded from political power. Finally, in the official opposition or entirely outside the *pays legal*,<sup>3</sup> there were the *ideological* representatives and spokesmen of the above classes, their savants, lawyers, doctors, etc., in a word: their so-called *talents*.

The July monarchy, owing to its financial need, was dependent from the beginning on the big bourgeoisie, and its

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<sup>1</sup> June 5, 1832, was the date of the uprising in Paris organised by the *Society of the Friends of the People* and other revolutionary unions. The occasion was furnished by the burial of General Lamarque, the leader of the republican group in the Chamber of Deputies. The revolutionary organisations proposed to arrange merely a demonstration but it ended in bloodshed. "Liberty or death," the troops hurled themselves upon them. Barricades were thrown up, the last of which were only destroyed by cannon fire on the evening of June 6.

On April 9, 1834, a new rising of the Lyons workers broke out (the first took place in 1831). The immediate cause was the verdict pronounced by the court against certain workers as instigators of the struggle for increased wages. After a stubborn and bloody struggle, which lasted several days, the rising ended in a defeat for the workers.

On May 12, 1839 an unsuccessful attempt at insurrection by the Blanquist Society of the Seasons took place. See note 1 on p. 3 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The Constituent Assembly sat from May 4, 1848, to May 26, 1849, and the Legislative Assembly from May 28, 1849, to December 2, 1851.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "legal country." This designation was applied during the period of the July Monarchy to the possessing minority who had electoral rights in contradiction to the wide masses of the population who were deprived of electoral rights.—Ed.

dependence on the big bourgeoisie was the inexhaustible source of a growing financial need. It was impossible to subordinate state administration to the interests of national production without balancing the budget, establishing a balance between state expenses and income. And how was this balance to be established, without limiting state expenditure, i.e., without encroaching on interests which were so many supports of the ruling system, and without redistributing taxes, i.e., without putting a considerable share of the burden of taxes on the shoulders of the big bourgeoisie itself?

Moreover the fraction of the bourgeoisie that ruled and legislated through the Chambers had a *direct interest in state indebtedness*. The *state deficit* was even the main object of its speculation and played the chief role in its enrichment. At the end of each year a new deficit. After expiry of four or five years a new loan. And every new loan offered new opportunities to the finance aristocracy for defrauding the state which was kept artificially on the verge of bankruptcy—it had to contract with the bankers under the most unfavourable conditions. Each new loan gave a further opportunity for plundering the public, that had invested its capital in state bonds, by stock exchange manipulations into the secrets of which the government and the majority in the Chambers were admitted. In general, the fluctuation of state credits and the possession of state secrets gave the bankers and their associates in the Chambers and on the throne the possibility of evoking sudden, extraordinary fluctuations in the quotations of state bonds, the result of which was always bound to be the ruin of a mass of smaller capitalists and the fabulously rapid enrichment of the big gamblers. If the state deficit was in the direct interest of the ruling fraction of the bourgeoisie, then it is clear why the *extraordinary* state expenditure in the last years of Louis Philippe's government was far more than double the extraordinary state expenditure under Napoleon, indeed reached a yearly sum of nearly 400,000,000 francs, whereas the whole annual export of France seldom attained a volume amounting to 750,000,000 francs. The enormous sums which, in this way, flowed through the hands of the state facilitated, moreover, swindling contracts for deliveries, bribery, defalcations and all kinds of roguery. The defrauding of the state, just as it occurred on a large scale in connection with loans, was repeated in detail, in the state works. The relationship between Chamber and government multiplied itself as the relationship between individual de-

partments and invidual *entrepreneurs*.

In the same way as the ruling class exploited state expenditure in general and state loans, they exploited the *building of railways*. The Chambers piled the main burdens on the state, and secured the golden fruits to the speculating finance aristocracy. One recalls the scandals in the Chamber of Deputies, when by chance it came out that all the members of the majority, including a number of ministers, had taken part as shareholders in the very railway construction which as legislators they caused to be carried out afterwards at the cost of the state.

On the other hand, the smallest financial reform was wrecked by the influence of the bankers. For example, the *postal reform*. Rothschild protested. Was it permissible for the state to curtail sources of income out of which interest was to be paid on its ever increasing debt?

The July monarchy was nothing other than a joint stock company for the exploitation of French national wealth, the dividends of which were divided among ministers, Chambers, 240,000 voters and their adherents. Louis Philippe was the director of this company—Robert Macaire<sup>1</sup> on the throne. Trade, industry, agriculture, shipping, the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie, were bound to be continually prejudiced and endangered under this system. The bourgeoisie in the July days had inscribed on its banner: *gouvernement a bon marche*, cheap government.

While the finance aristocracy made the laws, was at the head of the administration of the state, had command of all the organised public powers, dominated public opinion through facts and through the press, the same prostitution, the same shameless cheating, the same mania to get rich was repeated in every sphere, from the court to the Cafe Borgne,<sup>2</sup> to get rich not by production, but by pocketing the already available wealth of others. In particular there broke out, at the top of bourgeois society, clashing every moment with the bourgeois laws themselves, an unbridled display of unhealthy and dissolute appetites, wherein the wealth having its source in gamb-

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Macaire is a typical clever swindler, a character in the comedy of Benjamin Antier and F. Lemaitre, entitled *Robert and Bertrand* (1834).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> This term was applied in France to cafes of a doubtful character.—Ed.

ling naturally seeks its satisfaction, where pleasure becomes *crapuleux*,<sup>1</sup> where gold, filth and blood flow together. The finance aristocracy, in its mode of acquisition as well as in its pleasures, is nothing but the *resurrection of the lumpenproletariat at the top of bourgeois society*.

And the non-ruling sections of the French bourgeoisie cried: corruption! The people cried: *a bas les grands voleurs! a bas les assassins!*<sup>2</sup> When in 1847, on the most prominent stages of bourgeois society, the same scenes were publicly enacted which regularly lead the *lumpenproletariat* to brothels, to workhouses and lunatic asylums, before the Bench, to Bagnos<sup>3</sup> and to the scaffold. The industrial bourgeoisie saw its interests endangered, the petty bourgeoisie was filled with moral indignation, the imagination of the people was offended, Paris was flooded with pamphlets— "*la dynastie Rothschild*," "*les juifs rois de l'epoque*," etc<sup>4</sup>—in which the rule of the finance aristocracy was denounced and stigmatised with greater or less wit.

*Rien pour la gloire!* Glory brings no profit! *La paix partout et toujours!*<sup>5</sup> War depresses the quotations of the three and four per cents! the France of the Bourse Jews had inscribed on her banner. Her foreign policy was therefore lost in a series of mortifications to French national feeling, which reacted all the more vigorously when the robbery of Poland was brought to an end with the annexation of Cracow by Austria, and when Guizot came out actively on the side of the Holy Alliance in the Swiss separatist war. The victory of the Swiss liberals in this mimic war raised the self-respect of the bourgeois opposition in France; the bloody uprising of the people in Palermo worked like an electric shock on the paralysed masses of the people and awoke their great revolutionary memories and passions.<sup>6</sup>

The eruption of the general discontent was finally accele-

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<sup>1</sup> Debauched.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Down with the big thieves, down with the assassins!—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> In France, formerly, one of the prisons substituted for the galleys.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> The Rothschild dynasty, the Jewish kings of the epoch.—Ed.

<sup>5</sup> Peace everywhere and always.—Ed.

<sup>6</sup> Annexation of Cracow by Austria in agreement with Russia and Prussia on November 11, 1846.—Swiss separatist war, November 4 to 28, 1847.—Rising in Palermo January 12, 1848; at the end of January, nine days' bombardment of the town by the Neapolitans. [Note by F. Engels.]

rated and the sentiment for revolt ripened by *two economic world events*.

The *potato blight* and the *bad harvests* of 1845 and 1846 increased the general ferment among the people. The high cost of living of 1847 called forth bloody conflicts in France as well as on the rest of the Continent. As against the shameless orgies of the finance aristocracy, the struggle of the people for the first necessities of life? At Buzancais<sup>1</sup> the hunger rioters executed; in Paris the over-satiated *escrocs*<sup>2</sup> snatched from the courts by the royal family.

The second great economic event which hastened the outbreak of the revolution was a *general commercial and industrial crisis* in England. Already heralded in the autumn of 1845 by the wholesale reverses of the speculators in railway shares, delayed during 1846 by a number of incidents such as the impending abolition of the corn duties, in the autumn of 1847 the crisis finally burst forth with the bankruptcy of the London grocers, on the heels of which followed the insolvencies of the land banks and the closing of the factories in the English industrial districts. The after effect of this crisis on the Continent had not yet spent itself when the February Revolution broke out.

The devastation of trade and industry caused by the economic epidemic made the autocracy of the finance aristocracy still more unbearable. Throughout the whole of France the bourgeois opposition evoked the *banquet agitation* for an *electoral reform* which should win for them the majority in the Chambers and overthrow the Ministry of the Bourse. In Paris the industrial crisis had, in particular, the result of throwing a number of manufacturers and big traders, who under the existing circumstances could no longer do any business in the foreign market, on to the home market. They set up large establishments, the competition of which ruined the *epiciers* and *boutiquiers*<sup>3</sup> *en masse*. Hence the innumerable bankruptcies among this section of the Paris bourgeoisie, and hence their revolutionary action in February. It is known how Guizot and the Chambers answered the reform proposals with

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<sup>1</sup> In 1847 in Buzancais, in connection with the incipient famine, two rich landowners notorious as grain usurers were killed by an excited crowd; five persons were executed on account of this murder.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Swindles.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Grocers and shopkeepers.—*Ed.*

a plain challenge,<sup>1</sup> how Louis Philippe too late resolved on a Ministry led by Barrot<sup>2</sup> how hand-to-hand fighting took place between the people and the army, how the army was disarmed by the passive conduct of the National Guard, how the July monarchy had to give way to a Provisional Government.

The *Provisional Government* which emerged from the February barricades necessarily mirrored in its composition the different parties which shared in the victory. It could not be anything but a *compromise between the different classes* which together had overturned the July throne, but whose interests were mutually antagonistic. The great *majority* of its members consisted of representatives of the bourgeoisie. The republican petty bourgeoisie were represented by Ledru-Rollin and Flocon, the republican bourgeoisie by the people from the *National*,<sup>3</sup> the dynastic opposition<sup>4</sup> by Cremieux, Dupont de l'Eure, etc. The working class had only two representatives, Louis Blanc and Albert. Finally, Lamartine as a member of the Provisional Government; this was actually no real interest, no definite class, this was the February Revolution itself, the common uprising with its illusions, its poetry, its imagined content and its phrases. For the rest, the spokesman of the February Revolution, by his position and his views, belonged to the *bourgeoisie*.

If Paris, as a result of political centralisation, rules France, the workers, in moments of revolutionary earthquakes, rule Paris. The first act in the life of the Provisional Government was an attempt to escape from this overpowering influence, by an appeal from intoxicated Paris to sober France. Lamartine disputed the right of the barricade fighters to proclaim the republic, on the ground that only the majority of Frenchmen had that right; they must await their votes, the Parisian

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<sup>1</sup>To demands for electoral reform the minister Guizot answered, "Get rich and you will become electors."—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Louis Philippe, frightened by the popular uprising which was beginning, dismissed the Guizot ministry on February 23 and on the morning of the 24th appointed the ministry of Odilon Barrot.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The organ of the bourgeois republican opposition, founded by Thiers in 1830.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>The party of the period of the July Monarchy, headed by Odilon Barrot. It represented the interests of the bourgeoisie which was dissatisfied with the political domination of the financial aristocracy.—*Ed.*

proletariat must not besmirch its victory by a usurpation. The bourgeoisie allowed the proletariat only *one* usurpation—that of fighting.

Up to noon on February 25, the republic had not yet been proclaimed; on the other hand, the whole of the Ministries had already been divided among the bourgeois elements of the Provisional Government and among the generals, bankers and lawyers of the *National*. But the workers were this time determined not to put up with any swindling like that of July 1830.<sup>1</sup> They were ready to take up the fight anew and to enforce the republic by force of arms. With this message, Raspail betook himself to the Hotel de Ville. In the name of the Parisian proletariat he *commanded* the Provisional Government to proclaim the republic; if this order of the people were not fulfilled within two hours, he would return at the head of 200,000 men. The bodies of the fallen were scarcely cold, the barricades were not yet cleared away, the workers not yet disarmed, and the only force which could be opposed to them was the National Guard. Under these circumstances the prudent state doubts and juristic scruples of conscience of the Provisional Government suddenly vanished. The interval of two hours had not expired before all the walls of Paris were resplendent with the tremendous historical words:

*Republique française! Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité!*

Even the memory of the limited aims and motives which drove the bourgeoisie into the February Revolution was extinguished by the proclamation of the republic on the basis of universal suffrage. Instead of a few small fractions of the bourgeoisie, whole classes of French society were suddenly hurled into the circle of political power, forced to leave the boxes, the stalls and the gallery and to act in person upon the revolutionary stage! With the constitutional monarchy the semblance of a state power independently confronting bourgeois society also vanished, as well as the whole series

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of the July Revolution in 1830, the masses of the people who were fighting on the barricades and demanding the introduction of universal suffrage, the republic and the convening of the Constituent Assembly, were not able to exhibit such a degree of organisation as the bourgeoisie. The financial aristocracy and bankers utilised the victory of the people to call to the throne the Duke of Orleans (Louis Philippe).—Ed.

of subordinate struggles which this semblance of power called forth!

The proletariat, by dictating the republic to the Provisional Government and through the Provisional Government to the whole of France, stepped into the foreground forthwith as an independent party, but at the same time challenged the whole of bourgeois France to enter the lists against it. What it won was the terrain for the fight for its revolutionary emancipation, but in no way this emancipation itself!

The first thing that the February republic had to do was rather to *complete the rule of the bourgeoisie* by allowing, besides the finance aristocracy, *all the propertied classes* to enter the circle of political power. The majority of the great landowners, the Legitimists, were emancipated from the political nullity to which they had been condemned by the July Monarchy. Not for nothing had the *Gazette de France*<sup>1</sup> agitated in common with the opposition papers, not for nothing had Laroche-Jaquelin taken the side of the revolution in the session of the Chamber of Deputies on February 24. The nominal proprietors, who form the great majority of the French people, the *peasants*, were put by universal suffrage in the position of arbiters of the fate of France. The February republic finally brought the rule of the bourgeoisie clearly into prominence, since it struck off the crown behind which capital kept itself concealed.

Just as the workers by fighting in the July days had won the *bourgeois monarchy*, so by fighting in the February days they won the *bourgeois republic*. Just as the July monarchy had to proclaim itself as a monarchy *surrounded by republican institutions* so the February republic was forced to proclaim itself a republic *surrounded by social institutions*. The Parisian proletariat *compelled* this concession, too.

Marche, a worker, dictated the decree by which the newly formed Provisional Government pledged itself to secure the existence of the workers by work, to provide work for all citizens, etc. And when, a few days later, it forgot its promises and seemed to have lost sight of the proletariat, a mass of 20,000 workers marched on the Hotel de Ville with the cry: *Organisation of labour! Formation of a special Ministry of Labour!* The Provisional Government, with reluctance and after long debates, nominated a permanent, special commission,

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<sup>1</sup>The old royalist newspaper.—Ed.

charged with *finding* means of improving the lot of the working classes! This commission consisted of delegates from the corporations of Parisian artisans and was presided over by Louis Blanc<sup>1</sup> and Albert. The Luxembourg was assigned to it as a meeting place. In this way the representatives of the working class were exiled from the seat of the Provisional Government, the bourgeois section of which held the real state power and the reins of administration exclusively in its hands, and *side by side* with the Ministries of Finance, Trade and Public Works, *side by side* with the banks and the Bourse, there arose a *socialist synagogue* whose high priests, Louis Blanc and Albert, had the task of discovering the promised land, of preaching the new gospel and of occupying the attention of the Parisian proletariat. Unlike any profane state power, they had no budget, no executive authority at their disposal. With their heads they had to break the pillars of bourgeois society. While the Luxembourg sought the philosopher's stone, in the Hotel de Ville they minted the current coinage.

And yet the claims of the Parisian proletariat, so far as they went beyond the bourgeois republic, could win no other

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<sup>1</sup> By agreeing to the establishment of the Luxembourg Commission Louis Blanc assisted the manoeuvre of the bourgeoisie which was playing for time by means of empty promises. In entering the government, Louis Blanc showed himself to be an appendage of the bourgeoisie, an obedient tool in its hands. Lenin drew a parallel between the role of Louis Blanc in the Revolution of 1848 and the role of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in that of 1917 in his article, "In Louis Blanc's Footsteps": "The French Socialist, Louis Blanc, gained deplorable fame in the Revolution of 1848 by changing from the position of the class struggle to the position of petty-bourgeois illusions, adorned with would-be 'socialist' phraseology, but in reality tending to strengthen the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. Louis Blanc expected to receive aid from the bourgeoisie; he hoped, and aroused hopes in others, that the bourgeoisie could aid the workers in the matter of 'organisation of labour'—this vague term having been supposed to express a 'socialist' tendency." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, English ed., Vol. XX, Book I, p. 111.) The example of Louis Blanc afterwards found numerous followers. The isolated examples of the entry of Socialists into bourgeois governments were converted by the Second International after the war into a regular practice. The parties of the Second International send their representatives into bourgeois governments in order by the aid of these "socialist" lackeys to mask the dictatorship of capitalism.—*Ed.*

existence than the nebulous one of the Luxembourg.

In common with the bourgeoisie the workers had made the February Revolution, and *alongside* the bourgeoisie they sought to put through their interests, just as they had installed a worker in the Provisional Government itself alongside the bourgeois majority. *Organisation of labour!* But wage labour is the existing, bourgeois organisation of labour. Without it there is no capital, no bourgeoisie, no bourgeois society. *Their own Ministry of Labour!* But the Ministries of Finance, of Trade, Public Works—are not these the *bourgeois* Ministries of Labour? And *alongside* these a *proletarian* Ministry of Labour must be a Ministry of impotence, a Ministry of pious wishes, a commission of the Luxembourg. Just as the workers thought to emancipate themselves side by side with the bourgeoisie, so they thought they would be able to consummate a proletarian revolution within the national walls of France, side by side with the remaining bourgeois nations. But French production relations are conditioned by the foreign trade of France, by her position on the world market and the laws thereof; how should France break them without a European revolutionary war, which would strike back at the despot of the world market, England?

A class in which the revolutionary interests of society are concentrated, so soon as it has risen up, finds directly in its own situation the content and the material of its revolutionary activity: foes to be laid low, measures, dictated by the needs of the struggle, to be taken; the consequence of its own deeds drive it on. It makes no theoretical inquiries into its own task. The French working class had not attained this standpoint; it was still incapable of accomplishing its own revolution.

The development of the industrial proletariat is, in general, conditioned by the development of the industrial bourgeoisie. Only under its rule does the proletariat win the wider national existence which can raise its revolution to a national one, and itself create the modern means of production, which become just so many means of its revolutionary emancipation. Only bourgeois rule tears up the roots of feudal society and levels the ground on which a proletarian revolution is alone possible. In France industry is more developed and the bourgeoisie more revolutionary than elsewhere on the Continent. But was not the February Revolution directed immediately against the finance aristocracy? This fact proved that the industrial bourgeoisie did not rule France. The

industrial bourgeoisie can only rule where modern industry shapes all property relations in conformity with itself, and industry can only win this power when it has conquered the world market, for national bounds are not wide enough for its development. But French industry, to a great extent, maintains its command even of the national market only through a more or less modified system of prohibitive duties.<sup>1</sup> If, therefore, the French proletariat, at the moment of a revolution, possesses in Paris actual power and influence which spur it on to a drive beyond its means, in the rest of France it is crowded into single, scattered industrial centres, being almost lost in the superior numbers of peasants and petty bourgeois. The struggle against capital in its developed, modern form, in its culminating phase, the struggle of the industrial wage workers against the industrial bourgeois is in France a partial fact; which after the February days could so much the less supply the national content of the revolution, since the struggle against capital's secondary modes of exploitation, that of the peasants against the usury in mortgages; of the petty bourgeois against the wholesale dealer, banker and manufacturer, in a word, against bankruptcy, was still hidden in the general uprising against the finance aristocracy. Nothing is more understandable, then, than that the Paris proletariat sought to put through its own interests *side by side* with those of the bourgeoisie, instead of enforcing them as the revolutionary interests of society itself, and that it let the *red* flag be lowered to the tricolour.<sup>2</sup> The French workers could not take a step forward, could not touch a hair of the bourgeois order before the course of the revolution had forced the mass of the nation, peasants and petty bourgeois, standing between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to revolt against this order, against the rule of capital, to attach itself to the proletariat as its vanguard. The workers could only buy

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<sup>1</sup>The economic policy of the July Monarchy was distinguished by a system of extreme protectionism. The import of pig iron, iron and steel manufactures, yarn, cotton goods, etc., was subject to such high duties that they practically could not reach the French market.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>A struggle arose on the question of the flag of the French republic: The workers demanded that the red flag should be proclaimed the flag of the republic. The bourgeoisie defended the tricolour. The struggle ended in the typical compromise of the February days; the flag of the republic was declared to be the tricolour with a red rosette.—Ed.

this victory through the huge defeat of June.

To the Luxembourg commission, this creation of the Paris workers, remains the merit of having disclosed from the European tribune the secret of the revolution of the nineteenth century: the *emancipation of the proletariat*. The *Moniteur* raged when it had to propagate officially the "wild ravings" which up to that time lay buried in the apocryphal writings of the Socialists and only reached the ears of the bourgeoisie from time to time as remote, half terrifying, half ludicrous legends. Europe awoke astonished from its bourgeois doze. In the ideas of the proletarians, therefore, who confused the finance aristocracy with the bourgeoisie in general; in the imagination of good old republicans who denied the very existence of classes or, at most, admitted them as a result of the constitutional monarchy; in the hypocritical phrases of the section of the bourgeoisie up to now excluded from power, the *rule of the bourgeoisie* was abolished with the introduction of the republic. All the royalists were transformed into republicans and all the millionaires of Paris into workers. The phrase which corresponded to this imagined liquidation of class relations was *fraternite*, universal fraternisation and brotherhood. This pleasant abstraction from class antagonisms, this sentimental equalisation of contradictory class interests, this fantastic elevation above the class struggle, *fraternite*, this was the special catchword of the February Revolution. The classes were divided by a mere *misunderstanding* and Lamartine baptised the Provisional Government on February 24 as "*un gouvernement qui suspende ce malentendu terrible qui existe entre les differentes classes.*"<sup>1</sup> The Parisian proletariat revelled in this generous intoxication of fraternity.

The Provisional Government, on its side, once it was compelled to proclaim the republic, did everything to make it acceptable to the bourgeoisie and to the provinces. The bloody terror of the first French republic was disavowed by the abolition of the death penalty for political offences; the press was opened to all opinions; the army, the courts, the administration remained with a few exceptions in the hands of their old dignitaries; none of the July monarchy's great offenders was brought to book. The bourgeois republicans of the *National* amused themselves by exchanging monarchist names and

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<sup>1</sup>A government that removes this terrible misunderstanding which exists between different classes.—Ed.

costumes for old republican ones.' For them the republic was only a new ball dress for the old bourgeois society. The young republic sought its chief merit, not in being alarming, but rather in constantly taking fright itself, and through the soft compliance and non-resistance of its existence, sought to win existence and to disarm resistance. At home to the privileged classes, abroad to the despotic powers, it was loudly announced that the republic was of a peaceful nature. Live and let live was its motto. In addition thereto, shortly after the February Revolution the Germans, Poles, Austrians, Hungarians and Italians, revolted,<sup>1</sup> each people in accordance with its immediate situation. Russia and England—the latter itself agitated,<sup>2</sup> the former cowed—were not prepared. The republic, therefore, had no *national* enemy. Consequently, there were no great foreign complications which could fire the energies, hasten the revolutionary process, drive the Provisional Government forward or throw it overboard. The Parisian proletariat, which recognised its own creation in the republic, naturally acclaimed each act of the Provisional Government which allowed it to take its place more easily in bourgeois society. It willingly allowed itself to be employed on police service by Caussidiere, in order to protect property in Paris, just as it allowed Louis Blanc to arbitrate wage disputes between workers and masters. It was its *point d'honneur* to preserve unblemished the bourgeois honour of the republic in the eyes of Europe.

The republic encountered no resistance either abroad or at home. It was thereby disarmed. Its task was no longer the revolutionary transformation of the world, it was only to adapt itself to the relations of bourgeois society. Concerning the fanaticism with which the Provisional Government undertook this task, there is no more eloquent testimony than its financial measures.

*Public and private credit* were naturally shattered. *Public credit* rests on confidence that the state will allow itself to be exploited by the Jews of finance. But the old state had vanished and the revolution was directed above all against

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<sup>1</sup>Marx had in mind the March Revolutions of 1848 in Prussia and Austria, the uprising of the Poles in 1848 and the Revolutions of 1848 in Hungary and Italy.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Under the influence of the 1848 Revolution in France there took place in England a new and final upsurge of the Chartist movement.—Ed.

the finance aristocracy. The vibrations of the last European commercial crisis had not yet ceased. Bankruptcy still followed bankruptcy.

*Private credit* was therefore paralysed, circulation restricted, production at a standstill before the February Revolution broke out. The revolutionary crisis increased the commercial crisis. And if private credit rests on confidence that bourgeois production in the entire scope of its relations, that the bourgeois order, is untouched and inviolable, what effect must a revolution have had, which questioned the basis of bourgeois production, the economic slavery of the proletariat, and set up against the Bourse the sphinx of the Luxembourg? The uprising of the proletariat is the abolition of bourgeois credit; for it is the abolition of bourgeois production and its order. Public and private credit is the economic thermometer by which the intensity of a revolution can be measured. *To the same degree as they fall, the fervour and generative force of the revolution rises.*

The Provisional Government wanted to strip the republic of its anti-bourgeois appearance. And so it had, above all, to try to ensure the exchange value of this new form of state, its quotation on the Bourse. With the current quotation of the republic on the Bourse, private credit necessarily rose again.

In order to turn aside the very *suspicion* that it would not or could not comply with the obligations assumed by the monarchy, in order to build up confidence in bourgeois morality and capacity to pay, the Provisional Government took refuge in a boast as undignified as it was childish. In advance of the legal date of payment they paid out 5 per cent, 4.5 per cent and 4 per cent interest to the state creditors. The bourgeois aplomb, the self-respect of the capitalists suddenly awoke when they saw the anxious haste with which it was sought to buy their confidence.

The financial embarrassment of the Provisional Government was naturally not lessened by a theatrical stroke which robbed it of its stock of ready cash. The financial pinch could no longer be concealed and *petty bourgeois domestic servants and workers* had to pay for the pleasant surprise which had been prepared for the state creditors.

The *savings bank books* with an amount of more than one hundred francs were declared no longer changeable into gold. The sums deposited in the savings banks were confiscated and by decree transformed into unredeemable state

debt. This embittered the already hard pressed *petty bourgeois* against the republic. Since he received, in place of his savings bank books, state debt certificates, he was forced to go to the Bourse in order to sell them and in this way delivered himself directly into the hands of the Bourse Jews, against whom he had made the February Revolution...

The finance aristocracy which ruled under the July monarchy had its high church in the Bank. Just as the Bourse governs state credit, the Bank governs *commercial credit*.

The Bank, directly threatened not only in its rule, but in its very existence, by the February Revolution, tried from the beginning to discredit the republic by making the lack of credit general. It suddenly withdrew the credits of the bankers, the manufacturers and the merchants. This manoeuvre, as it did not immediately call forth a counter-revolution, necessarily reacted on the Bank itself. The capitalists drew out the money which they had deposited in the vaults of the Bank. The possessors of the bank notes rushed the pay office in order to change them for gold and silver.

The Provisional Government could, without forcible interference, force the Bank into *bankruptcy* in a legal manner; it had only to remain passive and leave the Bank to its fate. The *bankruptcy of the Bank*—that was the deluge which in a trice would sweep away from French soil the finance aristocracy, the most powerful and dangerous enemy of the republic, the golden pedestal of the July monarchy. And once the Bank was bankrupt, the bourgeoisie itself would have to regard it as a last, desperate attempt at rescue if the government formed a national bank and subjected national credit to the control of the nation.

The Provisional Government, on the contrary, fixed a compulsory quotation for the notes of the Bank. It did more. It transformed all provincial banks into branches of the *Banque de France* and allowed it to cast its net over the whole of France. Later it pledged the *state forests* to the Bank as a guarantee for a loan that it contracted from it. In this way the February Revolution directly strengthened and enlarged the bankocracy which it was to have overthrown.

Meanwhile, the Provisional Government was bowed beneath the burden of a growing deficit. In vain it begged for patriotic sacrifices. Only the workers threw in their alms. Recourse had to be had to a heroic measure, to the imposition of a *new tax*. But whom were they to tax? The Bourse

wolves, the bank kings, the state creditors, the *rentiers*, the manufacturers? That was not the way to ingratiate the republic with the bourgeoisie. That meant, on the one hand, to endanger state credit and commercial credit, while, on the other, attempts were made to purchase them with such great sacrifices and humiliations. But someone had to fork out the cash. Who was sacrificed to bourgeois credit? Jacques le *bonhomme*,<sup>1</sup> the peasant.

The Provisional Government imposed an additional tax of 45 centimes in the franc on the four direct taxes. The government press humbugged the Paris proletariat into thinking that this tax would fall chiefly on the big landed property, on the possessors of the milliard granted by the Restoration. But in truth it hit the *peasant class* above all, *i.e.*, the large majority of the French people. They had to pay the costs of the *February Revolution*; in them the counter-revolution gained its main material. The 45 centimes tax was a life question for the French peasant; he made it a life question for the republic. From that moment *the republic* meant the 45 centimes tax for the French peasant, and he saw in the Paris proletariat the spendthrift who did himself well at his expense.

Whereas the Revolution of 1789 began by shaking the feudal burdens off the peasants, the Revolution of 1848 announced itself with a new tax on the rural population, in order not to endanger capital and to keep its state machine going.<sup>2</sup>

There was only one means by which the Provisional Government could set aside all these inconveniences and jerk the state out of its old rut—the *declaration of state bankruptcy*. We recall how Ledru-Rollin in the National Assembly subsequently recited the virtuous indignation with which he

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<sup>1</sup>A contemptuous nickname applied by the French landowners to the peasants.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Compare Lenin's remark:

"In France, in 1789, it was a matter of overthrowing absolutism and the nobility. At the level of economic and political development then prevailing, the bourgeoisie believed in harmony of interests, it had no fears concerning the stability of its rule, and was prepared to enter into an alliance with the peasantry.... In 1848, it was a matter of the proletariat overthrowing the bourgeoisie. The proletariat failed to win over the petty bourgeoisie, whose treachery caused the defeat of the revolution." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V, English ed., "The Two Lines of the Revolution," pp. 158-59.)—Ed.

repudiated this demand of the Bourse Jew, Fould, new French Finance Minister. Fould had handed him the apple from the tree of knowledge.

The Provisional Government, having honoured the bill drawn on the state by the old bourgeois society, succumbed to the latter. It had become the hard pressed debtor of bourgeois society instead of confronting it as the pressing creditor that had to collect the revolutionary debts of many years. It had to consolidate the shaky bourgeois relationship, in order to fulfil obligations which are only to be fulfilled within these relationships. Credit becomes a condition of life for it and the concessions to the proletariat, the promises made to it, become so many fetters which *have* to be struck off. The emancipation of the workers—even as a *phrase*—became an unbearable danger to the new republic, for it was a standing protest against the restoration of credit, which rests on undisturbed and untroubled recognition of the existing economic class relations. Therefore, it was necessary *to have done with the workers.*

The February Revolution had cast the army out of Paris. The National Guard, i.e., the bourgeoisie in its different grades, formed the sole power. Alone, however, it did not feel itself a match for the proletariat. Moreover, it was forced slowly and bit by bit to open its ranks and allow armed proletarians to enter the National Guard, albeit after the most tenacious resistance and after setting up a hundred different obstacles. There consequently remained but one way out: *to set one part of the proletariat against the other.*

For this purpose the Provisional Government formed 24 battalions of Mobile Guards, each of a thousand men, out of young men from 15 to 20 years. They belonged for the most part to the *lumpenproletariat*, which, in all big towns form a mass strictly differentiated from the industrial proletariat, a recruiting ground for thieves and criminals of all kinds, living on the crumbs of society, people without a definite trade, vagabonds, *gens sans feu et sans aveu*,<sup>1</sup> varying according to the degree of civilisation of the nation to which they belong, but never renouncing their *lazzaroni*<sup>2</sup> character; at the youthful age at which the Provisional Government recruited them, thoroughly malleable, as capable of the most heroic deeds

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<sup>1</sup>Folk without fire and without faith, i.e., rabble.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Idlers and beggars of Naples.—Ed.

and the most exalted sacrifices, as of the basest banditry and the dirtiest corruption. The Provisional Government paid them 1 franc 50 centimes a day, i.e., it bought them. It gave them their own uniform, i.e., it made them outwardly distinct from the blouse of the workers. In part they had assigned to them as leaders, officers from the standing army; in part they themselves elected young sons of the bourgeoisie whose rhodomontades about death for the fatherland and devotion to the republic captivated them.

And so the Paris proletariat was confronted with an army, drawn from its own midst, of 24,000 young, strong and fool-hardy men. It gave cheers for the Mobile Guard on its marches through Paris. It recognised in it its champions of the barricades. It regarded it as the *proletarian* guard in opposition to the bourgeois National Guard. Its error was pardonable.

Besides the Mobile Guard, the government decided to gather round itself an industrial army of workers. A hundred thousand workers thrown on the streets through the crisis and the revolution were enrolled by the Minister Marie in so-called *National Ateliers*.<sup>1</sup> Under this grand name was hidden nothing but the employment of the workers on tedious, monotonous, unproductive *earthworks* at a wage of 23 sous, *English workhouses*<sup>2</sup> in the open—that is what these *National Ateliers* were. The Provisional Government believed that it had formed in them a *second proletarian army against the workers themselves*. This time the bourgeoisie was mistaken in the *National Ateliers*, just as the workers were mistaken in the Mobile Guard. It had created an *army for mutiny*.

But one purpose was achieved.

*National Ateliers*—that was the name of the people's workshops, which Louis Blanc preached in the Luxembourg. The *Ateliers* of Marie, devised in direct antagonism to the Luxembourg, thanks to the common name, offered occasion for a plot of errors worthy of the Spanish comedy of servants. The Provisional Government itself secretly spread the report

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<sup>1</sup> National Workshops.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The new Poor Law adopted in England in 1834 provided for building "workhouses" for the poor instead of "relief" in money or kind. The food given in these workhouses was disgustingly bad, and the work extremely heavy; consequently they were called "Bastilles for the poor" and were objects of terror to the poor.—Ed.

that these *National Ateliers* were the discovery of Louis Blanc, and this seemed the more plausible because Louis Blanc, the prophet of the *National Ateliers*, was a member of the Provisional Government. And in the half naïve, half intentional confusion of the Paris bourgeoisie, in the artificially maintained opinion of France and of Europe, these workhouses were the first realisation of socialism, which was put in the pillory with them.

In their title, though not in their content, the *National Ateliers* were the embodied protest of the proletariat against bourgeois industry, bourgeois credit and the bourgeois republic. The whole hate of the bourgeoisie was therefore turned upon them. At the same time, it had found in them the point against which it could direct the attack, as soon as it was strong enough to break openly with the February illusions. All the discontent, all the ill humour of the *petty bourgeois* was simultaneously directed against these *National Ateliers*, the common target. With real fury they reckoned up the sums that the proletarian loafers swallowed, while their own situation became daily more unbearable. A state pension for sham labour, that is socialism! they growled to themselves. They sought the basis of their misery in the *National Ateliers*, the declarations of the Luxembourg, the marches of the workers through Paris. And no one was more fantastic about the alleged machinations of the Communists than the *petty bourgeoisie* who hovered hopelessly on the brink of bankruptcy.

Thus in the approaching *melee* between bourgeoisie and proletariat, all the advantages, all the decisive posts, all the middle sections of society were in the hands of the bourgeoisie, at the same time as the waves of the February Revolution rose high over the whole Continent, and each new post brought a new bulletin of revolution, now from Italy, now from Germany, now from the remotest parts of Southeastern Europe, and maintained the general exuberance of the people, giving it constant testimony of a victory that it had already lost.

March 17 and April 16 were the first skirmishes in the big class struggle which the bourgeois republic hid under its wings.

March 17 revealed the ambiguous situation of the proletariat, which permitted no decisive act. Its demonstration originally had the purpose of pushing the Provisional Government back on to the path of the revolution, of effecting the exclusion of its bourgeois members according to circumstances, and of compelling the postponement of the election days for

the National Assembly and the National Guard. But on March 16 the bourgeoisie represented in the National Guard made a hostile demonstration against the Provisional Government. With the cry: *a bas Ledru-Rollin!*<sup>1</sup> It surged to the Hotel de Ville. And the people were forced on March 17, to shout: Long live Ledru-Rollin! Long live the Provisional Government! They were forced to take sides against the bourgeoisie in support of the bourgeois republic, which seemed to them to be in danger. They strengthened the Provisional Government, instead of subordinating it to themselves. March 17 went off in a melodramatic scene, and if the Paris proletariat on this day once more displayed its giant body, the bourgeoisie both inside and outside the Provisional Government were all the more determined to break it.

April 16 was a *misunderstanding* organised by the Provisional Government and the bourgeoisie. The workers had gathered in great numbers in the Field of Mars and in the Hippodrome, in order to prepare their selections for the general staff of the National Guard. Suddenly throughout Paris, from one end to the other, a rumour spread as quick as lightning, to the effect that the workers had met, armed, in the Field of Mars, under the leadership of Louis Blanc, Blanqui, Cabet and Raspail, in order to march thence on the Hotel de Ville, overthrow the Provisional Government and proclaim a communist government. The general alarm is sounded—Ledru-Rollin, Marrast and Lamartine later contended for the honour of having initiated this—in an hour 100,000 men are under arms; the Hotel de Ville is occupied at all points by the National Guard; the cry: Down with the Communists! Down with Louis Blanc, with Blanqui, with Raspail, with Cabet! thunders throughout Paris, and innumerable deputations pay homage to the Provisional Government, all ready to save the fatherland and society. When the workers finally appeared before the Hotel de Ville, in order to hand over to the Provisional Government a patriotic collection which they had made in the Field of Mars, they learned to their amazement that bourgeois Paris had defeated their shadow in a very carefully calculated sham fight. The terrible attempt of April 16 furnished the excuse for *recalling the army to Paris*—the actual purpose of the clumsily constructed comedy—and for the reactionary federalist demonstrations in

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<sup>1</sup>Down with Ledru-Rollin.—Ed.

the provinces.

On May 4 the *National Assembly* met, the result of the direct general elections. Universal suffrage did not possess the magic power which republicans of the old school had ascribed to it. They saw in the whole of France, at least in the majority of Frenchmen, *citoyens*, with the *same* interests, the same understanding, etc. This was their *cult of the people*. Instead of their *imaginary* people, the elections brought the *real* people to the light of day, *i.e.*, representatives of the different classes into which it falls. We have seen why peasants and petty bourgeois had to vote under the leadership of a bourgeoisie spoiling for a fight and big landowners frantic for restoration. But if universal suffrage was not the miraculous magic wand for which the republican duffers had taken it, it possessed the incomparably higher merit of unchaining the class struggle, of letting the various middle sections of petty-bourgeois society rapidly live through their illusions and disappointments, of tossing all the fractions of the exploiting class at one throw to the head of the state, and thus tearing from them their treacherous mask, whereas the monarchy with its property qualification only let definite fractions of the bourgeoisie compromise themselves, and let the others lie hidden behind the scenes and surrounded them with the halo of a common opposition.

In the Constituent National Assembly which met on May 4, the *bourgeois republicans*, the republicans of the *National* had the upper hand. Legitimists and even Orleanists at first only dared to show themselves under the mask of bourgeois republicanism. Only in the name of the republic could the fight against the proletariat be undertaken.

*The republic dates from May 4, not from February 25, i.e.*, the republic recognised by the French people; it is not the republic which the Paris proletariat thrust upon the Provisional Government, not the republic with social institutions, not the dream picture which hovered before the fighters on the barricades. The republic proclaimed by the National Assembly, the sole legitimate republic, is the republic which is no revolutionary weapon against the bourgeois order, but rather its political reconstitution, the political re-consolidation of bourgeois society, in a word, *the bourgeois republic*. From the tribune of the National Assembly this contention resounded and in the entire republican and anti-republican bourgeois press it found its echo.

And we have seen how the February republic in reality was not and could not be other than a *bourgeois* republic; how the Provisional Government, nevertheless, was forced by the immediate pressure of the proletariat to announce it as a *republic with social institutions*, how the Paris proletariat was still incapable of going beyond the bourgeois republic otherwise than in *ideas*, in *imagination*; how it everywhere acted in its service when it really came to action; how the promises made to it became an unbearable danger for the new republic; how the whole life process of the Provisional Government was comprised in a continuous fight against the demands of the proletariat.

In the National Assembly all France sat in judgment on the Paris proletariat. It broke immediately with the social illusions of the February Revolution; it roundly proclaimed the *bourgeois republic*, nothing but the bourgeois republic. It at once excluded the representatives of the proletariat, Louis Blanc and Albert, from the Executive Commission appointed by it; it threw out the proposal of a special Labour Ministry, and received with stormy applause the statement of the Minister Trelat: "The question is merely one of bringing labour back to its old conditions."

But all this was not enough. The February republic was won by the workers with the passive support of the bourgeoisie. The proletarians regarded themselves, and rightly, as the victors of February, and they made the proud claims of victors. They had to be vanquished on the streets, they had to be shown that they were worsted as soon as they fought, not *with* the bourgeoisie, but *against* the bourgeoisie. Just as the February republic, with its socialist concessions, required a battle of the proletariat, united with the bourgeoisie, against monarchy, so a second battle was necessary in order to sever the republic from the socialist concessions, in order to officially work out the bourgeois republic as dominant. The bourgeoisie had to refute the demands of the proletariat with arms in its hands. And the real birthplace of the bourgeois republic is not the *February victory*; it is the *June defeat*.

The proletariat hastened the decision when, on the 15th of May, it pushed into the National Assembly, sought in vain to recapture its revolutionary influence and only delivered its energetic leaders to the jailers of the bourgeoisie.<sup>1</sup> *Il faut en*

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<sup>1</sup>In connection with the events of May 15, 1848, Barbes,

*finir!* This situation must end! With this cry the National Assembly gave vent to its determination to force the proletariat into a decisive struggle. The Executive Commission issued a series of provocative decrees, such as that prohibiting congregation of the people, etc. From the tribune of the Constituent National Assembly, the workers were directly provoked, insulted and derided. But the real point of the attack was, as we have seen, the *National Ateliers*. The Constituent National Assembly imperiously pointed these out to the Executive Commission, which only waited to hear its own plan put forward as the command of the National Assembly.

The Executive Commission began by making entry into the *National Ateliers* more difficult, by turning the day wage into a piece wage, by banishing workers not born in Paris to Sologne, ostensibly for the construction of earthworks. These earthworks were only a rhetorical formula with which to gloss over their expulsion, as the workers, returning disillusioned, announced to their comrades. Finally, on June 21, a decree appeared in the *Moniteur*, which ordered the forcible expulsion of all unmarried workers from the *National Ateliers*, or their enrolment in the army.

The workers were left no choice, they had to starve or start to fight. They answered on June 22 with the tremendous insurrection in which the first great battle was fought between the two classes that split modern society. It was a fight for the preservation or annihilation of the *bourgeois order*. The veil that shrouded the republic was torn to pieces.

It is well known how the workers, with unexampled bravery and talent, without chiefs, without a common plan, without means and, for the most part, lacking weapons, held in check for five days the army, the Mobile Guard, the Parisian National Guard, and the National Guard that streamed in from the provinces. It is well known how the bourgeoisie compensated itself for the mortal anguish it underwent by unheard of brutality, and massacred over 3,000 prisoners.

The official representatives of French democracy were steeped in republican ideology to such an extent that it was only some weeks later that they began to have an inkling of the meaning of the June fight. They were stupefied by the gunpowder smoke in which their fantastic republic dissolved.

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Albert, Raspail, Sobrier, and within a few days Blanqui also, were arrested and cast into the Vincennes prison.—*Ed.*

The immediate impression which the news of the June defeat made on us, the reader will allow us to describe in the words of the *N.Rh. Z.*<sup>1</sup>

“The last official remnant of the February Revolution, the Executive Commission, has melted away, like an apparition, before the seriousness of events. The fireworks of Lamartine have turned into the war rockets of Cavaignac. *Fraternite*, the fraternity of antagonistic classes of which one exploits the other, this *fraternite*, proclaimed in February, written in capital letters on the brow of Paris, on every prison, on every barracks—its true, unadulterated, its prosaic expression is *civil war*, civil war in its most fearful form, the war of labour and capital. This fraternity flamed in front of all the windows of Paris on the evening of June 25, when the Paris of the bourgeoisie was illuminated, whilst the Paris of the proletariat burnt, bled, moaned. Fraternity endured just as long as the interests of the bourgeoisie were in fraternity with the interests of the proletariat.—Pedants of the old revolutionary traditions of 1793; socialist doctrinaires who begged at the doors of the bourgeoisie on behalf of the people and were allowed to preach long sermons and to compromise themselves as long as the proletarian lion had to be lulled to sleep; republicans who demanded the old bourgeois order in its entirety, with the exception of the crowned head; adherents of the dynasty among the opposition upon whom fortune foisted the overthrow of the dynasty instead of a change of ministers; Legitimists who wanted, not to throw away the livery, but to change its cut, these were the allies with whom the people made its February.—The February Revolution was the *beautiful* revolution, the revolution of universal sympathy, because the antagonisms, which had flared up in it against the monarchy, slumbered peacefully side by side, still *undeveloped*, because the social struggle which formed its background had won only a joyous existence, an existence of phrases, of words. The June revolution is the *ugly* revolution, the repulsive revolution, because things have taken the place of phrases, because the republic uncovered the head of the monster itself, by striking off the crown that shielded and concealed it.—*Order!* was the battle cry of Guizot. *Order!* cried Sebastiani,<sup>2</sup> the follower of Guizot, when Warsaw became Russian. *Order!* shouts Cavaignac, the brutal echo of the French National Assembly and of the republican bourgeoisie. *Order!* thundered his grape-shot, as it ripped up the body of the proletariat. None of the numerous revolutions of the French bourgeoisie since 1789 was an attack on order; for they allowed

<sup>1</sup>*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>In September 1831, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sebastiani, in discussing the policy of the government in relation to the insurrection in Poland which had just been suppressed by the Russian autocracy, uttered the notorious phrase: “Order reigns in Warsaw.”—Ed.

the rule of the class, they allowed the slavery of the workers, they allowed the bourgeois order to endure, however often the political form of this rule and of this slavery changed. June has attacked this order. Woe to June!" (*N. Rh. Z.*, June 29, 1848.)

Woe to June! re-echoes Europe.

The Paris proletariat was forced into the June insurrection by the bourgeoisie. In this lay its doom. Its immediate, admitted needs did not drive it to want to win the forcible overthrow of the bourgeoisie, nor was it equal to this task. The *Moniteur* had to inform it officially that the time was past when the republic saw any occasion to do honour to its illusions, and its defeat first convinced it of the truth that the slightest improvement in its position remains a *utopia within* the bourgeois republic, a utopia that becomes a crime as soon as it wants to realise it. In place of its demands, exuberant in form, but petty and even bourgeois still in content, the concession of which it wanted to wring from the February republic, there appeared the bold slogan of revolutionary struggle: *Overthrow the bourgeoisie! Dictatorship of the working class!*

By making its burial place the birth place of the bourgeois republic, the proletariat compelled the latter to come out forthwith in its pure form as the state whose admitted object is to perpetuate the rule of capital, the slavery of labour. Constantly faced by the scarred, irreconcilable, invincible enemy—invincible because its existence is the condition of the bourgeoisie's own life—bourgeois rule, freed from all fetters, was bound to turn immediately into *bourgeois terrorism*. With the proletariat removed for the time being from the stage and bourgeois dictatorship recognised officially, the middle sections, in the mass, had more and more to side with the proletariat as their position became more unbearable and their antagonism to the bourgeoisie became more acute. Just as earlier in its upsurge, so now they had to find in its defeat the cause of their misery.

If the June insurrection raised the self-reliance of the bourgeoisie all over the Continent, and caused it to league itself openly with the feudal monarchy against the people, what was the first sacrifice to this alliance? The Continental bourgeoisie itself. The June defeat prevented it from consolidating its rule and from bringing the people, half satisfied and half out of humour, to a standstill at the lowest stage of the bourgeois revolution.

Finally, the defeat of June divulged to the despotic powers of Europe the secret that France under all conditions must maintain peace abroad in order to be able to wage civil war at home. Thus the peoples who had begun the fight for their national independence were abandoned to the superior power of Russia, Austria and Prussia, but, at the same time, the fate of these national revolutions was subordinated to the fate of the proletarian revolution, robbed of its apparent independence, its independence of the great social revolution. The Hungarian shall not be free, nor the Pole, nor the Italian, as long as the worker remains a slave!

Finally, with the victory of the Holy Alliance, Europe took on a form that makes every fresh proletarian upheaval in France directly coincide with a *world war*. The new French revolution is forced to leave its national soil forthwith and *conquer the European terrain*, on which alone the revolution of the nineteenth century can be carried through.

Only through the defeat of June, therefore, were all the conditions created under which France can seize the *initiative* of the European revolution. Only after baptism in the blood of the June insurgents did the tricolour become the flag of the European revolution—the *red flag*.

And we cry: *The revolution is dead!—Long live the revolution!*

## II

### FROM JUNE 1848 TO JUNE 13, 1849

February 25, 1848, had granted the *republic* to France, June 25 thrust the *revolution* on her. And revolution, after June, meant: *overthrow of bourgeois society*, whereas, before February, it had meant *overthrow of the form of state*.

The June fight had been led by the republican fraction of the bourgeoisie; with victory, the state power inevitably fell to its share. The state of siege laid Paris, gagged, unresisting at its feet, and in the provinces there was a moral state of siege, the threatening, brutal arrogance of the victorious bourgeoisie and the unleashed property fanaticism of the peasant. No danger, therefore, from below!

The smashing of the revolutionary force of the workers simultaneously shattered the political influence of the *democratic republicans*, i.e., of the republicans in the sense of the

*petty bourgeoisie*, who were represented in the Executive Commission by Ledru-Rollin, in the Constituent National Assembly by the party of the Mountain and in the press by the *Reforme*.<sup>1</sup> Together with the bourgeois republicans they had conspired on April 16 against the proletariat, together with them they had warred against it in the June days. Thus they themselves blasted the background against which their party stood out as a power, for the petty bourgeoisie can only preserve a revolutionary attitude to the bourgeoisie as long as the proletariat stands behind it. They were dismissed. The sham alliance which the bourgeois republicans, reluctantly and with reservations, concluded with them during the epoch of the Provisional Government and the Executive Commission was openly broken by the bourgeois republicans. Spurned and repulsed as allies, they sank down to subordinate henchmen of the tricolour, from which they could not wring any concessions, but the domination of which they had to support whenever this, and with it the republic, was put in question by the anti-republican bourgeois factions. Finally, these factions, the Orleanists and the Legitimists, found themselves, as a matter of course, in a minority in the Constituent National Assembly. Before the June days, they themselves only dared to react under the mask of bourgeois republicanism; the June victory allowed for a moment the whole of bourgeois France to greet its deliverer in Cavaignac,<sup>2</sup> and when, shortly after the June days,

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<sup>1</sup> The Party of the Mountain (the *Montagnards*) was the name applied during the time of the 1848 Revolution to the representatives of the democratic petty-bourgeois republicans in the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies. This name dated from the time of the French bourgeois revolution when the designation of the Mountain was applied to the Left wing in the Convention, who received this title owing to the benches on which Left Deputies were seated "being situated high up. The "Mountain" of 1848 which represented "the mass of the nation wavering between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat" (Marx) was only a pitiful parody of the "Mountain" of the period of the French bourgeois revolution at the end of the eighteenth century: The *Reforme* was the organ of the Mountain in 1848.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Concerning the historical basis which gave rise to Cavaignac in France, Lenin wrote as follows in his articles entitled "The Class Origins of Present and 'Future' Cavaignacs":

"Let us recall the class role played by Cavaignac. In February 1848, the French monarchy was overthrown. The bourgeois republicans came into power. They, too, like our Cadets, wanted 'order,' meaning by that the restoration and

the anti-republicans reconstituted themselves as an independent party, the military dictatorship and the state of siege in Paris permitted it to put out its antennae only very timidly and bashfully.

Since 1830, the *bourgeois republican* fraction, with its writers, its speakers, its men of talent and ambition, its deputies, generals, bankers, and lawyers had grouped itself round a Parisian journal, the *National*. In the provinces this journal had its branch newspapers. The coterie of the *National* was the *dynasty of the tricolour republic*. It immediately took possession of all state offices, of the ministries, the prefecture of police, the post-office management, the positions of prefect,

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the strengthening of the monarchy's instruments for oppressing the masses: the police, the standing army and the privileged bureaucracy. They, too, like our Cadets, wanted to put an end to the revolution, for they hated the revolutionary proletariat with its still very hazy 'social' (i.e., socialist) aspirations.... They, too, like our Cadets artfully utilised the petty-bourgeois 'socialism' of Louis Blanc, by making him a member of the cabinet and thus transforming him from a leader of the socialist workers, which he wanted to be, into a mere appendage, hanger-on of the bourgeoisie.

"Such were the class interests, the position and the policy of the ruling class.

"Another basic social power was the petty bourgeoisie, vacillating, frightened by the Red spectre, carried away by the outcries against the 'Anarchists.' In its aspirations, dreamily and loquaciously 'socialistic,' gladly calling itself a 'socialist democracy' (even this very name has now been adopted by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks!), the petty bourgeoisie was afraid to entrust itself to the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat, not understanding that this fear condemned it to trust in the bourgeoisie. For, while in a society with an intensified class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, particularly when this struggle is inevitably made more acute by a revolution, there *can be no* 'middle' course, the whole essence of the class position and aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie consists in wanting the impossible, in aspiring towards the impossible, i.e., towards just such a 'middle course.'

"The third determining class force was the proletariat which aspired not towards a 'conciliation' with the bourgeoisie, but towards a victory over it, towards a fearless development of the revolution onward, and, what is more, on an international scale.

"This was the objective historical soil which gave rise to Cavaignac. The vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie 'pushed it aside' from the role of an active participant, and the French Cadet, General Cavaignac, taking advantage of the fear of

the higher posts of army officers now vacant. At the head of the executive power stood its general, Cavaignac; its editor-in-chief, Marrast, became permanent president of the Constituent National Assembly. As master of ceremonies in his salons, he at the same time did the honours of the honest republic.

Even revolutionary French writers awed, as it were, by the republican tradition, have encouraged the mistake that the royalists dominated the Constituent National Assembly. On the contrary, after the June days, the Constituent Assembly remained the *exclusive representative of bourgeois republicanism*, and it put this face forward all the more decidedly, the more the influence of the tricolour republicans collapsed outside the Assembly. If the question was one of maintaining the form of the bourgeois republic, then the Assembly had the votes of the democratic republicans at its disposal, if one of maintaining the *content*, then even its mode of speech no longer separated it from the royalist bourgeois factions. For it is precisely the interests of the bourgeoisie, the material conditions of its class rule and class exploitation, that form the content of the bourgeois republic.

Therefore it was not royalism, but bourgeois republicanism that was realised in the life and deeds of this Constituent Assembly, which in the end did not die, nor was it killed, but simply decayed.

For the entire duration of its rule, as long as it played the principal and state role on the proscenium, unbroken sacrificial feast went on in the background—the continual sentencing by courts martial of the imprisoned June insurgents or their deportation without trial. The Constituent Assembly had the tact to admit that in the insurgents of June it was not judging criminals but wiping out enemies.

The first act of the Constituent National Assembly was the setting up of a *commission of enquiry* into the events of June and of May 15, and into the part played by the socialist

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the petty bourgeoisie to entrust itself to the proletariat, decided to *disarm* the Paris workers, to shoot them down *en masse*.

“The revolution was terminated by this historical shooting; the petty bourgeoisie, numerically preponderant, had been and remained the politically impotent appendage of the bourgeoisie, and three years later France again saw the restoration of a particularly vile form of Caesarist monarchy.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, English ed., Vol. XX, Book II, pp. 255-56.)—Ed.

and democratic party leaders during these days. The enquiry was directed against Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, and Caussidiere. The bourgeois republicans burned with impatience to rid themselves of these rivals. They could have entrusted the venting of their spleen to no more suitable subject than M. Odilon Barrot, the former chief of the dynastic opposition, the incarnation of liberalism, the *nullite grave*,<sup>1</sup> the profoundly shallow person, who not only had a dynasty to revenge, but even had to settle accounts with the revolutionaries for thwarting his premiership. A sure guarantee of his relentlessness. This Barrot was therefore appointed chairman of the commission of enquiry, and he constructed a complete legal process against the February Revolution, which may be summarised thus: March 17, *demonstration*; April 16, *conspiracy*; May 15, *attempt*; June 23, *civil war*! Why did he not stretch his erudite researches into criminal law as far back as February 24? The *Journal des Debats*<sup>2</sup> answered: February 24—that is the *foundation of Rome*. The origin of states gets lost in a myth, in which one may believe, but which one may not discuss. Louis Blanc and Caussidiere were handed over to the courts. The National Assembly completed the work of cleansing itself which it had begun on May 15.

The plan formed by the Provisional Government, and again taken up by Goudchaux, of taxing capital—in the form of a mortgage tax—was rejected by the Constituent Assembly; the law that limited the working day to ten hours was repealed; imprisonment for debt was once more introduced; the large section of the French population that can neither read nor write was excluded from the service of juries. Why not from the franchise also? Sureties for journals were again demanded; the right of association was restricted.

But in their haste to give back to the old bourgeois relationships their old guarantees, and to wipe out every trace left behind by the waves of the revolution, the bourgeois republicans came up against an obstacle which threatened them with unexpected danger.

No one had fought more fanatically in the June days for the salvation of property and the restoration of credit than the Parisian petty bourgeois—keepers of cafes and restaurants

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<sup>1</sup>Pompous nonentity.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The organ of the Party of Order. On this party, see p. 233 *et seq.*, in the present volume.

*marchands de vins*,<sup>1</sup> small traders, shopkeepers, handicraftsmen, etc. The shopkeeper had pulled himself together and marched against the barricades, in order to restore the traffic which leads from the streets into the shop. But behind the barricade stood the customers and the debtors; before it the creditors of the shop. And when the barricades were thrown down and the workers were crushed and the shopkeepers, drunk with victory, rushed back to their shops, they found the entrance barred by a saviour of property, an official agent of credit, who presented them with threatening letters: Overdue bill of exchange! Overdue house rent! Overdue promissory note! Ruined shop! Ruined shopkeeper!

*Salvation of property!* But the house in which they lived was not their property; the shop which they kept was not their property: the commodities in which they dealt were not their property. Neither their business, nor the plate from which they ate, nor the bed on which they slept belonged to them any longer. As against them, precisely this property had to be saved for the house owner, who let the house; for the banker, who discounted the bills of exchange; for the capitalist, who made the advances in cash; for the manufacturer, who entrusted the sale of the commodities to these retailers; for the wholesale dealer, who had credited the raw materials to these handicraftsmen. *Restoration of credit!* But credit, having regained strength, proved itself a vigorous and jealous god, for it turned out of his four walls, the debtor who could not pay, together with wife and child, surrendered his presumed property to capital, and threw the man himself into the debtors' prison, which had once more reared itself threateningly over the corpses of the June insurgents.

The petty bourgeois saw with horror that, by striking down the workers, they had delivered themselves up unresisting into the hands of their creditors. Their bankruptcy, which since February had been dragging on in chronic fashion and had been apparently ignored, was openly declared after June.

Their *nominal property* had been left unassailed as long as it was of consequence to drive them to the battlefield *in the name of property*. Now that the great issue with the proletariat had been settled the small matter of the grocer could in turn be settled. In Paris the mass of liabilities amounted to

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<sup>1</sup>Wine merchants.—*ffd.*

over 21,000,000 francs; in the provinces to over 11,000,000. Business tenants of more than 7,000 Paris houses had not paid their rent since February.

While the National Assembly had instituted an enquiry into the *political guilt* beginning with February, the petty bourgeois, on their part, now demanded an enquiry into the *civil debts* up to February 24.<sup>1</sup> They assembled *en masse* in the Bourse hall and threateningly demanded on behalf of every dealer who could prove that his bankruptcy was due solely to the stagnation caused by the revolution, and that his business was good on February 24, a lengthening of the terms of payments by judgment of a commercial court and the compelling of the creditor, in consideration of a moderate percentage payment, to liquidate his claim. As a legislative proposal, this question was dealt with in the National Assembly in the form of *concordats a l'amiable*.<sup>2</sup> The Assembly vacillated; then it suddenly discovered that, at the same time, at Porte St. Denis, thousands of wives and children of the insurgents had prepared an amnesty petition.

In the presence of the resurrected spectre of June, the petty bourgeoisie trembled and the National Assembly again retrieved its sternness. The *concordats a l'amiable*, the friendly understanding between creditors and debtors, was rejected in its essential points.

Thus, after the democratic representatives of the petty bourgeois had long been repulsed by the republican representatives of the bourgeoisie within the National Assembly, this parliamentary breach received its civil, real economic meaning, when the petty bourgeois as debtors were handed over to the bourgeois as creditors. A large part of the former were completely ruined and the remainder were only allowed to continue their business under conditions which made them absolute serfs of capital. On August 22, 1848, the National Assembly rejected the *concordats a l'amiable*; on September 19, 1848, in the midst of the state of siege, Prince Louis Bonaparte and the prisoner of Vincennes, the Communist Raspail, were elected as representatives of Paris. The bourgeoisie, however, elected the Jewish money-changer and Orleanist, Fould. From all sides at once, therefore, open declaration of war against the Consti-

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<sup>1</sup>A play on words: *politische Schuld—burgerliche Schulden*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Amicable agreement.—Ed.

tuent Assembly, against bourgeois republicanism, against Cavaignac.

It needs no argument to show how the mass bankruptcy of the Paris petty bourgeois was bound to produce its effects far beyond its immediate victims, and convulse bourgeois commerce once more, while the state deficit was swollen anew by the costs of the June insurrection, and the state income sank continuously through the hold up of production, the restricted consumption and the decreasing imports. Cavaignac and the National Assembly could have recourse only to the expedient of a new loan, which forced them still further under the yoke of the finance aristocracy.

If the petty bourgeois had harvested bankruptcy and legal liquidation as the fruit of the June victory, the Janissaries<sup>1</sup> of Cavaignac, the *Mobile Guards*, found their reward in the soft arms of the courtesans and as "the youthful saviours of society" they received all kinds of homage in the salons of Marrast, the *gentilhomme*<sup>2</sup> of the tricolour, who at the same time served as the *Amphitryon*<sup>3</sup> and the troubadour of the honest republic. Meanwhile, this social favouritism and the disproportionately higher pay of the Mobile Guard embittered the *army*, while at the same time all those national illusions vanished with which bourgeois republicanism had been able to attach to itself a part of the army and peasant class under Louis Philippe by means of its journal, the *National*. The role of mediator which Cavaignac and the National Assembly played in *North Italy*, in order, together with England, to betray it to Austria—this one day of rule destroyed eighteen years of opposition on the part of the *National*. No government was less national than the *National*, none more dependent on England, and, under Louis Philippe, it lived by paraphrasing daily the saying of Cato: *Carthaginem esse delendam*<sup>4</sup>: none was more servile towards the Holy Alliance, and it had demanded from a Guizot the tearing up of the Treaties of Vienna.<sup>5</sup> The irony of history made Bastide, the ex-editor

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<sup>1</sup> Soldier of the Turkish Guard.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Nobleman.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Host; entertainer after the fashion of the hero of Moliere's play, *Amphitryon*.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> Carthage must be destroyed.—*Ed.*

<sup>5</sup> The decrees of the Vienna Congress of the chief European powers (1814-15), which were of a purely reactionary character and attempted to restore the political order which had

for foreign affairs of the *National*, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, so that he might refute every one of his articles in every one of his despatches.

For a moment, the army and the peasant class had believed that, simultaneously with the military dictatorship, war abroad and the *gloire* had been placed on the order of the day in France. But Cavaignac was not the dictatorship of the sabre over bourgeois society; he was the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through the sabre. And of the soldier they now required only the gendarme. Cavaignac concealed under the stern features of old republican resignation humdrum submission to the humiliating conditions of his bourgeois office. *L'argent n'a pas de maître!* Money has no master! He idealised this old election cry of the *tieretat*<sup>1</sup> as, in general, the Constituent Assembly did, by translating it into political speech: The bourgeoisie has no king; the true form of its rule is the republic.

And the "great organic work" of the Constituent National Assembly consisted in working out this *form*, in producing a republican constitution. The re-christening of the Christian calendar as a republican one, of the saintly Bartholomew as the saintly Robespierre made no more change in the wind and weather than this constitution made or was intended to make in bourgeois society. Where it went beyond the *change of costume*, it put on record the *existing facts*. Thus it solemnly registered the fact of the republic, the fact of universal suffrage, the fact of a single sovereign National Assembly in place of two limited constitutional chambers. Thus it registered and regulated the fact of the dictatorship of Cavaignac by replacing the stationary, irresponsible hereditary monarchy with itinerant, responsible, electoral monarchy, with a quadrennial presidency. Thus, no less, it elevated to a constitutional law the fact of the extraordinary powers with which the National Assembly, after the shock of May 15 and June 25, had providently invested its president in the interest of its own security. The remainder of the constitution was a work of terminology. The royalist labels were torn off the machine of the old monarchy and republican labels were stuck on. Marrast, former editor-in-chief of the *National*,

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existed before the French bourgeois revolution and Napoleon I and deprived France of all its territorial conquests.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Third estate.—Ed.

now editor-in-chief of the constitution, acquitted himself of this academic task not without talent.

The Constituent Assembly resembled that Chilian official who wanted to regulate property relations in land more firmly by a cadastral survey, just at the moment when subterranean rumblings had already announced the volcanic eruption that was to hurl away the land itself from under his feet. While in theory it accurately measured the forms in which the rule of the bourgeoisie found republican expression, in reality it held its own only by the suspension of all formulas, by force *sans phrase*,<sup>1</sup> by the *state of siege*. Two days before it began its work on the constitution, it proclaimed its permanency. Formerly, constitutions had been made and adopted as soon as the social process of revolution had reached a point of rest, the newly formed class relationships had established themselves and the contending factions of the ruling class had had recourse to a compromise which allowed them to continue the struggle among themselves and at the same time to keep the exhausted masses of the people out of it. On the other hand, this constitution did not sanction any social revolution; it sanctioned the momentary victory of the old society over the revolution.

The first draft of the constitution, made before the June days, still contained the *droit au travail*, the right to work, the first clumsy formula wherein the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat are summarised. It was transformed into the *droit a l'assistance*, the right to public relief, and what modern state does not feed its paupers in some form or other? The right to work is, in the bourgeois sense, an absurdity, a miserable, pious wish. But behind the right to work stands the power over capital; behind the power over capital the appropriation of the means of production, their subjection to the associated working class and, therefore, the abolition of wage labour as well as of capital and of their mutual relations.<sup>2</sup> Behind the "*right to work*" stood the June insurrection. The Constituent Assembly, which in fact set the revolutionary proletariat *hors la loi*, outside the law, had on principle to throw the formula out of the constitution, the law of laws, had to pronounce its anathema on the "right to work." But

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<sup>1</sup>Without circumlocution.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>On this passage, extremely important theoretically, see Engels' Introduction to *The Civil War in France*.—Ed.

it did not stop there. As Plato banned the poets from his republic, so it banished forever from its republic—the *progressive tax*. But the progressive tax is not only a bourgeois measure, which can be carried out within the existing relations of production to a greater or-less degree; it was the only means of binding the middle strata of bourgeois society to the *honnete*<sup>1</sup> republic, of reducing the state debt, of holding in check the anti-republican majority of the bourgeoisie.

In the matter of the *concordats a l'amiable*, tricolour republicans had actually sacrificed the petty bourgeoisie to the big bourgeoisie. They elevated this isolated fact to a principle by the legal prohibition of the progressive tax. They put bourgeois reform on the same level as proletarian revolution. But what class then remained as the mainstay of their republic? The big bourgeoisie. And its mass was anti-republican. If it exploited the republicans of the *National* in order to re-establish the old relations of economic life, it thought, on the other hand, of exploiting the re-established social relations in order to restore the political reforms that corresponded to them. Even at the beginning of October, Cavaignac saw himself forced to make Dufaure and Vivien, previously ministers of Louis Philippe, ministers of the republic, however much the brainless puritans of his own party growled and blustered.

While the tricolour constitution rejected every compromise with the petty bourgeoisie and did not know how to attach any new social element to the new state form, it hastened, on the other hand, to give back to a body that constituted the most hardbitten and fanatical defender of the old state its traditional immunity. It raised the *irremovability* of *judges*, which had been questioned by the Provisional Government, to a constitutional law. The one king whom it had removed rose again, multiplied in these irremovable inquisitors of legality.

The French press has analysed from numerous aspects the contradictions of M. Marrast's constitution, for example, the co-existence of two sovereigns, the National Assembly and the President, etc., etc.

The most comprehensive contradiction of this constitution, however, consisted in the following: The classes whose social slavery the constitution is to perpetuate, proletariat,

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<sup>1</sup>Honest.—Ed.

peasantry, petty bourgeois, it puts in possession of political power through universal suffrage. And from the class whose old social power it sanctions, the bourgeoisie, it withdraws the political guarantees of this power. It forces its political rule into democratic conditions, which at every moment help the hostile classes to victory and jeopardise the very foundations of bourgeois society. From the former classes it demands that they should not go forward from political to social emancipation; from the others that they should not go back from social to political restoration.

These contradictions perturbed the bourgeois republicans very little. To the extent that they ceased to be *indispensable*—they were indispensable only as the advance fighters of the old society against the revolutionary proletariat—a few weeks after their victory they fell from the position of a *party* to that of a *coterie*. And they treated the constitution as a big intrigue. Above all, what should be constituted in it was the rule of the *coterie*. The President should be a protracted Cavaignac; the Legislative Assembly a protracted Constituent Assembly. They hoped to reduce the political power of the masses of the people to a fictitious power, and to be able to make sufficient play with this sham power itself, continually to keep hanging over the majority of the bourgeoisie the dilemma of the June days: *realm of the National or realm of anarchy*.

The work on the constitution, which was begun on September 4, was ended on October 23. On September 2 the Constituent Assembly had decided not to dissolve until the organic laws supplementing the constitution were enacted. None the less, it decided to call into being the creation, most of all its own, the President, on December 4, long before the circle of its own activity was closed. So sure it was of hailing in the *homunculus*<sup>1</sup> of the constitution, the son of his mother. As a precaution it was provided that if none of the candidates received two million votes, the election should pass over from the nation to the Constituent Assembly.

Fruitless provisions! The first day of the realisation of the constitution was the last day of the rule of the Constituent Assembly. At the bottom of the ballot box lay its sentence of death. It sought the "son of his mother" and found "the

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<sup>1</sup>According to Paracelsus, a diminutive man produced artificially and endowed with magic powers.—Ed.

nephew of his uncle."<sup>1</sup> Saul Cavaignac obtained one million votes, but David Napoleon obtained six million. Saul Cavaignac was defeated six times over.

December 10, 1848, was the day of the *peasant insurrection*. Only from this day does the February of the French peasants date. The symbol that expressed their entry into the revolutionary movement, clumsily cunning, knavishly naive, doltishly sublime, a calculated superstition, a pathetic burlesque, a cleverly stupid anachronism, a world historic piece of buffoonery and an undecipherable hieroglyphic for the understanding of the civilised—this symbol bore the unmistakable features of the class that represents barbarism within civilisation. The republic had announced itself to this class with the *tax collector*; it announced itself to the republic with the emperor. Napoleon was the only man who had exhaustively represented the interests and the imagination of the peasant class, newly created in 1789. By writing his name on the front page of the republic, it declared war abroad and the enforcing of its class interests at home. Napoleon, for the peasants, was not a person but a programme. With banners, with beat of drums and blare of trumpets, they marched to the polling booths shouting: *plus d'impôts, à bas les riches, à bas la république, vive l'Empereur*. No more taxes, down with the rich, down with the republic, long live the emperor! Behind the emperor was hidden the peasant war. The republic that they voted down was the *republic of the rich*.

December 10 was the *coup d'état* of the peasants, which overthrew the existing government. And from that day on, when they had taken a government from France and given one to her, their eyes were turned steadily on Paris. For a moment active heroes of the revolutionary drama, they could no longer be forced back into the passive and spineless role of the chorus.

The other classes helped to complete the election victory of the peasants. The election of Napoleon, for the *proletariat*, meant the deposition of Cavaignac, the overthrow of the Constituent Assembly, the dismissal of bourgeois republicanism, the rescinding of the June victory. For the *petty bourgeoisie*, Napoleon meant the rule of the debtors over the creditors. For the majority of the *big bourgeoisie* the election of Napoleon

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<sup>1</sup>i.e., Louis Bonaparte, later Emperor Louis Napoleon III, the nephew of Napoleon I.—Ed.

meant an open breach with the fraction of which it had had to make use, for a moment, against the revolution, but which became intolerable to it as soon as this fraction sought to consolidate the position of the moment into the constitutional position. Napoleon in place of Cavaignac, for the majority of the big bourgeoisie, meant the monarchy in place of the republic, the beginning of the royalist restoration, a shy hint at Orleans, the lily hidden beneath the violet.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the army voted for Napoleon against the Mobile Guard, against the peace idyll, for war.

Thus it happened, as the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* stated, the most simple-minded man in France acquired the most multifarious significance. Just because he was nothing, he could signify everything save himself. Meanwhile, different as the meaning of the name Napoleon might be in the mouths of the different classes, with this name each wrote in its bulletin: Down with the party of the *National*, down with Cavaignac, down with the Constituent Assembly, down with the bourgeois republic. The Minister, Dufaure, publicly declared in the Constituent Assembly: December 10 is a second February 24.

Petty bourgeoisie and proletariat had voted *en bloc* for Napoleon, in order to vote against Cavaignac and, by pooling their votes, to wrest the final decision from the Constituent Assembly. The more advanced sections of the two classes, however, put forward their own candidates. Napoleon was the *collective name* of all parties in coalition against the bourgeois republic, Ledru-Rollin and Raspail were the *proper names*, the former of the democratic petty bourgeoisie, the latter of the revolutionary proletariat. The votes for Raspail, the proletarians and their socialist spokesmen loudly declared, were to be merely a demonstration, so many protests against either presidency, *i.e.*, against the constitution itself, so many votes against Ledru-Rollin, the first act by which the proletariat, as an independent political party, cut loose from the democratic party. This party on the other hand, the democratic petty bourgeoisie and its parliamentary representative, the Mountain, treated the candidature of Ledru-Rollin with all the seriousness with which they are in the habit of solemnly duping themselves. For the rest, this was their last attempt to set themselves up as an independent party, as against the

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<sup>1</sup>The device on the shield of the Bourbons.—Ed.

proletariat. Not only the republican bourgeois party, but also the democratic bourgeoisie and its Mountain were beaten on, December 10.

France now possessed a Napoleon side by side with a Mountain, proof that both were only the lifeless caricatures of the great realities whose names they bore. Louis Napoleon, with the emperor's hat and the eagle, parodied the old Napoleon no more miserably than the Mountain, with its phrases borrowed from 1793 and its demagogic poses, parodied the old Mountain. Thus the traditional superstition in 1793 was stripped off at the same time as the traditional superstition in Napoleon. The revolution had only come into its own when it had won its *own original* name and it could only do that when the modern revolutionary class, the industrial proletariat, came dominatingly into its foreground. One can say that December 10 dumbfounded the Mountain and caused it to grow confused in its own mind, because it laughingly cut short the classical analogy to the old revolution with a rude peasant joke.

On December 20 Cavaignac laid down his office and the Constituent Assembly proclaimed Louis Napoleon president of the republic. On December 19, the last day of its autocracy, it rejected the proposal for amnesty for the June insurgents. To revoke the decree of June 27, through which it had condemned, 15,000 insurgents to deportation by evading legal judgment, did not that mean to revoke the June battle itself?

Odilon Barrot, the last Minister of Louis Philippe, became the first Minister of Louis Napoleon. Just as Louis Napoleon dated his rule, not from December 10, but from a decree of the Senate of 1806, so he found a prime minister who did not date his ministry from December 20, but from a royal decree of February 24.<sup>1</sup> As the legitimate heir of Louis Philippe, Louis Napoleon softened the change of government by retaining the old ministry, which, moreover, had not had time to wear itself out, since it had not found time to come to life.

The chiefs of the royalist bourgeois factions advised him in this choice. The head of the old dynastic opposition, who had unconsciously made the transition to the republicans of the *National*, was still more fitted to make with full consciousness the transition from the bourgeois republic to the monarchy.

Odilon Barrot was the head of the one old opposition party

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<sup>1</sup>See footnote 2 on p. 185.—Ed.

which, always fruitlessly struggling for ministerial portfolios, had not yet worn itself out. In rapid succession the revolution threw all the old opposition parties to the top of the state, so that they had to deny and revoke their old phrases not only in deeds but in words, and might finally be flung all together, combined in a repulsive mixture, on the dung heap of history by the people.<sup>1</sup> And this Barrot was spared no apostasy, this incarnation of bourgeois liberalism, who for eighteen years had hidden the rascally vacuity of his mind behind the serious demeanour of his body. If, at certain moments, the far too striking contrast between the thistles of the present and the laurels of the past startled the man himself, a glance in the mirror gave back his ministerial serenity and human self-admiration. What beamed at him from the mirror was Guizot, whom he had always envied, who had always mastered him, Guizot himself, but Guizot with the Olympian forehead of Odilon. What he overlooked were the ears of Midas.<sup>1</sup>

The Barrot of February 24 first became manifest in the Barrot of December 20. Associated with him, the Orleanist and Voltairian was the Legitimist and Jesuit, Falloux, as Minister for Education.

A few days later, the Ministry for Home Affairs was given to Leon Faucher, the Malthusian. Law, religion and political economy! The ministry of Barrot contained all this and, in addition, a combination of Orleanists and Legitimists. Only the Bonapartist was lacking. Bonaparte still hid his longing to signify Napoleon, for Soulouque<sup>2</sup> did not yet play Toussaint, L'Ouverture.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Midas was the legendary king of the Phrygians. According to the old fable, at a musical competition between Apollo and Pan, Midas gave the preference to Pan. Because of this the indignant Apollo rewarded him by giving him ass's ears.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Soulouque was the name of the president of the Negro republic of Haiti, who, in imitation of Napoleon I in 1850, proclaimed himself Emperor, surrounding himself with a whole staff of Negro marshals and generals, establishing a court after the French model and in everything attempting to copy Napoleon. The masses of the people in France wittily commented on the resemblance by dubbing Louis Bonaparte "the French Soulouque."—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Toussaint L'Ouverture (1748-1803) the famous Negro revolutionary, the son of a slave, who headed the insurrection of the slaves in San Domingo in 1796-1802. He was taken prisoner by the French forces and died in prison. The heroic

The party of the *National* was immediately relieved of all the higher posts where it had entrenched itself. The positions of Prefect of Police, Director of the Post, Procurator General, Mayor of Paris, were all filled by old creatures of the monarchy. Changarnier, the Legitimist, received the unified supreme command of the National Guard of the Department of the Seine, the Mobile Guard and the troops of the first military division; Bugeaud, the Orleanist, was nominated as the commander-in-chief of the Alpine army. This change of officials continued uninterruptedly under the Barrot government. The first act of his ministry was the restoration of the old royalist administration. The official scene was transformed in a trice—scenery, costumes, speech, actors, supers, dummies, prompters, the position of the parties, the theme of the drama, the content of the conflict, the whole situation. Only the antediluvian Constituent Assembly remained in its place. But from the hour when the National Assembly had installed Bonaparte, Bonaparte Barrot and Barrot Changarnier, France stepped out of the period of republican constitution-making into the period of the constituted republic. And in the constituted republic what place was there for a Constituent Assembly? After the earth had been created, there was nothing else for its creator to do but to take flight to heaven. The Constituent Assembly was determined not to follow his example; the National Assembly was the last asylum for the party of the bourgeois republicans. If all levers of executive power had been wrested from it, was there not left to it constituent omnipotence? Its first thought was to hold under all circumstances the positions of sovereignty that it occupied and thence to reconquer the lost ground. The Barrot ministry once displaced by a ministry of the *National*, and the royalist personnel would have to vacate the palaces of the administration forthwith and the tricolour personnel would move in again triumphantly. The National Assembly resolved on the overthrow of the ministry and the ministry itself offered an opportunity for the attack, than which the Constituent Assembly could not have found a better.

It must be remembered that for the peasants Louis Bonaparte signified: No more taxes! He sat for six days in

struggle of Toussaint L'Ouverture is deeply enshrined in the memory of the oppressed Negroes in the U.S.A. and in the colonies, as one of the first great leaders of the Negro struggle against imperialist exploitation and oppression.—Ed.

the President's chair, and on the seventh day, on December 27, his ministry proposed the *retention of the salt tax*, the abolition of which the Provisional Government had decreed. The salt tax shares with the wine tax the privilege of being the scapegoat of the old French financial system, particularly in the eyes of the country folk. The Barrot ministry could not have put into the mouth of the elected choice of the peasants any more mordant epigram on his electors than the words: *Restoration of the salt tax!* With the salt tax, Bonaparte lost his revolutionary salt—the Napoleon of the peasant insurrection dissolved like an apparition, and nothing remained but the great unknown of royalist bourgeois intrigue. And not without intention, the Barrot ministry made this act of tactlessly rude disillusionment the first governmental act of the President.

The Constituent Assembly, on its part, seized eagerly on the double opportunity of overthrowing the ministry, and, as against the elect of the peasantry, of setting itself up as the representative of peasant interests. It rejected the proposal of the finance minister, reduced the salt tax to a third of its former amount thus increasing by sixty millions a state deficit of five hundred and sixty millions, and, after this *vote of no confidence*, calmly awaited the resignation of the ministry. So little did it comprehend the new world that surrounded it and its own changed position. Behind the ministry stood the President and behind the President stood six millions, who had placed in the ballot box as many votes of no confidence in the Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly gave the nation back its no confidence vote. Absurd exchange! It forgot that its votes had lost compulsory quotation. The rejection of the salt tax only matured the decision of Bonaparte and his ministry to "end" the Constituent Assembly. That long duel began which lasted half the entire life of the Constituent Assembly. January 29, March 31 and May 3 are the *journees*, the great days of this crisis, just so many forerunners of June 13.

Frenchmen, for example, Louis Blanc, have construed January 29 as the date of the emergence of a constitutional contradiction, the contradiction between a sovereign, indissoluble National Assembly born of universal suffrage and a President, who, in words, was responsible to the Assembly, but who, in reality, was not only similarly sanctioned by universal suffrage and, in addition, united in his own person

all the votes that were split up a hundred times and distributed among the individual members of the National Assembly, but was also in full possession of the whole executive power, above which the National Assembly hovered as a merely moral force. This interpretation of January 29 confuses the language of the struggle on the platform, through the press and in the clubs, with its real content. Louis Bonaparte as against the National Assembly—that was not a one-sided constitutional power as against another; it was not the executive power as against the legislative, it was the constituted bourgeois republic itself as against the instruments of its constitution, as against the honours-seeking intrigues and ideological demands of the revolutionary bourgeois faction that had founded it and was now amazed to find that its constituted republic looked like a restored monarchy, and now violently desires to adhere to the constituting period with its conditions, its illusions, its language and its personnel and to prevent the mature bourgeois republic from emerging in its complete and peculiar form. As the Constituent National Assembly represented Cavaignac who had fallen back into it, so Bonaparte represented the Legislative National Assembly, that had not yet been estranged from him, i.e., the National Assembly of the constituted bourgeois republic.

The election of Bonaparte could only become explicable by putting in the place of the *one* name its many-sided significance, by repeating itself in the election of the new National Assembly. The mandate of the old was annulled by December 10. On January 29, therefore, it was not the President and the National Assembly of the *same* republic that were face to face, it was the National Assembly of the republic in the making and the President of the republic in being, two powers that embodied quite different periods in the life process of the republic; the one the small republican section of the bourgeoisie that alone could proclaim the republic, wrest it from the revolutionary proletariat by street fighting and a reign of terror, and draft its ideal features in the constitution, and the other the whole royalist mass of the bourgeoisie that alone could rule in this constituted bourgeois republic, strip the constitution of its ideological trimmings, and realise by its legislation and administration the indispensable conditions for the subjection of the proletariat.

The storm which broke on January 29 gathered its elements together during the whole month of January. The Constituent

Assembly wanted to drive the Barrot ministry to resign by its no confidence vote. The Barrot ministry, on the other hand, proposed that the Constituent Assembly should give itself a definitive no confidence vote, decide on suicide and decree its *own dissolution*. Rateau, one of the most obscure deputies, at the order of the ministry, on January 6 brought this motion before the Constituent Assembly, the same Constituent Assembly that already in August had resolved not to dissolve until a whole series of organic laws supplementing the constitution had been enacted. Fould, the ministerialist, bluntly declared to it that its dissolution was necessary "for the restoration of the deranged credit." And did it not derange credit when it prolonged the provisional stage and, with Barrot, again called Bonaparte in question, and, with Bonaparte, the constituted republic? Barrot, the Olympian, became a raving Roland<sup>1</sup> with the prospect of seeing the finally grabbed premiership, which the republicans had already withheld from him once for a decade, i.e., for ten months, again torn from him after scarcely two weeks' enjoyment of it—Barrot confronting this wretched Assembly out-tyrannised the tyrant. His mildest words were "no future is possible with it." And actually it did only represent the past. "It is incapable," he added ironically, "of surrounding the republic with the institutions which are necessary for its consolidation." Incapable indeed! With its exclusive antagonism to the proletariat, its bourgeois energy was simultaneously broken, and with its antagonism to the royalists its republican exuberance lived anew. Thus it was doubly incapable of consolidating the bourgeois republic, which it no longer comprehended, by means of the corresponding institutions.

Simultaneously with Rateau's motion the ministry evoked a *storm of petitions* throughout the land, and from all corners of France came flying daily at the head of the Constituent Assembly bundles of *billets doux* in which it was more or less categorically requested to *dissolve* and make its will. The Constituent Assembly, on its side, called forth counter petitions, in which it caused itself to be requested to remain alive. The election struggle between Bonaparte and Cavaignac was renewed as a petition struggle for or against the dissolution of the National Assembly. The petitions were to be subsequent

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<sup>1</sup>The hero of the epic poem, *Orlando furioso*, by the Italian writer, Ariosto (1474-1533).—Ed.

commentaries on December 10. During the whole of January this agitation continued.

In the conflict between the Constituent Assembly and the President, the former could not go back to the general election as its origin, for the appeal was from it to universal suffrage. It could base itself on no regular power, for the issue was the struggle against the legal power. It could not overthrow the ministry by no confidence votes, as it again essayed to do on January 6 and 26, for the ministry did not ask for its confidence. Only one possibility was left to it, that of *insurrection*. The fighting forces of the insurrection were the *republican part of the National Guard*, the *Mobile Guard* and the centres of the revolutionary proletariat, the *clubs*. The Mobile Guard, those heroes of the June days, in December as well formed the organised fighting force of the republican bourgeois factions, just as before June the *National Ateliers* had formed the organised fighting force of the revolutionary proletariat. As the Executive Commission of the Constituent Assembly directed its brutal attack on the *National Ateliers*, when it had to put an end to the pretensions of the proletariat that had become unbearable, so the ministry of Bonaparte directed its attack on the Mobile Guard, when it had to put an end to the pretensions of the republican bourgeois factions that had become unbearable. It ordered the *dissolution of the Mobile Guard*. One half of it was dismissed and thrown on the street, the other was organised on monarchist instead of democratic lines, and its pay was reduced to the usual pay of troops of the line. The Mobile Guard found itself in the position of the June insurgents and every day the press carried *public confessions* in which it admitted its blame for June and implored the proletariat for forgiveness.

And the *clubs*? From the moment when the Constituent Assembly called the President in question in the person of Barrot, and the constituted bourgeois republic in the person of the President, and the bourgeois republic in general in the person of the constituted republic, all the constituent elements of the February republic necessarily ranged themselves round it, all the parties that wished to overthrow the existing republic and by violent retrograde process to reshape it to the republic of their class interests and principles. What was done was again undone, the crystallisations of the revolutionary movement had again become fluid, the republic that the parties

fought for was again the indefinite republic of the February days, the defining of which each party reserved for itself. For a moment the parties again took up their old February positions, without sharing the illusions of February. The tricolour republicans of the *National* again leant on the democratic republicans of the *Reforme* and pushed them as advance righters into the foreground of the parliamentary struggle. The democratic republicans again leant on the socialist republicans—on January 27 a public manifesto announced their reconciliation and alliance—and prepared their insurrectional background in the clubs. The ministerial press treated the tricolour republicans correctly as the resurrected insurgents of June. In order to maintain itself at the head of the bourgeois republic, it called in question the bourgeois republic itself. On January 26 the Minister Faucher proposed a law on the right of association, the first paragraph of which read: “*The clubs are forbidden.*” He moved that this bill should immediately be discussed as urgent. The Constituent Assembly rejected the motion of urgency, and on January 27 Ledru-Rollin put forward a proposition, with 230 signatures appended to it, impeaching the ministry for violation of the constitution. The impeachment of the ministry at a moment when such an act was a tactless disclosure of the impotence of the judge, to wit, the majority of the Chamber, or was an impotent protest of the accuser against this majority itself—that was the great revolutionary trump that the latter-day Mountain played from now on at each high spot of the crisis. Poor Mountain! crushed by the weight of its own name.

On May 15, Blanqui, Barbes, Raspail, etc., had attempted to break up the Constituent Assembly by forcing an entrance into its hall of session at the head of the Paris proletariat. Barrot prepared a moral May 15 for the same Assembly when he wanted to dictate its self-dissolution and close the hall. The same Assembly had commissioned Barrot with the official enquiry against the May accused, and now at the moment when he appeared before it like a royalist Blanqui, when it sought for allies against him in the clubs, among the revolutionary proletarians, in the Party of Blanqui—at this moment the relentless Barrot tormented it with the proposal to withdraw the May prisoners from the Court of Assizes and hand them over to the High Court, to the *haut cour*, devised by the party of the *National*. Remarkable how the fear excited for a ministerial portfolio could pound out of the head of a Barrot

points worthy of a Beaumarchais.<sup>1</sup> The National Assembly, after much vacillation accepted his proposal. As against the makers of the May attempt, it reverted to its normal character.

If the Constituent Assembly was driven to *insurrection* against the President and the ministers, the President and the ministers were driven to a *coup d'état* against the Constituent Assembly, for they had no legal means of dissolving it. But the Constituent Assembly was the mother of the constitution and the constitution was the mother of the President. With the *coup d'état*, the President tore up the constitution and extinguished his republican lawful title. He was then forced to pull out the imperial lawful title, but the imperial lawful title woke up the Orleanist lawful title and both paled before the Legitimist lawful title. The downfall of the legal republic could only then throw to the top its most extreme opposite pole, the Legitimist monarchy, at a moment when the Orleanist party was still only the vanquished of February and Bonaparte was still only the victor of December 10, when both could still only oppose to republican usurpation their likewise usurped monarchist titles. The legitimists were aware of the favourableness of the moment; they conspired openly. They could hope to find their Monk<sup>2</sup> in General Changarnier. The accession of the *White monarchy* was as openly predicted in their clubs as was that of the *Red republic* in the proletarian clubs.

The ministry would have escaped all difficulties through a happily suppressed rising. "Legality is the death of us," cried Odilon Barrot. A rising would have allowed it, under the pretext of the *salut public*,<sup>3</sup> to dissolve the Constituent Assembly, to violate the constitution in the interests of the constitution itself. The brutal action of Odilon Barrot in the

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<sup>1</sup>Beaumarchais (1732-99). Pamphleteer and dramatist of the epoch before the French Revolution, famous for his comedies *The Barber of Seville* and *the Marriage of Figaro*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>George Monk (1608-69) was an army general during the period of the English bourgeois revolution associated with Cromwell. While engaged in carrying out the king's orders he was made prisoner by the revolutionary forces, but after some years in prison he was liberated and put in command of the parliamentary forces. In 1660, Monk used the troops under him for the restoration of the old Stuart dynasty and the suppression of the revolution, for which he was liberally rewarded by Charles II.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Public welfare.—Ed.

National Assembly, the motion for the dissolution of the clubs, the tumultuous removal of 30 tricolour prefects, and their replacement by royalists, the dissolution of the Mobile Guard, the ill treatment of their chiefs by Changarnier, the reinstatement of L'Herminier, the professor who was impossible even under Guizot, the toleration of the Legitimist boasting—all these were just so many provocations to mutiny. But the mutiny remained mute. It expected its signal from the Constituent Assembly and not from the ministry.

Finally came January 29, the day on which the decision was to be taken on the motion of Mathieu (*de la Drome*) for unconditional rejection of Rateau's motion. Legitimists, Orleanists, Bonapartists, the Mobile Guard, the Mountain, the clubs, all conspired on this day, each just as much against ostensible allies as against ostensible enemies. Bonaparte, mounted on horseback, mustered a part of the troops on the *Place de la Concorde*: Changarnier play-acted with a display of strategic manoeuvres; the Constituent Assembly found its building occupied by the military. This Assembly, the centre of all the conflicting hopes, fears, expectation, ferments, tensions and conspiracies, this lion-hearted Assembly, did not falter for a moment, when it came nearer to the world spirit than usual. It was like that fighter who not only feared the use of his own weapons, but also felt himself obliged to maintain the weapons of his opponent unimpaired. Scorning death, it signed its own death warrant, and rejected the unconditional rejection of the Rateau motion.<sup>3</sup> Even in the state of siege, it set limits to a constituent activity whose necessary frame had been the state of siege of Paris. It revenged itself worthily, when, on the following day, it instituted an enquiry into the fright that the ministry had given it on January 29. The Mountain showed its lack of revolutionary energy and political understanding by allowing itself to be used by the party of the *National* in this great comedy of intrigues as the crier in the contest. The party of the *National* had made its last attempt to maintain, in the constituted republic, the monopoly

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<sup>3</sup> Frightened by the threat of dissolution and by the military demonstration organised on January 29 by Louis Bonaparte, the Assembly had not the courage categorically to reject the proposal of Rateau and adopted a supplementary proposal, according to which the Assembly would be dissolved as soon as it had issued laws on the State Council, the responsible president and his ministers, and on the suffrage.—*Ed.*

of rule that it had possessed during the formative period of the bourgeois republic. It was shipwrecked.

While in the January crisis it was a question of the existence of the Constituent Assembly, in the crisis of March 21, it was a question of the existence of the constitution—there of the personnel of the National Party, here of its ideal. There is no need to point out that the honest republicans surrendered the exaltation of their ideology more cheaply than the worldly enjoyment of governmental power.

On March 21 there was on the order of the day in the National Assembly Faucher's bill against the right of association: *the suppression of the clubs*. Article 8 of the constitution guarantees to all Frenchmen the right to associate. The prohibition of the clubs was, therefore, an evident violation of the constitution, and the Constituent Assembly itself had to canonise the profanation of its holies. But the clubs—these were the gathering points, the conspiratorial seats of the revolutionary proletariat. The National Assembly had itself forbidden the coalition of the workers against their bourgeois. And the clubs—what were they but a coalition of the whole working class against the whole bourgeois class, the formation of a workers' state against the bourgeois state? Were they not just so many constituent assemblies of the proletariat and just so many military detachments of revolt in fighting trim? What the constitution was above all to constitute was the rule of the bourgeoisie. The constitution, therefore, could manifestly only understand by the right of association the associations that harmonised with the rule of the bourgeoisie, i.e., with the bourgeois order. If, for reasons of theoretical propriety, it expressed itself in general terms, was not the government and the National Assembly there to interpret and apply it in a given case? And if in the primitive epoch of the republic, the clubs actually were forbidden by the state of siege, had they not also to be forbidden in the ordered, constituted republic by the law? The tricolour republicans had nothing to oppose to this prosaic interpretation of the constitution but the high-flown phraseology of the constitution. A section of them, Pagnerre, Duclerc, etc., voted for the ministry and thereby gave it a majority. The others, with the archangel, Cavaignac, and the father of the church, Marrast, at their head, after the article on the prohibition of the clubs had gone through, retired to a special committee room in conjunction with Ledru-Rollin and the Mountain—"and held a council."

The National Assembly was paralysed; it no longer had a quorum. At the right time, M. Cremieux remembered in the committee room that the way from here led directly to the street and that it was no longer February 1848, but March 1849. The party of the *National*, suddenly enlightened, returned to the National Assembly's hall of session, behind it the Mountain, duped once more. The latter, constantly tormented by revolutionary longings, just as constantly clutched at constitutional possibilities, and always felt itself more in place behind the bourgeois republicans than in front of the revolutionary proletariat. Thus the comedy was played. And the Constituent Assembly itself had decreed that the violation of the letter of the constitution was the only appropriate realisation of its spirit.

There was only one point left to settle, the relation of the constituted republic to the European revolution, its *foreign policy*. On May 8, 1849, an unwonted excitement prevailed in the Constitutional Assembly, whose term of life was due to end in a few days. The attack of the French army on Rome, its repulse by the Romans, its political infamy and military disgrace, the assassination of the Roman republic by the French republic, the first Italian campaign of the second Napoleon was on the order of the day. The Mountain had once more played its great trump. Ledru-Rollin had laid on the President's table the inevitable bill of impeachment against the ministry and this time also against Bonaparte for violation of the constitution.

The motive of May 8 repeated itself later as the motive of June 13. Let us get clear about the expedition to Rome.

In the middle of November 1848, Cavaignac had already sent a battle fleet to Civita Vecchia,<sup>1</sup> in order to protect the Pope, to take him on board and to ship him over to France. The Pope was to bless the honest republic, and to ensure the election of Cavaignac as president. With the Pope, Cavaignac wanted to angle for the priests, with the priests for the peasants, and with the peasants for the presidency. The expedition of Cavaignac, an election advertisement in its immediate purpose, was at the same time a protest and a threat against the Roman revolution. It contained in embryo France's intervention in favour of the Pope.

This intervention against the Roman republic, on the

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<sup>1</sup>An Italian harbour and fort near Rome.—Ed.

Pope's behalf, in association with Austria and Naples, was decided on at the first meeting of Bonaparte's ministerial council on December 23. Falloux in the ministry, that meant the Pope in Rome and in the Rome—of the Pope. Bonaparte did not need the Pope any longer in order to become the President of the peasants; but he needed the conservation of the Pope, in order to conserve the peasants of the President. Their credulity had made him President. With faith they lost credulity, and with the Pope, faith. And the Orleanists and Legitimists in coalition who ruled in Bonaparte's name! Before the king was restored, the power had to be restored that consecrates kings. Apart from their royalism: without the old Rome, subject to his worldly rule, no Pope; without the Pope, no catholicism; without catholicism, no French religion; and without religion, what became of the old French society? The mortgage that the peasant has on heavenly blessings guarantees the mortgage that the bourgeois has on peasant lands. The Roman revolution was, therefore, an attack on property, on the bourgeois order, dreadful as the June revolution. Re-established bourgeois rule in France required the restoration of papist rule in Rome. Finally, to smite the Roman revolutionaries was to smite the allies of the French revolutionaries; the alliance of the counter-revolutionary classes in the constituted French republic was necessarily supplemented by the alliance of the French republic with the Holy Alliance, with Naples and Austria. The decision of the ministerial council of December 23 was no secret for the Constituent Assembly. On January 8 Ledru-Rollin had already interrogated the ministry concerning it; the ministry had denied it and the National Assembly had proceeded to the order of the day. Did it trust the word of the ministry? We know that it spent the whole month of January in giving the ministry no confidence votes. But if it was part of the ministry's role to lie, it was part of the National Assembly's role to feign belief in its lie and thereby save the republican *dehors*.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, Piedmont was beaten, King Albert had abdicated and the Austrian army knocked at the door of France. Ledru-Rollin vehemently interrogated. The ministry proved that it had only continued in North Italy the policy of Cavaignac, and Cavaignac only the policy of the Provisional Government, i.e., of Ledru-Rollin. This time it even reaped a

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<sup>1</sup> Appearances.—Ed.

vote of confidence from the National Assembly and was authorised to occupy temporarily a suitable point in Upper Italy, in order to give support to peaceful negotiations with Austria concerning the integrity of Sardinian territory and the question of Rome. It is well known that the fate of Italy is decided on the battlefields of North Italy. Hence Rome had fallen with Lombardy and Piedmont, or France had to declare war on Austria and thereby on the European counter-revolution. Did the National Assembly suddenly take the Barrot ministry for the old Committee of Public Safety? Or itself for the Convention? Why, then, the military occupation of a point in Upper Italy? The expedition against Rome was covered with this transparent veil.

On April 14, 14,000 men sailed under Oudinot for Civita Vecchia; on April 16, the National Assembly voted the ministry a credit of 1,200,000 francs for the maintenance of a fleet of intervention in the Mediterranean Sea for three months. Thus it gave the ministry every means of intervening against Rome, while it adopted the pose of letting it intervene against Austria. It did not see what the ministry did; it only heard what it said. Such faith was not found in Israel; the Constituent Assembly had fallen into the position of not daring to know what the constituted republic had to do.

Finally, on May 8, the last scene of the comedy was played; the Constituent Assembly urged the ministry to take swift measures to bring the Italian expedition back to the aim set for it. Bonaparte that same evening inserted a letter in the *Moniteur*, in which he lavished the greatest appreciation on Oudinot. On May 11, the National Assembly rejected the bill of impeachment against this same Bonaparte and his ministry. And the Mountain, which, instead of tearing this web of deceit to pieces, took the parliamentary comedy tragically, in order itself to play in it the role of Fouquier-Tinville,<sup>1</sup> did it not reveal its natural petty-bourgeois calf's hide under the borrowed lion's skin of the Convention!

The last half of the life of the Constituent Assembly is

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<sup>1</sup>Fouquier-Tinville (1746-95). One of the most eminent Jacobin leaders of the first French bourgeois revolution. When the Revolutionary Tribunal was organised on March 10, 1793, Fouquier-Tinville was appointed Public Prosecutor. In this capacity he conducted a merciless struggle against the enemies of the Revolution, applying the method of revolutionary terror.

summarised thus : On January 29, it admits that the royalist bourgeois factions are the natural superiors of the republic constituted by it ; on March 21, that the violation of the constitution is its realisation, and on May 11, that the passive alliance of the French republic, bombastically proclaimed, with the struggling peoples means its active alliance with the European counter-revolution.

This miserable Assembly left the stage, after it had given itself the pleasure, two days before the anniversary of its birthday, May 4, of rejecting the motion of amnesty for the June insurgents. Its power shattered, held in deadly hatred by the people, repulsed, maltreated, contemptuously thrown aside by the bourgeoisie, whose tool it was, forced in the second half of its life to disavow the first, robbed of its republican illusion, without great creations in the past, without hope in the future and with its living body dying bit by bit, it knew how to galvanise its own corpse only by continually recalling and living through over again the June victory, substantiating itself by constantly repeated damnation of the damned. Vampire, that lived on the blood of the June insurgents !

It left behind the state deficit, increased by the costs of the June insurrection, by the loss of the salt tax, by the compensation it paid the plantation owners for abolishing Negro slavery, by the costs of the Roman expedition, by the loss of the wine tax, the abolition of which it resolved on when lying at its last gasp, a malicious old man, happy to impose on his laughing heir a compromising debt of honour.

With the beginning of March the agitation for the election of the *Legislative National Assembly* had commenced. Two main groups opposed each other, the *Party of Order* and the *democratic-socialist* or *Red party* ; between the two stood the *Friends of the Constitution*, under which name the tricolour republicans of the *National* sought to put forward a party. The *Party of Order* was formed directly after the June days ; only after December 10 had allowed it to cast off the coterie of the *National*, of the bourgeois republicans, did it disclose the secret of its existence, the *coalition of Orleanists and Legitimists into one party*. The bourgeois class fell apart into two big factions, which, alternately, the *big landed proprietors* under the *restored monarchy*, and the *finance aristocracy* and the *industrial bourgeoisie* under the *July monarchy*, had maintained a monopoly of power. *Bourbon* was the royal name for the

predominant influence of the interests of the *one* faction, Orleans the royal name for the predominant influence of the interests of the other faction—the *nameless realm of the republic* was the only one in which both factions could maintain in equal power the common class interest, without giving up their mutual rivalry. If the bourgeois republic could not be anything but the perfected and clearly expressed rule of the whole bourgeois class, could it be anything but the rule of the Orleanists supplemented by the Legitimists, and of the Legitimists supplemented by the Orleanists, the *synthesis of the restoration and the July monarchy*? The bourgeois republicans of the *National* did not represent any large fraction of their class resting on economic foundations. As against the two bourgeois factions that only understood their *own particular* regime, they had only the importance and the historical title, of having asserted under the monarchy the general regime of the bourgeois class, the *nameless realm of the republic*, which they idealised and embellished with antique arabesques, but in which, above all, they hailed the rule of their coterie. If the party of the *National* grew confused in its own mind when it described the coalesced royalists at the head of the republic founded by it, these royalists deceived themselves no less concerning the fact of their united rule. They did not comprehend that if each of their factions, regarded by itself separately, was royalist, the product of their chemical combination had necessarily to be republican, that the white and the blue monarchy had to neutralise each other in the tricolour republic. Forced, by antagonism to the revolutionary proletariat and the transition classes thronging more and more round this as the centre, to summon their united strength and to conserve the organisation of this united strength, each faction of the Party of Order, as against the desires for restoration and overweening presumptions of the other, had to assert their joint rule, i.e., the *republican form* of bourgeois rule. Thus we find these royalists in the beginning believing in an immediate restoration, later preserving the republican form with foaming rage and deadly invective against it on their lips, and finally confessing that they can endure each other only in the republic and postponing the restoration indefinitely. The enjoyment of the united rule itself strengthened each of the two factions, and made each of them still more unable and unwilling to subordinate itself to the other, i.e., to restore the monarchy.

The Party of Order directly proclaimed in its election programme the rule of the bourgeoisie, i.e., the maintenance of the life-conditions of its rule, *property, the family, religion, order!* Naturally it represented its class rule and the conditions of its class rule as the rule of civilisation and as the necessary conditions of material production as well as of the social relations arising from it. The Party of Order had enormous money resources at its command; it organised its branches throughout France; it had all the ideologists of the old society in its pay; it had the influence of the existing governmental power at its disposal; it possessed an army of unpaid vassals in the whole mass of petty bourgeois and peasants, who, still far removed from the revolutionary movement, found in the high dignitaries of property the natural representatives of their petty property and its petty prejudices. This party, represented throughout the country by countless petty kings, could punish the rejection of their candidates as insurrection, dismiss the rebellious workers, the recalcitrant farm hands, servants, clerks, railway officials, penmen, all the functionaries civilly subordinate to it. Finally, here and there, it could maintain the delusion that the republican Constituent Assembly had obstructed the Bonaparte of December 10 in the manifestation of his wonder-working powers. We have not mentioned the Bonapartists in connection with the Party of Order. They were not a serious faction of the bourgeois class, but a collection of old, superstitious invalids and young, sceptical fortune-hunters. The Party of Order was victorious in the elections; it sent a large majority into the Legislative Assembly.

As against the coalesced counter-revolutionary bourgeois class, the sections of the petty bourgeoisie and peasant class already revolutionised had naturally to join up with the high dignitary of revolutionary interests, the revolutionary proletariat. We have seen how the democratic spokesmen of the petty bourgeoisie in parliament, i.e., the Mountain, were driven by parliamentary defeats to the socialist spokesmen of the proletariat, and how the actual petty bourgeoisie, outside of parliament, were driven by the *concordats a l'amiable*, by the brutal enforcement of bourgeois interests and by bankruptcy to the actual proletarians. On January 27, Mountain and socialists had celebrated their reconciliation, and at the great banquet of February 1849, they repeated their act of union. The social and the democratic, the party of the workers and that of the petty bourgeois, were united into the *Social-*

*Democratic Party, i.e., the Red party.*

The French republic, paralysed for a moment by the agony that followed the June days, had lived through a continuous series of feverish excitements since the raising of the state of siege, since October 14. First the struggle for the Presidency, then the struggle between the President and the Constituent Assembly; the struggle for the clubs; the trial in Bourges,<sup>1</sup> which, in contrast to the petty figures of the President, the coalesced royalists, the honest republicans, the democratic Mountain and the socialist doctrinaires of the proletariat, caused the proletariat's real revolutionaries to appear as antediluvian monsters, such as only a deluge could leave behind on the surface of society, or such as could only precede a social flood; the election agitation; the execution of the Brea murderers;<sup>2</sup> the continual proceedings against the press; the violent interference of the government with the banquets by police action; the insolent royalist provocations; the exhibition of the portraits of Louis Blanc and Caussidiere on the pillory;<sup>3</sup> the unbroken struggle between the constituted republic and the Constituent Assembly, which each moment drove the revolution back to its starting point, which each moment made the victors the vanquished and the vanquished the victors and, in a trice, changed the positions of the parties and the classes, their separations and connections; the rapid march of the European counter-revolution; the glorious Hungarian fight; the armed uprisings in Germany; the Roman expedi-

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<sup>1</sup>The trial of those who had taken part in the events of May 15, 1848, on the charge of conspiracy against the government. There appeared before the court, which was held in the town of Bourges, representatives of the proletariat and also part of the Mountain. Barbes, Albert, Flotte, Sobrier and Raspail were condemned to exile. The same sentence was passed in their absence on Louis Blanc, Caussidiere and others. Blanqui was sentenced to ten years' solitary confinement. In view of his illness it was considered that this term would be equivalent to a life sentence.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>General Brea, who was in command of part of the troops which suppressed the July rising of the Paris proletariat, was killed by the insurgents on June 25. In connection with this, two of the participants in the rising were executed.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Louis Blanc and Caussidiere were accused of complicity in the movement of May 15 and in the July rising of 1848 and handed over to the jurisdiction of the court. After the July days they both fled the country and the infuriated counter-revolution had to content itself with placarding their portraits on the pillory.—*Ed.*

tion ; the ignominious defeat of the French army before Rome—in this vortex of the movement, in this torment of historical unrest, in this dramatic ebb and flow of revolutionary passions, hopes, disappointments, the different classes of French society had to count their epochs of development in weeks where they had previously counted them in half centuries. A considerable section of the peasants and of the provinces was revolutionised. Not only were they disappointed in Napoleon, but the Red party offered them, instead of the name, the content, instead of illusory freedom from taxation, repayment of the milliard paid to the Legitimists, the regulation of mortgages and the suppression of usurers.

The army itself was infected with the revolutionary fever. In voting for Bonaparte it had voted for victory, and he gave it defeat. In him it had voted for the Little Corporal,<sup>1</sup> behind whom the great revolutionary general was concealed, and he once more gave it the great generals, behind whom the pipe-clay corpóral sheltered himself. There was no doubt that the Red party, *i.e.*, the united democratic party, was bound to celebrate, if not victory, still, great triumphs ; that Paris, the army and a great part of the provinces would vote for it. Ledru-Rollin, the leader of the Mountain, was elected by five Departments ; no chief of the Party of Order bore off such a victory, no candidate belonging to the true proletarian party. The election reveals to us the secret of the democratic-socialist party.

If, on the one hand, the Mountain, the parliamentary champion of the democratic petty bourgeoisie, was forced to unite with the socialist doctrinaires of the proletariat—the proletariat, forced by the terrible material defeat of June to raise itself up again through intellectual victories and not yet enabled through the development of the remaining classes to seize the revolutionary dictatorship, had to throw itself into the arms of the doctrinaires of its emancipation, the founders of socialist sects—on the other hand, the revolutionary peasants, the army and the provinces ranged themselves behind the Mountain, which thus became the commander in the revolutionary army camp and through the understanding with the Socialists had eliminated every antagonism in the revolutionary party. In the last half of the life of the Constituent Assembly it represented the latter's revolutionary fervour and

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<sup>1</sup>*i.e.*, Napoleon I.—Ed.

buried in oblivion its sins during the Provisional Government, during the Executive Commission, during the June days. In the same measure as the party of the *National*, in accordance with its half-and-half nature, had allowed itself to be put down by the royalist ministry, the party of the Mountain, which had been brushed aside during the omnipotence of the *National*, rose and asserted itself as the parliamentary representative of the revolution. In fact, the party of the *National* had nothing to oppose to the other royalist factions but honours-hunting personalities and idealistic humbug. The party of the Mountain, on the contrary, represented a mass wavering between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, whose material interests demanded democratic institutions. As against the Cavaignacs and the Marrasts, Ledru-Rollin and the Mountain therefore represented the truth of the revolution, and from the consciousness of this important situation they drew greater courage the more the expression of revolutionary energy limited itself to parliamentary attacks, bringing in bills of impeachment, threats, raised voices, thundering speeches, and extremes which were only pushed as far as phrases. The peasants were in about the same position as the petty bourgeoisie; they had more or less the same social demands to put forward. All the middle sections of society, so far as they were driven into the revolutionary movement, were therefore bound to find their revolutionary hero in Ledru-Rollin. Ledru-Rollin was the personage of the democratic petty bourgeoisie. As against the Party of Order, the half conservative, half revolutionary and wholly utopian reformers of this order had first to be pushed to the front.

The party of the *National*, the Friends of the Constitution *quand meme*,<sup>1</sup> the *republikains purses et simples* were completely defeated in the elections. A tiny minority of them was sent into the Legislative Chamber, their most notorious chiefs vanished from the stage, even Marrast, the editor-in-chief and the Orpheus<sup>2</sup> of the honest republic.

On May 29 the Legislative Assembly met; on June 11, the collision of May 8 was renewed and, in the name of the Mountain, Ledru-Rollin brought in a bill of impeachment against the president and the ministry for violation of the constitution,

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<sup>1</sup> All the same.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> According to ancient Greek mythology, Orpheus was a musician who could tame wild beasts and even move the trees with his music.—Ed.

and for the bombardment of Rome. On June 12, the Legislative Assembly rejected the bill of impeachment as the Constituent Assembly had rejected it on May 11, but the proletariat this time drove the Mountain onto the streets, not to a street fight, however, only to a street procession. It is enough to say that the Mountain was at the head of this movement to know that the movement was defeated, and that June 1849 was a caricature, as laughable as it was futile, of June 1848. The great retreat of June 13 was only eclipsed by the still greater battle-report of Changarnier, the great man that the Party of Order improvised. Every social epoch needs its great men, and when it does not find them, it invents them, as Helvetius says.

On December 20 only one half of the constituted bourgeois republic was still in existence, the *President*; on May 29 it was completed by the other half, the *Legislative Assembly*. In June 1848, the constituent bourgeois republic, by an unspeakable blow against the proletariat, in June 1849, the constituted bourgeois republic, by an unutterable comedy with the petty bourgeoisie, had inscribed itself in the birth-register of history. June 1849, was the nemesis of June 1848. In June 1849, it was not the workers that were vanquished; it was the petty bourgeois, standing between them and the revolution that were felled; June 1849, was not a bloody tragedy between wage labour and capital, but a prison-filling and lamentable play of debtors and creditors. The Party of Order had won, it was all powerful; it had now to show what it was.

### III

#### FROM JUNE 13, 1849, TO MARCH 10, 1850

On December 20, the Janus<sup>1</sup> head of the *constitutional republic* had still shown only one face, the executive face with the indistinct, plain features of L. Bonaparte; on May 29, 1849, it showed its second face, the *legislative*, pitted with the scars that the orgies of the Restoration and the July monarchy had left behind. With the Legislative National Assembly the constitutional republic was completed, i.e., the

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<sup>1</sup>One of the old Roman gods, represented with two heads.  
--Ed.

republican form of state, in which the rule of the bourgeois class is constituted, therefore the common rule of the two great royalist factions that form the French bourgeoisie, the coalesced Legitimists and Orleanists, the *Party of Order*. While the French republic thus became the property of the coalition of the royalist parties, at the same time the European coalition of the counter-revolutionary powers began a general crusade against the last places of refuge of the March revolutions. Russia invaded Hungary; Prussia marched against the army defending the imperial constitution, and Oudinot bombarded Rome. The European crisis was evidently approaching a decisive turning point; the eyes of all Europe were turned on Paris, and the eyes of all Paris on the *Legislative Assembly*.

On June 11 Ledru-Rollin mounted its tribune. He made no speech; he formulated a requisitory<sup>1</sup> against the ministers, naked, unadorned, factual, concentrated, forceful.

The attack on Rome is an attack on the constitution; the attack on the Roman republic is an attack on the French republic. Article V of the constitution reads: "The French republic never employs its military forces against the liberty of any people whatsoever"—and the President employs the French army against Roman liberty. Article IV of the constitution forbids the executive power to declare any war whatsoever without the assent of the National Assembly. The Constituent Assembly's resolution of May 8 expressly commands the ministers to make the Rome expedition conform with the utmost speed to its original mission; it therefore just as expressly prohibits war on Rome—and Oudinot bombards Rome. Thus Ledru-Rollin called the constitution itself as a witness for the prosecution against Bonaparte and his ministers. At the royalist majority of the National Assembly, he, the tribune of the constitution, hurled the threatening declaration: "The republicans will know how to command respect for the constitution by every means, be it even by the force of arms!" "*By the force of arms!*" repeated the hundred-fold echo of the Mountain.\* The majority answered with a terrible tumult; the President of the National Assembly called Ledru-Rollin to order; Ledru-Rollin repeated the challenging declaration, and finally laid on the President's table a motion for the impeachment of Bonaparte and his ministers. By 361

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<sup>1</sup> In French law, the demand of the public prosecutor for punishment of the accused.—Ed.

votes to 203, the National Assembly resolved to pass on from the bombardment of Rome to the simple order of the day.

Did Ledru-Rollin believe that he could beat the National Assembly by means of the constitution, and the President by means of the National Assembly?

To be sure, the constitution forbade any attack on the liberty of foreign peoples, but what the French army attacked in Rome, was, according to the ministry, not "liberty" but the "despotism of anarchy." Had the Mountain still not comprehended, all experiences in the Constituent Assembly notwithstanding, that the interpretation of the constitution did not belong to those who had made it but only to those who had accepted it? That the letter must be construed in its living meaning and that the bourgeois meaning was its only living meaning? That Bonaparte and the royalist majority of the National Assembly were the authentic interpreters of the constitution, as the priest is the authentic interpreter of the bible, and the judge the authentic interpreter of the law? Should the National Assembly, fresh from the midst of the general elections, feel itself bound by the testamentary provisions of the dead Constituent Assembly, whose living will an Odilon Barrot had broken? When Ledru-Rollin cited the Constituent Assembly's resolution of May 8, had he forgotten that the same Constituent Assembly on May 11 had rejected his motion for the impeachment of Bonaparte and the ministers; that it had acquitted the President and the ministers; that it had thus sanctioned the attack on Rome as "constitutional"; that he only lodged an appeal against a judgment already delivered; that he finally appealed from the republican Constituent Assembly to the royalist Legislative Assembly? The constitution itself calls the insurrection to its aid, by summoning, in a special article, every citizen to protect it. Ledru-Rollin based himself on this article. But, at the same time, are not the public powers organised for the defence of the constitution, and does not the violation of the constitution first begin from the moment when one of the public constitutional powers rebels against the other? And the President of the republic, the ministers of the republic and the National Assembly of the republic were in the most harmonious agreement.

What the Mountain attempted on June 11 was "*an insurrection within the limits of pure reason*," i.e., a purely *parliamentary insurrection*. The majority of the Assembly, intimidated by the prospect of an armed rising of the popular

masses, was, in the persons of Bonaparte and the ministers, to destroy its own power and the significance of its own election. Had not the Constituent Assembly similarly attempted to annul the election of Bonaparte, when it insisted so obstinately on the dismissal of the Barrot-Falloux ministry ?

Neither were there lacking from the time of the Convention models for parliamentary insurrections, which had suddenly transformed completely the relation between the majority and the minority—and should the young Mountain not succeed where the old had succeeded?—nor did the relations at the moment seem unfavourable for such an undertaking. The popular unrest had in Paris reached a critically high point; the army, according to its voting at the election, did not seem inclined towards the government; the legislative majority itself was still too young to have consolidated itself and, in addition, it consisted of old gentlemen. If the Mountain were successful in a parliamentary insurrection, then the helm of state fell directly into its hands. The democratic petty bourgeoisie, for its part, wished, as always, for nothing more fervently than to see the battle fought out in the clouds over its head between the departed spirits of parliament. Finally both of them, the democratic petty bourgeoisie and its representatives, the Mountain, through a parliamentary insurrection achieved their great purpose, that of breaking the power of the bourgeoisie, without unleashing the proletariat, or letting it appear otherwise than in perspective; the proletariat would have been used without becoming dangerous.

After the vote of the National Assembly on June 11, a conference took place between some members of the Mountain and delegates of the workers' secret societies. The latter pressed for striking the first blow the same evening. The Mountain decisively rejected this plan. On no account did it want to let the leadership slip out of its hands; its allies were as suspect to it as its antagonists, and rightly so. The memory of June 1848 surged through the ranks of the Paris proletariat more vigorously than ever. Nevertheless it was chained to the alliance with the Mountain. The latter represented the largest part of the Departments; it exaggerated its influence in the army; it had at its disposal the democratic section of the National Guard; it had the moral power of the shop behind it. To begin the revolution at this moment against the will of the Mountain, meant for the proletariat, decimated moreover by cholera and driven out of Paris in considerable

numbers by unemployment, to repeat the June days of 1848 uselessly, without the situation which had forced this desperate struggle. The proletarian delegates did the only rational thing. They bound the Mountain to *compromise* itself, i.e., to come out beyond the confines of the parliamentary struggle in the event of its bill of impeachment being rejected. During the whole of June 13, the proletariat maintained this same sceptically watchful attitude, and awaited a seriously engaged irrevocable *melee* between the democratic National Guard and the army, in order then to plunge into the fight and push the revolution forward beyond the petty-bourgeois aim set for it. In the event of victory the proletarian commune was already formed which would take its place beside the official government. The Parisian workers had learned in the bloody school of June 1848.

On June 12 the Minister Lacrosse himself brought forward in the Legislative Assembly the motion to proceed at once to the discussion of the bill of impeachment. During the night the government made every provision for defence and attack; the majority of the National Assembly was determined to drive out the rebellious minority into the streets; the minority itself could no longer retreat; the die was cast; the bill of impeachment was rejected by 377 votes to 8. The Mountain, which had abstained from voting, rushed muttering into the propaganda halls of the "pacific democracy," into the newspaper offices of the *Democratique pacifique*.<sup>1</sup>

Its withdrawal from the House of Parliament broke its strength as withdrawal from the earth broke the strength of Antaeus,<sup>2</sup> her giant son. Samsons in the precincts of the Legislative Assembly, they were only Philistines in the precincts of the "pacific democracy." A long, noisy, rambling debate began. The Mountain was determined to compel respect for the constitution by every means, "*only not by force of arms.*" In this decision it was supported by a manifesto and by a deputation of the "Friends of the Constitution." "Friends of the Constitution," was what the wreckage of the coterie of the *National*, of the bourgeois-republican party called itself. While six of its remaining parliamentary representatives had voted

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<sup>1</sup>The organ of the Fourierists, published by Considerant.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>According to ancient Greek mythology, a giant who derived his strength from contact with the earth; he was defeated by Hercules who lifted him in the air.—Ed.

against, the others in a body voting for, the rejection of the bill of impeachment, while Cavaignac placed his sabre at the disposal of the Party of Order, the larger, extra-parliamentary part of the coterie greedily seized the opportunity to emerge from its position of a political pariah, and to press into the ranks of the democratic party. Did they not appear as the natural shield bearers of this party, which hid itself behind their shield, behind their *principles*, behind the *constitution*?

Till break of day the "Mountain" was in labour. It gave birth to "*a proclamation to the people*," which, on the morning of June 13, occupied a more or less shamefaced place in two socialist journals. It declared the President, the ministers, the majority of the Legislative Assembly "*outside the constitution*" (*hors la constitution*) and summoned the National Guard, the army and finally the people "to arise." "*Long live the constitution!*" was the slogan that it put forward, a slogan that signified nothing other than "*Down with the revolution!*"

In conformity with the constitutional proclamation of the Mountain, there was a so-called *peaceful demonstration* of the petty bourgeois on June 13, i.e., a street procession from the Chateau d'Eau through the boulevards, 30,000 strong, mainly National Guards, unarmed and with an admixture of members of the workers' secret sections, moving along with the cry: "*Long live the constitution*," which was uttered mechanically, ice-coldly and with a bad conscience by the members of the procession itself, and thrown back ironically by the echo of the people that surged along the sidewalks, instead of swelling up like thunder. From the many-voiced song the chest notes were missing. And when the procession swung by the meeting hall of the "Friends of the Constitution" and a hired herald of the constitution appeared on the house-top, violently cleaving the air with his *claquer*<sup>1</sup> hat and from tremendous lungs letting the catch-cry "*Long live the constitution*" fall like hail on the heads of the pilgrims, they seemed overcome themselves for a moment by the comedy of the situation. It is well known how the procession, having arrived at the entrance of the Rue de la Paix, was received in the boulevards by the dragoons and riflemen of Changarnier in an altogether unparliamentary way, how in a trice it scattered in all directions and how it threw behind it a few shouts of "to arms"

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<sup>1</sup>One who is paid to clap in the theatre.—Ed.

only in order that the parliamentary call to arms of June 11 might be fulfilled.

The majority of the Mountain assembled in the Rue du Hazard dispersed when this violent disruption of the peaceful procession, the muffled rumours of murder of unarmed citizens on the boulevards and the growing tumult in the street seemed to herald the approach of a rising. Ledru-Rollin at the head of a small band of deputies saved the honour of the Mountain. Under the protection of the Paris Artillery which had assembled in the Palais National, they betook themselves to the *Conservatory des Art et Metiers*, where the fifth and sixth legions of the National Guard were to arrive. But the *Montagnards* waited in vain for the fifth and sixth legions; these discreet National Guards left their representatives in the lurch; the Paris Artillery itself prevented the people from throwing up barricades; a chaotic disorder made any decision impossible; the troops of the line advanced with fixed bayonets; some of the representatives were taken prisoner, while others escaped. Thus ended June 13.

If June 23, 1848, was the insurrection of the revolutionary proletariat, June 13, 1849, was the insurrection of the democratic petty bourgeois, each of these two insurrections being the classically pure expression of the class which had made it.

Only in Lyons did it come to an obstinate, bloody conflict. Here, where the industrial bourgeoisie and the industrial proletariat stand directly opposed to one another, where the workers' movement is not, as in Paris, included in and determined by the general movement, June 13, in its reactions, lost its original character. Where it broke out elsewhere in the provinces it did not kindle fire—a cold lightning flash.

June 13 closes the first period of the Constitutional Republic, which had attained its normal span with the meeting of the Legislative Assembly in May. The whole period of this prologue is filled with noisy struggle between the Party of Order and the Mountain, between the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, which strove in vain against the consolidation of the bourgeois republic, for which it had itself continuously conspired in the Provisional Government and in the Executive Commission, and for which, during the June days, it had fought fanatically against the proletariat. The 13th of June breaks its resistance and makes the legislative dictatorship of the united royalist a *fait accompli*. From this moment the National Assembly is only a committee of public

*safety of the Party of Order.*

Paris had put the President, the ministers and the majority of the National Assembly in a "state of impeachment"; they put Paris in a "state of siege." The Mountain had declared the majority of the Legislative Assembly "*outside the constitution*"; for violation of the constitution the majority handed over the Mountain to the *haute cour*<sup>1</sup> and proscribed everything in it that still had vital force. It was decimated to a rump without head or heart. The minority had gone as far as to attempt a *parliamentary insurrection*; the majority elevated its *parliamentary despotism* to law. It decreed new *standing orders*, which annihilate the freedom of the tribune and authorise the President of the National Assembly to punish the representatives, for infringement of the standing orders, with censorship, with fines, with withdrawal of the indemnity moneys, the temporary expulsion, with incarceration. Over the rump of the Mountain it hung the whip instead of the sword. The remainder of the deputies of the Mountain owed it to their honour to make a mass exit. By such an act the dissolution of the Party of Order would have been hastened. It had to break up into its original component parts from the moment when not even the appearance of an opposition held it together any longer.

Simultaneously with their *parliamentary* power, the democratic petty bourgeois were robbed of their *armed* power through the dissolution of the Paris Artillery and the 8th, 9th and 12th legions of the National Guard. On the other hand, the legion of high finance, which had raided the printshops of Boule and Roux on June 13, destroyed the presses, played havoc with the offices of the republican journals and arbitrarily arrested editors, compositors, printers, despatch clerks and errand boys, received the most stirring encouragement from the tribune of the National Assembly. All over France the dissolution of the National Guards suspected of republicanism was repeated.

A new *press law*, a new *law of association*, a new *law on the state of siege*, the prisons of Paris overflowing, the political fugitives driven out, all the journals that go beyond the limits of the *National* suspended, Lyons and the five Departments surrounding it surrendered to the brutal chicanery of military despotism, the *parquets*<sup>2</sup> ubiquitous and the army of officials

<sup>1</sup>High court.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Office of the public prosecutor.—Ed.

so often purged, purged once more—these were the inevitable, the constantly recurring commonplaces of victorious reaction, only worth mentioning after the massacres and the deportations of June, because this time they were directed not only against Paris, but also against the Departments, not only against the proletariat, but, above all, against the middle classes.

The repressive laws, by which the declaration of a state of siege was left to the discretion of the government, the press still more firmly muzzled and the right of association annihilated, absorbed the whole of the legislative activity of the National Assembly, during the months of June, July and August.

Nevertheless, this epoch is characterised not by the exploitation of victory *in fact*, but *in principle*; not by the resolutions of the National Assembly, but by the grounds advanced for these resolutions; not by the thing, but by the phrase; not by the phrase but by the accent and the gesture which enliven the phrase. The unreserved, unashamed expression of *royalist sentiments*, the contemptuously aristocratic insults to the republic, the coquettishly frivolous babbling of the restoration aims, in a word, the boastful violation of *republican decorum*, give its peculiar tone and colour to this period. Long live the constitution! was the battle-cry of the *vanquished* of June 13. The victors were therefore absolved from the hypocrisy of constitutional, *i.e.*, republican, speech. The counter-revolution conquered in Hungary, Italy and Germany, and it believed that the restoration was already at the gates of France. Among the masters of ceremonies of the factions of order, there ensued a real competition to document their royalism in the *Moniteur*, and to confess, repent and beg pardon before God and man for liberal sins perchance committed by them under the republic. No day passed without the February Revolution being declared a public misfortune from the tribune of the National Assembly, without some Legitimist provincial cabbage-Junker solemnly stating that he had never recognised the republic, without one of the cowardly deserters of and traitors to the July monarchy relating the belated deeds of heroism in the performance of which only the philanthropy of Louis Philippe or other misunderstandings had hindered him. What was admirable in the February days was not the magnanimity of the victorious people, but the self-sacrifice and moderation of the royalists, who had allowed it to be victorious. One representative of the people proposed to divert part of the money destined for

the relief of those wounded in February to the Municipal Guards, who alone in those days had deserved well of the fatherland. Another wanted to have an equestrian statue decreed to the Duke of Orleans in the *Place de Carrousel*. Thiers called the constitution a dirty piece of paper. There appeared in succession on the tribune Orleanists, to repent of their conspiracy against the legitimate monarchy; Legitimists, who reproached themselves with having hastened the overthrow of monarchy in general by resisting the illegitimate monarchy; Thiers, who repented of having intrigued against Mole; Mole, who repented of having intrigued against Guizot; Barrot, who repented of having intrigued against all three. The cry "Long live the Social-Democratic republic!" was declared unconstitutional: the cry "Long live the republic!" was prosecuted as social-democratic. On the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, a deputy declared: "I fear an invasion of the Prussians less than the entry of the revolutionary refugees into France." To the complaints about the terrorism which was organised in Lyons and in the neighbouring Departments, Baraguey d'Hilliers answered: "I prefer the White terror to the Red terror." (*J'aime mieux la terreur blanche que la terreur rouge*). And the Assembly applauded frantically every time that an epigram against the republic, against the revolution, against the constitution, for the monarchy or for the Holy Alliance fell from the lips of its orators. Every infringement of the minutest republican formalities, for example, addressing the representative as *citoyens*, filled the knights of order with enthusiasm.

The by-election in Paris on July 8, held under the influence of the state of siege and of the abstention of a great part of the proletariat from the ballot box, the taking of Rome by the French army, the entry of the red eminences<sup>1</sup> into Rome and, in their train, the inquisition and monkish terrorism, added fresh victories to the victory of June and increased the intoxication of the Party of Order.

Finally, in the middle of August, half with the intention of attending the Department Councils just assembled, half through exhaustion from the tendencious orgy of many months, the royalists decreed the prorogation of the National Assembly for two months. With transparent irony, they left behind a

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<sup>1</sup>Cardinals.—Ed.

commission of twenty-five representatives, the cream of the Legitimists and the Orleanists, a Mole and a Changarnier, as proxies for the National Assembly and as *guardians of the republic*. The irony was more profound than they suspected. They, condemned by history to help to overthrow the monarchy they loved, were destined by her to conserve the republic they hated.

The *second period in the life of the constitutional republic, its period of royalist boorishness*, closes with the *proroguing* of the Legislative Assembly.

The state of siege in Paris was again raised, the activities of the press had again begun. During the suspension of the Social-Democratic papers, during the period of repressive legislation and royalist blusters, the *Siecle*, the old literary representative of the *monarchist-constitutional petty bourgeois*, *republicanised* itself; the *Presse*, the old literary expression of the *bourgeois reformers*, *democratised* itself; while the *National*, the old classic organ of the *republican bourgeois*, *socialised* itself.

The *secret societies* grew in extent and intensity to the degree that the *public clubs* became impossible. The *industrial associations of workers*, tolerated as purely trade companies, while of no account economically, became politically so many means of cementing the proletariat. June 13 had struck off the official heads of the different semi-revolutionary parties; the masses that remained won their own head. The knights of order had intimidated the Red republic by prophecies of terror; the base excesses, the hyperborean atrocities of the victorious counter-revolution in Hungary, in Baden and in Rome washed the "Red republic" white. And the discontented intermediate classes of French society began to prefer the promises of the Red republic with its problematic terrors to the terrors of the red monarchy with its actual hopelessness. No Socialist in France did more actual revolutionary propaganda than Haynau.<sup>1</sup> *A chaque capacite selon ses oeuvres !<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup>Haynau. An Austrian general, notorious for his ferocious punishment of the revolutionaries in the suppression of the revolution in Italy (1848) and in Hungary (1849). The "fame" of his cruelty and bloodthirstiness in the struggle against the revolution spread so far that, on the occasion of a visit to England, he was seized and flogged by the workers of a London brewery.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>To each talent according to its work.—*Ed.*

In the meantime Louis Bonaparte exploited the recess of the National Assembly by making princely tours of the provinces, the most hot-blooded Legitimists made pilgrimages to Ems, to the grandchild of the saintly Louis, and the mass of the popular representatives on the side of order intrigued in the Department Councils, which had just met. It was necessary to make them pronounce what the majority of the National Assembly did not yet dare to pronounce, an *urgent motion for immediate revision of the constitution*. According to the constitution, the constitution could only be revised in 1852 by a National Assembly called together expressly for this purpose. If, however, the majority of the Department Councils expressed themselves in this sense, was not the National Assembly bound to sacrifice the virginity of the constitution to the voice of France? The National Assembly entertained the same hopes in regard to these provincial assemblies as the nuns in Voltaire's *Henriade* entertained in regard to the pandurs.<sup>1</sup> But, some exceptions apart, the Potiphars of the National Assembly had to deal with just so many Josephs of the provinces. The vast majority did not want to understand the importunate insinuation. The revision of the constitution was frustrated by the very instruments by which it was to have been called into being, by the votes of the Department Councils. The voice of France, and indeed of bourgeois France, had spoken and had spoken against revision.

At the beginning of October the Legislative Assembly met once more—*tantum mutatus ab illo*.<sup>2</sup>—Its lineaments were completely changed. The unexpected rejection of revision on the part of the Department Councils had put it back within the limits of the constitution and indicated the limits of its term of life. The Orelanists had become mistrustful because of the pilgrimages of the Legitimists to Ems; the Legitimists had grown suspicious on account of the negotiations of the Orleanist with London;<sup>3</sup> the journals of the two factions had

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<sup>1</sup> Hungarian foot soldiers in the Austrian service, so called from Pandur, a village in Hungary where they were first raised.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> How greatly changed from the former.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Ems was the place of residence of Count Chambord (Henry V), Bourbon pretender to the French throne. His rival of the Orleans dynasty (Louis Philippe), who had fled to England after the February revolution, lived in Claremont near London. Thus Ems and Claremont were the centres of royalist intrigue.

fanned the fire and weighed the reciprocal claims of their pretenders. Orleanists and Legitimists grumbled in unison concerning the machinations of the Bonapartists, which showed themselves in the princely tours, in the more or less obvious emancipatory attempts of the President, in the presumptuous language of the Bonapartist newspapers; Louis Bonaparte grumbled concerning the National Assembly, which found only the Legitimist-Orleanist conspiracy legitimate, concerning the ministry, which betrayed him continually to this National Assembly. Finally, the ministry was itself divided on the Roman policy and on the *income tax* proposed by the Minister Passy, and decried as socialistic by the conservatives.

One of the first bills of the Barrot ministry in the re-assembled Legislative Assembly was a demand for a credit of 300,000 francs for the payment of a widow's pension to the *Duchess of Orleans*. The National Assembly granted it and added to the list of debts of the French nation a sum of seven million francs. Thus while Louis Philippe continued to play with success the role of the *pauvre honteux*, of the ashamed beggar, the ministry neither dared to move an increase of salary for Bonaparte nor did the Assembly appear inclined to grant it. And Louis Bonaparte, as ever, vacillated in the dilemma: *Aut Caesar aut Clichy!*<sup>1</sup>

The minister's second demand for a credit, one of nine million francs for the costs of the *Rome expedition*, increased the tension between Bonaparte, on the one hand, and the ministers and the National Assembly, on the other. Louis Bonaparte had inserted a letter to his orderly officer Edgar Ney in the *Moniteur*, in which he bound the papist government to constitutional guarantees. The Pope, for his part, had published an address, *motu proprio*,<sup>2</sup> in which he rejected any limitation of his restored rule. Bonaparte's letter, with considered indiscretion, raised the curtain of his cabinet, in order to expose himself to the eyes of the gallery as a benevolent genius who was, however, misunderstood and shackled in his own house. It was not the first time that he had coquetted with the "timid flights of a free soul." Thiers, the reporter of the commission, completely ignored Bonaparte's flight and contented himself with translating the papist allocution into French. It was not the ministry, but Victor Hugo that sought

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<sup>1</sup> Either Caesar or Clichy!—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Of his own free will.—Ed.

to save the President through an order of the day in which the National Assembly was to express its agreement with Napoleon's letter. *Allons donc! Allons donc!*<sup>1</sup> With this disrespectful, frivolous interjection the majority buried Hugo's motion. The policy of the President? The letter of the President? The President himself? *Allons donc! Allons donc!* Who the devil takes Monsieur Bonaparte *au serieux*?<sup>2</sup> Do you believe, Monsieur Victor Hugo, that we believe you, that you believe in the President? *Allons donc! Allons donc!*

Finally, the breach between Bonaparte and the National Assembly was hastened by the discussion on the *recall of the Orleanists and the Bourbons*. In default of the ministry, the cousin of the President, the son of the ex-king of Westphalia, had put forward this motion, which had no other purpose than to push the Legitimist and the Orleanist pretenders down to the same level, or rather a lower level than the Bonapartist pretender, who at least stood in fact at the head of the state.

Napoleon Bonaparte was disrespectful enough to make the *recall of the expelled royal families* and the *amnesty of the June insurgents* parts of one and the same motion. The indignation of the majority compelled him immediately to apologise for this sacrilegious joining of the holy and the impious, of the royal races and the proletarian brood, of the fixed stars of society and of its swamp lights, and to assign to each of the two motions the position proper to it. The majority energetically rejected the recall of the royal family, and Berryer, the Demosthenes<sup>3</sup> of the Legitimists, left no doubt about the meaning of the vote. The civic degradation of the pretenders, that is what is intended! It is desired to rob them of their halo, of the last majesty that is left to them, the *majesty of exile*! What, cried Berryer, would be thought of him among the pretenders who, forgetting his august origin, came here to live as a simple private individual? It could not have been more clearly intimated to Louis Bonaparte that he had not gained the day by his presence, that if the royalists in coalition needed him here in France as a *neutral person* in the President's chair, the serious pretenders to the throne had to be kept out of profane sight by the fog of exile.

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<sup>1</sup> Get along with you!—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Seriously—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Demosthenes (383-22 Before Our Era). A brilliant orator and politician of Athens, famous for his "Philippics" directed against Philip of Macedon.—Ed.

On November 1, Louis Bonaparte answered the Legislative Assembly with a message which in pretty sharp words announced the dismissal of the Barrot ministry and the formation of a new ministry. The Barrot-Falloux ministry was the ministry of the royalist coalition, the d'Hautpoul ministry was the ministry of Bonaparte, the organ of the President as against the Legislative Assembly, the *ministry of the clerks*.

Bonaparte was no longer the merely neutral man of December 10, 1848. Possession of the executive power had grouped a number of interests around him, the struggle with anarchy forced the Party of Order even to increase his influence, and if he was *no longer popular*, the Party of Order was *unpopular*. Could he not hope to compel the Orleanists and the Legitimists, through their rivalry as well as through the necessity of some sort of monarchist restoration, to recognise the *neutral President*?

From November 1, 1849, dates the third period in the life of the constitutional republic, a period which closes with March 10, 1850. Not only does the regular play, so much admired by Guizot, of the constitutional institutions now begin, but the quarrel between executive and legislative power. As against the hankering for restoration on the part of the united Orleanists and Legitimists, Bonaparte represents the title of his actual power, the republic; as against the hankerings for restoration on the part of Bonaparte, the Party of Order represents the title of its common rule, the republic; as against the Orleanists, the Legitimists and as against the Legitimists, the Orleanists represent the *status quo*, the republic. All these factions of the Party of Order, each of which has its own king and its own restoration *in petto*,<sup>1</sup> mutually assert, as against the rivals' desires for usurpation and elevation, the common rule of the bourgeoisie the form in which the particular claims remain neutralised and reserved—the *republic*.

Just as Kant makes the republic, as the only rational form of state, a postulate of practical reason whose realisation is never attained, but whose attainment must always be striven for and mentally adhered to as the goal, so these royalists make the *monarchy*.

Thus the constitutional republic had gone forth from the hands of the bourgeois republicans as a hollow ideological formula, to a form full of content and life in the hands of the royal-

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<sup>1</sup> In reserve.—Ed.

ists in coalition. And Thiers spoke more truly than he suspected, when he said: "We, the royalists, are the true pillars of the constitutional republic."

The overthrow of the ministry of the coalition, and the appearance of the ministry of the clerks has a second significance. Its finance minister was Fould. Fould as finance minister signifies the official surrender of French national wealth to the Bourse, the management of the state's property by the Bourse and in the interest of the Bourse. With the nomination of Fould, the finance aristocracy announced its restoration in the *Moniteur*. This restoration necessarily supplemented the other restorations, which form just so many links in the chain of the constitutional republic.

Louis Philippe had never dared to make a real *loup-cervier*, (Bourse wolf) finance minister. Just as his monarchy was the ideal name for the rule of the high bourgeoisie, in his ministries the privileged interests had to bear ideologically neutral names. The bourgeois republic everywhere pushed into the forefront what the different monarchists, Legitimists as well as Orleanist, kept concealed in the background. It made earthly what they had made heavenly. In place of the names of the saints, it put the bourgeois proper names of the ruling class interests.

Our whole exposition has shown how the republic, from the first day of its existence, did not overthrow the finance aristocracy, but consolidated it. But the concessions that were made to it were a fate to which submission was made without the desire to bring it about. With Fould, the initiative in the government returned to the finance aristocracy.

The question will be asked how the bourgeoisie in coalition could bear and suffer the rule of finance, which under Louis Philippe depended on the exclusion or subordination of the remaining bourgeois factions.

The answer is simple.

First of all, the finance aristocracy itself forms a weighty, authoritative part of the royalist coalition, whose common governmental power is the republic. Are not the spokesmen and leading lights among the Orleanists the old confederates and accomplices of the finance aristocracy? Is it not itself the golden phalanx of Orleanism? As far as the Legitimists are concerned, in practice they had already participated in all the orgies of the Bourse, mine and railway speculations under Louis Philippe. In general, the combination of large landed

property with high finance is a *normal fact*. Proof: *England*; proof: even *Austria*.

In a country like France, where the volume of national production stands at a disproportionately lower level than the amount of the national debt, where the state revenue forms the most important subject of speculation and the Bourse the chief market for the investment of capital that wants to turn itself to account in an unproductive way—in such a country a countless number of people of all bourgeois or semi-bourgeois classes must participate in the state debt, in the Bourse gambles, in finance. Do not all these subaltern participants find their natural mainstays and commanders in the faction which represents this interest in its vastest outlines, which represents it as a whole?

By what is the reversion of the state property to high finance conditioned? By the constantly growing indebtedness of the state. And the indebtedness of the state? By the constant excess of its expenditure over its income, a disproportion which is simultaneously the cause and effect of the system of state loans.

In order to escape from this indebtedness, the state must either restrict its expenditure, i.e., simplify and curtail the government organism, govern as little as possible, employ as small a personnel as possible, enter as little into relations with bourgeois society as possible. This path was impossible for the Party of Order, whose means of repression, whose official interference for reasons of state and whose universal presence through organs of state were bound to increase in the same measure as its rule and the conditions for existence of its class were threatened from more numerous sides. The *gendarmérie* could not be reduced in the same measure as attacks on persons and property increase.

Or the state must seek to elude the debts and produce an immediate but transitory balance in its budget, by putting extraordinary taxes on the shoulders of the wealthiest classes. In order to withdraw the national wealth from exploitation by the Bourse, was the Party of Order to sacrifice its own wealth on the altar of the fatherland? *Pas si bete!*<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, without a complete revolution in the French state, no revolution in the French state's budget. Along with this state budget necessarily goes state indebtedness, and

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<sup>1</sup> Not so stupid.—Ed.

with state indebtedness necessarily goes the rule of the trade in state debts, of the state creditors, the bankers, the money dealers and the wolves of the Bourse. Only a fraction of the Party of Order was directly concerned in the overthrow of the finance aristocracy—the manufacturers. We are not speaking of the middle, of the smaller industrials; we are speaking of the rulers of the factory interest, who had formed the broad basis of the dynastic opposition under Louis Philippe. Their interest is indubitably reduction of the costs of production, therefore reduction of the taxes, which enter into production, therefore reduction of the state debts, the interest on which enters into the taxes, therefore the overthrow of the finance aristocracy.

In England—and the largest French manufacturers are petty bourgeois as against their English rivals—we really find the manufacturers, a Cobden, a Bright, at the head of the crusade against the bank and the stock exchange aristocracy. Why not in France? In England industry rules; in France, agriculture. In England industry requires *free trade*; in France, protection, national monopoly besides other monopolies. French industry does not dominate French production; the French industrialists, therefore, do not dominate the French bourgeoisie. In order to put through their interest against the remaining fractions of the bourgeoisie, they cannot, like the English, take the lead of the movement and simultaneously push their class interest to the fore; they must follow in the train of the revolution, and serve interests which are opposed to the collective interests of their class. In February they had misunderstood their position; February sharpened their wits. And who is more directly threatened by the workers than the employer, the industrial capitalist? The manufacturer, therefore, of necessity became in France the most fanatical member of the Party of Order. The reduction of this *profit* by finance, *what is that compared with the abolition of profit by the proletariat?*

In France, the petty bourgeois does what normally the industrial bourgeois would have to do; the worker does what normally would be the task of the petty bourgeois; and the task of the worker, who solves that? No one. It is not solved in France; it is proclaimed in France. It is not solved anywhere within the national walls; the class war within French society turns into a world war, in which the nations confront one another. The solution begins only at the moment when,

through the world war, the proletariat is pushed to the head of the people that dominates the world market, to the head of England. The revolution, which finds here, not its end, but its organisational beginning, is no short-lived revolution. The present generation is like the Jews, whom Moses led through the wilderness. It has not only a new world to conquer, it must go under, in order to make room for the men who are fit for a new world.

Let us return to Fould.

On November 14, 1849, Fould mounted the tribune of the National Assembly and expounded his system of finance: *Apologia* for the old system of taxes! Retention of the wine tax! Repeal of Passy's income tax!

Passy, too, was no revolutionary; he was an old minister of Louis Philippe's. He belonged to the puritans of the Dufaure brand and to the most intimate *confidants* of Teste,<sup>1</sup> the scape-goat of the July monarchy. Passy, too, had praised the old tax system and recommended the retention of the wine tax; but he had, at the same time, torn the veil from the state deficit. He had declared the necessity for a new tax, the income tax, if it were desired to avoid the bankruptcy of the state. Fould who recommended state bankruptcy to Ledru-Rollin, recommended the state deficit to the Legislative Assembly. He promised economies, the secret of which later revealed itself in that; for example, the expenditure diminished by sixty millions, while the floating debt increased by two hundred millions—conjuring tricks in the grouping of figures, in the drawing up of accounts rendered, which all finally resulted in new loans.

Alongside the other jealous bourgeois factions, the finance aristocracy under Fould naturally did not act in so shamelessly corrupt a manner as under Louis Philippe. But the system remained the same; constant increase in the debts and masking of the deficit. And, in time, the old Bourse swindling came out more openly. Proof: the law concerning the Avignon railway; the mysterious fluctuations in government stocks,

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<sup>1</sup>On July 8, 1847, before the Chamber of Peers in Paris, the trial of Parmentier and General Cubieres began for bribery of officials with a view to obtaining a salt works concession and of the then Minister for Public Works, Teste, for accepting such money bribes. The latter, during the trial, attempted to commit suicide. All were sentenced to pay heavy fines, Teste, in addition, to serve three years' imprisonment. [Note by F. Engels.]

for a brief space the topic of the hour throughout Paris; finally, the ill-starred speculations of Fould and Bonaparte on the elections of March 10.

With the official restoration of the finance aristocracy, the French people had soon again to stand before a February 24.

The Constituent Assembly, in an attack of misanthropy against its heir, had abolished the wine tax for the year of the Lord, 1850. With the abolition of old taxes, new debts could not be paid. *Creton*, a cretin of the Party of Order, before the proroguing of the Legislative Assembly, already moved the retention of the wine tax. Fould took up this motion in the name of the Bonapartist ministry and, on December 20, 1849, the anniversary of the proclamation of Bonaparte, the National Assembly decreed the *restoration of the wine tax*.

The sponsor of this restoration was not a financier; it was the Jesuit chief, *Montalembert*. His argument was strikingly simple: Taxation is the material breast on which the government is suckled. The government is the instrument of repression; it is the organ of authority; it is the army; it is the police; it is the officials, the judges, the ministers; it is the priests. The attack on taxation is the attack of the anarchists on the sentinels of order, who safeguard the material and spiritual production of bourgeois society from the inroads of the proletarian vandals. Taxation is the fifth god, side by side with property, the family, order and religion. And the wine tax is incontestably taxation and, moreover, not vulgar, but traditional, monarchically disposed, respectable taxation. *Vive l'impot des boissons!*<sup>1</sup> Three cheers and one cheer more!<sup>2</sup>

The French peasant, when he paints the devil on the wall, paints him in the guise of the tax collector. From the moment when Montalembert elevated taxation to a god, the peasant became godless, atheist, and threw himself into the arms of the devil, socialism. The religion or order had lost him; the Jesuits had lost him; Bonaparte had lost him. December 20, 1849, had irrevocably compromised December 20, 1848. The "nephew of his uncle" was not the first of his family whom the wine tax defeated, this tax which, in the expression of Montalembert, heralds the revolutionary storm. The real, the great Napoleon declared at St. Helena that the reintroduction

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<sup>1</sup>Long live the tax on drinks.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>In English in the original text.—*Ed.*

of the wine tax had contributed more to his downfall than all else, since it had alienated from him the peasants of Southern France. Already the favourite object of the people's hate under Louis XIV (see the writings of Boisguillebert and Vauhan), abolished by the first revolution, it was reintroduced by Napoleon in a modified form in 1808. When the restoration entered France, there trotted before it not only the Cossacks, but also the promises to abolish the wine tax. The *gentil-homme* naturally did not need to keep its word to the *gents taillable, a merci et misericorde*<sup>1</sup>. The year 1830 promised the abolition of the wine tax. It was not its way to do what it said or say what it did. 1848 promised the abolition of the wine tax as it promised everything. Finally, the Constituent Assembly, which promised nothing, made, as mentioned, a testamentary provision whereby the wine tax was to disappear on January 1, 1850. And just ten days before January 1, 1850, the Legislative Assembly introduced it once more, so that the French people perpetually pursued it and when it had thrown it out the door, saw it come in again through the window.

The popular hatred of the wine tax is explained by the fact that it unites in itself all the hatefulness of the French system of taxation. The mode of its collection is hateful, the mode of its distribution aristocratic, for the rates of taxation are the same for the commonest as for the costliest wines; it increases therefore, in geometrical progression as the wealth of the consumers decreases, an inverted progressive tax. It is accordingly a direct provocation to the poisoning of the working classes as a premium on adulterated and spurious wines. It lessens consumption, since it sets up *octrois*<sup>2</sup> before the gates of all towns of over 4,000 inhabitants and transforms each town into a foreign country with protective duties against French wine. The big wine merchants, but still more the small ones, the *marchands de vins*, the keepers of wine-shops, whose living directly depends on the consumption of wine, are so many declared enemies of the wine tax. And finally by lessening the consumption the wine tax cuts away the market from production. While it renders the urban workers incapable of paying for wines, it renders the wine growers incapable of selling it. And France has a wine grow-

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<sup>1</sup> People deprived of rights.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Local customs offices, at the gates of towns.—Ed.

ing population of about twelve millions. One can, therefore, understand the hate of the people in general; one can, in particular, understand the fanaticism of the peasants against the wine tax. And, in addition, they saw in its restoration no isolated, more or less accidental event. The peasants have a kind of historical tradition of their own, which is handed down from father to son, and in this historical school it is muttered that every government, as long as it wants to dupe the peasants, promises the abolition of the wine tax; and as soon as it has duped the peasants, retains or reintroduces the wine tax. In the wine tax the peasant tests the bouquet of the government, its tendency. The restoration of the wine tax on December 20 meant: "*Louis Bonaparte is like the others; but he was not like the others; he was a peasant discovery*, and in the petitions carrying millions of signatures against the wine tax they took back the votes that they had given a year before to the "nephew of his uncle."

The country folk—over two-thirds of the total French population—consist for the most part of so-called free *landed proprietors*. The first generation, gratuitously freed by the revolution of 1789 from its feudal burdens; had paid no price for the soil. But the following generations paid, under the form of the *price of land*, what their semi-serf forefathers had paid in the form of rent, tithes, *corvee*,<sup>1</sup> etc. The more, on the one hand, the population grew and the more, on the other hand, the division of the soil increased—so much the higher became the price of the holdings, for the extent of the demand for them increased with their smallness. But in proportion as the price which the peasant paid for his holding rose, whether he bought it directly or whether he received it as capital from his co-heirs, in this same proportion the *indebtedness of the peasant, i.e., the mortgage*, necessarily rose. The title to the debt encumbering the land is termed a mortgage, a pawnticket in respect of the land. Just as *privileges* accumulated on the mediaeval estate, *mortgages* accumulate on the modern tiny holding. On the other hand: under the system of fragmentation of holdings the earth is purely an *instrument of production* for its proprietors. Now in the same measure as land is divided its fruitfulness diminishes. The application of machinery to the land, the division of labour, the ample means of improv-

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<sup>1</sup> Compulsory unpaid labour of serfs rendered to feudal lords.—*Ed.*

ing the soil, such as cutting drainage and irrigation channels and the like, become more and more impossible, while the *unproductive costs* of cultivation increase in the same proportion as the division of the instrument of production itself. All this, apart from whether the possessor of the lot possesses capital or not. But the more the division increases, so much the more does the holding with its most utterly wretched inventory form the entire capital of the small peasant, so much the more does investment of capital in the land diminish, so much the more does the cotter lack land, money and education for making use of the progress in agriculture, and so much the more does the cultivation of the soil retrogress. Finally, the *net proceeds* diminish in the same proportion as the *gross consumption* increases, when the whole family of the peasant is kept back from other occupations through its holding and yet is not enabled to live by it.

In the measure, therefore, that the population and, with it, the division of the land increases, in this same measure *the instrument of production, the soil, becomes dearer*, and its fruitfulness decreases, in this same measure *agriculture declines and the peasant becomes loaded with debt*. And what was the effect becomes, for its part, the cause. Each generation leaves behind another more deeply in debt; each new generation begins under more unfavourable and more aggravating conditions; mortgaging begets mortgaging, and when it becomes impossible for the peasant to offer his lot as security for *new debts, i.e.*, to encumber it with new mortgages, he falls a victim to usury, and so much the more huge do *the usurious sums of interest* become.

Thus it came about the French peasant, in the form of interest on the mortgages encumbering the soil and in the form of interest on the *advances made by the usurer without mortgages*, cedes to the capitalist not only ground rent, not only the industrial profit, in a word, not only the *whole net profit*, but even *a part of the wages*, and that therefore he has sunk to the level of the *Irish tenant farmer*—all under the pretence of being a *private proprietor*.

This process was accelerated in France by the ever growing burden of taxes, by legal expenses called forth in part directly by the formalities themselves, with which French legislation encumbers landed property, in part by the innumerable conflicts over holdings everywhere bounding and crossing each other, and in part by the passion for litigation of the peasants,

whose enjoyment of property is limited to the fanatical assertion of their fancied property, of their property rights.

According to a statistical statement of 1840 the gross product of French land amounted to 5,237,178,000 francs. Of this, the costs of cultivation come to 3,552,000,000 francs, including the consumption by the persons working. There remains a net product of 1,685,178,000 francs, from which 550,000,000 have to be deducted for interest on mortgages, 100,000,000 for law officials, 350,000,000 for taxes and 107,000,000 for registration money, stamp money, mortgage fees, etc. There is left one-third of the net product or 538,000,000; when distributed over the population, not 25 francs per head net product. Naturally neither usury outside of mortgage nor the expenses for lawyers, etc., are included in this calculation.

The condition of the French peasants, when the republic had added new burdens to their old ones, can be understood: It can be seen that their exploitation differs only in form from the exploitation of the industrial proletariat. The exploiter is the same: *capital*. The individual capitalists exploit the individual peasants through *mortgages* and *usury*; the capitalist class exploits the peasant class through the state taxes. The peasant's title to property is the talisman by which capital captivated him hitherto, the pretext under which it set him against the industrial proletariat. Only the fall of capital can raise the peasant; only an anti-capitalist, a proletarian government can break his economic misery, his social degradation. The *constitutional republic*, that is the dictatorship of his united exploiters; the *Social-Democratic*, the *Red republic*, that is the dictatorship of his allies. And the scale rises or falls, according to the votes that the peasant casts into the ballot box. He himself must decide his fate—so spoke the Socialist in pamphlets, almanacs, calendars and leaflets of all kinds. This language became more understandable to him through the counter-writings of the Party of Order, which, for its part, turned to him and by gross exaggeration, by its brutal conception and representation of the intentions and ideas of the Socialists, struck the true peasant note and exceedingly stimulated his lust after forbidden fruit. But most understandable was the language of the actual experiences that the peasant class had from the use of the suffrage, and of the disillusionments overwhelming him, blow upon blow, in revolutionary haste. *Revolutions are the locomotives of history.*

The gradual revolutionising of the peasants was mani-

fested by various symptoms. It was already shown in the elections to the Legislative Assembly; it was shown in the state of siege in the five Departments bordering Lyons; it was shown a few months after June 13 in the election of a *Montagnard* in place of the former president of the *Chambre introuvable*<sup>1</sup> by the Department of the Gironde; it was shown on December 20, 1849, in the election of a Red in place of a deceased Legitimist deputy in the Department of Gard, that lauded land of the Legitimists, the scene of the most frightful infamies committed against the republicans of 1794 and 1795 and the centre of the *terreur blanche*<sup>2</sup> in 1815, where Liberals and Protestants were publically murdered. This revolutionising of the most stationary class is most clearly evident since the reintroduction of the wine tax. The governmental measures and the laws of January and February, 1850, are directed almost exclusively against the Departments and the peasants. The most striking proof of their progress.

*The circular of Hautpoul*, by which the gendarme was appointed inquisitor of the prefect, of the sub-prefect and, above all, of the mayor, and by which espionage was organised even in the hidden corners of the remotest village communes; *the law against the school teachers*,<sup>3</sup> by which they, the men of talent, the spokesmen, the educators and interpreters of the peasant class were subjected to the arbitrary power of the prefect, they, the proletarians of the learned class, were chased like hunted beasts from one commune to another; *the proposed law against the mayors*, by which the Damocles sword of dismissal hung over their heads, and they, the presidents of the peasant communes, were every moment confronted by the President of the republic and the Party of Order; the ordinance which transformed the 17 military divisions of France into 4 pashalics<sup>4</sup> and forced the barracks and the bivouac on the

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<sup>1</sup> This is the name given by history to the fanatically ultra-royalist and reactionary Chamber of Deputies elected immediately after the second overthrow of Napoleon in 1815. [Note by F. Engels.]

<sup>2</sup> White terror.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> The law was promulgated on December 13, 1849. On the basis of this law, teachers could be arbitrarily dismissed by the prefects and subjected to disciplinary punishment.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> The decree on the organisation of military command by territorial areas was issued on February 15. The districts were divided into four areas which Marx compares with the pashalics ruled by Turkish pashas under governors general

French as the national salons ; the *education law*<sup>1</sup> by which the Party of Order proclaimed the ignorance and the forcible stupefaction of France as the condition of its own life under the regime of universal suffrage—what were all these laws and measures? Desperate attempts to reconquer the Departments and the peasants of the Departments for the Party of Order.

Regarded as *repression*, wretched methods that wrung the neck of their own purpose. The big measures, like the retention of the wine tax, of the 45 centimes tax, the scornful rejection of the peasant petitions for the repayment of the milliard, etc., all these legislative thunderbolts struck the peasant class only once, wholesale, from the centre ; the laws and measures instanced made the attack and the resistance the *common* topic of the day in every hut ; they inoculated every village with revolution ; *they localised and peasantised the revolution.*

On the other hand, did not these proposals of Bonaparte and their acceptance by the National Assembly prove the unity of the two powers of the constitutional republic, so far as it is a question of repression of anarchy, *i.e.*, of all the classes that rise against the bourgeois dictatorship? Had not Soulouque, directly after his sharp message, assured the Legislative Assembly of his devotion to order through the immediately following message of Carlier, that dirty, mean caricature of Fouché,<sup>2</sup> as Louis Bonaparte himself was the shallow caricature of Napoleon ?

The *education law* shows us the alliance of the young Catholics with the old Voltairians. Could the rule of the united bourgeois be anything else but the coalesced despotism of the restoration, friendly to the Jesuits, and the would-be free-thinking July monarchy ? Had not the weapons that the one bourgeois faction had distributed among the people against the other faction in their mutual struggle for supremacy again to be torn from it, the people, since the latter was confronted by their united dictatorship ? Nothing has aroused the Paris

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whose authority was marked by unrestricted supremacy of the military command.—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup> The education law adopted by the National Assembly on March 16, 1850, put education into the hands of the clergy and Jesuits.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Fouché (1763-1820). Active political figure in the first French bourgeois revolution and afterwards in the First Empire. Fouché was one of the most expert and ambitious intriguers and careerists known to history.—*Ed.*

shopkeeper more than this coquettish exhibition of *Jesuitism*, not even the rejection of the *concordats a l'amiable*.

Meanwhile the collisions between the different factions of the Party of Order continued, as well as between Bonaparte and the National Assembly. The National Assembly was far from pleased that Bonaparte, immediately after his *coup d'etat*, after appointing his own Bonapartist ministry, summoned before him the disabled soldiers of the monarchy, now appointed prefects, and made their unconstitutional agitation for his reelection as President the condition of their appointment; when Carlier celebrated his inauguration with the closing of a Legitimist club, or when Bonaparte founded a journal of his own, *Le Napoleon*, which betrayed the secret longings of the President to the public, while his ministers had to deny them from the tribune of the Legislative Assembly. The latter was far from pleased by the defiant retention of the ministry, notwithstanding its various votes of no confidence; far from pleased by the attempt to win the favour of non-commissioned officers by extra pay of four sous a day and the favour of the proletariat by a plagiarism of Eugene Sue's *Mysteres*,<sup>1</sup> by an honour loan bank;<sup>2</sup> far from pleased, finally by the effrontery with which the ministers were made to move the deportation of the remaining June insurgents to Algiers, in order to heap unpopularity on the Legislative *en gros*,<sup>3</sup> while the President reserved popularity for himself *en detail*, by individual grants of pardon. Thiers let fall threatening words about coups

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<sup>1</sup> Eugene Sue's *Mysteres* have been translated into English under the titles, *The Mysteries of Paris* and *The Mysteries of the People, or The History of a Proletarian Family Across the Ages*. The latter work was translated into English by Daniel De Leon.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Marx and Engels in *The Holy Family* give the following characterisation of the loan bank for the poor which was proposed by Eugene Sue in his *Mysteries of Paris*.

“The idea of the critical Poor Bank, if otherwise taken as reasonable, reduces itself to the following. From the pay of the worker during the period when he is employed there is to be withdrawn as much as he needs to live on in the period of unemployment. Whether I advance him a definite sum in the unemployed period and he gives me this sum back when employed, or whether he gives up a definite sum when employed and I return it to him in the period of unemployment, is one and the same. He always gives me in his employed period what he receives from me in his unemployed period.”  
—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> As a whole.—Ed.

*d'état* and *coups de tete*; and the Legislative Assembly revenged itself on Bonaparte by rejecting every proposed law which he put forward for his own benefit, and by inquiring with noisy mistrust, in every instance where he made a proposal in the common interest, whether through increase of the executive power he did not aspire to augment the personal power of Bonaparte. In a word; it *revenged itself by a conspiracy of contempt*.

The Legitimist party, on its side, saw with vexation the more capable Orleanists once more occupying almost all posts and *centralisation* increasing, while it sought its well-being principally in *decentralisation*. And so it was. The counter-revolution *centralised violently, i.e.*, it prepared the mechanism of the revolution. It even centralised the gold and silver of France in the Paris bank through the compulsory quotation of bank notes, and so created the *complete war chest* for the revolution.

Lastly, the Orleanists saw with vexation the rising principle of legitimacy contrasted with their bastard principle and themselves every moment snubbed and maltreated as the bourgeois *mesalliance* of a noble spouse.

Little by little we have seen peasants, petty bourgeois, the middle classes in general; stepping alongside the proletariat, driven into open antagonism to the official republic and treated by it as antagonists. *Revolt against bourgeois dictatorship*; need of a change in society, adherence to democratic-republican institutions as organs of their movement, grouping round *the proletariat as the decisive revolutionary power*—these were the common characteristics of the so-called party of Social-Democracy, the party of the Red republic. This party of *anarchy*, as its opponents christened it, is no less a coalition of different interests than the Party of Order. From the smallest reform of the old social disorder to the overthrow of the old social order, from bourgeois liberalism to revolutionary terrorism, as wide apart as this lie the extremes that form the starting and final point of the party of "anarchy."

Abolition of the protective duties—socialism! For it strikes at the monopoly of the industrial faction of the Party of Order. Regulation of the state budget—socialism! For it strikes at the monopoly of the financial faction of the Party of Order. Free admission of foreign meat and corn—socialism! For it strikes at the monopoly of the third faction of the Party of Order, *large landed property*. The demands of the free-trade party, *i.e.*, of the most advanced English bourgeois party, appear in

France as so many socialist demands. Voltairianism<sup>1</sup>—socialism! For it strikes at the fourth faction of the Party of Order, the Catholic. Freedom of the press, right of association, universal public education—socialism, socialism! They strike at the entire monopoly of the Party of Order.

So swiftly had the march of the revolution ripened conditions, that the friends of reform of all shades, the most moderate claims of the middle classes, were compelled to group themselves round the banner of the most extreme party of revolution, round the red flag.

Yes, manifold as was the socialism of the different large sections of the party of anarchy, according to the economic conditions and the total revolutionary requirements of their class or fraction of a class arising out of these, in one point it is in harmony: in proclaiming itself as *the means of emancipating the proletariat* and the emancipation of the latter as its object. Deliberate deception on the part of some; self-deception on the part of the others, who give out the world transformed according to their own needs as the best world for all, as the realization of all revolutionary claims and the abolition of all revolutionary collisions.

Under the somewhat similar sounding, general socialist phrases of the "*party of anarchy*," is concealed the socialism of the *National*, of the *Presse* and the *Siccle*, which more or less consistently wants to overthrow the rule of the finance aristocracy and to free industry and trade from their hitherto existing fetters. This is the socialism of industry, of trade and of agriculture, whose rulers in the Party of Order deny these interests, in so far as they no longer coincide with their private monopolies. From this *bourgeois socialism*, to which, as to every variety of socialism, a section of the workers and petty bourgeois naturally rallies, specific *petty-bourgeois socialism*, *socialism par excellence*, is distinct. Capital hounds this class chiefly as its creditors, so it demands *credit institutions*; capital crushes it by *competition*, so it demands *associations supported by the state*; capital overwhelms it by *concentration*, so it demands *progressive taxes*, limitations on inheritance, taking over of large works by the state, and other measures that *forcibly stem the growth of capital*. Since

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<sup>1</sup> Religious free-thinking, named after the philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778), who waged a struggle against the church.  
—Ed.

it dreams of the peaceful achievement of its socialism—allowing, perhaps, for a 'second February Revolution lasting a brief day—naturally the coming historical process appears to it as the *application of systems*, which the thinkers of society, whether in companies or as individual inventors, devise or have devised. Thus they become the eclectics or adepts of the existing socialist *systems*, of *doctrinaire socialism*, which was the theoretical expression of the proletariat only so long as it had not yet developed further into a free historical self-movement.

While this *utopia, doctrinaire socialism*, which subordinates the total movement to one of its moments, which puts in place of common, social production the brainwork of individual pedants and, above all, in fantasy does away with the revolutionary struggle of the classes and its requirements by small conjuring tricks or great sentimentality; while this doctrinaire socialism, which at bottom only idealises the present society, takes a picture of it without shadows and wants to achieve its ideal against the reality of society; while this socialism passes from the proletariat to the petty bourgeoisie; while the struggle of the different socialist chiefs among themselves sets forth each of the so-called systems as a pretentious adherence to one of the transit points of the social revolution as against another—the *proletariat* rallies more and more round *revolutionary socialism*, round *communism*, for which the bourgeoisie has itself found the name of *Blanqui*. This socialism is the *declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the class dictatorship* of the proletariat as the inevitable transit point to the *abolition of class differences generally*, to the abolition of all the production relations on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionising of all the ideas that result from these social connections.

The scope of this exposition does not permit of developing the subject further.

We have seen that just as in the Party of Order the *finance aristocracy* inevitably takes the lead, in the party of "anarchy" the *proletariat* does so. While the different classes united in a revolutionary league grouped themselves round the proletariat, while the Departments became ever more unsafe and the Legislative Assembly itself ever more morose towards the pretensions of the French Soulouque, the long deferred and delayed election of substitutes for the

*Montagnards* proscribed after June 13 drew near.

The government, scorned by its foes, maltreated and daily humiliated by its alleged friends, saw only one means of emerging from a repugnant and untenable position—a rising. A rising in Paris would have permitted the proclamation of a state of siege in Paris and the Departments and thus the control of the elections. On the other hand, the friends of order, in face of a government that had gained victory over anarchy were bound to make concessions, if they did not want to appear as anarchists themselves.

The government set to work. At the beginning of February 1850, provocation of the people by cutting down the trees of liberty.<sup>1</sup> In vain. If the trees of liberty lost their place, it itself lost its head and fell back frightened by its own provocation. The National Assembly, however, received this clumsy attempt at emancipation on the part of Bonaparte with ice-cold mistrust. The removal of the wreaths of *immortelles* from the July column was no more successful.<sup>2</sup> It gave a part of the army an opportunity for revolutionary demonstrations and the National Assembly the occasion for a more or less veiled vote of no confidence in the ministry. In vain the government press threatened the abolition of universal suffrage; the invasion of the Cossacks. In vain was d'Hautpoul's direct challenge issued from the midst of the Legislative Assembly to the Left, to betake itself to the streets, and his declaration that the government was ready to receive it. Hautpoul received nothing but a call to order from the President, and the Party of Order, with quiet, malicious joy, allowed a deputy of the Left to mock Bonaparte's usurpatory longings. In vain, finally was the prophecy of a revolution on February 24. The government caused February 24 to be ignored by

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<sup>1</sup>On February 5, 1850, the Prefect of Police, Carrier, a Bonapartist, ordered all "trees of liberty" to be cut down. The custom of planting "trees of liberty" in France is derived from the period of the first French bourgeois revolution and was revived at the time of the July Revolution, 1830, and of the February Revolution, 1848. The "trees of liberty," were regarded as revolutionary emblems; demonstrations, dances, etc., were arranged in their vicinity and they were decorated with ribbons, inscriptions, etc.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>On February 24 the anniversary of the revolution, the people decorated with flowers and wreaths the July column and the tomb of those who had fallen for freedom. During the night the police removed the decorations, an act which evoked great indignation among the people.—Ed.

the people.

The proletariat did not allow itself to be provoked into a rising, because it was on the point of making a revolution.

Unhindered by the provocations of the government, which only heightened the general irritation against the existing situation, the election committee, wholly under the influence of the workers, put forward three candidates for Paris; *Deflotte, Vidal* and *Carnot*. Deflotte was a June deportee, amnestied through one of Bonaparte's popularity-seeking ideas; he was a friend of Blanqui's and had taken part in the attempt of May 15. Vidal, known as a communist writer through his book *Concerning the Distribution of Wealth*, was formerly secretary to Louis Blanc in the Commission of the Luxembourg. Carnot, son of the man of the Convention who had organised victory, the least compromised member of the National party, Minister for Education in the Provisional Government and the Executive Commission, through his democratic education bill was a living protest against the education law of the Jesuits. These three candidates represented the three allied classes: at the head, the June insurgent, the representative of the revolutionary proletariat; next to him, the doctrinaire Socialist, the representative of the socialist petty bourgeoisie; finally, the third, the representative of the republican bourgeois party, the democratic formulas of which had gained a socialist significance as against the Party of Order and had long lost their own significance. This was a *general coalition against the bourgeoisie and the government, as in February*. But this time the *proletariat* was at the head of the revolutionary league.

In spite of all efforts the Socialist candidates won. The army itself voted for the June insurgent against its own War Minister, Lahitte. The Party of Order was thunderstruck. The elections in the Departments did not solace them; they gave a majority to the *Montagnards*.

*The election of March 10, 1850!*<sup>1</sup> It was the revocation of June 1848: the butchers and deporters of the June insurgents returned to the National Assembly, but humbled, in the train

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<sup>1</sup> On March 10, 1850, the by-elections to the Legislative Assembly took place, new deputies being elected in place of those imprisoned or exiled after the action of the Mountain on June 13, 1849. Marx gives an estimate of these elections in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, chap. IV, in the present volume.—Ed.

of the deported, and with their principles on their lips. It was the revocation of June 13, 1849: the Mountain proscribed by the National Assembly returned to the National Assembly, but as advance trumpeters of the revolution, no longer as its commanders. It was the revocation of December 10: Napoleon had been rejected with his minister, Lahitte. The parliamentary history of France knows only one analogy: the rejection of d'Haussay, minister of Charles X, in 1830. Finally, the election of March 10, 1850, was the cancellation of the election of May 13, which had given the Party of Order a majority. The election of March 10 protested against the majority of May 13. March 10 was a revolution. Behind the ballot papers lay the paving stones:

... "The vote of March 10 is war," shouted Segur d'Aguesseau, one of the most advanced members of the Party of Order.

With March 10, 1850, the constitutional republic entered a new phase; *the phase of its dissolution*. The different factions of the majority are again united among themselves and with Bonaparte; they are again the saviours of order; he is again their *neutral man*. If they remember that they are royalists it happens only from despair of the possibility of the bourgeois republic; if he remembers that he is President, it happens only because he despairs of remaining President.

At the command of the Party of Order, Bonaparte answers the election of Defflotte, the June insurgent, by appointing Baroche Minister for Internal Affairs, Baroche, the accuser of Blanqui and Barbes, of Ledru-Rollin and Guinard. The Legislative Assembly answers the election of Carnot by adopting the education law, the election of Vidal by suppressing the socialist press. The Party of Order seeks to blare away its own fears by the trumpet-blasts of its press. "The sword is holy," cries one of its organs; "the defenders of order must take the offensive against the Red party," cries another; "between socialism and society there is a duel to the death, a war without rest or mercy; in this duel of desperation one or the other must go under; if society does not annihilate socialism, socialism will annihilate society," crows a third cock of order. Throw up the barricades of order, the barricades of religion, the barricades of the family! An end must be made of the 127,000 voters of Paris! A. Bartholomew's night<sup>1</sup> for

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<sup>1</sup>The massacre of St. Bartholomew's night, August 23-24, 1572, one of the most bloody episodes in the history of religious

the Socialists! And the Party of Order believes for a moment in its own certainty of victory.

Their organs hold forth most fanatically of all against the "*shopkeepers of Paris.*" The June insurgent of Paris elected as their representative by the shopkeepers of Paris! This means that a second June 1848 is impossible; this means that a second June 13, 1849, is impossible; this means that the moral influence of capital is broken; this means that the bourgeois assembly now represents only the bourgeoisie; this means that large property is lost, because its vassal, small property, seeks its salvation in the camp of the propertyless.

The Party of Order naturally returns to its inevitable commonplace. "*More repression,*" it cries, "*tenfold repression!*" But its power of repression has diminished tenfold, while the resistance has increased a hundredfold. Must not the chief instrument of repression, the army, itself be repressed? And the Party of Order speaks its last word, "The iron ring of suffocating legality must be broken. *The constitutional republic is impossible.* We must fight with our true weapons; since February 1848 we have fought the revolution with its weapons and on its terrain; we have accepted its institutions; the constitution is a fortress, which safeguards only the besiegers, not the besieged! By smuggling ourselves into holy Ilion in the belly of the Trojan horse, we have, unlike our forefathers, the *Grecs*,<sup>2</sup> not conquered the hostile town, but made ourselves into prisoners."

The foundation of the constitution, however, is *universal suffrage.* *The abolition of universal suffrage* is the last word of the Party of Order, of bourgeois dictatorship.

On May 24, 1848, on December 20, 1848, on May 13, 1849, and on July 8, 1849, universal suffrage admitted that they were right. On March 10, 1850, universal suffrage admitted that it had itself been wrong. Bourgeois rule as the outcome and result of universal suffrage, as the express act of the sovereign will of the people, that is the meaning of the bourgeois constitution. But from the moment that the content of this suffrage, of this sovereign will, is no longer bourgeois rule, has the constitution any further meaning? Is it not the duty

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struggles in France in the sixteenth century, when the Protestant Huguenots were treacherously massacred by order of the king.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Grecs—play on words: Greeks, but also professional cheats. [Note by F. Engels.]

of the bourgeoisie so to regulate the suffrage that it wills the reasonable, its rule? By ever and again putting an end to the existing state power and creating it anew out of itself, does not universal suffrage put an end to all stability, does it not every moment question all the powers that be, does it not annihilate authority, does it not threaten to elevate anarchy itself to authority? After March 10, 1850, who should still doubt it?

By repudiating universal suffrage, with which it had hitherto draped itself and from which it sucked its omnipotence, the bourgeoisie openly confesses, "*Our dictatorship has hitherto existed by the will of the people; it must now be consolidated against the will of the people.*" And, consistently, it seeks its supporters no longer within France, but without, in foreign countries, in an invasion.

With the invasion, it, a second Coblenz,<sup>1</sup> which has established its seat in France itself, rouses all the national passions against it. With the attack on universal suffrage it gives a *general pretext* for the new revolution, and the revolution required such a pretext. Every particular pretext would divide the factions of the revolutionary league, and give prominence to their differences. The general pretext stuns the semi-revolutionary classes; it permits them to deceive themselves concerning the definite character of the coming revolution, concerning the consequences of their own act. Every revolution requires a banquet question. Universal suffrage is the banquet question of the new revolution.

The bourgeois factions in coalition, however, are already condemned, since they take flight from the only possible form of their united power, from the strongest and most complete form of their class rule, the *constitutional republic*, back to the subordinate, incomplete, weaker form of *monarchy*. They resemble that old man who, in order to regain his youthful strength, fetched out his boyhood apparel and sought to torment his withered limbs in it. Their republic had the sole merit of being the *hot-house of the revolution*.

March 10 bears the inscription: *Après moi le déluge!*  
After me the deluge!

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<sup>1</sup>Coblenz was the centre of the counter-revolutionary *émigrés* at the time of the first French bourgeois revolution.—Ed.

## THE ABOLITION OF UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, 1850

(The continuation of the three foregoing chapters is found in the *Revue* in the fifth and sixth double number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the last to appear. There, after the great commercial crisis that broke out in England in 1847 had first been described and the coming to a head of the political complications on the European Continent in the Revolutions of February and March 1848 had been explained by its reactions there, it is then shown how the prosperity of trade and industry, that again set in during the course of 1848 and increased still further in 1849, paralysed the revolutionary upsurge and made possible the simultaneous victories of the reaction. With special reference to France, it is then said :)<sup>1</sup>

The same symptoms showed themselves in *France* after 1849 and particularly since the beginning of 1850. The Parisian industries are abundantly employed and the cotton factories of Rouen and Mulhausen are also doing pretty well, although here, as in England, the high prices of the raw material have exercised a retarding influence. The development of prosperity in France was, in addition, especially advanced by the comprehensive tariff reform in Spain and by the reduction of the duties on various luxury articles in Mexico; the export of French commodities to both markets has considerably increased. The growth of capital in France led to a series of speculations, for which the exploitation of the California gold mines on a large scale served as a pretext. A swarm of companies sprang up, the low denomination of whose shares and whose socialist-coloured prospectuses appeal directly to the purses of the petty bourgeois and the workers, but which all and sundry result in that sheer swindling which is characteristic of the French and Chinese alone. One of these companies is even patronised directly by the government. The import duties in France during the first nine months of 1848 amounted to 63,000,000 francs, of 1849 to 95,000,000 francs and of 1850 to 93,000,000 francs. Moreover in the month of September 1850 they again rose by more than a million compared with the same month of 1849. Exports had also risen in 1849 and still more in 1850.

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<sup>1</sup>Introductory paragraph by Frederick Engels.—*Ed.*

The most striking proof of restored prosperity is the bank's reintroduction of cash payments by the law of September 6, 1850. On March 15, 1848, the bank was authorised to suspend its cash payments. Its note circulation, including the provincial banks, amounted at that time to 373,000,000 francs (£14,920,000 sterling). On November 2, 1849, this circulation amounted to 482,000,000 francs or £19,280,000 sterling, an increase of £4,360,000 sterling, and on September 2, 1850, to 496,000,000 francs or £19,840,000 sterling, an increase of some £5,000,000 sterling. This was not accompanied by any depreciation of the notes; on the contrary the increased circulation of the notes was accompanied by the steadily increasing accumulation of gold and silver in the cellars of the bank so that in the summer of 1850 its metallic reserve amounted to about £14,000,000 sterling, an unprecedented sum in France. That the bank was thus placed in a position to increase its circulation and therewith its active capital by 123,000,000 francs or £5,000,000 sterling is a striking proof of the correctness of our assertion in the earlier number that the finance aristocracy has not only not been overthrown by the revolution, but has even been strengthened. This result becomes still more evident from the following survey of the French bank legislation of the last few years. On June 10, 1847, the bank was authorised to issue notes of 200 francs; hitherto the smallest note had been one of 500 francs. A decree of March 15, 1848, declared the notes of the Bank of France legal tender and relieved the bank of the obligation of redeeming them in cash. Its note issue was limited to 350,000,000 francs. It was simultaneously authorised to issue notes of 100 francs. A decree of April 27 prescribed the merging of the departmental banks in the Bank of France; another decree of May 2, 1848, increased the latter's note issue to 422,000,000 francs. A decree of December 22, 1849, raised the maximum of the note issue to 525,000,000 francs. Finally, the law of September 6, 1850, reintroduced the exchangeability of notes for gold. These facts, the continual increase in the circulation, the concentration of the whole of French credit in the hands of the bank and the accumulation of all French gold and silver in the bank vaults, led M. Proudhon<sup>1</sup> to the conclusion that the bank must now shed its old snake-

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<sup>1</sup>Proudhon (1809-65) was not a Socialist. A typical representative of the petty property owners, he put forward in opposition to the system of capitalist property the system of

skin and metamorphose itself into a Proudhonist people's bank. He did not even need to know the history of the English bank restriction from 1797-1819 ; he only needed to direct his glance across the Channel to see that this fact, for him unprecedented in the history of bourgeois society, was nothing more than a very normal bourgeois event that now only occurred in France for the first time. One sees that the alleged revolutionary theoreticians who, after the Provisional Government, talked big in Paris, were just as ignorant of the nature and the results of the measures taken, as the gentlemen of the Provisional Government themselves. In spite of the industrial and commercial prosperity that France momentarily enjoys, the mass of the people, the twenty-five million peasants, labour under a state of great depression. The good harvests of the last few years have forced the prices of corn much lower than in England, and the position of the peasants in such circumstances, in debt, sucked dry by usury and crushed by taxes, can only be anything but brilliant. The history of the last three years has, however, provided sufficient proof that this class of the population is capable of absolutely no revolutionary initiative.

Just as the period of crisis occurs later on the Continent than in England, so does that of prosperity. The original process always takes place in England ; she is the demiurge of the bourgeois cosmos. On the Continent, the different phases of the cycle through which bourgeois society is ever speeding anew, occur in secondary and tertiary form. First, the Continent exported incomparably more to England than to any other country. This export to England, however, in turn depends on the position of England, particularly with regard to the overseas market. Then England exports to the overseas lands incomparably more than the entire Continent, so that the quantity of Continental exports to these lands is always dependent on England's overseas exports in each case. If, therefore, the crises first produce revolutions on the Con-

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petty commodity producers, who exchange the products of their "labour" property according to the quantity of labour expended on them. This exchange was to be carried out by the People's Bank, projected by him, which would give out to the owners of goods special bonds serving as exchange tokens. The petty-bourgeois views of Proudhon were subjected to an annihilating criticism by Marx in his *Poverty of Philosophy*.—Ed.

continent, the foundation for these is, nevertheless, always laid in England. Violent outbreaks must naturally occur earlier in the extremities of the bourgeois body than in its heart, since here the possibility of adjustment is greater than there. On the other hand, the degree to which the Continental revolutions react on England, is at the same time the thermometer on which is indicated how far these revolutions really call in question the bourgeois conditions of life, or how far they only hit their political formations.

With this general prosperity, in which the productive forces of bourgeois society develop as luxuriantly as is at all possible within bourgeois relationships, there can be no talk of a real revolution. Such a revolution is only possible in the periods when *both* these factors, the *modern* productive forces and the *bourgeois production forms*, come in *collision* with one another. The various quarrels in which the representatives of the individual factions of the Continental Party of Order now indulge and mutually compromise themselves, far from providing the occasion for new revolutions, are, on the contrary, only possible because the basis of the relationships is momentarily so secure and (what the reaction does not know) so *bourgeois*. From it all attempts of the reaction to hold up bourgeois development will rebound just as certainly as all moral indignation and all enthusiastic proclamations of the democrats. *A new revolution is only possible in consequence of a new crisis. It is, however, also just as certain as this.*

Let us now turn to *France*.

The victory that the people, in conjunction with the petty bourgeois, had won in the elections of March 10, was annulled by it itself when it provoked the new election of April 28. Vidal was elected not only in Paris, but also in the Lower Rhine. The Paris Committee, in which the Mountain and the petty bourgeoisie were strongly represented, induced him to accept for the Lower Rhine. The victory of March 10 ceased to be a decisive one; the date of the decision was once more postponed; the tension of the people was relaxed; it became accustomed to legal triumphs instead of revolutionary ones. The revolutionary meaning of March 10, the rehabilitation of the June insurrection, was finally completely annihilated by the candidature of Eugene Sue, the sentimental petty bourgeois social-pharantast, which the proletariat could at best accept as a joke to please the *grisettes*. As against this well-meaning

candidature, the Party of Order, emboldened by the vacillating policy of its opponent, put up a candidate who was to represent the June victory. This comic candidate was the Spartan *pater familias*,<sup>1</sup> Leclerc, from whose person the heroic armour was torn piece by piece by the press, and who also experienced a brilliant defeat in the election. The new election victory on April 28 made the Mountain and the petty bourgeoisie overconfident. They already exulted in the thought of being able to arrive at the goal of their wishes in a purely legal way and without again pushing the proletariat into the foreground through a new revolution; they reckoned positively on bringing Ledru-Rollin into the presidential chair, and a majority of the *Montagnards* into the Assembly through universal suffrage in the new elections of 1852. The Party of Order, rendered perfectly certain by the prospective elections, by the candidature of Sue and by the mood of the Mountain and the petty bourgeoisie, that the latter were resolved to remain quiet under all circumstances, answered the two election victories with the election law which abolished universal suffrage.

The government took good care not to make this legislative proposal on its own responsibility. It made an apparent concession to the majority by entrusting the working out of the bill to the high dignitaries of this majority, the seventeen burgraves. Therefore, it was not the government that proposed the repeal of universal suffrage to the Assembly; the majority of the Assembly proposed it to itself.

On May 8, the project was brought into the Chamber. The entire social-democratic press rose as one man in order to preach to the people dignified bearing, *calme majestueux*, passivity and trust in its representatives. Every article of these journals was a confession that a revolution must, above all, annihilate the so-called revolutionary press and that, therefore, it was now a question of their self-preservation. The alleged revolutionary press betrayed its whole secret. It signed its own death warrant.

On May 21, the Mountain put the preliminary question to debate and moved the rejection of the whole project because it violated the constitution. The Party of Order answered that the constitution would be violated if it were necessary; there was, however, no need for this at present, because the

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<sup>1</sup>Head of the family.—Ed.

constitution was capable of every interpretation, and because the majority was alone competent to decide on the correct interpretation. To the unbridled, savage attacks of Thiers and Montalembert the Mountain opposed a decorous and civilised humanism. It took its stand on the ground of law; the Party of Order referred it to the ground on which the law grows, to bourgeois property. The Mountain whimpered: Did they really want, then, to conjure up revolutions by main force? The Party of Order replied: One would await them.

On May 22, the preliminary question was settled by 462 votes to 227. The same men who had proved with such solemn profundity that the National Assembly and every individual deputy would abdicate if he dismissed the people, his mandator, now stuck to their seats and suddenly sought to let the country act, through petitions at that, instead of themselves, and still sat there unmoved when, on May 31, the law passed brilliantly. They sought to revenge themselves through a protest in which they recorded their innocence of the rape of the constitution, a protest which they did not even set down openly, but smuggled into the President's pocket from behind.

An army of 150,000 men in Paris, the long deferment of the decision, the peaceful attitude of the press, the pusillanimity of the Mountain and the newly elected representatives, the majestic calm of the petty bourgeois, but, above all, the commercial and industrial prosperity, prevented any attempt at revolution on the part of the proletariat.

Universal suffrage had fulfilled its mission. The majority of the people had passed through the school of development, which is all that universal suffrage can serve for in a revolutionary period. It had to be set aside by a revolution or by the reaction.

The Mountain developed a still greater display of energy on an occasion that soon afterwards arose. From the tribune the War Minister d'Hautpoul termed the February Revolution a disastrous catastrophe. The orators of the Mountain, who, as always, distinguished themselves by morally indignant uproar, were not allowed to speak by the President, Dupin. Girardin proposed to the Mountain that it should walk out at once *en masse*. Result: the Mountain remained seated, but Girardin was cast out from its midst as unworthy.

The election law still needed one thing to complete it, a new *press law*. This was not long in coming. A proposal of the government, made many times more drastic by amend-

ments of the Party of Order, increased the caution money, put an extra stamp on feuilleton novels (answer to the election of Eugene Sue), taxed all publications appearing in weekly or monthly parts upto a certain number of sheets and finally provided that every article of a journal must bear the signature of the author. The provisions concerning the caution money killed the so-called revolutionary press; the people regarded its extinction as satisfaction for the abolition of universal suffrage. However, neither the tendency nor the effect of the new law extended only to this section of the press. As long as the newspaper press was anonymous, it appeared as the organ of a numberless and nameless public opinion; it was the third power in the state. Through the signature of every article, a newspaper became a mere collection of literary contributions from more or less known individuals. Every article sank to the level of an advertisement. Hitherto the newspapers had circulated as the paper money of public opinion; now they were resolved into more or less bad solo bills, whose worth and circulation depended on the credit not only of the drawer but also of the endorser. The press of the Party of Order had not only incited for the repeal of universal suffrage but also for the most extreme measures against the bad press. However, in its sinister anonymity even the good press was irksome to the Party of Order and still more to its individual and provincial representatives. As for itself it still demanded only the paid writer, with name, address and description. In vain the good press bemoaned the ingratitude with which its services were rewarded. The law went through; the provision concerning the giving of names hit it hardest of all. The names of republican journalists were pretty well known; but the respectable firms of the *Journal des Debats*, the *Assemblée Nationale*, the *Constitutionnelle*, etc., etc., cut a sorry figure in their high protestations of state wisdom, when the mysterious company all at once disintegrated into purchasable penny-aliners of long practice, who had defended all possible causes for cash, like Granier de Cassagnac, or into old milksops who called themselves statesmen, like Capefigue, or into coquettish fops, like M. Lemoigne of the *Debats*.

In the debate on the press law the Mountain had already sunk to such a level of moral degeneracy that it had to confine itself to applauding the brilliant tirades of an old notability of Louis Philippe's time, M. Victor Hugo.

With the election law and the press law the revolutionary

and democratic party steps off the official stage. Before their departure home, shortly after the end of the session, both factions of the Mountain, the socialist democrats and the democratic socialists, issued two manifestoes, two *testimonia pauperitatis*,<sup>1</sup> in which they proved that if neither power nor success were on their side, nevertheless they had ever been on the side of eternal justice and all the other eternal truths.

Let us now consider the Party of Order. The *N. Rh. Z.* had said (Number III, p. 16) :

"As against the hankerings for restoration on the part of the united Orleanists and Legitimists, Bonaparte represents the title of his actual power, the republic. As against the hankerings for restoration on the part of Bonaparte, the Party of Order represents the title of its common rule : the republic. As against the Orleanists, the Legitimists, as against the Legitimists, the Orleanists, represent the *status quo* : the republic. All these factions of the Party of Order, each of which has its own king and its own restoration *in petto*, mutually assert, as against their rival's desires for usurpation and elevation, the common rule of the bourgeoisie, the form in which the particular claims remain neutralised and reserved : the republic. . . . And Thiers spoke more truly than he suspected, when he said : 'We, the royalists, are the true pillars of the constituent republic.'"

This comedy of the *republikains malgre eux*,<sup>2</sup> of antipathy to the *status quo* and constant consolidation of it ; the incessant friction between Bonaparte and the National Assembly ; the ever renewed threat of the Party of Order to split into its single component parts, and the ever repeated reunion of its factions ; the attempt of each faction to transform each victory over the common foe into a defeat for its temporary allies ; the mutual petty jealousy, chicanery, harassment, the tireless drawing of swords that ever and again ends with a *baiser-Lamourette*<sup>3</sup>—this whole unédifying comedy of errors never developed more classically than during the last six months.

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<sup>1</sup>Certifications of poverty.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Republicans in spite of themselves.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Lamourette (1742-94). French prelate and statesman, a deputy in the Legislative Assembly during the first French bourgeois revolution. He was famous for the so-called *baiser-Lamourette*, a fraternal kiss by which he proposed to end all party dissension. Under the influence of his proposal, put forward with exceptional fervour, on July 7, 1792, the repre-

The Party of Order regarded the election law at the same time as a victory over Bonaparte. Had not the government abdicated when it handed over the editing of and responsibility for its own proposal to the Commission of Seventeen? And did not the chief strength of Bonaparte as against the Assembly lie in the fact that he was the chosen of six millions?—Bonaparte, for his part, treated the election law as a concession to the Assembly, with which he had purchased harmony between the legislative and executive powers. As reward, the vulgar adventurer demanded an increase of three millions in his civil list. Dared the National Assembly enter a conflict with the executive at a moment when it had excommunicated the great majority of Frenchmen? It was roused to anger; it appeared to want to go to extremes; its Commission rejected the motion; the Bonapartist press threatened, and referred to the disinherited people, deprived of its franchise; numerous noisy attempts at an arrangement took place, and the Assembly finally gave way in fact, but at the same time revenged itself in principle. Instead of increasing the civil list in principle by three millions per annum, it granted him an accommodation of 2,160,000 francs. Not satisfied with this, it made the concession only after it had been supported by Changarnier, the general of the Party of Order and the protector thrust upon Bonaparte. Really, therefore, it granted the two millions not to Bonaparte, but to Changarnier.

This present, thrown to him *de mauvaise grace*<sup>1</sup> was accepted by Bonaparte quite in the spirit of the donor. The Bonapartist press blustered anew against the National Assembly. When, now in the debate on the press law, the amendment was made on the signing of names, which, in turn, was directed especially against the less important papers—the representatives of the private interests of Bonaparte, the principal Bonapartist paper, the *Pouvoir*, published an open and vehement attack on the National Assembly. The ministers had to disavow the paper before the National Assembly: the chief editor of the *Pouvoir* was summoned before the bar of the National Assembly and sentenced to pay the highest fine, 5,000 francs. Next day the *Pouvoir* published a much more insolent

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sentatives of the hostile parties embraced one another but, as might have been expected, on the following day this hypocritical "fraternal kiss" was forgotten.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>With bad grace.—Ed.

article against the Assembly, and, as the revenge of the government, the public prosecutor promptly prosecuted a number of Legitimist journals for violating the constitution.

Finally there came the question of proroguing the Chamber. Bonaparte desired this in order to be able to operate unhindered by the Assembly. The Party of Order desired it partly for the purpose of carrying on their factional intrigues, partly for the pursuit of the private interests of individual deputies. Both needed it in order to consolidate and push further the victories of the reaction in the provinces. The Assembly therefore adjourned from August 11 until November 11. Since, however, Bonaparte in no way concealed that his only concern was to get rid of the irksome surveillance of the National Assembly, the Assembly imprinted on the vote of confidence itself the stamp of want of confidence in the President. All Bonapartists were kept off the permanent commission of twenty-eight members, who persevered during the recess as guardians of the virtue of the republic. In their stead, some republicans of the *Siecle* and the *National* were actually elected to it, in order to prove to the President the attachment of the majority to the constitutional republic.

Shortly before and, especially, immediately after the proroguing of the Chamber, the two big factions of the Party of Order, the Orleanists and the Legitimists, appeared to want to be reconciled, and indeed by a fusion of the two royal houses under whose flags they were fighting. The papers were full of reconciliation proposals that had been discussed at the sick bed of Louis Philippe at St. Leonards, when the death of Louis Philippe suddenly simplified the situation. Louis Philippe was the usurper; Henry V, the dispossessed; the Count of Paris, on the other hand, owing to the childlessness of Henry V, his lawful heir to the throne. Every objection to the fusion of the two dynastic interests was now removed. But now, precisely, the two factions of the bourgeoisie first discovered that it was not zeal for a definite royal house that divided them, but that it was rather their divided class interests that kept the two dynasties apart. The Legitimists who had made a pilgrimage to the residence of Henry V at Wiesbaden just as their competitors had to St. Leonards, received there the news of Louis Philippe's death. Forthwith they formed a ministry *in partibus infidelium*, which consisted mostly of members of that commission of guardians of the virtue of the republic and which on the occasion of a squabble taking place in the bosom of the

party, came out with the most outspoken proclamation of right by the grace of God. The Orleanists rejoiced over the compromising scandal that this manifesto called forth in the press, and did not conceal for a moment their open enmity to the Legitimists.

During the adjournment of the National Assembly, the meeting of the councils of the Departments took place. The majority of them declared themselves for a more or less qualified revision of the constitution, i.e., they declared themselves for a monarchist restoration, not more closely specified, for a "solution," and confessed at the same time that they were too incompetent and too cowardly to find this solution. The Bonapartist faction construed this desire for revision in the sense of a prolongation of Bonaparte's presidency.

The constitutional solution, the retirement of Bonaparte in May 1852, the simultaneous election of a new president by all the electors of the land, the revision of the constitution by a Chamber of Revision in the first months of the new presidency, is utterly inadmissible for the ruling class. The day of the new presidential election would be the day of the *rendez-vous* for all the hostile parties, as the Legitimists, the Orleanists the bourgeois republicans, the revolutionaries. It had to come to a violent decision between the different factions. Even if the Party of Order should succeed in uniting round the candidature of a neutral person outside the dynastic families, he would still be opposed by Bonaparte. In its struggle with the people, the Party of Order is compelled constantly to increase the power of the executive. Every increase of the Executive's power increases the power of its bearer, Bonaparte. In the same measure, therefore, as the Party of Order strengthens its joint might, it strengthens the fighting resources of Bonaparte's dynastic pretensions, it strengthens his chance of frustrating the constitutional solution by force on the day of the decision. He will then have, as against the Party of Order, *no more* scruples about the one pillar of the constitution than that party had, as against the people, about the other pillar in the matter of the election law. As against the Assembly, he would seemingly appeal even to universal suffrage.<sup>1</sup> In a word, the constitutional solution questions the entire political *status quo*, and behind the jeopardising of the *status quo*, the bourgeois

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<sup>1</sup>Marx's supposition was strikingly confirmed. See *The Eighteenth Brumaire* in the present volume.—Ed.

sees chaos, anarchy, civil war. He sees his purchases and sales, his bills of exchange, his marriages, his legal contracts, his mortgages, his ground rents, house rents, profits, all his contracts and sources of gain called in question on the first Sunday in May 1852 and he cannot expose himself to this risk. Behind the jeopardising of the political status quo lurks the danger of the collapse of the entire bourgeois society. The only possible solution in the bourgeois sense is the postponement of the solution. It can only save the constitutional republic by a violation of the constitution, by the prolongation of the power of the President. This is also the last word of the press of order, after the protracted and thoughtful debate on the "solutions," to which it devoted itself after the session of the general councils. The high and mighty Party of Order thus finds itself, to its shame, compelled to take seriously the ridiculous, commonplace and, to it, odious person of the pseudo-Bonaparte.

This dirty figure likewise deceived himself concerning the causes that clothed him more and more with the character of the indispensable man. While his party had sufficient insight to ascribe the growing importance of Bonaparte to the circumstances, he believed that he owed it solely to the magic power of his name and his continual caricaturing of Napoleon. He became more enterprising every day. To the pilgrimages to St. Leonards and Wiesbaden he opposed his round tours of France. The Bonapartists had so little faith in the magical effect of his personality that they sent with him everywhere as *claquers* people from the Society of December 10,<sup>1</sup> that organisation of the Paris *lumpenproletariat*, packed *en masse* into railway trains and post-chaises. They put speeches into the mouth of their marionette which, according to the reception in the different towns, proclaimed republican resignation or perennial tenacity as the keynote of the president's policy. In spite of all the manoeuvres these journeys were anything but triumphant processions.

When Bonaparte believed he had thus enthused the people, he set out to win the army. He caused great reviews to be

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<sup>1</sup>The reference is to Louis Bonaparte's own organisation, built by him from the dregs of society, with whose aid he carried through his *coup d'état*. This organisation was called the Society of December 10, in memory of the day of election of Louis Bonaparte as President of the French Republic (December 10, 1848).—Ed.

held on the plain of Satori near Versailles, at which he sought to buy the soldiers with garlic sausages, champagne and cigars. If the genuine Napoleon, amid the hardships of his campaigns of conquest, knew how to encourage his weary soldiers with outbursts of patriarchal familiarity, the pseudo-Napoleon believed it was in gratitude that the troops shouted: *Vive Napoleon, vive le saucisson!* that is, hurrah for the sausage, hurrah for the buffoon!<sup>1</sup>

These reviews led to the outbreak of the long suppressed dissension between Bonaparte and his War Minister d'Hautpoul, on the one hand, and Changarnier, on the other. In Changarnier, the Party of Order had found its real neutral man, in whose case there could be no question of his own dynastic claims. It had designated him as Bonaparte's successor. In addition, Changarnier had become the general of the Party of Order through his conduct on January 29 and June 13, 1849, the modern Alexander, whose brutal intervention had, in the eyes of the frightened bourgeois, cut the Gordian knot of the revolution. At bottom just as ridiculous as Bonaparte, he had thus become a power in the very cheapest manner and was set up by the National Assembly against the President to watch over him. He himself coquetted, for example, in the matter of the grant, with the protection that he gave Bonaparte, and rose up even more overpoweringly against him and the ministers. When, on the occasion of the election law, an insurrection was expected, he forbade his officers to take any orders whatever from the War Minister or the President. The press was further instrumental in magnifying the figure of Changarnier. With the complete absence of great personalities, the Party of Order naturally found itself compelled to endow with the strength lacking in its class as a whole a single individual and so puff up this individual to a prodigy. Thus arose the myth of Changarnier, the "*bulwark of society.*" The arrogant charlatanry, the secretive officiousness with which Changarnier condescended to carry the world on his shoulders forms the most ridiculous contrast to the events during and after the Satori review, which irrefutably proved that it needed only a stroke of the pen by Bonaparte, the infinitely little, to bring this fantastic offspring of bourgeois fear, the colossus Changarnier, back to the dimensions of mediocrity, and transform

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<sup>1</sup> A play on words, Sausage in German—*Wurst*; buffoon—*Hanswurst*. *Es lebe die Wurst, es lebe der Hanswurst!*—Ed.

him, society's heroic saviour, into a pensioned general.

Bonaparte had for some time revenged himself on Changarnier by provoking the War Minister to disputes in matters of discipline with the irksome protector. The last review at Satori finally brought the old animosity to a climax. The constitutional indignation of Changarnier knew no bounds when he saw the cavalry regiments file past with the unconstitutional cry: *vive l'Empereur!* Bonaparte, in order to forestall any unpleasant debate on this cry in the coming session of the Chamber, removed the War Minister d'Hautpoul, by appointing him Governor of Algiers. In his place he put a reliable old general of the time of the emperor, one who was fully a match for Changarnier in brutality. But so that the dismissal of d'Hautpoul might not appear as a concession to Changarnier he simultaneously transferred General Neumayer, the right hand of the great saviour of society, from Paris to Nantes. It had been Neumayer, who at the last review had induced the whole of the infantry to file past the successor of Napoleon in icy silence. Changarnier, himself hit in the person of Neumayer, protested and threatened. To no purpose. After two days' negotiations, the decree for transferring Neumayer appeared in the *Moniteur*, and there was nothing left for the hero of order but to submit to discipline or resign.

The struggle of Bonaparte with Changarnier is the continuation of his struggle with the Party of Order. The re-opening of the National Assembly on November 11 therefore takes place under threatening auspices. It will be a storm in a tea-cup. In essence the old game must go on. Meanwhile the majority of the Party of Order will, despite the clamour of the sticklers on principle of its different factions, be compelled to prolong the power of the president. Similarly, Bonaparte, already humbled by lack of money, will, despite all preliminary protestations, accept this prolongation of power as simply delegated to him from the hands of the National Assembly. Thus the solution is postponed; the *status quo* continued; one faction of the Party of Order compromised, weakened, made impossible by the other; the repression of the common enemy, the mass of the nation, extended and exhausted, until the economic relations themselves have again reached the point of development where a new explosion blows into the air all the squabbling parties with their constitutional republic.

For the peace of mind of the bourgeois, moreover, it must

be said that the scandal between Bonaparte and the Party of Order has the result of ruining a multitude of small capitalists on the Bourse and putting their possessions in the pockets of the big Bourse wolves.

## THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE OF LOUIS BONAPARTE

### AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

MY friend *Joseph Weydemeyer*,<sup>1</sup> whose death was so untimely, intended to publish a political weekly in New York from January 1, 1852. He invited me to provide this weekly with the history of the *coup d'etat*. Down to the middle of February, I accordingly wrote him weekly articles under the title: *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Meanwhile Weydemeyer's original plan had fallen through. Instead, in the spring of 1852 he published a monthly, *Die Revolution*, the second number of which consists of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*. A few hundred copies of this found their way into Germany at that time, without, however, getting into the actual book trade. A German publisher of extremely radical pretensions, to whom I offered the sale of my book, was most virtuously horrified at a "presumption" so "contrary to the times."

From the above facts it will be seen that the present work took shape under the immediate pressure of events and its historical material does not extend beyond the month of February (1852). Its re-publication now is due in part to the demand of the book trade, in part to the urgent requests of my friends in Germany.

Of the writings dealing with the same subject and appearing approximately *at the same time* as mine, only two deserve notice: Victor Hugo's *Napoleon le Petit*<sup>2</sup> and Proudhon's *Coup d'Etat*.

Victor Hugo confines himself to biting and witty invective against the responsible author of the *coup d'etat*. The event itself appears in his work like a bolt from the blue. He sees in it only the violent act of a single individual. He does not notice that he makes this individual great instead of little by ascribing to him a personal power of initiative such as would

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<sup>1</sup> Military commandant of the St. Louis district during the American Civil War. [Note by Karl Marx.]

<sup>2</sup> Napoleon the Little.—Ed.

be without parallel in world history. Proudhon, for his part, seeks to represent the *coup d'état* as the result of the antecedent historical development. Unnoticeably, however, the historical exposition of the *coup d'état* is transformed into an historical *apologia* for its hero. Thus he falls into the error of our so-called *objective* historians: I, on the contrary, demonstrate how the *class struggle* in France created circumstances and relationships that made it possible for a grotesque mediocrity to play a hero's part.

A revision of the present work would have robbed it of its peculiar colouring. Accordingly I have confined myself to mere correction of printer's errors and to striking out allusions now no longer intelligible.

The concluding sentence of my work: "But if the imperial mantle finally falls on the shoulders of Louis Bonaparte, the iron statue of Napoleon will crash from the top of the Vendome Column," has already been fulfilled.<sup>1</sup>

Colonel Charras opened the attack on the Napoleon cult in his work on the campaign of 1815. Subsequently, and particularly in the last few years, French literature has made an end of the Napoleon legend with the weapons of historical research, of criticism, of satire and of wit. Outside France this violent breach with the traditional popular belief, this tremendous mental revolution, has been little noticed and still less understood.

Lastly, I hope that my work will contribute towards eliminating the stock phrase now current, particularly in Germany, of so-called *Caesarism*. In this superficial historical analogy the main point is forgotten, namely that in ancient Rome the class struggle took place only within a privileged minority,

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<sup>1</sup>The Vendome Column was erected in 1806-10, as a memorial to the victories of the armies of Napoleon I in 1805. It was cast from 1,200 cannon taken by Napoleon I in his battles with the Austrian and Russian armies. A statue of Napoleon I was erected at the top of the column. In the concluding sentence of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx predicts that Louis Bonaparte's coming to power would put an end to the cult of Napoleon I—the Napoleonic legend. It was not only in the sense of which Marx writes in his preface of 1869 that this prophecy came true. Fifteen months after Marx had written these lines, Louis Bonaparte was dethroned; and half a year after that the Vendome Column was destroyed, by decision of the Paris Commune (May 16, 1871), as a symbol of chauvinism and enmity of nations. After the defeat of the commune, the column was restored.—Ed.

between the free rich and the free poor, while the great, productive mass of the population, the slaves, formed the purely passive pedestal for these combatants. People forget *Sismondi's* significant remark: The Roman proletariat lived at the expense of society, while modern society lives at the expense of the proletariat. With so complete a difference between the material, economic conditions of the ancient and the modern class struggles, the political figures they produce can likewise have no more in common with one another than the Archbishop of Canterbury has with the High Priest Samuel.

London, June 23, 1869.

FREDERICK ENGELS' PREFACE TO THE THIRD  
GERMAN EDITION (1883)

The fact that a new edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* has become necessary, thirty-three years after its first appearance, proves that even today this little work has lost none of its value.

It is in truth a work of genius. Immediately after the event that struck the political world like a thunderbolt from a blue sky, that was condemned by some with loud cries of moral indignation and accepted by others as salvation from the revolution and as punishment for its errors, but was only wondered at by all and understood by none—immediately after this event Marx came out with a concise, epigrammatic exposition that laid bare the whole course of French history since the February days in its inner inter-connection, reduced the miracle of December 2 to a natural, necessary result of this interconnection and in so doing did not even need to treat the hero of the *coup d'état* otherwise than with the contempt he so well deserved. And with such a master hand was the picture drawn that every fresh disclosure since made has only provided fresh proofs of how faithfully it reflected reality. This eminent understanding of the living history of the day, this clear-sighted appreciation of events at the moment of happening, is indeed without parallel.

But for this, Marx's thorough knowledge of French history was also requisite. France is the land where, more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought

out to a decision, where, consequently, the changing political forms within which they occur and in which their results are summarised have likewise been stamped with the sharpest outlines. The centre of feudalism in the Middle Ages, the model country of centralised monarchy resting on estates, since the Renaissance,<sup>1</sup> France demolished feudalism in the Great Revolution and established the unalloyed rule of the bourgeoisie in a classical purity unequalled by any other European land. And the struggle of the upward striving proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie also appeared here in an acute form unknown elsewhere. This was the reason why Marx not only studied the past history of France with special interest, but also followed her current history in every detail, stored up the material for future use and consequently was never taken by surprise by the events.

In addition, however, there was still another circumstance. It was precisely Marx who had first discovered the great law of motion of history, the law according to which all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes, and that the existence and thereby the collisions, too, of these classes are in turn conditioned by the degree of development of their economic position, by the mode of their production and by the form of exchange resulting from it. This law, which has the same significance for history as the law of the transformation of energy has for natural science—this law gave him here, too, the key to understanding the history of the Second French Republic. He put his law to the test on these historical events, and even after thirty-three years we must still say that it has stood the test brilliantly.

FREDERICK ENGELS

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<sup>1</sup>The Renaissance is the name given to the period from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries preceding the bourgeois revolutions in England, France and Germany, when on the basis of the downfall of feudalism and the first successes of capitalism, the urban bourgeoisie began to flourish and bourgeois culture to develop, especially in Italy and along the shores of the Mediterranean. The opposition to mediaeval, ecclesiastical-feudal culture was marked above all by tremendous interest in ancient Greek and Roman culture.—Ed.

# THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE OF LOUIS BONAPARTE

## I

Hegel remarks somewhere that all great, world-historical facts and personages occur, as it were, twice. He has forgotten to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce. Caussidiere for Danton, Louis Blanc for Robespierre, the Mountain of 1848 to 1851 for the Mountain of 1793 to 1795, the Nephew for the Uncle. And the same caricature occurs in the circumstances in which the second edition of the Eighteenth Brumaire is taking place.<sup>1</sup>

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language. Thus Luther donned the mask of the Apostle Paul, the Revolution of 1789 to 1814 draped itself alternately as the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, and the Revolution of 1848 knew nothing better to do than to parody, in turn, 1789 and the revolutionary tradition of 1793 to 1795. In like manner the beginner who has learnt a new language always translates it back into his mother tongue, but he has assimilated the spirit of the new language and can produce freely in it only when he moves in it without remembering the old and forgets in it his ancestral tongue.

Consideration of this world-historical conjuring up of the

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<sup>1</sup>On the Eighteenth Brumaire, (according to the calendar introduced in the period of the first French bourgeois revolution), or November 9, 1799, Napoleon I carried out the *coup d'état* whereby as First Consul he concentrated supreme power in his hands; in 1804 he declared himself emperor. By "the second edition of the Eighteenth Brumaire," Marx means the *coup d'état* accomplished by Louis Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoleon I, on December 2, 1851.—*Ed.*

dead reveals at once a salient difference. Camille Desmoulins, Danton, Robespierre, Saint-Just, Napoleon, the heroes, as well as the parties and the masses of the old French Revolution, performed the task of their time in Roman costume and with Roman phrases, the task of releasing and setting up modern *bourgeois* society. The first ones knocked the feudal basis to pieces and mowed off the feudal heads which had grown from it. The other created inside France the conditions under which free competition could first be developed, the parcelled landed property exploited, the unfettered productive power of the nation employed, and outside the French borders he everywhere swept the feudal formations away, so far as was necessary to furnish bourgeois society in France with a suitable up-to-date environment on the European Continent. The new social formation once established, the ante-diluvian Colossi disappeared and with them the resurrected Romans—the Brutuses, Gracchi, Publicolas, the tribunes, the senators and Caesar himself. Bourgeois society in its sober reality had begotten its true interpreters and mouthpieces in the Says, Cousins, Royer-Colardes, Benjamin Constants and Guizots; its real military leaders sat behind the office desks, and the hog-headed Louis XVIII was its political chief. Wholly absorbed in the production of wealth and in the peaceful struggle of competition, it no longer comprehended that ghosts from the days of Rome had watched over its cradle. But unheroic as bourgeois society is, yet it had need of heroism, of sacrifice, of terror, of civil war and of national battles to bring it into being. And in the classically austere traditions of the Roman Republic its gladiators found the ideals and the art forms, the self-deceptions that they needed in order to conceal from themselves the bourgeois limitations of the content of their struggles and to keep their passion at the height of the great historical tragedy. Similarly, at another stage of development, a century earlier, Cromwell and the English people had borrowed speech, passions and illusions from the Old Testament for their bourgeois revolution.<sup>1</sup> When the real aim had been achieved, when the bourgeois transformation of English society had been accomplished, Locke supplanted Habakkuk.

The awakening of the dead in those revolutions therefore

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<sup>1</sup> In the English bourgeois revolution, "the bourgeoisie was allied with the new nobility against the monarchy, the feudal nobility, and the ruling church." (Marx.)—*Ed.*

served the purpose of glorifying the new struggles, not of parodying the old ; of magnifying the given tasks in imagination, not of taking flight from their solution in reality ; of finding once more the spirit of revolution, not of making its ghost walk again.

From 1848 to 1851 only the ghost of the old revolution walked, from Marrast, the *republican en gants jaunes*,<sup>1</sup> who disguised himself as the old Bailly, to the adventurer who hides his trivially repulsive features under the iron death mask of Napoleon. An entire people, which had imagined that by a revolution it had increased its power of action, suddenly finds itself set back into a dead epoch and, in order that no doubt as to the relapse may be possible, the old data again arise, the old chronology, the old names, the old edicts, which have long become a subject of antiquarian erudition, and the old henchmen, who had long seemed dead and decayed. The nation appears to itself like that mad Englishman in Bedlam, who fancies that he lives in the times of the ancient Pharaohs and daily bemoans the hard labour that he must perform in the Ethiopian mines as a gold digger, immured in this subterranean prison, a dimly burning lamp fastened to his head, the overseer of the slaves behind him with a long whip, and at the exits a confused mass of barbarian mercenaries, who understand neither the forced labourers in the mines nor one another, since they have no common speech. "And all this is expected of me," groans the mad Englishman, "of me, a free-born Briton, in order to make gold for the old Pharaohs." "In order to pay the debts of the Bonaparte family," sighs the French nation. The Englishman, so long as he was in his right mind, could not get rid of the fixed idea of making gold. The French, so long as they were engaged in revolution, could not get rid of the memory of Napoleon, as the election of December 10, 1848<sup>2</sup> proved. From the perils of revolution their longings went back to the flesh-pots of Egypt, and December 2, 1851, was the answer. They have not only a caricature of the old Napoleon, they have the old Napoleon himself, caricatured as he would inevitably appear in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot

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<sup>1</sup>Republican in yellow gloves.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The day Louis Bonaparte was elected president of the republic.—Ed.

draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself, before it has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past. Earlier revolutions required world-historical recollections in order to drug themselves concerning their own content. In order to arrive at its content, the revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury their dead. There the phrase went beyond the content; here the content goes beyond the phrase.

The February Revolution was a sudden attack, a taking of the old society by *surprise*, and the people proclaimed this unhopèd for *stroke* as a world-historic deed, opening the new epoch. On December 2 the February Revolution is conjured away by a cardsharpèr's trick, and what seems overthrown is no longer the monarchy; it is the liberal concessions that were wrung from it by century-long struggles. Instead of *society* having conquered a new content for itself, the *state* only appears to have returned to its oldest form, to the shamelessly simple domination of the sabre and the cowl. This is the answer to the *coup de main* of February 1848, given by the *coup de tete* of December 1851. Easy come, easy go. Meanwhile the interval has not passed by unused. During the years 1848 to 1851 French society has made up, and that by an abbreviated, because revolutionary, method, for the studies and experiences which, in a regular, so to speak, text-book development would have had to precede the February Revolution, if the latter was to be more than a disturbance of the surface. Society now seems to have fallen back behind its point of departure; it has in truth first to create for itself the revolutionary point of departure, the situation, the relationships, the conditions, under which modern revolution alone becomes serious.

Bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm more swiftly from success to success; their dramatic effects outdo each other; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants; ecstasy is the everyday spirit; but they are short lived; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long depression lays hold of society before it learns soberly to assimilate the results of its storm and stress period. Proletarian revolutions, on the other hand, like those of the nineteenth century, criticise themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin it afresh; deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltrinesses of their first attempts, seem to throw down their adversary only

in order that he may draw new strength from the earth and rise again more gigantic before them, recoil ever and anon from the indefinite prodigiousness of their own aims, until the situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves cry out :

*Hic Rhodus, hic salta !<sup>1</sup>*

*Hier ist die Rose, hier tanze !<sup>2</sup>*

For the rest, every fairly competent observer, even if he had not followed the course of French development step by step, must have had a presentiment that a terrible fiasco was in store for the revolution. It was enough to hear the self-complacent howl of victory with which Messieurs the Democrats congratulated each other on the gracious consequences of May 2, 1852.<sup>3</sup> In their minds May 2, 1852, had become a fixed idea, a dogma, like the day on which Christ should reappear and the millennium begin, in the minds of the Chiliasts.<sup>4</sup> As ever, weakness had taken refuge in a belief in miracles, had fancied the enemy overcome when he was only conjured away in imagination, and lost all understanding of the present in a passive glorification of the future that was in store for it and of the deeds it had *in petto*,<sup>5</sup> but merely did not want to carry out as yet. Those heroes, who seek to disprove their demonstrated incapacity by mutually offering each other their sympathy and getting together in a crowd, had tied up their bundles, collected their laurel wreaths in advance and were just then engaged in discounting on the exchange market the republics *in partibus*, for which they had already thoughtfully organised the government personnel with all the calm of their unassuming disposition. December 2 struck them like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, and the peoples that in epochs of pusillanimous depression gladly let their inward apprehension be drowned by the loudest bawlers will perchance have convinced themselves

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<sup>1</sup> Here is Rhodes, leap here !—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Here is the rose, dance here !—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The day on which new presidential elections were to be held. Louis Bonaparte would have had to retire on this day, as the constitution did not permit anyone to be elected to the presidency for a second time, except after an interval of four years.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>The adherents of an ancient Christian sect, who believed in the second coming of Christ and in the establishment of the millennium, a thousand years of paradise on earth.—*Ed.*

<sup>5</sup>In reserve.—*Ed.*

that the times are past when the cackle of geese could save the Capitol.<sup>1</sup>

The Constitution, the National Assembly, the dynastic parties,<sup>2</sup> the blue and the red republicans,<sup>3</sup> the heroes of Africa<sup>4</sup>, the thunder from the platform, the sheet lightning of the daily press, the entire literature, the political names and the intellectual reputations, the civil law and the penal code, the *liberte*, *egalite*, *fraternite* and the second of May, 1852—all have vanished like a phantasmagoria before the spell of a man whom even his enemies do not make out to be a magician. Universal suffrage seems to have survived only for a moment, in order that with its own hand it may make its last will and testament before the eyes of all the world and declare in the name of the people itself: Everything that exists has this much worth that it will perish.

It is not enough to say, as the French do, that their nation has been taken by surprise. A nation and a woman are not forgiven the unguarded hour in which the first adventurer that came along could violate them. The riddle is not solved by such terms of speech, but merely formulated in another way. It remains to be explained how a nation of thirty-six millions can be surprised and delivered unresisting into captivity by three high class swindlers.

Let us recapitulate in their general outlines the phases that the French Revolution has gone through from February 24, 1848, to December 1851.

Three main periods are unmistakable: the *February period*; the *period of the constituting of the republic* or of the *Constituent National Assembly*, May 4, 1848, to May 29, 1849; the *period of the constitutional republic* or of the *Legislative National Assembly*, May 29, 1849, to December 2, 1851.

*The first period*, from February 24, or the overthrow of Louis Philippe, to May 4, 1848, the meeting of the Constituent.

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<sup>1</sup>An old Roman story tells that once, when Rome was besieged, the sacred geese in the Roman fortress, the Capitol, wakened the garrison with their cackling; thanks to this, the garrison was able to beat off the attack of the enemies who had stolen up in the night.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>For these parties see p. 311 *et. seq.*—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The blue (bourgeois) and the red (socialist) republican parties.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>This refers to the generals distinguished for their savage deeds in Africa during the conquest of Algeria (Cavaignac, Changarnier and others).—*Ed.*

Assembly, the *February period* proper, may be described as the prologue of the Revolution. Its character was officially expressed in the fact that the government improvised by it declared itself to be *provisional* and, like the government, everything that was instigated, attempted or enunciated during this period; proclaimed itself to be *provisional*. Nothing and nobody ventured to lay claim to the right of existence and of real action. All the elements that had prepared or determined the Revolution, the dynastic opposition, the republican bourgeoisie, the democratic-republican petty bourgeoisie and the social-democratic workers, provisionally found their place in the *February government*.

It could not be otherwise. The February days originally intended an electoral reform, by which the circle of the politically privileged among the possessing class itself was to be widened and the exclusive domination of the aristocracy of finance overthrown. When it came to the actual conflict, however, when the people mounted the barricades, the National Guard maintained a passive attitude, the army offered no serious resistance and the monarchy ran away, the republic appeared to be a matter of course. Every party construed it in its own sense. Having been won by the proletariat by force of arms, the proletariat impressed its stamp on it and proclaimed it to be a *social republic*. There was thus indicated the general content of the modern revolution, which stood in most singular contradiction to everything that, with the material at hand, with the degree of education attained by the masses, under the given circumstances and relationships, could be immediately realised in practice. On the other hand, the claims of all the remaining elements that had participated in the February Revolution were recognised by the lion's share that they obtained in the government. In no period do we therefore find a more confused mixture of high-flown phrases and actual uncertainty and clumsiness, of more enthusiastic striving for innovation and more deeply rooted domination of the old routine, of more apparent harmony of the whole society and more profound estrangement of its elements. While the Paris proletariat still revelled in the vision of the wide prospects that had opened before it and indulged in seriously-meant discussions on social problems, the old powers of society had grouped themselves, assembled, reflected and found an unexpected support in the mass of the nation, the peasants and petty bourgeois, who all at once

stormed on to the political stage, after the barriers of the July monarchy had fallen.

"The *second period*, from May 4, 1848, to the end of May 1849, is the period of the constitution, of the foundation of the *bourgeois republic*. Directly after the February days the dynastic opposition had not only been surprised by the republicans; the republicans by the socialists, but all France had been surprised by Paris. The National Assembly, which had met on May 4, 1848, having emerged from the national elections, represented the nation. It was a living protest against the presumptuous aspirations of the February days and was to reduce the results of the Revolution to the bourgeois scale. In vain the Paris proletariat, which immediately grasped the character of this National Assembly, attempted on May 15, a few days after it met, forcibly to deny its existence, to dissolve it, to disintegrate once more into its constituent parts the organic form in which the proletariat was threatened by the reactionary spirit of the nation. As is known, May 15 had no other result save that of removing Blanqui and his comrades, that is, the real leaders of the proletarian party [the revolutionary communists],<sup>1</sup> from the public stage for the entire duration of the cycle we are considering.

The *bourgeois monarchy* of Louis Philippe can only be followed by the *bourgeois republic*, that is, if a limited section of the bourgeoisie formerly ruled in the name of the king, the whole of the bourgeoisie will now rule in the name of the people. The demands of the Paris proletariat are utopian nonsense to which an end must be put. To this declaration of the Constituent National Assembly the Paris proletariat replied with the *June Insurrection*, the most colossal event in the history of European civil wars. The bourgeois republic triumphed. On its side stood the aristocracy of finance, the industrial bourgeoisie, the middle class, the petty bourgeois, the army, the *lumpenproletariat* organised as the Mobile Guard,<sup>2</sup> the intellectual lights, the clergy, and the rural population. On the side of the Paris proletariat stood none but itself. More than three thousand insurgents were butchered after the victory,

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<sup>1</sup>Here and elsewhere the square brackets in the text denote passages of the first edition omitted in subsequent editions.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Marx gives a characterisation of the *Garde Mobile* in *The Class Struggles in France* (1848-50); included in the present volume.—Ed.

and fifteen thousands were transported without trial. With this defeat the proletariat passes into the background of the revolutionary stage. It attempts to press forward again on every occasion, as soon as the movement appears to make a fresh start, but with ever decreased expenditure of strength and always more insignificant results. As soon as one of the social strata situated above it gets into revolutionary ferment, it enters into an alliance with it and so shares all the defeats that the different parties suffer one after another. But these subsequent blows become steadily weaker, the more they are distributed over the entire surface of society. Its more important leaders in the Assembly and the press successively fall victims to the courts, and ever more equivocal figures come to the fore. In part it throws itself into *doctrinaire experiments, exchange banks and workers' associations, hence into a movement in which it renounces the revolutionising of the old world by means of its own great, combined resources, and seeks, rather, to achieve its salvation behind society's back, in private fashion, within its limited conditions of existence, and hence inevitably suffers shipwreck.* It seems to be unable either to rediscover revolutionary greatness in itself or to win new energy from the alliances newly entered into, until all classes with which it contended in June themselves lie prostrate beside it. But at least it succumbs with the honours of the great, world-historic struggle; not only France, but all Europe trembles at the June earthquake, while the ensuing defeats of the upper classes are so cheaply bought that they require bare-faced exaggeration by the victorious party to be able to pass for events at all and become the more ignominious the further the defeated party is removed from the proletariat.

The defeat of the June insurgents, to be sure, had now prepared and levelled the ground on which the bourgeois republic could be founded and built up, but it had shown at the same time that in Europe there are other questions involved than that of "republic or monarchy." It had revealed that here *bourgeois republic* signifies the unlimited despotism of one class over other classes. It had proved that in lands with an old civilisation, with a developed formation of classes, with modern conditions of production and with an intellectual consciousness into which all traditional ideas have been absorbed by the work of centuries, *the republic signifies in general only the political form of the revolution of bourgeois society.*

and not its *conservative form of life*, as, for example, in the United States of North America, where, though classes, indeed, already exist, they have not yet become fixed, but continually change and interchange their elements in a constant state of flux, where the modern means of production, instead of coinciding with a stagnant surplus population, rather supply the relative deficiency of heads and hands and where, finally, the feverishly youthful movement of material production, that has a new world to make its own, has left neither time nor opportunity for abolishing the old spirit world.

During the June days all classes and parties had united in the *Party of Order* against the proletarian class as the *party of anarchy*, of socialism, of communism. They had "saved" society from "*the enemies of society*". They had given out the watchwords of the old society, "*property, family, religion, order*," to their army as passwords and had proclaimed to the counter-revolutionary crusaders: "In this sign you will conquer!" from that moment, as soon as one of the numerous parties which had gathered under this sign against the June insurgents seeks to hold the revolutionary battlefield in its own class interests, it goes down before the cry: "*Property, family, religion, order*." Society is saved just as often as the circle of its rulers contracts, as a more exclusive interest is maintained against a wider one. Every demand of the simplest bourgeois financial reform, of the most ordinary liberalism, of the most formal republicanism, of the most insipid democracy, is simultaneously castigated as an "attempt on society" and stigmatised as "socialism." And, finally, the high priests of "religion and order" themselves are driven with kicks from their Pythian tripods, hauled out of their beds in the darkness of night, put in prison-vans, thrown into dungeons or sent into exile; their temple is razed to the ground, their mouths are sealed, their pens broken, their law torn to pieces in the name of religion, of property, of family, of order. Bourgeois fanatics for order are shot down on their balconies by mobs of drunken soldiers, their domestic sanctuaries profaned, their houses bombarded for amusement—in the name of property, of family, of religion and of order. Finally the scum of bourgeois society form the *holy phalanx of order* and the hero Crapulinsky<sup>1</sup> installs himself in the

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<sup>1</sup>The hero of Heine's poem, *Two Knights*. In this character, Heine ridicules the spendthrift Polish nobleman ("Crapu-

II

Let us pick up the threads of the development once more. The history of the *Constituent National Assembly* since the June days is the *history of the domination and the liquidation of the republican section of the bourgeoisie*, of that section which is known by the names of tricolour republicans, pure republicans, political republicans, formalist republicans, etc.

Under the bourgeois monarchy of Louis Philippe it had formed the *official republican opposition* and consequently a recognised; component part of the political world of the day. It had its representatives in the Chambers and a considerable sphere of influence in the press. Its Paris organ, the *National*, was considered just as respectable in its way as the *Journal des Débats*. Its character corresponded to this position under the constitutional monarchy. It was not a section of the bourgeoisie held together by great, common interests and marked off by specific conditions of production. It was a coterie of republican-minded bourgeois—writers, lawyers, officers and officials—that owed its influence to the personal antipathies of the country to Louis Philippe, to memories of the old republic, to the republican faith of a number of enthusiasts, above all, however, to *French nationalism*, whose hatred of the Vienna treaties and of the alliance with England it stirred up perpetually. A large part of the following that the *National* had under Louis Philippe was due to this concealed imperialism, which could consequently confront it later, under the republic, as a deadly rival in the person of Louis Bonaparte. It fought the aristocracy of finance, as did all the rest of the bourgeois opposition. Polemics against the budget, which were closely connected in France with fighting the aristocracy of finance, procured popularity too cheaply, and material for puritanical leading articles too plentifully, not to be exploited. The industrial bourgeoisie was grateful to it for its slavish defence of the French protectionist system, which it accepted, however, more on national grounds than on grounds of political economy; the bourgeoisie as a whole was grateful to it for its vicious

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linsky" comes from the French word *crapule*—gluttony, greediness). Here Marx means Louis Bonaparte.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>The residence of the head of the government in France.—Ed.

denunciation of communism and socialism. For the rest, the party of the *National* was purely republican, that is, it demanded a republican instead of a monarchist form of bourgeois rule and, above all, the lion's share of this rule. Concerning the conditions of this transformation it was by no means clear. On the other hand, what was clear as daylight to it and was publicly acknowledged at the reform banquets in the last days of Louis Philippe, was its unpopularity with the democratic petty bourgeois and, in particular, with the revolutionary proletariat. These pure republicans, as is, indeed, the way with pure republicans, were already on the point of contenting themselves in the first instance with a regency of the Duchess of Orleans,<sup>1</sup> when the February Revolution broke out and assigned their best known representatives a place in the Provisional Government. From the start, they naturally had the confidence of the bourgeoisie and a majority in the Constituent National Assembly. The *Socialist* elements of the Provisional Government were excluded forthwith from the Executive Commission which the National Assembly formed when it met, and the party of the *National* took advantage of the outbreak of the June Insurrection to discharge the *Executive Commission* also, and therewith to get rid of its immediate rivals, the *petty-bourgeois* or *democratic republicans* (Ledru-Rollin, etc.). Cavaignac, the general of the bourgeois-republican party, who commanded the June battle, took the place of the Executive Commission with a sort of dictatorial power. Marrast, former editor-in-chief of the *National*, became the perpetual president of the Constituent Assembly, and the ministries, as well as all other important posts, fell to the portion of the pure republicans.

The republican bourgeois section, which had long regarded itself as the legitimate heir of the July monarchy, thus found itself successful beyond its hopes; it attained power, however, not, as it had dreamed under Louis Philippe, through a liberal revolt of the bourgeoisie against the throne, but through a rising of the proletariat, against capital, a rising laid low with grape-shot. What it had pictured to itself as the *most revolutionary* happening, turned out in reality to be the *most*

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<sup>1</sup>On February 24, 1848, Louis Philippe, frightened at the revolutionary uprising, signed his abdication from the throne in favour of his grandson, the Count of Paris. Since the latter was a minor, it was proposed that his mother, the Duchess of Orleans, act as regent.—Ed.

*counter-revolutionary*. The fruit fell into its lap, but it fell from the tree of knowledge, not from the tree of life.

The exclusive rule of the *bourgeois republicans* lasted only from June 24 to December 10, 1848. It is summed up in the *drafting of a republican constitution*, and in the *state of siege of Paris*.

The new *Constitution* was at bottom only the republicanised edition of the constitutional Charter of 1830. The narrow electoral qualification of the July monarchy,<sup>1</sup> which even excluded a large part of the bourgeoisie from political rule, was incompatible with the existence of the bourgeois republic. In lieu of this qualification, the February Revolution had at once proclaimed direct, universal suffrage. The bourgeois republicans could not revoke this event. They had to content themselves with adding the limiting proviso of a six months' domicile in the constituency. The old organisation of government, of the municipal system, of the administration of law, of the army, etc., continued to exist inviolate, or, where the Constitution changed them, the change concerned the table of contents, not the contents; the name, not the thing.

The inevitable general staff of the liberties of 1848, personal liberty, liberty of the press, of speech, of association, of assembly, of education and of religion, etc., received a constitutional uniform, which made them invulnerable. Each of these liberties, namely, is proclaimed as the *absolute* right of the French *citoyen*, but always with the marginal note that it is unlimited so far as it is not restricted by the "*equal rights of others and the public safety*" or by "*laws*" which are intended to secure just this harmony of the individual liberties with one another and with the public safety. For example: "The citizens have the right of association, of peaceful and unarmed assembly, of petition and of the free expression of opinions, whether in the press or otherwise. *The enjoyment of these rights has no limit save the equal rights of others and the public safety.*" (Chapter II of the French Constitution, § 8.)—"Education is free. Freedom of education shall be *enjoyed* under the conditions fixed by law

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<sup>1</sup>After the July Revolution in 1830, the revision of the constitution made almost no changes in the formerly existing suffrage. The electoral qualification was lowered only to 200 francs; and the age qualification was lowered from 40 to 30. Only 250,000 of the 34,000,000 persons in France had the right to vote.—Ed.

and under the general supervision of the state." (*Ibidem*, § 9.) —"The domicile of every citizen is inviolable except in the forms prescribed by law." (Chapter II, § 3.) Etc., etc.—The Constitution, therefore, constantly refers to future *organic* laws, which are to put into effect those marginal notes and regulate the enjoyment of these unrestricted liberties so that they collide neither with one another nor with the public safety. And later, the organic laws were brought into being by the friends of order and all those liberties regulated in such a way that the bourgeoisie in its enjoyment of them does not come into collision with the equal rights of the other classes. Where it forbids these liberties entirely to "the others" or permits enjoyment of them under conditions that are just so many police traps, this always happens solely in the interest of the "public safety," that is, the safety of the bourgeoisie, as the Constitution prescribes. In the sequel, both sides accordingly appeal with complete justice to the Constitution, the friends of order, who suspended all these liberties, as well as the democrats, who demanded them back. Each paragraph of the Constitution, namely, contains in itself its own antithesis, its own Upper and Lower House, namely liberty in the general phrase, suspension of liberty in the marginal note. So long, therefore, as the *name* of freedom was respected and only its actual realisation prevented, of course in a legal way, the constitutional existence of liberty remained intact and inviolate, however mortal the blows dealt to its *everyday* existence.

This Constitution, made inviolable in so ingenious a manner, was nevertheless, like Achilles, vulnerable in one point, not in the heel, but in the head, or rather in the two heads in which it issued—the *Legislative Assembly*, on the one hand, the *President*, on the other. Glance through the Constitution and you will find that only the paragraphs in which the relationship of the President to the Legislative Assembly is determined are absolute, positive, non-contradictory, incapable of distortion. Here, that is to say, the issue for the bourgeois republicans was to safeguard themselves. §§ 45-70 of the Constitution are so worded that the National Assembly can remove the President constitutionally, whereas the President can only remove the National Assembly unconstitutionally, only by setting aside the Constitution itself. Here, therefore, it challenges its overthrow by force. It not only sanctifies the division of powers, like the Charter of 1830, it widens it into

an intolerable contradiction. *The play of the constitutional powers*, as Guizot termed the parliamentary squabble between the legislative and executive authorities, is in the Constitution of 1848 continually played *va-banque*.<sup>1</sup> On one side are seven hundred and fifty representatives of the people, elected by universal suffrage and eligible for re-election; they form an uncontrollable, indissoluble, indivisible National Assembly, a National Assembly that enjoys legislative omnipotence, decides in the last instance on war, peace and commercial treaties, alone possesses the right of amnesty and, by its permanence, perpetually holds the front of the stage. On the other side is the President, with all the attributes of royal power, with authority to appoint and dismiss his ministers independently of the National Assembly, with all the resources of the executive power in his hands, bestowing all posts and disposing thereby in France over at least a million and a half existences, for so many depend on the five hundred thousand officials and officers of every rank. He has the whole of the armed forces behind him. He enjoys the privilege of pardoning individual criminals, of suspending National Guards, of discharging, in agreement with the Council of State, the general cantonal and municipal councils elected by the citizens themselves. Initiative and direction are reserved to him in all treaties with foreign countries. While the Assembly constantly performs on the boards and is exposed to the searching light of day, he leads a hidden life in the Elysian fields, and that with Article 45 of the Constitution before his eyes and in his heart, crying to him daily: "*Frere, il faut mourir!*" Your power ceases on the second Sunday of the lovely month of May in the fourth year after your election! Then the glory is at an end, the piece is not played twice and if you have debts, look to it betimes that you pay them off with the six hundred thousand francs granted you by the Constitution, unless, perchance, you should prefer to go to Clichy,<sup>2</sup> on the second Monday of the lovely month of May!—Thus, if the Constitution assigns actual power to the President, it seeks to secure moral power for the National Assembly. Apart from the fact that it is impossible to create a moral power by paragraphs of law, the Constitution here suspends itself once more, by having the Presi-

<sup>1</sup>Staking all on one hazard.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Brother you must die!—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The debtors' prison in Paris.—Ed.

dent elected by all Frenchmen through direct suffrage. While the votes of France are split up among the seven hundred and fifty members of the National Assembly, they are, on the contrary, here concentrated on a single individual. While each separate representative of the people represents only this or that party, this or that town, this or that bridge-head, or even the mere necessity of electing one of the seven hundred and fifty, in which neither the cause nor the man is closely examined, the President is the elect of the nation and the act of his election is the trump that the sovereign people plays once every four years. The elected National Assembly stands in a metaphysical relation, but the elected President in a personal relation to the nation. The National Assembly indeed, exhibits in its individual representatives the manifold aspects of the national spirit, but in the President this national spirit finds its incarnation. As against the Assembly, he possesses a sort of divine right, he is President, by grace of the people.

Thetis, the sea goddess, had prophesied to Achilles that he would die in the bloom of youth. The Constitution, which, like Achilles, had its weak spot, had also, like Achilles, its presentiment that it must go to an early death. It was sufficient for the constitution-making, pure republicans to cast a glance from the cloud-kingdom of their ideal republic at the profane world, in order to perceive how the arrogance of the royalists, the Bonapartists, the democrats, the communists as well as their own discredit grew daily in the same measure as they approached the completion of their great legislative work of art, without Thetis on this account having to leave the sea and communicate the secret to them. They sought to cheat destiny by constitutional cunning, through § 111 of the Constitution, according to which every motion for the *revision of the Constitution* must have at least three-quarters of the votes cast for it in three successive debates between which an entire month must always lie, with the added proviso that not less than five hundred members of the National Assembly must vote. Thereby they merely made the impotent attempt to exercise as a parliamentary minority, as which they already saw themselves prophetically in their mind's eye, a power which at the moment when they commanded a parliamentary majority and all the resources of governmental authority was slipping daily more and more from their feeble hands.

Finally the Constitution, in a melodramatic paragraph, entrusts itself "to the vigilance and the patriotism of the

whole French people and every single Frenchman," after it had previously entrusted the "vigilant" and "patriotic" in another paragraph to the tender, painstaking care of the High Court of Justice, of the "haute cour," established by it for the purpose.

Such was the Constitution of 1848, which on December 2, 1851, was overthrown not by a head, but fell at the touch of a mere hat; this hat, to be sure, was a three-cornered, Napoleonic hat.

While the bourgeois republicans in the Assembly were busy elaborating, discussing and voting this Constitution, outside the Assembly Cavaignac maintained the *state of siege of Paris*. The state of siege of Paris was the *accoucheur*<sup>1</sup> of the Constituent Assembly in its travail of republican creation. If the Constitution is subsequently put out of existence by bayonets, it must not be forgotten that it was likewise by bayonets, and these turned against the people, that it had to be protected in its mother's womb and by bayonets that it had to be brought into existence. The forefathers of the "honest republicans" had sent their symbol, the tricolour, on a tour round Europe. They now, in turn, also produced an invention that made its way by itself over the whole continent, but returned to France with ever renewed love until it has now acquired citizen rights in half her departments—the *state of siege*. It was a splendid invention, periodically employed in every ensuing crisis in the course of the French Revolution. But barrack and bivouac, which were periodically laid on French society's head to compress its brain and make a quiet man of it; sabre and musket, which were periodically allowed to direct and administer, hold in tutelage and act as censor, play policeman and do night-watchman's duties; moustache and uniform, which were periodically trumpeted as the highest wisdom and master of society—were not barrack and bivouac, sabre and musket, moustache and uniform, finally bound to hit upon the idea of saving society, rather, once and for all, by proclaiming their own regime as the highest and freeing bourgeois society from all the trouble of governing itself? Barrack and bivouac, sabre and musket, moustache and uniform, were bound to hit upon the idea all the more as they might then also expect better cash payment for their higher services, whereas from the merely periodical state of siege

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<sup>1</sup>Midwife.—Ed.

and the transient rescues of society at the bidding of this or that bourgeois factión they gained little of substance beyond some killed and wounded and some friendly bourgeois grimaces. Should not the military, at length, likewise one day play the state of siege in their own interest and for their own interest and at the same time besiege the bourgeois bourses? Moreover, be it remarked in passing, one must not forget that Colonel Bernard, the same president of the military commission who under Cavaignac had 15,000 insurgents deported without trial, is at this moment again at the head of the military commissions active in Paris.

If, with the state of siege in Paris, the honest, the pure republicans founded the nursery in which the prætorians of December 2, 1851, were to grow up, on the other hand they deserve praise for the reason that, instead of exaggerating the national sentiment as under Louis Philippe, they now, when they have command of the national power, crawl before foreign countries, and, instead of setting Italy free, let her be reconquered by Austrians and Neapolitans. Louis Bonaparte's election as president on December 10, 1848, put an end to the dictatorship of Cavaignac and the Constituent Assembly.

In § 44 of the Constitution it is stated: "The President of the French Republic must never have lost his status as a French citizen." The first President of the French Republic, L. N. Bonaparte, had not merely lost his status as a French citizen, had not only been an English special constable he was even a naturalised Swiss.

I have worked out elsewhere the significance of the election of December 10. I will not revert to it here. It is sufficient to remark here that it was a *reaction of the peasants*, who had had to pay the costs of the February Revolution, against the remaining classes of the nation, a *reaction of the countryside against the town*. It met with great approval in the army, for which the republicans of the *National* had provided neither glory nor additional pay, among the big bourgeoisie, which hailed Bonaparte as a bridge to monarchy, among the

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<sup>1</sup>Prætorians was the name given in ancient Rome to the personal bodyguard of any general or emperor; this guard was in his pay, and was given various privileges. Mercenary, corrupt prætorians usually played a large part in the various palace revolutions. Here Marx is referring to the "Society of December 10," the bodyguard of Louis Bonaparte.—Ed.

proletarians and petty bourgeois, who hailed him as a scourge for Cavaignac. I shall have an opportunity later of going more closely into the relationship of the peasants to the French Revolution.

The period from December 20, 1848,<sup>1</sup> until the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in May 1849, comprises the history of the downfall of the bourgeois republicans. After having founded a republic for the bourgeoisie, driven the revolutionary proletariat out of the field and reduced the democratic petty bourgeoisie to silence for the time being, they are themselves thrust aside by the mass of the bourgeoisie, which justly impounds this republic as its property. This bourgeois mass was, however, royalist. One section of it, the large landowners, had ruled during the Restoration and was accordingly Legitimists.<sup>2</sup> The other, the aristocrats of finance and big industrialists, had ruled during the July Monarchy and was consequently Orleanist. The high dignitaries of the army, the university, the church, the bar, the academy and the press were to be found on either side, though in different proportions. Here in the bourgeois republic, which bore neither the name Bourbon nor the name Orleans, but the name capital; they had found the form of state in which they could rule conjointly. The June Insurrection had already united them in the "Party of Order." Now it was necessary, in the first place, to remove the coterie of bourgeois republicans, who still occupied seats in the National Assembly. Just as these pure republicans were brutal in their misuse of physical force against the people, to the same degree were they now cowardly, downcast, broken-spirited and incapable of fighting in their retreat, when it was a question of maintaining their republicanism and their legislative rights against the executive power and the royalists. I

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<sup>1</sup>On December 20, 1848, Louis Bonaparte appointed his first ministry, headed by Odilon Barrot.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The Restoration—the period from the downfall of Napoleon I (1814) to the July Revolution of 1830, when the dynasty of the Bourbons, which had been overthrown by the French Revolution, was again in power. The supporters of this dynasty, which represented the interests of the big landowners, called themselves Legitimists (they considered the Bourbon monarchy the only legitimate government). The Orleanists were the supporters of the Orleans dynasty, which represented the interests of the bankers, the financial aristocracy, and which came into power after the July Revolution of 1830.—Ed.

do not have to relate here the ignominious story of their dissolution. They were not destroyed; they passed away. Their history has come to an end forever, and, both inside and outside the Assembly, they figure in the following period only as memories, memories that again seem to become living whenever the mere name, republic, is once more the issue and as often as the revolutionary conflict threatens to sink down to the lowest level. I may remark in passing that the journal which gave its name to this party, the *National*, went over to socialism in the following period.

Before we finish with this period we must still cast a retrospective glance at the two powers, one of which annihilates the other on December 2, 1851, whereas from December 10, 1848, until the exit of the Constituent Assembly they lived in conjugal relations. We mean Louis Bonaparte, on the one hand, and the party of the royalist coalition, the Party of Order, of the big bourgeoisie, on the other. On his entry into the presidency, Bonaparte at once formed a ministry of the Party of Order, at the head of which he placed Odilon Barrot, the old leader, *nota bene*, of the most liberal section of the parliamentary bourgeoisie. M. Barrot had at last secured the portfolio, the spectre of which had haunted him since 1830, and what is more, the premiership in the ministry; but not, as he had imagined under Louis Philippe, as the most advanced leader of the parliamentary opposition, but with the task of killing a parliament, and as the confederate of all his arch-enemies, Jesuits and Legitimists. He brought the bride home at last, but only after she had become a prostitute. Bonaparte, appeared to efface himself completely. This party acted for him.

The first council of ministers at once resolved on the expedition to Rome, which they agreed to undertake behind the back of the National Assembly and the means for which they agreed to obtain from it by false pretences. Thus they began by swindling the National Assembly and secretly conspiring with the absolutist powers abroad against the revolutionary Roman republic. In the same manner and with the same manoeuvres Bonaparte prepared his coup of December 2 against the royalist Legislative Assembly and its constitutional republic. Let us not forget that the same party which formed Bonaparte's ministry on December 20, 1848, formed the majority of the Legislative National Assembly on December 2, 1851.

In August the Constituent Assembly had decided to dissolve only after it had worked out and promulgated a whole series of organic laws that were to supplement the Constitution. On January 6, 1849, the Party of Order had a deputy named Râteau move that it should let the organic laws go and, rather, decide on its own dissolution. Not merely the ministry, with Odilon Barrot at its head, but all the royalist members of the National Assembly bullying told it at this moment that its dissolution was necessary for the restoration of credit, for the consolidation of order, for putting an end to the indefinite provisional arrangements and for establishing a definite state of affairs; that it hampered the productivity of the new government and sought to prolong its existence merely out of malice; that the country was tired of it. Bonaparte took note of all this invective against the legislative power, learnt it by heart and proved to the parliamentary royalists on December 2, 1851, that he had learnt from them. He reiterated their own catchwords against them.

The Barrot ministry and the Party of Order went further. They caused *petitions to the National Assembly* to be made throughout France, in which this body was most politely requested to disappear. Against the National Assembly, the constitutionally organised expression of the people, they thus led its unorganised masses into the fire. They taught Bonaparte to appeal from the parliamentary assemblies to the people. At length, on January 29, the day had come on which the Constituent Assembly was to decide concerning its own dissolution. The National Assembly found the building where its sessions were held occupied by the military; Changarnier, the general of the Party of Order, in whose hands the supreme command of the National Guard and troops of the line had been united, held a great review in Paris, as if a battle were impending, and the royalists in coalition threateningly declared to the Constituent Assembly that force would be employed if it were not docile. It was docile and only bargained for a short extra term of life. What was January 29 but the *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851, only carried out by the royalists with Bonaparte against the republican National Assembly? The gentlemen did not observe or did not wish to observe that Bonaparte availed himself of January 29, 1849, to have a portion of the troops march past him in front of the Tuileries and seized with avidity on just this first public calling out of the military power against the parliamentary power to fore-

shadow Caligula.<sup>1</sup> They, to be sure, saw only their Changarnier.

One motive, in particular, that actuated the Party of Order in forcibly cutting short the duration of the Constituent Assembly's life consisted in the organic laws supplementing the Constitution, such as the education law, the law on religious worship, etc. To the royalists in coalition it was most important that they should make these laws themselves and not let them be made by the republicans, who had grown mistrustful. Among these organic laws, however, was also a law on the responsibility of the President of the republic. In 1851 the Legislative Assembly was occupied with the drafting of just such a law, when Bonaparte anticipated this coup with the coup of December 2. In their parliamentary winter campaign of 1851 what would the royalists in coalition not have given to have found the Responsibility Law ready to hand, and drawn up, at that, by a mistrustful malicious republican Assembly!

After the Constituent Assembly had itself shattered its last weapon on January 29, 1849, the Barrot ministry and the friends of order hounded it to death, left nothing undone that could humiliate it and wrested from its self-despairing weakness laws that cost it the last remnant of respect in the eyes of the public. Bonaparte, occupied with his fixed Napoleonic idea, was bold enough to exploit publicly this degradation of the parliamentary power. That is to say, when on May 8, 1849, the National Assembly passed a vote of censure on the ministry because of the occupation of Civita Vecchia by Oudinot, and ordered it to bring back the Roman expedition to its ostensible purpose, Bonaparte published the same evening in the *Moniteur* a letter to Oudinot, in which he congratulated him on his heroic exploits and, in contrast to the ink-slinging parliamentarians, already posed as the generous protector of the army. The royalists smiled at this. They regarded him simply as their dupe. Finally, when Marrast, the President of the Constituent Assembly, believed for a moment that the safety of the National Assembly was endangered and, relying on the Constitution, requisitioned a colonel and his regiment, the colonel declined, took refuge in discipline and referred Marrast to Changarnier, who scornfully refused him with the

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<sup>1</sup>Gaius Caligula—the third Roman emperor (37-41.). A crazy despot, put on the throne by the army. To humiliate the Senate—the shadowy remnant of the institutions of Republican Rome—he made his horse a senator.—Ed.

remark that he did not like *baionettes intelligentes*. In November 1851, when the royalists in coalition wished to begin the decisive struggle with Bonaparte, they sought to push through in their notorious *Quoestors' Bill* the principle of the direct requisition of troops by the President of the National Assembly. One of their generals, Leflo, had signed the bill. In vain did Changarnier vote for it and Thiers pay homage to the far-sighted wisdom of the former Constituent Assembly. The War Minister, *Saint-Arnaud*, answered him as Changarnier had, answered Marrast—and, to the acclamation of the Mountain! Thus the Party of Order, when it was not yet the National Assembly, when it was still only the ministry, had itself stigmatised the *parliamentary regime*. And it makes an outcry when December 2, 1851, banished this regime from France! We wish it a happy journey.

### III

On May 29, 1849, the Legislative National Assembly met. On December 2, 1851, it was forcibly dissolved. This period covers the life of the *constitutional or parliamentary republic*.

[It is subdivided into three main periods: *May 29, 1849, to June 13, 1849, struggle of the democracy and the bourgeoisie, defeat of the petty-bourgeois or democratic party; June 13, 1849, to May 31, 1850, parliamentary dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, that is, of the Orleanists and Legitimists in coalition or the Party of Order, dictatorship that is completed by the abolition of universal suffrage; May 31, 1850, up to December 2, 1851, struggle of the bourgeoisie and Bonaparte, overthrow of bourgeois rule, downfall of the constitutional or parliamentary republic.]<sup>a</sup>*

In the first French Revolution the rule of the *Constitutionalists* is followed by the rule of the *Girondins* and the rule

<sup>a</sup>The quaestors, (deputies of the National Assembly entrusted with the finance and safeguarding of the National Assembly), generals Leflo and Baze, brought in a bill by which the President of the National Assembly was to be entrusted with the preservation of the safety of the National Assembly, for which purpose he was to receive the right to call out military forces. The *Quoestors' Bill* was rejected on October 17, 1851, by a majority of 408 votes to 300.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup>This paragraph was omitted in the third German edition (1883).—Ed.

-of the *Girondins* by the rule of the *Jacobins*. Each of these parties supported itself on the more progressive party. As soon as it has brought the revolution far enough to be unable to follow it further, still less to go ahead of it, it is thrust aside by the bolder ally that stands behind it and sent to the guillotine. The revolution thus moves along an ascending line.

It is the reverse with the Revolution of 1848. The proletarian party appears as an appendage of the petty-bourgeois democratic party. It is betrayed and dropped by the latter on April 16, May 15, and in the June days. The democratic party, in its turn, leans on the shoulders of the bourgeois-republican party. The bourgeois-republicans no sooner believe themselves well established than they shake off the troublesome comrade and support themselves on the shoulders of the Party of Order. The Party of Order hunches its shoulders, lets the bourgeois-republicans tumble and throws itself on the shoulders of armed force. It fancies it is still sitting on its shoulders when, one fine morning, it perceives that the shoulders have transformed themselves into bayonets. Each party strikes from behind at that pressing further and leans from in front on that pressing back. No wonder that in this ridiculous posture it loses its balance and, having made the inevitable grimaces, collapses with curious capers. The revolution thus moves in a descending line. It finds itself in this state of retrogressive motion before the last February barricade has been cleared away and the first revolutionary authority constituted.

The period that we have before us comprises the most motley mixture of crying contradictions: constitutionalists who conspire openly against the Constitution; revolutionaries who are confessedly constitutional; a National Assembly that wants to be omnipotent and always remains parliamentary; a Mountain that finds its vocation in patience and counters its present defeats by prophesying future victories; royalists who form the *patres conscripti*<sup>1</sup> of the republic and are forced by the situation to keep the hostile royal houses, to which they adhere, abroad, and the republic, which they hate, in France; an executive power that finds its strength in its very weakness and its respectability in the contempt that it calls forth; a republic that is nothing but the combined infamy of two monarchies, the Restoration and the July Monarchy, with an

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<sup>1</sup>Conscript fathers. In ancient Rome every Senator began his speech to the Senate with this appellation.—Ed.

imperial label—combinations, whose first proviso is separation ; struggles, whose first law is indecision ; wild, empty agitation in the name of peace, most solemn preaching of peace in the name of revolution ; passions without truth, truth without passion ; heroes without heroic deeds, history without events ; development, whose sole driving force seems to be the calendar, wearying with constant repetition of the same tensions and relaxations ; antagonisms that periodically seem to reach a high pitch only in order to lose their acuteness and fall away without being able to find a solution ; pretentiously paraded exertions and bourgeois terror at the danger of the downfall of the world and at the same time the pettiest intrigues and court comedies played by the world redeemers, who in their *laissez aller*<sup>1</sup> remind us less of the Day of Judgment than of the times of the Fronde<sup>2</sup>—the official collective genius of France brought to naught by the artful stupidity of a single individual ; the collective will of the nation, as often as it speaks through universal suffrage, seeking its appropriate expression through the ancient enemies of the mass interests, until at length it finds it in the self-will of a filibuster. If any section of history has been painted grey on grey, it is this. Men and events appear inverted Schlemihls,<sup>3</sup> as shadows that have lost their substance. The revolution itself paralyses its own bearers and endows only its adversaries with passionate forcefulness. When the “red spectre,” continually conjured up and exorcised by the counter-revolutionaries, finally appears, it appears not with the Phrygian cap of anarchy on its head, but in the uniform of order, in *red breeches*.

We have seen that the ministry which Bonaparte installed on December 20, 1848, on his Ascension Day, was a ministry of the Party of Order, of the Legitimist and Orleanist coalition. This Barrot-Falloux ministry had outlived the republican Constituent Assembly, whose term of life it had more or less violently cut short, and found itself still at the helm. Chan-

<sup>1</sup>Letting things take their course.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The Fronde period in France (1648-53). The period of the regency of Anne of Austria before Louis XIV came of age—a period characterised by the opposition movement of the so-called parliamentary Fronde and the Fronde princes. This movement, which was directed against the absolute power of the king, was extremely weak, petty and irresolute.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Schlemihl—the hero of “Peter Schlemihl,” by Chamisso (1781-1838). He sold his shadow for wealth, and went seeking it all over the world.—Ed.

garnier, the general of the allied royalists, continued to unite in his person the general command of the first division of the army and the National Guard of Paris. The general elections had finally secured the Party of Order a large majority in the National Assembly. Here the deputies and peers of Louis Philippe encountered a hallowed host of Legitimists, for whom numerous ballot papers of the nation had become transformed into admission cards to the political stage. The Bonapartist representatives of the people were too few to be able to form an independent parliamentary party. They appear merely as the *mauvaise queue*<sup>1</sup> of the Party of Order. Thus the Party of Order was in possession of the governmental power, the army and the legislative body, in short, of the whole power of the state; while it had been morally strengthened by the general elections, which made its rule appear as the will of the people, and by the simultaneous triumph of counter-revolution over the whole continent of Europe.

Never did a party open its campaign with greater resources or under more favourable auspices.

The shipwrecked *pure republicans* found themselves reduced to a clique of some fifty men in the National Assembly, the African generals—Cavaignac, Lamoriciere and Bedau—at their head. The great opposition party, however, was formed by the *Mountain*. The *Social-Democratic Party* had given itself this parliamentary name. It commanded more than two hundred of the seven hundred and fifty votes of the National Assembly and was consequently at least as powerful as any one of the three factions of the Party of Order taken by itself. Its relative minority compared with the entire royalist coalition seemed compensated by special circumstances. Not only did the elections in the Departments show that it had gained a considerable following among the rural population. It counted in its ranks almost all the deputies from Paris; the army had made a confession of democratic faith by the election of three non-commissioned officers, and the leader of the Mountain, Ledru-Rollin, in contradistinction to all the representatives of the Party of Order, had been raised to the parliamentary peerage by five Departments, which had pooled their votes for him. In view of the inevitable clashes of the royalists among themselves and of the whole Party of

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<sup>1</sup>Evil appendage.—Ed.

Order with Bonaparte, the Mountain seemed to have all the elements of success before it on May 29, 1849. A fortnight later it had lost everything, honour included.

Before we pursue parliamentary history further, some remarks are necessary to avoid common misunderstandings regarding the whole character of the period that lies before us. Looked at in the democratic way, the period of the Legislative National Assembly is concerned with what the period of the Constituent Assembly was concerned, viz., the simple struggle between republicans and royalists. The movement itself, however, they sum up in the stock word "reaction"—a night in which all cats are grey and which permits them to reel off their night-watchman's commonplaces. And, to be sure, at first sight the Party of Order reveals a maze of different royalist factions, which not only intrigue against each other so that each may elevate its own pretender to the throne and exclude the pretender of the opposing party, but also all unite in common hatred of and common onslaughts on the "republic." In opposition to this royalist conspiracy the Mountain, for its part, appears as the representative of the "republic." The Party of Order appears to be perpetually engaged in a "reaction," which directs itself against press, association and the like, neither more nor less than in Prussia, and which, as in Prussia, is carried out in the form of brutal police intervention by the bureaucracy, the *gendarmérie* and the law courts. The "Mountain," for its part, is again just as continually occupied in warding off these attacks and thus defending the "eternal rights of man," as every so-called people's party has done, more or less, for a century and a half. Looking at the situation and the parties more closely, however, this superficial appearance which veils the *class struggle* and the peculiar physiognomy of this period disappears.

Legitimists and Orleanists, as we have said, formed the two great sections of the Party of Order. Was that which held these sections fast to their pretenders and kept them apart from one another nothing but lily and tricolour, house of Bourbon and house of Orleans, different shades of royalty; was it the confession of faith in royalty at all? Under the Bourbons, *large landed property* had governed with its priests and lackeys; under the Orleans, high finance, large-scale industry, wholesale trade, that is, *capital*, governed with its retinue of lawyers, professors and orators. The Legitimate Monarchy was merely the political expression of the heredi-

tary rule of the lords of the soil, as the July Monarchy, was only the political expression of the usurping rule of the bourgeois *parvenus*. What kept the two sections apart, therefore, was not any so-called principles, it was their material conditions of existence, two different kinds of property, it was the old contrast of town and country, the rivalry between capital and landed property. That at the same time old memories, personal enmities, fears and hopes, prejudices and illusions, sympathies and antipathies, convictions, articles of faith and principles bound them to one or the other royal house, who is there that denies this? Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence rises an entire superstructure of distinct and characteristically formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations. The single individual who derives them through tradition and education may imagine that they form the real motives and the starting point of his activity. If Orleanists and Legitimists, if each section sought to make itself and the other believe that loyalty to their two royal houses separated them, it later proved to be the case that it was rather their divided interests which forbade the uniting of the two royal houses. And as in private life one distinguishes between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, still more in historical struggles must one distinguish the phrases and fancies of the parties from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves from their reality. Orleanists and Legitimists found themselves side by side in the republic with equal claims. If each side wished to effect the *restoration* of its own royal house against the other, that merely signifies that the *two great interests* into which the *bourgeoisie* is split—landed property and capital—sought each to restore its own supremacy and the subordination of the other. We speak of two interests of the bourgeoisie, for large landed property, despite its feudal coquetry and pride of race, has been rendered thoroughly bourgeois by the development of modern society. Thus the Tories in England long imagined that they were enthusiastic about the monarchy, the church and the beauties of the old English Constitution, until the day of danger wrung from them the confession that they are only enthusiastic about *ground rent*.

The royalists in coalition carried on their intrigues against

one another in the press, in Ems, in Claremont,<sup>1</sup> outside parliament. Behind the scenes they donned their old Orleanist and Legitimist liveries again and engaged in their old tourneys once more. But on the public stage, in their principal and state actions, as a great parliamentary party, they put off their respective royal houses with formal obeisances and adjourn the restoration of the monarchy *in infinitum*. They do their real business as the *Party of Order*, that is, under a social, not under a political title; as representatives of the bourgeois world-order, not as knights of errant princesses; as the bourgeois class against other classes, not as royalists against the republicans. And as the Party of Order they exercised more absolute and sterner domination over the other classes of society than ever previously during the Restoration or during the July Monarchy, a domination which, in general, was only possible under the form of the parliamentary republic, for only under this form could the two great divisions of the French bourgeoisie unite, and therefore put the rule of their class instead of the regime of a privileged section of it on the order of the day. If, nevertheless, they, as the Party of Order, also insult the republic and express their repugnance to it, this happens not merely from royalist memories. Instinct taught them that the republic, indeed, perfects their political rule, but at the same time undermines its social foundation, since they must now confront the subjugated classes and contend against them without intermediation, without the concealment afforded by the crown, without being able to divert the national interest through their subordinate struggles with one another and with the monarchy. It was a feeling of weakness that caused them to recoil from the pure conditions of their own class rule and to sigh for the more incomplete, more undeveloped and consequently less dangerous forms of this rule. On the other hand, as often as the royalists in coalition come in conflict with the pretender that confronts them, with Bonaparte, as often as they believe their parliamentary omnipotence endangered by the executive power, as often, therefore, as they must put forward the political title to their rule, they come forward as *republicans* and not, as *royalists*, from the Orleanist Thiers, who warns the National Assembly that the republic divides them least,

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<sup>1</sup>For Ems and Claremont, see note 3 on p. 250 of the present volume.—Ed.

to the Legitimist Berryer, who, as a tribune swathed in a tri-coloured sash, harangues the people assembled before the town hall of the tenth *arrondissement*<sup>1</sup> on December 2, 1851, in the name of the republic. To be sure, a mocking echo calls back to him: Henry V! Henry V!

As against the coalition of the bourgeoisie, a coalition between petty bourgeois and workers had been formed, the so-called *Social-Democratic Party*. The petty bourgeoisie saw that they were badly rewarded after the June days of 1848, their material interests imperilled and the democratic guarantees which were to ensure the enforcement of these interests endangered by the counter-revolution. Accordingly, they came closer to the workers. On the other hand, their parliamentary representation, the Mountain, thrust aside during the dictatorship of the bourgeois republicans, had in the last half of the life of the Constituent Assembly reconquered its lost popularity through the struggle with Bonaparte and the royalist ministers. It had concluded an alliance with the socialist leaders. In February 1849, banquets celebrated the reconciliation. A joint programme was drafted, joint election committees were set up and joint candidates put forward. From the social demands of the proletariat the revolutionary point was broken off and a democratic turn given to them; from the democratic claims of the petty bourgeoisie the purely political form was stripped off and their socialist point thrust forward. Thus arose *Social-Democracy*. The new *Mountain*, the result of this combination, apart from some supernumeraries from the working class and some socialist sectarians, contained the same elements as the old Mountain, only numerically stronger. But in the course of development it had changed with the class that it represented. The peculiar character of Social-Democracy is epitomised in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded not as a means of doing away with both the extremes, capital and wage labour, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony. However different the means proposed for the attainment of this end may be, however much it may be trimmed with more or less revolutionary notions, the content remains the same. This content is the transformation of society in a democratic way, but a transformation within the bounds of the petty bourgeoisie. Only one must not form the narrow-minded notion that the

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<sup>1</sup>District of a French Department; in Paris, a city ward—Ed.

petty bourgeoisie, on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interest. Rather, it believes that the *special* conditions of its emancipation are the *general* conditions under which modern society can alone be saved and the class struggle avoided. Just as little must one imagine that the democratic representatives are all shopkeepers or enthusiastic champions of shopkeepers. According to their education and their individual position they may be separated from them as widely as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not go beyond the limits which the latter do not go beyond in life, that they are consequently driven theoretically to the same tasks and solutions to which material interest and social position practically drive the latter. This is in general the relationship of the *political and literary representatives* of a class to the class that they represent.

After the analysis given, it is obvious that if the Mountain continually contends with the Party of Order for the republic and the so-called rights of man, neither the republic nor the rights of man are its final end, any more than an army which it is desired to deprive of its weapons and which sets about defending itself has taken the field in order to remain in possession of its own weapons.

Immediately, as soon as the National Assembly met, the Party of Order provoked the Mountain. The bourgeoisie now felt the necessity of making an end of the democratic petty bourgeois, as a year before it had realised the necessity of settling with the revolutionary proletariat. Only the situation of the adversary was a different one. The strength of the proletarian party lay in the streets, that of the petty bourgeois in the National Assembly itself. It was therefore a question of decoying them out of the National Assembly into the streets and causing them to smash their parliamentary power themselves, before time and circumstances could consolidate it. The Mountain rushed headlong into the trap.

The bombardment of Rome by the French troops was the bait that was thrown to it. It violated Article 54 of the Constitution, which forbids the French republic to employ its military forces against the freedom of another people. In addition to this, Article IV also prohibited any declaration of war on the part of the executive power without the assent of the National Assembly, and by its resolution of May 8, the Constituent Assembly had disapproved of the Roman expedi-

tion. On these grounds Ledru-Rollin brought in a bill of impeachment against Bonaparte and his ministers on June 11, 1849. Provoked by the wasp stings of Thiers, he actually let himself be carried away to the point of threatening that he would defend the Constitution by every means, even by force of arms. The Mountain arose as *one* man and repeated this call to arms. On June 12, the National Assembly rejected the bill of impeachment, and the Mountain left the parliament. The events of June 13 are known: the proclamation issued by a section of the Mountain, declaring Bonaparte and his ministers "outside the Constitution"; the street processions of the democratic National Guards, who, unarmed as they were, were dispersed in the encounter with the troops of Changarnier, etc., etc. A part of the Mountain fled abroad; another part was arraigned before the High Court at Bourges, and a parliamentary regulation subjected the remainder to the schoolmasterly surveillance of the President of the National Assembly. Paris was again declared in a state of siege and the democratic section of its National Guard dissolved. Thus the influence of the Mountain in parliament and the power of the petty bourgeois in Paris were broken.

Lyons, where June 13 had given the signal for a bloody insurrection of the workers, was, along with the five surrounding Departments, likewise declared in a state of siege, a condition that has continued up to the present moment.

The bulk of the Mountain had left its advance guard in the lurch, having refused to subscribe to its proclamation. The press had deserted, only two journals having dared to publish the *pronunciamento*. The petty bourgeois betrayed their representatives, in that the National Guards either stayed away on, where they appeared, hindered the erection of barricades. The representatives had duped the petty bourgeois, in that the alleged allies from the army were nowhere to be seen. Finally, instead of gaining an accession of strength from it, the democratic party had infected the proletariat with its own weakness and, as is usual with the great deeds of democrats, the leaders had the satisfaction of being able to charge their "people" with desertion, and the people the satisfaction of being able to charge its leaders with selling it.

Seldom had an action been announced with more noise than the impending campaign of the Mountain, seldom had an event been trumpeted with greater certainty or longer in advance than the inevitable victory of democracy. Most assur-

edly, the democrats believe in the trumpets before whose blasts the walls of Jericho fell down. And as often as they stand before the ramparts of despotism, they seek to imitate the miracle. If the Mountain wished to triumph in parliament, it should not have called to arms. If it called to arms in parliament, it should not have acted in parliamentary fashion on the streets. If the peaceful demonstration was seriously intended, then it was folly not to foresee that it would be given a warlike reception. If a real struggle was intended, then it was a queer idea to lay down the weapons with which it must be waged. But the revolutionary threats of the petty bourgeois and their democratic representatives are mere attempts to intimidate the antagonist. And when they have run into a blind alley, when they have sufficiently compromised themselves to make it necessary to give effect to their threats, then this happens in an ambiguous fashion that avoids nothing so much as the means to the end and tries to find an excuse for defeat. The blaring overture that announced the struggle dies away in a dejected snarl as soon as the struggle has to begin, the actors cease to take themselves *au sérieux*, and the action collapses completely, like a pricked balloon.

No party exaggerates its powers more than the democrats, none deludes itself more irresponsibly over the situation. When a section of the army had voted for it, the Mountain was now convinced that the army would revolt for it. And on what grounds? On grounds which, from the standpoint of the troops, had no other meaning than that the revolutionaries took the side of the Roman soldiers against the French soldiers. On the other hand, the recollections of June 1848 were still too fresh to allow of anything but a profound aversion on the part of the proletariat towards the National Guard and a thorough-going mistrust of the democratic chiefs on the part of the leaders of the secret societies. To make up for these differences, it was necessary for great, common interests to be at stake. The violation of an abstract paragraph of the Constitution could not provide these interests. Had not the Constitution been repeatedly violated, according to the assurance of the democrats themselves? Had not the most popular journals branded it as counter-revolutionary botch-work? But the democrat, because he represents the petty bourgeoisie, therefore a *transition class*, in which the interests of two classes are simultaneously deadened, imagines himself elevated

above class antagonism generally. The democrats concede that a privileged class confronts them, but they, along with all the rest of the surrounding nation, form the people. What they represent are the people's rights; what interests them are the people's interests. Accordingly, when a struggle is impending, they do not need to examine the interests and positions of the different classes. They do not need to consider their own resources too critically. They have merely to give the signal and the people, with all its inexhaustible resources, will fall upon the oppressors. If in the performance their interests now prove to be uninteresting and their power to be impotence, then either the fault lies with pernicious sophists, who split the indivisible people into different hostile camps, or the army was too brutalised and blinded to apprehend the pure aims of democracy as best for itself, or the whole thing has been wrecked by a detail in its execution, or else an unforeseen accident has for this time spoilt the game. In any case, the democrat comes out of the most disgraceful defeat just as immaculate as he went into it innocent; with the newly-won conviction that he is bound to conquer, not that he himself and his party have to give up the old standpoint, but, on the contrary, that conditions have to ripen in his direction.

Accordingly, one must not imagine the Mountain, decimated and broken though it was, and humiliated by the new parliamentary regulation, as being particularly miserable. If June 13 had removed its chiefs, on the other hand it made room for men of lesser calibre, whom this new position flattered. If their powerlessness in parliament could no longer be doubted, they were also entitled now to confine their actions to outbursts of moral indignation and blustering declamation. If the Party of Order affected to see embodied in them, as the last official representatives of the revolution, all the terrors of anarchy, they could in reality be all the more insipid and moderate. They consoled themselves, however, for June 13 with the profound utterance: But if they dare to attack universal suffrage, ah then—then we'll show them what we are made of! *Nous verrons!*

So far as the *Montagnards* who fled abroad are concerned, it is sufficient to remark here that Ledru-Rollin, because in barely a fortnight he had succeeded in ruining irretrievably

“We shall see.”—Ed.

the powerful party at whose head he stood, now found himself called upon to form a French government *in partibus*; that to the extent that the level of the revolution sank and the official stalwarts of official France became more dwarflike, his figure in the distance, removed from the scene of action, seemed to grow in stature; that he could figure as the republican pretender for 1852, and that he issued periodical circulars to the Wallachians and other peoples, in which the despots of the Continent are threatened with the deeds of himself and his confederates. Was Proudhon altogether wrong when he cried to these gentlemen: "*Vous n'etes que des blagueurs*"?<sup>1</sup>

On June 13, the Party of Order had not only broken the Mountain, it had effected the *subordination of the Constitution to the majority decisions of the National Assembly*. And so it understood the republic: that the bourgeoisie rules here in parliamentary forms, without, as in the monarchy, any limitations such as the veto of the executive power or the fact that parliament could be dissolved. This was the *parliamentary republic*, as Thiers termed it. But if on June 13 the bourgeoisie, secured its omnipotence within the house of parliament, did it not afflict parliament itself with incurable weakness as compared with the executive power and the people by excluding its most popular part?<sup>2</sup> By surrendering numerous deputies without further ado on the demand of the public prosecutor, it abolished its own parliamentary inviolability. The humiliating regulations<sup>3</sup> to which it subjected the Mountain exalted the President of the republic in the same measure as it degraded the individual representative of the people. By branding the insurrection for the protection of the constitutional charter as an anarchic act aiming at the overthrow of society, it prohibited an appeal to insurrection in its own case as soon as, in relation to it, the executive power should violate the Constitution. And by the irony of history, the general who on Bonaparte's instructions bombarded Rome and thus provided

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<sup>1</sup>You are nothing but windbags.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>After the events of June 13, forty deputies were brought to trial, one after the other. Some of the leaders of the Mountain fled (Ledru-Rollin, Felix Pyat and others); others were put into prison.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>In order to silence the republican opposition, a new ruling was adopted by the majority of the Assembly, limiting freedom of speech and subjecting the deputies to the direction of the President. Deputies could now be excluded from the Assembly and deprived of their salaries.—*Ed.*

the immediate occasion for the constitutional revolt of June 13, that very *Oudinot* was the man offered by the Party of Order imploringly and unavailingly to the people as general on behalf of the Constitution against Bonaparte on December 2, 1851. Another hero of June 13, *Vieyra*, who was lauded from the tribune of the National Assembly for the brutalities that he had committed in the democratic newspaper offices at the head of a troop of National Guards in the pay of the high financiers, this same *Vieyra* had been initiated into Bonaparte's conspiracy and he essentially contributed to depriving the National Assembly in the hour of its death of any protection by the National Guard.

June 13 had still another meaning. The Mountain had wanted to force the impeachment of Bonaparte. Its defeat was therefore a direct victory for Bonaparte, his personal triumph over his democratic enemies. The Party of Order gained the victory; Bonaparte had only to profit by it. He did so. On June 14 a proclamation could be read on the walls of Paris in which the President, reluctantly and against his will, as it were, compelled by the mere force of events, comes forth from his cloistered seclusion and, posing as misunderstood virtue, complains of the calumnies of his opponents and, while he seems to identify his person with the cause of order, rather identifies the cause of order with his person. Moreover, the National Assembly had, it is true, subsequently approved the expedition against Rome, but Bonaparte had taken the initiative in the matter. After having installed the High Priest Samuel in the Vatican once more, he could hope to enter the Tuileries as King David. He had won over the priests.

The revolt of June 13, as we have seen, was confined to a peaceful street procession. No war laurels were therefore to be won against it. Nevertheless, at a time as poor as this in heroes and events the Party of Order transformed this bloodless battle into a second Austerlitz.<sup>1</sup> Platform and press praised the army as the power of order, in contrast to the popular masses representing the impotence of anarchy, and extolled *Changarnier* as the "bulwark of society," a deception in which he himself finally came to believe. Surreptitiously, however, the troops that seemed doubtful were trans-

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<sup>1</sup>Near Austerlitz, Napoleon I won a great victory over the combined Russian and Austrian armies in 1805.—*Ed.*

ferred from Paris, the regiments whose elections had turned out most democratically were banished from France to Algiers, the turbulent spirits among the troops were relegated to penal detachments and finally the isolation of the press from the barracks and of the barracks from bourgeois society was systematically carried out.

Here we have reached the decisive turning point in the history of the French National Guard. In 1830 it was decisive in the overthrow of the Restoration. Under Louis Philippe every rising miscarried in which the National Guard stood on the side of the troops. When in the February days of 1848 it evinced a passive attitude towards the insurrection and an equivocal one towards Louis Philippe, he gave himself up for lost and actually was lost. Thus the conviction took root that the revolution could not conquer *without* the National Guard, nor the army *against* it. This was the superstition of the army in regard to bourgeois omnipotence. The June days of 1848, when the entire National Guard, with the troops of the line, put down the insurrection, had strengthened the superstition. After Bonaparte's assumption of office, the position of the National Guard was to some extent weakened by the unconstitutional uniting in the person of Changarnier of the command of its forces with the command of the first military division.

Just as here the command of the National Guard appeared as a subsidiary function of the military commander-in-chief, so the National Guard itself appeared as only an appendage of the troops of the line. Finally, on June 13 its power was broken, and not only by its partial dissolution, which from this time on was periodically repeated all over France, until mere fragments of it were left behind. The demonstration of June 13 was, above all, a demonstration of the democratic National Guards. They had not indeed borne their arms, but had worn their uniforms against the army; precisely in his uniform, however, lay the talisman. The army convinced itself that this uniform was a piece of woollen cloth like any other. The spell was broken. In the June days of 1848, bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie as the National Guard had been united with the army against the proletariat; on June 13, 1849, the bourgeoisie let the petty-bourgeois National Guard be scattered by the army; on December 2, 1851, the National Guard of the bourgeoisie itself had vanished, and Bonaparte merely registered this fact when he subsequently signed the

decree for its dissolution. Thus the bourgeoisie had itself smashed its last weapon against the army, but it had to smash it the moment the petty bourgeoisie no longer stood behind it (as a vassal, but before it as a rebel, as in general it was bound to destroy all its means of defence against absolutism with its own hand, as soon as it had itself become absolute.

Meanwhile, the Party of Order celebrated the reconquest of a power that seemed lost in 1848 only to be found again, freed from its restraints, in 1849, with invective against the republic and the Constitution, with curses on all future, present and past revolutions, including those which its own leaders had made, and with laws by which the press was muzzled, association abolished and the state of siege regulated as an organic institution.<sup>1</sup> The National Assembly then adjourned from the middle of August to the middle of October, after having appointed a permanent commission for the period of its absence. During his recess the Legitimists intrigued with Ems, the Orleanists with Claremont, Bonaparte by princely tours, and the Departmental Councils in deliberations on the revision of the Constitution—incidents which regularly recur in the periodical recesses of the National Assembly and which I only propose to discuss when they become events. Here it may merely be remarked that it was impolitic for the National Assembly to disappear for considerable intervals from the stage and leave only a single, albeit a sorry, figure to be seen at the head of the republic, that of Louis Bonaparte, while to the scandal of the public the Party of Order fell asunder into its royalist component parts and followed its conflicting desires for Restoration. As often as the confused noise of parliament grew silent during these recesses and its body dissolved in

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<sup>1</sup>The temporary law against the press was issued on July 27. This law forbade the retail sale of newspapers without the permission of the administration; the latter could refuse this permission without giving any reasons. Any insult to the President of the republic was officially prosecuted. Any criticism of the laws was punished by fines, imprisonment, etc. The right of association—one of the most essential of the political victories of the February days—was abolished. By the new law on clubs, the government had the right to “close down clubs and existing unions which might be dangerous to public order.” The state of siege was declared not only in Paris and its environs, but also in Lyons with five Departments and in Strasbourg, Rheims, and other cities with sixteen Departments. Military courts functioned everywhere in place of the usual courts during the state of siege.—Ed.

the nation, it became 'unmistakably' clear that only one thing was still wanting to complete the true form of this republic, to make the parliamentary recess permanent and replace the republic's *Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite* by the unambiguous words, 'Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery!'

#### IV

In the middle of October 1849, the National Assembly met once more. On November 1, Bonaparte surprised it with a message in which he announced the dismissal of the Barrot-Falloux ministry and the formation of a new ministry. No one has ever sacked lackeys with less ceremony than Bonaparte his ministers. The kicks that were intended for the National Assembly were given in the meantime to Barrot and Co.

The Barrot ministry, as we have seen, had been composed of Legitimists and Orleanists, a ministry of the Party of Order. Bonaparte had needed it to dissolve the republican Constituent Assembly, to bring about the expedition against Rome and to break the democratic party. Behind this ministry he had seemingly eclipsed himself, surrendered governmental power into the hands of the Party of Order and donned the modest character-mask that the legally responsible editor of a newspaper wore under Louis Philippe, the mask of the *homme de paille*.<sup>1</sup> He now threw off his mask, which was no longer a light veil behind which he could hide his face, but an iron mask which prevented him from displaying his own features. He had appointed the Barrot ministry so far to force the dissolution of the republican National Assembly in the name of the Party of Order; he dismissed it in order to declare his own name independent of the National Assembly of the Party of Order.

Plausible pretexts for this dismissal were not lacking. The Barrot ministry neglected even the forms of politeness that would have let the President of the republic appear as a power side by side with the National Assembly. During the recess of the National Assembly Bonaparte published a letter to Edgar Ney in which he seemed to disapprove of the illiberal attitude of the Pope; just as in opposition to the Constituent Assembly he had published a letter in which he com-

<sup>1</sup>Man of straw.—Ed.

mended Oudinot for the attack on the Roman republic. When the National Assembly now voted the budget for the Roman expedition, Victor Hugo, ostensibly out of liberalism, brought up this letter for discussion. The Party of Order with scornfully incredulous outcries stifled the idea that Bonaparte's ideas could have any political importance. Not one of the ministers took up the gauntlet for him. On another occasion Barrot, with his well-known hollow rhetoric, let fall from the platform words of indignation concerning the "abominable machinations" that, according to his assertion, went on in the immediate entourage of the President. Finally, while the ministry obtained from the National Assembly a widow's pension for the Duchess of Orleans it refused to submit any motion to increase the Civil List of the President. And in Bonaparte the imperial pretender was so intimately bound up with the adventurer down on his luck, that the *one* great idea, that he was called on to restore the Empire, was always supplemented by the other, that it was the mission of the French people to pay his debts.

The Barrot-Falloux ministry was the first and last *parliamentary ministry* that Bonaparte brought into being. Its dismissal forms accordingly, a decisive turning point. With it the Party of Order lost, never to reconquer it, an indispensable post for the maintenance of the parliamentary regime, the lever of executive power. It is immediately obvious that in a country like France, where the executive power commands an army of officials numbering more than half a million individuals and therefore constantly maintains an immense mass of interests and existences in the most absolute dependence; where the state enmeshes, controls, punishes, superintends and tutors bourgeois society from its most comprehensive manifestations of life down to its most insignificant stirrings, from its most general modes of being to the private existence of individuals; where through the most extraordinary centralisation this parasitic body acquires an ubiquity, an omniscience, a capacity for swifter motion and an elasticity which has an analogy only in the helpless dependence, in the utter shapelessness of the actual body of society—it is obvious that in such a country the National Assembly forfeited all real influence when it lost command of the ministerial posts, if it did not at the same time simplify the administration of the state, reduce the army of officials as far as possible and, finally let bourgeois society and public opinion create organs of their

own, independent of the governmental power. But it is with the maintenance of that extensive state machine in its numerous ramifications that the *material interests* of the French bourgeoisie are interwoven in precisely the closest fashion. Here it finds posts for its surplus population and makes up in the form of state salaries for what it cannot pocket in the form of profits, interest, rents and honorariums. On the other hand, its *political interests* compelled it to increase daily the repressive measures and therefore the means and the personnel of the state power, while at the same time it had to wage an uninterrupted war against public opinion and mistrustfully mutilate and cripple society's organs of independent movement, where it did not succeed in amputating them wholly. Thus the French bourgeoisie was compelled by its class position to annihilate, on the one hand, the vital conditions of all parliamentary power, and therefore of its own, likewise, and to render irresistible, on the other hand, the executive power hostile to it.

The new ministry was called the d'Hautpoul ministry. Not in the sense that General d'Hautpoul had received the rank of Prime Minister. Rather, simultaneously with Barrot's dismissal, Bonaparte abolished this dignity, which certainly condemned the President of the republic to the status of a legal nonentity, of a constitutional monarch, but of a constitutional monarch without a throne or a crown, without a sceptre or a sword, without irresponsibility, without imprescriptible possession of the highest state dignity, and, worst of all, without a Civil List. The d'Hautpoul ministry contained only one man of parliamentary standing, the Jew *Fould*, one of the most notorious of the high financiers. To his lot fell the ministry of finance. Look up the quotations of the Paris *bourse* and you will find that from November 1849 onwards the French *Fonds*<sup>1</sup> rise and fall with the rise and fall of Bonapartist stocks. While Bonaparte had thus found his ally in the *bourse*, at the same time he took possession of the police by appointing Carlier Chief of Police in Paris.

Only in the course of development, however, could the consequences of the change of ministers come to light. To begin with, Bonaparte had only taken a step forward, in order to be driven backward all the more obviously. His brusque message was followed by the most servile declaration of sub-

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<sup>1</sup>Consolidated government stocks.—Ed.

missiveness: to the National Assembly. As often as the ministers dared to make a diffident attempt to introduce his personal fads as legislative proposals, they themselves seemed only to carry out, against their will and compelled by their position, comic instructions of whose fruitlessness they were persuaded in advance. As often as Bonaparte blurted out his intentions behind the ministers' backs and played with his "*idees napoleoniennes*,"<sup>1</sup> his own ministers disavowed him from the tribune of the National Assembly. His usurpatory longings seemed to make themselves heard only in order that the malicious laughter of his opponents might not be muted. He behaved like a misunderstood genius, whom all the world takes for a simpleton. Never did he enjoy the contempt of all classes in fuller measure than during this period. Never did the bourgeoisie rule more absolutely, never did it display more ostentatiously the insignia of domination.

I have not here to write the history of its legislative activity, which is summarised during this period in two laws: in the law re-establishing the *wine tax*<sup>2</sup> and the *education law*<sup>3</sup> abolishing unbelief. If wine drinking was made harder for the French, they were presented all the more plentifully with the water of truer life. If in the law on the wine tax the bourgeoisie declared the old, hateful French tax system to be inviolable, through the education law it sought to ensure among the masses the old state of mind that put up with the tax system. One is astonished to see the Orleanists, the liberal bourgeois, these old apostles of Voltairianism and eclectic philosophy, entrust to their hereditary enemies, the Jesuits, the superintendence of the French mind. But if, in regard to the pretenders to the throne, Orleanists and Legitimists could part company, they understood that to secure their united rule necessitated the uniting of the means of repression of two epochs, that the means of subjugation of the July Monarchy had to be supplemented and strengthened by the

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<sup>1</sup>Napoleonic ideas.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The *wine tax*, a burden falling on the poorest sections of the population, was repealed by the National Assembly with the intention of replacing it by an income tax. The first measure of the Fould ministry, appointed on November 1; 1849, was the re-establishment of the wine tax, in its former scandalous form, which made the tax fall mainly on the small consumers.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>See note 1 on p. 264 of this volume.—Ed.

means of subjugation of the Restoration.

The peasants, disappointed in all their hopes, crushed more than ever by the low level of corn prices on the one hand; and by the growing burden of taxes and mortgage debts on the other, began to bestir themselves in the Departments. They were answered by attacks on the schoolmasters, who were subjected to the clergy, by attacks on the mayors, who were subjected to the prefects, and by a system of espionage, to which all were subjected. In Paris and the large towns reaction has the very physiognomy of its epoch and challenges more than it strikes down. In the countryside it is dull, coarse, petty, tiresome and vexatious, in a word; the *gendarme*. One comprehends how three years of the regime of the *gendarme*, consecrated by the regime of the priest, were bound to demoralise immature masses.

Whatever amount of passion and declaration might be employed by the Party of Order against the minority from the tribune of the National Assembly, its speech remained as monosyllabic as that of the Christians, whose words were to be: "Yea, yea; nay, nay!" As monosyllabic on the platform as in the press. Flat as a riddle whose answer is known in advance. Whether it was a question of the right of petition or the tax on wine, freedom of the press or free trade, the clubs or the municipal constitution, protection of personal liberty or regulation of the state budget, the watchword constantly recurs, the theme remains always the same, the verdict is ever ready and invariably runs: "*Socialism!*". Even bourgeois liberalism is declared socialistic, bourgeois enlightenment socialistic, bourgeois financial reform socialistic. It was socialistic to build a railway, where a canal already existed, and it was socialistic to defend oneself with a stick, when one was attacked with a dagger.

This was not merely a figure of speech, fashion or party tactics. The bourgeoisie had true insight into the fact that all the weapons which it had forged against feudalism turned their points against itself, that all the means of education which it had produced rebelled against its own civilisation, that all the gods which it had created had fallen away from it. It understood that all the so-called bourgeois liberties and organs of progress attacked and menaced its class rule at its social foundation and its political summit simultaneously, and had therefore become "*socialistic*." In this menace and this attack it rightly discerned the secret of socialism; whose

import and tendency it judges more correctly than so-called socialism knows how to judge itself; the latter can, accordingly, not comprehend why the bourgeoisie callously hardens its heart against it, whether it sentimentally bewails the sufferings of mankind, or in Christian spirit prophesies the millennium and universal brotherly love; or in humanistic style twaddles about mind, education and freedom, or in doctrinaire fashion devises a system for the conciliation and welfare of all classes. What the bourgeoisie did not grasp, however, was the logical conclusion that its *own parliamentary regime*, that is *political rule* in general was now bound to meet with the general verdict of condemnation as being likewise socialistic. As long as the rule of the bourgeois class had not been organised completely, as long as it had not acquired its pure political expression, the antagonism of the other classes, likewise, could not appear in its pure form, and where it did appear, could not take the dangerous turn that transforms every struggle against the power of the state into a struggle against capital. If in every stirring of life in society it saw "tranquillity" imperilled, how could it want to maintain at the head of society the *regime of unrest*, its own regime, the *parliamentary regime*, this regime that, according to the expression of one of its orators, lives in struggle and by struggle? The parliamentary regime lives by discussion; how shall it forbid discussion? Every interest, every social institution, is here transformed into general ideas, debated as ideas; how shall any interest, any institution sustain itself as above thought and impose itself as an article of faith? The struggle of the orators on the platform evokes the struggle of the scribblers of the press; the debating club in parliament is inevitably supplemented by debating clubs in the salons and the pot-houses; the representatives who constantly appeal to public opinion give public opinion the right to speak its real mind in petitions. The parliamentary regime leaves everything to the decision of majorities; how shall the great majorities outside parliament not want to decide? When you play the fiddle at the top of the state, what else is to be expected but that those down below dance?

By now stigmatising as "socialistic" what it had previously extolled as "liberal," the bourgeoisie therefore confesses that its own interest dictates that it should be delivered from the danger of *governing in its own name*; that, in order to restore tranquillity in the land, its bourgeois parliament must, first of

all, be given its quietus ; that in order to preserve its social power inviolate, its political power must be broken ; that the private bourgeois can only continue to exploit the other classes and to enjoy undisturbed property, family, religion and order on condition that their class be condemned along with the other classes to a like political nullity ; that in order to save its purse, it must abandon the crown, and the sword that is to safeguard it must at the same time be hung over its own head like the sword of Damocles.

In the domain of general bourgeois interests the National Assembly showed itself so unproductive that, for example, the discussions on the Paris-Avignon railway, which began in the winter of 1850, were still not ripe for conclusion on December 2, 1851. Where it did not repress or react it was stricken with incurable barrenness.

While Bonaparte's ministry partly took the initiative in framing laws in the spirit of the Party of Order, and partly outdid its harshness in their execution and administration, he, on the other hand, by childish silly proposals sought to win popularity, to bring out the contrast between himself and the National Assembly, and to hint at a secret reserve that was only temporarily prevented by conditions from making its hidden treasures available to the French people. Of this character was the proposal to decree a bonus of four *sous* a day to the non-commissioned officers. Of this character was the proposal of an honour loan bank<sup>1</sup> for the workers. Money as a gift and money on loan, it was with prospects such as these that he hoped to allure the masses. Donations and loans—the financial science of the *lumpenproletariat*, whether high or low, is restricted to this. Such were the only springs which Bonaparte knew how to set in action. Never has a Pretender speculated more stupidly on the stupidity of the masses.

The National Assembly flared up repeatedly over these unmistakable attempts to gain popularity at its expense, over the growing danger that this adventurer, whom his debts spurred on and no established reputation held back, would venture a desperate coup. The discord between the Party of Order and the President had taken on a threatening character when an unexpected event threw him back repentant into its arms. We mean the *by-elections of March 10, 1850*.—These elections were held with the object of filling once more the

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 265 of the present volume.—Ed.

representatives' seats that after June 13 had been rendered vacant by imprisonment or exile. Paris elected only Social-Democratic candidates. It even concentrated most of the votes on an insurgent of June 1848, on Deflotte. Thus did the Parisian petty bourgeoisie, in alliance with the proletariat, revenge itself for its defeat on June 13, 1849. It seemed to have disappeared from the battlefield at the moment of danger only to reappear there on a more propitious occasion with more numerous fighting forces and with a bolder battle-cry. One circumstance seemed to heighten the peril of this election victory. The army voted in Paris for the June insurgent against Lahitte, a minister of Bonaparte's, and in the Departments largely for the *Montagnards*, who here, too, though not indeed so decisively as in Paris, maintained the ascendancy over their adversaries.

Bonaparte saw himself suddenly confronted with revolution once more. As on January 29, 1849, as on June 13, 1849, on March 10, 1850, he disappeared behind the Party of Order. He made obeisance, he pusillanimously begged pardon, he offered to appoint any ministry it pleased at the behest of the parliamentary majority, he even implored the Orleanist and Legitimist party leaders, the Thiers, the Berryers, the Broglies, the Moles, in brief, the so-called burgraves<sup>1</sup> themselves to take the helm of state. The Party of Order did not know how to take advantage of this moment that would never return. Instead of boldly possessing itself of the power offered, it did not even compel Bonaparte to reinstate the ministry dismissed on November 1; it contented itself with humiliating him by its forgiveness and adding *M. Baroche* to the d'Hautpoul ministry. As public prosecutor this Baroche had stormed and raged before the High Court at Bourges, the first time against the revolutionaries of May 15, the second time against the democrats of June 13, both times because of an *attentat*<sup>2</sup> on the National Assembly. None of Bonaparte's ministers subsequently contributed more to the degradation of the National Assembly, and after December 2, 1851, we meet him once more as the comfortably installed and highly paid vice-president of the Senate. He had spat in the revolutionaries' soup in order that Bonaparte might eat it up.

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<sup>1</sup>A sarcastic nickname, which referred to the impotent love of power and feudal ambitions of the royalists; borrowed from a play by Victor Hugo.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Attempt, attack.—*Ed.*

The Social-Democratic Party, for its part, seemed only to try to find pretexts for putting its victory once again in doubt and blunting the point of its victory. Vidal, one of the newly elected representatives of Paris, had been elected simultaneously in Strasbourg. He was induced to decline election for Paris and accept it for Strasbourg. Instead, therefore, of giving its victory at the polls a definite character and thereby compelling the Party of Order at once to contest it in parliament, instead of thus forcing the adversary to fight at the moment of popular enthusiasm and favourable state of feeling in the army, the democratic party wearied Paris during the months of March and April with a new election agitation, let the popular passions aroused wear themselves out in this provisional election interlude, let the revolutionary energy satiate itself with constitutional successes, dissipate itself in petty intrigues, hollow declamations and sham movements; let the bourgeoisie rally and make their preparations, and, lastly, allowed the meaning of the March elections to find a sentimentally softening commentary in the subsequent April election by the return of Eugene Sue. In a word, it made an April Fool of March 10.

The parliamentary majority understood the weakness of its antagonist. Its seventeen burgraves—for Bonaparte had left to it the direction of and responsibility for the attack—worked out a new electoral law, the introduction of which was entrusted to M. Faucher, who solicited this honour for himself. On May 8 he introduced the law by which universal suffrage was abolished, a residence of three years in the locality of the election imposed as a condition on the electors and, finally, the proof of this residence made dependent in the case of the workers on a certificate from their employers.

In the same measure as the democrats had agitated and raged in revolutionary fashion during the constitutional election contest, equally constitutionally did they now, when it was requisite to prove the serious nature of that victory arms in hand, preach order, majestic calm (*calme majestueux*), a legal attitude, that is to say, blind subjection to the will of the counter-revolution, which imposed itself as the law. During the debate the Mountain put the Party of Order to shame by asserting against its revolutionary passionateness the dispassionate standpoint of the philistine who keeps within the law, and by felling it to earth with the fearful reproach that it proceeded in a revolutionary manner. Even the newly elected

deputies were at pains to prove by their decorous and discreet action what a misconception it was to decry them as anarchists and construe their election as a victory for revolution. On May 31, the new electoral law went through. The Mountain contented itself with smuggling a protest into the pocket of the President. The electoral law was followed by a new press law, by which the revolutionary newspaper press was entirely suppressed. It had deserved its fate. The *National* and *La Presse*, two bourgeois organs, were left behind after this deluge as the most advanced outposts of the revolution.

We have seen how during March and April the democratic leaders had done everything to embroil the people of Paris in a sham fight, and how after May 8 they did everything to restrain them from a real fight. In addition to this, we must not forget that the year 1850 was one of the most splendid years of industrial and commercial prosperity, and the Paris proletariat was therefore fully employed. But the election law of May 31, 1850, excluded it from any participation in political power. It cut away from it the very ground of the struggle. It threw the workers back into the position of pariahs; just as they had been before the February Revolution. Since in face of such an event they could let themselves be led by the democrats and could forget the revolutionary interests of their class for a momentary ease and comfort, they renounced the honour of being a conquering power, surrendered themselves to their fate, proved that the defeat of June 1848 had made them incapable of fighting for years and that the historical process would first of all have to go forward again over their heads. So far as the petty-bourgeois democracy is concerned, which on June 13 had cried: "But if once universal suffrage is attacked, then we'll show them," it now consoled itself with the contention that the counter-revolutionary blow which had struck it was no blow and the law of May 31 no law. On May 2, 1852, every Frenchman would appear at the polling-place with ballot-paper in one hand and sword in the other. With this prophecy it rested content. Finally, just as for the elections of May 29, 1849, so for those of March and April 1850, the army was punished by its chiefs. This time, however, it said decidedly: "The revolution shall not dupe us a third time."

The law of May 31, 1850, was the *coup d'état* of the bourgeoisie. All its conquests over the revolution hitherto had only a provisional character. They were endangered as soon

as the existing National Assembly retired from the stage. They depended on the hazards of a new general election, and the history of elections since 1848 irrefutably proved that in the same measure as the actual domination of the bourgeoisie developed, its moral domination over the mass of the people was lost. On March 10, universal suffrage declared itself directly against the domination of the bourgeoisie; the bourgeoisie answered by outlawing universal suffrage. The law of May 31 was therefore one of the necessities of the class struggle. On the other hand, the Constitution required a minimum of two million votes in order that the election of the President of the republic might be valid. If none of the candidates for the presidency received this minimum, the National Assembly was then to choose the President from among the three candidates to whom the largest number of votes would fall. At the time when the Constituent Assembly made this law, ten million electors were registered on the rolls of voters. In its view therefore a fifth of the people entitled to vote was sufficient to make the presidential election valid. The law of May 31 struck at least three million votes off the electoral rolls, reduced the number of people entitled to vote to seven millions and, nevertheless, retained the legal minimum of two millions for the presidential election. It therefore raised the legal minimum from a fifth to nearly a third of the effective votes, that is, it did everything to smuggle the election of the President out of the hands of the people and into the hands of the National Assembly. Through the electoral law of May 31 the Party of Order thus seemed to have made its rule doubly secure, since it left the election of the National Assembly and that of the President of the republic to the stationary section of society.

## V

As soon as the revolutionary crisis had been weathered and universal suffrage abolished, the struggle between the National Assembly and Bonaparte immediately broke out again.

The Constitution had fixed Bonaparte's salary at 600,000 francs. Barely six months after his installation he succeeded in increasing this sum to twice as much, for Odilon Barrot wrung from the Constituent National Assembly an extra allowance of 600,000 francs a year for so-called representation monies. After June 13, Bonaparte had caused similar requests to be

voiced, this time without getting a response from Barrot. Now, after May 31, he at once availed himself of the favourable moment and caused his ministers to propose a Civil List of three millions in the National Assembly. A long life of adventurous vagabondage had endowed him with the most developed antennae for feeling out the weak moments when he might squeeze money from his bourgeois. He practised regular *chantage*.<sup>1</sup> The National Assembly had violated the sovereignty of the people with his assistance and his cognisance. He threatened to denounce its crime to the tribunal of the people unless it loosened its purse-strings and purchased his silence with three million a year. It had robbed three million Frenchmen of their franchise. He demanded, for every Frenchman put out of currency, a franc having currency, precisely three million francs. He, the elect of six millions, claims damages for the votes out of which he has subsequently been cheated. The Commission of the National Assembly refused the importunate one. The Bonapartist press threatened. Could the National Assembly break with the President of the republic at a moment when in principle it had definitely broken with the mass of the nation? It rejected the annual Civil List, it is true, but it granted, for this once, an extra allowance of two million one hundred and sixty thousand francs. It thus rendered itself guilty of the double weakness of granting the money and of showing at the same time by its vexation that it only granted it unwillingly. We shall see later for what purpose Bonaparte needed the money. After this vexatious aftermath, which followed on the heels of the abolition of universal suffrage and in which Bonaparte exchanged his humble attitude during the crisis of March and April for challenging impudence to the usurpatory parliament, the National Assembly adjourned for three months, from August 11 to November 11. In its place it left behind a Permanent Commission of eighteen members, which contained no Bonapartists, but did contain some moderate republicans. The Permanent Commission of 1849 had included only men of the Party of Order and Bonapartists. But at that time the Party of Order declared itself in permanence against the revolution. This time the parliamentary republic declared itself in permanence against the President. After the law of May 31, this was the only rival that still confronted the Party of Order.

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<sup>1</sup>Blackmail.—Ed.

When the National Assembly met once more in November 1850, it seemed that, instead of the petty skirmishes it had hitherto had with the President, a great and ruthless struggle, a life-and-death struggle between the two powers, had become inevitable.

As in 1849, so during this year's parliamentary recess the Party of Order had broken up into its separate sections, each occupied with its own Restoration intrigues, which obtained fresh nutriment through the death of Louis Philippe. The Legitimist king, Henry V, had even nominated a formal ministry which resided in Paris and in which members of the Permanent Commission held seats. Bonaparte, in his turn, was therefore entitled to make tours of the French Departments and according to the disposition of the town that he favoured with his presence, now covertly, now more openly, divulge his own restoration plans and canvass votes for himself. On these processions, which the great official *Moniteur* and the little private *Moniteurs* of Bonaparte were naturally bound to celebrate as triumphal processions, he was constantly accompanied by associates of the *Society of December 10*. This society dates from the year 1849. On the pretext of founding a benevolent society, the *lumpenproletariat* of Paris had been organised into secret sections, each section being led by Bonapartist agents, with a Bonapartist general at the head of the whole. Alongside decayed *roues* with doubtful means of subsistence and of doubtful origin, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jail-birds, escaped galley-slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, *lazzaroni*,<sup>1</sup> pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, *maquereaux*,<sup>2</sup> brothel-keepers, porters, *litterati*, organ-grinders, rag-pickers, knife-grinders, tinkers, beggars, in short the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass thrown hither and thither, which the French term *la Boheme*; from this kindred element Bonaparte formed the basis of the *Society of December 10*. A "benevolent society"—in so far as, like Bonaparte, all its members felt the need of benefiting themselves at the expense of the working nation. This Bonaparte, who constitutes himself chief of the *lumpenproletariat*, who here alone rediscovers in mass form the interests which he personally pursues, who recognises in this scum, offal, refuse of all classes, the only

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<sup>1</sup>The name given to the idlers and beggars of Naples.—Ed.  
<sup>2</sup>Procurers.—Ed.

class weapon upon which he can base himself unconditionally, he is the real Bonaparte, the Bonaparte *sans phrase*. An old crafty *roue*, he conceives the historical life of the nations and their principal and state actions as comedy in the most vulgar sense, as a masquerade where the grand costumes, words and postures merely serve to mask the pettiest knavishness. Thus on his expedition to Strasbourg<sup>1</sup> when a trained Swiss vulture had played the part of the Napoleonic eagle. For his irruption into Boulogne he puts some London lackeys into French uniforms. They represent the army. In his Society of December 10, he assembles ten thousand rascally fellows, who must play the part of the people, as Klaus Zette<sup>2</sup> that of the lion. At a moment when the French bourgeoisie itself played the most complete comedy, but in the most serious manner in the world, without infringing any of the pedantic conditions of French dramatic etiquette, and was itself half deceived, half convinced by the solemnity of its own principal and state actions, the adventurer who took the comedy as plain comedy was bound to conquer. Only when he has eliminated his solemn opponent, when he himself now takes his imperial role seriously and with the Napoleonic mask thinks to play the part of the real Napoleon, does he become the victim of his own conception of the world, the serious buffoon, who no longer takes world history for a comedy, but his comedy for world history. What the *National Ateliers*<sup>3</sup> were for the socialist workers, what the *Gardes Mobiles*<sup>4</sup> were for the bourgeois republicans, the Society of December 10 was for Bonaparte, the party fighting force peculiar to him. On his journeys the detachments of this society packing the railways had to improvise a public for him, display the public enthusiasm, howl *vive l'Empereur*<sup>5</sup> insult and thrash the republicans, of course under the protection of the police. On his return journeys to Paris they had to form the advance guard, forestall counter-demonstrations or disperse them. The Society of December 10

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Bonaparte's first unsuccessful attempt at a *coup d'etat* took place in 1836, in Strasbourg. The invasion of Boulogne—his second unsuccessful attempt to proclaim himself emperor—was in 1840.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to Nick Bottom, the weaver (Klaus Zettel) in Shakespeare's comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Workshops.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>Mobile Guards.—*Ed.*

<sup>5</sup>Long live the Emperor.—*Ed.*

belonged to him, it was his work, his very own idea. Whatever else he appropriates is put into his hands by the forces of circumstance; whatever else he does, the circumstances do for him or he is content to copy from the deeds of others. But Bonaparte in public before the citizens, with the official phrases of order, religion, family, property, and with the secret society of the Schufferles and Spiegelbergs,<sup>1</sup> the society of disorder, prostitution and theft, behind him—that is Bonaparte himself as original author, and the history of the Society of December 10 is his own history. Now it had happened by way of exception that popular representatives belonging to the Party of Order came under the cudgels of the Decembrists. Still more. Yon, the police-inspector assigned to the National Assembly and charged with watching over its safety, acting on the information given by a certain Alais, advised the Permanent Commission that a section of the Decembrists had determined to assassinate General Changarnier and Dupin, the President of the National Assembly, and had already fixed the individuals who were to do it. One comprehends the terror of M. Dupin. A parliamentary enquiry into the Society of December 10, that is, the profanation of the Bonapartist secret world, seemed inevitable. Just before the meeting of the National Assembly Bonaparte providently disbanded his society, naturally only on paper, for in a detailed memoir at the end of 1851 Police-Prefect Carlier still sought in vain to move him to a real dispersal of the Decembrists.

The Society of December 10 was thus to remain the private army of Bonaparte until he succeeded in transforming the public army into a Society of December 10. Bonaparte made the first attempt at this shortly after the adjournment of the National Assembly, and indeed with the money just wrested from it. As a fatalist, he lives in the conviction that there are certain higher powers which man, and the soldier in particular, cannot withstand. Among these powers he counts, first and foremost, cigars and champagne, cold poultry and garlic sausage. To begin with, in the apartments of the Elysee he accordingly treats officers and non-commissioned officers to cigars and champagne, to cold poultry and garlic sausage. On October 3 he repeats this manoeuvre with the mass of the troops at the review at St. Maur and on October 10

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<sup>1</sup>Rascally characters in Schiller's drama, *Die Rauber* [The Robbers].—Ed.

the same manoeuvre on a still larger scale at the army parade at Satori. The Uncle remembered the campaigns of Alexander<sup>1</sup> in Asia, the Nephew the triumphal marches of Bacchus<sup>2</sup> in the same land. Alexander was a demi-god, to be sure, but Bacchus was a god and moreover the tutelary deity of the Society of December 10.

After the review of October 3, the Permanent Commission summoned the War Minister d'Hautpoul before it. He promised that these breaches of discipline should not recur. We know how on October 10 Bonaparte kept d'Hautpoul's word. As Commander-in-Chief of the Paris army, Changarnier had commanded at both reviews. He, at once a member of the Permanent Commission, chief of the National Guard, the "saviour" of January 29 and June 13, the "bulwark of society," the candidate of the Party of Order for presidential honours, the suspected Monk<sup>3</sup> of two monarchies, had hitherto never acknowledged himself as the subordinate of the War Minister, had always openly derided the republican Constitution and had pursued Bonaparte with an ambiguous, lordly protection. Now he was consumed with zeal for discipline against the War Minister and for the Constitution against Bonaparte. While on October 10 a section of the cavalry raised the shout: "*Vive Napoleon! Vivent les saucissons!*"<sup>4</sup> Changarnier arranged that at least the infantry marching past under the command of his friend Neumayer should preserve an icy silence. As a punishment, the War Minister relieved General Neumayer of his post in Paris at Bonaparte's instigation; on the pretext of appointing him commanding general of the fourteenth and fifteenth military divisions. Neumayer refused this exchange of posts and so had to resign. Changarnier, for his part, published an order of the day on November 2, in which he forbade the troops to indulge in political outcries or demonstrations of any kind while under arms. The Elysee papers<sup>5</sup> attacked Changarnier; the papers of the Party of Order attacked Bona-

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander of Macedon (356-23 Before our era) made a number of conquering expeditions into Asia.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>According to the Greek myth Bacchus (or Dionysus), the ancient Greek god of the vine, went all over Asia with a drunken retinue.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>General Monk who served under Charles I, then under Cromwell and later under Charles II.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>Hurrah for Napoleon! Hurrah for the sausages!—Ed.

<sup>5</sup>Bonapartist newspapers.—Ed.

parte; the Permanent Commission held repeated secret sessions in which it was repeatedly proposed to declare the country in danger; the army seemed divided into two hostile camps, with two hostile general staffs, one in the Elysee, where Bonaparte resided, the other in the Tuileries, the quarters of Changarnier. It seemed that only the meeting of the National Assembly was needed to give the signal for battle. The French public judged this friction between Bonaparte and Changarnier like that English journalist who has characterised it in the following words: "The political housemaids of France are sweeping away the glowing lava of the revolution with old brooms and wrangle with one another while they do their work."

Meanwhile, Bonaparte hastened to remove the War Minister, d'Hautpoul, to pack him off in a hurry to Algiers and to appoint General Schramm War Minister in his place. On November 12, he sent to the National Assembly a message of American prolixity, overloaded with detail, redolent of order, desirous of reconciliation, constitutionally acquiescent, treating of all and sundry, but not of the question *brulantes*<sup>1</sup> of the moment. As if in passing, he made the remark that according to the express provisions of the Constitution the President alone disposed over the army. The message closed with the following lofty words:

"Above all things, France demands tranquillity.... But bound by an oath, I shall keep within the narrow limits that it has set for me.... As far as I am concerned elected by the people and owing my power to it alone, I shall always bow to its lawfully expressed will. Should you resolve in this session on the revision of the Constitution, a Constituent Assembly will then regulate the position of the executive power. If not, then the people will solemnly pronounce its decision in 1852. But whatever the solutions of the future may be, let us come to an understanding so that passion, surprise or violence may never decide the destiny of a great nation.... What occupies my attention, above all, is not who will rule France in 1852, but how to employ the time which remains at my disposal so that the intervening period may pass by without agitation or disturbance. I have opened my heart to you with sincerity; you will answer my frankness with

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<sup>1</sup>Burning questions.—*Ed.*

your trust, my good endeavours with your co-operation, and God will do the rest."

The respectable, hypocritically moderate, virtuously commonplace language of the bourgeoisie reveals its deepest meaning in the mouth of the autocrat of the Society of December 10 and the picnic hero of Saint-Maur and Satori.

The burgraves of the Party of Order did not delude themselves for a moment concerning the trust that this opening of the heart deserved. About oaths they had long been blasé; they numbered in their midst veterans and virtuosos of political perjury; they had not failed to hear the passage about the army. They observed with annoyance that in its discursive enumeration of lately enacted laws the message passed over the most important law, the electoral law, in studied silence, and moreover, in the event of there being no revision of the Constitution, left the election of the President in 1852 in the hands of the people. The electoral law was the leaden ball chained to the feet of the Party of Order, which hindered it in walking and now even prevented it from storming forward! Moreover, by the official disbanding of the Society of December 10 and the dismissal of the War Minister d'Hautpoul, Bonaparte had with his own hand sacrificed the scapegoats on the altar of the country. He had deprived the expected collision of its sharpness. Finally, the Party of Order itself anxiously sought to avoid, to mitigate, to palliate any decisive conflict with the executive power. From fear of losing their conquests over the revolution, they allowed their rivals to carry off the fruits of these. "Above all things, France demands tranquillity." This was what the Party of Order had cried to the revolution since February; this was what Bonaparte cried to the Party of Order in his message. "Above all things, France demands tranquillity." Bonaparte perpetrated acts that aimed at usurpation, but the Party of Order was guilty of "unrest" if it raised the alarm about these acts and construed them hypochondriacally. The sausages of Satori were quiet as mice when no one spoke of them. "Above all things, France demands tranquillity." Bonaparte demanded, therefore, that he be left in peace to do as he liked and the parliamentary party was paralysed by a double fear, by the fear of again evoking revolutionary unrest and by the fear of itself appearing as the instigator of unrest in the eyes of its own class, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie. Consequently, since France demanded tranquillity above all things, the Party of Order dared not

answer, "war" after Bonaparte had talked "peace" in his message. The public, which had flattered itself that there would be scenes of great scandal on the opening of the National Assembly, was cheated of its expectations. The opposition deputies, who demanded the submission of the Permanent Commission's minutes on the October events, were outvoted by the majority. On principle, all debates that might cause excitement were avoided. The activities of the National Assembly during November and December 1850 were without interest.

At last, towards the end of December, guerilla warfare began over individual prerogatives of parliament. The movement got bogged in petty chicaneries regarding the prerogatives of the two powers, since the bourgeoisie had done away with the class struggle for the moment by abolishing universal suffrage.

A judgment for debt had been obtained from the court against Manguin, one of the representatives of the people. In answer to the inquiry of the chief magistrate, the Minister for Justice, Rouher, declared that an order of arrest was to be executed against the debtor without further ado. Manguin, therefore, was thrown into the debtors' gaol. The National Assembly flared up when it learned of the assault. Not only did it order his immediate release, but it even had him fetched forcibly from Clichy the same evening, by its clerk. In order, however, to confirm its faith in the sanctity of private property and with the idea at the back of its mind of opening, in case of need, an asylum for *Montagnards* who had become troublesome, it declared imprisonment of the people's representatives for debt permissible after previously obtaining its consent. It forgot to decree that the President of the republic might also be locked up for debt. It destroyed the last semblance of immunity that surrounded the members of its own body.

It will be remembered that, acting on the information given by a certain Alais, Police-Inspector Yon had denounced a section of the Decémbrists for planning the murder of Dupin and Changarnier. In reference to this, at the very first sitting the *quoestors* made the proposal that parliament should form a police force of its own, paid out of the private budget of the National Assembly and absolutely independent of the police-prefect. The Minister for Home Affairs, Baroche, had protested against this invasion of his domain. A miserable compromise on this matter was concluded, according to which the police-inspector of the Assembly was indeed to be paid

out of its private budget and to be appointed and dismissed by its *quoestors*, but after previous agreement with the Minister for Home Affairs. Meanwhile criminal proceedings had been taken by the government against Alais, and here it was easy to represent his information as a hoax and through the mouth of the public prosecutor to cast ridicule upon Dupin, Changarnier, Yon and the whole National Assembly. On December 29 the Minister Baroche, now writes a letter to Dupin, in which he demands Yon's dismissal. The Bureau of the National Assembly decides to retain Yon in his position, but the National Assembly, alarmed by its violence in the Manguin affair and accustomed when it has ventured a blow at the executive power, to receive two blows from it in return, does not sanction this decision. It dismisses Yon as a reward for his zeal in service and robs itself of a parliamentary prerogative indispensable against a man who does not decide something in the night in order to carry it out by day, but who decides by day and carries it out in the night.

We have seen how on great and striking occasions during November and December the National Assembly avoided or quashed the struggle with the executive power. Now we see it compelled to take it up on the pettiest occasions. In the Manguin affair it confirms the principle of imprisoning the representatives of the people for debt, but reserves the right to have it applied only to representatives obnoxious to itself and wrangles over this infamous privilege with the Minister for Justice. Instead of availing itself of the alleged murder plot to decree an inquiry into the Society of December 10 and irredeemably unmasking Bonaparte before France and Europe in his true character of chief of the Paris *lumpenproletariat*, it lets the collision be degraded to a point where the only issue between it and the Minister for Home Affairs is one as to which of them has the authority to appoint and dismiss a police-inspector. Thus, during the whole of this period, we see the Party of Order compelled by its equivocal position to dissipate and disintegrate its struggle with the executive power in petty squabbles concerning competency, in chicaneries, legal squabbles, and border-line disputes, and to make the most ridiculous matters of form the substance of its activity. It does not dare to take up the conflict at the moment when this has significance from the standpoint of principle, when the executive power has really exposed itself and the cause of the National Assembly would be the cause of the nation.

By so doing it would give the nation its marching orders, and it fears nothing more than that the nation should be set in motion. On such occasions it accordingly rejects the motions of the Mountain and proceeds to the order of the day. The question at issue in its larger aspects having thus been dropped, the executive power calmly awaits the time when it can again take up the same question on petty and insignificant occasions, when this has, so to speak, only a parliamentary local interest. Then the repressed rage of the Party of Order breaks out, then it tears away the curtain from the coulisses, then it denounces the President, then it declares the republic in danger, but then, also, its fervour appears absurd and the occasion for the struggle seems a hypocritical pretext or not at all worth fighting about. The parliamentary storm becomes a storm in a tea-cup; the fight becomes an intrigue; the collision becomes a scandal. While the revolutionary classes gloat with malicious joy over the humiliation of the National Assembly, for they are just as enthusiastic about the parliamentary prerogatives of this Assembly as the latter is about the public liberties, the bourgeoisie outside parliament does not understand how the bourgeoisie inside parliament can fritter away time over such petty squabbles and imperil tranquillity by such pitiful rivalries with the President. It becomes confused by a strategy that makes peace at the moment when all the world is expecting battles, and attacks at the moment when all the world believes peace has been made.

On December 20, Pascal Duprat put a question to the Minister for Home Affairs concerning the Gold Bars Lottery. This lottery was a "daughter of Elysium." Bonaparte with his faithful followers had brought her into the world and Police-Prefect Carlier had placed her under his official protection, although French law forbids all lotteries with the exception of raffles for charitable purposes. Seven million lottery tickets at a franc apiece, the profits ostensibly to be devoted to shipping Parisian vagabonds to California. On the one hand, dreams of gold were to supplant the socialist dreams of the Paris proletariat, the seductive prospect of the first lottery prize, the doctrinaire right to work. Naturally, the Paris workers did not recognise in the glitter of the California gold bars the inconspicuous francs that were enticed out of their pockets. In the main, however, the matter involved a direct swindle. The vagabonds who wanted to open the California gold mines without troubling to leave Paris were Bonaparte

himself and his debt-ridden Round Table; The three millions voted by the National Assembly had been squandered; in one way or another the treasury had to be replenished. In vain had Bonaparte opened a national subscription for the foundation of so-called *cites ouvrières*<sup>1</sup> and figured at the head of the list himself with a considerable sum. The hard-hearted bourgeois waited mistrustfully for him to pay up his share and since this, naturally did not ensue, the speculation in socialist castles in the air fell straightway to the ground. The gold bars proved a better draw. Bonaparte and company were not content to pocket part of the excess of the seven millions over the gold bars to be allotted in prizes, they manufactured false lottery-tickets, they issued ten, fifteen and even twenty tickets with the same number, financial operations quite in the spirit of the Society of December 10! Here the National Assembly was confronted not with the fictitious President of the republic, but with Bonaparte in flesh and blood. Here it could catch him in the act, in conflict not with the Constitution but with the *Code Penal*. If on Duprat's interpellation it proceeded to the order of the day, this did not happen merely because Girardin's motion that it should declare itself *satisfait* reminded the Party of Order of its own systematic corruption. The bourgeois and, above all, the bourgeois inflated to become a statesman; supplements his practical meanness by theoretical extravagance. As a statesman he becomes, like the state power that confronts him, a higher being, that can only be fought in a higher, consecrated fashion.

The Assembly itself having guided him with its own hand across the slippery ground of the military banquets, the reviews, the Society of December 10, and finally, the *Code Penal*, Bonaparte, who precisely because he was a Bohemian, a princely *lumpenproletarian*, had the advantage over a rascally bourgeois in that he could conduct the struggle meanly, now saw that the moment had come when he could pass from an apparent defensive to the offensive. The minor defeats meanwhile sustained by the Minister for Justice, the Minister for War, the Minister for the Navy and the Minister for Finance, through which the National Assembly signified its snarling displeasure, troubled him little. He not only prevented the ministers from resigning and thus recognising the sovereignty of parliament over the executive power, he could now consummate what

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<sup>1</sup>Workers' cities.—Ed.

he had begun during the recess of the National Assembly, the separation of the military power from parliament, the removal of Changarnier.

An Elysee paper published an order of the day alleged to have been addressed during the month of May to the first military division, and therefore proceeding from Changarnier, in which the officers were recommended, in the event of an insurrection, to give no quarter to the traitors in their own ranks, but to shoot them immediately and refuse the National Assembly the troops, should it requisition them. On January 3, 1851, the Cabinet was interpellated concerning this order of the day. For the investigation of this matter it requests a breathing-space first of three months, then of a week, finally of only twenty-four hours. The Assembly insists on an immediate explanation. Changarnier rises and declares that this order of the day never existed. He adds that he will always hasten to comply with the demands of the National Assembly and that in case of a collision it can count on him. It receives his declaration with indescribable applause and passes a vote of confidence in him. It abdicates, it decrees its own impotence and the omnipotence of the army by placing itself under the private protection of a general; but the general deceives himself when he puts at its command against Bonaparte a power that he only holds in fee from the same Bonaparte and when, in his turn, he expects to be protected by this parliament, by his own protege in need of protection. But Changarnier believes in the mysterious power with which the bourgeoisie has endowed him since January 29, 1849. He considers himself the third power, existing side by side with both the other-state powers. He shares the fate of the rest of this epoch's heroes or rather saints whose greatness consists precisely in the great opinion of them that their party exhibits in its own interests and who shrink to everyday figures as soon as circumstances call on them to perform miracles. Unbelief is, in general, the mortal enemy of these reputed heroes and real saints. Hence their majestically moral indignation at unenthusiastic wits and scoffers.

The same evening, the ministers were summoned to the Elysee; Bonaparte insists on the dismissal of Changarnier; five ministers refuse to sign it; the *Moniteur* announces a ministerial crisis, and the Party of Order threatens to form a parliamentary army under Changarnier's command. The Party of Order had constitutional authority to take this step.

It merely had to appoint Changarnier President of the National Assembly and requisition any number of troops it pleased for its protection. It could do so all the more safely as Changarnier still really stood at the head of the army and the Paris National Guard and was only waiting to be requisitioned together with the army. The Bonapartist press did not as yet even dare to question the right of the National Assembly directly to requisition troops, a legal scruple that in the given circumstances did not promise any success. That the army would have obeyed the orders of the National Assembly seems probable when one reflects that Bonaparte had to search all Paris for eight days in order, finally, to find two generals—Baraguey d'Hilliers and Saint-Jean d'Angely—who declared themselves ready to countersign Changarnier's dismissal. That the Party of Order, however, would have found in its own ranks and in parliament the necessary number of votes for such a resolution seems more than doubtful, when one considers that eight days later two hundred and eighty-six votes detached themselves from the party and that in December 1851, at the last hour for decision, the Mountain still rejected a similar proposal. Nevertheless, the burgraves might, perhaps, still have succeeded in spurring the mass of their party to a heroism that consisted in feeling themselves secure behind a forest of bayonets and accepting the services of an army that had deserted to their camp. Instead of this, on the evening of January 6 the Messrs. Burgraves betook themselves to the Elysee in order to make Bonaparte desist from Changarnier's dismissal by means of statesmanlike phrases and considerations of statecraft. Whomever one seeks to persuade, one acknowledges as master of the situation. On January 12, Bonaparte, made secure by this step, appoints a new ministry in which the leaders of the old ministry, Fould and Baroche, remain members. Saint-Jean d'Angely becomes War Minister, the *Moniteur* publishes the decree dismissing Changarnier and his command is divided between Baraguey d'Hilliers, who receives the first military division, and Perrot, who receives the National Guard. The bulwark of society has been discharged, and if it does not cause any tiles to fall from the roof, on the other hand the quotations on the *Bourse* rise.

By repulsing the army, which places itself in the person of Changarnier at the disposal of the Party of Order, and so surrendering it irrevocably to the President, the Party of Order declares that the bourgeoisie has lost its vocation to

rule. Already a parliamentary ministry no longer existed. Having now lost, in addition, the lever of the army and National Guard, what forcible means remained to it with which simultaneously to maintain the usurped authority of parliament over the people and its constitutional authority against the President? None. Only the appeal to impotent principles remained to it now, to principles that it had itself always interpreted merely as general rules, which one prescribes for others in order to be able to move all the more freely oneself. The dismissal of Changarnier and the falling of the military power into Bonaparte's hands closes the first part of the period we are considering, the period of struggle between the Party of Order and the executive power. War between the two powers has now been openly declared, is openly waged, but only after the Party of Order has lost arms and soldiers. Without the ministry, without the people, without public opinion, no longer after its Electoral Law of May 31 the representative of the sovereign nation, *sans eyes, sans ears, sans teeth, sans everything*, the National Assembly had undergone a gradual transformation into an *old French Parliament*,<sup>2</sup> that has to leave action to the government and content itself with growling remonstrances *post festum*.<sup>3</sup>

The Party of Order receives the new ministry with a storm of indignation. General Bedeau recalls to mind the mildness of the Permanent Commission during the recess and the excess of consideration owing to which it has refrained from the publication of its minutes. The Minister for Home Affairs now himself insists on publication of these minutes which by this time have naturally become as dull as ditch-water, disclose no fresh facts and have not the slightest effect on the blase public. Upon Remusat's proposal the National Assembly retires into its committees and appoints a "Committee for Extraordinary Measures." Paris departs the less from the rut of its everyday-routine, since at this moment trade is prosperous, manufactures are busy, corn prices are low, food-

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<sup>2</sup>Marx is referring to the parliaments of pre-revolutionary France, which were supreme courts. They had the right to register new royal decrees; in case of disagreement, they could only present a remonstrance to the king, requesting that the decree be revoked. In reality, the old French parliament had no power.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>After the event.—Ed.

stuffs are overflowing, and the savings banks receive fresh deposits daily. The "extraordinary measures" that parliament has announced with so much noise fizzle out on January 18 in a no-confidence vote against the ministry without General Changarnier even being mentioned. The Party of Order had been forced to frame its motion in this way, in order to secure the votes of the republicans, as of all the measures of the ministry Changarnier's dismissal is precisely the only one which the republicans approve of, while the Party of Order is in fact not in a position to censure the other ministerial acts which it had itself dictated.

The no-confidence vote of January 18 was passed by four hundred and fifteen votes to two hundred and eighty-six. Thus, it was only carried by a *coalition* of the extreme Legitimists and Orleanists with the pure republicans and the Mountain. It proved, therefore, that the Party of Order had lost in conflicts with Bonaparte not only the ministry, not only the army, but also its independent parliamentary majority, that a body of representatives had deserted from its camp, out of fanaticism for conciliation, out of fear of the struggle, out of lassitude, out of family regard for the state salaries of relatives, out of speculation on ministerial posts becoming vacant (Odilon Barrot), out of the shallow egoism which makes the ordinary bourgeois always inclined to sacrifice the general interest of his class for this or that private motive. From the first, the Bonapartist representatives adhered to the Party of Order only in the struggle against revolution. The leader of the Catholic party, Montalembert, had already at that time thrown his influence into the Bonapartist scale, since he despaired of the parliamentary party's prospects of life. Lastly, the leaders of this party, Thiers and Berryer, the Orleanist and the Legitimist, were compelled openly to proclaim themselves republicans, to confess that their hearts were royalist, but their heads republican, that their parliamentary republic was the sole possible form for the rule of the whole bourgeoisie. Thus, they were compelled, before the eyes of the bourgeois class itself, to stigmatise the Restoration plans, which they continued indefatigably to pursue behind parliament's back, as an intrigue as dangerous as it was brainless.

The no-confidence vote of January 18 hit the ministers and not the President. But it was not the ministry, it was the President who had dismissed Changarnier. Should the Party of Order impeach Bonaparte himself? On account of

his restoration desires? The latter merely supplemented their own. On account of his conspiracy in connection with the military reviews and the Society of December 10? They had buried these themes long since under simple orders of the day. On account of the dismissal of the hero of January 29 and June 13, the man who in May 1850 threatened to set fire to all four corners of Paris in the event of a rising? Their allies of the Mountain and Cavaignac did not even allow them to raise the fallen bulwark of society by means of an official attestation of sympathy. They themselves could not deny the President the constitutional authority to dismiss a general. They only raged because he made an unparliamentary use of his constitutional right. Had they not continually made an unconstitutional use of their parliamentary prerogative, and particularly in regard to the abolition of universal suffrage? They were therefore reduced to moving within strictly parliamentary limits. And this involved that peculiar malady which since 1848 has spread all over the Continent, *parliamentary cretinism*, which holds those infected by it fast in an imaginary world and robs them of all sense, all memory, all understanding of the rude external world—it involved this parliamentary cretinism when those who had destroyed all the conditions of parliamentary power with their own hands, and were bound to destroy them in their struggle with the other classes, still took their parliamentary triumphs for victories and believed they hit the President by striking at his ministers. They merely gave him the opportunity to humiliate the National Assembly afresh in the eyes of the nation. On January 20 the *Moniteur* announced that the resignation of the entire ministry had been accepted. On the pretext that no parliamentary party any longer had a majority, as the vote of January 18, this fruit of the coalition between Mountain and royalists, proved, and pending the formation of a new majority, Bonaparte appointed a so-called transition ministry, not one member of which was a member of parliament, all being absolutely unknown and insignificant individuals, a ministry of mere clerks and copyists. The Party of Order could now work to exhaustion playing with these marionettes; the executive power no longer thought it worth while to be seriously represented in the National Assembly. The more his ministers were pure dummies, the more manifestly Bonaparte concentrated the whole executive power in his own person and the more scope he had for exploiting it for his own ends.

In coalition with the Mountain, the Party of Order revenged itself by rejecting the presidential grant of one million eight hundred thousand francs; which the chief of the Society of December 10 had compelled his ministerial clerks to propose. This time a majority of only a hundred and two votes decided the matter; twenty-seven fresh votes had therefore fallen away since January 18; the dissolution of the Party of Order was going forward. At the same time, in order that there might not for a moment be any mistake about the meaning of its coalition with the Mountain, it scorned even to consider a proposal signed by a hundred and eighty-nine members of the Mountain for a general amnesty for political offenders. It sufficed for the Minister for Home Affairs, a certain Vaisse, to declare that the tranquillity was only apparent, in secret great agitation prevailed, in secret ubiquitous societies were being organised, the democratic papers were preparing to come out again, the reports from the Departments were unfavourable, the Geneva refugees were directing a conspiracy spreading by way of Lyons over all the south of France. France was on the verge of an industrial and commercial crisis, the manufacturers of Roubaix had reduced working hours, the prisoners of Belle Isle were in revolt—it sufficed for even a mere Vaisse to conjure up the red spectre and the Party of Order rejected without discussion a motion that would certainly have won the National Assembly immense popularity and thrown Bonaparte back into its arms. Instead of letting itself be intimidated by the executive power with the prospect of fresh disturbances, it ought rather to have allowed the class struggle a little elbowroom, so as to keep the executive power dependent on it. But it did not feel equal to the task of playing with fire.

Meanwhile, the so-called transition ministry continued to vegetate until the middle of April. Bonaparte wearied and befuddled the National Assembly with continual new ministerial combinations. Now he seemed to want to form a republican ministry with Lamartine and Billault, now a parliamentary one with the inevitable Odilon Barrot, whose name may never be missing when a dupe is necessary, then a Legitimist ministry with Vatimesnil and Benoit d'Azy, and again an Orleanist one with Maleville. While he thus keeps the different sections of the Party of Order in tension against one another and alarms them as a whole with the prospect of a republican ministry and the consequent inevitable restoration of universal

suffrage, at the same time he engenders in the bourgeoisie the conviction that his honest efforts to form a parliamentary ministry are frustrated by the irreconcilability of the royalist factions. The bourgeoisie, however, cried out all the louder for a "strong government." It found it all the more unpardonable to leave France "without administration," the more a general commercial crisis seemed now to be approaching and won recruits for socialism in the towns, just as the ruinously low price of corn did in the countryside. Trade became daily slacker, the unemployed hands considerably increased, ten thousand workers, at least, were without bread in Paris, innumerable factories stood idle in Rouen, Muhlhausen, Lyons, Roubaix, Turcoing, St. Etienne, Elbeuf, etc. Under these circumstances, on April 11 Bonaparte could venture to restore the ministry of January 18, Messrs. Rouher, Fould, Baroche, etc., reinforced by M. Leon Faucher, whom the Constituent Assembly during its last days had, with the exception of five votes cast by ministers, unanimously stigmatised with a vote of no-confidence for sending out false telegrams. The National Assembly had therefore gained a victory over the ministry on January 18, it had struggled with Bonaparte for three months, in order that on April 11 Fould and Baroche might admit the puritan Faucher as a third party in their ministerial alliance.

In November 1849, Bonaparte had contented himself with an *unparliamentary* ministry, in January 1851 with an *extra-parliamentary* one, and on April 11 he felt strong enough to form an *anti-parliamentary* ministry, which harmoniously combined in itself the no-confidence votes of both Assemblies, the Constituent and the Legislative, the republican and the royalist. This gradation of ministries was the thermometer with which parliament could measure the decrease of its own vital heat. By the end of April the latter had fallen so low that Persigny, in a personal interview, could urge Changarnier to go over to the camp of the President. Bonaparte, he assures him, regards the influence of the National Assembly as completely destroyed, and the proclamation is already prepared that is to be published after the *coup d'etat*, which was kept steadily in view but was by chance again postponed. Changarnier informed the leaders of the Party of Order of the death warrant, but who believes that bug-bites are fatal? And the parliament, stricken, disintegrated and death-tainted as it was, could not prevail on itself to see in its duel with the grotesque chief of the Society of December 10 anything other than a

duel with a bug. But Bonaparte answered the Party of Order as Agesilaus did King Agis: "I seem to you an ant, but I shall one day be a lion."

- VI

The coalition with the Mountain and the pure republicans, to which the Party of Order saw itself condemned in its unavailing efforts to maintain possession of the military power and to reconquer supreme control of the executive power, proved incontrovertibly that it had lost its independent *parliamentary* majority. On May 29, the mere power of the calendar, of the hour-hand of the clock gave the sign for its complete disintegration. With May 29, the last year of the life of the National Assembly began. It had now to decide for continuing the Constitution unaltered or for revising it. But revision of the Constitution, that implied not only rule of the bourgeoisie or of petty-bourgeois democracy, democracy or proletarian anarchy, parliamentary republic or Bonaparte, it implied at the same time Orleans or Bourbon! Thus the apple of discord fell in the midst of parliament, whereupon the conflict of interests, which split the Party of Order into hostile sections, was bound to blaze up in the open. The Party of Order was a combination of heterogeneous social substances. The question of revision generated a political temperature at which the product again decomposed into its original constituents.

The interest of the Bonapartists in a revision was simple. For them it was above all a question of abolishing Article 45, which forbade Bonaparte's re-election, and the prolongation of his authority. No less simple appeared the position of the republicans. They unconditionally rejected any revision. Since they commanded *more than a quarter of the votes* in the National Assembly and, according to the Constitution, three-quarters of the votes were required for a resolution for revision to be legally valid and for convocation of a revising Assembly, they only needed to count their votes to be sure of victory. And they were sure of victory.

As against these clear positions, the Party of Order found itself caught in inextricable contradictions. If it rejected revision, then it imperilled the *status quo*, since it left Bonaparte only one way out, that of force, and since on May 2, 1852, at the decisive moment, it surrendered France to revolu-

tionary anarchy, with a President who lost his authority, with a parliament which had for a long time not possessed it and with a people that thought to reconquer it. If it voted for constitutional revision, then it knew that it voted in vain and would be bound to fail because of the veto of the republicans. If it unconstitutionally declared a simple majority vote to be binding, then it could only hope to dominate the revolution if it subjected itself unconditionally to the sovereignty of the executive power, then it made Bonaparte master of the Constitution, of the revision and of itself. An only partial revision, which prolonged the authority of the President, paved the way for imperial usurpation. A general revision which shortened the existence of the republic, brought the dynastic claims into unavoidable conflict, for the conditions of a Bourbon and the conditions of an Orleanist Restoration were not only different, they were mutually exclusive.

The *parliamentary republic* was more than the neutral territory on which the two factions of the French bourgeoisie, Legitimists and Orleanists, large landed property and industry, could dwell side by side with equality of rights. It was the unavoidable condition of their *common* rule, the sole form of state in which their general class interest subjected to itself at the same time both the claims of their particular sections and all the remaining classes of society. As royalists they fell back into their antagonism, into the struggle for the supremacy of landed property or of money, and the highest expression of this antagonism its personification, was their kings themselves, their dynasties. Hence the resistance of the Party of Order to the *recall of the Bourbons*.

The Orleanist and representative of the people, Creton, had in 1849, 1850 and 1851 periodically introduced a motion for the revocation of the decree exiling the royal families. Just as regularly parliament presented the spectacle of an Assembly of royalists that obdurately barred the gates through which their exiled kings might return home. Richard III had murdered Henry VI with the remark that he was too good for this world and belonged in heaven. They declared France too bad to possess her kings again. Constrained by force of circumstances, they had become republicans and repeatedly sanctioned the plebiscite that banished their kings from France.

The revision of the Constitution—and circumstances compelled taking it into consideration—called in question the common rule of the two bourgeois sections along with the republic,

and revived, with the possibility of a monarchy, the rivalry of the interests which had alternately predominated in representing it, the struggle for the supremacy of one section over the other. The diplomats of the Party of Order believed they could settle the struggle by a unification of the two dynasties, by a so-called *fusion* of the royalist parties and their royal houses. The real fusion of the Restoration and the July Monarchy was the parliamentary republic; in which Orleanist and Legitimist colours were obliterated and the various species of bourgeois disappeared in the bourgeois as such, in the bourgeois genus. Now, however, Orleanist was to become Legitimist and Legitimist Orleanist. Monarchy, in which their antagonism was personified, was to embody their unity, the expression of their exclusive factional interests to become the expression of their common class interest, the monarchy to do that which only the abolition of two monarchies, the republic, could do and had done. This was the philosopher's stone, to produce which the doctors of the Party of Order racked their brains. As if the Legitimist monarchy could ever become the monarchy of the industrial bourgeois or the bourgeois monarchy ever become the monarchy of the hereditary landed aristocracy. As if landed property and industry could fraternise under one crown, when the crown could only descend to one head, the head of the elder brother or of the younger. As if industry could come to terms with landed property at all, so long as landed property does not decide itself to become industrial. If Henry V should die tomorrow, the Count of Paris would not on that account become the king of the Legitimists unless he ceased to be the king of the Orleanists. The philosophers of fusion, however, who became more vociferous in proportion as the revision question came to the fore, who had provided themselves with an official daily organ in the *Assemblée Nationale* and who are again at work even at this very moment (February 1852), explained the whole difficulty to themselves by the opposition and rivalry of the two dynasties. The attempts to reconcile the Orleans family with Henry V, begun since the death of Louis Philippe,<sup>1</sup> but, like the dynastic intrigues generally, only played at while the National Assembly was in recess, during the *entr'actes* behind the scenes and having rather the character of senti-

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Philippe died on August 26, 1850, in Claremont (England).—Ed.

mental coquetry with the old superstition, than of seriously-meant business—these attempts now became principal and state actions and were enacted by the Party of Order on the public stage, instead of amateur theatricals as hitherto. The couriers sped from Paris to Venice, from Venice to Claremont, from Claremont to Paris. The Count of Chambord issues a manifesto in which “with the help of all the members of his family” he announces not his, but the “national” Restoration. The Orleanist, Salvandy, throws himself at the feet of Henry V. The Legitimist chiefs, Berryer, Benoit d’Azy and Saint-Priest, travel to Claremont in order to persuade the Orleans, but in vain. The fusionists perceive too late that the interests of the two bourgeois sections neither lose in exclusiveness nor gain in pliancy when they become accentuated in the form of family interests, interests of two royal houses. If Henry V recognised the Count of Paris as his successor—the sole success that the fusion could achieve at best—the House of Orleans did not in this way win any claim that the childlessness of Henry V had not already secured to it; but it lost all claims that it had conquered through the July Revolution. It waived its original claims, all the titles that it had wrested from the Bourbons in almost a hundred years of struggle with the older branch; it bartered away its historical prerogative, the prerogative of the modern kingdom, for the prerogative of its genealogical tree. The fusion was therefore nothing but a voluntary abdication of the House of Orleans, its resignation to Legitimacy, repentant withdrawal from the Protestant state church into the Catholic. A withdrawal, moreover, that did not even bring it to the throne which it had lost, but to the throne’s steps, on which it had been born. The old Orleanist ministers, Guizot, Duchatel, etc., who likewise hastened to Claremont to advocate the fusion, in fact represented merely the *Katzenjammer*<sup>2</sup> over the July Revolution, the despair felt in regard to the bourgeois monarchy and the monarchical rule of the bourgeois, the superstitious belief in Legitimacy as the last amulet against anarchy. Imagining themselves mediators between Orleans and Bourbon, in reality they were merely Orleanist deserters, and the Prince of Joinville received them as such. On the other hand, the vital, bellicose section of Orleanists, Thiers, Baze, etc., persuaded Louis Philippe’s family all the more easily that if any immediate monarchist restoration

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<sup>2</sup>The “morning-after” feeling.—Ed.

presupposed the fusion of the two dynasties, any such fusion, however, presupposed abdication of the House of Orleans; it was, on the contrary, wholly in accord with the tradition of their forefathers to recognise the republic for the moment and wait until events permitted the conversion of the presidential chair into a throne. Rumours of Joinville's candidature were circulated, public curiosity was kept in suspense and, a few months later, in September after the rejection of revision, his candidature was publicly proclaimed.

The attempt at a royalist fusion of Orleanists with Legitimists had thus not only failed, it had destroyed their *parliamentary fusion*, their common republican form, and had split the Party of Order into its original component parts; but the more the estrangement between Claremont and Venice grew, the more their agreement broke down and the more the Joinville agitation gained ground, so much the more eager and earnest became the negotiations between Bonaparte's minister, Faucher, and the Legitimists.

The distintegration of the Party of Order did not stop at its original elements. Each of the two great sections, in its turn, underwent decomposition anew. It was as if all the old nuances that had formerly fought and jostled one another within each of the two circles, whether Orleanist or Legitimist, had thawed again like dry infusoria on contact with water, as if they had acquired anew sufficient vital energy to form groups of their own and independent antagonisms. The Legitimists dreamed that they were back among the controversies between the Tuileries and the Pavillon Marsan,<sup>1</sup> between Villele and Polignac. The Orleanists relived the golden days of the tourneys between Guizot, Mole, Broglie, Thiers and Odilon Barrot.

That part of the Party of Order which was eager for revision, but was divided again on the limits to revision, a section composed of the Legitimists led by Berryer and Falloux, on the one hand, and by Larochejaquelin, on the other, and of the conflict-weary Orleanists led by Mole, Broglie, Montalembert and Odilon Barrot, agreed with the Bonapartist representatives on the following indefinite and broadly framed

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the conflict during the restoration period between Louis XVIII, who resided in the Palace of the Tuileries, and the representative of even more reactionary policy, Comte d'Artois (afterwards King Charles X), who lived in the Pavillon Marsan, in the Tuileries.—Ed.

motion: "With the object of restoring to the nation the full exercise of its sovereignty, the undersigned representatives move that the Constitution be revised." At the same time, however, they unanimously declared through their reporter Tocqueville that the National Assembly had not the right to move the abolition of the republic, that this right belonged solely to the Revising Chamber. For the rest, the Constitution might only be revised in a "legal" manner, hence only if the constitutionally prescribed three-quarters of the number of votes were cast in favour of revision. On June 19, after six days of stormy debate, revision was rejected, as was to be anticipated. Four hundred and forty-six votes were cast for it, but two hundred and seventy-eight against. The extreme Orleanists, Thiers, Changarnier, etc., voted with the republicans and the Mountain.

Thus, the majority of parliament declared against the Constitution, but this Constitution itself declared for the minority and that its vote was binding. But had not the Party of Order subordinated the Constitution to the parliamentary majority on May 31, 1850,<sup>1</sup> and on June 13, 1849? Up to now, was not its whole policy based on the subordination of the paragraphs of the Constitution to the votes of the parliamentary majority? Had it not left to the democrats the Old Testament superstition in the letter of the law, and scolded the democrats for it? At the present moment, however, revision of the Constitution meant nothing but continuation of the presidential authority, just as continuation of the Constitution meant nothing but Bonaparte's deposition: Parliament had declared for him, but the Constitution declared against parliament. He therefore acted in the sense of parliament when he tore up the Constitution, and he acted in the sense of the Constitution when he dispersed parliament.

Parliament had declared the Constitution and, with the latter, its own rule to be "beyond the majority"; by its vote it had suspended the Constitution and prolonged the presidential power, while declaring at the same time that neither the one can die nor the other live so long as it itself continues to exist. Those who were to bury it were standing at the door. While it debated on revision, Bonaparte removed General Baraguey d'Hilliers, who had proved irresolute, from the com-

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<sup>1</sup>May 31, 1850—the day the Legislative Assembly revoked universal suffrage.—Ed.

mand of the first military division and appointed in his place General Magnan, the victor of Lyons, the hero of the December days, one of his creatures, who under Louis Philippe had already compromised himself more or less in Bonaparte's favour on the occasion of the Boulogne expedition.

The Party of Order proved by its vote on revision that it knew neither how to rule nor how to serve; neither how to live nor how to die; neither how to suffer the republic nor how to overthrow it; neither how to uphold the Constitution nor how to throw it overboard; neither how to co-operate with the President, nor how to break with him. To what, then, did it look for the solution of all the contradictions? To the calendar, to the course of events. It ceased to presume to sway the events. It therefore challenged the events to assume sway over it, and thereby the power to which in the struggle against the people it had surrendered one attribute after another until before this power it itself stood impotent. In order that the head of the executive power might be able the more undisturbed to draw up his plan of campaign against it, strengthen his means of attack, select his tools and fortify his positions, it resolved precisely at this critical moment to retire from the stage and adjourn for three months, from August 10 to November 4.

The parliamentary party was not only dissolved into its two great sections, each of these sections was not only split up within itself, but the Party of Order in parliament had fallen out with the Party of Order outside parliament. The spokesmen and scribes of the bourgeoisie, its platform and its press, in short, the ideologists of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie itself, the representatives and the represented, faced one another in estrangement and no longer understood one another.

The Legitimists in the provinces, with their limited horizon and their unlimited enthusiasm, accused their parliamentary leaders, Berryer and Falloux, of deserting Henry V and going over to the Bonapartist camp. Their lily minds<sup>1</sup> believed in the fall of man, but not in diplomacy.

Far more fateful and decisive was the breach of the commercial bourgeoisie with its politicians. It reproached them; not as the Legitimists reproached theirs, with having abandoned

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<sup>1</sup>The lily was the emblem of the Bourbons.—Ed.

their principles, but, on the contrary, with clinging to principles that had become unprofitable.

I have already indicated that since the entry of Fould into the ministry the section of the commercial bourgeoisie which had held the lion's share of power during Louis Philippe's reign, that of the *aristocracy of finance*, had become Bonapartist. Fould represented not only Bonaparte's interests in the *Bourse*, he represented at the same time the interests of the *Bourse* in Bonaparte. The position of the aristocracy of finance is most strikingly depicted by a passage from its European organ, the *London Economist*. In its number of February 1, 1851, its Paris correspondent writes :

"Now we have it stated from numerous quarters that France wishes above all things for repose. The President declares it in his message to the Legislative Assembly ; it is echoed from the tribune ; it is asserted in the journals ; it is announced from the pulpit ; it is *demonstrated by the sensitiveness of the public funds at the least prospect of disturbance, and their firmness the instant it is made manifest that the executive is far superior in wisdom and power to the factious ex-officials of all former governments.*"

In its issue of November 29, 1851, *The Economist* declares in its own name : "*the president... is the guardian of order, and... is now recognised as such on every Stock Exchange of Europe.*"

The aristocracy of finance therefore condemned the parliamentary struggle of the Party of Order with the Executive power as a disturbance of order, and celebrated every victory of the President over its ostensible representatives as a *victory of order*. By the aristocracy of finance must here be understood not merely the great loan promoters and speculators in government securities, in regard to whom it is immediately obvious that their interests coincide with the interests of the state power. All modern finance, the whole of banking business, is interwoven in the closest fashion with public credit. A part of their business capital is necessarily invested and put out at interest in quickly convertible government securities. Their deposits, the capital placed at their disposal and distributed by them among merchants and industrialists, is partly derived from the dividends of holders of government securities.

If for the entire money market and the priests of this money market, the stability of the state power has in every epoch signified Moses and the prophets, why not all the more so today, when every deluge threatens to sweep away the old states, and the old state debts with them.

The *industrial bourgeoisie*, too, in its fanaticism for order, was angered by the squabbles of the parliamentary Party of Order with the executive power. After their vote of January 18 on the occasion of Changarnier's dismissal, Thiers, Anglas, St. Beuve, etc., received from their voters in precisely the industrial districts public reproofs in which particularly their coalition with the Mountain was scourged as high treason to order. If we have seen that the boastful taunts, the petty intrigues, which marked the struggle of the Party of Order with the President, merited no better reception, then, on the other hand, this bourgeois party, which required its representatives to allow the military power to go out of the hands of its own parliament into those of an adventurous pretender without offering resistance, was not even worth the intrigues that were squandered on its interests. It proved that the struggle to maintain its *public* interests, its own *class interests*, its *political power*, only troubled and upset it as a disturbance of private business.

With barely an exception, the bourgeois dignitaries of the towns in the Departments, the municipal authorities, the judges of the Commercial Court, etc., everywhere received Bonaparte on his tours in the most servile manner, even when, as in Dijon, he made an unrestrained attack on the National Assembly and especially on the Party of Order.

When trade was good, as it still was at the beginning of 1851, the commercial bourgeoisie raged against any parliamentary struggle, lest indeed trade be put out of humour. When trade was bad, as it continually was from the end of February 1851, the commercial bourgeoisie accused the parliamentary struggles of being the cause of stagnation and cried out for them to be ended, that trade might become lively again. The revision debates came on just in this bad period. Since the question here was whether the existing form of state was to be or not to be, the bourgeoisie felt itself all the more justified in demanding from its representatives the ending of this torturing provisional arrangement and at the same time the maintainance of the *status quo*. There was no contradiction in this. By the end of the provisional arrangement it

understood precisely its continuation, the postponement to a distant future of the moment when it had to reach a decision. The *status quo* could be maintained in only two ways: prolongation of Bonaparte's authority or his constitutional retirement and the election of Cavaignac. A section of the bourgeoisie desired the latter solution and knew no better advice: to give its representatives than to keep silent and leave the burning question untouched. They were of the opinion that if their representatives did not speak, Bonaparte would not act. They wanted an ostrich parliament that hid its head in order to remain unseen. Another section of the bourgeoisie, because Bonaparte was already in the presidential chair, desired: to leave him sitting in it, so that everything might remain on the old lines. They were indignant because their parliament did not openly infringe the Constitution and abdicate without ceremony.

The General Councils of the Departments, those provincial representative bodies of the big bourgeoisie, which met from August 25 onwards during the recess of the National Assembly, declared almost unanimously for revision, therefore against parliament and in favour of Bonaparte.

Still more unequivocally than over the falling out with its *parliamentary representatives* the bourgeoisie displayed its wrath in regard to its literary representatives, its own press. The verdicts of the bourgeois juries sentencing to ruinous fines and shameless imprisonments for every attack of the bourgeois journalists on Bonaparte's usurpationist desires, for every attempt of the press to defend the political rights of the bourgeoisie against the executive power, astonished not merely France, but all Europe.

If by its clamour for tranquillity the *Parliamentary Party of Order*, as I have shown, committed itself to quiescence, if it declared the political rule of the bourgeoisie to be incompatible with the safety and stability of the bourgeoisie, by destroying with its own hands in the struggle against the other classes of society all the conditions for its own regime, the parliamentary regime, then the *extra-parliamentary* mass of the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, by its servility towards the President, by its vilification of parliament, by the brutal maltreatment of its own press, invited Bonaparte to suppress and annihilate its speaking and writing section, its politicians and its *literati*, its platform and its press, in order that it might then be able to pursue its private affairs with full confidence

in the protection of a strong and unrestricted government. It declared unequivocally that it longed to get rid of its own political rule in order to get rid of the troubles and dangers of ruling.

And this mass, that had already rebelled against the purely parliamentary and literary struggle for the rule of its own class and betrayed the leaders of this struggle, now dares after the event to indict the proletariat for not having risen in a bloody struggle, a life-and-death struggle on its behalf! This mass, that every moment sacrificed its general class interests, that is, its political interests, to the narrowest and dirtiest private interests, and demanded a similar sacrifice from its representatives, now moans that the proletariat has sacrificed its ideal political interests to its material interests. It poses as a lovely soul that has been misunderstood and deserted in the decisive hour by the proletariat misled by socialists. And it finds a general echo in the bourgeois world. Naturally, I do not speak here of obscure German politicians and riff-raff of this persuasion. I refer, for example, to the same *Economist* that as late as November 29, 1851, consequently four days prior to the *coup d'etat*, had declared Bonaparte to be the "guardian of order," but Thiers and Berryer to be "anarchists," and already on December 27, 1851, after Bonaparte had quieted these anarchists; is already vociferous concerning the treason to "the skill, knowledge, discipline, mental influence, intellectual resources and moral weight of the middle and upper ranks" of society committed by "ignorant, untrained, and stupid, *proletaires*." The stupid ignorant and vulgar mass was none other than the bourgeois mass itself.

In the year 1851, France, to be sure, had passed through a kind of minor trade crisis. The end of February showed a decline in exports compared with 1850; in March trade suffered and factories closed down; in April the position of the industrial Departments appeared as desperate as after the February days; in May business had still not revived; as late as June 28, the holdings of the Bank of France showed, by the enormous growth of deposits and the equally great decrease in advances on bills of exchange, that production was at a standstill, and it was not until the middle of October that a progressive improvement of business again set in. The French bourgeoisie explained this trade stagnation by purely political causes, by the struggle

between parliament and the executive power, by the precariousness of a merely provisional form of state, by the terrifying prospect of May 2, 1852. I will not deny that all these circumstances had a depressing effect on some branches of industry in Paris and the Departments. But in any case this influence of the political conditions was only local and inconsiderable. Does this require further proof than the fact that the improvement of trade set in towards the middle of October, at the very moment when the political situation grew worse, the political horizon darkened and a thunderbolt from Elysium was expected at any moment? For the rest, a French bourgeois, whose skill, knowledge, spiritual insight and intellectual resources, reach no further than his nose, could throughout the period of the Industrial Exhibitions in London have found under his nose the cause of his commercial miseries. While in France factories were closed down, in England commercial bankruptcies broke out. While in April and May the industrial panic reached a climax in France, in April and May the commercial panic reached a climax in England. Like the French woollen industry, the English woollen industry suffered, and as French silk manufacture, so did English silk manufacture. If the English cotton factories continued working, this no longer resulted in the same profits as in 1849 and 1850. The only difference was that the crisis in France was industrial, in England commercial; that while in France the factories stood idle, in England they extended operations, but under less favourable conditions than in preceding years; that in France it was exports, in England imports which were hardest hit. The common cause, which is naturally not to be sought within the bounds of the French political horizon, was obvious. The years 1849 and 1850 were years of the greatest material prosperity and of an overproduction that appeared as such only in 1851. At the beginning of this year it was given a further special impetus by the prospect of the Industrial Exhibition. In addition there came as special circumstances: first the partial failure of the cotton crop in 1850 and 1851, then the certainty of a bigger cotton crop than had been expected; first the rise, then the sudden fall, in short, the fluctuations in the price of cotton. The supply of raw silk, in France at least, had turned out to be below the average yield. Woollen manufacture, finally, had expanded so much since 1848 that the production of wool could not keep pace with it and the price of raw wool rose out of all proportion to the price of

woollen manufactures. Here, then, in the raw material of three industries for the world market, we have already three-fold material for a stagnation in trade. Apart from these special circumstances, the apparent crisis of 1851 was nothing more than the halt which overproduction and overspeculation invariably make in describing the industrial cycle, before they gather all their forces in order to rush feverishly through the final phase of this cycle and arrive once more at their starting point, the *general trade crisis*. During such intervals in trade history commercial bankruptcies break out in England, while in France industry itself is reduced to idleness, being partly forced into retreat by the competition of the English in all markets, just then becoming intolerable, and being partly singled out for attack as a luxury industry by every business depression. Thus, besides the general crises, France goes through national trade crises of her own, which are nevertheless determined and conditioned far more by the general state of the world market than by French local influences. It will not be without interest to contrast the judgment of the English bourgeois with the prejudice of the French bourgeois. In its annual trade report for 1851, one of the largest Liverpool houses writes :

“ Few years have more thoroughly belied the anticipations formed at their commencement than the one just closed, or shown the fallacy of human calculations more completely, and instead of the great prosperity which was almost unanimously looked for at its opening, it has proved, with the single exception of '47, one of the most discouraging that has been seen for the last quarter of a century—this, of course, refers to the *mercantile*, not to the *manufacturing* classes. And yet there certainly were grounds for anticipating the reverse at the beginning of the year—stocks of produce were moderate, money was abundant, and has continued so throughout; food was cheap, and no apprehension has ever arisen to the contrary; a plentiful harvest well secured, unbroken peace on the Continent, and no political or fiscal disturbances at home; indeed the wings of commerce were never more unfettered.... To what source then, is this disastrous result to be attributed? We believe to overtrading both in imports and exports.... Unless they [our merchants] will put more stringent limits to their freedom of action, nothing but a *triennial* panic

can keep us in check."<sup>1</sup>

Now picture to yourself the French bourgeois, think how in the throes of this business panic his trade-sick brain is tortured, set in a whirl and stunned by rumours concerning *coups d'etat* and the restoration of universal suffrage, by the struggle between parliament and the executive power, by the Fronde war between Orleanists and Legitimists, by the communist conspiracies in the south of France, by alleged *Jacqueries*<sup>2</sup> in the Departments of Nièvre and Cher, by the advertising of the different candidates for the presidency, by the cheapjack slogans of the journals, by the threats of the republicans to uphold the Constitution and universal suffrage by force of arms, by the gospel preaching of the *emigre* heroes *in partibus*, who announced that the world would end on May 2, 1852—think of all this and you will comprehend why in this unspeakable, uproarious confusion of fusion, revision, prorogation, Constitution, conspiracy, coalition, emigration, usurpation and revolution the bourgeoisie madly snorts to this parliamentary republic: "Rather an end with terror than a terror without end!"

Bonaparte understood this cry. His powers of comprehension were sharpened by the growing turbulence of creditors who, in each sunset which brought settling day, May 2, 1852, nearer, saw a movement of the stars protesting against their earthly bills of exchange. They had become veritable astrologers. The National Assembly had blighted Bonaparte's hopes of a constitutional prorogation of his authority; the candidature of the Prince of Joinville forbade further vacillation.

If ever an event has, well in advance of its coming, cast its shadow before, it was Bonaparte's *coup d'etat*. As early as January 29, 1849, barely a month after his election, he had made a proposal about it to Changarnier. In the summer of 1849 his own Prime Minister, Odilon Barrot, had covertly denounced the policy of *coups d'etat*; in the winter of 1850 Thiers had openly done so. In May 1851, Persigny had sought once more to win Changarnier for the coup; the *Messenger de l'Assemblée* had published an account of their conversation. During every parliamentary storm, the Bonapartist journals

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from *The Economist*, January 10, 1852, pp. 29-30.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Peasant risings.. "Jacques Bonhomme" (John Goodfellow) was the nickname given to the French peasant.—Ed.

threatened a *coup d'etat*, and the nearer the crisis drew, the louder grew their tones. In the orgies that Bonaparte kept up every night with men and women of the "swell mob," as soon as the hour of midnight approached and copious potations had loosened tongues and fired imaginations, the *coup d'etat* was fixed for the following morning. Swords were drawn, glasses clinked, the representatives were thrown out of the window, the imperial mantle fell upon Bonaparte's shoulders, until the following morning banished the spook once more and astonished Paris learned, from vestals of little reticence and from indiscreet paladins<sup>1</sup> of the danger it had once again escaped. During the months of September and October rumours of a *coup d'etat* followed fast one after the other. The shadow took on colour, like a variegated daguerreotype. Look up the events of the month for September and October in the organs of the European daily press and you will find, word for word, intimations like the following: "Paris is full of rumours of a *coup d'etat*. The capital is to be filled with troops during the night and the next morning is to bring decrees which dissolve the National Assembly, declare the Department of the Seine in a state of siege, restore universal suffrage and appeal to the people. Bonaparte is said to be seeking ministers for the execution of these illegal decrees." The letters that bring these tidings always end with the fateful word "*postponed*." The *coup d'etat* was ever the fixed idea of Bonaparte. With this idea he had again set foot on French soil. He was so obsessed by it that he continually betrayed it and blurted it out. He was so weak that, just as continually, he gave it up again. The shadow of the *coup d'etat* had become so familiar to the Parisians as a spectre, that they were not willing to believe in it when it finally appeared in flesh and blood. It was therefore neither the reticent reserve of the chief of the Society of December 10 nor an unanticipated surprise attack by the National Assembly which allowed the *coup d'etat* to succeed. If it succeeded, it succeeded despite his indiscretion and with its foreknowledge, a necessary, inevitable result of the preceding development.

On October 10 Bonaparte announced to his ministers his

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<sup>1</sup>Marx's ironic term for the corrupt court ladies and gentlemen. Vestals was the name given in the ancient world to the priestesses of the goddess Vesta, who took the vow of chastity. The Paladins were knights of the Middle Ages who were shining examples of knightly valour.—Ed.

decision to restore universal suffrage; on the sixteenth they handed in their resignations; on the twenty-sixth Paris learned of the formation of the Thorigny ministry. The Police-Prefect, Carlier, was simultaneously replaced by Maupas; the head of the first military division, Magnan, concentrated the most reliable regiments in the capital. On November 4, the National Assembly resumed its sittings. It had nothing better to do than to recapitulate in a short, succinct form the course it had gone through and to prove that it was buried only after it had died.

The first post that it had forfeited in the struggle with the executive power was the ministry. It had solemnly to admit this loss by accepting the Torigny ministry, a mere shadow cabinet, as genuine. The permanent Commission had received M. Giraud with laughter when he presented himself in the name of the new ministers. Such a weak ministry for such strong measures as the restoration of universal suffrage! But the precise object was to accomplish nothing *in* parliament, everything *against* parliament.

On the very first day of its re-opening, the National Assembly received the message from Bonaparte in which he demanded the restoration of universal suffrage and the abolition of the law of May 31, 1850. The same day his ministers introduced a decree to this effect. The National Assembly at once rejected the ministry's motion of urgency and rejected the law itself on November 13 by three hundred and fifty-five votes to three hundred and forty-eight. Thus, it tore up its mandate once more; it once more confirmed the fact that it had transformed itself from the freely elected representatives of the people into the usurpatory parliament of a class; it acknowledged once more that it had itself cut in two the muscles which connected the parliamentary head with the body of the nation.

If by its motion to restore universal suffrage the executive power appealed from the National Assembly to the people, by its Quaestors' Bill the legislative power appealed from the people to the army. The Quaestors' Bill was to establish its right of immediate requisition of troops, of forming a parliamentary army. If it thus designated the army as the arbitrator between itself and the people, between itself and Bonaparte, if it recognised the army as the decisive state power, on the other hand it had to admit the fact that it had long given up its claim to command this power. By debating its right to requisi-

tion troops, instead of requisitioning them at once, it betrayed the doubt about its own powers. By rejecting the Quaestors' Bill, it made public confession of its impotence. This bill was defeated by a hundred and eight votes, the Mountain had thus determined the issue. It found itself in the position of Buridan's ass, not, indeed, between two bundles of hay with the problem of deciding which was the more attractive, but between two showers of blows with the problem of deciding which was the harder. On the one hand, there was the fear of Changarnier; on the other, the fear of Bonaparte. It must be confessed that the position was no heroic one.

On November 18, an amendment was moved to the law introduced by the Party of Order on the municipal elections, to the effect that, instead of three years', one year's domicile should suffice for the municipal electors. The amendment was lost by a single vote, but this one vote immediately proved to be a mistake. Through splitting up into its hostile sections, the Party of Order had long ago lost its independent parliamentary majority. It showed now that there was no majority in parliament at all. The National Assembly had become *incapable of decision*. Its atomic constituents were no longer held together by any force of cohesion; it had drawn its last breath; it was dead.

Finally, a few days before the catastrophe, the extra-parliamentary mass of the bourgeoisie was solemnly to confirm once more its breach with the bourgeoisie in parliament. Thiers, as a parliamentary hero infected more than the rest with the incurable disease of parliamentary cretinism, had, after the death of parliament, hatched out a new parliamentary intrigue with the Council of State, a responsibility law by which the President was to be firmly held within the limits of the Constitution. Just as, in laying the foundation stone of the new market halls in Paris on September 15, Bonaparte, like a second Masaniello,<sup>1</sup> had enchanted the *dames des halles*,<sup>2</sup> the fishwives—to be sure, one fishwife outweighed seventeen burghers in real power—just as after the introduction of the Quaestors' Bill he enraptured the lieutenants whom he entertained in the Elysee, so now, on November 25; he swept off their feet the industrial bourgeoisie, who had gathered at the

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<sup>1</sup>Masaniello (1623-47). A fisherman, the leader of an uprising against the Spanish dominion in Naples, in 1647.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Market women.—Ed.

circus to receive at his hands prize medals for the London Industrial Exhibition.<sup>1</sup> I give the significant portion of his speech as reported in the *Journal des Debats* :

“With such unhopèd for successes, I am justified in reiterating how great the French republic would be if it were permitted to pursue its real interests and reform its institutions, instead of being constantly disturbed by demagogues, on the one hand, and by monarchist hallucinations, on the other. [Loud, stormy and repeated applause from every part of the amphitheatre.] The monarchist hallucinations hinder all progress and all important branches of industry. In place of progress, nothing but struggle. One sees men who were formerly the most zealous supporters of the royal authority and prerogative become partisans of a Convention, merely in order to weaken the authority that has sprung from universal suffrage. [Loud and repeated applause.] We see men who have suffered most from the Revolution and have deplored it most, provoke a new one, and merely in order to fetter the nation’s will.... I promise you tranquillity for the future, etc. [Bravo, bravo, stormy bravos.] ”

Thus did the industrial bourgeoisie applaud with servile bravos the *coup d’etat* of December 2, the annihilation of parliament, the downfall of its own rule, the dictatorship of Bonaparte. The thunder of applause on November 25 had its answer in the thunder of cannon on December 4, and the house of M. Sallandrouze, who had been most lavish with bravos, was the most battered by bombs.

Cromwell, when he dissolved the Long Parliament, went alone into its midst, drew out his watch in order that it should not continue to exist a minute after the period fixed by him, and drove out each one of the members of parliament with hilariously humorous taunts. Napoleon, smaller than his prototype, at least betook himself on the eighteenth Brumaire to the legislative body and read out to it, though in an anxious voice, its sentence of death. The second Bonaparte, who, moreover, found himself in possession of an executive power very different from that of Cromwell or Napoleon, sought his

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<sup>1</sup>The first world-wide Industrial Exhibition took place in London May. 1 to October 11, 1851.

model, not in the annals of world history, but in the annals of the Society of December 10, in the annals of criminal jurisdiction. He robs the Bank of France of twenty-five million francs, buys General Magnan with a million, the soldiers with fifteen francs apiece and liquor, comes together with his accomplices secretly like a thief in the night, has the houses of the most dangerous parliamentary leaders broken into and Cavaignac, Lamoriciere, Leflo, Changarnier, Charras, Thiers, Baze, etc., dragged from their beds, the chief squares of Paris and the parliamentary buildings occupied by troops, and cheap-jack placards posted early in the morning on all the walls, proclaiming the dissolution of the National Assembly and the Council of State, the restoration of universal suffrage and the placing of the Seine Department in a state of siege. In like manner, he inserted a little later in the *Moniteur* a false document, according to which influential parliamentarians had grouped themselves round him as state advisers.

The rump parliament, assembled in the mayoral building of the tenth *arrondissement* and consisting mainly of Legitimists and Orleanists, votes the deposition of Bonaparte amid repeated cries of "Long live the republic," unavailingly harangues the gaping crowds before the building and is finally led off in the custody of African sharpshooters, first of all to the d'Orsay barracks, and later packed into prison vans and transported to the prisons of Mazas, Ham and Vincennes. Thus ended the Party of Order, the Legislative Assembly and the February Revolution. Before hastening to a close, let us briefly summarise its history :

I. *First Period.* From February 24 to May 4, 1848. February period. Prologue. Universal brotherhood swindle.

II. *Second Period.* Period of constituting the republic and of the Constituent National Assembly.

1. May 4 to June 25, 1848: Struggle of all classes against the proletariat. Defeat of the proletariat in the June days.

2. June 25 to December 10, 1848. Dictatorship of the pure bourgeois-republicans. Drafting of the Constitution. Proclamation of the state of siege in Paris. The bourgeois dictatorship set aside on December 10 by the election of Bonaparte as President.

3. December 20, 1848, to May 29, 1849. Struggle of the Constituent Assembly with Bonaparte and with the Party

of Order in alliance with him. Passing of the Constituent Assembly. Downfall of the republican bourgeoisie.

III. *Third Period.* Period of the constitutional republic and of the *Legislative National Assembly.*

1. May 29, 1849, to June 13, 1849. Struggle of the petty bourgeoisie with the bourgeoisie and with Bonaparte. Defeat of the petty-bourgeois democracy.

2. June 13, 1849, to May 31, 1850. Parliamentary dictatorship of the Party of Order. It completes its rule by abolishing universal suffrage, but loses the parliamentary ministry.

3. May 31, 1850, to December 2, 1851. Struggle between the parliamentary bourgeoisie and Bonaparte.

(a) May 31, 1850, to January 12, 1851. Parliament loses the supreme command of the army.

(b) January 12 to April 11, 1851. It is worsted in the attempts to regain the administrative power. The Party of Order loses its independent parliamentary majority. Its coalition with the republicans and the Mountain.

(c) April 11, 1851, to October 9, 1851. Attempts at revision, fusion, prorogation. The Party of Order decomposes into its separate constituents. The breach widens between the bourgeois mass and the the-bourgeois parliament and press.

(d) October 9 to December 2, 1851. Open breach between parliament and the executive power. Parliament performs its dying act and succumbs, left in the lurch by its own class, by the army and by all the remaining classes. Passing of the parliamentary regime and of bourgeois rule. Victory of Bonaparte. Parody of imperial restoration.

## VII

On the threshold of the February Revolution, the *social republic* appeared as a phrase, as a prophecy. In the June days of 1848, it was drowned in the blood of the *Paris proletariat*, but it haunts the subsequent acts of the drama like a ghost. The *democratic republic* makes its appearance. On June 13, 1849, it is dissipated together with its *petty bourgeois*, who take to their heels, but in its flight it blows its own trumpet with redoubled boastfulness. The *parliamentary republic*,

together with the bourgeoisie, takes possession of the entire stage; it lives out its existence to the full, but December 2, 1851, buries it to the accompaniment of the cry of terror of the royalists in coalition: "Long live the republic!"

The French bourgeoisie offered resistance to the domination of the working proletariat; it has brought the *lumpen-proletariat* to domination, with the chief of the Society of December 10 at the head. The bourgeoisie kept France in breathless fear of the future terrors of red anarchy; Bonaparte discounted this future for it when, on December 4, he had the eminent bourgeois of the Boulevard Montmartre and the Boulevard des Italiens shot down at their windows by the army of order, whose enthusiasm was inspired by liquor. It apotheosised the sword; the sword rules it. It destroyed the revolutionary press; its own press has been destroyed. It placed public meetings under police supervision; its salons are under the supervision of the police. It disbanded the democratic National Guard; its own National Guard has been disbanded. It imposed the state of siege; the state of siege has been imposed on it. It supplanted the juries by military commissions; its juries are supplanted by military commissions; it subjected public education to the priests; the priests subject it to their own education. It transported people without trial; it is transported without trial. It suppressed every stirring in society by means of the state power; every stirring in its society is repressed by means of the state power. Out of enthusiasm for its purse, it rebelled against its own politicians and men of letters; its politicians and men of letters are swept aside, but its purse is plundered now that its mouth has been gagged and its pen broken. The bourgeoisie never wearied of crying out to the revolution what Saint Arsenius cried out to the Christians: "*Fuge, tace, quiesce!*" Flee, be silent, keep quiet! Bonaparte cries to the bourgeoisie: "*Fuge, tace, quiesce!*" Flee, be silent, keep quiet!

The French bourgeoisie had long since found the solution to Napoleon's dilemma: "*Dans cinquante ans l'Europe sera republicaine ou cosaque.*"<sup>1</sup> It had found the solution to it in the "*republique cosaque.*" No Circe, by means of black magic, has distorted that work of art, the bourgeois republic,

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<sup>1</sup>Within fifty years Europe will be republican or Cossack.  
—Ed.

into a monstrous shape. That republic has nothing but the semblance of respectability. The present-day France was contained in a finished state within the parliamentary republic. It only required a bayonet thrust for the bubble to burst and the monster to spring forth before our eyes.

[The immediate aim of the February Revolution was to overthrow the Orleans dynasty and the section of the bourgeoisie that ruled during its reign. This aim was only attained on December 2, 1851. The immense possessions of the house of Orleans, the real basis of its influence, were now confiscated and what had been expected after the February Revolution came to pass after the December coup—prison, flight, dismissal, banishment, disarming, derision for the men who since 1830 had wearied France with their renown. But under Louis Philippe only a part of the commercial bourgeoisie ruled. Its other sections formed a dynastic and a republican opposition or were altogether disfranchised. Only the parliamentary republic accepted all sections of the commercial bourgeoisie into its sphere of state. Under Louis Philippe, moreover, the commercial bourgeoisie excluded the landowning bourgeoisie. Only the parliamentary republic set them side by side, with equal rights, married the July monarchy to the Legitimist monarchy and fused two epochs of property rule into one. Under Louis Philippe, the favoured section of the bourgeoisie concealed its rule under cover of the crown; in the parliamentary republic the rule of the bourgeoisie, after it had united all its elements and extended its realm to be the realm of its class, revealed its uncovered head. Thus the revolution itself had first to create the form in which the rule of the bourgeoisie could obtain its broadest, most general and final expression, and therefore could also be overthrown without being able to arise again.

Only now was the judgment, passed in February, executed on the Orleanist bourgeoisie, that is, on the most vital section of the French bourgeoisie. Now it was defeated in its parliament, its bar, its commercial courts, its provincial representative bodies, its notaries, its university, its tribune and its tribunals, its press and its literature, its administrative revenues and its court fees, its army pay and its state incomes, in its mind and in its body. *Blanqui* had made the disbandment of the bourgeois guards the first demand on the revolution, and the bourgeois guards, who in February offered the revolution their hand in order to hinder its progress, vanished from the

scene in December. The Pantheon itself becomes transformed into an ordinary church. With the final form of the bourgeois regime the spell is likewise broken which transfigured its initiators of the eighteenth century into saints.]

Why did not the Paris proletariat rise in revolt after December?

The overthrow of the bourgeoisie had as yet only been decreed; the decree had not been carried out. Any serious insurrection of the proletariat would at once have put fresh life into the bourgeoisie, would have reconciled it with the army and would have ensured a second June defeat for the workers.

On December 4 the proletariat was incited to fight by the bourgeois and the small shopkeepers. On the evening of that day several legions of the National Guard promised to appear, armed and uniformed, on the scene of action. For the bourgeois and the small shopkeepers had found out that in one of his decrees of December 2 Bonaparte abolished the secret ballot and enjoined them to record their "yes" or "no" in the official registers after their names. The resistance of December 4 intimidated Bonaparte. During the night, he caused placards to be posted on all the street corners of Paris, announcing the restoration of the secret ballot. The bourgeois and the small shopkeepers believed that they had gained their end. Those who failed to appear next morning were the bourgeois and the small shopkeepers.

By a *coup de main* during the night of December 1 to 2, Bonaparte had robbed the Paris proletariat of its leaders, the barricade commanders. An army without officers, made disinclined to fight under the banner of the *Montagnards* by the memories of June 1848 and 1849 and May 1850, it left its vanguard, the secret societies, the task of saving the insurrectionary honour of Paris, which the bourgeoisie had so spinelessly surrendered to the soldiers that, later on, Bonaparte could sneeringly give as his motive for disarming the National Guard—his fear that its arms would be turned against itself by the anarchists!

*"C'est le triomphe complet et définitif du socialisme!"*

Thus Guizot characterised December 2. But if the overthrow of the parliamentary republic contains within itself the

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<sup>14</sup> "This is the complete and final triumph of socialism."—*Ed.*

germ of the triumph of the proletarian revolution, its immediate and obvious result was the victory of Bonaparte over parliament, of the executive power over the legislative power, of force without phrases over the force of phrases. In parliament the nation made its general will the law, that is, it made the law of the ruling class its general will. Before the executive power it renounces all will of its own and surrenders itself to the superior orders of something alien, of authority. The executive power, in contrast to the legislative power, expresses the heteronomy<sup>1</sup> of the nation, in contrast to its autonomy. France, therefore, seems to have escaped the despotism of a class only to fall back beneath the despotism of an individual and, what is more, beneath the authority of an individual without authority. The struggle seems to be settled in such a way that all classes, equally impotent and equally mute, fall on their knees before the club.

But the revolution is thorough-going. It is still in process of passing through purgatory. It does its work methodically. By December 2, 1851, it had completed one half of its preparatory work; it is now completing the other half. First it perfected the parliamentary power, in order to be able to overthrow it. Now that it has attained this, it perfects the executive power, reduces it to its purest expression, isolates it, sets it up against itself as the sole target, in order to concentrate all its forces of destruction against it. And when it has done this second half of its preliminary work, Europe will leap from her seat and exultantly exclaim: Well grubbed, old mole!<sup>2</sup>

This executive power with its enormous bureaucratic and military organisation, with its artificial state machinery embracing wide strata, with a host of officials numbering half a million, besides an army of another half million, this appalling parasitic growth, which enmeshes the body of French society like a net and chokes all its pores, sprang up in the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten. The seigniorial privileges of the landowners and towns became transformed into so many

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<sup>1</sup>I.e., dependence on foreign authority.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>A reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The actual words are "Old mole! Canst work i' the earth so fast? A worthy pioneer!"—Ed.

attributes of the state power, the feudal dignitaries into paid officials and the motley pattern of conflicting mediaeval plenary powers into the regulated plan of a state authority, whose work is divided and centralised as in a factory. The first French Revolution, with its task of breaking all local, territorial, urban and provincial independent powers in order to create the bourgeois unity of the nation, was bound to develop what the absolute monarchy had begun—centralisation, but at the same time the extent, the attributes and the agents of governmental authority. Napoleon perfected this state machinery. The Legitimist monarchy and the July monarchy added nothing but a greater division of labour, growing in the same measure that the division of labour within bourgeois society created new groups of interests, and, therefore, new material for state administration. Every *common* interest was straightway severed from society, counterposed to it as a higher, *general* interest, snatched from the self-activity of society's members and made an object of governmental activity, from the bridge, the school-house and the communal property of a village community to the railways, the national wealth and the national university of France. The parliamentary republic, finally, in its struggle against the revolution, found itself compelled to strengthen, along with the repressive measures, the resources and centralisation of governmental power. All the revolutions perfected this machine instead of smashing it. The parties that contended in turn for domination regarded the possession of this huge state edifice as the principal spoils of the victor.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In his classic work, *The State and Revolution*, Lenin cites this section of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* and writes: "In this remarkable passage Marxism takes a tremendous step forward compared with *The Communist Manifesto*. In the latter, the question of the state is still treated in an extremely abstract manner, in the most general terms and expression. In the above-quoted passage, the question is treated in a concrete manner, and the conclusion is most precise, definite, practical and palpable: all the revolutions which have occurred up to now have helped to perfect the state machine, whereas it must be smashed, broken.

"This conclusion is the chief and fundamental thesis in the Marxian doctrine of the state. And it is precisely this fundamental thesis which has been not only completely forgotten, by the predominant official Social-Democratic Parties, but positively *distorted* (as we shall see later) by the foremost theoretician of the Second International, K. Kautsky.

But under the absolute monarchy, during the first revolution, and under Napoleon, bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe and under the parliamentary republic, it was the instrument of the ruling class, however much it strove for power of its own.

Only under the second Bonaparte does the state seem to have made itself completely independent. As against bourgeois society, the state machine has consolidated its position so thoroughly that the chief of the Society of December 10 suffices for its head, an adventurer blown in from abroad, elevated on the shield by a drunken soldiery, which he has bought with liquor and sausages, and which he must continually ply with sausage anew. Hence the downcast despair, the feeling of most dreadful humiliation and degradation that oppresses the breast of France and makes her catch her breath. She feels herself dishonoured.

And yet the state power is not suspended in mid-air. Bonaparte represents a class, and the most numerous class of French society at that, the *small peasants*.

Just as the Bourbons were the dynasty of large landed property and just as the Orleans were the dynasty of money, so the Bonapartes are the dynasty of the peasants, that is, the mass of the French people. Not the Bonaparte who submitted to the bourgeois parliament, but the Bonaparte who dispersed it is the chosen of the peasantry. For three years

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"*The Communist Manifesto* gives a general summary of history, which compels us to regard the state as the organ of class rule and leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the proletariat cannot overthrow the bourgeoisie without first capturing political power, without attaining political predominance, without transforming the state into the 'proletariat organised as the ruling class'; it inevitably leads to the conclusion that this proletarian state will begin to wither away immediately after its victory, because the state is unnecessary and cannot exist in a society in which there are no class antagonisms. The question as to how, from the point of view of historical development, the substitution of the proletarian state for the bourgeois state is to take place is not raised.

"Marx raises this question and answers it in 1852. True, to his philosophy of dialectical materialism, Marx takes as his basis the experience of the great years of revolution, 1848 to 1851. Here, as everywhere, his teaching is the *summary of experience*, illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the world and a rich knowledge of history." (*The State and Revolution*.)—Ed.

the towns had succeeded in falsifying the meaning of the election of December 10 and in cheating the peasants out of the restoration of the Empire. The election of December 10, 1848, was consummated only by the *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851.

The small peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar conditions, but without entering into manifold relations with one another. Their mode of production isolates them from one another, instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse. The isolation is increased by France's bad means of communication and by the poverty of the peasants. Their field of production, the small holding, admits of no division of labour in its cultivation, no application of science and, therefore, no multiplicity of development, no diversity of talents, no wealth of social relationships. Each individual peasant family is almost self-sufficient; it itself directly produces the major part of its consumption and thus acquires its means of life more through exchange with nature than in intercourse with society. The small holding, the peasant and his family; alongside them another small holding, another peasant and another family. A few score of these make up a village, and a few score of villages make up a Department. In this way, the great mass of the French nation is formed by simple addition of homologous magnitudes, much as potatoes in a sack form a sackful of potatoes. In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that divide their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile contrast to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no unity, no national union and no political organisation, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects them against the other classes and sends them the rain and the sunshine from above. The political influence of the small peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself.

Historical tradition gave rise to the faith of the French

peasants in the miracle that a man named Napoleon would bring all the glory back to them. . And an individual was found who gives himself out as the man because he bears the name of Napoleon, in consequence of the *Code Napoleon*,<sup>1</sup> which lays down that *la recherche de la paternite est interdite*.<sup>2</sup> After being a vagabond for twenty years and after a series of grotesque adventures, the legend finds fulfilment and the man becomes Emperor of the French. The fixed idea of the nephew was realised, because it coincided with the fixed idea of the most numerous class of the French people.

But, it may be objected, what about the peasant risings in half of France, the hounding of masses of peasants by the army, the mass incarceration and transportation of the peasants ?

Since Louis XIV, France has experienced no similar persecution of the peasants "on account of demagogic intrigues."

But let there be no misunderstanding. The Bonaparte dynasty represents not the revolutionary, but the conservative peasant ; not the peasant that strikes out beyond the condition of his social existence, the small holding, but rather the peasant who wants to consolidate it ; not the country folk who want to overthrow the old order through their own energies linked up with the towns, but on the contrary those who, in stupefied bondage to this old order, want to see themselves with their small holding saved and favoured by the ghost of the empire. It represents not the enlightenment, but the superstition of the peasant ; not his judgment, but his prejudice ; not his future, but his past ; not his modern Cevennes,<sup>3</sup> but his modern Vendee.<sup>4</sup>

The three years' rigorous rule of the parliamentary republic had freed a part of the French peasants from the Napoleonic illusion and had revolutionised them, even if only superficially, but the bourgeoisie violently repressed them, as often as they set themselves in motion. Under the parliamentary republic

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<sup>1</sup>The French code of civil law, promulgated on March 31, 1804.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Inquiry into fatherhood is forbidden.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>In Cevennes (Southern France, Languedoc), at the beginning of the eighteenth century, there was an uprising of peasants under the slogans, "Down with taxes! Freedom of faith!"—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>The Vendee peasantry was the most politically backward at the time of the first French bourgeois revolution ; it supported the royalist counter-revolution.—*Ed.*

the modern and the traditional consciousness of the French peasant contended for mastery. The contest proceeded in the form of an incessant struggle between the schoolmasters and the priests. The bourgeoisie struck down the schoolmasters. For the first time, the peasants made efforts to behave independently in the face of governmental activity. This was shown in the continual conflict between the mayors and the prefects. The bourgeoisie deposed the mayors. Finally, during the period of the parliamentary republic, the peasants of different localities rose against their own offspring, the army. The bourgeoisie punished them with states of siege and distrains on their goods. And this same bourgeoisie now cries out about the stupidity of the masses, the vile multitude, that has betrayed it to Bonaparte. It has itself forcibly strengthened the imperialism<sup>1</sup> of the peasant class, it held fast to the conditions that form the birthplace of this peasant religion. The bourgeoisie, to be sure, is bound to fear the stupidity of the masses, as long as they remain conservative, and the insight of the masses, as soon as they become revolutionary.

In the risings after the *coup d'etat*, a part of the French peasants protested, arms in hand, against their own vote of December 10, 1848. The school they had gone through since 1848 had sharpened their wits. But they had made themselves over to the underworld of history; history held them to their word, and the majority was still so bound that in precisely the reddest Departments the peasant population voted openly for Bonaparte.<sup>2</sup> In its view, the National Assembly had hindered his progress. He had now merely broken the fetters that the town had imposed on the will of the countryside. In some parts the peasants even entertained the grotesque notion of a Convention<sup>3</sup> side by side with a Napoleon.

After the first revolution had transformed the peasants from semi-villeins into freeholders, Napoleon confirmed and

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<sup>1</sup>In the sense of imperial sentiments.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>In the plebiscite that ratified the *coup d'etat* by voting Bonaparte back as President with a huge majority.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The Convention. The revolutionary representative assembly of the first French bourgeois revolution. It was convened in September 1792, after the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the republic. After the expulsion of the Girondins (May 31-June 2, 1793), the majority of its members were Jacobins—the representatives of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie.—*Ed.*

regulated the conditions on which they could exploit undisturbed the soil of France which had only just come into their possession and slake their youthful passion for property. But what is now causing the ruin of the French peasant is his dwarf holding itself, the division of the land, the form of property which Napoleon consolidated in France. It is precisely the material conditions which made the feudal peasant into a small peasant and Napoleon into an emperor. Two generations have sufficed to produce the inevitable result: progressive deterioration of agriculture, progressive indebtedness of the agriculturist. The "Napoleonic" form of property, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century was the condition for the liberation and enrichment of the French country folk, has developed in the course of this century as the law of their enslavement and pauperisation. And it is just this law which is the first of the "*idees napoleoniennes*" which the second Bonaparte has to uphold. If he still shares with the peasants the illusion that the cause of their ruin is to be sought not in this small holding property itself but outside it in the influence of secondary causes, then his experiments will burst like soap bubbles when they come into contact with the relations of production.

The economic development of this small holding property has turned the relation of the peasants to the remaining classes of society completely upside down. Under Napoleon, the fragmentation of the land in the countryside supplemented free competition and the beginning of big industry in the towns. [Even the favouring of the peasant class was in the interest of the new bourgeois order. This newly-created class was the many-sided extension of the bourgeois regime beyond the gates of the towns, its realisation on a national scale.]<sup>1</sup> This class was the ubiquitous protest against the landed aristocracy which had just been overthrown.

[If it was favoured above all, it, above all, offered the point of attack for the restoration of the feudal lands.]

The roots that this small holding property struck in French soil deprived feudalism of all nutriment. Its landmarks formed the natural fortifications of the bourgeoisie against any *coup de main* on the part of its old overlords. But in the course

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<sup>1</sup>The sentences in square brackets on this and the following pages were omitted by Engels from the third German edition on account of the censorship.—*Ed.*

of the nineteenth century the feudal lords were replaced by urban usurers; the feudal obligation that went with the land was replaced by the mortgage; aristocratic landed property was replaced by bourgeois capital. The small holding of the peasant is now only the pretext that allows the capitalist to draw profits, interest and rent from the soil, while leaving it to the tiller of the soil himself to see how he can extract his wages. The mortgage debt burdening the soil of France imposes on the French peasantry payment of an amount of interest equal to the annual interest on the entire British national debt. Small-holding property, in this enslavement by capital to which its development inevitably pushes forward, has transformed the mass of the French nation into troglodytes. Sixteen million peasants (including women and children) dwell in hovels, a large number of which have but one opening, others only two and the most favoured only three. And windows are to a house what the five senses are to the head. The bourgeois order, which at the beginning of the century set the state to stand guard over the newly arisen small holding and manured it with laurels, has become a vampire that sucks out its blood and marrow and throws them into the alchemistic cauldron of capital. The *Code Napoleon* is now nothing but a *codex* of distraints, forced sales and compulsory auctions. To the four million (including children, etc.) officially recognised paupers, vagabonds, criminals and prostitutes in France must be added five millions who hover on the margin of existence and either have their haunts in the countryside itself or, with their rags and their children, continually desert the countryside for the towns and the towns for the countryside. The interests of the peasants, therefore, are no longer, as under Napoleon, in accord with, but in opposition to the interests of the bourgeoisie, to capital. Hence the peasants find their natural ally and leader in the *urban proletariat*, whose task is the overthrow of the bourgeois order. But *strong and unlimited government*—and this is the second "*idee napoleonienne*," which the second Napoleon has to carry out—is called upon to defend by force this "material" order. This "material order" also serves as the catchword in all Bonaparte's proclamations against the rebellious peasants.

Besides the mortgage which capital imposes on it, the small holding is burdened by *taxes*. Taxes are the source of life for the bureaucracy, the army, the priests and the court, in short, for the whole apparatus of the executive power.

Strong government and heavy taxes are identical. By its very nature, small holding property forms a suitable basis for an all-powerful and innumerable bureaucracy. It creates a uniform level of relationships and persons over the whole surface of the land. Hence it also permits of uniform action from a supreme centre on all points of this uniform mass. It annihilates the aristocratic intermediate grades between the mass of the people and the state power. On all sides, therefore, it calls forth the direct interference of this state power and the intervention of its immediate organs. Finally, it produces an unemployed surplus population for which there is no place either on the land or in the towns, and which accordingly reaches out for state offices as a sort of respectable alms, and provokes the creation of state posts.

[Under Napoleon this numerous governmental personnel was not merely immediately productive, inasmuch as, through the means of compulsion of the state, it executed on behalf of the newly arisen peasantry, in the form of public works, etc., what the bourgeoisie could not yet accomplish by way of private industry. State taxes were a necessary means of compulsion to maintain exchange between town and country. Otherwise, the owner of a dwarf holding would in his rustic self-sufficiency have severed his connection with the townsman, as in Norway and a part of Switzerland.]

By the new markets which he opened at the point of the bayonet, and by the plundering of the Continent, Napoleon repaid the compulsory taxes with interest. These taxes were a spur to the industry of the peasant, whereas now they rob his industry of its last sources of aid and complete his powerlessness to resist pauperism. And an enormous bureaucracy, well-dressed and well-fed, is the "*idee napoleonnienne*" which is most congenial of all to the second Bonaparte. How could it be otherwise, seeing that alongside the actual classes of society, he is forced to create an artificial caste, for which the maintenance of his regime becomes a bread-and-butter question? Accordingly, one of his first financial operations was the raising of officials' salaries to their old level again and the creation of new sinecures.

Another "*idee napoleonnienne*" is the domination of the priests as a means of government. But if in its accord with society, in its dependence on natural forces and its subjection to the authority which protected it from above, the small holding that had newly come into being was naturally religious,

the small holding that is ruined by debts, at odds with society and authority, and driven beyond its own limitations, naturally becomes irreligious. Heaven was quite a pleasing accessory to the narrow strip of land just won, more particularly as it makes the weather; it becomes an insult as soon as it is thrust forward as substitute for the small holding. The priest then appears as only the anointed bloodhound of the earthly police—another “*idée napoléonienne*”—[whose mission under the second Bonaparte is to keep watch over, not the enemies of the peasant regime in the towns, as under Napoleon, but the enemies of Bonaparte in the country]. On the next occasion, the expedition against Rome will take place in France itself, but in a sense opposite to that of M. de Montalembert.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the culminating point of the “*idées napoléoniennes*” is the preponderance of the *army*. The army was the *point d'honneur* of the peasants, it was they themselves transformed into heroes, defending their new possession against the outer world, glorifying their recently won nationality, plundering and revolutionising the world. The uniform was their own state dress; war was their poetry; the small holding, extended and rounded off in imagination, was their fatherland, and patriotism the ideal form of the property sense. But the enemies against whom the French peasant has now to defend his property are not the Cossacks; they are the *hussiers*<sup>2</sup> and the tax collectors. The small holding lies no longer in the so-called fatherland, but in the register of mortgages. The army itself is no longer the flower of the peasant youth; it is the swamp-flower of the peasant *lumpenproletariat*. It consists in large measure of *remplacants*, of substitutes, just as the second Bonaparte is himself only a *remplacant*, the substitute for Napoleon. It now performs its deeds of valour by hounding the peasants in masses like chamois, by discharging *gendarme* duties, and when the internal contradictions of his system chase the chief of the Society of December 10 over the French border, his army, after some acts of brigandage, will reap, not laurels, but thrashings.

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<sup>1</sup>Montalembert, the head of the militant Catholic Party, spoke, during the discussions on the repeal of universal suffrage, on the necessity of undertaking a Roman expedition “within” France—meaning support of the Roman Pope and the Catholic clergy. Marx, on the other hand, is speaking of an expedition against Rome in the sense of a struggle *against* the clergy.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Bailiffs.—Ed.

One sees : all ideas napoleoniennes are the *ideas of the undeveloped small holding in the freshness of its youth* : for the small holding that has outlived its day they are an absurdity. They are only the hallucinations of its death struggle, words that are reduced to phrases, spirits reduced to ghosts. But the parody of imperialism was necessary to free the mass of the French nation from the weight of tradition and to work out in pure form the opposition between the state power and society. With the progressive undermining of this small holding property, the state structure erected upon it collapses. The state centralisation that modern society requires arises only on the ruins of the military-bureaucratic governmental machinery which was forged in opposition to feudalism.

[The demolition of the state machine will not endanger centralisation. Bureaucracy is only the low and brutal form of a centralisation that is still afflicted with its opposite, with feudalism. On coming to despair of the Napoleonic Restoration, the French peasant parts with his belief in his small holding, the entire state edifice erected on this small holding falls to the ground and the *proletarian revolution* obtains that chorus without which its solo song in all peasant nations becomes a swan song.]

French peasant relationships provide us with the answer to the riddle of the general elections of December 20 and 21, which bore the second Napoleon up Mount Sinai, not to receive laws, but to give them.

[To be sure, on those fateful days the French nation committed a deadly sin against democracy, which is on its knees and prays daily : Holy universal suffrage, intercede for us ! Naturally, the believers in universal suffrage do not want to renounce a miraculous power that has accomplished such great things in regard to themselves, which has transformed Bonaparte II into a Napoleon, a Saul into a Paul and a Simon into a Peter. The spirit of the people speaks to them through the ballot-box as the god of the prophet Ezekiel spoke to the marrowless bones : "*Hoec dicit dominus deus ossibus suis : Ecce, ego intromittam in vos spiritum et vivetis.*" "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones : Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live."]

Manifestly, the bourgeoisie had now no choice but to elect Bonaparte. [Despotism or anarchy. Naturally, it voted for despotism.] When the puritans at the Council of Constance complained of the dissolute lives of the popes and wailed about

the necessity of moral reform, Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly thundered to them. "Only the devil in person can now save the Catholic Church, and you ask for angels." In like manner, after the *coup d'etat*, the French bourgeoisie cried: Only the chief of the Society of December 10 can now save bourgeois society; Only theft can now save property; only perjury, religion; only bastardy, the family; only disorder, order!

As the executive authority which has made itself an independent power, Bonaparte feels it to be his mission to safeguard "civil order." But the strength of this "civil order" lies in the middle class. He looks on himself, therefore, as representative of the middle class and issues decrees in this sense. Nevertheless, he is somebody solely due to the fact that he has broken the political power of this middle class and daily breaks it anew. Consequently, he looks on himself as the adversary of the political and literary power of the middle class. But by protecting its material power, he generates its political power anew. The cause must accordingly be kept alive; but the effect, where it manifests itself, must be done away with. But this cannot pass off without slight confusions of cause and effect, since in their interaction both lose their distinguishing features. New decrees, that obliterate the border-line. At the same time, Bonaparte looks on himself as the representative of the peasants, and of the people in general, against the bourgeoisie, who wants to make the lower classes of the people happy within the frame of bourgeois society. New decrees, that cheat the "true socialists" of their statecraft in advance. But, above all, Bonaparte looks on himself as the chief of the Society of December 10, as the representative of the *lumpenproletariat* to which he himself, his *entourage*, his government and his army belong, and for which the prime consideration is to benefit itself and draw California lottery prizes from the state treasury. And he makes good his position as chief of the Society of December 10 with decrees, without decrees and despite decrees.

This contradictory task of the man explains the contradictions of his government, the confused groping hither and thither which seeks now to win, now to humiliate first one class and then another and arrays all of them uniformly against him, whose practical uncertainty forms a highly comical contrast to the imperious categorical style of the government decrees, a style which is copied obsequiously from the Uncle.

Industry and trade, hence the business affairs of the middle class, are to prosper in hot-house fashion under the strong government. Granting of innumerable railway concessions. But the Bonapartist *lumpenproletariat* is to enrich itself. Trickery with the railway concessions on the Bourse by those previously initiated. But no capital is forthcoming for the railways. Obligation of the Bank to make advances on railway shares. But, at the same time, the Bank is to be exploited for personal ends and therefore must be cajoled. Release of the Bank from the obligation to publish its report weekly. Leonine agreement<sup>1</sup> of the Bank with the government. The people are to be given employment. Inauguration of public works. But the public works increase the obligations of the people in respect of taxes. Therefore, reduction of the taxes by an onslaught on the *rentiers*,<sup>2</sup> by conversion of the five per cent bonds to four-and-a-half per cent. But, once more, the middle class must receive a sop. Therefore doubling of the wine tax for the people, who buy it *en detail*,<sup>3</sup> and halving of the wine tax for the middle class, who drink it *en gros*.<sup>4</sup> Dissolution of the actual workers' associations, but promises of miracles of association in the future. The peasants are to be helped. Mortgage banks, that expedite their getting into debt and accelerate the concentration of property. But these banks are to be used to make money out of the confiscated estates of the house of Orleans. No capitalist wants to agree to this condition, which is not in the decrees, and the mortgage bank remains a mere decree, etc., etc.

Bonaparte would like to appear as the patriarchal benefactor of all classes. But he cannot give to one class without taking from another. Just as at the time of the Fronde it was said of the Duke of Guise that he was the most *obligeant* man in France because he had turned all his possessions into his partisans' obligations to him, so Bonaparte would fain be the most *obligeant* man in France and turn all the property, all the labour of France into a personal obligation to himself. He would like to steal the whole of France in order to be able to make a present of her to France or, rather, in order to be able to buy France anew with French money, for as the chief

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<sup>1</sup>Meaning an agreement by which one gets the lion's share.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Persons drawing income from bonds and investments.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Retail.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>Wholesale.—Ed.

of the Society of December 10 he must needs buy what ought to belong to him. And all the state institutions, the Senate, the Council of State, the legislative body, the Legion of Honour, the soldiers' medals, the wash-houses, the public works, the railways, the *etat major*<sup>1</sup> of the National Guard to the exclusion of privates, and confiscated estates of the house of Orleans—all become parts of the institution of purchase. Every place in the army and in the government machine becomes a means for purchase. But the most important feature of this process, whereby France is taken in order to give to her, is the percentages that find their way to the head and the members of the Society of December 10 during the turnover. The witicism with which Countess L., the mistress of M. de Morny, characterised the confiscation of the Orleans estates: "*C'est le premier vol de l'aigle*,"<sup>2</sup> is applicable to every flight of this eagle, which is more like a raven. He himself and his adherents call out to one another daily like that Italian Carthusian admonishing the miser who, with boastful display, counted up the goods on which he could yet live for years to come: "*Tu fai conto sopra i beni, bisogna prima far il conto sopra gli anni*."<sup>3</sup> Lest they make a mistake in the years, they count the minutes. At the court, in the ministries, at the head of the administration and the army, a crowd of fellows pushes forward, of the best of whom it can be said that no one knows whence he comes, a noisy, disreputable, rapacious Boheme that dresses itself in gallooned coats with the same caricature of dignity as the high dignitaries of Soulouque<sup>4</sup>. One can visualise clearly this upper stratum of the Society of December 10, if one reflects that Veron-Crevel<sup>5</sup> is its preacher of morals and Granier de Cassagnac its thinker. When Guizot, at the time of his ministry, utilised this Granier on a hole-and-corner newspaper against the dynastic opposition, he used to boast of him with the quip: "*C'est le roi des drolés*," "he is the king of buffoons." One would do wrong to recall the Regency

<sup>1</sup>General Staff.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>"It is the first flight (theft) of the eagle." *Vol* means flight and theft. [Note by Karl Marx.]

<sup>3</sup>Thou countest thy goods, thou shouldst first count thy years.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>See note 2 on p. 220 of the present volume.—Ed. . . . .

<sup>5</sup>In his work, *La Cousine Bette*, Balzac delineates the thoroughly dissolute Parisian philistine in the character of Crevel, which he draws after the model of Dr. Veron, the proprietor of the *Constitutionnel*. [Note by Karl Marx.]

of Louis XV in connection with Louis Bonaparte's court and clique. For "often already, France has experienced a government of mistresses ; but never before, a government of *hommes entretenus*."<sup>2</sup>

Driven by the contradictory demands of his situation, and, at the same time, like a conjurer under the necessity of keeping the public gaze fixed on himself, as Napoleon's substitute, by constant surprises, hence of executing a *coup d'etat en miniature* every day, Bonaparte throws the entire bourgeois economy into confusion, lays hands on everything that seemed inviolable to the revolution of 1848, makes some tolerant of revolution, others desirous of revolution, and produces actual anarchy in the name of order, while at the same time he divests the whole state machine of its halo, profanes it and makes it at once loathsome and ridiculous. The cult of the Holy Coat of Treves<sup>3</sup> he duplicates at Paris in the cult of the Napoleonic imperial mantle. But if the imperial mantle finally falls on the shoulders of Louis Bonaparte, the iron statue of Napoleon will crash from the top of the Vendome column.

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<sup>2</sup>Kept men. The words quoted are the words of Madame Girardin.—[Note by Karl Marx.]

<sup>3</sup>One of the "sacred" relics ("the vestment of the Lord"), exhibited in the Treves cathedral in 1844 for public worship.—Ed.

## SPEECH AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEOPLE'S PAPER<sup>1</sup>

THE so-called Revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents—small fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. However, they denounced the abyss. Beneath the apparently solid surface, they betrayed oceans of liquid matter, only needing expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock. Noisedly and confusedly they proclaimed the emancipation of the proletarian, i.e., the secret of the nineteenth century, and of the revolution of that century. That social revolution, it is true, was no novelty invented in 1848. Steam, electricity, and the self-acting mule were revolutionists of a rather more dangerous character than even citizens Barbes, Raspail and Blanqui. But, although the atmosphere in which we live weighs upon everyone with a 20,000 pound force, do you feel it? No more than European society before 1848 felt the revolutionary atmosphere enveloping and pressing it from all sides. There is one great fact, characteristic of this, our nineteenth century, a fact which no party dares deny! On the one hand, there have started into life industrial and scientific forces, which no epoch of the former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman empire. In our days everything seems pregnant with its contrary; machinery gifted with the wonderful power of shortening and fructifying human labour, we behold starving and overworking it. The new-fangled sources of wealth, by some strange weird spell, are turned into sources of want. The victories of art seem bought by the loss of char-

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<sup>1</sup> The speech reprinted here was delivered by Marx at the anniversary celebration of the Chartist organ, the *People's Paper* in April 1856. With regard to this celebration see also the letter of Marx to Engels of April 16, 1856, which follows in the text.

The *People's Paper* was published in London from 1852 to 1858. Marx supported it as much as he could, wrote articles for it and sometimes assisted the editor, Ernest Jones, in the work of editing the paper.—Ed.

acter. At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life and in stultifying human life into a material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science on the one hand, modern misery and dissolution on the other hand; this antagonism between the productive powers, and the social relations of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted. Some parties may wail over it; others may wish to get rid of modern arts in order to get rid of modern conflicts. Or they may imagine that so signal a progress in industry wants to be completed by as signal a regress in politics. On our part, we do not mistake the shape of the shrewd spirit that continues to mark all these contradictions. We know that to work well the new-fangled forces of society, they only want to be mastered by new-fangled men—and such are the working men. They are as much the invention of modern time as machinery itself. In the signs that bewilder the middle class, the aristocracy and the poor prophets of regression, we do recognise our brave friend, Robin Goodfellow, the old mole, that can work in the earth so fast, that worthy pioneer—the revolution. The English working men are the first born sons of modern industry. They will then, certainly, not be the last in aiding the social revolution produced by that industry, a revolution, which means the emancipation of their own class all over the world, which is as universal as capital-rule and wages-slavery. I know the heroic struggles the English working class have gone through since the middle of the last century—struggles less glorious because they are shrouded in obscurity and burked by the middle class historians to revenge the misdeeds of the ruling class; there existed in the middle ages in Germany a secret tribunal, called the "Vehmgericht". If a red cross was seen marked on a house people knew that its owner was doomed by the "Vehm." All the houses of Europe are now marked with the mysterious red cross. History is the judge—its executioner, the proletarian.

London, April 16, 1856

..... The day before yesterday there was a little banquet to celebrate the anniversary of the *People's Paper*. On this occasion I accepted the invitation, as the times seemed to demand it of me, and all the more since I *alone* (as announced in the paper) of all the refugees had been invited and the first toast also fell to me, and I was to speak for the sovereignty of the proletariat in all countries. So I made a little English speech which I shall not allow to be printed. The aim which I had in mind was achieved. Herr Talandier, who had to buy his ticket for 2|6, and the rest of the French and other refugees,

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<sup>1</sup>Marx's letter to Engels characterises the circumstances in which Marx made his speech at the anniversary celebration of the *People's Paper* and also the significance which he himself attached to his action.

This letter is extraordinarily important for understanding Marx's strategy and tactics after the suppression of the 1848 Revolution in Germany. In this letter Marx formulates, especially clearly the necessity for an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary struggle. Lenin wrote as follows on the strategical and tactical line of Marx in the period of the blackest reaction of the 'fifties:

"When the revolutionary period of 1848-49 was over, Marx was strongly opposed to any playing at revolution (Schapper and Willich, and the fight with them), insisting on the need for knowing how to work under the new conditions, when the quasi-'peaceful' new revolutions were in the making. The spirit in which Marx wanted the work to be carried on is plainly shown by his estimate of the situation in Germany during the period of blackest reaction in 1856:

"The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility to back the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasants' War.' [Marx to Engels, April 16, 1856.] While the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany was in progress, Marx directed his whole attention, in the matter of tactics of the socialist proletariat, to developing the democratic energy of the peasantry. He held that Lassalle's action was objectively... a betrayal of the whole workers' movement to the Prussians (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 210), among other things, because he 'favoured the *Junkers* and Prussian nationalism.' On February 5, 1865, exchanging views with Marx regarding a forthcoming joint declaration of theirs in the press, Engels wrote (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 217): '... in a predominantly agricultural country... it is dastardly to

have convinced themselves that we are the only "intimate allies" of the Chartists and that though we refrain from public demonstrations and leave open flirtation with Chartism to the Frenchmen, we have it in our power to re-occupy at any time the position already historically due to us. This has become all the more necessary because at the meeting I mentioned on February 25, under Pyat's chairmanship, the German *Knote Scherzer* (old boy) came forward and in truly awful *Straubinger*<sup>1</sup> style, denounced the German "men of learning," the "intellectual workers" who had left them (the *Knoten*) in the lurch and forced them to discredit themselves among the other nations. You know this Scherzer from Paris days. I have had some more meetings with friend *Schapper* and have found him a very repentant sinner. The retirement in which he has lived for the last two years seems rather to have sharpened his mental powers. You will understand that in any eventuality it may always be good to have the man at hand, and still more out of Willich's hands. Sch[apper] is now furious with the *Knoten* at the W[indmill].<sup>2</sup> . . .

I fully agree with you about the Rhine province. The fatal thing for us is that I see something looming in the future which will smack of "treachery to the fatherland." It will depend very much on the turn of things in Berlin whether we are not forced into a position similar to that of the Mayence-Clubbists<sup>3</sup> in the old revolution. That would be hard. We: who are so enlightened about our worthy brothers on the

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make an exclusive attack on the bourgeoisie in the name of the industrial proletariat but never to devote a word to the patriarchal exploitation of the rural proletariat under the lash of the great feudal aristocracy. . . ." (See Lenin, "Karl Marx.")—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup> *Straubinger* was the name given by Marx and Engels to handicraft workers with a backward, undeveloped class consciousness who were infected by petty-bourgeois prejudices and who had not yet freed themselves from their old craft outlook.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> In Windmill street was the house in which meetings of the German Workers' Union took place. By the "*Knoten* at the Windmill" Marx means the fraction of the Communist League, headed by Schapper and Willich, which split off from the League in 1850. For this see the text and note on pp. 21-22 of this volume.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Marx refers to the members of the Jacobin Club in Mayence who joined the French revolutionary troops that occupied Mayence in 1792.—*Ed.*

other side of the Rhine! The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility to back the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasants' War.<sup>1</sup> Then the affair will be splendid.

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<sup>1</sup>The Great Peasant War of 1525 was a mighty peasant uprising in Germany. It arose from a sharp accentuation of the social contradictions in the countryside, the result of money economy developing in the conditions of the feudal system. The slogans of the insurrection were abolition of serfdom, removal of the dues and services burdening the peasantry and return of the common lands appropriated by the landlords. As a result of the splitting of the movement, of the dispersion of the revolutionary forces and of the treachery of the very unreliable allies of the peasantry—the urban bourgeoisie—the movement suffered defeat. See also Engels' Prefatory Note to *The Peasant War in Germany*.—Ed.

ADDRESS AND PROVISIONAL RULES OF THE  
WORKING MEN'S INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION<sup>1</sup>

*Established September 28, 1864 at a public meeting held at  
St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, London*

*Working Men,*

It is a great fact that the misery of the working masses has not diminished from 1848 to 1864, and yet this period is unrivaled for the development of its industry and the growth of its commerce. In 1850, a moderate organ of the British middle class, of more than average information, predicted that if the exports and imports of England were to rise 50 per cent, English pauperism would sink to zero. Alas! on April 7, 1864, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delighted his parliamentary audience by the statement that the total import and export trade of England had grown in 1863 "to £443,955,000! that astonishing sum about three times the trade of the comparatively recent epoch of 1843!" With all that, he was eloquent upon "poverty." "Think," he exclaimed, "of those who are on the border of that region," upon "wages...not increased"; upon "human life...in nine cases out of ten but a struggle of existence!" He did not speak of the people of Ireland, gradually replaced by machinery in the north, and by sheepwalks in the south, though even the sheep in that unhappy country are decreasing, it is true, not at so rapid a rate as the men. He did not repeat what then had been just betrayed by the highest representatives of the upper ten thousand in a

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<sup>1</sup> After the Communist League had ceased to exist under the blows of the reaction, Marx and Engels continued their propaganda for the idea of international proletarian solidarity, and rallied the revolutionary forces for the creation of a militant international party of the proletariat. This organisation arose in 1864 under the leadership of Marx and on the basis of the growing workers' movement in the principal countries of Europe. In Marx the First International found a leader of genius, both in theory and in practice.

The difficulties of leadership of this organisation already

sudden fit of terror. When the garotte<sup>1</sup> panic had reached a certain height, the House of Lords caused an inquiry to be made into, and a report to be published upon, transportation and penal servitude. Out came the murder in the bulky Blue Book of 1863, and proved it was, by official facts and figures, that the worst of the convicted criminals, the penal serfs of England and Scotland, toiled much less and fared far better than the agricultural labourers of England and Scotland. But this was not all. When, consequent upon the Civil War in

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manifested themselves in the first days of its existence. Its task consisted in uniting the workers' movements, which were at very diverse levels of development, of the various countries, in organising joint activity of the various elements, overcoming their sectarian tendencies, and in raising the workers' movement to a higher level. These difficulties already made themselves felt in working out the draft programme and statutes of the International. (See the letter of Marx to Engels of November 4, 1864.)

The aim of the International Working Men's Association "was to weld together into one huge army the whole militant working class of Europe and America....It had to have a programme which would not shut the door on the English trade unions, the French, Belgian, Italian and Spanish Proudhonists and the German Lassalleans." (Engels' Preface to the 1890 German edition of *The Communist Manifesto*.)

It was necessary to take into account that the movement as a whole had not yet reached a sufficiently high level, without at the same time sacrificing principles or retreating by a single step from its own world outlook.

"It was very difficult to frame the thing so that our views should appear in a form acceptable from the present standpoint of the workers' movement....It will take time before the re-awakened movement allows the old boldness of speech." (Marx to Engels, November 4, 1864.)

All Marx's suggestions were accepted by the sub-committee elected to draw up the Address and Statutes.

"Only I was obliged to insert two phrases about 'duty' and 'right' into the Preamble to the Statutes, ditto 'truth, morality and justice,' but these are placed in such a way that they can do no harm."

The *Inaugural Address* ranks after *The Communist Manifesto* as one of the most important programme documents of the international proletariat.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Garotters. Street robbers who seized their victims by the throat and strangled them. Their attacks increased in London in the beginning of 1860 to such an extent that it evoked a panic, and parliament was compelled to pass a special law against the garotters.—Ed.

America the operatives of Lancashire and Cheshire<sup>1</sup> were thrown upon the streets, the same House of Lords sent to the manufacturing districts a physician commissioned to investigate into the smallest possible amount of carbon and nitrogen, to be administered in the cheapest and plainest form, which on an average might just suffice to "avert starvation diseases." Dr. Smith, the medical deputy, ascertained that 28,000 grains of carbon, and 1,330 grains of nitrogen were the weekly allowance that would keep an average adult...just over the level of starvation diseases, and he found furthermore that quantity pretty nearly to agree with the scanty nourishment to which the pressure of extreme distress had actually reduced the cotton operatives.<sup>2</sup> But now mark! The same learned Doctor was later on again deputed by the medical officer of the Privy Council to inquire into the nourishment of the poorer labouring classes. The results of his researches are embodied in the "Sixth Report on Public Health," published by order of parliament in the course of the present year. What did the Doctor discover? That the silk weavers, the needle women, the kid glovers, the stocking weavers, and so forth, received, on an average, not even the distress pittance of the cotton operatives, not even the amount of carbon and nitrogen "just sufficient to avert starvation diseases."

"Moreover," we quote from the report, "as regards the examined families of the agricultural population, it appeared that more than a fifth were with less than the estimated sufficiency of carbonaceous food, that more than one-third were with less than the estimated sufficiency of nitrogenous food, and that in three counties (Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Somersetshire) insufficiency of nitrogenous food was the average

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<sup>1</sup>In connection with the Civil War in America (at the beginning of the 'sixties) the English textile industry passed through a severe crisis owing to a lack of raw material: imports from the American southern states, which were the only suppliers of cotton, were suspended as a result of the war and blockade.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>We need hardly remind the reader that, apart from the elements of water and certain inorganic substances, carbon and nitrogen form the raw materials of human food. However, to nourish the human system, those simple chemical constituents must be supplied in the form of vegetable or animal substances. Potatoes, for instance, contain mainly carbon, while wheaten bread contains carbonaceous and nitrogenous substances in a due proportion. [*Note by Karl Marx.*]

local diet." "It must be remembered," adds the official report, "that privation of food is very reluctantly borne, and that, as a rule great poorness of diet will only come when other privations have preceded it.... Even cleanliness will have been found costly or difficult, and if there still be self-respectful endeavours to maintain it, every such endeavour will represent additional pangs of hunger." "These are painful reflections, especially when it is remembered that the poverty to which they advert is not the deserved poverty of idleness; in all cases it is the poverty of working populations. Indeed the work which obtains the scanty pittance of food is for the most part excessively prolonged." The report brings out the strange, and rather unexpected fact: "That of the divisions of the United Kingdom," England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, "the agricultural population of England," the richest division, "is considerably the worst fed"; but that even the agricultural labourers of Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Somersetshire, fare better than great numbers of skilled indoor operatives of the East of London.

Such are the official statements published by order of parliament in 1864, during the millennium of free trade, at a time when the Chancellor of the Exchequer told the House of Commons that "the average condition of the British labourer has improved in a degree we know to be extraordinary and unexampled in the history of any country or any age." Upon these official congratulations jars the dry remark of the official Public Health Report: "The public health of a country means the health of its masses, and the masses will scarcely be healthy unless, to their very base, they be at least moderately prosperous."

Dazzled by the "Progress of the Nation" statistics dancing before his eyes, the Chancellor of the Exchequer exclaims in wild ecstasy: "From 1842 to 1852 the taxable income of the country increased by 6 per cent; in the eight years from 1853 to 1861, it has increased from the basis taken in 1853—20 per cent! the fact is so astonishing to be almost incredible!.... This intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power," adds Mr. Gladstone, "is entirely confined to classes of property!"

If you want to know under what conditions of broken health, tainted morals and mental ruin, that "intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power entirely confined to classes of property" was, and is being produced by the classes of labour, look to the picture hung up in the last "Public Health Report"

of the workshops of tailors, printers and dressmakers! Compare the "Report of the Children's Employment Commission" of 1863, where it is stated, for instance, that: "The potters as a class, both men and women, represent a much degenerated population, both physically and mentally," that "the unhealthy child is an unhealthy parent in his turn," that "a progressive deterioration of the race must go on," and that "the degenerescence of the population of Staffordshire would be even greater were it not for the constant recruiting from the adjacent country, and the intermarriages with more healthy races." Glance at Mr. Tremenheere's Blue Book on the "Grievances complained of by the Journeymen Bakers!" And who has not shuddered at the paradoxical statement made by the inspectors of factories, and illustrated by the Registrar General, that the Lancashire operatives, while put upon the distress pittance of food, were actually improving in health, because of their temporary exclusion by the cotton famine from the cotton factory, and that the mortality of the children was decreasing, because their mothers were now at last allowed to give them, instead of Godfrey's cordial, their own breasts.

Again reverse the medal! The Income and Property Tax Returns laid before the House of Commons on July 20, 1864, teach us that the persons with yearly incomes, valued by the tax-gatherer at £50,000 and upwards, had, from April 5, 1862, to April 5, 1863, been joined by a dozen and one, their number having increased in that single year from 67 to 80. The same returns disclose the fact that about 3,000 persons divide amongst themselves a yearly income of about £25,000,000 sterling, rather more than the total revenue doled out annually to the whole mass of the agricultural labourers of England and Wales. Open the census of 1861, and you will find that the number of the male landed proprietors of England and Wales had decreased from 16,934 in 1851, to 15,066 in 1861, so that the concentration of land had grown in 10 years 11 per cent. If the concentration of the soil of the country in a few hands proceed at the same rate, the land question will become singularly simplified, as it had become in the Roman empire, when Nero grinned at the discovery that half the Province of Africa was owned by six gentlemen.

We have dwelt so long upon these "facts so astonishing to be almost incredible," because England heads the Europe of commerce and industry. It will be remembered that some months ago one of the refugee sons of Louis Philippe publicly

congratulated the English agricultural labourer on the superiority of his lot over that of his less florid comrade on the other side of the Channel. Indeed, with local colours changed, and on a scale somewhat contracted, the English facts reproduce themselves in all the industrious and progressive countries of the Continent. In all of them there has taken place, since 1848, an unheard-of development of industry, and an un-dreamed-of expansion of imports and exports. In all of them "the augmentation of wealth and power entirely confined to classes of property" was truly "intoxicating." In all of them, as in England, a minority of the working classes got their real wages somewhat advanced; while in most cases the monetary rise of wages denoted no more a real access of comforts than the inmate of the metropolitan poorhouse or orphan asylum, for instance, was in the least benefited by his first necessities costing £9 15s. 8d. in 1861 against £7 7s. 4d. in 1852. Everywhere the great mass of the working classes were sinking down to a lower depth, at the same rate at least that those above them were rising in the social scale. In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only denied by those whose interest it is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses; but that, on the present false base, every fresh development of the productive powers of labour must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonism. Death of starvation rose almost to the rank of an institution, during this intoxicating epoch of economical progress, in the metropolis of the British empire. That epoch is marked in the annals of the world by the quickened return, the widening compass, and the deadlier effects of the social pest called a commercial and industrial crisis.

After the failure of the Revolutions of 1848, all party organisations and party journals of the working classes were, on the Continent, crushed by the iron hand of force, the most advanced sons of labour fled in despair to the Transatlantic Republic, and the short-lived dreams of emancipation vanished before an epoch of industrial fever, moral marasm, and political reaction. The defeat of the continental working classes, partly owed to the diplomacy of the English government, act-

ing then as now in fraternal solidarity with the cabinet of St. Petersburg, soon spread its contagious effects to this side of the Channel. While the rout of their continental brethren unmanned the English working classes, and broke their faith in their own cause, it restored to the landlord and the money lord their somewhat shaken confidence. They insolently withdrew concessions already advertised. The discoveries of new gold lands<sup>1</sup> led to an immense exodus, leaving an irreparable void in the ranks of the British proletariat. Others of its formerly active members were caught by the temporary bribe of greater work and wages, and turned into "political blacks." All the efforts made at keeping up, or remodelling, the Chartist movement, failed signally; the press organs of the working class died one by one of the apathy of the masses, and, in point of fact, never before seemed the English working class so thoroughly reconciled to a state of political nullity. If, then, there had been no solidarity of action between the British and the continental working classes, there was, at all events, a solidarity of defeat.

And yet the period passed since the Revolutions of 1848 has not been without its compensating features. We shall here only point to two great facts.

After a thirty years' struggle, fought with most admirable perseverance, the English working classes, improving a momentaneous split between the landlords and money lords, succeeded in carrying the Ten Hours' Bill. The immense physical, moral and intellectual benefits hence accruing to the factory operatives, half-yearly chronicled in the reports of the inspectors of factories, are now acknowledged on all sides. Most of the continental governments had to accept the English Factory Act in more or less modified forms, and the English parliament itself is every year compelled to enlarge its sphere of action. But besides its practical import, there was something else to exalt the marvellous success of this working men's measure. Through their most notorious organs of science, such as Dr. Ure, Professor Senior, and other sages of that stamp, the middle class had predicted, and to their heart's content proved, that any legal restriction of the hours of labour must sound the death knell of British industry, which, vampire-like, could but live by sucking blood, and children's blood, too. In

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<sup>1</sup>The gold fields of California and Australia were discovered in 1848.—*Ed.*

olden times, child murder was a mysterious rite of the religion of Moloch, but it was practised on some very solemn occasions only, once a year perhaps, and then Moloch had no exclusive bias for the children of the poor. This struggle about the legal restriction of the hours of labour raged the more fiercely since, apart from frightened avarice, it told indeed upon the great contest between the blind rule of the supply and demand laws which form the political economy of the middle class, and social production controlled by social foresight, which forms the political economy of the working class. Hence the Ten Hours' Bill was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of the principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class.

But there was in store a still greater victory of the political economy of labour over the political economy of property. We speak of the co-operative movement, especially the co-operative factories raised by the unassisted effort of a few bold "hands." The value of these great social experiments cannot be over-rated. By deed, instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labour need not be monopolised as a means of dominion over, and of extortion against, the labouring man himself; and that, like slave labour, like serf labour, hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind and a joyous heart. In England, the seeds of the co-operative system were sown by Robert Owen; the working men's experiments, tried on the Continent, were, in fact, the practical upshot of the theories, not invented, but loudly proclaimed, in 1848.

At the same time, the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864 has proved beyond doubt that, however excellent in principle and however useful in practice, co-operative labour, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. It is perhaps for this very reason that plausible noblemen, philanthropic

middle class spouters, and even keen political economists, have all at once turned nauseously complimentary to the very co-operative labour system they had vainly tried to nip in the bud by deriding it as the utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatising it as the sacrilege of the socialist. To save the industrious masses, co-operative labour ought to be developed to national dimensions, and, consequently, to be fostered by national means. Yet, the lords of land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economic monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labour. Remember the sneer with which, last session, Lord Palmerston put down the advocates of the Irish Tenants' Right Bill. The House of Commons, cried he, is a house of landed proprietors. To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes. They seem to have comprehended this, for in England, Germany, Italy and France there have taken place simultaneous revivals, and simultaneous efforts are being made at the political reorganisation of the working men's party.

One element of success they possess—numbers; but numbers weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge. Past experience has shown how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts. This thought prompted the working men of different countries assembled on September 28, 1864, in public meeting at St. Martin's Hall, to found the International Association.

Another conviction swayed that meeting.

If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfil that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure? It was not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England that saved the West of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other

side of the Atlantic.<sup>1</sup> The shameless approval, mock sympathy, or idiotic indifference, with which the upper classes of Europe have witnessed the mountain fortress of the Caucasus falling a prey to, and heroic Poland being assassinated by, Russia;<sup>2</sup> the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power, whose head is at St. Petersburg, and whose hands are in every cabinet of Europe, have taught the working classes the duty to master themselves the mysteries of international politics; to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective governments; to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power; when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations, and to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes. Proletarians of all countries, Unite!

#### PROVISIONAL RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION

*Considering,*

That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;

That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopoliser of the means of labour, that is the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation and political dependence;

That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;

That all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divi-

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the energetic campaign developed by the English workers during the Civil War in the United States, a campaign directed against the attempts of the English and French bourgeoisie to organise armed intervention in favour of the southern states that upheld slavery.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Marx refers to the conquest of the Caucasus by tsarist Russia, which resulted in the subjection and impoverishment of the indigenous nationalities, as well as to the suppression of the revolutionary rising in Poland in 1863-64 by the tsarist government.—*Ed.*

sions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries ;

That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries ;

That the present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries of Europe, while it raises a new hope, gives solemn warning against a relapse into the old errors and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements ;

*For these reasons :—*

The undersigned members of the committee, holding its powers by resolution of the public meeting held on September 28, 1864, at St. Martin's Hall, London, have taken the steps necessary for founding the Working Men's International Association ;

They declare that this International Association and all societies and individuals adhering to it will acknowledge truth, justice and morality, as the bases of their conduct towards each other, and towards all men, without regard to colour, creed or nationality ;

They hold it the duty of a man to claim the rights of a man and a citizen, not only for himself, but for every man who does his duty. No rights without duties, no duties without rights ;

And in this spirit they have drawn up the following provisional rules of the International Association :—

1. This association is established to afford a central medium of communication and co-operation between Working Men's Societies existing in different countries, and aiming at the same end : *viz.*, the protection, advancement and complete emancipation of the working classes.

2. The name of the society shall be : "The Working Men's International Association."

3. In 1865 there shall meet in Belgium a General Working Men's Congress, consisting of representatives of such working men's societies as may have joined the International Association. The Congress will have to proclaim before Europe the common aspirations of the working classes, decide on the definitive rules of the International Association, consider the

means required for its successful working, and appoint the Central Council<sup>1</sup> of the Association. The General Congress is to meet once a year.

4. The Central Council shall sit in London, and consist of working men belonging to the different countries represented in the International Association. It shall from its own members elect the officers necessary for the transaction of business, such as a president, a treasurer, a general secretary, corresponding secretaries for the different countries, etc.

5. On its annual meetings, the General Congress shall receive a public account of the annual transactions of the Central Council. The Central Council, yearly appointed by the Congress, shall have power to add to the number of its members. In cases of urgency, it may convoke the General Congress before the regular yearly term.

6. The Central Council shall form an international agency between the different co-operating associations, so that the working men in one country be constantly informed of the movements of their class in every other country; that an inquiry into the social state of the different countries of Europe be made simultaneously, and under a common direction; that the questions of general interest mooted in one society be ventilated by all; and that when immediate practical steps should be needed, as, for instance, in case of international quarrels, the action of the associated societies be simultaneous and uniform. Whenever it seems opportune, the General Council shall take the initiative of proposals to be laid before the different national or local societies.

7. Since the success of the working men's movement in each country cannot be secured but by the power of union and combination, while, on the other hand, the usefulness of the International Central Council must greatly depend on the circumstances whether it has to deal with a few national centres of working men's associations, or with a great number of small and disconnected local societies, the members of the International Association shall use their utmost efforts to combine the disconnected working men's societies of their respective countries into national bodies, represented by central national organs. It is self-understood, however, that the appliance of this rule will depend upon the peculiar laws of each country, and that, apart from legal obstacles, no indepen-

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards called the General Council.—*Ed.*

dent local society shall be precluded from directly corresponding with the London Central Council.

8. Until the meeting of the first Congress, the committee chosen on September 28, 1864, will act as a Provisional Central Council, try to connect the different national working men's associations, enlist members in the United Kingdom, take the steps preparatory to the convocation of the General Congress, and discuss with the national and local societies the main questions to be laid before that Congress.

9. Each member of the International Association, on removing his domicile from one country to another, will receive the fraternal support of the associated working men.

10. While united in a perpetual bond of fraternal co-operation, the working men's societies, joining the International Association, will preserve their existent organisations intact.

N.B. Persons in England can join the Association by paying 1s. *per annum*, for which a card of membership will be supplied.

At a meeting of the General Council, held at 18, Greek Street, Soho, on Tuesday evening, November 22, 1864, Mr. Eccarius in the chair, the following resolution, proposed by Mr. Dick, and seconded by Mr. Dell, was unanimously agreed to—"That the *Bee-Hive* newspaper be the organ of the association, and that the members be recommended to take up shares."

## THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

INTRODUCTION by FREDERICK ENGELS

I DID not anticipate that I would be asked to prepare a new edition of the Address of the General Council of the International on *The Civil War in France*, and to write an introduction to it. Therefore I can only touch briefly here on the most important points.

I am prefacing the longer work mentioned above by the two shorter Addresses of the General Council on the Franco-Prussian War. In the first place, because the second of these, which itself cannot be fully understood without the first, is referred to in *The Civil War*. But also because these two Addresses, likewise drafted by Marx, are, no less than *The Civil War*, outstanding examples of the author's remarkable gift, first proved in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, for grasping clearly the character, the import, and the necessary consequences of great historical events, at a time when these events are still in process before our eyes, or have only just taken place. And finally, because we in Germany are still having to endure the consequences which Marx prophesied would follow from these events.

Has that which was declared in the first Address not come to pass: that if Germany's defensive war against Louis Bonaparte degenerated into a war of conquest against the French people, all the misfortunes which befell Germany after the so-called wars of liberation<sup>1</sup> would revive again with renewed intensity? Have we not had a further twenty years of Bismarck's government, the Exceptional Law and the anti-socialist campaign taking the place of the prosecution of "demagogues," with the same arbitrary police measures and with literally the same staggering interpretations of the law?

And has not the prophecy been proved to the letter that the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine would "force France into

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<sup>1</sup>The wars (1813-14) of the German states, led by Prussia in alliance with the tsardom, against Napoleon I who annexed part of German territory to France and made the remainder subordinate to him.—Ed.

the arms of Russia," and that after this annexation Germany must either become the avowed tool of Russia, or must, after some short respite, arm for a new war, and, moreover, "a war with the combined Slavonian and Roman races"? Has not the annexation of the French provinces driven France into the arms of Russia? Has not Bismarck for full twenty years vainly wooed the favour of the tsar, wooed it with services even more lowly than those which little Prussia, before it became the "first Power in Europe," was wont to lay at Holy Russia's feet? And is there not every day hanging over our heads the Damocles' sword of war, on the first day of which all the chartered covenants of princes will be scattered like chaff; a war of which nothing is certain but the absolute uncertainty of its outcome; a race war which will subject the whole of Europe to devastation by fifteen or twenty million armed men, and is only not already raging because even the strongest of the great military states shrinks before the absolute incalculability of its final outcome?

All the more is it our duty to make again accessible to the German workers these brilliant proofs, now half-forgotten, of the far-sightedness of international working class policy in 1870.

What is true of these two Addresses is also true of *The Civil War in France*. On May 28, the last fighters of the Commune succumbed to superior forces on the slopes of Belleville; and only two days later, on May 30, Marx read to the General Council the work in which the historical significance of the Paris Commune is delineated in short powerful strokes, but with such clearness, and above all such truth, as has never again been attained in all the mass of literature which has been written on this subject.

Thanks to the economic and political development of

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<sup>1</sup>A quotation from the second Address of the General Council on the Franco-Prussian War. Marx foresaw that after the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, France would be thirsting for revenge and would seek allies, turning, in the first place, to tsarist Russia. On September 1, 1870, Marx wrote to Sorge:

"What the Prussian fools do not see is that the present war is leading just as inevitably to a war between Germany and Russia as the war of 1866 led to the war between Prussia and France. That is the best result I expect from it for Germany. Typical 'Prussianism' never has had and never can have any existence except in alliance with and subjection to Russia. And a war No. 2 of this kind will act as the midwife to the inevitable social revolution in Russia."—Ed.

France since 1789, for fifty years the position in Paris has been such that no revolution could break out there without assuming a proletarian character, that is to say, without the proletariat, which had bought victory with its blood, advancing its own demands after victory. These demands were more or less unclear and even confused, corresponding to the state of evolution reached by the workers of Paris at the particular period, but in the last resort they all amounted to the abolition of the class antagonism between capitalists and workers. It is true that no one knew how this was to be brought about. But the demand itself, however indefinite it still was in its formulation, contained a threat to the existing order of society: the workers who put it forward were still armed; therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois at the helm of the state. Hence, after every revolution won by the workers, a new struggle, ending with the defeat of the workers.

This happened for the first time in 1848. The liberal bourgeoisie of the parliamentary opposition held banquets for securing reform of the franchise, which was to ensure supremacy for their party. Forced more and more, in their struggle with the government, to appeal to the people, they had to allow the radical and republican strata of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie gradually to take the lead. But behind these stood the revolutionary workers, and since 1830 these had acquired far more political independence than the bourgeoisie, and even the republicans, suspected. At the moment of the crisis between the government and the opposition, the workers opened battle on the streets; Louis Philippe vanished, and with him the franchise reform; and in its place arose the republic, and indeed one which the victorious workers themselves designated as a "social" republic. No one, however, was clear as to what this social republic was to imply; not even the workers themselves. But they now had arms in their hands, and were a power in the state. Therefore, as soon as the bourgeois republicans in control felt something like firm ground under their feet, their first aim was to disarm the workers. This took place by driving them into the insurrection of June 1848 by direct breach of faith, by open defiance and the attempt to banish the unemployed to a distant province. The government had taken care to have an overwhelming superiority of force. After five days' heroic struggle, the workers were defeated. And then followed a blood-bath of

defenceless prisoners, the like of which has not been seen since the days of the civil wars which ushered in the downfall of the Roman republic. It was the first time that the bourgeoisie showed to what insane cruelties of revenge they will be goaded the moment the proletariat dares to take its stand against them as a separate class, with its own interests and demands. And yet 1848 was only child's play compared with their frenzy in 1871.

Punishment followed hard at heel. If the proletariat was not yet able to rule France, the bourgeoisie could no longer do so. At least not at that period, when the greater part of it was still monarchically inclined, and it was divided into three dynastic parties<sup>1</sup> and a fourth republican party. Its internal dissensions allowed the adventurer Louis Bonaparte to take possession of all the commanding points—army, police, administrative machinery—and, on December 2, 1851,<sup>2</sup> to explode the last stronghold of the bourgeoisie, the National Assembly. The Second Empire<sup>3</sup> opened the exploitation of France by a gang of political and financial adventurers, but at the same time also an industrial development such as had never been possible under the narrow-minded and timorous system of Louis Philippe, with its exclusive domination by only a small section of the big bourgeoisie. Louis Bonaparte took the political power from the capitalists under the pretext of protecting them, the bourgeoisie, from the workers, and on the other hand the workers from them; but in return his rule encouraged speculation and industrial activity—in a word the rise and enrichment of the whole bourgeoisie to an extent hitherto unknown. To an even greater extent, it is true, corruption and mass robbery developed, clustering round the imperial court, and drawing their heavy percentages from this enrichment.

But the Second Empire was the appeal to French chauvin-

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<sup>1</sup>The monarchists in France were at that time divided into three parties: the Legitimists—adherents of the "legitimate" dynasty of the Bourbons; the Orleanists—adherents of the Orleans dynasty; and the Bonapartists—adherents of Louis Bonaparte.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte by which he made himself Emperor. See Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire* in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The Second Empire in France was the name given to the period of the rule of Louis Bonaparte (Napoleon III, 1852-70) in distinction to the First Empire of Napoleon I (1804-14).—Ed.

ism, the demand for the restoration of the frontiers of the First Empire, which had been lost in 1814, or at least those of the First Republic. A French empire within the frontiers of the old monarchy and, in fact, within the even more amputated frontiers of 1815—such a thing was impossible for any long duration of time. Hence the necessity for brief wars and extension of frontiers. But no extension of frontiers was so dazzling to the imagination of the French chauvinists as the extension to the German left bank of the Rhine. One square mile on the Rhine was more to them than ten in the Alps or anywhere else. Given the Second Empire, the demand for the restoration to France of the left bank of the Rhine, either all at once or piecemeal, was merely a question of time. The time came with the Austro-Prussian War of 1866;<sup>1</sup> cheated of the anticipated "territorial compensation" by Bismarck and by his own over-cunning, hesitating policy, there was now nothing left for Napoleon but war, which broke out in 1870 and drove him first to Sedan,<sup>2</sup> and thence to Wilhelmshöhe.

The inevitable result was the Paris Revolution of September 4, 1870. The empire collapsed like a house of cards, and the republic was again proclaimed. But the enemy was standing at the gates; the armies of the empire were either hopelessly beleaguered in Metz or held captive in Germany. In this emergency the people allowed the Paris deputies to the former legislative body to constitute themselves into a "Government of National Defence." This was the more readily conceded, since, for the purposes of defence, all Parisians capable of bearing arms had enrolled in the National Guard and were armed, so that now the workers constituted a great majority. But almost at once the antagonism between the almost completely bourgeois government and the armed proletariat broke into open conflict. On October 31, workers' battalions stormed the town hall, and captured some members of the government. Treachery, the government's direct breach

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<sup>1</sup>The war with Austria was contrived by Bismarck in order to get rid of Prussia's old competitor in the unification of Germany. Prussia conquered Austria in this war and so secured the hegemony in German unification. Napoleon III remained neutral in the Austro-Prussian War because he hoped to receive as a reward part of the territory of the German states, as promised him by Bismarck.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>At Sedan (a town in Northeast France) on September 2, 1870, the bulk of the French army, headed by the emperor, surrendered to the German troops.—*Ed.*

of its undertakings, and the intervention of some petty-bourgeois battalions set them free again, and in order not to occasion the outbreak of civil war inside a city which was already beleaguered by a foreign power, the former government was left in office.

At last, on January 8, 1871, Paris, almost starving, capitulated but with honours unprecedented in the history of war. The forts were surrendered, the outer wall disarmed, the weapons of the regiments of the line and of the Mobile Guard<sup>1</sup> were handed over, and they themselves considered prisoners of war. But the National Guard kept its weapons and guns, and only entered into an armistice with the victors, who themselves did not dare enter Paris in triumph. They only dared to occupy a tiny corner of Paris, which, into the bargain, consisted partly of public parks, and even this they only occupied for a few days! And during this time they, who had maintained their encirclement of Paris for 131 days, were themselves encircled by the armed workers of Paris, who kept a sharp watch that no "Prussian" should overstep the narrow bounds of the corner ceded to the foreign conquerors. Such was the respect which the Paris workers inspired in the army before which all the armies of the empire had laid down their arms; and the Prussian *Junkers*, who had come to take revenge at the very centre of the revolution, were compelled to stand by respectfully, and salute just precisely this armed revolution!

During the war the Paris workers had confined themselves to demanding the vigorous prosecution of the fight. But now, when peace had come after the capitulation of Paris, now, Thiers, the new head of the government, was compelled to realise that the supremacy of the propertied classes—large landowners and capitalists—was in constant danger so long as the workers of Paris had arms in their hands. His first action was to attempt to disarm them. On March 18, he sent troops of the line with orders to rob the National Guard of the artillery belonging to it, which had been constructed during the siege of Paris and had been paid for by subscription. The attempt failed; Paris mobilised as one man in defence of the guns, and war between Paris and the French government sitting at Versailles was declared. On March 26 the Paris Commune was elected and on March 28 it was proclaimed. The Central

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<sup>1</sup> The mobile National Guard—reserve troops created by Napoleon III in 1868 for protection of the towns in case of war.—Ed.

Committee of the National Guard, which up to then had carried on the government, handed in its resignation to the National Guard, after it had first decreed the abolition of the scandalous Paris "Morality Police." On March 30 the Commune abolished conscription and the standing army, and declared that the National Guard, in which all citizens capable of bearing arms were to be enrolled, was to be the sole armed force. It remitted all payments of rent for dwelling houses from October 1870 until April, the amounts already paid to be reckoned to a future rental period, and stopped all sales of articles pledged in the municipal pawnshops. On the same day the foreigners elected to the Commune were confirmed in office, because "the flag of the Commune is the flag of the World Republic."

On April 1 it was decided that the highest salary received by any employee of the Commune, and therefore also by its members themselves, might not exceed 6,000 francs. On the following day the Commune decreed the separation of the church from the state, and the abolition of all state payments for religious purposes as well as the transformation of all Church property into national property; as a result of which, on April 8 a decree excluding from the schools all religious symbols, pictures, dogmas, prayers—in a word, "all that belongs to the sphere of the individual's conscience" was ordered to be excluded from the schools, and this decree was gradually applied. On the 5th, in reply to the shooting, day after day, of the Commune's fighters captured by the Versailles troops, a decree was issued for imprisonment of hostages, but it was never carried into effect. On the 6th, the guillotine was brought out by the 137th battalion of the National Guard, and publicly burnt, amid great popular rejoicing. On the 12th, the Commune decided that the Victory Column on the Place Vendome, which had been cast from guns captured by Napoleon after the war of 1809, should be demolished as a symbol of chauvinism and incitement to national hatred. This decree was carried out on May 16. On April 16 the Commune ordered a statistical tabulation of factories which had been closed down by the manufacturers, and the working out of plans for the carrying on of these factories by workers formerly employed in them, who were to be organised in co-operative societies, and also plans for the organisation of these co-operatives in one great union. On the 20th the Commune abolished night work for bakers, and also the workers' registration

cards, which since the Second Empire had been run as a monopoly by police nominees—exploiters of the first rank; the issuing of these registration cards was transferred to the mayors<sup>1</sup> of the twenty *arrondissements* of Paris. On April 30 the Commune ordered the closing of the pawnshops, on the ground that they were a private exploitation of labour, and were in contradiction with the right of the workers to their instruments of labour and to credit. On May 5 it ordered the demolition of the Chapel of Atonement, which had been built in expiation of the execution of Louis XVI.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, from March 18 onwards the class character of the Paris movement, which had previously been pushed into the background by the fight against the foreign invaders, emerged sharply and clearly. As almost without exception, workers, or recognised representatives of the workers, sat in the Commune, its decisions bore a decidedly proletarian character. Either they decreed reforms which the republican bourgeoisie had failed to pass solely out of cowardice, but which provided a necessary basis for the free activity of the working class—such as the realisation of the principle that *in relation to the state*, religion is a purely private matter—or they promulgated decrees which were in the direct interests of the working class and to some extent cut deeply into the old order of society. In a beleaguered city, however, it was possible at most to make a start in the realisation of all these measures. And from the beginning of May onwards all their energies were taken up by the fight against the ever-growing armies assembled by the Versailles government.

On April 7 the Versailles troops had captured the Seine crossing at Neuilly, on the western front of Paris; on the other hand in an attack on the southern front on the 11th they were repulsed with heavy losses by General Eudes. Paris was continually bombarded and, moreover, by the very people who had stigmatised as a sacrilege the bombardment of the same city by the Prussians. These same people now begged the Prussian government for the hasty return of the French soldiers taken prisoner at Sedan and Metz, in order that they might recapture Paris for them. From the beginning of May

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<sup>1</sup>For the purpose of municipal administration, Paris was divided into *arrondissements* each of which had a mayor at the head.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Louis XVI was executed during the first French bourgeois revolution (on January 21, 1793).—Ed.

the gradual arrival of these troops gave the Versailles forces a decided ascendancy. This already became evident when, on April 23, Thiers broke off the negotiations for the exchange, proposed by the Commune, of the Archbishop of Paris and a whole number of other priests held as hostages in Paris, for only one man, Blanqui, who had twice been elected to the Commune but was a prisoner in Clairvaux. And even more in the changed language of Thiers; previously procrastinating and equivocal, he now suddenly became insolent, threatening; brutal. The Versailles forces took the redoubt of Moulin Saquet on the southern front, on May 3; on the 9th, Fort Issy, which had been completely reduced to ruins by gunfire; and on the 14th, Fort Vanves. On the western front they advanced gradually, capturing the numerous villages and buildings which extended up to the city wall, until they reached the main wall itself; on the 21st, thanks to treachery and the carelessness of the National Guards stationed there, they succeeded in forcing their way into the city. The Prussians who held the northern and eastern forts allowed the Versailles troops to advance across the land north of the city, which was forbidden ground to them under the armistice, and thus to march forward and attack on a long front, which the Parisians naturally thought covered by the armistice, and therefore held only with weak forces. As a result of this, only a weak resistance was put up in the western half of Paris, in the luxury city proper; it grew stronger and more tenacious the nearer the incoming troops approached the eastern half, the real working class city. It was only after eight days' fighting that the last defenders of the Commune were overwhelmed on the heights of Belleville and Menilmontant; and then the massacre of defenceless men, women and children, which had been raging all through the week on an increasing scale, reached its zenith. The breechloaders could no longer kill fast enough; the vanquished workers were shot down in hundreds by mitrailleuse fire. The "Wall of the Federals" at the Pere Lachaise cemetery, where the final mass murder was consummated, is still standing today, a mute but eloquent testimony to the savagery of which the ruling class is capable as soon as the working class dares to come out for its rights. Then came the mass arrests; when the slaughter of them all proved to be impossible, the shooting of victims arbitrarily selected from the prisoners' ranks, and the removal of the rest to great camps where they awaited trial by court-martial.

The Prussian troops surrounding the northern half of Paris had orders not to allow any fugitives to pass; but the officers often shut their eyes when the soldiers paid more obedience to the dictates of humanity than to those of the General Staff; particularly, honour is due to the Saxon army corps, which behaved very humanely and let through many workers who were obviously fighters for the Commune.

If today, after twenty years, we look back at the activity and historical significance of the Paris Commune of 1871, we shall find it necessary to make a few additions to the account given in *The Civil War in France*.

The members of the Commune were divided into a majority, the Blanquists, who had also been predominant in the Central Committee of the National Guard; and a minority, members of the International Working Men's Association, chiefly consisting of adherents of the Proudhon school of socialism. The great majority of the Blanquists at that time were socialists only by revolutionary and proletarian instinct; only a few had attained greater clarity on the essential principles, through Vaillant, who was familiar with German scientific socialism. It is therefore comprehensible that in the economic sphere much was left undone which, according to our view today, the Commune ought to have done. The hardest thing to understand is certainly the holy awe with which they remained standing respectfully outside the gates of the Bank of France. This was also a serious political mistake. The bank in the hands of the Commune—this would have been worth more than ten thousand hostages. It would have meant the pressure of the whole of the French bourgeoisie on the Versailles government in favour of peace with the Commune. But what is still more wonderful is the correctness of so much that was actually done by the Commune, composed as it was of Blanquists and Proudhonists. Naturally, the Proudhonists were chiefly responsible for the economic decrees of the Commune, both for their praiseworthy and their unpraiseworthy aspects; as the Blanquists were for its political actions and omissions. And in both cases the irony of history willed—as is usual when doctrinaires come to the helm—that both did the opposite of what the doctrines of their school prescribed.

Proudhon, the socialist of the small peasant and master-craftsman, regarded association with positive hatred. He said of it that there was more bad than good in it; that it was by nature sterile, even harmful, because it was a fetter on the

freedom of the workers ; that it was a pure dogma, unproductive and burdensome, in conflict as much with the freedom of the workers as with economy of labour ; that its disadvantages multiplied more swiftly than its advantages ; that, as compared with it, competition, division of labour and private property were economic forces. Only for the exceptional cases—as Proudhon called them—of large-scale industry and large industrial units, such as railways, was there any place for the association of workers. (Cf. *Idee Generale de la Revolution*, 3 *etude*.)

By 1871, even in Paris, the centre of handicrafts, large-scale industry had already so much ceased to be an exceptional case that by far the most important decree of the Commune instituted an organisation of large-scale industry and even of manufacture which was not based only on the association of workers in each factory, but also aimed at combining all these associations in one great Union ; in short an organisation which, as Marx quite rightly says in *The Civil War*, must necessarily have led in the end to communism, that is to say, the direct antithesis of the Proudhon doctrine. And, therefore, the Commune was also the grave of the Proudhon school of socialism. Today this school has vanished from French working class circles ; among them now, among the Possibilists<sup>1</sup> no less than among the "Marxists," Marx's theory rules unchallenged. Only among the "radical" bourgeoisie are there still Proudhonists.

The Blanquists fared no better. Brought up in the school of conspiracy, and held together by the strict discipline which went with it, they started out from the viewpoint that a relatively small number of resolute, well-organised men would be able, at a given favourable moment, not only to seize the helm of state, but also by energetic and relentless action, to keep power until they succeeded in drawing the mass of the people into the revolution and ranging them round the small

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<sup>1</sup>The split in the French Workers' Party, into the supporters of Brousse (Possibilists), and the supporters of Guesde (Marxists), took place at the congress in Etienne in 1882. The opportunist wing, the Possibilists or Broussists, who were hunting for electoral victories, repudiated the party programme, restricting themselves in their agitation solely to "realisable" demands ; they fought against party discipline, demanding autonomy for the local organisations in the question of the election platform and in the tactic of blocs with other parties.

band of leaders. This conception involved, above all, the strictest dictatorship, and centralisation of all power in the hands of the new revolutionary government. And what did the Commune, with its majority of these same Blanquists, actually do? In all its proclamations to the French in the provinces, it proposed to them a free federation of all French Communes with Paris, a national organisation, which for the first time was really to be created by the nation itself. It was precisely the oppressing power of the former centralised government, army, political police and bureaucracy, which Napoleon had created in 1798 and since then had been taken over by every new government as a welcome instrument and used against its opponents, it was precisely this power which was to fall everywhere, just as it had already fallen in Paris.

From the outset the Commune was compelled to recognise that the working class, once come to power, could not manage with the old state machine; that in order not to lose again its only just conquered supremacy, this working class must, on the one hand, do away with all the old repressive machinery previously used against it itself, and on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all, without exception, subject to recall at any moment. What had been the characteristic attribute of the former state? Society had created its own organs to look after its common interests, originally through simple division of labour. But these organs, at whose head was the state power, had in the course of time, in pursuance of their own special interests, transformed themselves from the servants of society into the masters of society, as can be seen for example, not only in the hereditary monarchy, but equally also in the democratic republic. Nowhere do "politicians" form a more separate, powerful section of the nation than in North America. There, each of the two great parties<sup>1</sup> which alternately succeed each other in power is itself in turn controlled by people who make a business of politics, who speculate on seats in the legislative assemblies of the union as well as of the separate states, or who make a living by carrying on agitation for their party and on its victory are rewarded with positions. It is well known

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<sup>1</sup>The Republican and Democratic Parties. At an earlier period the Democratic Party represented the interests of the landowning South, while the Republican Party represented the interests of the industrial North. Both parties are now representatives of finance capital.—*Ed.*

that the Americans have been striving for thirty years to shake off this yoke, which has become intolerable, and that in spite of all they can do they continue to sink ever deeper in this swamp of corruption. It is precisely in America that we see best how there takes place this process of the state power making itself independent in relation to society, whose mere instrument it was originally intended to be. Here there exists no dynasty, no nobility, no standing army, beyond the few men keeping watch on the Indians, no bureaucracy with permanent posts or the right to pensions. And nevertheless we find here two great gangs of political speculators, who alternately take possession of the state power and exploit it by the most corrupt means and for the most corrupt ends—and the nation is powerless against these two great cartels of politicians, who are ostensibly its servants, but in reality exploit and plunder it.

Against this transformation of the state and the organs of the state from servants of society into masters of society—an inevitable transformation in all previous states—the Commune made use of two infallible expedients. In the first place, it filled all posts—administrative, judicial and educational—by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, with the right of the same electors to recall their delegate at any time. And in the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs. In this way an effective barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the binding mandates to delegates to representative bodies which were also added in profusion.

This shattering of the former state power and its replacement by a new and really democratic state is described in detail in the third section of *The Civil War*. But it was necessary to dwell briefly here once more on some of its features, because in Germany particularly the superstitious belief in the state has been carried over from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even to many workers. According to the philosophical notion, the state is the "realisation of the idea" or the Kingdom of God on earth, translated into philosophical terms, the sphere in which eternal truth and justice is or should be realised. And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the state and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily as people

from their childhood are accustomed to imagine that the affairs and interests common to the whole of society could not be looked after otherwise than as they have been looked after in the past, that is, through the state and its well-paid officials. And people think they have taken quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they have rid themselves of belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the proletariat, just like the Commune, cannot avoid having to lop off at the earliest possible moment, until such time as a new generation, reared in new and free social conditions, will be able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap-heap.

Of late, the Social-Democratic philistine<sup>1</sup> has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

FREDERICK ENGELS

London, on the twentieth anniversary  
of the Paris Commune,  
March 18, 1891.

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<sup>1</sup>In all editions published previous to 1932 the text had the words "the German philistine." This was a falsification. Engels' manuscript, in the possession of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow, has the words "the Social-Democratic philistine." The word "Social-Democratic" was afterwards crossed out (not by Engels) and the word "German" inserted in an unknown handwriting.—Ed.

FIRST ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL ON THE  
FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

*To the Members of the International Working Men's Association  
in Europe and the United States*

IN the Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association, of November 1864, we said: "If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfil that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure?" We defined the foreign policy aimed at by the International in these words: "Vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the laws paramount of the intercourse of nations."

No wonder that Louis Bonaparte, who usurped his power by exploiting the war of classes in France, and perpetuated it by periodical wars abroad, should, from the first, have treated the International as a dangerous foe. On the eve of the plebiscite<sup>1</sup> he ordered a raid on the members of the Administrative Committees of the International Working Men's Association throughout France, at Paris, Lyons, Rouen, Marseilles, Brest, etc.,<sup>2</sup> on the pretext that the International was a secret society dabbling in a *complot* for his assassination, a pretext soon after exposed in its full absurdity by his own judges. What was the real crime of the French branches of the International? They told the French people publicly and emphatically that voting the plebiscite was voting despotism at home and war abroad. It has been, in fact, their work that in all the great towns, in all the industrial centres of France, the

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<sup>1</sup> The plebiscite was arranged by Napoleon III in order to consolidate his empire and undermine republican agitation in the country. On May 8, 1870, the nation was to express its attitude to certain of the government's liberal reforms and amendments introduced into the constitution. There voted, for the new constitution, and consequently for the empire, 7,358,786 persons, against 1,571,939, while 1,894,681 abstained from voting.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the third court prosecution against the International taking place under the empire.—Ed.

working class rose like one man to reject the plebiscite. Unfortunately the balance was turned by the heavy ignorance of the rural districts. The stock exchanges, the cabinets, the ruling classes and the press of Europe celebrated the plebiscite as a signal victory of the French emperor over the French working class; and it was the signal for the assassination, not of an individual, but of nations.

The war plot of July 1870<sup>1</sup> is but an amended edition of the *coup d'état* of December 1851. At first view the thing seemed so absurd that France would not believe in its real good earnest. It rather believed the deputy denouncing the ministerial war talk as a mere stock-jobbing trick. When, on July 15, war was at last officially announced to the *Corps Legislatif*, the whole Opposition refused to vote the preliminary subsidies—even Thiers branded it as “detestable”; all the independent journals of Paris condemned it, and, wonderful to relate, the provincial press joined in almost unanimously.

Meanwhile, the Paris members of the International had again set to work. In the *Reveil* of July 12 they published their manifesto “to the Workmen of all Nations,” from which we extract the following few passages:

“Once more,” they say, “on the pretext of European equilibrium, of national honour, the peace of the world is menaced by political ambitions. French, German, Spanish workmen! Let our voices unite in one cry of reprobation against war!... War for a question of preponderance or a dynasty can, in the eyes of workmen, be nothing but a criminal absurdity. In answer to the warlike proclamations of those who exempt themselves from the blood tax, and find in public misfortunes a source of fresh speculations, we protest, we who want peace, labour and liberty!... Brothers in Germany! Our division would only result in the complete triumph of the despotism on both sides of the Rhine... Workmen of all countries! Whatever may for the present become of our common efforts, we, the members of the International Working Men's Association, who know of no frontiers, we send you, as a pledge of indissoluble solidarity, the good wishes and the salutations of the workmen of France.”

This manifesto of our Paris section was followed by numerous similar French addresses, of which we can here only

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<sup>1</sup>The war between France and Germany began on July 19, 1870.—*Ed.*

quote the declaration of Neuilly-sur-Seine, published in the *Marseillaise* of July 22: "The war, is it just? No! The war, is it national? No! It is merely dynastic. In the name of humanity, of democracy, and the true interests of France, we adhere completely and energetically to the protestation of the International against the war."

These protestations expressed the true sentiments of the French working people, as was soon shown by a curious incident. *The Band of the Tenth of December*,<sup>1</sup> first organised under the presidency of Louis Bonaparte, having been masqueraded into blouses and let loose on the streets of Paris, there to perform the contortions of war fever, the real workmen of the Faubourgs came forward with public peace demonstrations so overwhelming that Pietri, the Prefect of Police, thought it prudent to at once stop all further street politics, on the plea that the real Paris people had given sufficient vent to their pent-up patriotism and exuberant war enthusiasm.

Whatever may be the incidents of Louis Bonaparte's war with Prussia, the death-knell of the Second Empire has already sounded at Paris. It will end, as it began, by a parody. But let us not forget that it is the governments and the ruling classes of Europe who enabled Louis Bonaparte to play during eighteen years the ferocious farce of the *Restored Empire*.

On the German side, the war is a war of defence;<sup>2</sup> but who put Germany to the necessity of defending herself? Who enabled Louis Bonaparte to wage war upon her? *Prussia!* It was Bismarck who conspired with that very same Louis Bonaparte for the purpose of crushing popular opposition at home, and annexing Germany to the Hohenzollern dynasty. If

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 343 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>On the German side, the war was a war of defence in so far as it was directed against Bonapartist France, which was interested in the dismemberment of Germany and hindered German unification (national unity was a basic question for the German bourgeois revolution). While giving this characterisation of the war, Marx and Engels at the same time demanded from the German Workers' Party that it should: 1) sharply distinguish between German national and Prussian dynastic interests; 2) oppose the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine; 3) make peace as soon as a republican, non-chauvinist government came to power in Paris; 4) unceasingly emphasise the unity of German and French workers, who did not approve of the war and had no quarrel with one another.—Ed.

the battle of Sadowa<sup>1</sup> had been lost instead of being won, French battalions would have overrun Germany as the allies of Prussia. After her victory, did Prussia dream one moment of opposing a free Germany to an enslaved France? Just the contrary. While carefully preserving all the native beauties of her old system, she super-added all the tricks of the Second Empire, its real despotism and its mock democratism, its political shams and its financial jobs, its high-flown talk and its low *legerdemains*. The Bonapartist regime, which till then only flourished on one side of the Rhine, had now got its counterfeit on the other. From such a state of things, what else could result but war?

If the German working class allow the present war to lose its strictly defensive character and to degenerate into a war against the French people, victory or defeat will prove alike disastrous. All the miseries that befell Germany after her war of independence will revive with accumulated intensity.

The principles of the International are, however, too widely spread and too firmly rooted amongst the German working class to apprehend such a sad consummation. The voices of the French workmen had re-echoed from Germany. A mass meeting of workmen, held at Brunswick on July 16, expressed its full concurrence with the Paris manifesto, spurned the idea of national antagonism to France, and wound up its resolutions with these words:

"We are enemies of all wars, but above all of dynastic wars.<sup>2</sup> . . . With deep sorrow and grief we are forced to undergo a defensive war as an unavoidable evil; but we call, at the same time, upon the whole German working class to render the recurrence of such an immense social misfortune impossible by vindicating for the peoples themselves the power to decide on peace and war, and making them masters of their own destinies."

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<sup>1</sup>The battle at Sadowa (in Bohemia) on July 3, 1866, played a decisive role in the Austro-Prussian war. After the Prussian victory over Austria, the latter was excluded from the German Federation and an important part of Bismarck's plan for the unification of Germany was accomplished (the creation of the North German Confederation).—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>On the French side, the war was a dynastic one; Louis Bonaparte hoped by victory over the foreign foe to be able to save the crumbling edifice of the Bonapartist Empire.—*Ed.*

At Chemnitz, a meeting of delegates, representing 50,000 Saxon workmen, adopted unanimously a resolution to this effect:

"In the name of the German Democracy, and especially of the workmen forming the Democratic Socialist Party, we declare the present war to be exclusively dynastic.... We are happy to grasp the fraternal hand stretched out to us by the workmen of France.... Mindful of the watchword of the International Working Men's Association: *Proletarians of all countries, unite*, we shall never forget that the workmen of all countries are our friends and the despots of all countries our enemies."

The Berlin branch of the International has also replied to the Paris manifesto:

"We," they say, "join with heart and hand your protestation.... Solemnly we promise that neither the sound of the trumpet, nor the roar of the cannon, neither victory nor defeat, shall divert us from our common work for the union of the children of toil of all countries."

Be it so!

In the background of this suicidal strike looms the dark figure of Russia. It is an ominous sign that the signal for the present war should have been given at the moment when the Moscovite government had just finished its strategic lines of railway and was already massing troops in the direction of the Pruth. Whatever sympathy the Germans may justly claim in a war of defence against Bonapartist aggression they would forfeit at once by allowing the Prussian government to call for, or accept the help of, the Cossack. Let them remember that after their war of independence against the first Napoleon Germany lay for generations prostrate at the feet of the tsar.<sup>1</sup>

The English working class stretch the hand of fellowship to the French and German working people. They feel deeply

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<sup>1</sup>Germany conducted the war against Napoleon I in alliance with tsarist Russia. By means of the "Holy Alliance," created after the victory over Napoleon I, (1814-15), Russia attained a tremendous influence in international politics and began to play the role of "the gendarme of Europe." Prussia, as Marx expressed it, became "the fifth wheel of the coach of the European states."—Ed.

convinced that whatever turn the impending horrid war may take, the alliance of the working classes of all countries will ultimately kill war. The very fact that while official France and Germany are rushing into a fratricidal feud, the workmen of France and Germany send each other messages of peace and goodwill; this great fact, unparalleled in the history of the past, opens the vista of a brighter future. It proves that in contrast to old society, with its economical miseries and its political delirium, a new society is springing up, whose International rule will be *peace*, because its national ruler will be everywhere the same—*Labour!* The Pioneer of that new society is the International Working Men's Association.

July 23, 1870

## II

### SECOND ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL ON THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

In our first manifesto of the 23rd of July we said:

“The death-knell of the Second Empire has already sounded at Paris. It will end, as it began, by a parody. But let us not forget that it is the governments and the ruling classes of Europe who enabled Louis Napoleon to play during eighteen years the ferocious farce of the *Restored Empire*.”

Thus, even before war operations had actually set in, we treated the Bonapartist bubble as a thing of the past.

If we were not mistaken as to the vitality of the Second Empire, we were not wrong in our apprehension lest the German war should “lose its strictly defensive character and degenerate into a war against the French people.” The war of defence ended, in point of fact, with the surrender of Louis Bonaparte, the Sedan capitulation, and the proclamation of the republic at Paris.<sup>1</sup> But long before these events, the very moment that the utter rottenness of the imperialist arms became evident, the Prussian military *camarilla* had resolved upon conquest. There lay an ugly obstacle in their way—

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<sup>1</sup> The French army was heavily defeated at Sedan on September 2 and the emperor taken prisoner. On September 4, the republic was proclaimed in France and the so-called “Government of National Defence” set up.—Ed.

*King William's own proclamations at the commencement of the war.* In his speech from the throne to the North German Diet, he had solemnly declared to make war upon the emperor of the French and not upon the French people. On August 11 he had issued a manifesto to the French nation, where he said: "The Emperor Napoleon having made by land and sea an attack on the German nation, which desired and still desires to live in peace with the French people, I have assumed the command of the German armies *to repel his aggression*, and I have been led by *military events to cross the frontiers of France.*" Not content to assert the defensive character of the war by the statement that he only assumed the command of the German armies "*to repel aggression*," he added that he was only "led by military events" to cross the frontiers of France. A defensive war does, of course, not exclude offensive operations, dictated by military events.

Thus, the pious king stood pledged before France and the world to a strictly defensive war. How to release him from his solemn pledge? The stage managers had to exhibit him as reluctantly yielding to the irresistible behest of the German nation. They at once gave the cue to the liberal German middle class, with its professors, its capitalists, its aldermen and its penmen. That middle class, which, in its struggles for civil liberty, had, from 1846 to 1870, been exhibiting an unexampled spectacle of irresolution, incapacity and cowardice, felt, of course, highly delighted to bestride the European scene as the roaring lion of German patriotism. It re-vindicated its civic independence by affecting to force upon the Prussian government the secret designs of that same government. It does penance for its long-continued and almost religious faith in Louis Bonaparte's infallibility, by shouting for the dismemberment of the French republic. Let us for a moment listen to the special pleadings of those stout-hearted patriots!

They dare not pretend that the people of Alsace and Lorraine pant for the German embrace; quite the contrary. To punish their French patriotism, Strasbourg, a town with an independent citadel commanding it, has for six days been wantonly and fiendishly bombarded by "German" explosive shells, setting it on fire, and killing great numbers of its defenceless inhabitants! Yet, the soil of those provinces once upon a time belonged to the whilom German empire. Hence, it seems, the soil and the human beings grown on it must be confiscated as imprescriptible German property. If the map of Europe

is to be re-made in the antiquary's vein, let us by no means forget that the Elector of Brandenburg, for his Prussian dominions, was the vassal of the Polish republic.

The more knowing patriots, however, require Alsace and the German-speaking part of Lorraine as a "material guarantee" against French aggression. As this contemptible plea has bewildered many weak-minded people, we are bound to enter more fully upon it.

There is no doubt that the general configuration of Alsace, as compared with the opposite bank of the Rhine, and the presence of a large fortified town like Strasbourg, about halfway between Basle and Germersheim, very much favour a French invasion of South Germany, while they offer peculiar difficulties to an invasion of France from South Germany. There is, further, no doubt that the addition of Alsace and German-speaking Lorraine would give South Germany a much stronger frontier, inasmuch as she would then be master of the crest of the Vosges mountains in its whole length, and of the fortresses which cover its northern passes. If Metz were annexed as well, France would certainly for the moment be deprived of her two principal bases of operation against Germany, but that would not prevent her from constructing a fresh one at Nancy or Verdun. While Germany owns Coblenz, Mayence, Germersheim, Rastatt, and Ulm, all bases of operation against France, and plentifully made use of in this war, with what show of fair play can she begrudge France Strasbourg and Metz, the only two fortresses of any importance she has on that side? Moreover, Strasbourg endangers South Germany only, while South Germany is a separate power from North Germany. From 1792 to 1795 South Germany was never invaded from that direction, because Prussia was a party to the war against the French Revolution; but as soon as Prussia made a peace of her own in 1795, and left the South to shift for itself, the invasions of South Germany with Strasbourg for a base began and continued till 1809. The fact is, a *united* Germany can always render Strasbourg and any French army in Alsace innocuous by concentrating all her troops, as was done in the present war, between Saarlouis and Landau, and advancing, or accepting battle, on the line of road between Mayence and Metz. While the mass of the German troops is stationed there, any French army advancing from Strasbourg into South Germany would be outflanked, and have its communications threatened. If the present campaign has proved anything, it

is the facility of invading France from Germany.

But, in good faith, is it not altogether an absurdity and an anachronism to make military considerations the principle by which the boundaries of nations are to be fixed? If this rule were to prevail, Austria would still be entitled to Venetia and the line of the Mincio, and France to the line of the Rhine, in order to protect Paris, which lies certainly more open to an attack from the northeast than Berlin does from the southwest. If limits are to be fixed by military interests, there will be no end to claims, because every military line is necessarily faulty, and may be improved by annexing some more outlying territory; and, moreover, they can never be fixed finally and fairly, because they always must be imposed by the conqueror upon the conquered, and consequently carried within them the seed of fresh wars.

Such is the lesson of all history. Thus with nations as with individuals. To deprive them of the power of offence, you must deprive them of the means of defence. You must not only garotte, but murder. If every conqueror took "material guarantees" for breaking the sinews of a nation, the first Napoleon did so by the Tilsit Treaty,<sup>1</sup> and the way he executed it against Prussia and the rest of Germany. Yet, a few years later, his gigantic power split like a rotten reed upon the German people. What are the "material guarantees" Prussia, in her wildest dreams, can or dare impose upon France, compared to the "material guarantees" the first Napoleon had wrenched from herself? The result will not prove the less disastrous. History will measure its retribution, not by the extent of the square miles conquered from France, but by the intensity of the crime of reviving, in the second half of the nineteenth century, *the policy of conquest!*

But, say the mouthpieces of Teutonic patriotism, you must not confound Germans with Frenchmen. What *we* want is not glory, but safety. The Germans are an essentially peaceful people. In their sober guardianship, conquest itself changes from a condition of future war into a pledge of perpetual peace. Of course, it is not Germans that invaded France in 1792, for the sublime purpose of bayonetting the revolution of the eighteenth century. It is not Germans that befouled their

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<sup>1</sup> By the Treaty of Tilsit (1807) France compelled Prussia to reduce the army, to pay a war indemnity of 100 million talers and to surrender territory in the west and east.—*Ed.*

hands by the subjugation of Italy, the oppression of Hungary, and the dismemberment of Poland. Their present military system, which divides the whole able-bodied male population into two parts—one standing army on service, and another standing army on furlough, both equally bound in passive obedience to rulers by divine right—such a military system is, of course, “a material guarantee,” for keeping the peace and the ultimate goal of civilising tendencies! In Germany, as everywhere else, the sycophants of the powers that be poison the popular mind by the incense of mendacious self-praise.

Indignant as they pretend to be at the sight of French fortresses in Metz and Strasbourg, those German patriots see no harm in the vast system of Moscovite fortifications at Warsaw, Modlin, and Ivangorod. While gloating at the terrors of imperialist invasion, they blink at the infamy of autocratic tutelage.

As in 1865 promises were exchanged between Louis Bonaparte and Bismarck, so in 1870 promises have been exchanged between Gorchakov<sup>1</sup> and Bismarck. As Louis Bonaparte flattered himself that the War of 1866, resulting in the common exhaustion of Austria and Prussia, would make him the supreme arbiter of Germany, so Alexander flattered himself that the War of 1870, resulting in the common exhaustion of Germany and France, would make him the supreme arbiter of the western continent. As the Second Empire thought the North German Confederation incompatible with its existence, so autocratic Russia must think herself endangered by a German empire under Prussian leadership. Such is the law of the old political system. Within its pale the gain of one state is the loss of the other. The tsar's paramount influence over Europe roots in his traditional hold on Germany. At a moment when in Russia herself volcanic social agencies threaten to shake the very base of autocracy, could the tsar afford to bear with such a loss of foreign prestige? Already the Moscovite journals repeat the language of the Bonapartist journals after the War of 1866.<sup>2</sup> Do the Teuton patriots really believe that liberty and peace will be guaranteed to Germany by

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<sup>1</sup>In 1865, Louis Bonaparte promised Bismarck France's neutrality in case of an Austro-Prussian war. In 1870, the Russian Foreign Minister Gorchakov promised Russia's neutrality in a Franco-Prussian war.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The Russian press attacked the Russian government for its friendly attitude to Prussia.—Ed.

forcing France into the arms of Russia? If the fortune of her arms, the arrogance of success, and dynastic intrigue lead Germany to a spoliation of French territory, there will then only remain two courses open to her. She must at all risks become the *avowed* tool of Russian aggrandisement, or, after some short respite, make again ready for another "defensive" war, not one of those new-fangled "localised" wars, but a *war of races*—a war with the combined Slavonian and Roman races.

The German working class have resolutely supported the war, which it was not in their power to prevent, as a war for German independence and the liberation of France and Europe from that pestilential incubus, the Second Empire. It was the German workmen who, together with the rural labourers, furnished the sinews and muscles of heroic hosts, leaving behind their half-starved families. Decimated by the battles abroad, they will be once more decimated by misery at home. In their turn they are now coming forward to ask for "guarantees"—guarantees that their immense sacrifices have not been bought in vain, that they have conquered liberty, that the victory over the imperialist armies will not, as in 1815, be turned into the defeat of the German people; and, as the first of these guarantees, they claim an *honourable peace for France*, and the *recognition of the French republic*.

The Central Committee of the German Socialist-Democratic Workmen's Party issued on September 5 a manifesto,<sup>1</sup> energetically insisting upon these guarantees.

"We," they say, "protest against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. And we are conscious of speaking in the name of the German working class. In the common interest of France and Germany, in the interest of western civilisation against eastern barbarism the German workmen will not patiently tolerate the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine . . . We shall faithfully stand by our fellow workmen in all countries for the common international cause of the proletariat!"

Unfortunately, we cannot feel sanguine of their immediate success. If the French workmen amidst peace failed to stop the aggressor, are the German workmen more likely to

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<sup>1</sup> The basis for this manifesto was Marx's letter of instructions to the committee of the German Social-Democratic Party (published in the *Volksstaat*, September 11, 1871).—Ed.

stop the victor amidst the clamour of arms? The German workmen's manifesto demands the extradition of Louis Bonaparte as a common felon to the French republic. Their rulers are, on the contrary, already trying hard to restore him to the Tuileries as the best man to ruin France. However that may be, history will prove that the German working class are not made of the same malleable stuff as the German middle class. They will do their duty.

Like them, we hail the advent of the republic in France, but at the same time we labour under misgivings which we hope will prove groundless. That republic has not subverted the throne, but only taken its place become vacant. It has been proclaimed, not as a social conquest, but as a national measure of defence. It is in the hands of a Provisional Government composed partly of notorious Orleanists, partly of middle class republicans, upon some of whom the insurrection of June 1848 has left its indelible stigma. The division of labour amongst the members of that government looks awkward. The Orleanists have seized the strongholds of the army and the police, while to the professed republicans have fallen the talking departments. Some of their first acts go far to show that they have inherited from the empire, not only ruins, but also its dread of the working class. If eventual impossibilities are in wild phraseology promised in the name of the republic, is it not with a view to prepare the cry for a "possible" government! Is the republic, by some of its middle class undertakers, not intended to serve as a mere stop-gap and bridge over an Orleanist restoration?

The French working class moves, therefore, under circumstances of extreme difficulty. Any attempt at upsetting the new government in the present crisis, when the enemy is almost knocking at the doors of Paris, would be a desperate folly.<sup>1</sup> The French workmen must perform their duties as

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<sup>1</sup>In regard to this, Lenin wrote as follows, in his Preface to the Russian translation of Marx's *Letters to Kugelmann*:

"In September 1870, six months before the Commune, Marx emphatically warned the French workers, any attempt at upsetting the new government would be desperate folly, he said in his well-known Address of the International. He revealed in advance the nationalistic illusions concerning the possibility of a movement in the spirit of 1792...."

"But when the masses rose Marx wanted to march with them, to learn with them in the process of the struggle and not to give them bureaucratic admonitions. He realised that

citizens; but, at the same time, they must not allow themselves to be swayed by the national souvenirs of 1792,<sup>1</sup> as the French peasants allowed themselves to be deluded by the national souvenirs of the First Empire.<sup>2</sup> They have not to recapitulate the past, but to build up the future. Let them calmly and resolutely improve the opportunities of republican liberty, for the work of their own class organisation. It will gift them with fresh herculean powers for the regeneration of France, and our common task—the emancipation of labour. Upon their energies and wisdom hinges the fate of the republic.

The English workmen have already taken measures to overcome by a wholesome pressure from without, the reluctance of their government to recognise the French republic.<sup>3</sup> The present dilatoriness of the British government is probably intended to atone for the Anti-Jacobin war [1792]<sup>4</sup> and the

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it would be quackery or hopeless pedantry to attempt to calculate the chances in advance *with complete accuracy*. Above everything else he put the fact that the working class heroically, self-sacrificingly and taking the initiative itself, *makes* world history. Marx looked upon this history from the point of view of those who *make* it without being able to calculate *exactly* the chances beforehand and not from the point of view of a moralising intellectual and philistine who says: 'It was easy to foresee... they should not have resorted to...'

"Marx was able to appreciate the fact that moments occurred in history when the desperate struggle of the masses even for a hopeless cause is *necessary* for the sake or the further education of these masses and their training for the *next* struggle." (1934 English ed., 16-19.)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Marx has in mind the wave of national feeling among the masses in France in 1792 during the struggle with the attacking armies of the coalition of European states. He warns against a mechanical application of the slogan "the fatherland in danger" to the Franco-Prussian war. "To fight the Prussians on behalf of the bourgeoisie would be madness." (Engels.)—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>At the presidential election (December 10, 1848) Louis Bonaparte exploited the prejudices of the French peasants; they gave him their votes in recollection of Napoleon Bonaparte with whose name they erroneously associated the achievements of the first French bourgeois revolution.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Marx has in mind the great campaign of meetings, which developed in England on the initiative of Marx and the General Council of the International, for securing recognition of the French republic.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>The war conducted by the first coalition of the powers, (Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, etc.) against the first French bourgeois revolution. In February 1793, England and Holland, and in March Spain, also joined in the war.—Ed.

former indecent haste in sanctioning the coup d'etat. The English workmen call also upon their government to oppose by all its power the dismemberment of France, which a part of the English press is shameless enough to howl for. It is the same press that for twenty years deified Louis Bonaparte as the providence of Europe, that frantically cheered on the slaveholders to rebellion.<sup>1</sup> Now, as then, it drudges for the slaveholder.

Let the sections of the *International Working Men's Association* in every country stir the working classes to action. If they forsake their duty, if they remain passive, the present tremendous war will be but the harbinger of still deadlier international feuds, and lead in every nation to a renewed triumph over the workman by the lords of the sword, of the soil and of capital.

*Vive la Republique!*

THE GENERAL COUNCIL

ROBERT APPEGARTH, MARTIN J. BOON, FRED. BRADNICK, CAIHL, JOHN HALES, WILLIAM HALES, GEORGE HARRIS, FRED. LESSNER, LAYSATINE, B. LUCRAFT, GEORGE MILNER, THOMAS MOTTERSHEAD, CHARLES MURRAY, GEORGE ODGER, JAMES PARNELL, PFANDER, RUHL, JOSEPH SHEPHERD, COWELL, STEPNEY, STOLL, SCHMITZ.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES

EUGENE DUPONT, for France	GIOVANNI BORA, for Italy
HERMANN JUNG, for Switzerland, Holland and Spain	ZEVEY MAURICE, for Hungary
A. SERRAILLER, for Belgium	ANTON ZABICKI, for Poland
KARL MARX, for Germany and Russia	JAMES COHEN, for Denmark
	J. G. ECCARIUS, for the United States

WILLIAM TOWNSHEND, *Chairman*

JOHN WESTON, *Treasurer*

J. GEORGE ECCARIUS, *General Secretary*

Office: 256 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C., September 9, 1870

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<sup>1</sup>During the Civil War in America (1861-65) between the industrial north and the south, which upheld the system of slave plantations, the English bourgeoisie supported the south, i.e., slavery. This was due to the fact that the English bourgeoisie saw a growing rival in the industrial north, while the south represented a supplier of cotton for the English market.—Ed.

ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION  
ON THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

*To All the Members of the Association in Europe and the  
United States*

I

ON the 4th of September, 1870, when the working men of Paris proclaimed the republic, which has almost instantaneously acclaimed throughout France, without a single voice of dissent, a cabal of place-hunting barristers, with Thiers for their statesman and Trochu for their general, took hold of the Hotel de Ville. At that time they were imbued with so fanatical a faith in the mission of Paris to represent France in all epochs of historical crisis, that, to legitimate their usurped titles as governors of France, they thought it quite sufficient to produce their lapsed mandates as representatives of Paris. In our second address on the late war, five days after the rise of these men, we told you who they were. Yet, in the turmoil of surprise, with the real leaders of the working class still shut up in Bonapartist prisons and the Prussians already marching upon Paris, Paris bore with their assumption of power, on the express condition that it was to be wielded for the single purpose of national defence. Paris, however, was not to be defended without arming its working class, organising them into an effective force, and training their ranks by the war itself. But Paris armed was the revolution armed. A victory of Paris over the Prussian aggressor would have been victory of the French workman over the French capitalist and his state parasites. In this conflict between national duty and class interest, the Government of National Defence did not hesitate one moment to turn into a Government of National Defection.

The first step they took was to send Thiers on a roving tour to all the courts of Europe, there to beg mediation by offering the barter of the republic for a king. Four months after the commencement of the siege, when they thought the opportune moment come for breaking the first word of capitulation, Trochu, in the presence of Jules Favre and others of his colleagues, addressed the assembled mayors of Paris in these terms :

“The first question put to me by my colleagues on the

very evening of the 4th of September was this : Paris, can it, with any chance of success, stand a siege by the Prussian army ? I did not hesitate to answer in the negative. Some of my colleagues here present will warrant the truth of my words and the persistence of my opinion. I told them, in these very terms, that, under the existing state of things, the attempt of Paris to hold out a siege by the Prussian army would be a folly. Without doubt, I added, it would be an heroic folly ; but that would be all. . . . The events [managed by himself] have not given the lie to my prevision."

This nice little speech of Trochu was afterwards published by M. Corbon, one of the mayors present.

Thus, on the very evening of the proclamation of the republic, Trochu's "plan" was known to his colleagues to be the capitulation of Paris. If national defence had been more than a pretext for the personal government of Thiers, Favre and Co., the upstarts of the 4th of September would have abdicated on the 5th—would have initiated the Paris people into Trochu's "plan," and called upon them to surrender at once, or to take their own fate into their own hands. Instead of this, the infamous imposters resolved upon curing the heroic folly of Paris by a regimen of famine and broken heads, and to dupe her in the meanwhile by ranting manifestoes, holding forth that Trochu, "the governor of Paris, will never capitulate," and Jules Favre, the foreign minister, will "not cede an inch of our territory, nor a stone of our fortresses." In a letter to Gambetta, that very same Jules Favre avows that what they were "defending" against were not the Prussian soldiers, but the working men of Paris. During the whole continuance of the siege the Bonapartist cut-throats, whom Trochu had wisely intrusted with the command of the Paris army, exchanged, in their intimate correspondence, ribald jokes at the well-understood mockery of defence. (See, for instance, the correspondence of Alphonse Simon Guiod, supreme commander of the artillery of the Army of Defence of Paris and Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, to Suzanne, general of division of artillery, a correspondence published by the *Journal officiel* of the Commune.) The mask of imposture was at last dropped on the 28th of January, 1871. With the true heroism of utter self-debasement, the Government of National Defence, in their capitulation, came out as the government of France by Bismarck's prisoners—a part so base that Louis Bonaparte himself had, at Sedan, shrunk from accepting it.

After the events of the 18th of March on their wild flight to Versailles, the *capitulards* left in the hands of Paris the documentary evidence of their treason, to destroy which, as the Commune says in its manifesto to the provinces, "those men would not recoil from battering into a heap of ruins washed by a sea of blood."

To be eagerly bent upon such a consummation, some of the leading members of the Government of Defence had, besides, most peculiar reasons of their own.

Shortly after the conclusion of the armistice, M. Milliere, one of the representatives of Paris to the National Assembly, now shot by express orders of Jules Favre, published a series of authentic legal documents in proof that Jules Favre, living in concubinage with the wife of a drunken resident at Algiers, had, by a most daring concoction of forgeries, spread over many years, contrived to grasp, in the name of the children of his adultery, a large succession, which made him a rich man, and that, in a lawsuit undertaken by the legitimate heirs, he only escaped exposure by the connivance of the Bonapartist tribunals. As these dry legal documents were not to be got rid of by any amount of rhetorical horse-power, Jules Favre, for the first time in his life, held his tongue, quietly awaiting the outbreak of the civil war, in order, then, frantically to denounce the people of Paris as a band of escaped convicts in utter revolt against family, religion, order and property. This same forger had hardly got into power, after the 4th of September, when he sympathetically let loose upon society Pic and Taillefer, convicted, even under the empire, of forgery in the scandalous affair of the "Etendard." One of these men, Taillefer, having dared to return to Paris under the Commune, was at once reinstated in prison; and then Jules Favre exclaimed, from the tribune of the National Assembly, that Paris was setting free all her jailbirds!

Ernest Picard, the Joe Miller of the Government of National Defence, who appointed himself finance minister of the republic after having in vain striven to become the home minister of the empire, is the brother of one Arthur Picard, an individual expelled from the Paris *Bourse* as a blackleg (see report of the Prefecture of Police, dated 13th July, 1867), and convicted, on his own confession, of a theft of 300,000 francs, while manager of one of the branches of the *Societe Generale*, Rue Palestro, No. 5 (see report of the Prefecture of Police, 11th December, 1868). This Arthur Picard was made by

Ernest Picard the editor of his paper, *l'Electeur Libre*. While the common run of stockjobbers were led astray by the official lies of this finance office paper, Arthur was running backwards and forwards between the finance office and the *Bourse*, there to discount the disasters of the French army. The whole financial correspondence of that worthy pair of brothers fell into the hands of the Commune.

Jules Ferry, a penniless barrister before the 4th of September, contrived, as mayor of Paris during the siege, to job a fortune out of famine. The day on which he would have to give an account of his maladministration would be the day of his conviction.

These men, then, could find, in the ruins of Paris only, their tickets-of-leave: they were the very men Bismarck wanted. With the help of some shuffling of cards, Thiers, hitherto the secret prompter of the government, now appeared at its head, with the ticket-of-leave men of his ministers.

Thiers, that monstrous gnome, has charmed the French bourgeoisie for almost half a century, because he is the most consummate intellectual expression of their own class corruption. Before he became a statesman he had already proved his riving powers as an historian. The chronicle of his public life is the record of the misfortunes of France. Banded, before 1830, with the republicans, he slipped into office under Louis Philippe by betraying his protector Lafitte, ingratiating himself with the king by exciting mob riots against the clergy, during which the church of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois and the Archbishop's palace were plundered, and by acting the minister-spy upon, and the jail-*accoucheur* of the Duchess de Berri. The massacre of the republicans in the Rue Transnonain,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent infamous laws of September against the press and the right of association, were his work. Reappearing as the chief of the cabinet in March 1840, he astonished France with his plan of fortifying Paris. To the republicans, who denounced this plan as a sinister plot against the liberty of Paris, he replied from the tribune of the Chamber of Deputies:

"What! to fancy that any works of fortification could ever endanger liberty! And first of all you calumniate any possible government in supposing that it could some day attempt

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<sup>1</sup>The ferocious suppression in Paris in 1839 of the rising of the Society for the Rights of Man, during which unarmed persons, including women and children, were slaughtered.—*Ed.*

to maintain itself by bombarding the capital; . . . . but that government would be a hundred times more impossible after its victory than before." Indeed, no government would ever have dared to bombard Paris from the forts but that government which had previously surrendered these forts to the Prussians.

When King Bomba<sup>1</sup> tried his hand at Palermo, in January 1848, Thiers, then long since out of office, again rose in the Chamber of Deputies :

"You know, gentlemen, what is happening at Palermo. You, all of you, shake with horror [in the parliamentary sense] on hearing that during forty-eight hours a large town has been bombarded—by whom? Was it by a foreign enemy exercising the rights of war? No, gentlemen, it was by its own government. And why? Because the unfortunate town demanded its rights. Well, then, for the demand of its rights it has got forty-eight hours of bombardment. . . . Allow me to appeal to the opinion of Europe. It is doing a service to mankind to arise, and to make reverberate, from what is perhaps the greatest tribune in Europe, some words [indeed words] of indignation against such acts. . . . When the Regent Espartero, who had rendered services to his country [which M. Thiers never did] intended bombarding Barcelona, in order to suppress its insurrection, there arose from all parts of the world a general outcry of indignation."

Eighteen months afterwards, M. Thiers was amongst the fiercest defenders of the bombardment of Rome by a French army. In fact, the fault of King Bomba seems to have consisted in this only, that he limited his bombardment to forty-eight hours.

A few days before the Revolution of February, fretting at the long exile from place and pelf to which Guizot had condemned him, and sniffing in the air the scent of an approaching popular commotion, Thiers, in that pseudo-heroic style which won him the nickname of *Mirabeau-mouche*, declared, to the Chamber of Deputies: "I am of the party of revolution, not only in France, but in Europe. I wish the government of the revolution to remain in the hands of moderate men . . . . but if that government should fall into the hands of ardent minds, even into those of radicals, I shall, for all that, not desert my cause. I shall always be of the party of the

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<sup>1</sup>See note 3 on p. 88 of the present volume.—Ed.

revolution." The Revolution of February came. Instead of displacing the Guizot Cabinet by the Thiers Cabinet, as the little man had dreamt, it superseded Louis Philippe by the republic. On the first day of the popular victory he carefully hid himself, forgetting that the contempt of the working men screened him from their hatred. Still, with his legendary courage, he continued to shy the public stage, until the June massacres<sup>1</sup> had cleared it for his sort of action. Then he became the leading mind of the "Party of Order" and its parliamentary republic, that anonymous interregnum, in which all the rival factions of the ruling class conspired together to crush the people, and conspired against each other to restore each of them its own monarchy. Then, as now, Thiers denounced the republicans as the only obstacle to the consolidation of the republic; then, as now, he spoke to the republic as the hangman spoke to Don Carlos<sup>2</sup>: "I shall assassinate thee, but for thy own good." Now, as then, he will have to exclaim on the day after his victory: *L'Empire est fait*—the empire is consummated. Despite his hypocritical homilies about necessary liberties and his personal grudge against Louis Bonaparte, who had made a dupe of him, and kicked out parliamentarism—and outside of its factitious atmosphere the little man is conscious of withering into nothingness—he had a hand in all the infamies of the Second Empire, from the occupation of Rome by French troops to the war with Prussia, which he incited by his fierce invective against German unity—not as a cloak of Prussian despotism, but as an encroachment upon the vested right of France in German disunion. Fond of brandishing with his dwarfish arms in the face of Europe the sword of the first Napoleon, whose historical shoe-black he had become,<sup>3</sup> his foreign policy always culminated in the utter humiliation of France, from the London convention of 1840 to the Paris capitulation of 1871, and the present civil war, where he hounds on the prisoners of Sedan and Metz against Paris by special permission of Bismarck. Despite his

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the suppression of the June insurrection of the Paris proletariat in 1848.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Don Carlos (1545-68). Spanish prince who took part in the conspiracy against his father. He is idealised by Schiller in the latter's tragedy, *Don Carlos*.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> The chief historical works of Thiers are: *History of the French Revolution* and *History of the Consulate and the Empire*—*Ed.*

versatility of talent and shiftiness of purpose, this man has his whole lifetime been wedded to the most fossil routine. It is self-evident that to him the deeper undercurrents of modern society remained forever hidden; but even the most palpable changes on its surface were abhorrent to a brain all the vitality of which had fled to the tongue. Thus he never tired of denouncing as a sacrilege any deviation from the old French protective system.<sup>1</sup> When a minister of Louis Philippe, he railed at railways as a wild chimera; and when in opposition under Louis Bonaparte, he branded as a profanation every attempt to reform the rotten French army system. Never in his long political career has he been guilty of a single—even the smallest—measure of any practical use. Thiers was consistent only in his greed for wealth and his hatred of the men that produce it. Having entered his first ministry under Louis Philippe poor as Job, he left it a millionaire. His last ministry under the same king (of the 1st of March, 1840) exposed him to public taunts of peculation in the Chamber of Deputies, to which he was content to reply by tears—a commodity he deals in as freely as Jules Favre, or any other crocodile. At Bordeaux his first measure for saving France from impending financial ruin was to endow himself with three millions a year, the first and the last word of the "Economical Republic", the vista of which he had opened to his Paris electors in 1869. One of his former colleagues of the Chamber of Deputies of 1830, himself a capitalist and, nevertheless, a devoted member of the Paris Commune, M. Beslay, lately addressed Thiers thus in a public placard: "The enslavement of labour by capital has always been the cornerstone of your policy, and from the very day you saw the Republic of Labour installed at the Hotel de Ville, you have never ceased to cry out to France: "These are criminals!" " A master in small state roguery, a virtuoso in perjury and treason, a craftsman in all the petty stratagems, cunning devices, and base perfidies of parliamentary party warfare; never scrupling, when out of office, to fan a revolution, and to stifle it in blood when at the helm of the state; with class prejudices standing him in

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<sup>1</sup>The French system of protection was marked by high import duties on commodities (e.g., the duty on English cast-iron was 70 per cent of its value, that on iron 105 per cent of its value). As a result, many tools and other commodities which could not be produced in France vanished altogether from the market.—*Ed.*

the place of ideas, and vanity in the place of a heart; his private life as infamous as his public life is odious—even now, when playing the part of a French Sulla, he cannot help setting off the abomination of his deeds by the ridicule of his ostentation.

The capitulation of Paris, by surrendering to Prussia not only Paris, but all France, closed the long-continued intrigues of treason with the enemy, which the usurpers of the 4th September had begun, as Trochu himself said, on that very same day. On the other hand, it initiated the civil war they were now to wage, with the assistance of Prussia, against the republic and Paris. The trap was laid in the very terms of the capitulation. At that time above one-third of the territory was in the hands of the enemy, the capital was cut off from the provinces, all communications were disorganised. To elect under such circumstances a real representation of France was impossible, unless ample time were given for preparation. In view of this, the capitulation stipulated that a National Assembly must be elected within eight days; so that in many parts of France the news of the impending election arrived on its eve only. This assembly, moreover, was, by an express clause of the capitulation, to be elected for the sole purpose of deciding on peace or war, and, eventually, to conclude a treaty of peace. The population could not but feel that the terms of the armistice rendered the continuation of the war impossible, and that for sanctioning the peace imposed by Bismarck, the worst men in France were the best. But not content with these precautions, Thiers even before the secret of the armistice had been broached to Paris, set out for an electioneering tour through the provinces, there to galvanise back into life the Legitimist party, which now, along with the Orleanists, had to take the place of the then impossible Bonapartists. He was not afraid of them. Impossible as a government of modern France, and, therefore, contemptible as rivals, what party were more eligible as tools of counter-revolution than the party whose action, in the words of Thiers himself (Chamber of Deputies, 5th January, 1833), "had always been confined to the three resources of foreign invasion, civil war, and anarchy"? They verily believed in the advent of their long-expected retrospective millenium. There were the heels of foreign invasion trampling upon France; there was the downfall of an empire, and the captivity of a Bonaparte; and there they were themselves. The wheel of history had evidently rolled back to stop at the "Chambre introu-

able" of 1816. In the assemblies of the republic, 1848 to 1851, they had been represented by their educated and trained parliamentary champions; it was the rank-and-file of the party which now rushed in—all the Pourceaugnacs of France.

As soon as this Assembly of "Rurals" had met at Bordeaux, Thiers made it clear to them that the peace preliminaries must be assented to at once, without even the honours of a parliamentary debate, as the only condition on which Prussia would permit them to open the war against the republic and Paris, its stronghold. The counter-revolution had, in fact, no time to lose. The Second Empire had more than doubled the national debt, and plunged all the large towns into heavy municipal debts. The war had fearfully swelled the liabilities, and mercilessly ravaged the resources of the nation. To complete the ruin, the Prussian Shylock was there with his bond for the keep of half a million of his soldiers on French soil, his indemnity of five milliards, and interest at 5 per cent on the unpaid instalments thereof. Who was to pay the bill? It was only by the violent overthrow of the republic that the appropriators of wealth could hope to shift on to the shoulders of its producers the cost of a war which they, the appropriators, had themselves originated. Thus, the immense ruin of France spurred on these patriotic representatives of land and capital, under the very eyes and patronage of the invader, to graft upon the foreign war a civil war—a slaveholders' rebellion.

There stood in the way of this conspiracy one great obstacle—Paris. To disarm Paris was the first condition of success. Paris was therefore summoned by Thiers to surrender its arms. Then Paris was exasperated by the frantic anti-republican demonstrations of the "Rural" Assembly and by Thiers' own equivocations about the legal status of the republic; by the threat to decapitate and decapitalise Paris; the appointment of Orleanist ambassadors; Dufaure's laws on over-due commercial bills and house rents, inflicting ruin on the commerce and industry of Paris; Pouyer-Quertier's tax of two centimes

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The Chamber of Deputies in France which consisted mainly of extreme monarchists, representatives of the nobility, and was marked by its reactionary character.—*Ed.*

The National Assembly which opened in Bordeaux on February 13 had a majority of outspoken royalists (450 out of 750 deputies), chiefly representatives of the landowners. Hence its name of Assembly of "Rurals."—*Ed.*

upon every copy of every imaginable publication; the sentences of death against Blanqui and Flourens; the suppression of the republican journals; the transfer of the National Assembly to Versailles; the renewal of the state of siege declared by Palikao, and expired on the 4th of September; the appointment of Vinoy, the *Decembriseur*, as governor of Paris—of Valentin, the imperialist *gendarme*, as its prefect of police—and of D'Aurelles de Paladine, the Jesuit general, as the commander-in-chief of its National Guard.

And now we have to address a question to M. Thiers and the men of national defence, his under-strappers. It is known that, through the agency of M. Pouyer-Quertier, his finance minister, Thiers had contracted a loan of two milliards. Now, is it true or not—

1. That the business was so managed that a consideration of several hundred millions was secured for the private benefit of Thiers, Jules Favre, Ernest Picard, Pouyer-Quertier and Jules Simon? and—

2. That no money was to be paid down until after the "pacification" of Paris?.

At all events, there must have been something very pressing in the matter, for Thiers and Jules Favre, in the name of the majority of the Bordeaux Assembly, unblushingly solicited the immediate occupation of Paris by Prussian troops. Such, however, was not the game of Bismarck, as he sneeringly, and in public, told the admiring Frankfort philistines on his return to Germany.

## II

Armed Paris was the only serious obstacle in the way of the counter-revolutionary conspiracy. Paris was, therefore, to be disarmed. On this point the Bordeaux Assembly was sincerity itself. If the roaring rant of its Rurals had not been audible enough, the surrender of Paris by Thiers to the tender mercies of the triumvirate of Vinoy the *Decembriseur*, Valentin the Bonapartist *gendarme*, and Aurelles de Paladine the Jesuit general, would have cut off even the last subterfuge of doubt. But while insultingly exhibiting the true purpose of the disarmament of Paris, the conspirators asked her to lay down her arms on a pretext which was the most glaring, the most barefaced of lies. The artillery of the Paris National Guard,

said Thiers, belonged to the state, and to the state it must be returned. The fact was this : From the very day of capitulation, by which Bismarck's prisoners had signed the surrender of France, but reserved to themselves a numerous bodyguard for the express purpose of cowing Paris, Paris stood on the watch. The National Guard reorganised themselves and intrusted their supreme control to a Central Committee elected by their whole body, save some fragments of the old Bonapartist formations. On the eve of the entrance of the Prussians into Paris, the Central Committee took measures for the removal to Montmartre, Belleville, and La Villette of the cannon and *mitrailleuses* treacherously abandoned by the *capitulards* in and about the very quarters the Prussians were to occupy. That artillery had been furnished by the subscriptions of the National Guard. As their private property, it was officially recognised in the capitulation of the 28th of January, and on that very title exempted from the general surrender, into the hands of the conqueror, of arms belonging to the government. And Thiers was so utterly destitute of even the flimsiest pretext for initiating the war against Paris, that he had to resort to the flagrant lie of the artillery of the National Guard being state property !

The seizure of her artillery was evidently but to serve as the preliminary to the general disarmament of Paris, and, therefore, of the Revolution of the 4th of September. But that revolution had become the legal status of France. The republic, its work, was recognised by the conqueror in the terms of the capitulation. After the capitulation, it was acknowledged by all the foreign powers, and in its name the National Assembly had been summoned. The Paris working men's revolution of the 4th of September was the only legal title of the National Assembly seated at Bordeaux, and of its executive. Without it, the National Assembly would at once have to give way to the *Corps Legislatif* elected in 1869 by universal suffrage under French, not under Prussian, rule, and forcibly dispersed by the arm of the revolution. Thiers and his ticket-of-leave men would have had to capitulate for safe conducts signed by Louis Bonaparte, to save them from a voyage to Cayenne.<sup>1</sup> The National Assembly, with its power of attorney to settle the terms of peace with Prussia, was but an incident

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<sup>1</sup>Cayenne, capital of French Guiana in South America, notorious penal settlement.—Ed.

of that revolution, the true embodiment of which was still armed Paris, which had initiated it, undergone for it a five-months' siege, with its horrors of famine, and made her prolonged resistance, despite Trochu's plan, the basis of an obstinate war of defence in the provinces. And Paris was now either to lay down her arms at the insulting behest of the rebellious slaveholders of Bordeaux, and acknowledge that her revolution of the 4th of September meant nothing but a simple transfer of power from Louis Bonaparte to his royal rivals; or she had to stand forward as the self-sacrificing champion of France, whose salvation from ruin and whose regeneration were impossible without the revolutionary overthrow of the political and social conditions that had engendered the Second Empire, and, under its fostering care, matured into utter rotteness. Paris, emaciated by a five-months' famine, did not hesitate one moment. She heroically resolved to run all the hazards of a resistance against the French conspirators, even with Prussian cannon frowning upon her from her own forts. Still, in its abhorrence of the civil war into which Paris was to be goaded, the Central Committee continued to persist in a merely defensive attitude, despite the provocations of the Assembly, the usurpations of the Executive, and the menacing concentration of troops in and around Paris.

Thiers opened the civil war by sending Vinoy, at the head of a multitude of *Sergents-de-ville* and some regiments of the line, upon a nocturnal expedition against Montmartre, there to seize, by surprise, the artillery of the National Guard. It is well known how this attempt broke down before the resistance of the National Guard and the fraternisation of the line with the people. Aurelles de Paladine had printed beforehand his bulletin of victory, and Thiers held ready the placards announcing his measures of *coup d'etat*. Now these had to be replaced by Thiers' appeals, imparting his magnanimous resolve to leave the National Guard in the possession of their arms, with which, he said, he felt sure they would rally round the government against the rebels. Out of 300,000 National Guards only 300 responded to this summons to rally round little Thiers against themselves. The glorious working men's Revolution of the 18th March took undisputed sway of Paris. The Central Committee was its provisional government. Europe seemed, for a moment, to doubt whether its recent sensational performances of state and war had any reality in them or whether they were the dreams of a long bygone past.

From the 18th of March to the entrance of the Versailles troops into Paris, the proletarian revolution remained so free from the acts of violence in which the revolutions, and still more the counter-revolutions, of the "better classes" abound, that no facts were left to its opponents to cry out about, but the execution of Generals Lecomte and Clement Thomas, and the affair of the Place Vendome.

One of the Bonapartist officers engaged in the nocturnal attempt against Montmartre, General Lecomte, had four times ordered the 81st line regiment to fire at an unarmed gathering in the Place Pigalle, and on their refusal fiercely insulted them. Instead of shooting women and children, his own men shot him. The inveterate habits acquired by the soldiery under the training of the enemies of the working class are, of course, not likely to change the very moment these soldiers change sides. The same men executed Clement Thomas.

"General" Clement Thomas, a malcontent ex-quarter-master-sergeant, had, in the latter times of Louis Philippe's reign, enlisted at the office of the republican newspaper *Le National*, there to serve in the double capacity of responsible man-of-straw (*gerant responsable*)<sup>1</sup> and of duelling bully to that very combative journal. After the Revolution of February, the men of the *National* having got into power, they metamorphosed this old quarter-master-sergeant into a general on the eve of the butchery of June, of which he, like Jules Favre, was one of the sinister plotters, and became one of the most dastardly executioners. Then he and his generalship disappeared for a long time, to again rise to the surface on the 1st November, 1870. The day before<sup>2</sup> the Government of

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<sup>1</sup>His function was to serve imprisonment if the newspaper was prosecuted.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>On October 31, 1870, an attempt was made to overthrow the Government of National Defence and to seize power. The impulse for the movement was provided by rumours of an armistice about to be concluded with the Prussians, of the defeat of the National Guard at Le Bourget (October 30) and of the capitulation of Metz. Led by Blanquists, a battalion of National Guards composed chiefly of workers, occupied the Town Hall, proclaimed the overthrow of the old government and the establishment of a new one which would organise elections to the Commune. The new government, which did not base itself on the masses, proved irresolute and vacillating. It entered into negotiations with the arrested members of the Government of National Defence and obtained from them a

Defence, caught at the Hotel de Ville, had solemnly pledged their parole to Blanqui, Flourens, and other representatives of the working class, to abdicate their usurped power into the hands of a commune to be freely elected by Paris. Instead of keeping their word, they let loose on Paris the Bretons of Trochu, who now replaced the Corsicans of Bonaparte. General Tamisier alone, refusing to sully his name by such a breach of faith, resigned the commandership-in-chief of the National Guard, and in his place Clement Thomas for once became again a general. During the whole of his tenure of command, he made war, not upon the Prussians, but upon the Paris National Guard. He prevented their general armament, pitted the bourgeois battalions against the working men's battalions, weeded out the officers hostile to Trochu's "plan," and disbanded, under the stigma of cowardice, the very same proletarian battalions whose heroism has now astonished their most inveterate enemies. Clement Thomas felt quite proud of having reconquered his June pre-eminence as the personal enemy of the working class of Paris. Only a few days before the 18th of March, he laid before the War Minister, Leflo, a plan of his own for "finishing off *la fine fleur* [the cream] of the Paris *canaille*." After Vinoy's rout, he must needs appear upon the scene of action in the quality of an amateur spy. The Central Committee and the Paris working men were as much responsible for the killing of Clement Thomas and Lecomte as the Princess of Wales for the fate of the people crushed to death on the day of her entrance into London.

The massacre of unarmed citizens in the Place Vendome is a myth which M. Thiers and the Rurals persistently ignored in the Assembly, entrusting its propagation exclusively to the servants' hall of European journalism. "The men of order," the reactionists of Paris, trembled at the victory of the 18th of March. To them it was the signal of popular retribution at last arriving. The ghosts of the victims assassinated at their hands from the days of June 1848, down to the 22nd of January,

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verbal promise to institute elections for the Commune (on November 1) and to declare a general amnesty. In the meantime battalions of the Civil Guard were concentrated at the Town Hall and on the morning of November 1. they occupied it and restored the Government of National Defence to power.  
—Ed.

1871,<sup>1</sup> arose before their faces. Their panic was their only punishment. Even the *sergents-de-ville*, instead of being disarmed and locked up, as ought to have been done, had the gates of Paris flung wide open for their safe retreat to Versailles. The men of order were left not only unharmed, but allowed to rally and quietly to seize more than one stronghold in the very centre of Paris. This indulgence of the Central Committee—this magnanimity of the armed working men—so strangely at variance with the habits of the “Party of Order,” the latter misinterpreted as mere symptoms of conscious weakness. Hence their silly plan to try, under the cloak of an unarmed demonstration, what Vinoy had failed to perform with his cannon and *mitrailleuses*. On the 22nd of March a riotous mob of swells started from the quarters of luxury, all the *petits creves* in their ranks, and at their head the notorious familiars of the empire—the Heeckeren, Coetlogon, Henri de Pene, etc. Under the cowardly pretence of a pacific demonstration, this rabble, secretly armed with the weapons of the bravo, fell into marching order, ill treated and disarmed the detached patrols and sentries of the National Guard they met with on their progress, and, on debouching from the Rue de la Paix, with the cry of “Down with the Central Committee! Down with the assassins! The National Assembly for ever!” attempted to break through the line drawn up there, and thus to carry by a surprise the headquarters of the National Guard in the Place Vendome. In reply to their pistolshots, the regular *sommations* (the French equivalent of the English Riot Act) were made, and, proving ineffective, fire was commanded by the general of the National Guard. One volley dispersed into wild flight the silly coxcombs, who expected that the mere exhibition of their “respectability” would have the same effect upon the Revolution of Paris as Joshua’s trumpets upon the walls of Jericho. The runaways left behind them two National Guards killed, nine

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<sup>1</sup>On January 22, 1871, a new attempt was made to overthrow the Government of National Defence. The immediate occasion for this attempt was the defeat of the National Guard at Bougainville (January 19, 1871), rumours of an armistice and the appointment of General Vinoy as military governor of Paris. The attempt of January 22, exactly like that of October 31, was marked by lack of determination and unity, and absence of organisational contact with the masses. During its suppression, thirty persons were killed or wounded, including women and children.—Ed.

severely wounded (among them a member of the Central Committee), and the whole scene of their exploit strewn with revolvers, daggers, and sword-canes, in evidence of the "unarmed" character of their "pacific" demonstration. When, on the 13th of June, 1849, the National Guard made a really pacific demonstration in protest against the felonious assault of French troops upon Rome, Changarnier, then general of the Party of Order, was acclaimed by the National Assembly, and especially by M. Thiers, as the saviour of society, for having launched his troops from all sides upon these unarmed men, to shoot and sabre them down, and to trample them under their horses' feet. Paris, then, was placed under a state of siege. Dufaure hurried through the Assembly new laws of repression. New arrests, new proscriptions—a new reign of terror set in. But the lower orders manage these things otherwise. The Central Committee of 1871 simply ignored the heroes of the "pacific demonstration"; so much so, that only two days later they were enabled to muster under Admiral Saisset, for that *armed* demonstration, crowned by the famous stampede to Versailles. In their reluctance to continue the civil war opened by Thiers' burglarious attempt on Montmartre, the Central Committee made themselves, this time, guilty of a decisive mistake in not at once marching upon Versailles, then completely helpless, and thus putting an end to the conspiracies of Thiers and his Rurals. Instead of this, the Party of Order was again allowed to try its strength at the ballot box, on the 26th of March,<sup>1</sup> the day of the election of the Commune. Then, in the *mairies* of Paris, they exchanged bland words of conciliation with their too generous conquerors, muttering in their hearts solemn vows to exterminate them in due time.

Now, look at the reverse of the medal. Thiers opened his second campaign against Paris in the beginning of April. The first batch of Parisian prisoners brought into Versailles was subjected to revolting atrocities, while Ernest Picard, with his hands in his trousers' pockets, strolled about jeering them, and while Mesdames Thiers and Favre, in the midst of their ladies of honour (?) applauded, from the balcony, the outrages of the Versailles mob. The captured soldiers of the line were massacred in cold blood; our brave friend, General Duval,

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<sup>1</sup>About these fatal mistakes of the Central Committee, Marx wrote to Kugelmann on April 12, 1871. See p. 495 in the present volume.—Ed.

the iron-founder, was shot without any form of trial. Gallifet, the kept man of his wife, so notorious for her shameless exhibitions at the orgies of the Second Empire, boasted in a proclamation of having commanded the murder of a small troop of National Guards, with their captain and lieutenant, surprised and disarmed by his Chasseurs. Vinoy, the runaway, was appointed by Thiers, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, for his general order to shoot down every soldier of the line taken in the ranks of the Federals, Desmaret, the Gendarme, was decorated for the treacherous butcher-like chopping in pieces of the high-souled and chivalrous Flourens, who had saved the heads of the Government of Defence on the 31st of October, 1870. "The encouraging particulars" of his assassination were triumphantly expatiated upon by Thiers in the National Assembly. With the elated vanity of a parliamentary Tom Thumb, permitted to play the part of a Tamerlane, he denied the rebels against his littleness every right of civilised warfare, up to the right of neutrality for ambulances. Nothing more horrid than that monkey allowed for a time to give full fling to his tigerish instincts, as foreseen by Voltaire.

After the decree of the Commune of the 7th April ordering reprisals and declaring it to be its duty "to protect Paris against the cannibal exploits of the Versailles banditti, and to demand an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," Thiers did not stop the barbarous treatment of prisoners, moreover insulting them in his bulletins as follows: "Never have more degraded countenances of a degraded democracy met the afflicted gazes of honest men,"—honest, like Thiers himself and his ministerial ticket-of-leave men. Still the shooting of prisoners was suspended for a time. Hardly, however, had Thiers and his Decembrist generals become aware that the Communal decree of reprisals was but an empty threat, that even their gendarme spies caught in Paris under the disguise of National Guards, that even *sergents-de-ville*, taken with incendiary shells upon them, were spared—when the wholesale shooting of prisoners was resumed and carried on uninterruptedly to the end. Houses to which National Guards had fled were surrounded by gendarmes, inundated with petroleum (which here occurs for the first time in this war) and then set fire to, the charred corpses being afterwards brought out by the ambulance of the Press at the Ternes. Four National Guards having surrendered to a troop of mounted Chasseurs at Belle Epine, on the 25th of April, were afterwards shot down,

one after another, by the captain, a worthy man of Gallifet's. One of his four victims, left for dead, Scheffer, crawled back to the Parisian outposts, and deposed to this fact before a commission of the Commune. When Tolain interpellated the War Minister upon the report of this commission, the Rurals drowned his voice and forbade Leflo to answer. It would be an insult to their "glorious" army to speak of its deeds. The flippant tone in which Thiers' bulletins announced the bayoneting of the Federals surprised asleep at Moulin Saquet, and the wholesale fusillades at Clamart shocked the nerves even of the not over-sensitive London Times. But it would be ludicrous today to attempt recounting the merely preliminary atrocities committed by the bombardiers of Paris and the fomenters of a slaveholders' rebellion protected by foreign invasion. Amidst all these horrors, Thiers, forgetful of his parliamentary laments on the terrible responsibility weighing down his dwarfish shoulders, boasts in his bulletins that *l'Assemblée siege paisiblement* (the Assembly continues meeting in peace), and proves by his constant carousals, now with Decembrist generals, now with German princes, that his digestion is not troubled in the least, not even by the ghosts of Lecomte and Clement Thomas.

### III

On the dawn of the 18th of March, Paris arose to the thunderburst of "Vive la Commune!" What is the Commune, that sphinx so tantalising to the bourgeois mind?

"The proletarians of Paris," said the Central Committee in its manifesto of the 18th March, "amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood that the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs. . . . They have understood that it is their imperious duty and their absolute right, to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power." But the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Marx here formulates one of the fundamental lessons of the Paris Commune. The tremendous significance attached by Marx and Engels to this lesson is evident from their remarks in the Preface to *The Communist Manifesto*, dated June 24, 1872.

The centralised state power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy, and judicature—organs wrought after the plan of a systematic and hierarchic division of labour—originates from the days of absolute monarchy, serving nascent middle class society as a mighty weapon in its struggles against feudalism. Still, its development remained clogged by all manner of mediaeval rubbish, seignorial rights, local privileges, municipal and guild monopolies and provincial constitutions. The gigantic broom of the French Revolution of the eighteenth century swept away all these relics of bygone times, thus clearing simultaneously the

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There it is said that the Programme of *The Communist Manifesto* has "in some details become antiquated. One thing especially," they continue, "was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.' . . ."

In this connection, Lenin wrote :

"It is extremely characteristic that it is precisely this vital correction that has been distorted by the opportunists, and its meaning, probably, is not known to nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of the readers of *The Communist Manifesto*.

. . . The current vulgar 'interpretation' of Marx's famous utterance quoted above is that Marx here emphasises the idea of gradual development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

"As a matter of fact, *exactly the opposite is the case*. Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up, smash* the 'ready-made state machinery,' and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.

"On April 12, 1871, i.e., just at the time of the Commune, Marx wrote to Kugelmann :

"'If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to the other, but to *smash* it [Marx's italics—the original is *zerbrechen*]; and this is essential for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting.' (*Die Neue Zeit*, XX, I, 1901-02, p. 709.)

"The words, 'to smash' 'the bureaucratic-military state machinery,' briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism on the tasks of the proletariat in relation to the state during a revolution. And it is precisely this lesson that has been not only forgotten, but positively distorted, in the prevailing Kautskyan 'interpretation' of Marxism." (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*.)—Ed.

social soil of its last hindrances to the superstructure of the modern state edifice raised under the First Empire, itself the offspring of the coalition wars<sup>1</sup> of old semi-feudal Europe against modern France. During the subsequent *regimes* the government, placed under parliamentary control—that is, under the direct control of the propertied classes—became not only a hotbed of huge national debts and crushing taxes; with its irresistible allurements of place, pelf, and patronage, it became not only the bone of contention between the rival factions and adventurers of the ruling classes; but its political character changed simultaneously with the economic changes of society. At the same pace at which the progress of modern industry developed, widened, intensified the class antagonism between capital and labour, the state power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labour, of a public force organised for social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism. After every revolution marking a progressive phase in the class struggle, the purely repressive character of the state power stands out in bolder and bolder relief. The Revolution of 1830, resulting in the transfer of government from the landlords to the capitalists, transferred it from the more remote to the more direct antagonists of the working men. The bourgeois republicans, who, in the name of the Revolution of February, took the state power, used it for the June massacres, in order to convince the working class that “social” republic meant the republic ensuring their social subjection, and in order to convince the royalist bulk of the bourgeois and landlord class that they might safely leave the cares and emoluments of government to the bourgeois “republicans.” However, after their one heroic exploit of June, the bourgeois republicans had, from the front, to fall back to the rear of the “Party of Order”—a combination formed by all the rival fractions and factions of the appropriating class in their now openly declared antagonism to the producing classes. The proper form of their joint-stock government was the *parliamentary republic*, with Louis Bonaparte for its president. There was a *regime* of avowed class terrorism and deliberate insult towards the “vile multitude.” If the parliamentary republic, as M. Thiers said, “divided them [the different frac-

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<sup>1</sup>The wars waged by England, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Spain and other states against revolutionary France and later against the empire of Napoleon I.—*Ed.*

tions of the ruling class] least;" it opened an abyss between that class and the whole body of society outside their spare ranks. The restraints by which their own divisions had under former *regimes* still checked the state power, were removed by their union; and in view of the threatening upheaval of the proletariat, they now used that state power mercilessly and ostentatiously as the national war engine of capital against labour. In their uninterrupted crusade against the producing masses they were, however, bound not only to invest the executive with continually increased powers of repression, but at the same time to divest their own parliamentary stronghold—the National Assembly—one by one, of all its own means of defence against the Executive. The Executive, in the person of Louis Bonaparte, turned them out. The natural offspring of the "Party of Order" republic was the Second Empire.

The empire, with the *coup d'état* for its certificate of birth, universal suffrage for its sanction, and the sword for its sceptre, professed to rest upon the peasantry, the large mass of producers not directly involved in the struggle of capital and labour. It professed to save the working class by breaking down parliamentarism, and, with it, the undisguised subserviency of government to the propertied classes. It professed to save the propertied classes by upholding their economic supremacy over the working class; and, finally, it professed to unite all classes by reviving for all the chimera of national glory. In reality, it was the only form of government possible at a time when the bourgeoisie had already lost, and the working class had not yet acquired, the faculty of ruling the nation. It was acclaimed throughout the world as the saviour of society. Under its sway, bourgeois society, freed from political cares, attained a development unexpected even by itself. Its industry and commerce expanded to colossal dimensions; financial swindling celebrated cosmopolitan orgies; the misery of the masses was set off by a shameless display of gorgeous, meretricious and debased luxury. The state power, apparently soaring high above society, was at the same time itself the greatest scandal of that society and the very hotbed of all its corruptions. Its own rottenness, and the rottenness of the society it had saved, were laid bare by the bayonet of Prussia, herself eagerly bent upon transferring the supreme seat of that regime from Paris to Berlin. Imperialism<sup>1</sup> is, at the same time,

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<sup>1</sup>Refers to the Bonapartist empire.—Ed.

the most prostitute and the ultimate form of the state power which nascent middle class society had commenced to elaborate as a means of its own emancipation from feudalism, and which full-grown bourgeois society had finally transformed into a means for the enslavement of labour by capital.

The direct antithesis to the empire was the Commune. The cry of "social republic," with which the Revolution of February was ushered in by the Paris proletariat, did but express a vague aspiration after a republic that was not only to supersede the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself. The Commune was the positive form of that republic.

Paris, the central seat of the old government power, and, at the same time, the social stronghold of the French working class, had risen in arms against the attempt of Thiers and the Rurals to restore and perpetuate that old governmental power bequeathed to them by the empire. Paris could resist only because, in consequence of the siege, it had got rid of the army, and replaced it by a National Guard, the bulk of which consisted of working men. This fact was now to be transformed into an institution. The first decree of the Commune, therefore, was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people.

The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time.<sup>1</sup> Instead of continuing to be the agent of

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<sup>1</sup>In connection with this characterisation of the Commune as a new type of state, Lenin wrote:

"'A working, not a parliamentary body'—this hits the nail on the head in regard to the present-day parliamentarians and the parliamentary 'lap dogs' of Social-Democracy! Take any parliamentary country, from America to Switzerland, from France to England, Norway and so forth—in these countries: the actual work of the 'state' is done behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, the government offices and the General Staffs. Parliament itself is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the 'common people.' . . ."

"The Commune was to have substituted for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion would not have degenerated into deception, for the parliamentarians would have had to work themselves, would have had to execute their

the Central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. Public functions ceased to be the private property of the tools of the Central Government. Not only municipal administration, but the whole initiative hitherto exercised by the state was laid into the hands of the Commune.

Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the "parson-power," by the disestablishment and disendowment of all churches as proprietary bodies. The priests were sent back to the recesses of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the apostles. The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of church and state. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.

The judicial functionaries were to be divested of that sham independence which had but served to mask their abject subserviency to all succeeding governments to which, in turn, they had taken, and broken, the oaths of allegiance. Like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible and revocable.

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own laws, they themselves would have had to test their results in real life; they would have been directly responsible to their constituents. Representative institutions would have remained, but there was to have been *no* parliamentarism as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for deputies..."

"There can be no thought of destroying officialdom immediately, everywhere, completely. That is utopia. But to *smash* the old bureaucratic machine at once and to begin immediately to construct a new one that will enable all officialdom to be gradually abolished is *not* utopia, it is the experience of the Commune, it is the direct and immediate task of the revolutionary proletariat." (*The State and Revolution*)—Ed.

The Paris Commune was, of course, to serve as a model to all the great industrial centres of France. The communal regime once established in Paris and the secondary centres, the old centralised government would in the provinces, too, have to give way to the self-government of the producers. In a rough sketch of national organisation which the Commune had no time to develop, it states clearly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet, and that in the rural districts the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia, with an extremely short term of service. The rural communes of every district were to administer their common affairs by an assembly of delegates in the central town, and these district assemblies were again to send deputies to the National Delegation in Paris, each delegate to be at any time revocable and bound by the *mandat impératif* (formal instructions) of his constituents. The few but important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been intentionally misstated, but were to be discharged by Communal and therefore strictly responsible agents. The unity of the nation was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, to be organised by the Communal Constitution, and to become a reality by the destruction of the state power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior to, the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence. While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society. Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament,<sup>2</sup> universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business.

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<sup>2</sup>In regard to this characterisation of parliamentarism, Lenin wrote :

“Thanks to the prevalence of social-chauvinism and opportunism, this remarkable criticism of parliamentarism made in 1871 also belongs now to the ‘forgotten words’ of Marxism...

“To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to misrepresent the people in parliament is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.” (*The State and Revolution.*)—Ed.

And it is well known that companies, like individuals, in matters of real business generally know how to put the right man in the right place, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly. On the other hand, nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchic investiture.

It is generally the fate of completely new historical creations to be mistaken for the counterpart of older and even defunct forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks the modern state power, has been mistaken for a reproduction of the mediaeval Communes, which first preceded, and afterwards became the substratum of, that very state power.—The Communal Constitution has been mistaken for an attempt to break up into a federation of small states, as dreamt of by Montesquieu and the Girondins,<sup>1</sup> that unity of great nations which, if originally brought about by political force, has now become a powerful coefficient of social production.—The antagonism of the Commune against the state power has been mistaken for an exaggerated form of the ancient struggle against over-centralisation. Peculiar historical circumstances may have prevented the classical development, as in France, of the bourgeois form of government, and may have allowed, as in England, to complete the great central state organs by corrupt vestries, jobbing councillors, and ferocious poor-law guardians in the towns, and virtually hereditary magistrates in the counties. The Communal Constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the state parasite feeding upon, and clogging the free movement of, society. By this one act it would have initiated the regeneration of France. The provincial French middle class saw in the Commune an attempt to restore the sway their order had held over the country under Louis Philippe, and which, under Louis Napoleon, was supplanted by the pretended rule of the country over the towns. In reality, the Communal Constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the

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<sup>1</sup>The Girondins were the party of the industrial and trading bourgeoisie during the epoch of the first French bourgeois revolution. Wishing to behead the revolution and to weaken the centralisation of revolutionary forces, they endeavoured to convert France into a Federation and to destroy the leading role of revolutionary Paris.—*Ed.*

working men, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local municipal liberty, but no longer as a check upon the now superseded state power. It could only enter into the head of a Bismarck, who, when not engaged on his intrigues of blood and iron, always likes to resume his old trade, so befitting his mental calibre, of contributor to *Kladderadatsch* (the Berlin *Punch*), it could only enter into such a head to ascribe to the Paris Commune aspirations after that caricature of the old French municipal organisation of 1791, the Prussian municipal constitution which degrades the town governments to mere secondary wheels in the police machinery of the Prussian state. The Commune made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure—the standing army and state functionarism. Its very existence presupposed the non-existence of monarchy, which, in Europe at least, is the normal incumbrance and indispensable cloak of class rule. It supplied the republic with the basis of really democratic institutions. But neither cheap government nor the “true republic” was its ultimate aim; they were its mere concomitants.

The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which construed it in their favour, show that it was a thoroughly expansive political form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive. Its true secret was this. It was essentially a working class government, the produce of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Analysing the tremendous historical importance of the lessons derived by Marx from the experience of the Paris Commune, Lenin wrote:

“The utopians busied themselves with ‘inventing’ the political forms under which the socialist transformation of society was to take place. The anarchists waived the question of political forms altogether. The opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy accepted the bourgeois political forms of the parliamentary democratic state as the unsurpassable limit; they battered their foreheads praying before this idol and denounced every attempt to *smash* these forms as anarchism.

“Marx deduced from the whole history of Socialism and of the political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from the state to no state) would be the ‘proletariat

Except on this last condition, the Communal Constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion. The political rule of the producer cannot co-exist with the perpetuation of his social slavery. The Commune was therefore to serve as a lever for uprooting the economical foundations upon which rests the existence of classes, and therefore of class rule. With labour emancipated, every man becomes a working man, and productive labour ceases to be a class attribute.

It is a strange fact. In spite of all the tall talk and all the immense literature, for the last sixty years, about emancipation of labour, no sooner do the working men anywhere take the subject into their own hands with a will, than uprises at once all the apologetic phraseology of the mouthpieces of present society with its two poles of capital and wages-slavery (the landlord now is but the sleeping partner of the capitalist), as if capitalist society was still in its purest state of virgin innocence, with its antagonisms still undeveloped, with its delusions still unexploded, with its prostitute realities not yet laid bare. The Commune, they exclaim, intends to abolish property, the basis of all civilisation! Yes, gentlemen, the Commune intended to abolish that class property which makes the labour of the many the wealth of the few. It aimed at the expropriation of the expropriators. It wanted to make individual property a truth by transforming the means of pro-

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organised as the ruling class.' But Marx did not set out to discover the political forms of this future stage. He limited himself to a precise observation of French history, to analysing it, and to the conclusion to which the year 1851 had led, *viz.*, that matters were moving towards the *smashing* of the bourgeois state machine.

"And when the mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat burst forth, Marx, in spite of the failure of that movement, in spite of its short life and its patent weakness, began to study the political forms that it had *disclosed*.

"The Commune is the form 'at last discovered' by the proletarian revolution, under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour.

"The Commune is the first attempt of a proletarian revolution to *smash* the bourgeois state machine and it constitutes the political form, 'at last discovered,' which can and must *supersede* the smashed machine.

"We shall see below that the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917, in different circumstances and under different conditions, continued the work of the Commune and corroborated Marx's brilliant historical analysis." (*The State and Revolution.*)—Ed.

duction, land and capital, now chiefly the means of enslaving and exploiting labour, into mere instruments of free and associated labour. But this is communism, "impossible" communism! Why, those members of the ruling classes who are intelligent enough to perceive the impossibility of continuing the present system—and they are many—have become the obtrusive and full-mouthed apostles of co-operative production. If cooperative production is not to remain a sham and a snare; if it is to supersede the capitalist system; if united co-operative societies are to regulate national production upon a common plan, thus taking it under their own control, and putting an end to the constant anarchy and periodical convulsions which are the fatality of capitalist production—what else, gentlemen, would it be but communism, "possible" communism?

The working class did not expect miracles from the Commune. They have no ready-made utopias to introduce *par decret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realise, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant. In the full consciousness of their historic mission, and with the heroic resolve to act up to it, the working class can afford to smile at the coarse invective of the gentlemen's gentlemen with the pen and ink-horn, and at the didactic patronage of well-wishing bourgeois-doctrinaires, pouring forth their ignorant platitudes and sectarian crotchets in the oracular tone of scientific infallibility.

When the Paris Commune took the management of the revolution in its own hands; when plain working men for the first time dared to infringe upon the governmental privilege of their "natural superiors," and, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty, performed their work modestly, conscientiously, and efficiently—performed it at salaries the highest of which barely amounted to one-fifth of what, according to high scientific authority, is the minimum required for a secretary to a certain metropolitan school-board—the old world writhed in convulsions of rage at the sight of the Red Flag, the symbol of the Republic of Labour, floating over the Hotel de Ville.

And yet, this was the first revolution in which the working

class was openly acknowledged as the only class capable of social initiative, even by the great bulk of the Paris middle class—shopkeepers, tradesmen, merchants—the wealthy capitalist alone excepted. The Commune had saved them<sup>1</sup> by a sagacious settlement of that ever recurring cause of dispute among the middle class themselves—the debtor and creditor accounts. The same portion of the middle class, after they had assisted in putting down the working men's insurrection of June 1848, had been at once unceremoniously sacrificed to their creditors by the then Constituent Assembly. But this was not their only motive for now rallying round the working class. They felt there was but one alternative—the Commune, or the empire—under whatever name it might reappear. The empire had ruined them economically by the havoc it made of public wealth, by the wholesale financial swindling it fostered, by the props it lent to the artificially accelerated centralisation of capital, and the concomitant expropriation of their own ranks. It had suppressed them politically, it had shocked them morally by its orgies, it had insulted their Voltairianism<sup>2</sup> by handing over the education of their children to the *freres Ignorantins*, it had revolted their national feeling as Frenchmen by precipitating them headlong into a war which left only one equivalent for the ruins it made—the disappearance of the empire. In fact, after the exodus from Paris of the high Bonapartist and capitalist *bohème*, the true middle class Party of Order came out in the shape of the "*Union Republicaine*," enrolling themselves under the colours of the Commune and defending it against the wilful misconstruction of Thiers. Whether the gratitude of this great body of the middle class will stand the present severe trial, time must show.

The Commune was perfectly right in telling the peasants that "its victory was their only hope." Of all the lies hatched at Versailles and re-echoed by the glorious European penny-a-liner, one of the most tremendous was that the Rurals represented the French peasantry. Think only of the love of the French peasant for the men to whom, after 1815, he had to

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<sup>1</sup>The Central Committee of the National Guard as late as March 20 had postponed payment on bills of exchange until October 1, 1871. On April 18, the Commune promulgated a decree postponing payments on debt obligations for three years.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>*I.e.*, free-thinking, hostile to the priests and the church—*Ed.*

pay the milliard of indemnity!<sup>1</sup> In the eyes of the French peasant, the very existence of a great landed proprietor is in itself an encroachment on his conquests of 1789. The bourgeois, in 1848, had burdened his plot of land with the additional tax of forty-five cents,<sup>2</sup> in the franc; but then he did so in the name of the revolution; while now he had fomented a civil war against the revolution, to shift on to the peasant's shoulders the chief load of the five milliards of indemnity to be paid to the Prussian. The Commune, on the other hand, in one of its proclamations, declared that the true originators of the war would be made to pay its cost. The Commune would have delivered the peasant of the blood tax—would have given him a cheap government—transformed his present blood-suckers, the notary, advocate, executor, and other judicial vampires, into salaried communal agents, elected by, and responsible to, himself. It would have freed him of the tyranny of the *grade champetre*, the gendarme, and the prefect; would have put enlightenment by the schoolmaster in the place of stultification by the priest. And the French peasant is, above all, a man of reckoning. He would find it extremely reasonable that the pay of the priest, instead of being extorted by the tax-gatherer, should only depend upon the spontaneous action of the parishioners' religious instincts. Such were the great immediate boons which the rule of the Commune—and that rule alone—held out to the French peasantry. It is, therefore, quite superfluous here to expatiate upon the more complicated but vital problems which the Commune alone was able, and at the same time compelled, to solve in favour of the peasant, viz., the hypothecary debt, lying like an incubus upon his parcel of soil, the *proletariat foncier* (the rural proletariat), daily growing upon it, and his expropriation from it enforced, at a more and more rapid rate, by the very develop-

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<sup>1</sup>The Bourbon dynasty, which was restored to power after the overthrow of Napoleon I, decided to compensate the French nobility for the land taken from it during the first French bourgeois revolution. One milliard francs was paid to the nobility.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The 45 centime tax was introduced in 1848 by the bourgeois provisional government with the object of creating dissension between the proletariat and the peasantry. The government gave as the reason for the tax the necessity of feeding the workers. The increase of taxation on the peasants by almost 50 per cent turned the peasantry against the revolution and the republic.—*Ed.*

ment of modern agriculture and the competition of capitalist farming.

The French peasant had elected Louis Bonaparte president of the republic; but the Party of Order<sup>1</sup> created the empire. What the French peasant really wants he commenced to show in 1849 and 1850, by opposing his *maire* to the government's prefect, his schoolmaster to the government's priest, and himself to the government's gendarme. All the laws made by the Party of Order in January and February 1850 were avowed measures of repression against the peasant. The peasant was a Bonapartist, because the Great Revolution, with all its benefits to him, was, in his eyes, personified in Napoleon. This delusion, rapidly breaking down under the Second Empire (and in its very nature hostile to the Rurals), this prejudice of the past, how could it have withstood the appeal of the Commune to the living interests and urgent wants of the peasantry?.

The Rurals—this was, in fact, their chief apprehension—knew that three months' free communication of Communal Paris with the provinces would bring about a general rising of the peasants, and hence their anxiety to establish a police blockade around Paris, so as to stop the spread of the rinderpest.

If the Commune was thus the true representative of all the healthy elements of French society, and therefore the truly national government, it was, at the same time, as a working men's government, as the bold champion of the emancipation of labour, emphatically international. Within sight of the Prussian army, that had annexed to Germany two French provinces,<sup>2</sup> the Commune annexed to France the working people all over the world.

The Second Empire had been the jubilee of cosmopolitan blacklegism, the rakes of all countries rushing in at its call for a share in its orgies and in the plunder of the French people. Even at this moment the right hand of Thiers is Ganesco, the foul Wallachian, and his left hand is Markovsky, the Russian spy. The Commune admitted all foreigners to the honour of dying for an immortal cause. Between the foreign war lost by their treason, and the civil war fomented by their conspiracy with the foreign invader, the bourgeoisie had found the time to display their patriotism by organising

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<sup>1</sup>The Party of Order during the 1848 Revolution united the royalist big bourgeoisie and the landowners.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Alsace and Lorraine.—*Ed.*

police hunts upon the Germans in France. The Commune made a German working man its Minister of Labour. Thiers, the bourgeoisie, the Second Empire, had continually deluded Poland by loud professions of sympathy, while in reality betraying her to, and doing the dirty work of, Russia. The Commune honoured the heroic sons of Poland by placing them at the head of the defenders of Paris. And, to broadly mark the new era of history it was conscious of initiating, under the eyes of the conquering Prussians on the one side, and of the Bonapartist army, led by Bonapartist generals, on the other, the Commune pulled down that colossal symbol of martial glory, the Vendome Column.

The great social measure of the Commune was its own working existence. Its special measures could but betoken the tendency of a government of the people by the people. Such were the abolition of the nightwork of journeymen bakers; the prohibition, under penalty, of the employers' practice to reduce wages by levying upon their workpeople fines under manifold pretexts—a process in which the employer combines in his own person the parts of legislator, judge, and executor, and filches the money to boot. Another measure of this class was the surrender to associations of workmen, under reserve of compensation, of all closed workshops and factories, no matter whether the respective capitalists had absconded or preferred to strike work.

The financial measures of the Commune, remarkable for their sagacity and moderation, could only be such as were compatible with the state of a besieged town. Considering the colossal robberies committed upon the city of Paris by the great financial companies and contractors, under the protection of Haussmann,<sup>2</sup> the Commune would have had an incomparably better title to confiscate their property than Louis Napoleon had against the Orleans family. The Hohenzollern and the English oligarchs, who both have derived a good deal of their estates from church plunder, were, of course, greatly shocked at the Commune clearing but 8,000 f. out of secularisation.

While the Versailles government, as soon as it had recovered some spirit and strength, used the most violent means against the Commune; while it put down the free expression

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<sup>2</sup>During the Second Empire, Baron Haussmann was Prefect of the Department of the Seine, i.e., of the City of Paris. He caused a number of new streets and buildings to be constructed.  
—Ed.

of opinion all over France, even to the forbidding of meetings of delegates from the large towns; while it subjected Versailles and the rest of France to an espionage far surpassing that of the Second Empire; while it burned by its gendarme inquisitors all papers printed at Paris, and sifted all correspondence from and to Paris; while in the National Assembly the most timid attempts to put in a word for Paris were howled down in a manner unknown even to the *Chambre introuvable* of 1816; with the savage warfare of Versailles outside, and its attempts at corruption and conspiracy inside Paris—would the Commune not have shamefully betrayed its trust by affecting to keep up all the decencies and appearances of liberalism as in a time of profound peace? Had the government of the Commune been akin to that of M. Thiers, there would have been no more occasion to suppress Party of Order papers at Paris than there was to suppress Communal papers at Versailles.

It was irritating indeed to the Rurals that at the very same time they declared the return to the Church to be the only means of salvation for France, the infidel Commune unearthed the peculiar mysteries of the Picpus nunnery, and of the Church of St. Laurent.<sup>1</sup> It was a satire upon M. Thiers that, while he showered grand crosses upon the Bonapartist generals in acknowledgment of their mastery in losing battles, signing capitulations, and turning cigarettes at Wilhelmshohe, the Commune dismissed and arrested its generals whenever they were suspected of neglecting their duties. The expulsion from, and arrest by, the Commune of one of its members who had slipped in under a false name, and had undergone at Lyons six days' imprisonment for simple bankruptcy, was it not a deliberate insult hurled at the forger, Jules Favre, then still the foreign minister of France, still selling France to Bismarck, and still dictating his orders to that paragon government of Belgium? But indeed the Commune did not pretend to infallibility, the invariable attribute of all governments of the old stamp. It published its doings and sayings, it initiated the public into all its shortcomings.

In every revolution there intrude, at the side of its true agents, men of a different stamp; some of them survivors of

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<sup>1</sup> In the church of St. Laurent were discovered skeletons of women who had been violated by the monks and buried alive in the vaults. In the Picpus nunnery women were held on the pretext that they were insane, and they suffered the same fate.—Ed.

and devotees to past revolutions, without insight into the present movement, but preserving popular influence by their known honesty and courage, or by the sheer force of tradition; others mere brawlers, who, by dint of repeating year after year the same set of stereotyped declamations against the government of the day, have sneaked into the reputation of revolutionists of the first water. After the 18th of March, some such men did also turn up, and in some cases contrived to play pre-eminent parts. As far as their power went, they hampered the real action of the working class, exactly as men of that sort have hampered the full development of every previous revolution. They are an unavoidable evil: with time they are shaken off; but time was not allowed to the Commune.

Wonderful, indeed, was the change the Commune had wrought in Paris! No longer any trace of the meretricious Paris of the Second Empire! No longer was Paris the rendezvous of British landlords, Irish absentees,<sup>1</sup> American ex-slaveholders and shoddy men, Russian ex-serfowners, and Wallachian boyards. No more corpses at the morgue, no nocturnal burglaries, scarcely any robberies; in fact, for the first time since the days of February 1848, the streets of Paris were safe, and that without any police of any kind. "We," said a member of the Commune, "hear no longer of assassination, theft and personal assault; it seems indeed as if the police had dragged along with it to Versailles all its Conservative friends." The *cocottes* had refound the scent of their protectors—the absconding men of family, religion, and above all, of property. In their stead, the real women of Paris showed again at the surface—heroic, noble, and devoted, like the women of anti-quity. Working, thinking, fighting, bleeding Paris—almost forgetful, in its incubation of a new society, of the cannibals: at its gates—radiant in the enthusiasm of its historic initiative!

Opposed to this new world at Paris, behold the old world at Versailles—that assembly of the ghouls of all defunct *regimes*, Legitimists and Orleanists, eager to feed upon the carcass of the nation—with a tail of antediluvian republicans, sanctioning, by their presence in the Assembly, the slaveholders' rebellion, relying for the maintenance of their parliamentary republic upon the vanity of the senile mountebank at its head, cari-

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<sup>1</sup> Irish landlords who squandered their "income" outside the country, hardly ever visiting their estates.—*Ed.*

capturing 1789 by holding their ghastly meetings in the *Jeu de Paume*.<sup>1</sup> There it was, this Assembly, the representative of everything dead in France, propped up to the semblance of life by nothing but the swords of the generals of Louis Bonaparte. Paris all truth, Versailles all lie; and that lie vented through the mouth of Thiers.

Thiers tells a deputation of the mayors of the Seine-et-Oise—"You may rely upon my word, which I have *never* broken!" He tells the Assembly itself that "it was the most freely elected and most liberal Assembly France ever possessed"; he tells his motley soldiery that it was "the admiration of the world, and the finest army France ever possessed"; he tells the provinces that the bombardment of Paris by him was a myth: "If some cannon-shots have been fired, it is not the deed of the army of Versailles, but of some insurgents trying to make believe that they are fighting, while they dare not show their faces." He again tells the provinces that "the artillery of Versailles does not bombard Paris, but only cannonades it." He tells the Archbishop of Paris that the pretended executions and reprisals (!) attributed to the Versailles troops were all moonshine. He tells Paris that he was only anxious "to free it from the hideous tyrants who oppress it," and that, in fact, the Paris of the Commune was "but a handful of criminals."

The Paris of M. Thiers was not the real Paris of the "vile multitude," but a phantom Paris, the Paris of the *francs-fleurs*, the Paris of the Boulevards, male and female—the rich, the capitalist, the gilded, the idle Paris, now thronging with its lackeys, its black-legs, its literary *bohème*, and its *cocottes* at Versailles, Saint-Denis, Rueil, and Saint-Germain; considering the civil war but an agreeable diversion, eyeing the battle going on through telescopes, counting the rounds of cannon, and swearing by their own honour and that of their prostitutes, that the performance was far better got up than it used to be at the Porte St. Martin. The men who fell were really dead; the cries of the wounded were cries in good earnest; and, besides, the whole thing was so intensely historical.

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<sup>1</sup>The tennis court where in 1789 the National Assembly took an oath not to dissolve, in spite of the royal command, before the constitution had been drafted.—*Ed.*

This is the Paris of M. Thiers, as the emigration of Coblenz<sup>1</sup> was the France of M. de Calonne.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV

The first attempt of the slaveholders' conspiracy to put down Paris by getting the Prussians to occupy it was frustrated by Bismarck's refusal. The second attempt, that of the 18th of March, ended in the rout of the army and the flight to Versailles of the government, which ordered the whole administration to break up and follow in its track. By the semblance of peace negotiations with Paris, Thiers found the time to prepare for war against it. But where to find an army? The remnants of the line regiments were weak in number and unsafe in character. His urgent appeal to the provinces to succour Versailles, by their National Guards and volunteers, met with a flat refusal. Brittany alone furnished a handful of *Chouans* fighting under a white flag, every one of them wearing on his breast the heart of Jesus in white cloth, and shouting "*Vive le Roi!*" (Long live the King!) Thiers was, therefore, compelled to collect, in hot haste, a motley crew, composed of sailors, marines, Pontifical Zouaves, Valentin's gendarmes, and Pietri's *sergents-de-ville* and *mouchards*. This army, however, would have been ridiculously ineffective without the instalments of imperialist war prisoners, which Bismarck granted in numbers just sufficient to keep the civil war agoing, and keep the Versailles government in abject dependence on Prussia. During the war itself, the Versailles police had to look after the Versailles army, while the gendarmes had to drag it on by exposing themselves at all posts of danger. The forts which fell were not taken, but bought. The heroism of the Federals convinced Thiers that the resistance of Paris was not to be broken by his own strategic genius and the bayonets at his disposal.

Meanwhile, his relations with the provinces became more and more difficult. Not one single address of approval came in to gladden Thiers and his Rurals. Quite the contrary. Deputations and addresses demanding, in a tone anything but respectful, conciliation with Paris on the basis of the unequi-

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<sup>1</sup>The centre of the counter-revolutionary nobility in emigration during the first French bourgeois revolution.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>De Calonne was Comptroller General (a kind of Prime Minister) in France on the eve of the 1789 Revolution.—*Ed.*

vocal recognition of the republic, the acknowledgment of the Communal liberties, and the dissolution of the National Assembly, whose mandate was extinct, poured in from all sides, and in such numbers that Dufaure, Thiers' Minister of Justice, in his circular of April 23 to the public prosecutors, commanded them to treat "the cry of conciliation" as a crime! In regard, however, of the hopeless prospect held out by his campaign, Thiers resolved to shift his tactics by ordering, all over the country, municipal elections to take place on the 30th of April, on the basis of the new municipal law dictated by himself to the National Assembly. What with the intrigues of his prefects, what with police intimidation, he felt quite sanguine of imparting, by the verdict of the provinces, to the National Assembly that moral power it had never possessed, and of getting at last from the provinces the physical force required for the conquest of Paris.

His banditti-warfare against Paris, exalted in his own bulletins, and the attempts of his ministers at the establishment, throughout France, of a reign of terror, Thiers was from the beginning anxious to accompany with a little by-play of conciliation, which had to serve more than one purpose. It was to dupe the provinces, to inveigle the middle class element in Paris, and, above all, to afford the professed republicans in the National Assembly the opportunity of hiding their treason against Paris behind their faith in Thiers. On the 21st of March, when still without an army, he had declared to the Assembly: "Come what may, I will not send an army to Paris." On the 27th March he rose again: "I have found the republic an accomplished fact, and I am firmly resolved to maintain it." In reality, he put down the revolution at Lyons and Marseilles<sup>1</sup> in the name of the republic, while the roars of his Rurals drowned the very mention of its name at Versailles. After this exploit, he toned down the "accomplished fact" into an hypothetical fact. The Orleans princes, whom he had cautiously warned off Bordeaux, were now, in flagrant breach of the law, permitted to intrigue at Dreux. The concessions held out by Thiers in his interminable interviews with the delegates from Paris and the provinces, although constantly varied

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<sup>1</sup>The outbreak of the revolution and proclamation of the Commune in Lyons occurred on March 22, and in Marseilles on March 23; both were quickly crushed by the Thiers government. The Commune was also proclaimed in Toulouse, Narbonne, St. Etienne and some other towns.—Ed.

in tone and colour, according to time and circumstances, did in fact never come to more than the prospective restriction of revenge to the "handful of criminals implicated in the murder of Lecomte and Clement Thomas," on the well-understood premise that Paris and France were unreservedly to accept M. Thiers himself as the best of possible Republics, as he, in 1830, had done with Louis Philippe. Even these concessions he not only took care to render doubtful by the official comments put upon them in the Assembly through his ministers. He had his Dufaure to act. Dufaure, this old Orleanist lawyer, had always been the justiciary of the state of siege, as now in 1871, under Thiers, so in 1839 under Louis Philippe, and in 1849 under Louis Bonaparte's presidency. While out of office he made a fortune by pleading for the Paris capitalists, and made political capital by pleading against the laws he had himself originated. He now hurried through the National Assembly not only a set of repressive laws which were, after the fall of Paris, to extirpate the last remnants of republican liberty in France; he foreshadowed the fate of Paris by abridging the, for him, too slow procedure of courts-martial, and by a newfangled, Draconic code of deportation. The Revolution 1848, abolishing the penalty of death for political crimes, had replaced it by deportation. Louis Bonaparte did not dare, at least not in theory, to re-establish the regime of the guillotine. The Rural Assembly, not yet bold enough even to hint that the Parisians were not rebels, but assassins, had therefore to confine its prospective vengeance against Paris to Dufaure's new code of deportation. Under all these circumstances Thiers himself could not have gone on with his comedy of conciliation, had it not, as he intended it to do, drawn forth shrieks of rage from the Rurals, whose ruminating mind did neither understand the play, nor its necessities of hypocrisy, tergiversation, and procrastination.

In sight of the impending municipal elections of the 30th April, Thiers enacted one of his great conciliation scenes on the 27th April. Amidst a flood of sentimental rhetoric, he exclaimed from the tribune of the Assembly:

"There exists no conspiracy against the republic but that of Paris, which compels us to shed French blood. I repeat it again and again. Let those impious arms fall from the hands which hold them, and chastisement will be arrested at once by an act of peace excluding only the small number of criminals."

To the violent interruption of the Rurals he replied:

“Gentlemen, tell me, I implore you, am I wrong? Do you really regret that I could have stated the truth that the criminals are only a handful? Is it not fortunate in the midst of our misfortunes that those who have been capable to shed the blood of Clement Thomas and General Lecomte are but rare exceptions?”

France, however, turned a deaf ear to what Thiers flattered himself to be a parliamentary siren's song. Out of 700,000 municipal councillors returned by the 35,000 communes still left to France, the united Legitimists, Orleanists, and Bonapartists did not carry 8,000. The supplementary elections which followed were still more decidedly hostile. Thus, instead of getting from the provinces the badly-needed physical force, the National Assembly lost even its last claim to moral force, that of being the expression of the universal suffrage of the country. To complete the discomfiture, the newly-chosen municipal councils of all the cities of France openly threatened the usurping Assembly at Versailles with a counter assembly at Bordeaux.

Then the long-expected moment of decisive action had at last come for Bismarck. He peremptorily summoned Thiers to send to Frankfort plenipotentiaries for the definitive settlement of peace. In humble obedience to the call of his master, Thiers hastened to despatch his trusty Jules Favre, backed by Pouyer-Quertier. Pouyer-Quertier, an “eminent” Rouen cotton-spinner, a fervent and even servile partisan of the Second Empire, had never found any fault with it save its commercial treaty with England,<sup>1</sup> prejudicial to his own shop-interest. Hardly installed at Bordeaux as Thiers' Minister of Finance, he denounced that “unholy” treaty, hinted at its near abrogation, and had even the effrontery to try, although in vain (having counted without Bismarck), the immediate enforcement of the old protective duties against Alsace, where, he said, no previous international treaties stood in the way. This man who considered counter-revolution as a means to put down wages at Rouen, and the surrender of French provinces as a means to bring up the price of his wares in France, was he not *the one* predestined to be picked out by Thiers as the helpmate of Jules Favre in his last and crowning treason?

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<sup>1</sup>By the commercial treaty with England concluded by Napoleon III in 1860, duties on English goods were lowered.  
—Ed.

On the arrival at Frankfort of this exquisite pair of plenipotentiaries, bully Bismarck at once met them with the imperious alternative: Either the restoration of the empire or the unconditional acceptance of my own peace terms! These terms included a shortening of the intervals in which the war indemnity was to be paid and the continued occupation of the Paris forts by Prussian troops until Bismarck should feel satisfied with the state of things in France; Prussia thus being recognised as the supreme arbiter in internal French politics! In return for this he offered to let loose, for the extermination of Paris, the captive Bonapartist army, and to lend them the direct assistance of Emperor William's troops. He pledged his good faith by making payment of the first instalment of the indemnity dependent on the "pacification" of Paris. Such a bait was, of course, eagerly swallowed by Thiers and his plenipotentiaries. They signed the treaty of peace on the 10th of May and had it endorsed by the Versailles Assembly on the 18th.

In the interval between the conclusion of peace and the arrival of the Bonapartist prisoners, Thiers felt the more bound to resume his comedy of conciliation, as his republican tools stood in sore need of a pretext for blinking their eyes at the preparations for the carnage of Paris. As late as the 8th May he replied to a deputation of middle class conciliators—"Whenever the insurgents will make up their minds for capitulation, the gates of Paris shall be flung wide open during a week for all except the murderers of Generals Clement Thomas and Lecomte."

A few days afterwards, when violently interpellated on these promises by the Rurals, he refused to enter into any explanations; not, however, without giving them this significant hint: "I tell you there are impatient men amongst you, men who are in too great a hurry. They must have another eight days; at the end of these eight days there will be no more danger, and the task will be proportionate to their courage and to their capacities." As soon as MacMahon was able to assure him that he could shortly enter Paris, Thiers declared to the Assembly that "he would enter Paris with the laws in his hands, and demand a full expiation from the wretches who had sacrificed the lives of soldiers and destroyed public monuments." As the moment of decision drew near he said—to the Assembly, "I shall be pitiless!"—to Paris, that it was doomed; and to his Bonapartist banditti, that they had

state licence to wreak vengeance upon Paris to their hearts' content. At last, when treachery had opened the gates of Paris to General Douai, on the 21st May, Thiers, on the 22nd, revealed to the Rurals the "goal" of his conciliation comedy, which they had so obstinately persisted in not understanding. "I told you a few days ago that we were approaching *our goal*; today I come to tell you *the goal* is reached. The victory of order, justice and civilisation is at last won!"

So it was. The civilisation and justice of bourgeois order comes out in its lurid light whenever the slaves and drudges of that order rise against their masters. Then this civilisation and justice stand forth as undisguised savagery and lawless revenge. Each new crisis in the class struggle between the appropriator and the producer brings out this fact more glaringly. Even the atrocities of the bourgeois in June 1848 vanish before the ineffable infamy of 1871. The self-sacrificing heroism with which the population of Paris—men, women and children—fought for eight days after the entrance of the Versaillaise, reflects as much the grandeur of their cause, as the infernal deeds of the soldiery reflect the innate spirit of that civilisation of which they are the mercenary vindicators. A glorious civilisation, indeed, the great problem of which is: how to get rid of the heaps of corpses it made after the battle was over!

To find a parallel for the conduct of Thiers and his bloodhounds we must go back to the times of Sulla and the two Triumvirates of Rome. The same wholesale slaughter in cold blood; the same disregard, in massacre, of age and sex, the same system of torturing prisoners; the same proscriptions, but this time of a whole class; the same savage hunt after concealed leaders, lest one might escape; the same denunciations of political and private enemies; the same indifference for the butchery of entire strangers to the feud. There is but this difference, that the Romans had no *mitrailleuses* for the despatch, in the lump, of the proscribed, and that they had not "the law in their hands," nor on their lips the cry of "civilisation."

And after those horrors look upon the other still more hideous face of that bourgeois civilisation as described by its own press!

"With stray shots," writes the Paris correspondent of a London Tory paper, "still ringing in the distance, and untended wounded wretches dying amid the tombstones of Pere

la Chaise—with 6,000 terror-stricken insurgents wandering in an agony of despair in the labyrinth of the catacombs, and wretches hurried through the streets to be shot down in scores by the *mitrailleuse*—it is revolting to see the cafes filled with the votaries of absinthe, billiards and dominoes; female profligacy perambulating the boulevards, and the sound of revelry disturbing the night from the *cabinets particuliers* of fashionable restaurants.” M. Edouard Herve writes in the *Journal de Paris*, a Versaillist journal suppressed by the Commune: “The way in which the propulation of Paris [!] manifested its satisfaction yesterday was rather more than frivolous, and we fear it will grow worse as time progresses. Paris has now a *fete* day appearance, which is sadly out of place; and, unless we are to be called the *Parisiens de la decadence*, this sort of thing must come to an end.” And then he quotes the passage from Tacitus: “Yet, on the morrow of that horrible struggle, even before it was completely over, Rome—degraded and corrupt—began once more to swallow in the voluptuous slough which was destroying its body and polluting its soul—*alibi proelia et vulnera, alibi balnea popinoeque* [here fights and wounds, there baths and restaurants].” M. Herve only forgets to say that the “population of Paris” he speaks of is but the population of the Paris of M. Thiers—the *francs-fleurs* returning in throngs from Versailles, Saint-Denis, Rueil, and Saint Germain—the Paris of the “Decline.”

In all its bloody triumphs over the self-sacrificing champions of a new and better society, that nefarious civilisation, based upon the enslavement of labour, drowns the moans of its victims in a hue-and-cry of calumny, reverberated by a world-wide echo. The serene working men’s Paris of the Commune is suddenly changed into a pandemonium by the bloodhounds of “order.” And what does this tremendous change prove to the bourgeois mind of all countries? Why, that the Commune has conspired against civilisation! The Paris people die enthusiastically for the Commune in numbers unequalled in any battle known to history. What does that prove? Why, that the Commune was not the people’s own government but the usurpation of a handful of criminals! The women of Paris joyfully give up their lives at the barricades and on the place of execution. What does this prove? Why, that the demon of the Commune has changed them into Me-gaeras and Hecates! The moderation of the Commune during two months of undisputed sway is equalled only by the hero-

ism of its defence. What does that prove? Why, that for months the Commune carefully hid, under a mask of moderation and humanity, the bloodthirstiness of its fiendish instincts, to be let loose in the hour of its agony!

The working men's Paris, in the act of its heroic self-holocaust, involved in its flames buildings and monuments. While tearing to pieces the living body of the proletariat, its rulers must no longer expect to return triumphantly into the intact architecture of their abodes. The government of Versailles cries "Incendiarism!" and whispers this cue to all its agents, down to the remotest hamlet, to hunt up its enemies everywhere as suspect of professional incendiarism. The bourgeoisie of the whole world, which looks complacently upon the wholesale massacre after the battle, is convulsed by horror at the desecration of brick and mortar!

When governments give state licences to their navies to "kill, burn, and destroy," is that a licence for incendiarism? When the British troops wantonly set fire to the Capitol at Washington and to the summer palace of the Chinese emperor, was that incendiarism? When the Prussians not for military reasons, but out of the mere spite of revenge, burned down, by the help of petroleum, towns like Chateaudun and innumerable villages, was that incendiarism? When Thiers, during six weeks, bombarded Paris, under the pretext that he wanted to set fire to those houses only in which there were people, was that incendiarism?—In war, fire is an arm as legitimate as any. Buildings held by the enemy are shelled to set them on fire. If their defenders have to retire, they themselves light the flames to prevent the attack from making use of the buildings. To be burned down has always been the inevitable fate of all buildings situated in the front of battle of all the regular armies of the world. But in the war of the enslaved against their enslavers, the only justifiable war in history, this is by no means to hold good! The Commune used fire strictly as a means of defence. They used it to stop up to the Versailles troops those long, straight avenues which Haussmann had expressly opened to artillery-fire; they used it to cover their retreat, in the same way as the Versaillese, in their advance, used their shells which destroyed at least as many buildings as the fire of the Commune. It is a matter of dispute, even now, which buildings were set fire to by the defence, and which by the attack. And the defence resorted to fire only when the Versaillese troops had already commenced their

wholesale murdering of prisoners.—Besides, the Commune had, long before, given full public notice that if driven to extremities, they would bury themselves under the ruins of Paris, and make Paris a second Moscow, as the Government of Defence; but only as a cloak for its treason, had promised to do. For this purpose Trochu had found them the petroleum. The Commune knew that its opponents cared nothing for the lives of the Paris people, but cared much for their own. Paris buildings. And Thiers, on the other hand, had given them notice that he would be implacable in his vengeance. No sooner had he got his army ready on one side, and the Prussians shutting up the trap on the other, than he proclaimed: "I shall be pitiless! The expiation will be complete, and justice will be stern!" If the acts of the Paris working men were vandalism, it was the vandalism of defence in despair, not the vandalism of triumph, like that which the Christians perpetrated upon the really priceless art treasures of heathen antiquity; and even that vandalism has been justified by the historian as an unavoidable and comparatively trifling concomitant to the titanic struggle between a new society arising and an old one breaking down. It was still less the vandalism of Haussmann, razing historic Paris to make place for the Paris of the sightseer!

But the execution by the Commune of the sixty-four hostages, with the Archbishop of Paris at their head! The bourgeoisie and its army in June 1848 re-established a custom which had long disappeared from the practice of war—the shooting of their defenceless prisoners. This brutal custom has since been more or less strictly adhered to by the suppressors of all popular commotions in Europe and India; thus proving that it constitutes a real "progress of civilisation"! On the other hand the Prussians, in France, had re-established the practice of taking hostages—innocent men, who, with their lives, were to answer to them for the acts of others. When Thiers, as we have seen, from the very beginning of the conflict, enforced the humane practice of shooting down the Communal prisoners, the Commune, to protect their lives, was obliged to resort to the Prussian practice of securing hostages. The lives of the hostages had been forfeited over and over again by the continued shooting of prisoners on the part of the Versaillese. How could they be spared any longer after the carnage with which MacMahon's praetorians celebrated their entrance into Paris? Was even the last check upon the unscrupulous ferocity of bourgeois governments—the taking of hostages—to be

made a mere sham of? The real murderer of Archbishop Darboy is Thiers. The Commune again and again had offered to exchange the archbishop, and ever so many priests in the bargain, against the single Blanqui, then in the hands of Thiers. Thiers obstinately refused. He knew that with Blanqui he would give to the Commune a head; while the archbishop would serve his purpose best in the shape of a corpse. Thiers acted upon the precedent of Cavaignac. How, in June 1848, did not Cavaignac and his men of order raise shouts of horror by stigmatising the insurgents as the assassins of Archbishop Affre! They knew perfectly well that the archbishop had been shot by the soldiers of order. M. Jacquemet, the archbishop's vicar-general, present on the spot, had immediately afterwards handed them in his evidence to that effect.

All this chorus of calumny, which the Party of Order never fail, in their orgies of blood, to raise against their victims, only proves that the bourgeois of our days considers himself the legitimate successor to the baron of old, who thought every weapon in his own hand fair against the plebeian, while in the hands of the plebeian a weapon of any kind constituted in itself a crime.

The conspiracy of the ruling class to break down the revolution by a civil war carried on under the patronage of the foreign invader—a conspiracy which we have traced from the very 4th of September down to the entrance of MacMahon's praetorians through the gate of St. Cloud—culminated in the carnage of Paris. Bismarck gloats over the ruins of Paris, in which he saw perhaps the first instalment of that general destruction of great cities he had prayed for when still a simple Rural in the Prussian *Chambre introuvable* of 1849. He gloats over the cadavres of the Paris proletariat. For him this is not only the extermination of revolution, but the extinction of France, now decapitated in reality, and by the French government itself. With the shallowness characteristic of all successful statesmen, he sees but the surface of this tremendous historic event. Whenever before has history exhibited the spectacle of a conqueror crowning his victory by turning into, not only the gendarme, but the hired bravo of the conquered government? There existed no war between Prussia and the Commune of Paris. On the contrary, the Commune had accepted the peace preliminaries, and Prussia had announced her neutrality. Prussia was, therefore, no belligerent. She acted the part of a bravo, a cowardly bravo, because incurring

no danger ; a hired bravo, because stipulating beforehand the payment of her blood-money of 500 millions on the fall of Paris. And thus, at last, came out the true character of the war, ordained by Providence as a chastisement of godless and debauched France by pious and moral Germany ! And this unparalleled breach of the law of nations, even as understood by the old-world lawyers, instead of arousing the "civilised" governments of Europe to declare the felonious Prussian government, the mere tool of the St. Petersburg Cabinet, an outlaw amongst nations, only incites them to consider whether the few victims who escape the double cordon around Paris are not to be given up to the hangman at Versailles !

That after the most tremendous war of modern times, the conquering and the conquered hosts should fraternise for the common massacre of the proletariat—this unparalleled event does indicate, not, as Bismarck thinks, the final repression of a new society upheaving, but the crumbling into dust of bourgeois society. The highest heroic effort of which old society is still capable is national war; and this is now proved to be a mere governmental humbug, intended to defer the struggle of classes and to be thrown aside as soon as that class struggle bursts out into civil war. Class rule is no longer able to disguise itself in a national uniform; the national governments are *one* as against the proletariat !

After Whit-Sunday, 1871, there can be neither peace nor truce possible between the working men of France and the appropriators of their produce. The iron hand of a mercenary soldiery may keep for a time both classes tied down in common oppression. But the battle must break out again and again in ever-growing dimensions, and there can be no doubt as to who will be the victor in the end—the appropriating few, or the immense working majority. And the French working class is only the advanced guard of the modern proletariat.

While the European governments thus testify, before Paris, to the international character of class rule, they cry down the International Working Men's Association—the international counter-organisation of labour against the cosmopolitan conspiracy of capital—as the head fountain of all these disasters. Thiers denounced it as the despot of labour, pretending to be its liberator. Picard ordered that all communications between the French Internationals and those abroad should be cut off; Count Jaubert, Thiers' mummified accomplice of 1835, declares it the great problem of all civilised

governments to weed it out. The Rurals roar against it, and the whole European press joins the chorus. 'An honourable French writer, completely foreign to our Association, speaks as follows: "The members of the Central Committee of the National Guard, as well as the greater part of the members of the Commune, are the most active, intelligent, and energetic minds of the International Working Men's Association.... men who are thoroughly honest, sincere, intelligent, devoted, pure, and fanatical in the *good* sense of the word." The police-tinged bourgeois mind naturally figures to itself the International Working Men's Association as acting, in the manner of a secret conspiracy, its central body ordering, from time to time, explosions in different countries. Our Association is, in fact, nothing but the international bond between the most advanced working men in the various countries of the civilised world. Wherever, in whatever shape, and under whatever conditions the class struggle obtains any consistency, it is but natural that members of our Association should stand in the foreground. The soil out of which it grows is modern society, itself. It cannot be stamped out by any amount of carnage. To stamp it out, the governments would have to stamp out the despotism of capital over labour—the condition of their own parasitical existence.

Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be for ever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them.

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Office: 256 High Holborn, London, W.C., May 30, 1871.

## NOTES

"The column of prisoners halted in the Avenue Uhrich, and was drawn up, four or five deep, on the footway facing to the road. General Marquis de Gallifet and his staff dismounted and commenced an inspection from the left of the line. Walking down slowly and eyeing the ranks, the general stopped here and there, tapping a man on the shoulder or beckoning him out of the rear ranks. In most cases, without further parley, the individual thus selected was marched out into the centre of the road, where a small supplementary column was thus soon formed.... It was evident that there was considerable room for error. A mounted officer pointed out to General Gallifet a man and woman for some particular offence. The woman, rushing out of the ranks, threw herself on her knees, and, with outstretched arms, protested her innocence in passionate terms. The general waited for a pause, and then with most impassible face and unmoved demeanour, said: 'Madame, I have visited every theatre in Paris, your acting will have no effect on me' (*'ce n'est pas la peine de jouer la comedie'*).... It was not a good thing on that day to be noticeably taller, dirtier, cleaner, older, or uglier than one's neighbours. One individual in particular struck me as probably owing his speedy release from the ills of this world.

to his having a broken nose. . . . Over a hundred being thus chosen, a firing party told off; and the column resumed its march, leaving them behind. A few minutes afterwards a dropping fire in our rear commenced, and continued for over a quarter of an hour. It was the execution of the summarily-convicted wretches."—Paris Correspondent *Daily News*, June 8.—The Gallifet, "the kept man of his wife, so notorious for her shameless exhibitions at the orgies of the Second Empire," went, during the war, by the name of the French "Ensign Pistol."

"The *Temps*, which is a careful journal, and not given to sensation, tells a dreadful story of people imperfectly shot and buried before life was extinct. . . . A great number were buried in the Square round St. Jacques-la-Bouchiere; some of them very superficially. In the daytime the roar of the busy streets prevented any notice being taken; but in the stillness of the night the inhabitants of the houses in the neighbourhood were roused by distant moans, and in the morning a clenched hand was seen protruding through the soil. In consequence of this, exhumations were ordered to take place. . . . That many wounded have been buried alive I have not the slightest doubt. One case I can vouch for. When Brunel was shot with his mistress on the 24th ult. in the courtyard of a house in the Place Vendome, the bodies lay there until the afternoon of the 27th. When the burial party came to remove the corpses, they found the woman living still, and took her to ambulance. Though she had received four bullets she is now out of danger."—Paris Correspondent *Evening Standard*, June 8.

## LETTERS TO DR. KUGELMANN ON THE PARIS COMMUNE<sup>1</sup>

April 12, 1871

... If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire* you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it, and this is essential for every real people's revolution on the

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"In the letters to Kugelmann published here, Marx gives an estimate of the Paris Commune and characterises it as a "historic experiment of gigantic importance, as an advance of the world proletarian revolution, as a practical step that was more important than hundreds of programmes and discussions." (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*.)

Concerning Marx's letter of April 12, Lenin wrote in 1907 that it was "a letter which we would gladly see hung on the wall of the home of every Russian Social-Democrat and of every literate Russian worker."

In this letter to Kugelmann, Marx formulates, as Lenin says, "more accurately, more clearly and better" those extraordinarily important conclusions for the Marxist theory of the state which he had arrived at on the basis of the world-historic experience of the Commune.

"It is clear that Marx's April letter (April 12, 1871) expresses the same thought that is contained in the Address of the General Council of the International written in the end of May (dated May 30, 1871).

"That which in *The Civil War* is called 'the ready-made state machine' is called in the letter of April 12, 'the bureaucratic-military machine'; that which in *The Civil War* is expressed by the words 'simply lay hold of,' is in the letter of April 12, 1871, once again formulated more exactly, clearly and better: 'to transfer . . . from one hand to another.' And the addition, which does not exist in *The Civil War*, is especially striking: not to transfer the ready-made [machine] from one hand to another, but to *smash* it. And this the Commune began to do, but unfortunately did not carry it to completion." (Lenin, *Marxism on the State*.)

Lenin emphasises Marx's high estimate of the historical initiative of the masses in the letter to Kugelmann of April 17. Lenin contrasts this estimate of Marx with the estimates of the Revolution of 1905 by the Russian Mensheviks. He points out the great gulf in regard to this question between Marx and Plekhanov, who after the defeat of the Revolution of

Continent.<sup>1</sup> And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting. What elasticity, what historical initiative, what a capacity for sacrifice in these Parisians! After six months of hunger and ruin, caused rather by internal treachery than by the external enemy, they rise, beneath Prussian bayonets, as if there had never been a war between France and Germany and the enemy were not at the gates of Paris. History has no like example of a like greatness. If

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1905 arrived at the cowardly opportunist conclusion that "they should not have resorted to arms."

"The homage paid to the *historical initiative* of the masses by this profound thinker who foresaw failure six months ahead—and the lifeless, soulless pedantic: 'They should not have resorted to arms!' Are these not as far apart as heaven is from earth. . . .

" . . . 'Marx was able to appreciate the fact that moments occurred in history when the desperate struggle of the masses even for a hopeless cause is *necessary* for the sake of the further education of these masses and their training for the next struggle." (Lenin, Preface to the Russian translation of Marx's *Letters to Kugelmann*.)

And just as Marx drew extremely important lessons from the experience of the defeated Paris Commune for his teachings on the state, so the even more significant world-historic experience of the successful proletariat of the Soviet Union, provided, at the hands of Lenin, and Stalin, extremely rich material for further development of Marx's teachings on the revolution, on the state and on the dictatorship of the proletariat.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>In *The State and Revolution* Lenin explained as follows why Marx restricted his conclusions to the Continent:

"This was natural in 1871, when England was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without militarism and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Hence, Marx excluded England, where a revolution, even a people's revolution, could be conceived of, and was then possible, *without* the condition of first destroying the 'ready-made state machine.'

"Today, in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, Marx's exception is no longer valid. Both England and America, the greatest and last representatives of Anglo-Saxon 'liberty,' in the sense that militarism and bureaucracy are absent, have today plunged headlong into the all-European, filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions to which everything is subordinated and which trample everything under foot. Today, both in England and America, the 'essential' thing for 'every real people's revolution' is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the 'ready-made state machine' (brought in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, to general 'European' imperialist perfection)."

Further, Lenin emphasises that Marx makes use of the

they are defeated only their "good nature" will be to blame. They should have marched at once on Versailles, after first Vinoy and then the reactionary section of the Paris National Guard had themselves retreated. The right moment was missed because of conscientious scruples. They did not want to start the civil war, as if that mischievous abortion Thiers had not already started the civil war with his attempt to disarm Paris. Second mistake: The Central Committee surrendered its power too soon, to make way for the Commune. Again from a too "honourable" scrupulosity!<sup>1</sup> However that may be, the present rising in Paris—even if it be crushed by the wolves, swine and vile curs of the old society—is the most glorious deed of our Party since the June insurrection in Paris. Compare these Parisians, storming heaven, with the slaves to heaven of the German-Prussian Holy Roman Empire, with its posthumous masquerades reeking of the barracks, the Church, cabbage-junkedom and above all, of the philistine.

*A propos.* In the official publication of the list of those receiving direct subsidies from Louis Bonaparte's treasury there is a note that Vogt received 40,000 francs in August 1859. I have informed Liebknecht of the *fait*, (fact) for further use.

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concept of "people's revolution" and explains this concept as follows:

"In Europe, in 1871, there was not a single country on the Continent in which the proletariat constituted the majority of the people. A 'people's' revolution, that swept actually the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced the proletariat and the peasantry. Both classes then constituted the 'people.' Both classes were united by the fact that the 'bureaucratic-military state machine' oppressed, crushed, exploited them. To *smash* this machine, to *break it up*—this is what is truly in the interests of the 'people,' of the majority, the workers and most of the peasants, this is what is 'essential' for the free alliance between the poor peasantry and the proletarians; without such an alliance democracy is unstable and the socialist reformation is impossible.

"As is well known, the Paris Commune strove for such an alliance, although it failed to achieve it owing to a number of circumstances, internal and external." (*The State and Revolution.*)—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup>In his notes on the letters of Marx to Kugelmann, Lenin summarises the essence of the mistakes of the Commune and the historical merits of the Communards in the following words:

"Both mistakes consist in the lack of offensive, in the lack of consciousness and determination to *smash* the state bureaucratic-military machine and the power of the bourgeoisie. What aroused Marx's enthusiasm in the Paris Com-

[London] April 17, 1871

. . . How you can compare petty-bourgeois demonstrations *a la* 13 June, 1849<sup>1</sup> etc., with the present struggle in Paris is quite incomprehensible to me.

World history would indeed be very easy to make, if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favourable chances. It would, on the other hand, be of a very mystical nature, if "accidents" played no part. These accidents themselves fall naturally into the general course of development and are compensated again by other accidents. But acceleration and delay are very dependent upon such "accidents," which include the "accident" of the character of those who at first stand at the head of the movement.

The decisive, unfavourable "accident" this time is by no means to be found in the general conditions of French society, but in the presence of the Prussians in France and their position right before Paris. Of this the Parisians were well aware. But of this, the bourgeois *canaille* of Versailles were also well aware. Precisely for that reason they presented the Parisians with the alternative of taking up the fight or succumbing without a struggle. In the latter case, the demoralisation of the working class would have been a far greater misfortune than the fall of any number of "leaders." The struggle of the working class against the capitalist class and its state has entered upon a new phase with the struggle in Paris. Whatever the immediate results may be a new point of departure of world-historic importance has been gained.

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mune? *The flexibility, the historical initiative, the capacity for self-sacrifice among these Parisians 'The Parisians storming heaven.'*" (Lenin, *Marxism on the State.*)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>See Marx, *The Class Struggles in France.*—Ed.

## PREFATORY NOTE TO THE PEASANT WAR IN GERMANY<sup>1</sup>

THE following work was written in London in the summer of 1850 while still under the immediate impression of the counter-revolution just then completed; it appeared in the fifth and sixth numbers of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung, a politico-economic review, edited by Karl Marx, Hamburg, 1850*. My political friends in Germany desire it to be reprinted, and I accede to their desire, because the work is, to my great regret, still timely today.

It makes no claim to provide material from independent research. On the contrary, the entire matter on the peasant risings and on Thomas Munzer is taken from Zimmermann.<sup>2</sup> His book, despite gaps here and there, is still the best compilation of the factual material. Moreover, old Zimmermann enjoyed his subject. The same revolutionary instinct, which makes him here always take the side of the oppressed classes, made him later one of the best of the extreme Left wing in Frankfort. It is true that since then he is said to have somewhat aged.

If, nevertheless, Zimmermann's account lacks the inner inter-connections; if it does not succeed in showing the religious-political controversies of that epoch as the reflection of

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<sup>1</sup>This Prefatory Note to *The Peasant War in Germany*, a work written by Engels in the year 1850, consists of two parts. The first part was prepared for the new edition of 1870, the second, written in June 1874, for the edition which appeared in the year 1875. On February 12, 1870, Marx wrote to Engels about this Prefatory Note to *The Peasant War in Germany*: "Your introduction is very good. I know of nothing that should be altered or added. With your treatment of 1866 I agree word for word. The double thrust at Wilhelm of the People's Party and at Schweitzer with his bodyguard of rascals is very pretty." The thrust at Schweitzer, a follower of Lassalle, is in the passage where Engels says that "in Germany there is only one serious adversary of the revolution—the Prussian government." The cut at Liebknecht [Wilhelm] is in the passage where Engels describes the National-Liberals and the People's Party as "the opposite poles of one and the same narrow-mindedness."—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Wilhelm Zimmermann (1807-88). A German historian. The reference here is to Zimmermann's chief work, *History of the Great Peasant Wars* (first published in 1841).—*Ed.*

the contemporary class struggles; if it sees in these class struggles only oppressors and oppressed, good and evil, and the final victory of the evil ones; if its insight into the social conditions which determined both the outbreak and the outcome of the struggle is extremely defective, then that was the fault of the time in which the book came into existence. On the contrary, for its time, it is written even very realistically, an honourable exception among the German idealist works on history.

My account, while sketching the historic course of the struggle only in its outlines, attempted to explain the origin of the Peasant War, the attitude of the various parties taking part in it, the political and religious theories through which those parties strove to become clear about their position, and finally the result of the struggle itself as necessarily following from the historically established social conditions of these classes; that is to say, to demonstrate the political constitution of Germany of that time, the revolts against it and the contemporary political and religious theories not as causes but as results of the stage of development of agriculture, industry, land and waterways, commerce and finance, which then existed in Germany. This, the only materialist conception of history, originates not from myself but from Marx, and can be found also in his works on the French Revolution of 1848-49, published in the same review,<sup>1</sup> and in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.

The parallel between the German Revolution of 1525 and that of 1848-49 was too obvious to be rejected altogether at that time. Nevertheless, despite the uniformity in the course of events, where various local revolts were crushed by one and the same princely army despite the often ludicrous similarity in the behaviour of the city burghers in both cases, the difference also stood out clear and unmistakable.

“Who profited by the Revolution of 1525? The *princes*. Who profited by the Revolution of 1848? The *big* princes, Austria and Prussia. Behind the minor princes of 1525, chaining them to themselves by the taxes, stood the urban petty bourgeoisie; behind the big princes of 1850, behind Austria and Prussia there stood the modern big bourgeoisie, rapidly getting them under their yoke by means of the national debt. And behind the big bourgeoisie stand the proletarians.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to *The Class Struggles in France*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>This passage is cited by Engels from the last chapter of *The Peasant War in Germany*. There he compares the course and results of the Peasant Revolution of 1925 with the Revolution of 1848-49.—Ed.

I regret to have to say that in this paragraph much too much honour was done the German bourgeoisie. Both in Austria and Prussia, it has had the opportunity of getting the monarchy "under its yoke by means of the national debt"; nowhere did it ever make use of this opportunity.

By the War of 1866, Austria fell as a gift into the lap of the bourgeoisie.<sup>1</sup> But it does not know how to rule, it is powerless and incapable of anything. It can do only one thing: savagely attack the workers as soon as they begin to stir. It only remains at the helm because the *Hungarians* need it.

And in Prussia? Yes, it is true the national debt has increased by leaps and bounds, the deficit has become a permanent feature, state expenditure grows from year to year, the bourgeoisie have a majority in the Chamber and without their consent taxes cannot be increased nor loans floated—but where is their power over the state? Only a couple of months ago, when there was again a deficit, they had a most favourable position. By holding out only just a little, they could have forced fine concessions. What do they do? They regard it as a sufficient concession that the government *allows* them to lay at its feet close on nine millions, not for one year, but *every year* and for all time to come.

I do not want to blame the poor "National-Liberals"<sup>2</sup> in the Chamber more than they deserve. I know they have been left in the lurch by those who stand behind them, by the mass of the bourgeoisie. This mass does not *want* to rule. It has 1848 still in its bones.

Why the German bourgeoisie exhibits this remarkable cowardice will be discussed later.

In general, however, the above statement has been fully confirmed. Beginning with 1850, the small states have fallen more and definitely into the background, serving only as levers

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<sup>1</sup>The war between Prussia and Austria in the summer of 1866 ended with the defeat of Austria. After the defeat the Austrian emperor "granted" a Constitution. Power was in fact left essentially in the hands of the military clique and the bureaucracy. On February 18, 1867 the Constitution was introduced into the other part of the empire, into Hungary.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>After the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 differences of opinion arose in the ranks of the Progressives, the party of the German bourgeoisie. One section was in favour of a compromise with Bismarck's government and advocated support of his foreign policy. In 1867, this section of the bourgeoisie formed the National-Liberal Party.—*Ed.*

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for Prussian or Austrian intrigues, the struggles for hegemony between Austria and Prussia have become ever more violent, until finally came the armed conflict of 1866, with the result that Austria retained its own provinces, while Prussia obtained direct or indirect control of the whole of the North, the three states of the Southwest being left out in the cold for the time being.<sup>1</sup>

In the whole of this principal and state action the only thing of importance for the German working class is as follows :

Firstly, universal suffrage has given the workers the power of being directly represented in the legislative assembly.

Secondly, Prussia has set a good example by swallowing three other crowns held by the grace of god. That after this operation she still has the same immaculate crown, held by the grace of god as she formerly claimed it to be, not even the National-Liberals believe any more.

Thirdly, there is now only *one* serious adversary of the revolution in Germany—the Prussian government.

And fourthly, the German Austrians will now at last have to ask themselves what they want to be, Germans or Austrians. Whom they would rather prefer to adhere to—to Germany or to their extra German Transleithanian appendages?<sup>2</sup> It has been obvious for a long time that they will have to give up one or the other, but this has been continually glossed over by petty-bourgeois democracy.

As regards the other important controversies on account of 1866, which since then have been thrashed out *ad nauseam* between the "National-Liberals" on the one side and the "People's Party"<sup>3</sup> on the other, the history of the next few years will probably prove that these two standpoints are so bitterly hostile to one another because they are the opposite poles of the same narrow-mindedness.

The year 1866 has changed almost nothing in the social conditions of Germany. The few bourgeois reforms—uniform weights and measures, freedom of movement, freedom of occu-

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<sup>1</sup>After its victory over Austria in 1866, Prussia annexed the kingdom of Hanover, the principality of Hesse-Kassel and the Duchy of Nassau. The North German Alliance was established, consisting of the German states situated north of the Main. Austria, as also the South German states of Bavaria, Wurttemberg and Baden, remained outside this alliance.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the Transleithanian Austrian possessions, i.e., those on the other side of the Leitha (a tributary of the Danube), viz., Siebenburgen, Croatia and Slavonia.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>For the People's Party see note 3 on p. 524, of the present volume.—*Ed.*

patron, etc., all within limits acceptable to the bureaucracy—do not even come up to what the bourgeoisie of other West European countries have long possessed, and leave the main evil, the system of bureaucratic concessions, untouched. Apart from that, for the proletariat, freedom of movement, the right to settle anywhere, the abolition of passports and other such legislation is made quite illusory by current police practice.

What is much more important than the principal and state action in 1866 is the growth of German industry and commerce, of railways, telegraphs and ocean steamship navigation since 1848. However much this progress lags behind that of England, or even of France, during the same period, it is unprecedented for Germany and has accomplished more in twenty years than a whole century has done previously. Germany has just now been drawn, seriously and irrevocably, into *world commerce*. Capital invested in industry has multiplied rapidly, the social position of the bourgeoisie has been raised accordingly. The surest sign of industrial prosperity—*swindling*—has established itself abundantly and chained counts and dukes to its triumphal chariot. German capital is now constructing Russian and Rumanian railways—may it not come to grief—whereas, only fifteen years ago, German railways went a-begging to English firms. How then is it possible that the bourgeoisie has not conquered political power as well, that it behaves in so cowardly a manner towards the government?

The misfortune of the German bourgeoisie is that in the favourite German manner it arrived too late. The period of its ascendancy occurs at a time when the bourgeoisie of the other West European countries is already politically in decline. In England, the bourgeoisie could only get its real representative, Bright, into the government by extending the franchise, which in its consequences is bound to put an end to the whole bourgeois rule. In France, where the bourgeoisie as such, as a complete class, has only held power for two years, 1849-50, under the republican regime, it was able to continue its social existence only by surrendering its political power to Louis Bonaparte and the army. And under the present conditions of the enormously increased interrelation of the three most progressive European countries, it is today no longer possible for the bourgeoisie in Germany to settle down to a comfortable political rule when this rule has already outlived itself in England and France.

It is a peculiarity of the bourgeoisie, distinguishing it from all former ruling classes, that there is a turning point in its development after which every further increase in its means of power, that is in the first place every increase of its capital,

only tends to make it more and more incapable of ruling politically. "*Behind the big bourgeois stand the proletarians.*" To the extent that the bourgeoisie develops its industry, its commerce and its means of communication, to the same extent it also produces the proletariat. And at a certain point—which need not appear everywhere at the same time or at the same stage of development—it begins to notice that this, its proletarian double, is outgrowing it. From that moment on, it loses the power for exclusive political domination; it looks round for allies with whom it shares its domination, or to whom it cedes its whole domination, as circumstances may demand.

In Germany this turning point came for the bourgeoisie as early as 1848. And actually the German bourgeoisie was frightened not so much by the German as by the French proletariat. The June battle in Paris, in 1848, showed the bourgeoisie what it had to expect; the German proletariat was just restless enough to make it clear that the seed of the same harvest had been sown in German soil also; and from that day on the edge was taken off all bourgeois political action. The bourgeoisie looked round for allies, bargained itself away to them regardless of price—and even today it is not a step further forward.

These allies are all of a reactionary nature. There is the monarchy with its army and its bureaucracy; there is the big feudal nobility; there are the little cabbage-*Junkers*, and there are even the priests. With all of these the bourgeoisie made so many pacts and bargains to save its dear skin that at last it had nothing left to barter. And the more the proletariat developed, the more it began to feel as a class and to act as a class, the more faint-hearted did the bourgeoisie become. When the astonishingly bad strategy of the Prussians triumphed over the astonishingly still worse strategy of the Austrians at Sadowa, it was difficult to say who gave a deeper sigh of relief—the Prussian bourgeois, who was also defeated at Sadowa, or the Austrian.<sup>1</sup>

Our big bourgeois of 1870 acts exactly like the middle

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<sup>1</sup>On July 3, 1886, Prussia won a decisive battle over Austria at Sadowa (Koniggratz). The Prussian bourgeoisie, which had been afraid to base itself upon the democratic mass movement, finally capitulated to the Bismarck government and openly supported the counter-revolutionary path to the unification of Germany (from above with the assistance of the Prussian monarchy), although this union meant a further strengthening of the *Junkers* politically, and the collapse of the liberal hopes of the bourgeoisie.—Ed.

bourgeois of 1525 acted. As to the petty bourgeoisie, artisans and shopkeepers, they will always remain the same. They hope to raise themselves into the big bourgeoisie by swindling, they are afraid of being pushed down into the proletariat. Between fear and hope, they will in times of struggle seek to save their precious skin and to join the victors when the struggle is over. Such is their nature.

The social and political activity of the proletariat has kept pace with the rapid growth of industry since 1848. The role that the German workers play today in their trade unions, co-operative societies, political associations and public meetings, at elections and in the so-called Reichstag, is by itself sufficient proof of the transformation which has come unperceived over Germany in the last twenty years. It greatly redounds to the credit of the German workers that *they alone* have succeeded in sending workers and workers' representatives into parliament—a feat which neither the French nor the English have so far accomplished.

Still, even the proletariat has not yet outgrown the parallelism with 1525. The class of the population entirely and permanently dependent on wages is still far from forming the majority of the German people. This class is, therefore, also compelled to seek allies. The latter can only be found among the petty bourgeoisie, the *lumpenproletariat* of the cities, the small peasants and the agricultural labourers.

The *petty bourgeois* have been spoken of above. They are extremely unreliable except when a victory has been won, and then their shouting in the beer houses knows no bounds. Nevertheless, there are very good elements among them, who of their own accord join up with the workers.

The *lumpenproletariat*, this scum of the demoralised elements of all classes, which establishes its headquarters in all the big cities, is the worst of all possible allies. This rabble is absolutely venal and absolutely brazen. If the French workers, in every revolution, inscribed on the houses: *Mort aux voleurs!* Death to the thieves! and even shot many, they did it, not out of enthusiasm for property, but because they rightly considered it necessary to keep that gang at distance. Every leader of the workers who uses these scoundrels as guards or bases himself on them, proves himself by this action alone a traitor to the movement.

The *small peasants*—for the bigger peasants belong to the bourgeoisie—are of different kinds. Either they are *feudal peasants* and still have to perform *corvee* services for their gracious lord. Now that the bourgeoisie has failed to do its duty in freeing these people from serfdom, it ought not to be

difficult to convince them that they can only expect salvation from the working class.

Or they are *tenants*. In this case the situation is for the most part the same as in Ireland. Rents are pushed so high that in times of average crops the peasant and his family can only just manage to live; when the crops are bad he almost starves, is unable to pay his rent and consequently finds himself entirely at the mercy of the landlord. For such people the bourgeoisie only does something when it is compelled. From whom then should they expect salvation except from the workers?

There remain the peasants who cultivate their *own little piece of land*. In most cases they are so burdened with mortgages that they are as dependent on the usurer as the tenant on the landlord. For them also there remains only a meagre wage, which moreover, on account of there being good and bad years, is highly uncertain. These people least of all have anything to expect from the bourgeoisie, because it is precisely the bourgeoisie, the capitalist usurers, who suck the life-blood out of them. Still these peasants cling tightly to their property, though in reality it does not belong to them but to the usurers. Nevertheless, it will be possible to bring home to them that only when a government dependent on the people will have transformed all mortgages into a state debt, and thereby have lowered the interest rates, will they be able to free themselves from the usurer. And this can only be achieved by the working class.

Wherever medium-sized and large estates prevail, *agricultural labourers* form the most numerous class in the countryside. This is the case throughout the entire North and East of Germany and it is *here*, that the industrial workers of the towns find their *most numerous and most natural allies*. In the same way as the capitalist confronts the industrial worker, the landowner or large tenant confronts the agricultural labourer. The same measures that help the one must also help the other. The industrial workers can free themselves only by transforming the capital of the bourgeois, *i.e.*, the raw materials, machines and tools, and the foodstuffs, necessary for production, into social property, *i.e.*, into their own property, used by them in common. Similarly, the agricultural labourers can be rescued from their hideous misery only when their chief subject of labour, the land itself, is withdrawn from the private ownership of the large peasants and the still larger feudal lords, transformed into social property and cultivated by co-operative associations of agricultural workers on a common account. And here we come to the

famous decision of the International Workers' Congress in Basle<sup>1</sup>: that it is in the interest of society to transform landed property into common national property. This resolution was adopted primarily for the countries where there is a large-scale landed property, and, connected with that, the cultivation of large farms, with one master and many labourers on every estate. This state of affairs, however, is still as a whole predominant in Germany, and therefore, next to England, the decision was *most timely precisely for Germany*. The agricultural proletariat, the farm labourers—that is the class from which the bulk of the armies of the princes is recruited. It is the class which, thanks to universal suffrage, sends into parliament the great mass of feudal lords and *Junkers*. But it is also the class nearest to the industrial workers of the towns, which shares their living conditions, which is even steeped still deeper in misery than they. To call into life and to draw into the movement this class, powerless because split and scattered, but whose hidden power is so well known to the government and nobility that they purposely allow the schools to fall into decay in order that it should remain ignorant, this is the immediate, most urgent task of the German workers' movement. From the day when the mass of agricultural labourers have learned to understand their own interests, from that day a reactionary, feudal, bureaucratic or bourgeois movement in Germany becomes an impossibility.

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The preceding lines were written over four years ago. They are still valid today. What was true after Sadowa and the partition of Germany, is being confirmed also after Sedan and the establishing of the Holy German Empire of the Prussian nation.<sup>2</sup> So little can "world-shaking" principal and state actions in the realm of so-called high politics change

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<sup>1</sup>The Basle Congress of the First International in September 1869 adopted a resolution that "it is in the interest of society to abolish private property in land and to convert it into social ownership."—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>In the Franco-Prussian War the Prussian army gained a decisive victory over the French army at Sedan, on September 2, 1870. This removed the last obstacle in the way of a union of North and South Germany (*viz.*, the French empire of Napoleon III was interested in keeping Germany broken up into small states and had hindered the union), German unification was carried out from above by the counter-revolutionary path and the German Reich was established. Nevertheless, this unification was far from being complete. (The German Reich still contained twenty-two monarchies and three free cities; Austria was excluded from it.)—*Ed.*

the direction of the movement of history.

What, on the other hand, these principal and state actions are in a position to do is to hasten the tempo of this movement. And in this respect, the authors of the above-mentioned "world-shaking" events have had involuntary successes, which they themselves surely find most undesirable, but which, however, for better or worse, they have to take into the bargain.

The War of 1866 had already shaken the old Prussia to its foundations. After 1848 it had already been difficult to bring the rebellious industrial element of the Western provinces, bourgeois as well as proletarian, under the old discipline; still, this had been accomplished, and the interests of the *Junkers* of the Eastern provinces, together with those of the army, again became dominant in the state. In 1866 almost all Northwest Germany became Prussian. Apart from the irreparable moral injury suffered by the Prussian crown by the grace of god owing to having swallowed three other crowns by the grace of god, the centre of gravity of the monarchy now shifted considerably westward. The five million Rhinelanders and Westphalians were reinforced by the Germans annexed through the North German Alliance, first of all by the four millions annexed directly, and then by the six millions annexed indirectly. And in 1870 were further added the eight million Southwest Germans, so that in the "new Reich," the fourteen and a half million old Prussians (from the six East Elbian provinces, including moreover two million Poles) were confronted by some twenty-five millions who had long outgrown the old Prussian *Junker* feudalism. In this way the very victories of the Prussian army displaced the entire basis of the Prussian state; the *Junker* domination became ever more intolerable even for the government itself. At the same time, however, the extremely rapid industrial development caused the struggle between the bourgeois and the workers to supplant the struggle between *Junkers* and bourgeois, so that internally also the social foundations of the old state suffered a complete transformation. The fundamental condition for the existence of the monarchy, which had been slowly rotting since 1840, was the struggle between nobility and bourgeoisie, in which the monarchy held the balance. From the moment when it was no longer a question of protecting the nobility against the pressure of the bourgeoisie, but of protecting all propertied classes against the pressure of the working class, the old, absolute monarchy had to go over completely to the form of state expressly devised for this purpose: the *Bonapartist monarchy*. This transition of Prussia to Bonapartism I have already discussed in another place (*Zur*

*Wohnungsfrage* [*The Housing Question*] Part 2.)<sup>1</sup> What I did not have to stress there, but what is very essential here, is that this transition was the *greatest progress* made by Prussia after 1848, so much had Prussia lagged behind in *point of modern development*. It was still a semi-feudal state, whereas Bonapartism is, at all events, a modern form of state which presupposes the abolition of feudalism. Hence Prussia has to decide to get rid of its numerous remnants of feudalism, to sacrifice *Junkerdom* as such. This naturally is being done in the mildest possible form and to the favourite tune of: always slowly forward! Thus, for example in the notorious *Kreisordnung*,<sup>2</sup> it abolishes the feudal privileges of the individual *Junker* in relation to his estate, but only to restore them as privileges of the whole of the big landowners in relation to the entire district. The substance remains, being only translated from the feudal into the bourgeois dialect. The old Prussian *Junker* is being compulsorily transformed into something akin to an English squire, and he need not have offered so much resistance because the one is as stupid as the other.

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<sup>1</sup>Engels refers to the following passage from his pamphlet, *The Housing Question*, written in 1872:

"In reality, however, the state as it exists at present in Germany is also the necessary product of the social basis out of which it has developed. In Prussia—and Prussia is now decisive—there exists side by side with a landowning aristocracy which is still powerful, a comparatively young and markedly very cowardly bourgeoisie, which up to the present has not won either direct political domination, as in France, or more or less indirect as in England. Side by side with these two classes, however, there exists further a rapidly increasing proletariat, which is intellectually highly developed and which is becoming more and more organised every day. We find, therefore, in Germany alongside of the basic condition of the old absolute monarchy, an equilibrium between the landowning aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, also the basic condition of modern Bonapartism, an equilibrium between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

But both in the old absolute monarchy and in the modern Bonapartist monarchy, the real governing power lies in the hands of a special caste of army officers and state officials. In Prussia this caste is supplemented partly from its own ranks, partly from the lesser aristocracy owning the entailed estates, more rarely the higher aristocracy and least of all from the bourgeoisie. The independence of this caste, which appears to occupy a position outside, and so to speak, above society, gives the state the semblance of independence in relation to society." (Engels, *The Housing Question*, pp. 71-72.)—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Legislation establishing distinct local authorities.—Ed.

Thus it has been the peculiar fate of Prussia to complete its bourgeois revolution, begun in 1803 to 1813<sup>1</sup> and advanced further in 1848, in the pleasant form of Bonapartism at the end of this century. And if everything goes well, and the world remains nice and quiet, and we all become old enough, we may live to see—perhaps in 1900—that the government of Prussia has actually abolished all feudal institutions and Prussia has finally arrived at the point where France stood in 1792.

The abolition of feudalism, expressed positively, means the establishment of bourgeois conditions. In the measure that the privileges of the nobility fall, legislation becomes more and more bourgeois. And here we come to the central point of the relation of the German bourgeoisie to the government. We have seen that the government is *compelled* to introduce these slow and petty reforms. As against the bourgeoisie, however, it portrays each of these small concessions as a *sacrifice* made to the bourgeois, as a concession wrung from the crown with the greatest difficulty, and for which the bourgeois must in return concede something to the government. The bourgeois, though fairly clear as to the true state of affairs, allow themselves to be fooled. This is the source of the tacit agreement which is the basis of all Reichstag and Chamber debates in Berlin. On the one hand, the government reforms the laws at a snail's pace in the interests of the bourgeoisie, removes the obstacles to industry arising from feudalism and the multiplicity of small states, establishes unity of coinage, of weights and measures, gives freedom of occupation, puts Germany's labour power at the unrestricted disposal of capital by granting freedom of movement and fosters trade and swindling. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie leaves in the hands of the government all actual political power, votes taxes, loans and soldiers and helps to frame all new reform laws in such a way that the old police power over undesirable individuals remains in full force. The bourgeoisie buys its gradual social emancipation at the price of immediate renunciation of its own political power. Naturally, the chief motive which makes such an agreement acceptable to the bourgeoisie is not the fear of the government but the fear of the proletariat.

However miserable a figure our bourgeoisie may cut in the political field, it cannot be denied that as far as industry and commerce are concerned, it is at last doing its duty. The impetuous growth of industry and commerce referred to

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<sup>1</sup>During these years the feudal authorities of Prussia, weakened by the blows of Napoleon, carried out a number of reforms, even if insignificant ones.—*Ed.*

in the introduction to the second edition has since then developed with still greater vigour. What has taken place in this respect since 1869 in the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial region is quite unprecedented for Germany, and recalls the rapid growth in the English manufacturing districts at the beginning of this century. The same thing will hold good of Saxony and Upper Silesia, Berlin, Hanover and the sea cities. At last we have world trade, a really big industry and a really modern bourgeoisie. But in return we have also had a real crisis, and have likewise got a real, powerful proletariat.

For the future historian, the roar of battle at Spichern, Mars la Tour and Sedan and everything connected therewith, will be of much less importance in the history of Germany from 1869-74 than the unpretentious, quiet but constantly forward-moving development of the German proletariat. As early as 1870, the German workers were subjected to a severe test: the Bonapartist war provocation and its natural effect: the general national enthusiasm in Germany. The German workers did not allow themselves to be led astray for a single moment. Not a trace of national chauvinism showed among them. In the midst of the wildest intoxication of victory they remained cool, demanding "an equitable peace with the French republic and no annexations" and not even martial law was able to silence them.<sup>1</sup> No battle glory, no talk of German "imperial magnificence" produced any effect on them; their sole aim remained the liberation of the entire European proletariat. We may surely say that in no other country up to now have the workers been put to so hard a test and have passed through it so brilliantly.

After martial law during the war came the trials for treason, *lese majeste* and libel of officials and the ever-increasing police chicanery of peace-time. The *Volksstaat*<sup>2</sup> had usually three or four editors in prison at the same time and the other

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<sup>1</sup>From the very start of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), the German workers, headed by the Social-Democratic Party (the Eisenachers), protested against the war and expressed their solidarity with the French workers in a number of resolutions and manifestoes. After the victory of Prussia at Sedan they demanded "an equitable peace with the French republic and no annexations" and protested against the seizure of Alsace-Lorraine. Bebel and Liebknecht made a sharp protest in the Reichstag against the war and abstained from voting the war credits; after Sedan they voted against the war credits.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The central organ of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Germany, published from 1869-76 in Leipzig. Its editor-in-chief was Wilhelm Liebknecht.—Ed.

papers in proportion. Every party speaker at all well known had to face prosecution at least once a year and was almost always convicted. Deportations, confiscations, suppressions of meetings followed one another, thick as hail. All in vain. The place of every prisoner or deportee was immediately filled by another; for every suppressed meeting, two others were substituted, and thus the arbitrary power of the police was worn down in one place after the other by endurance and strict conformity to the law. All the persecution had the opposite effect to that intended. Far from breaking the workers' party or even bending it, it only brought ever new recruits to it and consolidated the organisation. In their struggle both against the authorities and individual bourgeois, the workers showed themselves superior, intellectually and morally, and proved particularly in their conflicts with the so-called "*providers of work*," that they, the workers, were now the educated class and the capitalists the *Knoten*.<sup>1</sup> And in their fights they fought for the most part with a sense of humour, which is the best proof of how sure they were of their cause and how conscious they were of their superiority. A struggle thus conducted, on historically prepared soil, must yield great results. The successes of the January elections stand out unique in the history of the modern workers' movement and the astonishment aroused by them throughout Europe was fully justified.

The German workers have two important advantages over those of the rest of Europe. First, they belong to the most theoretical people of Europe; they have retained that sense of theory which the so-called "educated" people of Germany have completely lost. Without German philosophy which preceded it, particularly that of Hegel, German scientific socialism—the only scientific socialism that has ever existed—would never have come into being. Without a sense of theory among the workers, this scientific socialism would never have passed so entirely into their flesh and blood as has been the case. What an immeasurable advantage this is may be seen, on the one hand, from the indifference towards all theory, which is one of the main reasons why the English workers' movement moves so slowly in spite of the splendid organisation of the individual unions; on the other hand, from the mischief and confusion wrought by Proudhonism in its original form among the French and Belgians, and in the

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<sup>1</sup>Handicraftsmen. Marx and Engels often used this term for the backward, non-class conscious workers still under the influence of guild ideology.—Ed.

further caricatured form at the hands of Bakunin, among the Spaniards and Italians.

The second advantage is that chronologically speaking the Germans were almost the last to come into the workers' movement. Just as German theoretical socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen, three men who, in spite of all their fantastic notions and utopianism,<sup>1</sup> have their place among the most eminent thinkers of all times, and whose genius anticipated innumerable things the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by us—so the practical workers' movement in Germany must never forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilise their dearly-bought experience, and could now avoid their mistakes, which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the English trade unions and the French workers' political struggles which came before, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we be now?

It must be said to the credit of the German workers that they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a workers' movement has existed, the struggle is being conducted from its three sides, the theoretical, the political and the practical-economic (resistance to the capitalists), in harmony, co-ordination and in a planned way. It is precisely in this, as it were, concentric attack, that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies.

It is due to this advantageous situation on the one hand, to the insular peculiarities of the English and to the forcible suppression of the French movement on the other, that the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But as long as they occupy it, let us hope that they will fill it in a fitting manner. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. It is in particular the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, must be pursued as a science, i.e., it must be studied. The task will be to spread with increased

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<sup>1</sup>On utopian socialism, cf. Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.—Ed.

zeal among the masses of the workers the ever clearer insight, thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organisation both of the party and of the trade unions. Even if the votes cast for the socialists in January already make quite a decent army,<sup>1</sup> they are still far from constituting the majority of the working class; and encouraging as are the successes of the propaganda among the rural population, infinitely more still remains to be done precisely in this field. Hence, there must be no slackening in the struggle, the task must be to wrest from the enemy one town, one constituency after the other. But above all it is necessary to observe the true international spirit, which allows no patriotic chauvinism to manifest itself, and which joyfully greets each new advance of the proletarian movement, no matter from which nation it comes. If the German workers proceed in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any one country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line, and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events will demand from them heightened courage, heightened determination and the power to act.

London, July 1, 1874.

<sup>1</sup>At the Reichstag elections on January 10, 1874, the Social-Democratic candidates received 351,670 votes (an increase of 200 per cent compared with the 1871 results) and eight representatives in the Reichstag. In addition eleven Social-Democratic candidates had a relative majority and thus went to the second ballot, which resulted in a victory in two more constituencies. The successes of the Social-Democrats, who were then being persecuted by the government, made a great impression both in Germany and abroad.—*Ed.*

## CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAMME

FOREWORD by FREDERICK ENGEIS'

THE manuscript published here—the covering letter to Bracke<sup>2</sup> as well as the critique of the draft programme—was sent in 1875, shortly before the Gotha Unity Congress, to Bracke for communication to Geib, Auer, Bebel and Liebknecht and subsequent return to Marx. Since the Halle Party Congress has put the discussion of the Gotha Programme on the agenda of the party, I think I would be guilty of suppression if I any longer withheld from publicity this important—perhaps the most important—document relevant to this discussion.

But the manuscript has yet another and more far-reaching significance. Here for the first time Marx's attitude to the line adopted by Lassalle since the latter embarked on his agitation is clearly and firmly formulated, both as regards Lassalle's economic principles and his tactics.

The ruthless severity with which the draft programme is dissected here, the mercilessness with which the results obtained are enunciated and the shortcomings of the draft laid bare, all this today, after fifteen years, can no longer give offence. Specific Lassalleans now only exist abroad as isolated ruins and in Halle the Gotha Programme has been given up even by its creators as altogether inadequate.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, I have omitted a few sharp personal expressions and judgments, where these were of no importance to the

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<sup>2</sup>Engels wrote this foreword to the *Critique* when it was published in 1891 in the *Neue Zeit*.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>See Marx's letter of May 5, 1875, to Bracke. In this letter Marx says that he is going to come out publicly against the programme. For the explanation why Marx did not do so, see p. 539 of the present volume.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>The congress of the German Social-Democratic Party at Halle—the first congress after the abrogation of the Anti-Socialist Law—decided on October 16, 1890, on the motion of Liebknecht, the main author of the Gotha programme, to prepare a draft of a new programme for the next party congress. The new programme of German Social-Democracy was adopted at the Erfurt Congress (the "*Erfurt Programme*").—*Ed.*

matter, and replaced them by dots. Marx himself would have done so if he had published the manuscript today. The violence of the language in some passages was provoked by two circumstances. In the first instance, Marx and I had been more intimately connected with the German movement than with any other; we were, therefore, bound to be particularly intensely perturbed by the decidedly retrograde step manifested by this draft programme. And secondly, we were at that time, hardly two years after the Hague Congress of the International,<sup>1</sup> engaged in the most violent struggle against Bakunin and his anarchists who made us responsible for everything that happened in the labour movement in Germany; hence we had to expect that we would also be saddled with the secret paternity of this programme. These considerations do not now exist and so there is no necessity for the passages in question.

For reasons arising from the Press Law, also, a few sentences have been only indicated by dots. Where I have had to choose a milder expression this has been enclosed in square brackets.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise the text has been published word for word.

London, January 6, 1891.

F. ENGELS

<sup>1</sup>The fifth, Hague Congress of the First International, in September 1872, was dominated by the struggle between the Bakunists on the one hand and the General Council under the leadership of Marx and Engels on the other. The majority of the Congress supported the General Council. Bakunin was expelled, but the Bakunists continued their struggle against the General Council even after the Hague Congress. In regard to Bakunin and his struggle against Marx in the First International, see also Engels' letter of January 24, 1872, to Cuno.

<sup>2</sup>In the text of the *Critique* published here, all the passages omitted have been restored.—Ed.

London, May 5, 1875

Dear Bracke :

When you have read the following critical marginal notes on the Unity Programme, would you be so good as to send them to Geib and Auer,<sup>2</sup> Bebel and Liebknecht for them to see. I am excessively busy and have already had to go a long way beyond the extent of work allowed me by the doctor. Hence it was anything but a "pleasure" to write such a lengthy screed. It was, however, necessary so that the steps that have to be taken by me later on will not be misinterpreted by our friends in the party for whom this communication is intended. After the Unity Congress has been held, Engels and I will publish a short declaration to the effect that our position is altogether remote from the said programme of principles and that we have nothing to do with it.

This is indispensable because the opinion—the entirely erroneous opinion—is held abroad, assiduously nurtured by enemies of the party, that we secretly guide from here the movements of the so-called Eisenach party. In a Russian pamphlet that has recently appeared,<sup>3</sup> Bakunin again makes me responsible for example, not only for all the programmes, etc., of that party but even for every step taken by Liebknecht from the day of his co-operation with the People's Party.

Apart from this, it is my duty not to give recognition, even by diplomatic silence, to what is in my opinion a thoroughly objectionable programme tending to demoralise the party.

Every step of real movement is more important than a

<sup>1</sup>Together with this letter, Marx sent Bracke, one of the leaders of the Eisenachers, his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. In 1891, Engels published the *Critique* together with this letter.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>August Geib (1842-79). Treasurer of the Eisenach Party, a member of the Reichstag from 1874.

<sup>3</sup>Ignaz Auer (1846-1907). Secretary of the Eisenach Party, subsequently one of the leaders of the reformist wing of German Social-Democracy.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>The reference is to Bakunin's work *Statehood and Anarchy, the Struggle of Two Parties in the International Working Men's Association* (1873), in which Bakunin calls Liebknecht an "agent of Marx" and makes Marx responsible for all the theoretical and tactical mistakes of Liebknecht, "who acts under the direct leadership of Marx."—*Ed.*

dozen programmes.<sup>1</sup> If, therefore, it was not possible—and the conditions of the time did not permit it—to go *beyond* the Eisenach programme, one should simply have concluded an agreement for action against the common enemy. But by drawing up a programme of principles (instead of postponing this until it has been prepared for by a considerable period of common activity) one sets up before the whole world a landmark by which the level of the party movement is measured. The Lassallean leaders came because circumstances forced them to come. If they had been told from the beginning that there would be no bargaining about principles, they would have *had* to be content with a programme of action or a plan of organisation for common action. Instead of this, they have been permitted to arrive armed with mandates, these mandates have been recognised on our part as valid, and thus one surrenders unconditionally to those who are in need of help. To crown the whole business, they are holding a congress again *before the Congress of Compromise*, while our own party is holding its congress *post festum*.<sup>2</sup> There has obviously been a desire to stifle all criticism and to prevent our own party from considering the matter. One knows that the mere fact of unification is satisfying to the workers, but it would be a mistake to believe that this immediate success is not being bought at too high a price.

For the rest, the programme is no good, even apart from its sanctification of the Lassallean articles of faith.

I shall be sending you in the near future the last parts of the French edition of *Capital*. The progress of the printing was held up for a considerable time owing to the ban of the French government. The thing will be ready this week or the

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<sup>1</sup>In 1902 when the Russian "Economists" appealed to this statement of Marx in order to justify their own opportunist practice, Lenin gave a telling answer to this attempt by explaining the real content of Marx's words in connection with the concrete situation in which they were written by Marx:

"'If you must combine,' Marx wrote to the party leaders, 'then enter into an agreement to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not haggle over principles, do not make 'concessions' in theory.' That was Marx's idea. . . ." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. IV, "What Is To Be Done?" p. 47.)—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The Unity Congress of German Social-Democracy was held on May 22-27, 1875, in Gotha; the congress of the Lassalleans had taken place previously in May and the congress of the Eisenachers took place afterwards in Hamburg on June 8.—*Ed.*

end of next week.<sup>1</sup> Have you received the previous six parts? Please let me have the address of Bernhard Becker<sup>2</sup> to whom I must also send the final parts.

The bookshop of the Volksstaat has its own way of behaving. Up to this moment, for example, I have not been sent a single copy of the publication on the Cologne Communist Trial.<sup>3</sup>

With best wishes,

Yours,  
KARL MARX

## CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAMME

### MARGINAL NOTES TO THE PROGRAMME OF THE GERMAN WORKERS' PARTY<sup>4</sup>

1. "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture and since useful labour is only possible in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

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<sup>1</sup>The first French translation of Volume I of *Capital* was edited by Marx himself and was published in Paris in separate parts during the years 1872-75.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Bernhard Becker (1826-82). German historian and publicist, one of the founders of Lassalle's *General Association of German Workers*. After Lassalle's death, in accordance with the testament left by Lassalle, he was elected chairman of the party. In the beginning of 1866 he broke with the Lassalleans and subsequently joined the Eisenachers.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Marx's pamphlet, *Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial*, was written in 1853 and issued by the publishing house of the Volksstaat together with Marx's postscript dated January 8, 1875.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>The *Critique of the Gotha Programme* ranks with *The Communist Manifesto* as one of Marx's most important programmatic works. It gives in the space of a few pages, in very concise formulation, the theoretical basis of the programme of the party of the proletariat.

The central place in the *Critique* is devoted to an analysis of the "development of future communism" in the closest connection with the question of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

The immense theoretical and practical significance of this part of the *Critique* was emphasised by Lenin with special force in 1917 in his book *The State and Revolution*, chap. V, where he develops Marx's idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin says:

*First Part of the Paragraph*: "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture."

Labour is *not* the source of all wealth. Nature is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists!) as labour, which itself is only the manifestation of a natural force, human labour power. That phrase is to be found in all children's primers and is correct in so far as it is *implied* that labour proceeds with the appropriate subjects and instruments. But a socialist programme cannot allow such bourgeois phrases to cause the *conditions* that alone give them meaning to be ignored. And in so far as man from the beginning behaves towards nature, the primary source of all instruments and subjects of labour, as her

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"Marx explains this question [the economic basis of the withering away of the state] most thoroughly in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. . . . The polemical part of this remarkable work, consisting of a criticism of Lassalleism, has, so to speak, overshadowed its positive part, namely, the analysis of the connection between the development of communism and the withering away of the state. . . .

"Without dropping into utopias, Marx defined more fully what can be defined *now* regarding this future, namely, the difference between the lower and higher phases (degrees, stages) of communist society." He "makes a sober estimate of exactly how a socialist society will have to manage its affairs. Marx proceeds to make a *concrete* analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there is no capitalism. . . . "The analysis of capitalist society and of the inevitable course of its development, the position and role of the proletariat in it and the analysis of the "economic basis of the withering away of the state" lead Marx to the conclusion of the necessity and inevitability of the "political transition period. . . . between capitalist and communist society." The state of this transition period "can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

In these "remarkable observations of Marx," writes Lenin in his book *The Proletarian Revolution and The Renegade Kautsky*, "is summarised his complete revolutionary doctrine."

In 1918 the renegade Kautsky had the effrontery to declare that the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat (he called it a "catchword") was only put forward by Marx on one occasion—in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. This, of course, is a lie. In actual fact the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat runs like a red thread through all the teachings and all the works of Marx and Engels. There is no doubt that in the *Critique* Marx gave this idea its sharpest formulation and substantiated it by a thorough-going analysis of the development of communist society, in the course of which he dealt in especial detail with the question of the "utilisation of the

owner, treats her as belonging to him, his labour becomes the source of use values, therefore also of wealth. The bourgeois have very good grounds for fancifully ascribing *supernatural creative power* to labour, since it follows precisely from the fact that labour depends on nature, that the man who possesses no other property than his labour power must, in all conditions of society and culture, be the slave of other men who have made themselves the owners of the material conditions of labour. He can only work with their permission, and hence only live with their permission.

Let us now leave the sentence as it stands, or rather limps. What would one have expected as conclusion? Obviously this:

"Since labour is the source of all wealth, in society also no one can appropriate wealth except as the product of labour. Therefore, if he himself does not work, he lives by the labour

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power of the proletariat for the organisation of socialism, for the abolition of classes and for the transition to a society without classes, to a society without a state." (Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, "Problems of Leninism.")

Particularly at the present moment, when, under the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R., the transition from capitalism to communism is being realised in practice, Marx's scientific forecasts, developed by Lenin and Stalin, have particular importance and take on the character of practical directives which are being immediately put into effect. And now that in the Soviet Union, the foundations of socialist economy have already been laid, and socialist economy is proving victorious, and now that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is realising the basic political task of the abolition of classes and the construction of classless, socialist society, it is particularly clear that it is the political line of Bolshevism which represents the immediate continuation of the line pursued by Marx and Engels throughout their lives.

In his *Critique*, Marx, in May 1875, came out against the gross opportunist mistakes in questions of principle and questions of program committed by the leaders of German Social-Democracy on the occasion of the union of the two German workers' parties then in existence—the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Germany (the so-called Eisenachers) led by Liebknecht and Bebel, and the Lassallean party, the General Association of German Workers headed by Hasenclever, Hasselmann and Tolcke. Both these parties arose in the 'sixties, when the question of the creation of a united German state had not yet been solved—a question which had also played the chief role at the time of the Revolution of 1848-49 but had then remained unsolved. It was possible to

of others and also acquires his culture at the expense of the labour of others."

Instead of this, by means of the words "and since" a second proposition is added in order to draw a conclusion from this and not from the first one.

*Second part of the Paragraph:* "Useful labour is only possible in society and through society."

According to the first proposition, labour was the source of all wealth and all culture, therefore also no society is possible without labour. Now we learn, conversely, that no "useful" labour is possible without society.

One could just as well have said that only in society can useless and even generally harmful labour become a branch of gainful occupation, that only in society can one live by being idle, etc., etc.,—in short one could just as well have

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solve it in either of two ways: "either by the path of revolution led by the proletariat giving rise to an All-German republic, or by the path of Prussia's dynastic wars consolidating the hegemony of the Prussian *Junkers* in a united Germany." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, "August Bebel.")

The party of Liebknecht and Bebel, strongly influenced by Marx and Engels, fought for the first solution. The Lassalleans, continuing Lassalle's policy which counted on the aid of the *Junker* state in the struggle of the workers for the improvement of their economic position, pursued a policy which in fact assisted the solution of the question of German unification in the *Junker* way. Hence, Marx dubbed the Lassalleans "Royal Prussian Socialists." A series of wars, especially the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, the alliance concluded between the bourgeoisie and the *Junkers* out of fear of the proletariat, the cowardice of the German petty bourgeoisie, the weakness and immaturity of the German proletariat—all this enabled Bismarck to achieve the unification of Germany under the leadership of Prussia by the counter-revolutionary path. Thus one of the most important grounds of political difference between the two workers' parties ceased to exist. The masses of the party membership demanded unity and Marx was not against it. Nevertheless, he saw a dangerous opportunism in the lack of principle with which the leaders of the Eisenach party patched up a programme that represented a mixture of pre-Marxist, and especially Lassallean, dogmas, vulgar-democratic demands and completely distorted communist theses. Marx considered such an eclectic programme altogether unsuitable and therefore came forward against it with his *Critique*. The *Critique* was first published in 1891. For the history of its publication see the letter of Engels to Kautsky of February 23, 1891, and the notes to this letter.

—Ed.

copied the whole of Rousseau.<sup>1</sup>

And what is "useful" labour? Surely only labour which produces the intended useful effect. A savage—and man was a savage after he had ceased to be an ape—who has killed an animal with a stone, who collects fruits, etc., performs "useful" labour.

*Thirdly: The Conclusion:* "And since useful work is only possible in society and through society—the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

A fine conclusion! If useful labour is only possible in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong to society—and only so much therefrom accrues to the individual workers as is not required to maintain the "condition" of labour, society.

In fact, also, this proposition has at all times been made use of by the champions of the *prevailing state of society*. First come the claims of the government and everything connected with it, since it is the social organ for the maintenance of the social order; then come the claims of the various kinds of private property, for the various kinds of private property are the foundations of society, etc. One sees that such hollow phrases can be twisted and turned as desired.

The first and second parts of the paragraph have some intelligible connection only in the following wording:

"Labour only becomes the source of wealth and culture as social labour," or, what is the same thing, "in and through society."

This proposition is incontestably correct, for although isolated labour (its material conditions presupposed) can also

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<sup>1</sup>Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78). French philosopher of the period of the Enlightenment. As a petty-bourgeois ideologist, Rousseau was the theoretician of consistent bourgeois democracy. He was a passionate champion of the struggle against feudal exploitation and absolutism and defended the theory of the "sovereignty of the people." He based his criticism of the feudal system on an abstract, unhistorical theory of natural equality, of a primitive happy communist condition of humanity, and of the superiority of nature and inborn qualities over culture. In his *Marginal Notes*, Marx points out that the Gotha Programme, instead of giving a scientific class analysis of the social order and of the law of its development, confines itself to the repetition of an abstract preaching which recalls that of Rousseau.—Ed.

create use values, it can create neither wealth nor culture.

But equally incontestable is this other proposition :

“In proportion as labour develops socially, and becomes thereby a source of wealth and culture, poverty and neglect develop among the workers and wealth and culture among the non-workers.”

This is the law of all history hitherto. What, therefore, had to be done here, instead of making general phrases about “labour” and “society,” was to prove concretely how in present capitalist society the material, etc., conditions have at last been created which will enable and compel the workers to lift this social curse.

In fact, however, the whole paragraph, incorrect in style and content, is only there in order to inscribe the Lassallean catchword of the “undiminished proceeds of labour” as a slogan at the top of the party banner. I shall return to the “proceeds of labour,” “equal right,” etc., later on, since the same thing recurs in a somewhat different form.

2. “In present-day society, the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the capitalist class; the resulting dependence of the working class is the cause of misery and servitude in all its forms.”

This sentence, borrowed from the Statutes of the International,<sup>3</sup> is incorrect in this “improved” edition.

In present-day society the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the landowners (the monopoly of property in land is even the basis of the monopoly of capital) and the capitalists. In the passage in question, the Statutes of the International do not mention by name either the one or the other class of monopolists. They speak of the “*monopoly of the instruments of labour, i.e., of the sources of life.*” The addition, “*sources of life*” makes it sufficiently clear that land is included in the instruments of labour.

The correction was introduced because Lassalle, for reasons now generally known, attacked *only* the capitalist class and not the landowners.” In England, the capitalist is usually not even the owner of the land on which his factory stands.

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<sup>3</sup>See p. 412 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Marx refers to the “contract” concluded by Lassalle with Bismarck, the existence of which was suspected by Marx and Engels. Their suspicions were only confirmed after the death of Lassalle. (See Marx’s letter of February 23, 1865, to Kugelmann.) Marx did not know (it was only

3. "The emancipation of labour demands the promotion of the instruments of labour to the common property of society and the co-operative regulation of the total labour with equitable distribution of the proceeds of labour."

"Promotion of the instruments of labour to the common property" ought obviously to read their "conversion into the common property," but this only in passing.

What are the "proceeds of labour"? The product of labour or its value? And in the latter case, is it the total value of the product or only that part of the value which labour has newly added to the value of the means of production consumed?

The "proceeds of labour" is a loose notion which Lassalle has put in the place of definite economic conceptions.

What is "equitable distribution"?

Do not the bourgeois assert that the present-day distribution is "equitable"? And is it not, in fact, the only "equitable" distribution on the basis of the present-day mode of production? Are economic relations regulated by legal conceptions or do not, on the contrary, legal relations arise from economic ones? Have not also the socialist sectarians<sup>1</sup> the most varied notions about "equitable" distribution?

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brought to light in 1928) that Lassalle had concluded his contract with Bismarck not shortly before his death but considerably earlier, in the beginning of May 1863. Consequently, he had conducted negotiations with Bismarck even before the foundation of the General Association of German Workers; one can even assume that the association was founded by a secret agreement with Bismarck. For a characterisation of "Royal Prussian socialism" one may quote here a passage of Lassalle's letter of June 8, 1863, to Bismarck: "The working class . . . would be inclined . . . to see in the crown the natural bearer of social dictatorship, in opposition to the egoism of bourgeois society, if the crown for its part . . . could make up its mind . . . to pursue a really revolutionary and national direction and to transform itself from a monarchy of the privileged estates into a social and revolutionary people's monarchy." (Gustav Mayer, "Bismarck und Lassalle. Ihr Briefwechsel und ihre Gespräche" [*Bismarck and Lassalle. Their Correspondence and Conversations*], Berlin, 1928, p. 60.)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Marx in 1872 wrote about sectarian socialism in his pamphlet directed against the Bakunists, *Les prétendues scissions dans l'Internationale* [*The Alleged Splits in the International*]: "The first phase in the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie is marked by the sectarian movement. This is

To understand what idea is meant in this connection by the phrase "equitable distribution," we must take the first paragraph and this one together. The latter implies a society wherein "the instruments of labour are common property, and the total labour is co-operatively regulated," and from the first paragraph we learn that "the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

"To all members of society"? To those who do not work as well? What remains then of the "undiminished proceeds of labour"? Only to those members of society who work? What remains then of the "equal right" of all members of society?

But "all members of society" and "equal right" are obviously mere phrases. The kernel consists in this, that in this communist society every worker must receive the "undiminished" Lassallean "proceeds of labour."

Let us take first of all the words "proceeds of labour" in the sense of the product of labour, then the co-operative proceeds of labour are the *total social product*.

From this is then to be deducted :

*Firstly*, cover for replacement of the means of production used up.

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justifiable at a time when the proletariat is not yet sufficiently developed to act as a class. Isolated thinkers subject the social antagonisms to criticism and at the same time give a fantastic solution of them which the mass of the workers have only to accept as complete, to propagate and to put into practical operation. It is in the nature of these sects, which are founded on the initiative of individuals, that they keep themselves aloof and remote from every real activity, from politics, strikes, trade unions, in a word, from every collective movement. The mass of the proletariat always remains indifferent, even hostile, to their propaganda. The workers of Paris and Lyons were as little interested in the Saint-Simonists, Fourierists and Icarians, as the English Chartists and trade unionists in the Owenites. The sects, at the outset a lever for the movement, become an obstacle as soon as this movement has overtaken them; they then become reactionary. The proof of this is the sects in France and England and recently the Lassalleans in Germany, who, after having for years hindered the organisation of the proletariat, have finally become simple police tools. In short, they represented the infancy of the proletarian movement just as astrology and alchemy represented the infancy of science."—*Ed.*

*Secondly*, additional portion for expansion of production.

*Thirdly*, reserve or insurance fund to provide against misadventures, disturbances through natural events, etc.

These deductions from the "undiminished proceeds of labour" are an economic necessity and their magnitude is to be determined by available means and forces, and partly by calculation of probabilities, but they are in no way calculable by equity.

There remains the other part of the total product, destined to serve as means of consumption.

Before this is divided among the individuals, there has to be deducted from it:

*Firstly*, the general costs of administration not belonging to production.

This part will, from the outset, be very considerably restricted in comparison with present-day society and it diminishes in proportion as the new society develops.

*Secondly*, that which is destined for the communal satisfaction of needs, such as schools, health services, etc.

From the outset this part is considerably increased in comparison with present-day society and it increases in proportion as the new society develops.

*Thirdly*, funds for those unable to work, etc., in short, what is included under so-called official poor-relief today.

Only now do we come to the "distribution" which the programme, under Lassallean influence, alone has in view in its narrow fashion, namely that part of the means of consumption which is divided among the individual producers of the co-operative society.

The "undiminished proceeds of labour" have already quietly become converted into the "diminished" proceeds, although what the producer is deprived of in his capacity as a private individual benefits him directly or indirectly in his capacity as a member of society.

Just as the phrase the "undiminished proceeds of labour" has disappeared, so now does the phrase "proceeds of labour" disappear altogether.<sup>1</sup>

Within the co-operative society based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange

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<sup>1</sup>Compare with this refutation of Lassalle's demand for the "undiminished" or "whole proceeds of labour." Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, chap. V, Section III, "The First Phase of Communist Society."—Ed.

their products ; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear here *as the value* of these products, as a material quality possessed by them, since now, in contrast to capitalist society, individual labour no longer exists in an indirect fashion but directly as a component part of the total labour. The phrase "proceeds of labour," objectionable even today on account of its ambiguity, thus loses all meaning.

What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, as it *emerges* from capitalist society ; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth-marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions have been made—exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual amount of labour. For example, the social working day consists of the sum of the individual labour hours ; the individual labour time of the individual producer is the part of the social labour day contributed by him, his share in it. He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such and such an amount of labour (after deducting his labour for the common fund), and with this certificate he draws from the social stock of means of consumption as much as costs the same amount of labour. The same amount of labour which he has given to society in one form, he receives back in another.

Here obviously the same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities, as far as this is exchange of equal values. Content and form are changed, because under the altered circumstances no one can give anything except his labour, and because, on the other hand, nothing can pass into the ownership of individuals except individual means of consumption. But, as far as the distribution of the latter among the individual producers is concerned, the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity equivalents, so much labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form.

Hence, *equal right* here is still in principle—*bourgeois right*, although principle and practice are no longer in conflict, while the exchange of equivalents in commodity exchange only exists on the *average* and not in the individual case.

In spite of this advance, this *equal right* is still stigmatised by a bourgeois limitation. The right of the producers is *proportional* to the labour they supply ; the equality consists

in the fact that measurement is made with an *equal standard*, labour.

But one man is superior to another physically or mentally and so supplies more labour in the same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This *equal* right is an unequal right for unequal labour. It recognises no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognises unequal individual endowment and thus productive capacity as natural privileges. It is therefore a *right of inequality in its content, like every right*. Right by its very nature can only consist in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are only measurable by an equal standard in so far as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one definite side only, e.g., in the present case are regarded *only as workers*, and nothing more seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another not; one has more children than another and so on and so forth. Thus with an equal output, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right instead of being equal would have to be unequal.<sup>1</sup>

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“On “right” and “equality” in the first phase of communism, Lenin wrote:

“Hence, the first phase of communism cannot produce justice and equality; differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still exist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize the *means of production*, the factories, machines, land, etc., as private property. In smashing Lassalle’s petty-bourgeois, confused phrases about ‘equality’ and ‘justice’ in general, Marx shows the *course of development* of communist society, which, at first, is compelled to abolish *only* the ‘injustice’ of the means of production having been seized by private individuals, and which cannot at once abolish the other injustice of the distribution of articles of consumption ‘according to the amount of work performed’ (and not according to needs.)” (*The State and Revolution.*)

The C.P.S.U., in waging the struggle against Leftist equalitarianism in the sphere of wages, bases itself entirely on the teachings of Marx and Lenin concerning the first phase of communist society. This was emphasised by Stalin in his historic speech delivered at the conference of leaders of

But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural development thereby determined.<sup>1</sup>

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished, after labour has become not merely a means to live but has become itself the primary necessity of

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industry :

“Marx and Lenin said that the difference between skilled and unskilled labour would continue to exist even under socialism and even after classes had been abolished, that only under communism would this difference disappear and that, therefore, even under socialism ‘wages’ must be paid according to labour performed and not according to need. But our industrialist and trade union equalitarians do not agree with this and consider that that difference has already disappeared under our Soviet system. Who is right, Marx and Lenin, or our equalitarians? We may take it that Marx and Lenin are right. But if so, it follows that whoever draws up wage scales on the ‘principle’ of equality, and ignores the difference between skilled and unskilled labour, is at loggerheads with Marxism and Leninism.” (*Leninism*, Vol. II, “New Conditions, New Tasks.”)

On this, see also Stalin, *Interview with the German Author, Emil Ludwig and Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.*, 1934.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>In *The State and Revolution*, Lenin explains and develops this proposition of Marx as follows :

“And so, in the first phase of communist society (generally called socialism) ‘bourgeois right’ is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic transformation so far attained, *i.e.*, only in respect of the means of production. ‘Bourgeois right’ recognises them as the private property of separate individuals. Socialism converts them into common property. To that extent, and to that extent alone, ‘bourgeois right’ disappears.

“However, it continues to exist so far as its other part is concerned; it remains in the capacity of regular (determining factor) in the distribution of products and allotment of labour among the members of society. The socialist principle: ‘He who does not work, neither shall he eat,’ is *already* realised; the other socialist principle: ‘An equal amount of labour for an equal quantity of products,’ is also *already* realised. But this is not yet communism, and it does not abolish ‘bourgeois right,’ which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an unequal (actually unequal) amount of work, an equal quantity of products.

life, after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.<sup>1</sup>

I have dealt more at length with the “undiminished proceeds of labour” on the one hand, and with “equal right” and “equitable distribution” on the other, in order to show what a crime it is to attempt, on the one hand, to force on our party again, as dogmas, ideas which in a certain period had some meaning but have now become obsolete rubbishy phrases, while on the other, perverting the realistic outlook, which has cost so much effort to instil into the party, but which has now taken root in it, by means of ideological nonsense about “right” and other trash common among the democrats and French

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“This is a ‘defect,’ says Marx, but it is unavoidable in the first phase of communism; for, if we are not to fall into utopianism, we cannot imagine that, having overthrown capitalism, people will at once learn to work for society *without any standard of right*; indeed, the abolition of capitalism does not immediately create the economic prerequisites for such a change.” (*The State and Revolution*.)—Ed.

“Developing further the Marxian teachings on the first and second phases of communist society and the economic basis for the withering away of the state, Lenin wrote:

“The economic basis for the complete withering away of the state is the high stage of development of communism in which the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears, that is to say, when one of the principal sources of modern social inequality—a source, moreover, which cannot be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists—disappears....

“The state will be able to wither away completely when society can apply the rule: ‘From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs,’ i.e., when people have become accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social life and when their labour is so productive that they will voluntarily work according to their ability. ‘The narrow horizon of bourgeois right,’ which compels one to calculate with the shrewdness of a Shylock whether he has not worked half an hour more than another, whether he is not getting less pay than another—this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need for society to make an exact calculation of the quantity of products to be distributed to each of its members; each will take freely ‘according to his needs.’” (*Ibid.*)—Ed.

Quite apart from the analysis so far given, it was in general incorrect to make a fuss about so-called "distribution" and put the principal stress on it.

The distribution of the means of consumption at any time is only a consequence of the distribution of the conditions of production themselves. The latter distribution, however, is a feature of the mode of production itself. The capitalist mode of production, for example, rests on the fact that the material conditions of production are in the hands of non-workers in the form of property in capital and land, while the masses are only owners of the personal condition of production, *viz.*, labour power. If the elements of production are so distributed, then the present-day distribution of the means of consumption results automatically. If the material conditions of production are the co-operative property of the workers themselves, then this likewise results in a different distribution of the means of consumption from the present one. Vulgar socialism (and from it in turn a section of democracy) has taken over from the bourgeois economists the consideration and treatment of distribution as independent of the mode of production and hence the presentation of socialism as turning principally on distribution.<sup>1</sup> After the real position has long been made clean, why go back again?

4. "The emancipation of labour must be the work of the working class, in contrast to which all other classes are only . . . one reactionary mass."

The first strophe is taken from the introductory words of the Statutes of the International, but "improved." There it is said: "The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the workers themselves." Here, on the contrary, the "working class" has to emancipate—what? "Labour." Let him understand who can.

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<sup>1</sup>In his article, "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book" (1894), Lenin, referring to the passage in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* quoted above, wrote:

" . . . Marx contrasts vulgar socialism to scientific socialism, which does not attach great importance to distribution and which explains the social system by the organisation of the *relations of production* and which considers that a given system of organisation of relations of production already includes a definite system of distribution . . . this idea runs like a thread through the whole of Marx's teachings." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 460.)—Ed.

In compensation, the antistrophe on the other hand is a Lassallean quotation of the first water: "in contrast to which (the working class) all other classes form only one reactionary mass."<sup>2</sup>

In *The Communist Manifesto* it is said: "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the prole-

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<sup>1</sup>In Greek tragedies the chorus consisted of a strophe and an anti-strophe.—*Ed.*

Marx and Engels criticised this slogan; they continually pointed out the impotence of the allies of the proletariat, they emphasised the enormous importance of the growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution. On this subject, Engels wrote to Bernstein on November 2, 1882:

"The real weakness is the childish notion of the coming revolution which is supposed to begin by . . . the whole world dividing itself into armies: we here, the 'one reactionary mass' there. That means that the revolution is to begin with the fifth act, and not with the first in which the mass of all the oppositional parties stand together against the government and its agents and thus is victorious, upon which the separate parties among the victors one after another wear themselves out; make themselves impossible, until finally by this means the mass of the people is thrust wholly onto our side and then Vollmar's much vaunted decisive battle can proceed."

Lenin also says:

"To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and Europe, without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without a movement of non-class conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against the oppression of the landlords, the church, the monarchy, the foreign nations, etc.—to imagine that means repudiating social revolution. Only those who imagine that in one place an army will line up and say, 'We are for socialism,' and in another place another army will say, 'We are for imperialism,' and that this will be social revolution! . . . Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip service to revolution, without understanding what revolution is. The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It consisted of a series of battles in which all the discontented classes, groups and elements of the population participated. . . . Objectively, the mass movement broke the back of tsarism and paved the way for democracy; and for that reason the class conscious workers led it. The socialist revolution in Europe cannot be anything else than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry of the oppressed and discontented elements. (*Selected Works*, Vol. V, "Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up," pp. 303-4.)—*Ed.*

tariat alone is a *really revolutionary class*. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry, the proletariat is its special and essential product."<sup>2</sup>

The bourgeoisie is here conceived as a revolutionary class—as the bearer of large-scale industry—in contrast to the feudal lords and middle estates, who desire to maintain all social positions that are the creation of obsolete modes of production. Thus they do not form together with the bourgeoisie only one reactionary mass.

On the other hand, the proletariat is revolutionary in contrast to the bourgeoisie because, having itself grown up on the basis of large-scale industry, it strives to strip off from production the capitalist character that the bourgeoisie seeks to perpetuate. But the *Manifesto* adds that the "middle class.... if by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat."

From this point of view, therefore, it is again nonsense to say that they, together with the bourgeoisie, and with the feudal lords into the bargain, "form only one reactionary mass" in relation to the working class.

Did we proclaim to the artisans, small industrialists, etc., and peasants during the last elections.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to us you, with the bourgeois and feudal lords, form only one reactionary mass?

Lassalle knew *The Communist Manifesto* by heart, as his faithful followers know the gospels written by him. If, therefore, he has falsified it so grossly, this has occurred only to put a good colour on his alliance with absolutist and feudal opponents against the bourgeoisie.

In the above paragraph, moreover, his oracular saying is dragged in by force without any connection with the botched quotation from the Statutes of the International. Thus it is here simply an impertinence and indeed not at all displeasing to Herr Bismarck, one of those cheap pieces of insolence in which the Marat<sup>3</sup> of Berlin deals.

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<sup>1</sup>See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The Reichstag elections mentioned here took place in January 1874.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Marat (1743-93). The mightiest figure in the first French bourgeois revolution, one of the most vigorous revolutionary agitators. By the "Marat of Berlin" Marx ironically refers to Hasselmann, the chief editor of the *Neuer Sozialdemokrat*, the central organ of the Lasselleans.—Ed.

5. "The working class strives for its emancipation first of all *within the framework of the present-day national state*, conscious that the necessary result of its efforts, which are common to the workers of all civilised countries, will be the international brotherhood of peoples."

Lassalle, in opposition to *The Communist Manifesto* and to all earlier socialism, conceived the workers' movement from the narrowest national standpoint. He is being followed in this—and that after the work of the International!

It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organise itself at home *as a class* and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle. In so far its class struggle is national, not in content, but as *The Communist Manifesto* says, "in form." But the "framework of the present-day national state," e.g., the German empire, is itself in its turn economically "within the framework" of the world market, politically "within the framework" of the system of states. Every businessman knows that German trade is at the same time foreign trade, and the greatness of Herr Bismarck consists, to be sure, precisely in a kind of *international* policy.

And to what does the German Workers' Party reduce its internationalism? To the consciousness that the result of its efforts will be "*the international brotherhood of peoples*"—a phrase borrowed from the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom,<sup>1</sup> which is intended to pass as equivalent to the international brotherhood of the working classes in the joint struggle against the ruling classes and their governments. Not a word, therefore, about the *international functions* of the German working class! And it is in this way it is to challenge its own bourgeoisie, which is already linked up in brotherhood against it with the bourgeois of all other countries, and Herr Bismarck's international policy of conspiracy!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The International League of Peace and Freedom was an international organisation of bourgeois democrats and pacifist free traders which existed in the 'sixties and 'seventies. The First International, under the pressure of Marx and under his leadership, carried on a decisive struggle against this League. The watchwords of the League were "Universal Brotherhood of Peoples" and "United States of Europe."—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>After the fall of the Paris Commune, Bismarck attempted in 1871-72 to conclude a formal treaty between Germany, Austria and Russia for the purpose of united persecution of the

In fact the international consciousness expressed in the programme stands *even infinitely* below that of the Free Trade Party. The latter also asserts that the result of its efforts will be "the international brotherhood of peoples." But it also *does* something to make trade international and by no means contents itself with the consciousness—that all peoples are carrying on trade at home.

The international activity of the working classes does not in any way depend on the existence of the International Working Men's Association. This was only the first attempt to create a central organ for that activity; an attempt which was of lasting success on account of the impulse which it gave but which was no longer realisable in its *first historical form* after the fall of the Paris Commune.

Bismarck's *Norddeutsche* was absolutely correct when it announced for the satisfaction of its master that the German Workers' Party had repudiated internationalism in the new programme.

## II

"Starting from these basic principles, the German Workers' Party strives by all legal means for the *free state*—and—socialist society; the abolition of the wages system *together with the iron law of wages*—and exploitation in every form; the removal of all social and political inequality."

I shall return to the "free" state later.

Thus, in future, the German Workers' Party has got to

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revolutionary movement in general and the First International in particular. It is true that a formal treaty was not arrived at, but the government organs of the Big Powers, nevertheless, were already taking joint action against the revolutionaries.—Ed.

The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, an organ of Bismarck's, published, on March 20, 1875 (No. 67), a leading article on the draft programme of the Social-Democratic Party. This article makes special reference to point 5 of the programme which Marx is referring to here, and in connection with this point the comment was made that "the Social-Democrats, at least in part, appear to desire to free themselves to a certain extent from the influence of the International," that "the Social-Democratic agitation has in many respects become more prudent," and that "it is renouncing the International."—Ed.

believe in Lassalle's "iron law of wages"!<sup>1</sup> That this shall not be lost, the nonsense is perpetrated of speaking of the "abolition of the wage system" (it should read: system of wage labour) *together with* the "iron law of wages." If I abolish wage labour, then naturally I abolish its laws also, whether they are of "iron" or sponge. But Lassalle's attack on wage labour turns almost solely on this so-called law. In order, therefore, to prove that Lassalle's sect has conquered, the "wage system" must be abolished "*together with* the iron law of wages" and not without it.

It is well known that nothing of the "iron law of wages" belongs to Lassalle except the word "iron" borrowed from Goethe's "great, eternal, iron laws." The word *iron* is a label by which the true believers recognise one another. But if I take the law with Lassalle's stamp on it and consequently in his sense then I must also take it with his basis for it. And what is that? As Lange<sup>2</sup> already showed, shortly after Lassalle's death, it is the Malthusian<sup>3</sup> theory of population (preached by Lange himself). But if this theory is correct, then again I can *not* abolish the law even if I abolish

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<sup>1</sup>Lassalle formulated this law as follows: "The iron economic law which, under present-day conditions, under the rule of the supply and demand of labour, determines wages is this, that the average wage always remains reduced to the necessary basis of subsistence that... is requisite for existence and propagation." (*An Open Answer to the Central Committee for Convening a General Congress of German Workers at Leipzig, Zurich, 1863.*) See also the criticism of this law in Engels' letter to Bebel, of March 18-28, 1875.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>F. A. Lange (1828-75). German Neo-Kantian philosopher, petty-bourgeois democratic writer, author of a work on social reform, *The Labour Question: Its Significance for the Present and the Future* (1865).—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834). English economist. In his work, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), he developed the idea that there exists an immutable law of population according to which the population figure increases in geometrical progression while the means of subsistence necessary for its maintenance increase only in arithmetical progression. Consequently, according to Malthus, the basis for poverty lies in the natural contradiction between the boundless striving of men for propagation and the restricted increase of the necessary means of subsistence. Marx, who called Malthus' work a libel on the human race, pointed out the falsity of this "law," and proved that "in fact each special historical mode of production has its own special, historically valid laws of population." (*Capital*, Vol. I., chap. XXIII, p. 693.)—Ed.

wage labour a hundred times over, because the law then governs not only the system of wage labour but *every* social system. Basing themselves directly on this, the economists have proved for fifty years and more that socialism cannot abolish poverty, *which has its basis in nature*, but can only generalise it, distribute it simultaneously over the whole surface of society!

But all this is not the main thing. Quite *apart* from this *false* Lassallean formulation of the law, the truly infuriating retrograde step consists in the following:

Since Lassalle's death<sup>1</sup> the scientific understanding has made progress in *our* party, that wages are not what they *appear* to be, namely, the *value*, or *price*, of *labour*, but only a masked form for the *value*, or *price*, of *labour power*. Thereby the whole bourgeois conception of wages hitherto, as well as all the criticism hitherto directed against this conception, was thrown overboard once for all and it was made clear that the wage worker has permission to work for his own life, *i.e.*, *to live*, only in so far as he works for a certain time gratis for the capitalist (and hence also for the latter's fellow consumers of surplus value); that the whole capitalist system of production turns on the prolongation of this gratis labour by extending the working day or by developing the productivity, or the greater intensity, of labour power, etc., that, consequently, the system of wage labour is a system of slavery, and indeed a slavery which becomes more severe in proportion as the social productive forces of labour develop, whether the worker receives better or worse payment. And after this understanding has more and more made progress in our party, one returns to Lassalle's dogmas, although one must have known that Lassalle *did not know what wages are*, but following in the wake of the bourgeois economists took the appearance for the essence of the matter.

It is as if, among slaves who have at last got behind the secret of slavery and broken out in rebellion, a slave still in thrall to obsolete notions were to inscribe on the programme of the rebellion: Slavery must be abolished because the upkeep of slaves in the system of slavery cannot exceed a certain low maximum!

Does not the mere fact that the representatives of our party were capable of perpetrating such a monstrous attack on

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<sup>1</sup>Lassalle was killed in a duel in September 1864.—Ed.

the understanding that has spread among the mass of our party prove by itself with what criminal levity and with what lack of conscience they set to work in drawing up this compromise programme!

Instead of the indefinite concluding phrase of the paragraph "the removal of all social and political inequality" it ought to have been said that with the abolition of class differences all the social and political inequality arising from them would disappear of itself.

### III

*"The German Workers' Party, in order to pave the way to the solution of the social question, demands the establishment of producers' co-operative societies with state aid under the democratic control of the toiling people. The producers' co-operative societies are to be called into being for industry and agriculture in such dimensions that the socialist organisation of the total labour will arise from them."*

After the Lassallean "iron law of wages" the remedy of the prophet. The way to it is "paved" in worthy fashion. In place of the existing class struggle appears a newspaper scribbler's phrase: "the social question," to the "solution" of which one "paves the way." Instead of the revolutionary process of transformation of society, the "socialist organisation of the total labour" "arises" from the "state aid" that the state gives to the producers' co-operative societies and which the state, not the worker, "calls into being." This is worthy of Lassalle's imagination that one can build a new society by state loans just as well as a new railway!

From the remnants of a sense of shame, "state aid" has been put—under the democratic control of the "toiling people."

In the first place the majority of the "toiling people" in Germany consists of peasants and not of proletarians.

Secondly, "democratic" is in German "*volksherrschaftlich*," ["by the rule of the people"]. But what does "control by the rule of the people of the toiling people" mean? And particularly in the case of a toiling people which, through these demands that it puts to the state, expresses its full consciousness that it neither rules nor is ripe for ruling!

It would be superfluous to deal here with the criticism of

the recipe prescribed by Büchez<sup>1</sup> in the reign of Louis Philippe in opposition to the French Socialists and accepted by the reactionary workers of the *Atelier*.<sup>2</sup> The chief offence does not lie in having inscribed these specific nostrums in the programme, but in that in general a retrograde step from the standpoint of a class movement to that of a sectarian movement is being taken.

That the workers desire to establish the conditions of co-operative production on a social, and first of all on a national scale in their own country, only means that they are working to revolutionise the present conditions of production, and has nothing in common with the foundation of co-operative societies with state aid. But as far as the present co-operative societies are concerned they are of value *only* in so far as they are the independent creations of the workers and not proteges either of the government or of the bourgeoisie.

#### IV

I come now to the democratic section.

A. "*The free basis of the state.*"

First of all, according to II, the German Workers' Party strives for the "free state."

Free state—what is this?

It is by no means the aim of the workers, who have got rid of the narrow mentality of humble subjects, to set the state free. In the German empire the "state" is almost as "free" as in Russia. Freedom consists in converting the state from an organ standing above society into one completely subordinated to it, and today also the forms of the state are more free or less free to the extent that they restrict the "freedom of the state."

The German Workers' Party—at least if it adopts the programme—shows that its socialist ideas are not even skin-deep;

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<sup>1</sup>Büchez (1796-1865). French historian and writer. In the forties of the last century, he was the representative of French Catholic "socialism," which demanded the formation of producers' co-operative societies with state aid as a means of struggle against the growing revolutionary movement.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>*Atelier* [Workshop]. A monthly journal published in Paris (1840-48.) Its editors and contributors were all workers. The *Atelier* group were under the influence of the reactionary Catholic socialism of Büchez. In politics they supported the bourgeois radicals.—Ed.

in that, instead of treating existing society (and this holds good of any future one) as the basis of the existing state (or of the future state in the case of future society) it treats the state rather as an independent entity that possesses its own intellectual, moral and free basis.

And what of the riotous misuse which the programme makes of the words "present-day state," "present-day society," and of the still more riotous misconception that it achieves in regard to the state to which it addresses its demands?

"Present-day society" is capitalist society, which exists in all civilised countries, more or less free from mediaeval admixture, more or less modified by the special historical development of each country and more or less developed. On the other hand, the "present-day state" changes with a country's frontier. It is different in the Prusso-German empire from what it is in Switzerland, it is different in England from what it is in the United States. "The present-day state" is therefore a fiction.

Nevertheless, the different states of the different civilised countries, in spite of their manifold diversity of form, all have this in common that they are based on modern bourgeois society, only one more or less capitalistically developed. They have, therefore, also certain essential features in common. In this sense it is possible to speak of the "present-day state," in contrast to the future in which its present root, bourgeois society, will have died away.

The question then arises: what transformation will the state undergo in communist society? In other words, what social functions will remain in existence there that are analogous to the present functions of the state? This question can only be answered scientifically and one does not get a flea-hop nearer to the problem by a thousand-fold combination of the word people with the word state.

Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In regard to this thesis Lenin wrote, in the autumn of 1916: "Up to now this axiom has never been disputed by socialists and yet it implies the recognition of the state, right up to the time when victorious socialism will have grown into complete communism." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX,

Now the programme does not deal with this nor with the future state in communist society.<sup>1</sup>

Its political demands contain nothing beyond the old familiar democratic litany: universal suffrage, direct legislation, people's justice, a people's militia, etc.<sup>2</sup> They are a mere echo of the bourgeois People's Party,<sup>3</sup> of the League of Peace and Freedom. They are all demands which, in so far as they are not exaggerated in fanciful presentation, have already been realised. Only the state to which they belong does not lie within the frontiers of the German empire, but in Switzerland, the United States, etc. This sort of "state of the future" is a present-day state although existing outside the "framework" of the German empire.

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"The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up.") Lenin discusses this thesis in more detail in his work *The State and Revolution*. In 1922 the renegade Kautsky produced the following "variation" of this thesis of Marx: "In the interval between the purely bourgeois administration and the purely proletarian administration of a democratic state there is the period of transition from one to the other. To this also corresponds a political transition period when the government, as a rule, takes the form of a coalition government." (K. Kautsky, *The Proletarian Revolution and Its Programme*, Stuttgart, 1922).—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>In his Notebook on the *Critique* Lenin makes the following observation: "It is clear that this is a rebuke; this is clear from the following phrase: the programme 'deals' with the old democratic litany but not with the questions of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the state in communist society." (Lenin, *Marxism on the State*).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>For the text of these political demands, see note 5 on pp. 533-34 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The German People's Party or Democratic Party was founded in September 1865 in Darmstadt and reorganised at the Stuttgart Party Congress in September 1868. It was the party of the petty bourgeoisie, of oppositional and partly also revolutionary inclination, of the smaller and medium-sized states of Germany, and particularly of South Germany. In opposition to Bismarck's policy of the unity of Germany under the hegemony of monarchist-Junker Prussia, it put forward the establishment of a democratic German republic. It was connected with the International League of Peace and Freedom (see note 1 on p. 517) and it made efforts to gain influence among the workers. It assisted the creation of various workers' educational associations and played the leading role in the annual congresses of the "German Workers' Association." The organisation of the People's Party in Saxony, which consisted almost exclusively of members of the workers' associations, was used by W. Liebknecht and A. Bebel, who carried

But one thing has been forgotten. Since the German Workers' Party expressly declares that it acts within "the present-day national state," hence its *own state*, the Prusso-German empire—its demands would indeed otherwise be largely meaningless, since one only demands what one has not got—it should not have forgotten the chief thing, namely that all those pretty little toys rest on the recognition of the so-called sovereignty of the people and hence there is only room for them in a *democratic republic*.

Since one has not the courage—and wisely, for the circumstances demand caution—to demand the democratic republic, as the French workers' programmes under Louis Philippe and under Louis Napoleon did, one should not have taken refuge either in the subterfuge, neither "honourable" nor "worthy," of demanding things which have meaning only in a democratic republic from a state which is nothing but a police guarded military despotism,<sup>1</sup> embellished with parliamentary forms, alloyed with a feudal admixture, bureaucracially constructed and already influenced by the bourgeoisie, and then to assure this state into the bargain that one thinks one will be able to extort these things from it "by legal means."

Even vulgar democracy, which sees the millenium in the democratic republic and has no suspicion that it is precisely in this last state form of bourgeois society that the class

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on agitation within the framework of the People's Party as the basis for the foundation of an independent workers' party. Later, in September 1868, after Liebknecht and Bebel had succeeded; under the pressure of Marx and Engels, at the Nuremberg Congress of the German Workers' Associations, in securing the adherence of these Associations to the First International and, a year later, in August 1869, at the Eisenach Congress of the Workers' Associations, in the foundation of a Social-Democratic Workers' Party, the People's Party rapidly lost its influence over the workers.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Referring to this characterisation of the constitution of the new Hohenzollern German Empire, Lenin wrote in 1913: "Marx estimated the actual essence of the German 'constitution' a hundred thousand times more profoundly than hundreds of professors, priests and publicists of the bourgeoisie, who chanted the praises of the 'state based on law.' They crawled on their bellies before the success and triumph of the highly placed favourites in Germany. Marx estimated the class essence of the policy, being guided not by a particular 'kink' in events; but by the whole experience of *international democracy* and of the international workers' movement." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, "Zabern.")—Ed.

struggle has to be fought out to a conclusion—even it towers mountains above this kind of democratism within the limits of what is permitted by the police and what is logically impermissible.<sup>2</sup>

That, in fact, by the word "state" the government machinery is understood, or the state, in so far as it forms a special organism separated from society through division of labour, is already shown by the words "the German Workers' Party demands as the economic basis of the state: a single progressive income tax, etc." Taxes are the economic basis of the government machinery and of nothing else. In the state of the future as it exists in Switzerland, this demand has been pretty well fulfilled. Income tax presupposes the various sources of income of the various social classes, and hence capitalist society. It is, therefore, not extraordinary that the Liverpool financial reformers, bourgeois headed by Gladstone's brother,<sup>2</sup> are putting forward the same demand as the programme.

B. "The German Workers' Party demands as the intellectual and moral basis of the state:

1. Universal and *equal elementary education* through the state. Universal compulsory school attendance, free instruction."

*Equal elementary education?* What idea lies behind these words? Is it believed that in present-day society (and it is only with this one has to deal) education can be *equal* for all classes? Or is it demanded that the upper classes also shall be compulsorily reduced to the modicum of education—the elementary school—that alone is compatible with the economic conditions not only of the wage workers but of the peasants as well?

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<sup>1</sup>In his Notebook on the *Critique*, Lenin makes the following comment:

"In these words, Marx, as it were, foresaw the whole course of Kautskyism; sweet speeches about all kinds of fine things, turning into beautifying of reality, because they shade over, or leave in the dark the irreconcilability of democratic peace and imperialism, of democracy and monarchy, etc."—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to Robertson Gladstone (1805-75), a big merchant in Liverpool, a Liberal who propagated the idea of a progressive income tax which should fall primarily on the big landowners. He was the brother of William Gladstone (1809-98), the prominent Liberal Prime Minister of the last half of the nineteenth century.—Ed.

∴ "Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction." The former exists even in Germany, the second in Switzerland and in the United States in the case of elementary schools. If in some states of the latter country the higher education institutions are also "free" that only means in fact defraying the cost of the education of the upper classes from the general tax receipts. Incidentally, the same holds good for "free administration of justice" demanded under A. 5. Criminal justice is to be had free everywhere; civil justice is concerned almost exclusively the possessing classes. Should they carry on their litigation at the expense of the national treasury?

The paragraph on the schools should at least have demanded technical schools (theoretical and practical) in combination with the elementary school.

"Elementary education through the state" is altogether objectionable. Defining by a general law the financial means of the elementary schools, the qualifications of the teachers, the branches of instruction, etc., and, as happens in the United States, supervising the fulfilment of these legal prescriptions by means of state inspectors, is a very different thing from appointing the state as the educator of the people! Government and church should rather be equally excluded from any influence on the school. Particularly, indeed, in the Prusso-German empire (and one cannot take refuge in the rotten subterfuge that one is speaking of a "state of the future," we have seen what that is) the state has need, on the contrary, of a very stern education by the people.

But the whole programme, for all its democratic clang is tainted through and through by the servile belief in the state of Lassalle's sect, or, what is no better, by democratic miracle-faith, or rather it is a compromise between these two kinds of miracle-faith, both equally remote from socialism.

"Freedom of science" says a paragraph of the Prussian constitution. Why then there?

"Freedom of conscience"! If one desires at this time of the *Kulturkampf*<sup>1</sup> to remind liberalism of its old catchwords,

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<sup>1</sup>Lenin wrote: "*Der Kulturkampf*, the 'Struggle for Culture,' i.e., Bismarck's struggle in the 'seventies against the German Catholic Party, the party of the 'Centre,' by means of police persecution of Catholicism. By this struggle Bismarck only strengthened the militant clericalism of the Catholics,

then it surely could have been done in the following form: Everyone should be able to attend to his religious as well as his bodily needs without the police sticking their noses in. But the Workers' Party ought at any rate in this connection to have expressed its consciousness of the fact that bourgeois "freedom of conscience" is nothing but the toleration of all possible kind of *religious freedom of conscience*, and that for its part it endeavours rather to liberate the conscience from the spectre of religion.<sup>1</sup> But there is a desire not to transgress the "bourgeois" level.

I have now come to the end, for the appendix<sup>2</sup> that now follows in the programme does not constitute a characteristic component part of it. Hence I can be very brief here.

## 2. "Normal working day."

In no other country has the Workers' Party restricted itself to such an indefinite demand, but has always fixed the length of the working day that it considers normal under the given circumstances.

## 3. "Restriction of women's labour and prohibition of child labour."

The standardisation of the working day must already include the restriction of women's labour, in so far as it relates to the duration, intervals, etc., of the working day; otherwise it could only mean the exclusion of women's labour from branches of industry that are specifically unhealthy for the female body or are objectionable morally for the female sex. If that is what was meant, then it ought to have been stated.

"Prohibition of child labour"! Here it was absolutely essential to state the age limits.

A general prohibition of child labour is incompatible with

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and only injured the cause of real culture, because he brought religious divisions instead of political ones to the forefront and thus diverted the attention of some sections of the working class and of democracy from the urgent tasks of class and revolutionary struggle to the most superficial and mendacious bourgeois anti-clericalism." (*Lenin on Religion.*)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Compare Lenin, "The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion" (1907): the workers' party "regards religion as a private matter *in relation to the state*, but by no means in relation to itself, to Marxism, or to the workers' party." (*Lenin on Religion.*)—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>This appendix contains "demands for the protection of the working class against the power of capital within present-day society." The first point, with which Marx does not deal, demands full "freedom of association."—Ed.

the existence of large-scale industry and hence an empty pious aspiration.

Its realisation—if it were possible—would be reactionary, since, with a strict regulation of the working time according to the different age groups and other safety measures for the protection of children, an early combination of productive labour with education is one of the most potent means for the transformation of present-day society.

4. "State supervision of factory, workshop and domestic industry."

In regard to the Prusso-German state it should definitely have been demanded that the inspectors are only to be removable by a court of law; that any worker can denounce them to the courts for neglect of duty; that they must belong to the medical profession.

5. "Regulation of prison labour."

A petty demand in a general workers' programme. In any case, it should have been clearly stated that there is no intention from fear of competition to allow ordinary criminals to be treated like beasts, and especially that there is no desire to deprive them of their sole means of betterment, productive labour. This was surely the least one might have expected from socialists.

6. "An effective liability law."

Incidentally remarked, in connection with the normal working day the part of factory legislation that deals with health regulations and safety measures has been overlooked. The liability law only comes into operation when these regulations are infringed.

In short, this appendix also is distinguished by slovenly editing.

*Dixi et salvavi animam meam.*<sup>2</sup>

FREDERICK ENGELS TO AUGUST BEBEL<sup>3</sup>

Dear Bebel:

London, March 18-28, 1875.

I have received your letter of February 23, and am glad you are in such good health.

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<sup>1</sup>I.e., responsibility for the life and health of the workers in case of accidents and in occupations injurious to health.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>I have spoken and saved my soul, that is to say, I have done my duty.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Lenin attached extraordinary great importance to this

"You ask me what we think of the unification business. Unfortunately our fate has been the same as yours. Neither Liebknecht nor anyone else has sent us any information and we too; therefore, only know what is in the papers; and there was nothing in them until the draft programme appeared

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letter of Engels to Bebel. In his work *The State and Revolution*, Lenin wrote:

"One of the most remarkable, if not the most remarkable observation on the state in the works of Marx and Engels is contained in the following passage in Engels' letter to Bebel, dated March 18-28, 1875." And further Lenin quoted from the letter beginning with the words "The free people's state" to the words ". . . represent the French word *commune*." See pp. 537-38 of the present volume.

In his Notebook, *Marxism on the State*, Lenin sums up these statements of Engels on the state; he exposes the distortions of Marx's teachings on the state by the opportunists—the vulgarisation of this teaching by Kautsky on the one hand and the radical differences on the question of the state between Marxism and anarchism on the other:

1) "The whole talk about the state should be dropped."  
2) "The Commune . . . was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word." (But what, then? A transitional form from the state to no state, clearly!)

3) The anarchists have long enough "thrown in our faces" the "people's state." (Marx and Engels, it is clear, were ashamed of this obvious mistake on the part of their German friends; however, they thought, and of course *under the circumstances* then existing rightly thought, that it was an incomparably less serious mistake than the mistake of the anarchists. N.B. this!!)

4) The state "will decompose of itself ('dissolve') *Nota bene* and disappear." . . . (compare further on "will wither away") "with the introduction of the socialist order of society. . . ."

5) The state is "a transitional institution," which is needed "in the struggle, in the revolution . . ." (needed by the proletariat, of course)

6) The state is needed *not for freedom*, but for *crushing* (?*Niederhaltung* is not holding down, properly speaking, but holding back from restoration, holding in submission) the adversaries of the proletariat.

7) When there is freedom, then there will be no state. . . . The concepts "freedom" and "democracy" are usually treated as identical and are often used instead of each other. Very often the vulgar Marxists (with Kautsky, Plekhanov and Co. at their head) argue precisely in this way. In fact, democracy excludes freedom. The dialectics (process) of development is: from absolutism to bourgeois democracy; from

about a week ago! This programme has certainly astonished us not a little.

Our party has so frequently made offers of reconciliation or at least of co-operation to the Lassalleans and has been so frequently and contemptuously repulsed by the Hasenclevers,

bourgeois democracy to proletarian; from proletarian to none at all.

8) "We" (i.e., Engels and Marx) would propose "everywhere" (in the programme) to speak, instead of the "state," of the "community," the "Commune"!!!

From this it is clear how not only the opportunists, but also Kautsky, have vulgarised, defiled, Marx and Engels.

The opportunists have not understood a single one of these eight most rich ideas!!

They have taken *only* the practical needs of the present: to make use of the political struggle, to make use of the contemporary state for the training, the education of the proletariat, for the "extraction of concessions." This is correct (as against the anarchists), but as yet it is only one-hundredth of Marxism, if it can be so expressed arithmetically.

Kautsky completely covered over (or forgot? or did not understand?), in his propagandist and throughout his publicist work, points 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and Marx's "smashing" (in his polemic with Pannekoek in 1912 or 1913 . . . . Kautsky has already tumbled completely into opportunism on this question).

We are distinguished from the anarchists by (a) the use of the state now and (b) at the time of the proletarian revolution ("the dictatorship of the proletariat")—points of the greatest practical importance, just now! (And Bukharin has forgotten just these!)

From the opportunists by the deeper, "more eternal," truths concerning (aa) the "temporary" character of the state, (bb) the harm of "chatter" about it now, (cc) the dictatorship of the proletariat not having altogether the character of a state (dd) the contradiction between the state and freedom, (ee) the greater correctness of the idea (conception, programme term) "community" in place of state, (ff) the "smashing" of the bureaucratic-military machine. Not to forget also that the dictatorship of the proletariat is directly repudiated by the avowed opportunists of Germany (Bernstein, Kolb and so forth), and indirectly by the official programme and Kautsky; being silent about it in everyday agitation and tolerating the renegacy of the Kolbs and Co.

Bukharin was written to in VIII 1916: "Let your ideas on the state ripen fully." But without letting them ripen, he rushed into print as "Nota bene," and he did it in such a way that instead of exposing the Kautskyians he helped them by his own mistakes!! But in the essence of the matter Bukharin is nearer to the truth than Kautsky.—Ed.

Hasselmanns and Tolckes<sup>1</sup> that any child must have drawn the conclusion: if these gentlemen are now coming and offering reconciliation themselves they must be in a damned tight fix. But considering the well-known character of these people it is our duty to utilise their fix in order to stipulate for every possible guarantee, so that they shall not re-establish their impaired position in the public opinion of the workers at the expense of our party. They should have been received with extreme coolness and mistrust, and union should have been made dependent on the extent to which they were willing to drop their sectarian slogans and their state aid and to accept in essentials the Eisenach programme of 1869<sup>2</sup> or a revised edition of it adapted to the position at the present day.

Our Party had *absolutely nothing to learn* from the Lassalleans in the theoretical sphere and therefore in what is decisive for the programme, but the Lassalleans certainly had something to learn from our Party; the first condition of union was that they should cease to be sectarians, Lassalleans, above all that the universal panacea of state aid should be, if not entirely relinquished, at any rate recognised by them as a subordinate and transitional measure of less or equal importance to many other possible ones. The draft programme shows that our people are a hundred times superior theoretically to the Lassalleans—but in the same measure removed from being equal to them where political cunning is concerned: the “honest”<sup>3</sup> have been once more cruelly fleeced by the dishonest.

In the first place Lassalle’s high-sounding but historically false phrase is accepted: in contrast to the working class all

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<sup>1</sup>Wilhelm Hasenclever, Wilhelm Hasselmann and Wilhelm Tolcke were leaders of the General Association of German Workers. The first named was chairman of the party during 1871 to 1875, after the fusion with the Eisenachers he occupied various important party posts but did not play any leading role; he died in 1889. The second became an anarchist during the period of the Anti-Socialist Law and in 1880 was expelled from the party. Tolcke (1817-93) remained in the ranks of the German Social-Democratic Party until his death but he played no important part in the leadership of the united party.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The programme of the Social-Democratic Workers’ Party of Germany, led by W. Liebknecht and A. Bebel, which was founded at the Eisenach Congress in August 1869 (the party of the “Eisenachers”).—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The reference is to the Eisenachers.—Ed.

other classes are only one reactionary mass.<sup>1</sup> This statement is only true in a few exceptional cases: for instance, in a proletarian revolution like the Commune, or in a country where not only have state and society been moulded by the bourgeoisie in its own image but where in its wake the democratic petty-bourgeoisie too has already carried out this re-casting down to its final consequences. If in Germany, for instance, the democratic petty-bourgeoisie belonged to this reactionary mass, how could the Social-Democratic Workers' Party have gone hand in hand with it—with the People's Party—for years? How can the *Volksstaat* [People's State]<sup>2</sup> take almost the whole of its political contents from the petty-bourgeois democratic *Frankfurter Zeitung*?<sup>3</sup> And how comes it that no less than seven demands are accepted in this programme which directly and literally coincide with the programme of the People's Party and petty-bourgeois democracy? I mean the seven political demands, 1 to 5 and I to II, of which there is not a single one that is not *bourgeois* democratic<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Marx's criticism of this Lassallean phrase, p. 515 et seq., in the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>For the People's Party see note 3 on p. 524. The Eisenachers remained even after 1871 in political contact with the Left wing of the People's Party. This Left wing was headed by J. Jacoby, an old democrat and republican hostile to the Bismarckian empire. In this connection Liebknecht, the leader of the Eisenachers, was not able to distinguish sufficiently sharply and expose the difference in principle between the oppositional policy of petty-bourgeois democracy on the one hand and the revolutionary policy of the proletarian socialist party on the other. Marx and Engels frequently took Liebknecht to task for this Right opportunist mistake that was of advantage to the Lassalleans.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The *Volksstaat* was the central organ of the Eisenachers from 1870 to 1876. It appeared twice weekly in Leipzig; its editor was Liebknecht.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>The *Frankfurter Zeitung* was at that time an oppositional daily paper, the organ of the South German petty-bourgeois democrats, and it adopted a social reform standpoint in regard to the "labour question."—Ed.

<sup>5</sup>These political demands of the Gotha Programme were formulated as follows:

A. The German Workers' Party demands as the free basis of the state:

1. Universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage for all males of twenty-one years of age and above, for all elections—national and local.

2. Direct legislation by the people with right of initiating proposals and veto.

Secondly, the principle that the workers' movement is an international movement is completely disavowed in practice for the present day, and that by people who have upheld this principle in the most glorious way for five years, and under the most difficult conditions. The German workers' position at the head of the European movement is essentially based on their genuinely international attitude during the war: no other proletariat would have behaved so well.<sup>1</sup> And now this principle is to be denied by them at the very moment when the workers everywhere abroad are emphasising it, in the same degree as the governments are striving to suppress every attempt at its manifestation in an organisation!

And what is left of the internationalism of the workers' movement then? The faint prospect—not even of the future co-operation of the European workers for their emancipation—no, of a future “international brotherhood of nations”—of the bourgeois Peace League's “United States of Europe”!

It was of course quite unnecessary to speak of the International as such. But surely the very least would have been to make no retreat from the programme of 1869 and to say something to this effect: *although* the German Workers' Party is operating for the time being within the state boundaries laid down for it (it has no right to speak in the name of the European proletariat and especially no right to say something false), it is conscious of its solidarity with the workers of all countries and will always be ready in the future, as it has been hitherto, to fulfil the obligations imposed upon it by this solidarity. Obligations of that kind exist even if one does not exactly proclaim or regard oneself as a part of the “In-

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3. Universal conscription.

4. Abolition of all exceptional laws, especially the laws on the press, association and assembly.

5. Administration of justice by the people. Gratuitous administration of justice.

B. The German Workers' Party demands as the intellectual and moral basis of the state:

1. Universal and equal elementary education through the state. Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction.

2. Freedom of science. Freedom of conscience.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>For the attitude of the German Social-Democratic workers in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 see the two Addresses of the General Council of the First International, written by Marx, p. 430 *et seq.*, in the present volume. See also Engels' Prefatory Note to *The Peasant War in Germany*.—Ed.

ternational"; for instance, help and abstention from black-legging in strikes; care taken that the party organs keep the German workers informed about the movement abroad; agitation against the threat or the outbreak of Cabinet-made wars, behaviour during such wars similar to that carried out in a model fashion in 1870 and 1871, etc.

Thirdly, our people have allowed the Lassallean "iron law of wages" to be foisted upon them, a law based on a quite antiquated economic view, namely, that the worker receives on the average only the minimum of the labour wage, because, according to Malthus' theory of population, there are always too many workers (this was Lassalle's argument). Now Marx has proved in detail in *Capital* that the laws regulating wages are very complicated, that sometimes one predominates and sometimes another, according to circumstances, that therefore they are in no sense iron but on the contrary very elastic, and that the thing can by no means be dismissed in a few words, as Lassalle imagined. The Malthusian basis for the law which Lassalle copied from Malthus and Ricardo (with a falsification of the latter), as it is to be found for instance in the *Arbeiterlesebuch*, page 5, quoted from another pamphlet of Lassalle's,<sup>1</sup> has been refuted in detail by Marx in the section on the "Accumulation of Capital." Thus by adopting Lassalle's "iron law" we commit ourselves to a false statement with a false basis.

Fourthly, the programme puts forward as its sole social demand—Lassalle's state aid in its most naked form, as Lassalle stole it from Buchez. And this after Bracke<sup>2</sup> has very well exposed this demand in its entire nullity and after almost all, if not all, our party speakers have been obliged to come out

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<sup>1</sup>Two speeches delivered by Lassalle in Frankfurt on May 17 and May 19, 1863, were published by the General Association of German Workers, under the title of *Arbeiterlesebuch* [Workers' Reader]. Engels refers to the passage in the first speech which was taken by Lassalle from his pamphlet, *An Open Answer to the Central Committee for Convening a General Congress of German Workers at Leipzig* (Zurich 1863). The passage is quoted by us on p. 518 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Wilhelm Bracke (1842-80). One of the leaders of the Eisenachers. He stood very close to Marx and Engels and supported them, though not very energetically, in their struggle against the opportunist errors of the Gotha Programme. In 1873 he wrote a pamphlet, *The Lassallean Proposal*, in which he criticised the Lassallean demand for "state aid" for producers' co-operative societies.—Ed.

against this state aid in fighting the Lassalleans! Lower than this our Party could not abase itself. Internationalism brought down to Amand Gogg<sup>1</sup> and socialism to the bourgeois, republican Buchez, who put forward this demand *in opposition to the socialists*, in order to supplant them!

In the best of cases, however, "state aid." in the Lassallean sense is only the *particular* measure among many others designed to attain the end here lamely described as "paving the way for a solution of the social question"—as if a theoretically *unsolved social question* still existed for us! So if we say: the German workers' party strives for the abolition of wage labour, and with it of class differences, by the establishment of co-operative production on a national scale in industry and agriculture; it supports every measure adapted to the attainment of this end!—then no Lassallean can have anything against it.

Fifthly, there is not a word about the organisation of the working class as a class by means of the trade unions. And that is a very essential point, for this is the real class organisation of the proletariat, in which it carries on its daily struggles with capital, in which it trains itself, and which nowadays even amid the worst reaction (as in Paris at present) can simply no longer be smashed. Considering the importance which this form of organisation has also attained in Germany, it would be absolutely necessary in our opinion to mention it in the programme and if possible to leave open a place for it in the party organisation.

All this has been done by our people to please the Lassalleans. And what has the other side conceded? That a crowd of rather confused *purely democratic demands* should figure in the programme, of which several are a mere matter of fashion, as for instance the "legislation by the people" which exists in Switzerland and does more harm than good when it does anything at all. *Administration* by the people would be something different. Equally lacking is the first condition of all freedom: that all functionaries should be responsible for all their official actions to every citizen before the ordinary courts and according to common law. Of the fact that such demands as freedom for science, freedom of conscience, figure

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<sup>1</sup>Amand Gogg (1820-97). A petty-bourgeois democrat from Baden. He took part in the Revolution of 1848-49; in the 'sixties he conducted pacifist propaganda. He was one of the leaders of the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom.—Ed.

in every bourgeois liberal programme and have a somewhat strange appearance here, I will say nothing more.

The free people's state is transformed into the free state. Taken in its grammatical sense a free state is one where the state is free in relation to its citizens and is therefore a state with a despotic government. The whole talk about the state should be dropped, especially since the Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. The "people's state" has been thrown in our faces by the anarchists too long, although Marx's book against Proudhon<sup>1</sup> and later *The Communist Manifesto* directly declare that with the introduction of the socialist order of society the state will of itself dissolve and disappear. As, therefore, the "state" is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down [*niederzuhalten*] one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a "free people's state"; so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist.<sup>2</sup> We would therefore propose to replace the word "state" everywhere by the word *Gemeinwesen* [community], a good old

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<sup>1</sup>Marx's work against Proudhon was published in 1847 in the French language entitled *Misere de la philosophie* [*The Poverty of Philosophy*]. The passage to which Engels refers is as follows:

"The working class, in the course of its development, will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will be no more political power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of antagonisms in civil society." (*The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 147, 1935 ed.)—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>We quote here a forgotten statement of Engels on the withering away of the state and on the dictatorship of the proletariat from a letter of his to the American socialist van Patten of April 18, 1883:

"Since 1845 Marx and I have held the view that one of the ultimate results of the future proletarian revolution will be the gradual dissolution and final disappearance of the political organisation known by the name of *state*. The main object of this organisation has always been to secure, by armed force, the economic oppression of the labouring majority by the minority which alone possesses wealth. With the disappearance of an exclusively wealth-possessing minority, there also disappears the necessity for the power of armed oppression, or state power. At the same time, however, it was always our view that in order to attain this and the other far

German word which can very well represent the French word *commune*.<sup>1</sup>

“The removal of all social and political inequality” is also a very questionable phrase in place of the “the abolition of all class differences.” Between one country and another, one province and another and even one place and another there will always exist a *certain* inequality in the conditions of life, which can be reduced to a minimum but never entirely removed. Mountain dwellers will always have different conditions of life from those of people living on plains. The idea of socialist society as the realm of equality is a one-sided French idea resting upon the old “liberty, equality, fraternity”—an idea which was justified as a *stage of development* in its own time and place but which, like all the one-sided ideas of the earlier socialist schools, should now be overcome; for they only produce confusion in people’s heads and more precise modes of presentation have been found.

I will stop, although almost every word in this programme, which has, moreover, been put together in a flat and feeble style, could be criticised. It is of such a character that if it is accepted Marx and I can *never* give our adherence to the *new*

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more important aims of the future social revolution, the working class must first take possession of the organised political power of the state and by its aid crush the resistance of the capitalist class and organise society anew. This is to be found already in *The Communist Manifesto*, of 1847, chapter II, conclusion.

“The anarchists put the thing upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must *begin* by doing away with the political organisation of the state. But after its victory the sole organisation that the proletariat finds already in existence is precisely the state. This state may require very considerable alterations before it can fulfil its new functions. But to destroy it at such a moment would be to destroy the only organism by means of which the victorious proletariat can assert its newly conquered power, hold down its capitalist adversaries and carry out the economic revolution of society without which the whole victory must end in a new defeat and in a mass slaughter of the workers similar to those after the Paris Commune.” (*The Correspondence of Marx and Engels*, 1934 ed. pp. 416-17.)—Ed.

“Lenin characterises this passage in Engels’ letter as follows: “This is probably the most striking and certainly the sharpest passage, so to speak, *against* the state” in the writings of Marx and Engels. And he further formulates, in eight points, the basic thoughts of Marx and Engels in regard to the state. (See note 3, p. 529.)—Ed.

party established on this basis, and shall have very seriously to consider what our attitude towards it—in public as well—should be. You must remember that abroad we are made responsible for any and every utterance and action of the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party. Thus Bakunin in his pamphlet, *Statehood and Anarchy*<sup>2</sup>—where we have to answer for every thoughtless word spoken or written by Liebknecht since the *Demokratisches Wochenblatt* [*Democratic Weekly*]<sup>3</sup> was started. People imagine, indeed, that we issue our orders for the whole business from here, while you know as well as I that we hardly ever interfere in internal party affairs in the smallest way, and even then only in order to make good, so far as is possible, blunders, and only theoretical blunders, which have in our opinion been committed. But you will see for yourself that this programme marks a turning point which may very easily compel us to refuse any and every responsibility for the party which recognises it.

As a rule, the official programme of a party is less important than what it does. But a new programme is after all a banner publicly raised, and the outside world judges the party from it. It should therefore on no account include a step backwards, as this one does in comparison with the Eisenach programme. One should surely also take into consideration what the workers of other countries will say to this programme, what impression will be produced by this bending of the knee to Lassalleanism on the part of the whole German

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<sup>1</sup>Why Marx and Engels did not come forward publicly against this opportunist programme after its acceptance is explained in the letter of Engels to Bracke of October 11, 1875.

<sup>2</sup>“Fortunately the programme has fared better than it deserves. Both workers and bourgeois and petty bourgeois read into it what ought properly be in it but is not in it, and it has not occurred to anyone to investigate publicly a single one of these wonderful propositions as to its real content. This has made it possible for us to keep silent on this programme. It comes to this that one cannot translate these propositions into any foreign language without being *compelled* either to write down palpably crazy stuff or to insert a communist meaning into them, and the latter has been done so far by friend and foe. I myself have had to do so in the translation for our Spanish friends.”—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>See note 3 on p. 499 of the present volume.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>The organ of the Eisenachers prior to their formal separation from the petty-bourgeois radical People's Party of Saxony. It was edited by W. Liebknecht and published in Leipzig in 1868-69.—Ed.

socialist proletariat.

At the same time I am convinced that a union on *this* basis will never last a year. Are the best minds in our party to lend themselves to grinding out repetitions, learnt off by rote, of the Lassallean statements on the iron law of wages and state aid? I should like to see you doing it, for instance! And if they did do this they would be hissed by their audiences. And I am sure the Lassalleans will insist on just *these* points of their programme like the Jew Shylock on his pound of flesh. The separation will come; but we shall have "rehabilitated" Hasselmann, Hasenclever, Tolcke and Co.; we shall come out of the separation weaker and the Lassalleans stronger; our party will have lost its political virginity and will never again be able to come out whole-heartedly against the Lassallean phrases which it will have inscribed for a time on its own banner; and if the Lassalleans then once more say that they are the most genuine, the only workers' party, while our people are bourgeois, the programme will be there to prove it. All the socialist measures in it are *theirs*, and all *our* party has put into it are the demands of that same petty-bourgeois democracy which is nevertheless *also* described by it in the same programme as a part of the "reactionary mass."

I had left this letter lying as after all you are to be freed on April 1, in honour of Bismarck's birthday,<sup>1</sup> and I did not want to expose it to the chance of being seized in any attempt to smuggle it in. And now a letter has just come from Bracke, who has also his grave doubts about the programme and wants to know our opinion.<sup>2</sup> I am therefore sending this letter to

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<sup>1</sup>On account of the revolutionary internationalist position they took up during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, Liebknecht and Bebel were sentenced in March 1872 in the famous Leipzig trial for state treason to two years' imprisonment in a fortress. Bebel's term of imprisonment ended on May 14, 1874, but six weeks later he was again imprisoned in Zwickau (Saxony) for a further nine months for "high treason." He was finally released on April 1, 1875, which happened to coincide with Bismarck's birthday.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Bracke in his letter to Engels of March 25, 1875, sharply criticised the Gotha Programme. He said: "The acceptance of this programme is impossible for me and Bebel also is of the same opinion as regards himself." Bracke directed his main attack against the point of the programme on the establishment of producers' co-operatives by state aid. According to Bracke's opinion, the acceptance of this point turned the party into a sect. He writes: "Since Bebel appears to be determined to

him to forward, so that he can read it and so that I need not write out all this stuff over again. Moreover, I have also told the unvarnished truth to Ramm<sup>1</sup>—to Liebknecht I only wrote briefly. I cannot forgive him for never telling us a *single word* about the thing (while Ramm and others thought he had given us exact information) until it was too late, so to speak. But indeed this is what he has always done—hence the large amount of disagreeable correspondence which both Marx and I have had with him but this time it is really too much and *we are certainly not going to co-operate*.

See that you contrive to come here in the summer. You will, of course, stay with me, and if the weather is good we can go to the seaside for a day or two, which will be really beneficial to you after your long spell in jail.

Your sincere friend,

F. E.

FREDERICK ENGELS TO KARL KAUTSKY<sup>2</sup>

London, February 23, 1891

Dear Kautsky :<sup>3</sup>

You will have received my hasty congratulations of the day before yesterday. So now to turn again to our muttoms,

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take up the struggle, I should feel myself compelled at least to support him with all my strength. I should, however, like very much to know in advance how you and Marx regard the matter. Your experience is riper, your understanding is better than mine. If you agree to this, then I will make a proposal to Bebel that we can come forward to the Congress with a common draft programme." Bebel, however, did not justify Bracke's hopes and did not come out against the programme.—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup>Ramm. A German Social-Democrat, one of the editors of the *Leipzig Volksstaat*, the central organ of the Eisenach party. He did not play any leading role in the party.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>This letter from Engels to Kautsky throws light on the history of the publication of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1891. The letter shows how hostilely the *Critique* was received by the leaders of German Social-Democracy. Extremely valuable also in this letter is Engels' ruthless criticism of Lassalle: the sketch of a work projected by Engels, in order "to clear away the Lassalle legend once for all." Kautsky also helped to spread this legend. He glorified Lassalle as the leader and teacher of the German proletariat and put him on a level with Marx. For further details see the notes to this letter.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>Kautsky was then editor of the weekly journal, *Die Neue Zeit*, the theoretical organ of German Social-Democracy, in which Engels published Marx's *Critique*.—*Ed.*

the Marx letter.

The fear that it would put a weapon in the hands of our opponents was unfounded. Malicious insinuations, of course, are being attached to everything and anything, but on the whole the impression made on the opponents was one of complete disconcertion at this ruthless self-criticism and the feeling, what an inner power must be possessed by a party that can afford such a thing! That can be seen from the hostile newspapers that you sent me (for which many thanks) and from those to which I have otherwise had access. And, frankly speaking, that was also my intention when I published the document. That at the first moment some persons here and there could not but be unpleasantly affected by it, of that I was aware, but it was not to be avoided and it was amply outweighed in my view by the material contents. I knew, also, that the party was fully strong enough to bear it, and I reckoned that it would today also put up with this frank language used fifteen years ago, that it would point with justifiable pride to this test of strength and would say: Where is there another party that can dare the like? That has been left, meanwhile, to the *Sachsische* and *Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung* and to the *Zuricher Post*.<sup>1</sup>

That in No. 21 of the *Neue Zeit* you take on yourself the responsibility for the publication is very gallant of you but do not forget that, after all, I gave the first impulse and moreover, to a certain extent I put you in a position in which you had no choice.<sup>2</sup> I claim, therefore, the main responsibility for myself. As far as details are concerned, one can certainly always have different opinions about them. I have deleted and altered everything that you and Dietz<sup>3</sup> have objected to, and if Dietz had marked even more I would still, as far as possible, have

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<sup>1</sup>Of these papers the first two were Social-Democratic, the third, bourgeois.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Engels is referring to the fact that when he sent Kautsky the text of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* for publication, he notified Kautsky that if it was not published in the *Neue Zeit* he (Engels) would publish it in the *Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung*—i.e., that one way or another Marx's *Critique* would be made public.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>W. Dietz (1843-1922). German Social-Democrat, member of the Reichstag, manager of the party publishing house in Stuttgart, which also issued the *Neue Zeit*. He always belonged to the Right opportunist wing of German Social-Democracy; during the World War he was a social-chauvinist.—Ed.

been amenable even then, of that I have always given you proof. But, as far as the main point is concerned, it was *my duty* to publish the thing when once the programme had come up for discussion. And, especially now, after Liebknecht's report in Halle, in which he utilises his extracts from it, in part unceremoniously as his own property, and in part on the other hand at objects of attack without mentioning the source,<sup>1</sup> Marx would certainly have confronted this version with the original and it was my duty in his place to do the same. Unfortunately, at that time I had not yet got the document, I only found it later after much search.

You say that Bebel writes to you that Marx's treatment of Lassalle has caused bad blood among the old Lassalleans. That may be. People do not know the real story and nothing appears to have happened to enlighten them about it." If these people do not know that Lassalle's whole greatness rests on this, that for years Marx allowed him to parade the results of Marx's research as his own and, owing to defective education in economics, to distort them into the bargain, then that is not my fault. But I am Marx's literary executor and as such

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<sup>1</sup>Although in making his report at the Halle Congress in 1890, W. Liebknecht admitted that the old programme required revision, he nevertheless praised it in every possible way as the "battle standard," the "guiding star" of the party, etc. While analysing each point of the Gotha Programme separately and in places putting forward the objections raised by Marx and Engels—but without mentioning their names—Liebknecht ended his examination of each point with the conclusion that the point was "of unassailable importance" "in principle" or "in essence," even if it required re-editing.—*Ed.*

"This reproach was directed above all against Kautsky. In his endeavours to weaken the effect of Marx's criticism of Lassalleanism, Kautsky published in No. 21 of the *Neue Zeit* an article entitled "Our Programmes" in which he opportunistically diminished the practical significance of Marx's criticism, marked himself off from it and emphasised the great "services" of Lassalle. Among other things, he said "the standpoint which Marx adopted towards Lassalle is not the standpoint of German Social-Democracy... Social-Democracy has a different attitude to Lassalle from that of Marx... How could we forget the man from whose writings all we older party comrades and even the majority of the younger have derived their first socialist knowledge, their first enthusiasm for socialism! We study and examine attentively what Marx says about his pupil Lassalle, but we do not forget that the latter also was one of our first teachers and champions." (*Neue Zeit*, 1890-91, —*Ed.*

I also have my duty to perform.

Lassalle has belonged to history for twenty-six years. While under the Exceptional Law historical criticism of him has been left in abeyance, the time is at last at hand when it must have its say and Lassalle's position in relation to Marx be made clear. The legend that conceals and glorifies the true stature of Lassalle cannot become an article of faith of the party. However highly one may estimate Lassalle's services to the movement, his historical role in it remains an equivocal one. Lassalle the socialist is accompanied step by step by Lassalle the demagogue. Lassalle, the conductor of the Hatzfeld law suit, appears everywhere, showing through Lassalle the agitator and organiser;<sup>1</sup> the same cynicism in choice of methods, the same preference for surrounding himself with rowdy and corrupt people who can be used as mere tools and discarded. Until 1862, a specifically Prussian vulgar democrat in practice, with strong Bonapartist leanings (I have just looked through his letters to Marx), he suddenly turned round from purely personal causes and began his agitation; and before two years had gone by he was demanding that the workers should take the part of the monarchy against the bourgeoisie, and intriguing with Bismarck, one of his own kind in character, in a way that was bound to lead to the actual betrayal of the movement, if fortunately for him he had not been shot in time. In his agitational writings, the correct things that he borrowed from Marx are so much interwoven with his own invariably false expositions that the two are hardly to be separated. The section of the workers that feels itself injured by Marx's judgment only knows Lassalle through his two years of agitation, and they also see them through coloured spectacles. But historical criticism cannot stand eternally, hat in hand, before such prejudices. It was my duty finally to settle accounts between Marx and Lassalle. That has been done. For the time being I can content myself with that. Moreover, I myself have other things to do now. And the published ruthless judgment of Marx on Lassalle will by itself have its effect and give others courage. But should I be forced to it, there

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<sup>1</sup>During nearly a decade (1845-54) Lassalle conducted as a lawyer a very complicated and for its time a very sensational divorce case of the Countess Sophie Hatzfeld, in the course of which he made use of the most varied lawyer's tricks and did not shrink from employing every means to win the case.—Ed.

would be no choice for me; I should have to clear away the Lassalle legend once for all.

... That voices have been raised in the fraction saying that the *Neue Zeit* should be placed under censorship is indeed a fine affair. Is the ghost of the fraction's dictatorship during the Anti-Socialist Law (which was of course necessary and excellently carried out)<sup>1</sup> now appearing, or is it due to remembrance of the late strict organisation of Schweitzer?<sup>2</sup> It is in fact a brilliant idea to put German socialist science, after its liberation from Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Law, under a new socialist law manufactured and carried out by the Social-Democratic Party officials themselves. For the rest, it is ordained that the desires of the ambitious will not be realised.

The article in the *Vorwärts* does not stir me much.<sup>3</sup> I shall

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<sup>1</sup>During the period of the Anti-Socialist Law (1878-90) when all legal working class organisations were forbidden, the Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag was the highest organ of the party. Although the fraction consisted to a considerable extent of opportunists, the leadership of the party was in the hands of Bebel who based himself on the masses of the party membership and on the illegal organ, the *Sozialdemokrat*, published in Zurich and later in London. This paper was in general edited in accordance with the directions of Engels.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>That is to say, the organisation of the Lassalleans, the General Association of German Workers, the leader of which, from 1864 to 1871, was Johann Baptist Schweitzer (1833-75). Schweitzer was editor of the central organ, chairman of the party and a member of the Reichstag. He continued Lassalle's policy of intriguing with Bismarck who, as was revealed a few years ago, financed the paper. He guided the association, following Lassalle's tradition, in a dictatorial fashion, attempting to maintain his dictatorial power even when a strong opposition had developed against him, and he endeavoured to extend this power to the trade union organisations to the foundation of which—only under the pressure of the masses, it is true—he had proceeded in 1868.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The leading article in the *Vorwärts*, the central organ of German Social-Democracy, expressed the official position of the party leadership on Marx's *Critique*. The article contained a sharp condemnation of Marx's estimate of Lassalle and considered it a merit of the party that it had accepted the Gotha draft programme in opposition to Marx's opinion. It was further asserted in the article that the development of the party had proved Marx wrong and that the Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag and the party leadership had in no case expressed their agreement to the publication of the *Critique*. The article says: "The German Social-Democrats

wait for Liebknecht's historical account<sup>1</sup> and shall then reply to both in as friendly a tone as possible. In the *Vorwärts* article there are only a few inaccuracies to be corrected (e.g., that we did not desire unity, that events proved Marx wrong, etc.) and a few obvious things to be confirmed. With this answer I intend then, for my part, to close the discussion unless new attacks or false assertions compel me to continue.

Tell Dietz that I am working on the *Origin*,<sup>2</sup> but to day Fischer<sup>3</sup> writes to me and wants three new prefaces as well!

Yours,  
F.E.

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are not Marxians, not Lassalleans—they are Social-Democrats." (*Neue Zeit*, 1890-91, Vol. I., p. 684.)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Liebknecht intended to write a special article on the history of the Gotha Programme for the *Neue Zeit*. According to Kautsky, "an article . . . which would give a history of our party programme in general and particularly of those conditions which made it possible for the Gotha Programme in 1875 to represent the expression of the theoretical consciousness of the majority of the party." (*Ibid.*, p. 681.) Kautsky wrote in the above-mentioned article, entitled "Our Programmes": "In this respect. . . the programme letter required a supplement. Engels could not give this."—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to the fourth edition of Engels' book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, published by the Stuttgart publishing house (Verlag Dietz) of the party.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Fischer (1855-1926). Member of the Executive of the Social-Democratic Party; manager of the Berlin party publishing house.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>In 1891 Engels wrote prefaces to the newly republished works of Marx, *The Civil War in France* and *Wage-Labour and Capital*, and to his own pamphlet, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.—Ed.

## LETTERS ON THE STRUGGLE FOR THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

KARL MARX TO FREDERICK ENGELS<sup>1</sup>

[London], November 4, 1864

...*The Working Men's International Association.*

Some time ago London workers had sent an address about Poland to Paris workers and summoned them to common action in this matter.

The Parisians on their part sent over a deputation headed

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<sup>1</sup>Marx was not only the great theoretician of the Workers' Party; he was the leader and founder of the *World Communist Party*. During many decades, Marx and Engels waged a stubborn struggle for the creation and consolidation of the proletarian party. In a letter to the Danish socialist Trier in 1889, Engels wrote as follows on this subject:

"For the proletariat to be strong enough to conquer on the day of decision, it is necessary, and this view Marx and I have upheld since 1847, that it should form its own party, separated from all others and opposed to them, a class-conscious, class party." (Engels to Trier, December 18, 1889.)

The struggle for a real proletarian party waged by Marx and Engels reflects itself very clearly in their letters.

On this correspondence, Lenin wrote that it contained the "most profound understanding of the *fundamental* revolutionary aims of the proletariat, and an unusually flexible definition of a given problem of tactics from the point of view of these revolutionary aims and without the slightest concession to opportunism or revolutionary phraseology." (Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, pp. 44-45.)

The correspondence between Marx and Engels brings before our eyes a picture of their fifty years of indefatigable struggle in the ranks of the international workers' movement. The extracts from this correspondence that we give here are only isolated examples of the consistent, tenacious and passionate struggle waged by Marx and Engels against all varieties of Right and "Left" opportunism, for a truly revolutionary party of the working class. On all the essential questions touched on by Marx and Engels in their letters to third persons they were in full agreement with one another. Hence, the letters written by Engels during Marx's lifetime to Recker, Sorge, Bernstein and others express the views of both leaders of the international proletariat.

The first letter deals with the founding of the First Inter-

by a worker called *Tolain*, the real workers' candidate at the last election in Paris, a very nice fellow. (His companions too were quite nice lads.) A public meeting in St. Martin's Hall was summoned for September 28, 1864, by Odger (shoemaker, President of the Council here of all London Trades Unions and also especially of the Trades Unions Suffrage Agitation Society, which is in contact with Bright) and Cremer, mason and Secretary of the Masons' Union. (These two organised the big meeting of the Trade Unions in St. James' Hall for North America,<sup>1</sup> under Bright, ditto the Garibaldi demonstrations.) A certain *Le Lubez* was sent to ask me if I would take part on behalf of the German workers, and especially if I would supply a German worker to speak at the meeting. I provided them with Eccarius, who came off splendidly, and was likewise present myself as a mute figure on the platform. I knew that this time real "powers" were involved both on the London and Paris sides and therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule of declining any such invitations.

(*Le Lubez* is a young Frenchman, i.e., in the thirties, who has however grown up in Jersey and London, speaks English excellently and is a very good intermediary between the French and English workers.) (Music teacher and French lessons.)

At the meeting, which was packed to suffocation (for evidently there is a revival of the working classes taking place now), Major Wolff (Thurn-Taxis, Garibaldi's adjutant) represented the London *Italian Working Men's Society*. It was decided to found a "Working Men's International Association," of which the General Council should be in London and should act as a "medium of co-operation" between the workers' societies in Germany, Italy, France and England. Ditto that a General Working Men's Congress should be summoned in Belgium<sup>2</sup> in 1865. A provisional committee was appointed

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national, which "laid the foundation for the proletarian international struggle for socialism" (Lenin), and with the conditions in which the *Inaugural Address* of the First International was drawn up.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>This refers to the Civil War in the United States of America between the industrial north and the slaveholding south (1861-65).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The First Congress of the International met, not in 1865, but in 1866, and not in Belgium, but in Switzerland (in Geneva).—Ed.

at the meeting; Odger, Cremer and many others, some of them old Chartists, old Owenites, etc., for England; Major Wolff, Fontana and other Italians for Italy; Le Lubez, etc., for France, Eccarius and I for Germany. The committee was empowered to co-opt as many members as it chose.

So far so good. I attended the first meeting of the committee. A sub-committee (including myself) was appointed to draft a declaration of principles and provisional statutes. Being unwell I was prevented from attending the meeting of the sub-committee and the meeting of the whole committee which followed.

In these two meetings which I had missed—that of the sub-committee and the subsequent one of the whole committee—the following had taken place:

Major Wolff had handed in the *reglement* [statutes] of the Italian Workers' Unions (which possess a central organisation but, as later transpired, are really associated benefit societies) to be used for the new Association. I saw the stuff later. It was evidently a compilation of Mazzini's so you already know the spirit and phraseology in which the real question, the workers' question, was dealt with. Also how nationalities were shoved in.

In addition an old Owenite, Weston—now a manufacturer himself, a very amiable and worthy man—had drawn up a programme of indescribable breadth and full of the most extreme confusion.

The subsequent general committee meeting instructed the sub-committee to remodel Weston's programme and Wolff's regulations. Wolff himself left in order to attend the Congress of Italian Working Men's Association in Naples and get them to decide on joining the London Central Association.

Another meeting of the sub-committee—which I again failed to attend, because I was informed of the *rendezvous* too late. At this a "declaration of principles" and a new version of Wolff's statutes were put forward by Le Lubez and accepted by the committee for submission to the general committee. The general committee met on October 18. As Eccarius had written me that delay would be dangerous I appeared, and was really frightened when I heard the worthy Le Lubez read out an appallingly wordy, badly written and utterly undigested preamble, pretending to be a declaration of principles, in which Mazzini could be detected everywhere, the whole being crusted over with the vaguest tags of French

socialism. Added to this the Italian statutes were taken over in the main, and these, apart from all their other faults, aim at something which is in fact utterly impossible, a sort of central government of the *European* working classes (with Mazzini in the background, of course). I put up a mild opposition and after a lot of talking backwards and forwards Eccarius proposed that the sub-committee should submit the thing to further "editing." On the other hand the "sentiments" contained in Lubez's declaration were voted for.

Two days later, on October 20, Cremer (for the English), Fontana (Italy) and Le Lubez assembled in my house. (Weston was prevented.) Hitherto I had never had the documents (those of Wolff and Le Lubez) in my hand so could not prepare anything, but was firmly determined that if possible not one single line of the stuff should be allowed to stand. In order to gain time I proposed that before we "edited" the preamble we should "discuss" the rules. This took place. It was an hour after mid-night by the time the first of forty rules was agreed to. Cremer said (*and this was what I had aimed at*): We have nothing to put before the committee which meets on October 25. We must postpone the meeting till November. The sub-committee can then get together on October 27 and attempt to reach a definite conclusion. This was agreed to and the "papers" "left behind" for my opinion.

I saw that it was impossible to make anything out of the stuff. In order to justify the extremely strange way in which I intended to present the "sentiments" already "voted for," I wrote *An Address to the Working Classes* (which was not in the original plan: a sort of review of the adventures of the working classes since 1845); on the pretext that everything material was included in this *Address* and that we ought not to repeat the same thing three times over I altered the whole preamble, threw out the declaration of principles and finally replaced the forty rules by ten. In so far as international politics come into the address I speak of countries, not of nationalities, and denounce Russia, not the lesser nations. My proposals were all accepted by the sub-committee. Only I was obliged to insert two phrases about "duty" and "right," into the preamble to the statutes; ditto "truth, morality and justice," but these are placed in such a way that they can do no harm. . . . .

...It was very difficult to frame the thing so that our view should appear in a form acceptable from the present stand-

point of the workers' movement. In a few weeks the same people will be holding meetings for the franchise with Bright and Cobden. It will take time before the reawakened movement allows the old boldness of speech. It will be necessary to be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo* [bold in matter—mild in manner]. As soon as the stuff is printed you will get it.<sup>1</sup>

KARL MARX TO DR. KUGELMANN

[London], February 23, 1865.

I received your very interesting letter yesterday and shall now deal with the separate points you raise.

First of all I shall briefly describe my attitude to Lassalle. During the period of his practical agitation relations between us were suspended: 1) because of the self-flattering braggadocio, to which he added the most shameless plagiarism from my writings, etc.; 2) because I condemned his political tactics; 3) because, even before he began his agitation, I fully explained and "proved" to him here in this country that direct socialist action by the "state of Prussia" was nonsense. In his letters to me (from 1848 to 1863), as in our personal encounters, he always declared himself an adherent of the party which I represent. As soon as he had convinced himself, in London (end of 1862), that he could not play his games with me, he decided to put himself forward as the "workers'" dictator against me and the old party. In spite of all that I recognised his services as an agitator, although towards the end of his brief life even that agitation appeared to me of a more and more ambiguous character. His sudden death, old friendship, sorrowful letters from the Countess Hatzfeld, indignation over the cowardly impertinence of the bourgeois press towards one whom in his lifetime they had so greatly feared, all that induced me to publish a short statement against the wretched Blind, which did not however deal with the content of Lassalle's actions (Hatzfeld sent the statement to the *Nordstern*).

For the same reasons, and in the hope of being able to remove elements which appeared to me dangerous, Engels and I promised to contribute to the *Sozialdemokrat* (it has published a translation of the *Address* and at the editor's request I wrote an article about Proudhon on the death of the latter)

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<sup>1</sup>See the *Inaugural Address* of the First International, p. 403 of the present volume.—Ed.

and, after Schweitzer had sent us a *satisfactory programme of his editorial work*, we allowed our names to be given out as contributors. A further guarantee for us 'was the presence of *W. Liebknecht* as an unofficial member of the editorial board.

However, it soon became clear—the proofs fell into our hands—that *Lassalle* had in fact *betrayed* the party.<sup>1</sup> He had entered into a formal contract with *Bismarck* (of course, without having any sort of guarantees in his hand). At the end of September 1864 he was to go to Hamburg and there (together with the crazy *Schramm* and the Prussian police spy *Marr*) force *Bismarck* to annex *Schleswig-Holstein*,<sup>2</sup> that is, he was to proclaim its incorporation in the name of the "workers," etc. In return for which *Bismarck* promised universal suffrage and a few socialist charlatanries. It is a pity that *Lassalle* could not play the comedy through to the end. The hoax would have made him look damned ridiculous and foolish, and would have put a stop for ever to all attempts of that sort.

*Lassalle* went astray because he was a "*Realpolitiker*" of the type of *Herr Miquel*, but cut on a larger pattern and with bigger aims. (By the bye, I had long ago seen sufficiently far through *Miquel* to explain his coming forward by the fact that the *Nationalverein*<sup>3</sup> offered an excellent excuse for a petty *Hanoverian* lawyer to make his voice heard outside his own four walls by all Germany, and thus cause the enhanced "reality" of himself to react again on the *Hanoverian* homeland, playing the "*Hanoverian Mirabeau*" under Prussian pro-

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<sup>1</sup>Shortly afterwards it became evident that *Schweitzer* was continuing *Lassalle's* policy of supporting *Bismarck*. For this reason, *Marx* and *Engels*, as well as *Liebknecht*, publicly refused to make any further contribution to the *Sozialdemokrat*.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The Duchies of *Schleswig* and *Holstein* were intimately associated with *Denmark* for centuries. *Prussia* was striving for their annexation. *Lassalle* advised *Bismarck* to declare war against *Denmark* and annex *Schleswig-Holstein*, and he promised "in the name of the workers" to support *Bismarck* in this undertaking if *Bismarck*, for his part, would promise to grant universal suffrage.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The *Nationalverein* [National Association] founded in September 1859, was an organisation of part of the Prussian bourgeois which made propaganda for the union of all the German states, with the exception of *Austria*, under the hegemony of *Prussia*. From this National Association arose later on the big bourgeois National Liberal Party, one of the main supports of *Bismarck's* policy.—*Ed.*

fection.) Just as Miquel and his present friends snatched at the "new era" inaugurated by the Prussian prince regent, in order to join the *Nationalverein* and to fasten on to the "Prussian top," just as they developed their "civic pride" generally under Prussian protection, so Lassalle wanted to play the Marquis Posa of the proletariat with Philip II of the Uckermark, Bismarck acting as intermediary between him and the Prussian kingdom. He only imitated the gentlemen of the *Nationalverein*; but while these invoked the Prussian "reaction" in the interests of the middle class, Lassalle shook hands with Bismarck in the interests of the proletariat. These gentlemen had greater justification than Lassalle, in so far as the bourgeois is accustomed to regard the interest immediately in front of his nose as "reality," and as in fact this class has concluded a compromise everywhere, even with feudalism, whereas, in the very nature of the case, the working class must be sincerely *revolutionary*.

For a theatrically vain nature like Lassalle (who was not, however, to be bribed by paltry trash like office, a mayoralty, etc.), it was a most tempting thought: an act directly on behalf of the proletariat, and executed by Ferdinand Lassalle! He was in fact too ignorant of the real economic conditions attending such an act to be critically true to himself. The German workers, on the other hand, were too "demoralised" by the despicable "practical politics" which had induced the German bourgeoisie to tolerate the reaction of 1849-59 and the stupefying of the people, not to hail such a quack saviour, who promised to get them at one bound into the promised land.

Well, to pick up again the threads broken off above. Hardly was the *Sozialdemokrat* founded than it became clear that old Hatzfeld wanted to execute Lassalle's "testament." Through Wagener (of the *Kreuzzeitung*) she was in touch with Bismarck. She placed the *Arbeiterverein (Allgemeiner Deutscher)*, the *Sozialdemokrat*, etc., at his disposal. The annexation of Schleswig-Holstein was to be proclaimed in the *Sozialdemokrat*, Bismarck to be recognised in general as patron, etc. The whole pretty plan was frustrated because we had Liebknecht in Berlin and on the editorial board of the *Sozialdemokrat*. Although Engels and I were not pleased with the editing of the paper, with its lick-spittle cult of Lassalle, its occasional coquetting with Bismarck, etc., it was, of course

more important to stand publicly by the paper for the time being, in order to thwart old Hatzfeld's intrigues and the complete compromising of the workers' party. We therefore made *bonne mine a mauvais jeu*<sup>1</sup> although privately we were always writing to the *Sozialdemokrat* that Bismarck must be opposed just as much as the progressives. We even put up with the intrigues of that affected coxcomb Bernhard Becker—who takes the importance conferred upon him in Lassalle's testament quite seriously—against the *International Working Men's Association*.

Meanwhile Herr Schweitzer's articles in the *Sozialdemokrat* became more and more Bismarckian. I had written to him earlier that the progressives could be *intimidated* on the coalition question, but that the Prussian government *would never* concede the complete abolition of the Combination Laws, because that would involve making a breach in the bureaucracy, would give the workers adult status, would shatter the *Gesindeordnung*, abolish the flogging regime of the aristocracy in the countryside, etc., etc., which Bismarck would never allow, which was altogether incompatible with the Prussian *bureaucratic state*. I added that if the Chamber rejected the Combination Laws, the government would have recourse to phrases (such phrases, for example, as that the social question demanded "more thoroughgoing" measures, etc.) in order to retain them. All this proved to be correct. And what did Herr von Schweitzer do? He wrote an article for Bismarck and saved all his heroics for such *infiniment petits*<sup>2</sup> as Schulze, Faucher, etc.

I think that Schweitzer and Co. have honest intentions, but they are "*Realpolitiker*." They want to accommodate themselves to *existing* circumstances and not to surrender this *privilege* of "real politics" to the exclusive use of Herr Miquel and Co. (The latter seem to want to keep for themselves the right of intermixture with the Prussian government.) They know that the workers' press and the workers' movement in Prussia (and therefore in the rest of Germany) exist solely *par la grace de la police*. So they want to take the circumstances as they are, and not irritate the government, just like our "*republican*" *Realpolitiker*, who are willing to "put up with" a Hohenzollern emperor.

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<sup>1</sup>The best of a bad job.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Infinitely small people.—Ed.

Since I am not a "Realpolitiker," I have found it necessary to sever all connection with the *Sozialdemokrat* in a public declaration signed by myself and Engels (which you will probably see soon in one paper or another). You will understand at the same time why at the present moment I can do nothing in Prussia. The government there has refused point blank to re-naturalise me as a Prussian citizen. I should only be allowed to agitate there in a form acceptable to Herr v. Bismarck.

I prefer a hundred times over my agitation here through the *International Association*. Its influence on the English proletariat is direct and of the greatest importance. We are making a stir here now on the general suffrage question, which of course has a significance here quite different from what it has in Prussia.

On the whole the progress of this Association is beyond all expectation, here, in Paris, in Belgium, Switzerland and Italy. Only in Germany, of course, Lassalle's successors oppose me, in the first place, because they are frantically afraid of losing their importance, and, secondly, because they are aware of my avowed opposition to what the Germans call "Realpolitik." (It is this sort of reality which places Germany so far behind all civilised countries).

Since anybody who pays 1 shilling for a card can become a member of the Association; since the French chose this form of individual membership (ditto the Belgians), because the law prevents them from joining us as an association, and since the situation is the same in Germany, I have now decided to ask my friends here and in Germany to form small societies wherever they are—the number of members does not matter—each member of which will take out an English membership card. Since the English society is public, nothing stands in the way of such procedure, even in France. I would be glad if you too were to get in touch with London in this way in your neighbourhood.

KARL MARX TO DR. KUGELMANN

London, October 9, 1866

. . . I had great fears for the first Congress at Geneva.<sup>1</sup> On the whole, however, it turned out better than I expected. The

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<sup>1</sup>At the first Congress of the International, at Geneva in September 1866, the Statutes and organisation of the Inter-

effect in France, England and America was un hoped for. I could not, and did not want to go there, but wrote the programme for the London delegation. I deliberately restricted it to those points which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by the workers and give direct nourishment and impetus to the requirements of the class struggle and the organisation of the workers into a class. The Parisian gentlemen had their heads full of the emptiest Proudhonist phrases. They babble about science and know nothing. They scorn all *revolutionary* action, i.e., action arising out of the class struggle itself, all concentrated social movements, and therefore all those which can be carried through by *political means* (e.g., the *legal* limitation of the working day). Under the *pretext of freedom*, and of anti-governmentalism or anti-authoritarian individualism, these gentlemen who for sixteen years have so calmly endured the most miserable despotism, and still endure it—actually preach the ordinary bourgeois science, only Proudhonistically idealised! Proudhon has done enormous mischief. His sham criticism and sham opposition to the utopians (he himself is only a philistine utopian, whereas in the utopias of a Fourier, an Owen, etc., there is the presentiment and imaginative expression of a new world) attracted and corrupted first the “brilliant youth,” the students, and then the workmen, particularly those of Paris, who, as workers in luxury trades, are strongly attached, without knowing it, to the old rubbish. Ignorant, vain, presumptuous, chattering, dogmatic, arrogant, they were on the point of spoiling everything, for they came to the Congress in numbers which bore no proportion whatever to the number of their members. I shall have a dig at them in the report without mentioning names.

I was very pleased with the American Workers' Congress at Baltimore which took place at the same time. The slogan there was organisation for the struggle against capitalism, and curiously enough most of the demands which I drew up for

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national, the trade union and co-operative question and a series of other questions were discussed. At the Congress a considerable group of the supporters of Proudhon, were present, their main strength lying among the French and particularly the Paris delegates.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Sixteen years after the *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte (see *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* in the present volume).—Ed.

Genève were also put forward there by the correct instinct of the workers.

The Reform movement<sup>1</sup> here, which our Central Council called into existence and *quorum magna pars*<sup>2</sup> has now reached immense and irresistible dimensions. I have kept behind the scenes all the time and do not trouble myself further about the affair now it has been set going.

KARL MARX TO FREDERICK ENGELS

[London], September 11, 1867

At the next congress in Brussels<sup>3</sup> I shall personally deal these fools of Proudhonists the finishing blow. I have managed the whole thing diplomatically and did not want to come out *personally* until my book was published and our Association had struck root. I will give them a hiding too in the official report of the General Council (despite all their efforts, the Parisian babblers could not prevent our re-election).<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile our Association has made great progress. The wretched *Star*, which tried to ignore us entirely, announced yesterday in a leading article that we were more important than the Peace Congress. Schulze-Delitzsch was not able to prevent his Workers' Association in Berlin from joining us. The swine among the English trade unionists, who thought we went "too far," are now coming running to us. Besides the *Courier Francais*, Girardin's *Liberte*, the *Siecle*, *Mode*, *Gazette de France*, etc., have given reports of our Congress. Things are moving. And in the next revolution, which is perhaps nearer than it appears, *we* (i.e., you and I) will have this powerful engine *in our hands*. Compare this with the

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<sup>1</sup>With the co-operation of the General Council of the International the English trade unions developed a wide campaign during 1866-67 for electoral reform (extension of the franchise to wider circles of workers and to the poorer strata of the population).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Marx refers to the line in Virgil's *Æneid*: *Quorum magna pars fui* (in which I played a large part).—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The Brussels Congress of the First International took place in 1868. Marx was not present at that congress but he led its work.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup>Marx refers to the election of the General Council of the First International at the Lausanne Conference in September 1867.—Ed.

results of Mazzini's, etc., operations during the last thirty years! And without any financial means, moreover. With the intrigues of the Proudhonists in Paris, of Mazzini in Italy, of the jealous Odger, Cremer, and Potter in London, with the Schulze-Delitzschites and Lassalleans in Germany! We can be very well content!

KARL MARX TO FREDERICK ENGELS

London, March 5, 1869

. . . Bakunin thinks to himself: if we approve his "radical programme" he can make a big noise about this and compromise us *tant soit peu* [just a little bit].<sup>1</sup> If we declare ourselves against it we shall be decried as counter-revolutionaries. Moreover: if we admit them he will see to it that he is supported by some of the riff-raff at the Congress in Basle. I think the answer should be on the following lines:

According to Paragraph 1 of the Statutes every workers' association "aiming at the same end: *viz.*, the protection, advancement and *complete emancipation of the working classes*" shall be admitted.

As the stage of development reached by different sections of workers in the same country and by the working class in different countries varies very much, the actual movement necessarily expresses itself in very different theoretical forms.

The community of action which the International Working Men's Association called into being, the exchange of ideas by means of the different organs of the sections in all countries, and, finally, the direct discussions at the General Congresses will by degrees create for the general workers' movement its common theoretical programme also.

With regard to the programme of the "Alliance," therefore, it is not necessary for the General Council to submit it

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<sup>1</sup>This letter deals with the negotiations between the General Council of the International and Bakunin and his followers. Bakunin was an anarchist. The Bakunists on entering the International had maintained their secret organisation, the *Alliance de la démocratie socialiste*. They carried on a bitter factional struggle against the General Council led by Marx, and they carried on an especially vigorous fight against recognising the necessity of the *political* struggle of the working class and against centralisation and discipline in the ranks of the International. Bakunin was expelled from the International in 1872.—Ed.

to a critical examination. The Council has not to examine whether it is an adequate, scientific expression of the working class movement. It has only to ask if the *general tendency* of the programme is not in opposition to the general tendency of the International Working Men's Association—the complete emancipation of the working classes!

This reproach could only apply to one phrase in the programme, par. 2: "Above all things it desires the political, economical and social equalisation of *the classes*." "The equalisation of the classes," literally interpreted, is nothing but another expression for the "harmony of capital and labour" preached by the bourgeois socialists. Not the logically impossible "equalisation of classes" but the historically necessary "abolition of classes" constitutes the final aim of the International Working Men's Association. But from the context in which this phrase occurs in the programme it would appear that it is only a slip of the pen. The less, therefore, does the General Council doubt that this phrase, which might lead to serious misunderstanding, will be removed from the programme.

This being assumed, it is in accordance with the principle of the International Working Men's Association to leave to each section the responsibility for its own programme. There is therefore nothing to prevent the transformation of the sections of the Alliance into sections of the Working Men's Association.

As soon as this has taken place an enumeration of the newly joined sections according to country, habitation and number must be sent regularly to the General Council. . . .

KARL MARX TO A. BOLTE

London, November 23, 1871

. . . . The *International* was founded in order to replace the socialist or semi-socialist sects by a real organisation of the working class for struggle. The original statutes and the Inaugural Address show this at the first glance. On the other hand the internationalists could not have maintained themselves if the course of history had not already smashed up the sectarian system. The development of the system of socialist sects and that of the real workers' movement always stand in inverse ratio to each other. So long as the sects are (historically) justified the working class is not yet ripe for

an independent historic movement. As soon as it has attained this maturity all sects are essentially reactionary. Nevertheless what history has shown everywhere was repeated within the International. The antiquated attempts to re-establish and maintain itself within the newly achieved form.

And the history of the International was a *continual struggle on the part of the General Council* against the sects and amateur experiments which attempted to maintain themselves within the International itself against the genuine movement of the working class. This struggle was conducted at the *Congresses*, but far more in the private dealings of the General Council with the individual sections.

In Paris, as the Proudhonists (Mutualists<sup>1</sup>) were co-founders of the Association, they naturally had the reins in their hands there for the first years. Later, of course, collectivist, positivist, etc., groups were formed in opposition to them.

In Germany—the Lassalle clique. I myself went on corresponding for two years with the notorious Schweitzer and proved irrefutably to him that Lassalle's organisation is nothing but a sectarian organisation and as such hostile to the organisation of the *genuine* workers' movement striven for by the International. He had his "reasons" for not understanding this.

At the end of 1868 the Russian, Bakunin, entered the International with the aim of forming inside it a *second International* called the "Alliance of Social-Democracy," *with himself as leader*. He—a man devoid of any theoretical knowledge—put forward the pretension that this separate body was to represent the *scientific* propaganda of the International, which was to be made the special function of this *second International within the International*.

His programme was a superficially scraped together hash of Right and Left—equality of classes (!), *abolition of the right of inheritance as the starting point of the social movement* (Saint-Simonistic nonsense), *atheism as a dogma* to be dictated to the members, etc., and as the main dogma (Proudhonist), *abstention from the political movement*.

This infant's spelling-book found favour (and still has

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<sup>1</sup>The Proudhonists called themselves Mutualists; the term arises from the word "mutual," as against the principle of social ownership, the Proudhonists putting forward the slogan. of mutual aid.—Ed.

a certain 'hold) in Italy and Spain, where the real conditions of the workers' movement are as yet little developed, and among a few vain, ambitious and empty doctrinaires in French Switzerland and Belgium.

For Mr. Bakunin the theory (the assembled rubbish he has scraped together from Proudhon, Saint-Simon, etc.) is a secondary affair—merely a means to his personal self-assertion. If he is a nonentity as a theoretician he is in his element as an intriguer.

For years the General Council had to fight against this conspiracy (which was supported up to a certain point by the French Proudhonists, especially in the *South of France*). At last by means of Conference resolutions I (2) and (3), IX, XVI, and XVII, it delivered its long prepared blow.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously the General Council does not support in America what it combats in Europe. Resolutions I (2) and (3) and IX now give the New York committee legal weapons with which to put an end to all sectarian formations and amateur groups and if necessary to expel them. . . .

The political movement of the working class has as its object, of course, the conquest of political power for the working class, and for this it is naturally necessary that a previous organisation of the working class, itself arising from their economic struggles, should have been developed up to a certain point.

On the other hand, however, every movement in which the working class comes out *as a class* against the ruling classes and attempts to force them by pressure from without is a political movement. For instance, the attempt in a particular factory or even a particular industry to force a shorter working day out of the capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. On the other hand the movement to force an eight-hour day, etc., *law* is a *political* movement. And in this way, out of the separate economic movements of the

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<sup>1</sup>Marx refers to the London Conference of the First International (September 1871), which concerned itself particularly with the question of the political organisation of the working class. The resolutions mentioned by Marx relate to the following questions: I, (2), (3), Consolidation of the International, strengthening of centralism and of the leading role of the General Council; IX. Necessity of an independent political party of the proletariat and of the closest combination of political with economic struggle; XVI and XVII. Liquidation of the Bakunist factional grouping (the *Alliance*).—Ed.

workers there grows up everywhere a *political* movement, that is to say a movement of the *class*, with the object of achieving its interests in a general form, in a form possessing a general social force of compulsion. If these movements presuppose a certain degree of previous organisation they are themselves equally a means for the development of this organisation.

Where the working class is not yet far enough advanced in its organisation to undertake a decisive campaign against the collective power, i.e., the political power of the ruling classes, it must at any rate be trained for this by continual agitation against and the hostile attitude towards the policy of the ruling classes. Otherwise it will remain a plaything in their hands, as the September revolution in France showed, and as is also proved up to a certain point by the game Messrs. Gladstone and Co. are bringing off in England even up to the present time.<sup>1</sup>

FREDERICK ENGELS TO FRIEDRICH CUNO

January 24, 1872

Bakunin, who up to 1868 had intrigued against the International, joined it after he had made a fiasco at the Berne Peace Conference<sup>2</sup> and at once began to conspire *within it* against the General Council. Bakunin has a peculiar theory of his own, a medley of Proudhonism and communism, the chief point of which is in the first place that he does not regard capital, and therefore the class contradiction between capitalists and wage earners which has arisen through social development, as the main evil to be abolished—instead he regards the *state* as the main evil. While the great mass of the social-democratic workers hold our view that state power is nothing more than the organisation with which the ruling classes, landlords and capitalists have provided themselves in order to protect their social prerogatives, Bakunin maintains that it is the *state* which has created capital, that the capitalist has his

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<sup>1</sup>For the revolution of September 4, 1870, in France, see *The Civil War in France*. By the words "Gladstone's game" Marx means the influence of the bourgeois party and of the liberals led by Gladstone on the leaders of the trade unions.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The Congress of the bourgeois political League of Peace and Freedom took place in Berne in September 1868. Bakunin took part in it.—*Ed.*

capital only by favour of the state. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to hell of itself. We, on the contrary, say: Do away with capital, the appropriation of the whole means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall away of itself. The difference is an essential one. Without a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of capital is in itself the social revolution and involves a change in the whole method of production. Further, however, as for Bakunin the state is the main evil, nothing must be done which can maintain the existence of any state, whether it be a republic, a monarchy or whatever it may be. Hence therefore *complete abstention from all politics*. To perpetrate a political action, and especially to take part in an election, would be a betrayal of principle. The thing to do is to conduct propaganda, abuse the state, organise, and when all the workers are won over, i.e., the majority, depose the authorities, abolish the state and replace it by the organisation of the International. This great act, with which the millennium begins, is called *social liquidation*.

All this sounds extremely radical, and is so simple that it can be learnt by heart in five minutes; that is why this theory of Bakunin's has also speedily found favour in Spain and Italy, among young lawyers, doctors and other doctrinaires. But the mass of the workers will never allow themselves to be persuaded that the public affairs of their country are not also their own affairs, they are by nature *political* and whoever tries to make out to them that they should leave politics alone will in the end get left in the lurch. To preach that the workers should in all circumstances abstain from politics is to drive them into the arms of the priests or the bourgeois republicans.

Now as, according to Bakunin, the International is not to be formed for political struggle but in order that it may at once replace the old state organisation as soon as social liquidation takes place, it follows that it must come as near as possible to the Bakunist ideal of the society of the future. In this society there will above all be no *authority*, for authority is equal to state is equal to an absolute evil. (How these people propose to run a factory, work a railway or steer a ship without having in the last resort one deciding will, without a unified direction,

they do not indeed tell us.) The authority of the majority over the minority also ceases. Every individual and every community is autonomous, but as to how a society, even of only two people, is possible unless each gives up some of his autonomy, Bakunin again remains silent. The International, then, must also be reorganised according to this model. Every section, and in every section every individual, is autonomous. To hell with the *Basle resolutions*,<sup>1</sup> which bestowed upon the General Council a pernicious authority demoralising even to itself!

Even if this authority is *voluntarily* bestowed it must cease simply *because* it is authority.

Here you have in brief the main points of the swindle. . .

### FREDERICK ENGELS TO AUGUST BEBEL

London, June 20, 1873

. . . One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for "unity." Those who have this word most often on their lips are those who sow the most dissension, just as at present the Jura Bakunists in Switzerland, who have provoked all the splits, scream for nothing so much as for unity. These unity fanatics are either the people of limited intelligence who want to stir everything up together into one nondescript brew, which, the moment it is left to settle, throws up the differences again in much more acute opposition because they are now all together in one pot (you have a fine example of this in Germany with the people who preach the reconciliation of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie)—or else they are people who consciously or unconsciously (like Muhlberger, for instance) want to adulterate the movement. For this reason the greatest sectarians and the biggest brawlers and rogues are at certain moments the loudest shouters for unity. Nobody in our lifetime has given us more trouble and been more treacherous than the unity shouters.

Naturally every party leadership wants to see successes and this is quite good too. But there are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice *momentary* success for more important things. Especially for a party like

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<sup>1</sup>Engels refers to decisions of the Basle Congress of the International (September 1869) which extended the powers of the General Council. The Bakunists conducted a furious campaign for getting these decisions annulled.—Ed.

ours, whose ultimate success is so absolutely certain, and which has developed so enormously in our own lifetime and under our own eyes, momentary success is by no means always and absolutely necessary. Take the International, for instance. After the Commune it had its colossal success. The bourgeoisie, struck all of a heap, ascribed omnipotence to it. The great mass of the membership believed things would stay like that for all eternity. We knew very well that the bubble *must* burst. All the riff-raff attached themselves to it. The sectarians within, it began to flourish and misused the International in the hope that the most stupid and mean actions would be permitted them. We did not allow that. Well knowing that the bubble *must* burst some time all the same, our concern was not to delay the catastrophe but to take care that the International emerged from it pure and unadulterated. The bubble burst at the Hague and you know that the majority of Congress members went home sick with disappointment. And yet nearly all these disappointed people, who imagined they would find the ideal of universal brotherhood and reconciliation in the International, had far more bitter quarrels at home than those which broke out at the Hague! Now the sectarian quarrel-mongers are preaching conciliation and decrying us as the intolerant and the dictators. And if we had come out in a conciliatory way at the Hague, if we had hushed up the breaking out of the split—what would have been the result? The sectarians, especially the Bakunists, would have got another year in which to perpetrate, in the name of the International, much greater stupidities and infamies even; the workers of the most developed countries would have turned away in disgust; the bubble would not have burst but, pierced by pinpricks, would have slowly collapsed, and the next Congress, which would have been bound to bring the crisis anyhow, would have turned into the lowest kind of personal row, because *principles* had already been sacrificed at the Hague. Then the International would indeed have gone to pieces—gone to pieces through “unity”! Instead of this we have now got rid of the rotten elements with honour to ourselves—the members of the Commune who were present at the last decisive session say that no session of the Commune left such a terrible impression upon them as this session of the tribunal which passed judgment on the traitors to the European proletariat—we have left them to expend all their forces in lying slander and intrigue

for ten months—and where are they? They, the alleged representatives of the great majority of the International, now announce that they do not dare to come to the next Congress (more details in an article which is being sent off for the *Volksstaat* with this letter). And if we had to do it again we should not, taking it altogether, act any differently—tactical mistakes are of course always committed.

In any case I think the efficient elements among the Lassalleans will fall to you of themselves in course of time and that it would therefore be unwise to break off the fruit before it is ripe as the unity people want.

For the rest, old Hegel has already said: A party proves itself a victorious party by the fact that it splits and can stand the split. The movement of the proletariat necessarily passes through different stages of development; at every stage one section of people lags behind and does not join in the further advance. . . .

#### FREDERICK ENGELS TO FRIEDRICH SORGE

London, September 12 (and 17), 1874

. . . With your resignation the old International is entirely wound up and at an end. And that is well. It belonged to the period of the Second Empire,<sup>1</sup> during which the oppression reigning throughout Europe entailed unity and abstention from all internal polemics upon the workers' movement, then just reawakening. It was the moment when the common, cosmopolitan interests of the proletariat could be put in the foreground; Germany, Spain, Italy, Denmark had only just come into the movement or were just coming into it. Actually in 1864 the theoretical character of the movement was still very confused everywhere in Europe, that is among the masses, German Communism did not yet exist as a workers' party, Proudhonism was too weak to be able to insist on its particular fads, Bakunin's new trash had not so much as come into being in his own head, even the leaders of the English trade unions thought the programme laid down in the Preamble to the Statutes gave them a basis for entering the movement.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Second Empire was the empire of Louis Bonaparte, Napoleon III.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>With regard to the *Considerants*: [Considerations] see the *Inaugural Address of the First International in the present volume*.—Ed.

The first great success was bound to explode this naive conjunction of all fractions. This success was the Commune, which was without any doubt the child of the International intellectually, although the International did not lift a finger to produce it, and for which the International—thus far with full justification—was held responsible.

When, thanks to the Commune, the International had become a moral force in Europe, the row at once began. Every fraction wanted to exploit the success for itself. The inevitable collapse arrived. Jealousy of the growing power of these people who were really ready to work further along the lines of the old comprehensive programme—the German Communists—drove the Belgian Proudhonists into the arms of the Bakunist adventurers. The Hague Congress was really the end—and for both parties. The only country where something could still be accomplished in the name of the old International was America, and by a happy instinct the executive was transferred there. Now its prestige is exhausted there too and any further effort to galvanise it into new life would be folly and waste of energy. For ten years the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies—and can look back upon its work with pride. But in its old form it has outlived itself. In order to produce a new International after the fashion of the old one, an alliance of all the proletarian parties in every country, a general suppression of the workers' movement like that which predominated from 1849-64 would be necessary. But for this the proletarian world has become too big, too extensive. I think that the next International—after Marx's writings have had some years of influence—will be directly communist and will openly proclaim our principles. . . .

#### KARL MARX TO FRIEDRICH SORGE

London, October 19, 1877 .

A rotten spirit is making itself felt in our party in Germany, not so much among the masses as among the leaders (upper class and "workers").

The compromise<sup>1</sup> with the Lassalleans has led to compromise with other half-way elements too; in Berlin (e.g.,

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<sup>1</sup>The reference is to the compromise concluded between the Eisenachers and Lassalleans at the unification in Gotha in 1875. For details about this see p. 500 of the present volume.—Ed.

Most) with Duhring and his "admirers" but also with a whole gang of half-mature students and super-wise doctors who want to give socialism a "higher ideal" orientation, that is to say, to replace its materialistic basis (which demands serious study) by its goddesses of justice, Freedom, Equality and Fraternity. Dr. Hochberg, who publishes the *Zukunft* [Future] is a representative of this tendency and has "bought himself into" the party—with the "noblest" intentions, I assume, but I do not give a damn for "intentions." Anything more miserable than his programme of the "future" has seldom seen the light of day with more "modest presumption."

The workers themselves when, like Mr. Most and Co., they give up work and become *professional literary men*, always set some theoretical mischief going and are always ready to attach themselves to muddleheads from the alleged "learned" caste. *Utopian socialism* especially, which for tens of years we have been clearing out of the German workers' heads with so much toil and labour—their freedom from it making them theoretically, and therefore also practically, superior to the French and English—*utopian socialism*, playing with fancy pictures of the future structure of society—is now raging in a much more futile form, not to be compared with the great French and English utopians, but only with—Weitling. Naturally utopianism, which before the time of materialistic-critical socialism concealed the germs of the latter within itself, coming now after the event can only be silly; silly, stale and basically reactionary. . . .

FREDERICK ENGELS TO JOHANN PHILIPP BECKER

July 1, 1879

. . . Liebknecht's unseasonable mildness in the Reichstag has naturally enough produced a very unpleasant effect in Latin Europe, and also among the Germans the impression is very disagreeable.<sup>1</sup> We said so at once by letter. *The old easy-going grousing agitation*, with occasionally six weeks

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<sup>1</sup>Engels refers to the speech of Liebknecht in the German Reichstag on March 17, 1879. In this speech Liebknecht said among other things:

". . . Our party is indeed a party of reform in the strictest sense of the word and not a party aiming at violent revolution, which would be sheer nonsense. . . . I deny most emphati-

to six months in prison, has come to an end in Germany for ever. In whatever way the present situation may reach its end, the new movement begins on a more or less *revolutionary* basis and must therefore have a much more resolute character than the now-expired first period. *The phase of the peaceful achievement of the goal will either no longer be necessary or it will be taken more seriously.* Bismarck, by making this phase impossible and turning the movement into revolutionary channels, did us an enormous service which more than outweighs the trifling harm by temporarily stopping our propaganda.

On the other hand, *this tame attitude in the Reichstag* has resulted in the revolutionary phrase heroes beginning to strut about again and trying to disorganise the party by cliques and intrigues. The centre of these intrigues is the Workers' Association here.<sup>1</sup> . . .

MARX AND ENGELS TO BEBEL, LIEBKNECHT, BRACKE AND OTHERS  
Circular Letter

London, September 1879

. . . He [Schweitzer] is further reproached with his "rejection of bourgeois democracy."<sup>2</sup> And what has bourgeois democracy got to do with the Social-Democratic Party? If it consists of "honest men" it cannot wish for admittance and if it does nevertheless wish to be admitted this can only be in order to start a row.

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cally that our efforts 'are directed' towards the overthrow of the 'existing state and social order.'" (*Stenographic Reports on the Proceedings of the German Reichstag, Berlin, 1879, Verlag der "Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,"* p. 441.)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>In 1879 the London Workers' Educational Association fell into the hands of the supporters of the "Left" opportunist tactics of Johann Most. Most and his followers later slipped down into an openly anarchist position and and in 1880 were expelled from the ranks of German Social-Democracy.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>In this letter Marx and Engels subjected to critical analysis the article entitled "*Reckblicke auf die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland. Kritische Aphorismen*" [A Retrospect of the Socialist Movement in Germany. *Critical Aphorisms*], which appeared in the *Zurich Jahrbuch fur Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* [Annual for Social Science and Social Policy]. The authors of this article were Hochberg, Bernstein and Schramm, called by Marx and Engels the "Zurich trinity."—Ed.

The Lassallean party "chose to conduct itself in the most one-sided way as a workers' party." The gentlemen who write that are themselves members of a party which conducts itself in the most one-sided way as a workers' party, they are at present invested with offices and dignities in this party. Here there is an absolute incompatibility. If they mean what they write they must leave the party, or at least resign their offices and dignities. If they do not do so, they are admitting that they are proposing to utilise their official position in order to combat the proletarian character of the party. If therefore the party leaves them their offices and dignities it will be betraying itself.

In the opinion of these gentlemen, then, the Social-Democratic Party should *not* be a one-sided workers' party but an all-sided party of "everyone imbued with a true love of humanity." It must prove this above all by laying aside its crude proletarian passions and placing itself under the guidance of educated, philanthropic bourgeois in order to "cultivate good taste" and "learn good form" (page 85). Then even the "disreputable behaviour" of many leaders will give way to a thoroughly respectable "bourgeois behaviour." (As if the externally disreputable appearance of those here referred to were not the least they can be reproached with!) Then, too, "numerous adherents from the circles of the educated and propertied classes will make their appearance. But these must first be won if the . . . agitation conducted is to attain tangible successes."

German socialism has "attached too much importance to the winning of the masses and in so doing has neglected energetic (!) propaganda among the so-called upper strata of society." And then "the party still lacks men fitted to represent it in the Reichstag." It is, however, "desirable and necessary to entrust the mandate to men who have the time and opportunity to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the relevant materials. The simple worker and small self-employed man . . . has necessary leisure for this only in rare and exceptional cases." So elect bourgeois!

In short: the working class of itself is incapable of its own emancipation. For this purpose it must place itself under the leadership of "educated and propertied" bourgeois who alone possess the "time and opportunity" to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers.

And secondly the bourgeoisie is on no account to be fought

against but—to be won over by energetic propaganda.

But if one wants to win over the upper strata of society or only its well-disposed elements one must not frighten them on any account. And here the three Zurichers think they have made a reassuring discovery:

“Precisely at the present time, under the pressure of the Socialist Law, the party is showing that it is *not inclined* to pursue the path of violent bloody revolution but is determined . . . to follow the path of legality, i.e., of *reform*.”

So if the 500,000 to 600,000 Social-Democratic voters—between a tenth and an eighth of the whole electorate and distributed over the whole width of the land—have the sense not to run their heads against a wall and to attempt a “bloody revolution” of one against ten, this proves that they also *forbid* themselves to take advantage at any future time of a tremendous external event, a sudden revolutionary upsurge arising from it or even a *victory* of the people gained in a conflict resulting from it. If Berlin should ever again be so uneducated as to have another March 18,<sup>1</sup> the Social-Democrats, instead of taking part in the fight as “riff-raff” with a “mania for barricades,” (page 88) must rather “follow the path of legality,” act pacifically, clear away the barricades and if necessary march with the glorious army against the rough, uneducated, one-sided masses. Or if the gentlemen assert that this is not what they meant, what did they mean then?

But still better follows.

“The more quiet, objective and well-considered the party is, therefore, in the way it comes out with criticism of existing conditions and proposals for changes in them, the less possible will a repetition become of the present successful strategy (when the Socialist Law was introduced) by which the conscious reaction has intimidated the bourgeoisie by fear of the Red bogey” (page 88).

But in order to relieve the bourgeoisie of the last trace of anxiety it must be clearly and convincingly proved to them that the Red bogey is really only a bogey, and does not exist. But what is the secret of the Red bogey if it is not the bourgeoisie's dread of the inevitable life, and death struggle between it and the proletariat? Dread of the inevitable decision of the modern class struggle? Do away with the class

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the revolutionary barricade fighting in Berlin on March 18-19, 1848.—Ed.

struggle and the bourgeoisie and "all independent people" will "not be afraid to go hand in hand with the proletariat." And the ones to be cheated will be precisely the proletariat.

Let the party therefore prove by its humble and repentant attitude that it has once and for all laid aside the "improprieties and excesses" which provoked the Socialist Law. If it voluntarily promises that it only intends to act within the limits of the Socialist Law, Bismarck and the bourgeoisie will surely have the kindness to repeal this then superfluous law!

"Let no one misunderstand us"; we do not want "to give up our party and our programme, but think that for years hence we shall have enough to do if we concentrate our whole strength and energy upon the attainment of certain immediate aims which must in any case be achieved before the realisation of the more far-reaching ends can be thought of." Then the bourgeois, petty bourgeois and workers who are "at present frightened away . . . by the far-reaching demands will join us in masses."

The programme is not to be *given up* but only *postponed*—to an indefinite period. One accepts it, though not really for oneself and one's own lifetime but posthumously as an heirloom to be handed down to one's children and grandchildren. In the meantime one devotes one's "whole strength and energy" to all sorts of petty rubbish and the patching up of the capitalist order of society in order at least to produce the appearance of something happening without at the same time scaring the bourgeoisie. There I must really praise the Communist Miquel, who proved his unshakable belief in the inevitable overthrow of capitalist society in the course of the next few hundred years by heartily carrying on swindles, contributing his honest best to the crash of 1873<sup>1</sup> and so *really* doing something to assist the collapse of the existing order.

Another offence against good form was also the "exaggerated attacks on the company promoters," who were after all "only children of their time"; "the abuse of Straussberg<sup>2</sup> and similar people . . . would therefore have been better

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<sup>1</sup>The crash of 1873 ended the so-called "*Grundertaumel*" (the promoting frenzy), a period of furious speculation and stock exchange gambling which followed on the unification of Germany (1871).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Straussberg, B.G. (1823-84). German financier, one of the best known participators in the promoting frenzy of 1871-73.—Ed.

omitted." Unfortunately everyone is only a "child of his time" and if this is a sufficient excuse nobody ought ever to be attacked any more, all controversy, all struggle on our part ceases; we quietly accept all the kicks our adversaries give us because we, who are so wise, know that these adversaries are "only children of their time" and cannot act otherwise. Instead of repaying their kicks with interest we ought rather to pity these unfortunates.

Then again the party's support of the Commune had the disadvantage nevertheless "that people who were otherwise well disposed to us were alienated and in general the *hatred of the bourgeoisie* against us was increased." And further, "the party is not wholly without blame for the introduction of the October Law,<sup>1</sup> for it had increased the *hatred of the bourgeoisie* in an unnecessary way."

There you have the programme of the three censors of Zurich. In clarity it leaves nothing to be desired. Least of all to us, who are very familiar with the whole of this phraseology from the 1848 days. It is the representatives of the petty bourgeoisie who are here presenting themselves, full of anxiety that the proletariat under the pressure of its revolutionary position, may "go too far." Instead of decided political opposition, general compromise; instead of the struggle against the government and the bourgeoisie an attempt to win and to persuade; instead of defiant resistance to ill treatment from above, a humble submission and a confession that the punishment was deserved. Historically necessary conflicts are all reinterpreted as misunderstandings, and all discussion ends with the assurance that after all we are all agreed on the main point. The people who came out as bourgeois democrats in 1848 could just as well call themselves social-democrats now: To them the democratic republic was unattainably remote and to these people the overthrow of the capitalist system is equally so and therefore has absolutely no significance for the practical present-day politics; one can mediate, compromise and philanthropise to one's heart's content. It is just the same with the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie. It is recognised on paper because its existence can no longer be denied, but in practice it is hushed up, diluted, attenuated.

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<sup>1</sup>The Exceptional Law against the socialists, which prohibited the Social-Democratic Party, came into force on October 19, 1878. The party was driven into illegality. The Exceptional Law was only annulled in 1890.—Ed.

The Social-Democratic Party is not to be a workers' party, is not to burden itself with the hatred of the bourgeoisie or of anyone else; should above all conduct energetic propaganda among the bourgeoisie; instead of laying stress on far-reaching aims which frighten the bourgeoisie and are not after all attainable in our generation it should rather devote its whole strength and energy to those small petty-bourgeois patching-up reforms which by providing the old order of society with new props may perhaps transform the ultimate catastrophe into a gradual, piecemeal and so far as is possible peaceful process of dissolution. These are the same people who under the pretence of indefatigable activity not only do nothing themselves but also try to prevent anything happening at all except—chatter; the same people whose fear of every form of action in 1848 and 1849 obstructed the movement at every step and finally brought about its downfall, the same people who see reaction and are then quite astonished to find themselves at last in a blind alley where neither resistance nor flight is possible; the same people who want to confine history within their narrow petty-bourgeois horizon and over whose heads history invariably proceeds to the order of the day.

As to their socialist content this has been adequately criticised already in the [Communist] *Manifesto*, chapter on "German or True Socialism." When the class struggle is pushed on one side as a disagreeable "crude" phenomenon, nothing remains as a basis for socialism but "true love of humanity" and empty phraseology about "justice."

It is an inevitable phenomenon, rooted in the course of development, that people from what have hitherto been the ruling classes should also join the militant proletariat and contribute cultural elements to it. We clearly stated this in the [Communist] *Manifesto*. But here there are two points to be noted:

First, in order to be of use to the proletarian movement these people must also bring real cultural elements to it. But with the great majority of the German bourgeois converts that is not the case. Neither the *Zukunft* [Future] nor the *Neue Gesellschaft* [New Society] have contributed anything which could advance the movement one step further. Here there is an absolute lack of real cultural material, whether concrete or theoretical. In its place we get attempts to bring superficially adopted socialist ideas into harmony with the most varied theoretical standpoints which these gentlemen have

brought with them from the university or elsewhere and of which owing to the process of decomposition in which the remnants of German philosophy are at present involved, each is more confused than the last. Instead of thoroughly studying the new science themselves to begin with, each of them preferred to trim it to fit the point of view he had already made a private science of his own without more ado and at once came forward with the claim that he was ready to teach it. Hence there are about as many points of view among these gentry as there are heads; instead of producing clarity in a single case they have only produced desperate confusion—fortunately almost exclusively among themselves. Cultural elements whose first principle is to teach what they have not learnt can be very well dispensed with by the party.

*Secondly.* If people of this kind from other classes join the proletarian movement, the first condition is that they should not bring any remnants of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc., prejudices with them but should whole-heartedly adopt the proletarian point of view. But these gentlemen, as has been proved, are stuffed and crammed with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas. In such a petty-bourgeois country as Germany these ideas certainly have their own justification. But only *outside* the Social-Democratic Workers' Party. If these gentlemen form themselves into a Social-Democratic Petty-Bourgeois Party they have a perfect right to do so; one could then negotiate with them, form a *bloc* according to circumstances, etc. But in a workers' party they are an adulterating element. If reasons exist for tolerating them there for the moment it is also a duty only to tolerate them, to allow them no influence in the party leadership and to remain aware that a break with them is only a matter of time. The time, moreover, seems to have come. How the party can tolerate the authors of this article in its midst any longer is to us incomprehensible. But if the leadership of the party should fall more or less into the hands of such people then the party will simply be castrated and there will be an end of proletarian incisiveness.

As for ourselves, in view of our whole past there is only one path open to us. For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggle as the immediate driving force of history and in particular the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the great lever of the modern social revolution; it is therefore impossible for us to co-operate

with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the International was formed we expressly formulated the battle-cry: the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. We cannot therefore co-operate with people who say that the workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves and must first be freed from above by philanthropic bourgeois and petty bourgeois. If the new party organ adopts a line corresponding to the views of these gentlemen, and is bourgeois and not proletarian, then nothing remains for us, much though we should regret it, but publicly to declare our opposition to it, and to dissolve the solidarity with which we have hitherto represented the German Party abroad. But it is to be hoped that things will not come to *that* . . .

FREDERICK ENGELS TO AUGUST BEBEL<sup>1</sup>

London, November 14, 1879

. . . Unpleasant concessions to the German philistine are contained in the third part. What is the point of the entirely superfluous passage about "civil war," and of respectfully touching one's hat to "public opinion" which in Germany will always be that of the pot-house philistine? Why the complete blurring here of the class character of the movement? Why give the anarchists this satisfaction? And, in addition, all these concessions are perfectly useless. The German philistine is the embodiment of cowardice, he only respects those who inspire him with fear. But whoever seeks to curry favour with him he considers his equal, and only respects him as an equal, that is, not at all. And now, after the "storm" of pot-house philistine indignation called "public opinion" has admittedly subsided, now that the burden of taxation has already made the people submissive again in any case, why all this soft soap now? If you only knew what sort of an impression it makes abroad! It is very good that a party organ should be edited by people who are in the midst of the party and of the struggle. But if you were only six months abroad, you would think very differently of this quite unnecessary self-humiliation on the part of the party mem-

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<sup>1</sup>In this letter Engels criticises the report of the Social-Democratic deputies in the Reichstag, published in November, 1879. The report contained a number of obviously opportunist passages.—Ed.

bers in the Reichstag towards the philistine. The storm which broke over the French socialists after the Commune was something very different from the howling at Nobiling in Germany.<sup>1</sup> And with how much more pride and self-confidence did the French behave! Where can you find there such weaknesses, such compliments to the opponent? They were silent when they could not speak freely. They let the petty bourgeois howl till they were tired, they knew their time would again come, and now it is there. . . .

. . . We here neither underestimate the difficulties against which the party has to struggle in Germany nor the importance of the successes already won in spite of them and the really model behaviour of the party masses so far. Needless to say, we rejoice over every victory won in Germany just as much as over one gained elsewhere, and even more, since the German party developed from the beginning on the basis of our theoretical views. But for that very reason we are particularly interested in seeing that the practical attitude of the German party and especially the public utterances of the party leadership remain in harmony with the general theory. Our criticism is undoubtedly unpleasant for some; but it must surely be of more advantage to the party and the party leadership than all uncritical compliments to have a couple of people abroad who, uninfluenced by confusing local conditions and details of the fight, from time to time test events and utterances by the theoretical principles valid for all modern proletarian movements, and reflect for it the impression which its actions create outside Germany.

FREDERICK ENGELS TO EDUARD BERNSTEIN

London, October 25, 1881

. . . But it is true that Guesde came over when it was a matter of drawing up the *draft* programme for the French Workers' Party. In the presence of Lafargue and myself, here in my room, Marx dictated to him the "*considerants*" of it: the worker is only free when he becomes the owner of his instruments of labour—this can take place either in individual or collective form. The form of individual ownership is being overcome as a result of economic development and is becoming

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<sup>1</sup>In June 1879, Nobiling, while of unsound mind, made an attempt on the life of Wilhelm I. This attempt afforded the pretext for the Anti-Socialist Law.—Ed.

ing more completely so from day to day—there remains, therefore, only the collective form of ownership, etc.—a masterpiece of convincing argument making things clear to the masses in a few words, such as I have seldom heard and which in this concise form amazed even me. The remaining contents of the programme were then discussed; we put a few things in and others out, but how little Guesde was Marx's mouth-piece is shown by the fact that he insisted on including his crackbrained idea of the *minimum du salaire*<sup>1</sup> and, as not we but the French are responsible for it, we finally let him have his way, although he admitted that theoretically it was nonsense. . . . .

The French then discussed this programme afterwards and accepted it with a few alterations, among which Malon's were no improvement. . . .

But what most annoys the petty carpers who are nothing and would like to be everything is this: by his theoretical and practical achievements Marx has won for himself the position that the best people of all labour movements in the various countries have full confidence in him. They turn to him for *advice at decisive moments* and generally find that his advice is the best. He has this position in Germany, in France, in Russia, to say nothing of the smaller countries. It is therefore not Marx who imposes his opinion, far less his will, on these people, it is these people themselves who come to him. And that is just the basis of the peculiar influence of Marx, so extremely important for the movement.

Malon also wanted to come here but he wanted to obtain a special invitation from Marx through Lafargue, which of course he did not get; one was ready to discuss with him as with every other person *de bonne volonte*<sup>2</sup> but invite him! What for? Who has ever been invited like that?

Marx's relations to the other national movements, and in the second place mine too, are the same as to the French. We are continually in touch with them, in so far as it is worth while and opportunity offers, but any attempt at influencing the people against their will would only do us harm and destroy the old confidence from the time of the International. And for that we have too much experience *in revolutionaribus rebus*.<sup>3</sup> . . . .

<sup>1</sup>Minimum wage.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Of good will.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>In revolutionary matters.—Ed.

London, November 30, 1881

If any external event has helped to put Marx to some extent on his feet again, it was the elections.<sup>1</sup> No proletariat has behaved so splendidly. In England, after the great failure of 1848<sup>2</sup> a sinking into apathy and finally submission to bourgeois exploitation with the exception of the isolated struggles of the trades unions for higher wages. In France, disappearance of the proletariat from the stage after December 2.<sup>3</sup>

In Germany after three years of unprecedented persecution, of unrelaxing pressure, of complete impossibility of public organisation and even of co-ordination, our lads are not only there in their old strength, but even strengthened. And strengthened precisely in an all-important respect: the centre of gravity of the movement has shifted from the semi-rural districts of Saxony to the big industrial cities.

Most of our people in Saxony are hand-weavers, doomed to extinction by the steam-loom and only dragging out a bare existence on starvation wages and with the help of subsidiary employment (gardening, carving toys, etc.). These people are economically in a reactionary position, representing a declining stage in production. They are therefore, to say the least, not to the same extent the born representatives of revolutionary socialism as the workers in large-scale industry. They are not on that account reactionary by nature (as, for instance, here the remnants of the hand-weavers finally became the crystalline core of the "Conservative Working Men"), but they are in the long run uncertain, especially because of their terribly miserable position, which makes them far less capable of resistance than the townsmen, and because they are so scattered, which makes it easier to enslave them politically than the people of the big cities. Considering the facts as given in the S.D. [*Sozialdemokrat*], one must indeed also admire the heroism with which these poor devils have held

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<sup>1</sup>In the autumn of 1881, at the Reichstag elections the Social-Democrats received 312,000 votes and twelve seats.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Engels refers to the defeat and decline of the Chartist movement in England after the failure of the demonstration of April 10, 1848.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>On December 2, 1851 (the *coup d'etat* of Louis Napoleon), see *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* in this volume.—*Ed.*

out in such numbers.

But they are not a proper kernel for a great national movement. Under certain circumstances—as between 1865 and 1870—their misery makes them more open to social-democratic views than the men of the big cities, but the same misery also makes them less reliable. . . .

Now the whole situation is different. Berlin, Hamburg, Breslau, Leipzig, Dresden, Mayence, Offenbach, Bremen, Elberfeld, Solingen, Nurnberg, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Hanau, as well as Chemnitz and the districts of the Erzgebirge, that gives quite a different foundation.

#### FREDERICK ENGELS TO AUGUST BEBEL

London, October 28, 1882

. . . In France the long expected split has taken place.<sup>1</sup> The original conjunction of Guesde and Lafargue with Malon and Brousse was no doubt unavoidable when the party was founded, but Marx and I never had any illusions that it could last. The issue is purely one of principle: is the struggle to be conducted *as a class struggle* of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie or is it to be permitted that in good opportunist (or as it is called in the socialist translation: possibilist) style the class character of the movement, together with the programme, are everywhere to be dropped where there is a chance of winning more votes, more adherents, by this means? Malon and Brousse, by declaring themselves in favour of the latter alternative, have sacrificed the proletarian class character of the movement and made separation inevitable. All the better. The development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere amidst internal struggles and France, which is now forming a workers' party for the first time, is no exception. We in Germany have got beyond the first phase of the internal struggle, other phases still lie before us. Unity is quite a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things which stand higher than unity.

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<sup>1</sup>The split in the French Workers' Party took place at the congress in St. Etienne (September 25, 1882). The Central Committee in its report to the congress proposed to expel the Marxists from the party. The minority of the congress—32 delegates with Guesde and Lafargue at their head—left the congress, the majority of which was on the side of the opportunists. The Guesdists convened their own congress in Rouen (September 27, 1882).—Ed.

And when, like Marx and myself, one has fought harder all one's life long against the alleged socialists than against anyone else (for we only regarded the bourgeoisie as a *class* and hardly ever involved ourselves in conflicts with individual bourgeois), one cannot greatly grieve that the inevitable struggle has broken out. . . .

FREDERICK ENGELS TO JOHANN PHILIPP BECKER

London, June 15, 1885

. . . In a petty-bourgeois country like Germany the party is bound also to have a *petty-bourgeois* "educated" *Right wing*, which it shakes off at the decisive moment. Petty-bourgeois socialism in Germany dates from 1844 and was already criticised in *The Communist Manifesto*. It is as immortal as the German petty bourgeois himself. So long as the Anti-Socialist Laws are in force I am not in favour of *our* provoking the split, because our weapons are unevenly matched. But if the gentlemen provoke a split themselves by suppressing the proletarian character of the Party and trying to replace it by a stick-in-the-mud aesthetic-sentimental philanthropy without force or life, then we must just take it as it comes. . . .

LETTERS ON IRELAND<sup>1</sup>

FREDERICK ENGELS TO KARL MARX ·

Manchester, May 23, 1856

In our tour in Ireland we came from Dublin to Galway on the west coast, then twenty miles north inland, then to Limerick, down the Shannon to Tarbett, Tralee, Killarney and back to Dublin. A total of about four to five hundred English miles in the country itself, so that we have seen about two-thirds of the whole country. With the exception of Dublin which bears the same relation to London as Dusseldorf does to Berlin, and has quite the character of a small one-time capital, all English-built too, the whole country, and especially the towns, has exactly the appearance of France or Northern Italy. Gendarmes, priests, lawyers, bureaucrats, squires in pleasing profusion and a total absence of any and every indus-

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<sup>1</sup>The three letters of Marx and Engels on Ireland reprinted here afford a classical example of their policy in the national question. Lenin wrote as follows on the position taken up by Marx and Engels in the Irish question :

“On the Irish question also, Marx and Engels pursued a consistently proletarian policy, which really trained the masses in the spirit of democracy and socialism. Only this policy was capable of ridding both Ireland and England of the half century of delay in introducing the necessary changes and the mutilation of these changes by the Liberals to please the reaction.

“The policy of Marx and Engels on the Irish question provided a magnificent model—which preserves its enormous practical significance to this day—of what the attitude of the proletariat in oppressing nations towards national movements should be ; it provided a warning against that ‘servile haste’ with which the petty bourgeoisie of all countries, of all colours and languages, hasten to declare that the alteration of state frontiers created by the violence and privileges of the landlords and the bourgeoisie of one nation is ‘utopian.’

“Had the Irish and the English proletariat not adopted Marx’s policy, had they not put forward separation of Ireland as their slogan, it would have been the most malicious opportunism on their part, an oblivion to the task of the democrats and the socialists, a surrender to *English* reaction and the bourgeoisie.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, “On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination.”)—Ed.

try, so that it would be difficult to understand what all these parasitic growths found to live on if the misery of the peasants did not supply the other half of the picture. "Strong measures" are visible in every corner of the country, the government meddles with everything, of so-called self-government there is not a trace. Ireland may be regarded as the first English colony and as one which because of its proximity is still governed exactly in the old way, and here one can already observe that the so-called liberty of English citizens is based on the oppression of the colonies. I have never seen so many gendarmes in any country and the drink-sodden expression of the Prussian gendarme is developed to its highest perfection here among the constabulary, who are armed with carbines, bayonets and handcuffs.

Characteristic of this country are its ruins, the oldest from the fifth and sixth centuries, the latest from the nineteenth—with every intervening period. The most ancient are all churches; after 1100, churches and castles; after 1800, the houses of peasants. The whole of the West, but especially in the neighbourhood of Galway, is covered with these ruined peasant houses, most of which have only been deserted since 1846. I never thought that a famine could have such tangible reality. Whole villages are devastated, and there among them lie the splendid parks of the lesser landlords, who are almost the only people still living there, mostly lawyers. Famine, emigration and clearances together have accomplished this. There are not even cattle to be seen in the fields. The land is an utter desert which nobody wants. In County Clare, south of Galway, it is rather better, here there are at least some cattle, and the hills towards Limerick are excellently cultivated, mostly by Scottish farmers, the ruins have been cleared away and the country has a bourgeois appearance. In the South-West there are a lot of mountains and bogs but also wonderfully rich forest growth, beyond that again fine pasture, especially in Tipperary, and towards Dublin land which is, one can see, gradually coming into the hands of big farmers. The country has been completely ruined by the English wars of conquest from 1100 to 1850 (for in reality both the wars and the state of siege lasted as long as that). It is a fact that most of the ruins were produced by destruction during the wars. The people itself has got its peculiar character from this, and despite all their Irish nationalist fanaticism the fellows feel that they are no longer at home in their own

country. Ireland for the Saxon! That is now being realised. The Irishman knows he cannot compete with the Englishman, who comes with means in every respect superior; emigration will go on until the predominantly, indeed almost exclusively, Celtic character of the population is all to hell. How often have the Irish started to try and achieve something, and every time they have been crushed, politically and industrially. By consistent oppression they have been artificially converted into an utterly demoralised nation and now fulfil the notorious function of supplying England, America, Australia, etc., with prostitutes, casual labourers, pimps, thieves, swindlers, beggars and other rabble. This demoralised character persists in the aristocracy too. The landowners who everywhere else have taken on bourgeois qualities, are here completely demoralised. Their country seats are surrounded by enormous, wonderfully beautiful parks, but all around is waste land, and where the money is supposed to come from it is impossible to see. These fellows ought to be shot. Of mixed blood, mostly tall, strong handsome chaps, they all wear enormous moustaches under colossal Roman noses, give themselves the sham military airs of retired colonels, travel around the country after all sorts of pleasures, and, if one makes an inquiry, they haven't a penny, are laden with debts and live in dread of the Encumbered Estates Court. . . . .

KARL MARX TO DR. KUGELMANN

London, November 29, 1869

. . . You will probably have seen in the *Volksstaat* the resolutions against Gladstone which I proposed on the question of the Irish amnesty.<sup>1</sup> I have now attacked Gladstone—and it has attracted attention here—just as I formerly attacked Palmerston. The demagogic refugees here love to fall upon the continental despots from a safe distance. That sort of

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to Marx's speech at the end of November 1869 in moving his resolution on the Irish question, adopted unanimously by the General Council of the First International after a long and stormy debate. The resolution welcomed the Irish struggle for the amnesty of the imprisoned leaders of the fight for Irish national emancipation; it expressed its protest against the behaviour of the English Prime Minister Gladstone who "clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to."  
—Ed.

‘thing’ only attracts me, when it happens *vultu instantis tyranni*.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless both my coming out on this Irish amnesty question and my further proposal to the General Council to discuss the relation of the English working class to Ireland and to frame resolutions on it, have of course other objects besides that of speaking out loudly and decidedly for the oppressed Irish against their oppressors.

I have become more and more convinced—and the only question is to bring this conviction home to the English working class—that it can never do anything decisive here in England until it separates its policy with regard to Ireland in the most definite way from the policy of the ruling classes, until it not only makes common cause with the Irish, but actually takes the initiative in dissolving the Union<sup>2</sup> established in 1801 and replacing it by a free federal relationship. And, indeed, this must be done, not as a matter of sympathy with Ireland, but as a demand made in the interests of the English proletariat. If not, the English people will remain tied to the leading-strings of the ruling classes, because it must join with them in a common front against Ireland. Every one of its movements in England itself is crippled by the disunion with the Irish, who form a very important section of the working class in England. The *primary condition* of emancipation here—the overthrow of the English landed oligarchy—remains impossible because its position here cannot be stormed so long as it maintains its strongly entrenched outposts in Ireland. But there, once affairs are in the hands of the Irish people itself, once it is made its own legislator and ruler, once it becomes autonomous, the abolition of the landed aristocracy (to a large extent the *same persons* as the English landlords) will be infinitely easier than here, because in Ireland it is not merely a simple economic question, but at the same time a *national* question, since the landlords there are not like those in England, the traditional dignitaries and representatives, but are the mortally hated oppressors of a nation. And not only does England’s internal social development remain crippled by her present relation with Ireland; her foreign policy and particularly her policy with regard to Russia and America, suffers the same fate.

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<sup>1</sup>In the immediate presence of the tyrant.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The “Act of Union” was passed in England in 1801; it abolished the Irish parliament and made Ireland completely dependent on England.—*Ed.*

But since the English working class undoubtedly throws the decisive weight into the scale of social emancipation generally, the lever has to be applied here. As a matter of fact, the English republic under Cromwell met shipwreck in—Ireland.<sup>1</sup> *Non bis in idem!*<sup>2</sup> The Irish have played a capital joke on the English government by electing the “convict felon” O’Donovan Rossa<sup>3</sup> to parliament. The government papers are already threatening a renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act,<sup>4</sup> a “renewed system of terror.” In fact, England never has and never can—so long as the present relation lasts—rule Ireland otherwise than by the most abominable reign of terror and the most reprehensible corruption. . . .

KARL MARX TO SIEGFRIED MEYER AND KARL VOGT

London, April 9, 1870

. . . . After occupying myself with the Irish questions<sup>5</sup> for many years I have come to the conclusion that the decisive blow against the English ruling classes (and it will be decisive

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<sup>1</sup>In 1641, during the English bourgeois revolution, an insurrection broke out in Ireland which led to the greater part of this island severing itself completely from England, Cromwell did not succeed in crushing the rising until 1649. The “pacification” of Ireland was effected with unprecedented cruelty; it ended with an enormous expropriation of the lands of the Irish population. The soldiers and officers of Cromwell’s army were rewarded, and the suppliers of the army paid, with the land seized from the Irish. All this converted the Irish into opponents of the English republic, into an active power struggling against the English revolution.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Not twice for the same thing!—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>O’Donovan Rossa—Irish politician and journalist. In 1865 he founded in Dublin the *Irish People*, the organ of the Irish national and revolutionary society, the Fenian Brotherhood. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on account of the revolutionary character of this paper. In 1869 he was elected a member of parliament for Tipperary. The election was annulled but he was set free and emigrated to America.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup>The Habeas Corpus Act was passed by the English parliament in 1679. It provides that every arrest must be judicially confirmed and the arrested person either brought to trial within a short period or set free.—*Ed.*

<sup>5</sup>As early as 1853 Marx devoted a number of articles in the *New York Daily Tribune* to the Irish question. Engels had already made a detailed reference to the Irish question in his first work, *The Condition of the Working Class in England.*—*Ed.*

for the workers' movement all over the world) cannot be delivered in England but only in Ireland. On December 1, 1869, the General Council issued a confidential circular<sup>1</sup> drawn up by me in French (for the reaction upon England only the French, not the German papers, are important) on the relations of the Irish national struggle to the emancipation of the working class, and therefore on the attitude which the International Working Men's Association should take towards the Irish question. I will here give you quite shortly the decisive points.

Ireland is the bulwark of the English landed aristocracy. The exploitation of this country is not only one of the main sources of their national wealth, it is their greatest moral strength. They, in fact, represent the domination of England over Ireland. Ireland is therefore the great means by which the English aristocracy maintains its domination in England itself.

If, on the other hand, the English army and police were withdrawn tomorrow there would immediately be an agrarian revolution in Ireland. But the overthrow of the English aristocracy in Ireland involves and has as a necessary consequence its overthrow in England. And this would fulfil the prerequisites for the proletarian revolution in England. The destruction of the English landed aristocracy in Ireland is an infinitely easier operation than in England itself because the land question has hitherto been the exclusive form of the social question in Ireland, because it is a question of existence, of life and death, for the immense majority of the Irish people and because it is at the same time inseparable from the national question quite apart from the passionate character of the Irish and the fact that they are more revolutionary than the English.

As for the English bourgeoisie, they have in the first place a common interest with the aristocracy in transforming Ireland into a mere pasture land which provides the English market with meat and wool at the cheapest possible prices. Hence it is interested in reducing, by expropriation and forcible emigration, the Irish population to such a small number that English capital, invested in land leased for farming, can function with "security." They have the same interest in clearing the estate

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<sup>1</sup>The Irish question was put by Marx on the agenda of the session of the General Council held on November 16, 1869. Marx put this question forward in connection with the agitation for the amnesty of the imprisoned Irish Fenians. The circular referred to in this letter has not been preserved.—Ed.

of Ireland as they had in clearing the agricultural districts of England and Scotland.<sup>1</sup> The six to ten thousand pound sterling absentee landlord and other Irish revenues which at present flow annually to London have likewise to be taken into account.

But the English bourgeoisie has also much more important interests in the present Irish regime. Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of farming, Ireland supplies its constant surplus to the English labour market and thus forces down wages and lowers the moral and material position of the English working class. And most important of all: every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class population *divided* into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the *ruling* nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists *against Ireland*, thus strengthening their domination *over himself*. He cherishes religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites"<sup>2</sup> to the "niggers" in the former slave states of the U.S.A. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own coin.

He looks upon the English worker as sharing in the guilt for the English domination in Ireland while at the same time serving as its stupid tool.

This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. It is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite their organisation. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power. And of this that class is well aware.

But the evil does not stop there. It continues across the ocean. The antagonism between English and Irish is the hidden basis of the conflict between the United States and England.<sup>3</sup> It makes any honest and serious co-operation between

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<sup>1</sup>For a description of the process of expropriation of the English and Scottish peasantry, see *Capital*, Vol. I, Part VIII; "The So-Called Primitive Accumulation."—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the proletariat and the poor farmers of the former slaves states of the South.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The colonial exploitation of Ireland by England led to the complete impoverishment of the Irish village; the peasant

the working classes of the two countries impossible. It enables the governments of both countries, whenever they think fit, to break the edge of the social conflict by their mutual threats, and if need be by war with one another.

England, as the metropolis of capital, as the power which has hitherto ruled the world market, is for the time being the most important country for the workers' revolution, and moreover the *only* country in which the material conditions for this revolution exist up to a certain point. Therefore to hasten the social revolution in England is the most important object of the International Working Men's Association. The sole means of hastening it is to make Ireland independent.

Hence the task of the "International" is everywhere to put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground! and everywhere to side openly with Ireland. The special task of the Central Council in London is to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the *national emancipation of Ireland* is no question of abstract justice or human sympathy, but the first condition of *their own social emancipation*.....

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population had to choose between dying of starvation and emigration. The population sank from eight million in 1846 to four and a half million at the end of the century. Between 1851 and 1905, over four million Irish emigrated to the U.S.A. They formed a considerable portion of the American population particularly in the ranks of the working class, and they retained all their hatred of their English oppressors. The American bourgeoisie was always inclined to utilise this national hatred both in the class struggle inside America and also as a weapon against England, by permitting the organisation of Irish revolutionary conspirative societies on American soil.—Ed.

## THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA<sup>1</sup>

Correspondence of the *New York Daily Tribune*

London, Friday, June 10, 1853

TELEGRAPHIC dispatches from Vienna announce that the pacific solution of the Turkish, Sardinian and Swiss questions, is regarded there as a certainty.

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<sup>1</sup>Marx and Engels began to study the Eastern question in 1853. Just at this period we find them discussing in their correspondence the basic features of the historical development of the Oriental countries. The role of the village community, the significance of artificial irrigation, questions of peculiarities in the origin of private property in the soil, the bases of Oriental despotism, the role and influence of colonial policy on the development of the largest colonial and semi-colonial countries—such are the questions dealt with in the correspondence between Marx and Engels. The ideas developed in this correspondence are summarised in detail in a series of articles by Marx on China and India. In this period the Taiping insurrection was taking place in China. In India, the Sepoy rising was in course of preparation and broke out in 1857. Thus the study of Oriental problems was for Marx not only of theoretical interest but resulted from the demands of the revolutionary struggle. The economic crisis which broke out in 1847 had already revealed the enormous importance of India and China from the standpoint of the development of capitalism and of the course of the industrial cycle in the mother countries.

Theoretical interest and the practical requirements of the revolutionary struggle alike caused Marx's attention to be directed to India.

Marx's articles on India have not lost any of their significance even today. The revisionists, headed by Bernstein, came forward as early as the nineties of the last century with the theory of the civilising role of colonial policy and later with the theory of the progressive role of imperialism in the colonies. They defended their point of view at the congresses of the Second International in Paris, Amsterdam and Stuttgart. In the post-war period, at the congress in Brussels of 1928, the Second International incorporated this anti-Marxist theory in its official programme. This theory is the real basis of the theory of "decolonisation" defended by the opportunists at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, according to which the imperialist powers, as it were, promote the development and industrialisation of the colonies.

Last night the debate on India was continued in the House of Commons, in the usual dull manner. Mr. Blakett charged the statements of Sir Charles Wood and Sir J. Hogg with bearing the stamp of optimist falsehood. A lot of ministerial and directional advocates rebuked the charge as well as they could, and the inevitable Mr. Hume summed up by calling on ministers to withdraw their bill. Debate adjourned.

Hindustan is an Italy of Asiatic dimensions, the Himalayas for the Alps, the Plains of Bengal for the Plains of Lombardy, the Deccan for the Appenines, and the Isle of Ceylon for the Island of Sicily. The same rich variety in the products of the soil, and the same dismemberment in the political configuration. Just as Italy has, from time to time, been compressed by the conqueror's sword into different national masses, so do we find Hindustan, when not under the pressure of the Mohammedan, or the Mogul, or the Briton, dissolved into as many independent and conflicting states as it numbered towns, or even villages. Yet, in a social point of view, Hindustan is not the Italy, but the Ireland of the East. And this strange combination of Italy and of Ireland, of a world of voluptuousness and of a world of woes, is anticipated in the ancient traditions of the religion of Hindustan. That religion is at once a religion of sensualist exuberance, and a religion of self-torturing ascetism; a religion of the Lingam<sup>1</sup> and of the Juggernaut; the religion of the Monk, and of the Bayadere.

I share not the opinion of those who believe in a golden age of Hindustan, without recurring, however, like Sir Charles Wood, for the confirmation of my view, to the authority of Khuli-Khan. But take, for example, the times of Aurangzeb;<sup>2</sup> or the epoch, when the Mogul appeared in the North, and the Portuguese in the south; or the age of Mohammedan invasion,

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Marx's articles on India provide an answer to these questions which has not become obsolete even today; they reveal the real role of colonial policy and refute the views both of the decolonisation theories and of the Narodniki, (Populists). They give an estimate of British rule in India, opening up the prospect of revolution in England and in India.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Lingam religion. The cult of the deity Siva; widespread among the Southern India sect of the Lingayat, with about a million adherents, which preaches mortification of the flesh.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Aurangzeb (Died 1707). The last Mogul emperor of India. After his death the Mogul state in India (1526-1707) came to an end as a centralised whole.—Ed.

and of the Heptarchy<sup>1</sup> in Southern India ; or, if you will, go still more back to antiquity, take the mythological chronology of the Brahmin himself, who places the commencement of Indian misery in an epoch even more remote than the Christian creation of the world.

There cannot, however, remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindustan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before. I do not allude to European despotism, planted upon Asiatic despotism, by the British East India Company, forming a more monstrous combination than any of the divine monsters startling us in the temple of Salsette.<sup>2</sup> This is no distinctive feature of British colonial rule, but only an imitation of the Dutch, and so much so that in order to characterise the working of the British East India Company, it is sufficient to literally repeat what Sir Stanford Raffles, the *English* governor of Java, said of the old Dutch East India Company :

“The Dutch Company, actuated solely by the spirit of gain and viewing their subjects with less regard or consideration than a West India planter formerly viewed a gang of slaves upon his estate, because the latter had paid the purchase money of human property, which the other had not, employed all the existing machinery of despotism to squeeze from the people their utmost mite of contribution, the last dregs of their labour, and thus aggravated the evils of a capricious and semi-barbarous government, by working it with all the practiced ingenuity of politicians, and all the monopolising selfishness of traders.”

All the civil wars, invasions, revolutions, conquests, famines, strangely complex, rapid and destructive as the successive action in Hindustan may appear, did not go deeper than its surface. England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing. This loss of his old world, with no gain.

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<sup>1</sup>The Heptarchy. The conventional designation of the political dismemberment of India in the period of early feudalism (sixth to eighth centuries of our era). Marx uses this expression to denote the political breakup of India.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Temple of Salsette. A cave temple situated on the island of that name in the Bombay Presidency. It contains some 5,000 carvings, chiselled in stone like the entire temple itself.—*Ed.*

of a new one, imparts a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindu and separates Hindustan, ruled by Britain, from all its ancient traditions, and from the whole of its past history.

There have been in Asia, generally from immemorial times, but three departments of government, that of finance, or the plunder of the interior; that of war, or the plunder of the exterior; and, finally, the department of public works. Climate and territorial conditions, especially the vast tracts of desert, extending from the Sahara, through Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary, to the most elevated Asiatic highlands, constituted artificial irrigation by canals and waterworks, the basis of Oriental agriculture. As in Egypt and India, inundations are used for fertilising the soil in Mesopotamia, Persia, etc.; advantage is taken of a high level for feeding irrigative canals. This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which in the Occident drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated in the Orient, where civilisation was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralising power of government. Hence an economical function devolved upon all Asiatic governments, the function of providing public works. This artificial fertilisation of the soil, dependent on a central government and immediately decaying with the neglect of irrigation and drainage, explains the otherwise strange fact that we now find whole territories barren and desert that were once brilliantly cultivated, as Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in Yemen, and large provinces of Egypt, Persia and Hindustan; it also explains how a single war of devastation has been able to depopulate a country for centuries, and to strip it of all its civilisation.

Now, the British in East India accepted from their predecessors the department of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works. Hence the deterioration of an agriculture which is not capable of being conducted on the British principle of free competition, of *laissez-faire* and *laissez-aller*. But in Asiatic empires we are quite accustomed to see agriculture deteriorating under one government and reviving again under some other government. There the harvests correspond to good or bad government, as they change in Europe with good or bad seasons. Thus the oppression and neglect of agriculture, bad as it is, could not be looked upon as the final blow dealt to Indian society by the British intruder,

had it not been attended by a circumstance of quite different importance, a novelty in the annals of the whole Asiatic world. However changing the political aspect of India's past must appear, its social condition has remained unaltered since its remotest antiquity, until the first decennium of the nineteenth century. The hand-loom and the spinning wheel, producing their regular myriads of spinners and weavers were the pivots of the structure of that society. From immemorial times, Europe received the admirable textures of Indian labour, sending in return for them her precious metals, and furnishing thereby his material to the goldsmith, that indispensable member of Indian society, whose love of finery is so great that even the lowest class, those who go about nearly naked, have commonly a pair of golden earrings and a gold ornament of some kind hung round their necks. Rings on the fingers and toes have also been common. Women as well as children frequently wore massive bracelets and anklets of gold or silver, and statuettes of divinities in gold and silver were met with in the households. It was the British intruder who broke up the Indian hand-loom and destroyed the spinning wheel. England began with driving the Indian cottons from the European market; it then introduced twist into Hindustan and, in the end inundated the very mother country of cotton with cottons. From 1818 to 1836 the export of twist from Great Britain to India rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,200. In 1824 the export of British muslins to India hardly amount to 1,000,000 yards while in 1837 it surpassed 64,000,000 of yards. But at the same time the population of Dacca decreased from 150,000 inhabitants to 20,000. This decline of Indian towns celebrated for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole surface of Hindustan, the union between agricultural and manufacturing industry.

These two circumstances—the Hindu, on the one hand, leaving, like all Oriental peoples, to the central government the care of the great public works, the prime condition of his agriculture and commerce, dispersed, on the other hand, over the surface of the country, and agglomerated in small centres by the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits—these two circumstances had brought about, since the remotest times, a social system of particular features—the so-called *village system*, which gave to each of these small unions their independent organisation and distinct life. The

peculiar character of this system may be judged from the following description, contained in an old official report of the British House of Commons on Indian affairs :

“ A village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundred or thousand acres of arable and waste lands: politically viewed it resembles a corporation or township. Its proper establishment of officers and servants consists of the following descriptions: the *potail*, or head inhabitant, who has generally the superintendence of the affairs of the village, settles the disputes of the inhabitants, attends to the police and performs the duty of collecting the revenue within his village, a duty which his personal influence and minute acquaintance with the situation and concerns of the people render him the best qualified for this charge. The *kurnum* keeps the accounts of cultivation, and registers everything connected with it. The *tallier* and the *totie*, the duty of the former of which consists in gaining information of crimes and offences, and in escorting and protecting persons travelling from one village to another; the province of the latter appearing to be more immediately confined to the village, consisting among other duties, in guarding the crops and assisting in measuring them. The boundary man, who preserves the limits of the village or gives evidence respecting them in cases of dispute. The superintendent of tanks and watercourses distributes the water for the purposes of agriculture. The Brahmin, who performs the village worship. The schoolmaster, who is seen teaching the children in a village to read and write in the sand. The calender-Brahmin, or astrologer, etc., these officers and servants generally constitute the establishment of a village; but in some parts of the country it is of less extent; some of the duties and functions above described being united in the same person; in others it exceeds the above-named number of individuals. Under this simple form of municipal government, the inhabitants of the country have lived from time immemorial. The boundaries of the villages have been but seldom altered; and though the villages themselves have been sometimes injured and even desolated by war, famine or disease, the same name, the same limits, the same interests and even the same families, have continued for ages. The inhabitants gave themselves no trouble about the breaking up and divisions of kingdoms; while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred; or to what sovereign it devolves; its internal economy remains unchanged. The *potail* is still the head inhabitant, and still acts as the petty judge or magistrate, and collector or rentor of the village.”

These small stereotype forms of social organism have been to the greater part dissolved, and are disappearing, not so much through the brutal interference of the British tax-gatherer and the British soldier, as to the working of English

steam and English free trade. Those family communities were based on domestic industry, in that peculiar combination of hand-weaving, hand-spinning and hand-tilling agriculture which gave them self-supporting power. English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindu spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilised communities, by blowing up their economical basis and thus produced the greatest, and to speak the truth, the only *social* revolution ever heard of in Asia.

Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organisations disorganised and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilisation, and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the helpless prey of any aggressor who deigned to notice it at all. We must not forget that this undignified, stagnatory, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindustan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste<sup>1</sup> and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances, instead of

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<sup>1</sup>A hereditarily fixed occupational and social group. There were originally four chief castes: priests (Brahmins), warriors (Kshatriyas), merchants and cultivators (Vaishyas) and menials (Sudras). Marriage between different castes is forbidden. Behind the caste differences are concealed the deprivation of rights and oppression of the toiling masses in India which goes as far as forbidding the use of roads, public wells, schools, etc., to the "untouchable" castes.—*Ed.*

elevating man the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalising worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of *Hanuman*,<sup>1</sup> the monkey, and *Sabbala*,<sup>2</sup> the cow.

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindustan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crime of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution.

Then, whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of an ancient world may have for our personal feelings, we have the right, in point of history, to exclaim with Goethe :

“ Sollte diese Qual uns qualen  
Da sie unsre Lust vermehrt,  
Hat nicht myriaden Seelen  
Timur's Herrschaft aufgezehrt ? ”

[Should this torture then torment us  
Since it brings us greater pleasure?  
Were not through the rule of Timur  
Souls devoured without measure?]

KARL MARX

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<sup>1</sup>A mythical ape-king who was made into a god on account of the help which he rendered to one of the “avatars” or incarnations of the god Vishnu.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>The holy cow in the Hindu religion, the bearer of wealth and happiness; it is often worshipped as the god of earth and fertility.—*Ed.*

**THE FUTURE RESULTS OF BRITISH RULE  
IN INDIA**Correspondence of the *New York Daily Tribune*

London, Friday, July 22, 1853 .

I PROPOSE in this letter to conclude my observations on India.

How came it that English supremacy was established in India? The paramount power of the Great Mogul<sup>1</sup> was broken by the Mogul Viceroy. The power of the Viceroy was broken by the Mahrattas.<sup>2</sup> The power of the Mahrattas was broken by the Afghans,<sup>3</sup> and while all were struggling against all, the Briton rushed in and was enabled to subdue them all. A country not only divided between the Mohammedan and Hindu, but between tribe and tribe, between caste and caste; a society whose framework was based on a sort of equilibrium, resulting from a general repulsion and constitutional exclusiveness between all its members. Such a country and such a society, were they not the predestined prey of conquest? If we knew nothing of the past history of Hindustan, would there not be the one great and incontestible fact, that even at this moment India is held in English thralldom by an Indian army maintained at the cost of India? India, then, could not escape the fate of being conquered, and the whole of her past history, if it be anything, is the history of the successive conquests she has undergone. Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history. What we call its history, is but the history of the successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society. The question, therefore, is not whether the English had a right to conquer India, but whether we are to prefer India conquered by the Turk, by the Persian, by the Russian, to

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<sup>1</sup>The title of the feudal Indian Mohammedan emperors of the Turkish Baber dynasty, which ruled from 1526 to 1857.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>A confederation of several Indian feudal states, formed in Central India in the eighteenth century; the power of the Mahrattas was broken by the British, who conquered their territory in 1817 after a series of ferocious wars.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The power of the Mahrattas received its first blow in 1761 at the hands of the Afghan Ahmad Shah.—*Ed.*

India conquered by the Briton.

England has to fulfil a double mission in India : one destructive, and the other regenerating—the annihilation of old Asiatic society,<sup>1</sup> and the laying the material foundations of Western society in Asia.

Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, who had successively overrun India, soon became *Hinduised*, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilisation of their subjects. The British were the first conquerors superior, and therefore inaccessible to Hindu civilisation. They destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry, and by levelling all that was great and elevated in the native society. The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that destruction. The work of regeneration hardly transpires through a heap of ruins. Nevertheless it has begun.

The political unity of India, more consolidated, and extending farther than it ever did under the Great Moguls, was the first condition of its regeneration. That unity, imposed by the British sword, will now be strengthened and perpetuated by the electric telegraph. The native army, organised and trained by the British drill-sergeant, was the *sine qua non* of Indian self-emancipation, and of India ceasing to be the prey of the first foreign intruder. The free press, introduced for the first time into Asiatic society, and managed principally by the common offspring of Hindus and Europeans, is a new and powerful agent of reconstruction. The *Zemindaree*<sup>2</sup> and *Ryotwar*<sup>3</sup> themselves, abominable as they are, involve two distinct forms of private property in land—the great *desidera-*

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<sup>1</sup>Ancient Asiatic society was an Oriental form of feudalism marked by the following characteristic features : state ownership of land, concentration of public works, particularly irrigation, in the hands of the state, and the combination of industry and agriculture within the framework of the village community. In other passages, Marx and Engels use the expression " Asiatic despotism " in place of " Asiatic society."—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Zemindars. Landowners in Bengal who were established by the British from former tax collectors who subsequently became merchants and usurers. Thus, instead of coming under the old expropriated feudal landowners, the Indian peasant came under the yoke of the new landlord-usurer.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>*Ryotwar*. From the word ryot or peasant cultivator. Under the ryotwari system the peasant cultivator pays land tax directly to the state.—*Ed.*

tum of Asiatic society. From the Indian natives, reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta, under English superintendence, a fresh class is springing, endowed with the requirements for government and imbued with European science. Steam has brought India into regular and rapid communication with Europe, has connected its chief ports with those of the whole southeastern ocean, and has revindicated it from the isolated position which was the prime law of its stagnation. The day is not far distant when, by a combination of railways and steam vessels, the distance between England and India, measured by time, will be shortened to eight days, and when that once fabulous country will thus be actually annexed to the Western world.

The ruling classes of Great Britain have had, till now, but an accidental, transitory and exceptional interest in the progress of India. The aristocracy wanted to conquer it, the moneyocracy to plunder it and the millocracy to undersell it. But now the tables are turned. The millocracy have discovered that the transformation of India into a reproductive country has become of vital importance to them, and that, to that end, it is necessary above all to gift her with means of irrigation and of internal communication. They intend now drawing a net of railroads over India. And they will do it. The results must be inappreciable.

It is notorious that the productive powers of India are paralysed by the utter want of means for conveying and exchanging its various produce. Nowhere, more than in India, do we meet with social destitution in the midst of natural plenty, for want of the means of exchange. It was proved before a Committee of the British House of Commons, which sat in 1848 that "when grain was selling from 6s. to 8s. a quarter at Kandeish, it was sold at 64s. to 70s. at Poona, where the people were dying in the streets of famine, without the possibility of gaining supplies from Kandeish, because the clay roads were impracticable."

The introduction of railroads may be easily made to subserve agricultural purposes by the formation of tanks, where ground is required for embankment, and by the conveyance of water along the different lines. Thus irrigation, the *sine qua non* of farming in the East, might be greatly extended, and the frequently recurring local famines, arising from the want of water, would be averted. The general importance of railways, viewed under this head, must become evident, when we remem-

ber that irrigated land, even in the districts near Ghauts, pay three times as much in taxes, afford ten or twelve times as much employment, and yield twelve or fifteen times as much profit as the same area without irrigation.

Railways will afford the means of diminishing the amount and the cost of the military establishments. Col. Warren, Town Major of the Fort St. William, stated before a Select Committee of the House of Commons :

“The practicability of receiving intelligence from distant parts of the country in as many hours, as at present it requires days and even weeks, and of sending instructions with troops and stores in the more brief period are considerations which cannot be too highly estimated. Troops could be kept at more distant and healthier stations than at present, and much loss of life from sickness would by this means be spared. Stores could not to the same extent be required at the various depots, and the loss by decay, and the destruction incidental to the climate, would also be avoided. The number of troops might be diminished in direct proportion to their effectiveness.”

We know that the municipal organisation and the economical basis of the village communities has been broken up, but their worst feature, the dissolution of society into stereotype and disconnected atoms, has survived their vitality.

The village isolation produced the absence of roads in India, and the absence of roads perpetuated the village isolation. On this plan a community existed with a given scale of low conveniences, almost without intercourse with other villages, without the desires and efforts indispensable to social advance. The British having broken up this self-sufficient *inertia* of the villages, railways will provide the new want of communication and intercourse. Besides,

“one of the effects of the railway system will be to bring into every village affected by it such knowledge of the contrivances and appliances of other countries, and such means of obtaining them, as will first put the hereditary and stipendiary village artisanship of India to full proof of its capabilities, and then supply its defects.” (Chapman, *The Cotton and Commerce of India*.)

I know that the English millocracy intend to endow India with railways with the exclusive view of extracting at diminished expenses the cotton and other raw materials for their manufactures. But when you have once introduced machinery into the locomotion of a country, which possesses iron and

coals, you are unable to withhold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The railway system will therefore become, in India, truly the forerunner of modern industry. This is the more certain as the Hindus are allowed by British authorities themselves to possess particular aptitude for accommodating themselves to entirely new labour, and acquiring the requisite knowledge of machinery. Ample proof of this fact is afforded by the capacities and expertness of the native engineers in the Calcutta mint, where they have been for years employed in working the steam machinery, by the natives attached to the several steam engines in the Hurdwar coal districts, and by other instances. Mr. Campbell himself, greatly influenced as he is by the prejudices of the East India Company,<sup>1</sup> is obliged to avow "that the great mass of the Indian people possesses a great *industrial energy*, is well fitted to accumulate capital, and remarkable for a mathematical clearness of head, and talent for figures and exact sciences." "Their intellects," he says, "are excellent." Modern industry, resulting from the railway system will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labour, upon which rest the Indian castes, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power.

All the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social condition of the mass of the people, depending not only on the development of the productive power, but of their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both. Has the bourgeoisie ever done more? Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and people through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?

The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements

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<sup>1</sup>The British East India Company was formed in 1599 for monopoly trade with India. Under the pretext of "trade" operations, the company conquered India for British capitalism and ruled it for many years. After the Indian rising of 1857, the company was dissolved and the British government took over directly the administration and exploitation of India.  
—Ed.

of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself the now ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindus themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether. At all events, we may safely expect to see, at a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country, whose gentle natives are, to use the expression of Prince Saltykov, even in the most inferior classes, "*plus fins et plus adroits que les Italiens,*" whose submission even is counterbalanced by a certain calm nobility, who, notwithstanding their natural languor, have astonished the British officers by their bravery, whose country has been the source of our languages, our religions, and who represent the type of the ancient German in the *Jat*<sup>1</sup> and the type of the ancient Greek in the Brahmin.

I cannot part with the subject of India without some concluding remarks.

The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilisation lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked. They are the defenders of property, but did any revolutionary party ever originate agrarian revolutions<sup>2</sup> like those in Bengal, in Madras, and in Bombay? Did they not in India, to borrow an expression of that great robber Lord Clive himself, resort to atrocious extortion, when simple corruption could not keep pace with their rapacity? While they prated in Europe about the inviolable sanctity of the national debt, did they not confiscate in India the dividends

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<sup>1</sup>*Jats*. A race of peasants in Northwest India, supposed to be of Indo-Aryan origin.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Marx gave the following characterisation of British agrarian policy in India:

"If ever the history of any people did so, that of the economy of the British in India exhibits mistaken and really stupid (in practice infamous) economic experiments. In Bengal they created a caricature of British large-scale landownership; in Southeast India a caricature of small holdings; in the Northwest they transformed, as far as they could, the Indian economic community with common ownership of land into a caricature of itself." (Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III)

In consequence of this policy the village community was broken up and therewith the unity of agriculture and peasant domestic industry, and in this sense an agrarian revolution was accomplished.—Ed.

of the *rajahs*, who had invested their private savings in the Company's own funds. While they combated the French revolution under the pretext of defending "our holy religion," did they not forbid, at the same time, Christianity to be propagated in India, and did they not, in order to make money out of the pilgrims streaming to the temples of Orissa and Bengal take up the trade in the murder and prostitution perpetrated in the temple of Juggernaut?<sup>1</sup> These are the men of "Property, Order, Family and Religion."

The devastating effects of English industry, when contemplated with regard to India, a country as vast as Europe and containing 150 millions of acres, are palpable and confounding. But we must not forget that they are only the organic results of the whole system of production as it is now constituted. That production rests on the supreme rule of capital. The centralisation of capital is essential to the existence of capital as an independent power. The destructive influence of that centralisation upon the markets of the world but reveal, in the most gigantic dimensions, the inherent organic laws of political economy now at work in every civilised town. The bourgeois period of history has to create the material basis of the new world—on the one hand universal intercourse founded upon the mutual dependency of mankind, and the means of that intercourse; on the other hand the development of the productive powers of man and the transformation of material production into a scientific domination of natural agencies. Bourgeois industry and commerce create these material conditions of a new world in the same way as geological revolutions have created the surface of the earth. When a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of the bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production, and subjected them to the common control of the most advanced peoples, then only will human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain.

KARL MARX

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<sup>1</sup>Juggernaut. A temple in honour of the Indian god Vishnu to which many worshippers made pilgrimages. On feast days the idol was carried in procession on a triumphal car and many pilgrims threw themselves under the wheels of the holy car and perished. The temple was notorious for prostitution, organised by the priests under the pretext of religious rites. In reality it was a question of income. A part of this income was paid as tribute to the British.—*Ed.*

LETTER TO KARL KAUTSKY 'ON THE COLONIES'

London, November 12, 1882

. . . In my opinion the colonies proper, *i.e.*, the countries occupied with a European population, Canada, the Cape, Australia, will all become independent; on the other hand the countries inhabited by a native population, which are simply subjugated, India, Algiers, the Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish

<sup>1</sup>In his work, *The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up*, Lenin analyses and extends the ideas given in this letter of Engels which deals with the question of the policy that must be pursued by the proletariat in relation to the colonial peoples after seizure of power and the establishment of its dictatorship. Lenin says:

“Engels does not in the least suppose that the ‘economic’ element will by itself and directly remove all difficulties. An economic revolution will stimulate *all* peoples to *reach out* towards socialism; at the same time, however, revolutions—against the socialist state—and wars are also possible. Politics will inevitably adapt itself to economics, but not immediately, not smoothly, simply and not directly. Engels is ‘certain’ of only one thoroughly internationalist principle, which he applies to *all* ‘alien peoples,’ *i.e.*, not only to colonial peoples, namely: to force happiness upon them would mean to undermine the victory of the proletariat.

“The proletariat will not become holy and immune against error and weaknesses merely by virtue of the fact that it has carried out the social revolution. But the possible errors (and selfish interest—attempts to ride on another’s back) will inevitably cause it to appreciate this truth.

“We Left Zimmerwaldists are all convinced of what Kautsky, for example, was convinced of before his desertion in 1914 from Marxism to the defence of chauvinism, namely, that the socialist revolution is quite possible in the *very near* future—‘one of these days,’ as Kautsky himself once put it. National antipathies will not disappear so quickly: the hatred—perfectly legitimate—of the oppressed nation towards its oppressor will *continue* for a while; it will die down only *after* the victory of socialism and *after* the final establishment of completely democratic relations between nations. If we desire to be faithful to socialism we must educate the masses in internationalism now, and such education is impossible in an oppressing nation without the preaching of freedom of secession for the oppressed nations.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX.)—Ed.

possessions, must be taken over for the time being by the proletariat and led as rapidly as possible towards independence. How this process will develop is difficult to say. India will perhaps, indeed very probably, produce a revolution, and as the proletariat emancipating itself cannot conduct any colonial wars, this would have to be allowed; it would not pass off without all sorts of destruction, of course, but that sort of thing is inseparable from all revolutions. The same might also take place elsewhere, *e.g.*, in Algiers and Egypt, and would certainly be the best thing *for us*. We shall have enough to do at home. Once Europe is organised and North America, that will furnish such colossal power and such an example that the semi-civilised countries will follow in their wake of their own accord. Economic needs alone will be responsible for this. But as to what social and political phases these countries will then have to pass through before they likewise arrive at socialist organisation, we today can only advance rather idle hypotheses, I think. One thing alone is certain: the victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing. Which of course by no means excludes defensive wars of various kinds. . . .

## ON RUSSIA<sup>1</sup>

KARL MARX TO FRIEDRICH SORGE

September 27, 1877

THIS crisis<sup>2</sup> is a *new turning point* in European history. Russia has long been standing on the threshold of an upheaval,

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“In studying the agrarian question Marx devoted very special attention to the investigation of Russia, its political economy, the relation of class forces within it and the analysis of the prospects of the Russian revolution. Russia interested Marx and Engels as a country which played an outstanding role in European politics. The reactionary tsarist government played the role of international gendarme. The ripening revolutionary situation in Russia, which Marx and Engels took into account, revealed the prospect of a revolution of tremendous force. All this moved them to make an especially careful study of Russia.

“In order that I might be qualified to estimate the economic development in Russia today, I learnt Russian, and then for many years studied the official publications and others bearing on this subject.” (Karl Marx to the editor of the *Otechestvenniye Zapisky* [*Notes of the Fatherland*] at the end of 1877)

Engels declared that Marx knew and understood Russia better than anybody.

Marx in his letters repeatedly pointed out the highly revolutionary situation which was arising in Russia and the international significance of the Russian revolution. The following are a few extracts on this subject:

“In Russia the movement is advancing faster than in all the rest of Europe,” Marx wrote on December 13, 1859, “the struggle for a constitution for one thing—of the nobles against the tsar and of the peasants against the nobles.... When the next revolution comes Russia will be so kind as to revolutionise as well.” (Marx to Engels, December 13, 1859.)

By the “next revolution” is to be understood the revolution in all Europe and the world revolution. In January 1882, in their foreword to the Russian translation of *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels openly declared: “Russia is the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in Europe.” That Marx did not mean only the revolution in Russia is clear from his letter to Engels of February 13, where he says:

“What do you say to the Polish business? [This refers to  
<sup>2</sup>This refers to the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78.—Ed.

all the elements of it are prepared—I have studied conditions there from the original *Russian* sources, unofficial and official (the latter only available to a few people but got for me through friends in Petersburg). The gallant Turks have hastened the explosion by years with the thrashing they have inflicted, not only upon the Russian army and Russian finances, but in a highly personal and individual manner on the *dynasty commanding* the army (the tsar, the heir to the throne and six other Romanovs). The upheaval will begin *secundum artem*<sup>1</sup> with some playing at constitutionalism and then there will be a fine row. If Mother Nature is not particularly unfavourable towards us we shall still live to see the fun! The stupid nonsense which the Russian students are perpetrating is only a

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the Polish insurrection.—Ed.] This much is certain—the era of revolution has now fairly opened again in Europe... Let us hope that this time the lava will flow from East to West and not the other way around, so that we may be spared the ‘honour’ of French initiative.”

How correctly Marx foresaw the concrete conditions of the Russian revolution can be seen from what he wrote immediately after the events of the Franco-Prussian war which had just then broken out. On August 8, 1870 he wrote to Engels :

“Russia, therefore, just as Bonaparte did in 1866-70 will intrigue with Prussia in order to get concessions in relation to Turkey and all this trickery, despite the Russian religion of the Hohenzollerns, will end in *war between the tricksters.*”

And on September 1 of the same year, Marx wrote to Sorge :

“What the Prussian fools do not see is that the present war is leading just as inevitably to a war between Germany and Russia as the War of 1866 led to the war between Prussia and France. That is the *best result* I expect from it for Germany. Typical ‘Prussianism’ never has had and never can have any existence except in alliance with and subjection to Russia. And a war No. 2 of this kind will act as the midwife to the inevitable social revolution in Russia.”

This prophecy of Marx was exactly fulfilled forty-seven years later. Marx and Engels in a number of their utterances made the mistake in this question of expecting the onset of the revolution too early. But this mistake in the question of the time of onset of the revolution did not prevent their general diagnosis of the situation, their estimate of the driving forces and the character of the Russian revolution, as well as of its international significance, from being perfectly correct.

We publish here a letter of Marx on Russia and an article of Engels directed against Tkachov (*Soziales aus Russland* [*On Social Conditions in Russia*]), written in 1875.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>According to the rules of the art.—Ed.

symptom, worthless in itself. But it is a symptom. All sections of Russian society are in complete disintegration economically, morally and intellectually.

This time the revolution will begin in the East, hitherto the unbroken bulwark and reserve army of counter-revolution.

Herr Bismarck was pleased to see the thrashing, but it ought not to have gone so far. Russia too much weakened could not hold Austria in check again as she did in the Franco-Prussian War!<sup>1</sup> And if it were even to come to revolution there, where would the last guarantee of the Hohenzollern dynasty be?

For the moment everything depends on the Poles (in the Kingdom of Poland) lying low. If only there are no risings there at the moment! Bismarck would at once intervene and Russian chauvinism would once more side with the tsar. If on the other hand the Poles wait quietly till there is a conflagration in Petersburg and Moscow, and Bismarck then intervenes as a saviour, Prussia will find its—Mexico!<sup>2</sup>

I have rammed this home again and again to any Poles I am in contact with who can influence their fellow-countrymen.

Compared with the crisis in the East, the *French crisis*<sup>3</sup> is quite a secondary event. Still it is to be hoped that the bourgeois republic will be victorious or else the old game will begin all over again, and a nation can repeat the same stupidities once too often.

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<sup>1</sup>At the time of the Franco-Prussian war, Russia not only observed neutrality towards Prussia, but also compelled Austria and Italy to remain neutral.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>An allusion to the Mexican war (1861-67) of Napoleon III undertaken by him to consolidate the tottering structure of his Second Empire with the help of a colonial adventure.

The unsuccessful Mexican adventure spoiled the relations between France and the U.S.A. and England and provided new material for the republican opposition.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>This refers to the intensification of the political struggle in France in 1877. On May 16, MacMahon, the reactionary president, entrusted the notorious royalist de Broglie with the formation of a ministry against the wish of parliament. He dissolved the hostile chamber and declared new elections. The elections took place in October 1877 and, in spite of the government terror, resulted in a majority for the republicans.—*Ed.*

By FREDERICK ENGELS

THE following lines were written on the occasion of a controversy into which I was drawn by Mr. Peter Nikitich Tkachov. In an article on the Russian periodical *Vperyod* (Forward), appearing in London (*Volksstaat*, 1874, Nos. 117 and 118), I had occasion to mention the name of this gentleman quite incidentally but in such a manner as to draw upon myself his illustrious enmity. Mr. Tkachov immediately published an *Open Letter to Mr. Frederick Engels, Zurich, 1874*, in which he accused me of all sorts of surprising things, and then, in contrast to my gross ignorance, aired his own opinion of the state of things and of the prospects of a social revolution in Russia. Both form and content of this production bore the usual Bakunist stamp. As it appeared in German, I considered it worth while to answer it in the *Volksstaat*. (See *Fluchtlingsliteratur* [Refugee Literature], Nos. IV and V, *Volksstaat* 1875, No. 36 and following.) The first part of my answer was mainly taken up with describing the Bakunist manner of literary controversy, which simply consists in attributing to your opponent a healthy portion of downright lies. Publication in the *Volksstaat* did ample justice to this predominantly personal part. I omit it here, therefore, and for the reprint desired by the publishers leave only the second part, which deals chiefly with social conditions in Russia, as they have developed since 1861, since the so-called emancipation of the peasants.

The development of things in Russia is of the greatest importance for the German working class. The present Russian empire constitutes the last great stronghold of all West European reaction. That was strikingly shown in 1848 and 1849. Because Germany failed in 1848 to stir up Poland to revolt and to declare war on the Russian tsar (as the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* demanded from the outset), the same tsar was able in 1849 to crush the Hungarian Revolution which had advanced to the very gates of Vienna, and in 1850 to sit in judgment on Austria, Prussia and the small German states in Warsaw, and re-establish the old Federal Diet.<sup>1</sup> And only a

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<sup>1</sup>After the defeat of the Revolution of 1848 Prussia endeavoured to form a federation of German states under its hegemony. In 1850 it succeeded in constituting the "Prussian Union," embracing nineteen states. Russia and Austria

few days ago—at the beginning of May 1875—the Russian tsar received the homage of his vassals in Berlin exactly as he did twenty five years ago and proved that he is still today the arbiter of Europe. No revolution in Western Europe can finally conquer as long as the present Russian state exists beside it. Germany, however, is its next-door neighbour, hence Germany is the first to receive the shock of the Russian armies' of reaction. The overthrow of Russian tsardom, the dissolution of the Russian empire, is consequently one of the first conditions for the final victory of the German proletariat.

But this overthrow need by no means necessarily be brought about from without, although a foreign war might greatly hasten it. Within the Russian empire itself there are forces working strongly for its ruin.

The first of these is the *Poles*. Century-long oppression has put them in a position where they must either be revolutionary and support every really revolutionary rising of the West as the first step towards the liberation of Poland or perish. And just now they are in a position in which they can only look for West European allies in the proletarian camp. For the last hundred years they have been continually betrayed by all the bourgeois parties of the West. It is only since 1848, that the bourgeoisie in Germany counts at all. And from then on it has always been anti-Polish. In France Napoleon betrayed Poland in 1812 and in consequence of his treachery lost campaign, crown and empire; in 1830 and 1846 the bourgeois monarchy followed his example; in 1848 the bourgeois republic; and in the Crimean War in 1863, the Second Empire. Each betrayed Poland as basely as the other. And today the radical bourgeois republicans of France are still crawling before the tsar to drive a bargain for a revenge alliance against Prussia in return for a fresh betrayal of Poland, just as the bourgeois of the German empire idolise the same tsar as the protector of European peace, *i.e.*, of the German-Prussian annexation booty. Nowhere except among the revolutionary workers do the Poles find honest and unreserved support, because both have the same interest in the overthrow of the common enemy and because the liberation of Poland is equivalent to that overthrow.

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thwarted these plans. In October in Warsaw, and in November in Olmutz, Prussia had to abandon these plans under pressure of the Russian tsar. Only subsequently, by a number of wars, did Prussia succeed in establishing this hegemony.—*Ed.*

But the activity of the Poles is territorially limited. It is confined to Poland, Lithuania and Little Russia; the real heart of the Russian empire. Great Russia, remains practically excluded from its action. The forty million Great Russians are much too big a people and have had much too special a development for it to be possible that a movement could be imposed on them from without. This however is by no means necessary. It is true that the mass of the Russian people, the peasants, have for centuries past vegetated apathetically from generation to generation in a sort of stupor, outside of history, and the only variations which somewhat interrupted this desolate state consisted in isolated fruitless revolts and in renewed oppression by nobility and government. The Russian government itself put an end to this living outside of history (1861) by the abolition of serfdom, which could not be put off any longer, and the redemption of the *corvee*—a measure drafted with such excessive cunning that it spells certain ruin for the majority both of the peasants and the nobles. Hence the circumstances themselves in which the Russian peasant is now placed drive him into the movement, a movement which certainly is still only in its very earliest beginnings but which is irresistibly driven onward by the economic position of the mass of the peasants which grows worse from day to day. The resentful discontent of the peasants is already a fact with which both the government and all dissatisfied and opposition parties must reckon.

It follows from this that when Russia is spoken of in the following pages, not the whole Russian empire is meant but only Great Russia, i.e., the territory whose most western gubernias are Pskov and Smolensk, the most southern, Kursk and Voronezh.

On the subject matter, Mr. Tkachov tells the German workers that as regards Russia I have not even a "little knowledge," but possess nothing but "ignorance," and feels himself therefore obliged to explain to them the real state of affairs and in particular the reasons why just at the present time a social revolution could be made in Russia with the greatest of ease, much more easily than in Western Europe.

"We have no city proletariat, that is undoubtedly true, but to balance that we have also no bourgeoisie....our workers will have to fight only against the *political power*—the *power of capital* is with us still only in germ. And you, sir, are well

aware that the fight against the former is much easier than against the latter."

The revolution which modern socialism strives to achieve is, briefly, the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, and the organisation of a new society by the destruction of all class differences. For this, there must be not only a proletariat that carries out this revolution, but also a bourgeoisie in whose hands the social productive forces have so far developed as to allow of the final destruction of class differences. Among savages and semi-savages there often exist likewise no class differences, and every people has passed through such a state. To re-establish this state could not occur to us for the simple reason that class differences necessarily emerge out of it as the social productive forces develop. Only at a certain level of development of the social productive forces, even, at a very high level for our modern conditions, will it be possible to raise production to such an extent that the abolition of class differences can be a real progress and lasting without causing stagnation or even decline in the mode of social production. But the productive forces have reached this level of development only in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, therefore, in this respect also is just as necessary a pre-condition of the socialist revolution as the proletariat itself. Hence a man who can say that this revolution can be more easily carried out in a country, because, although having no proletariat, it has no bourgeoisie either, only proves that he has still to learn the ABC of socialism.

The Russian workers—and these workers are, as Mr. Tkachov himself says, "peasants and as such not proletarians but owners"—have therefore an easier task because they do not have to fight with the power of capital, but "simply with the political power," with the Russian state. And this state :

"only appears from a distance as a power...it has no roots in the economic life of the people; it does not embody the interests of any particular estate...In your country the state is no imaginary power. It stands four square on the basis of capital; it embodies in itself (!!) certain economic interests....In our country this situation is just reversed—the form of our society owes its existence to the state, to a state more or less hanging in the air, one that has nothing in common with the existing social order, and that has its roots in the past, but not in the present."

We will waste no time over the confused notion that the

economic interests need the state, which they themselves create, in order to acquire a *body*, or the bold contention that the Russian form of society (which must include also the communal ownership of the peasants) owes its existence to the state, or over the contradiction that this same state "has nothing in common" with the existing social order which, however, is supposed to be its very own creation. Let us rather examine at once this "state hanging in the air," which does not represent the interests of even a single estate.

In European Russia the peasants possess 105 million dessiatines, the nobility (as I here term the big landowners for brevity) 100 million dessiatines, of which about half belong to 15,000 nobles, who consequently each possess on the average 33,000 dessiatines. The land of the peasants is therefore only a trifle bigger than that of the nobles. The nobles, one sees, have not the slightest interest in the existence of the Russian state, which guards them in the possession of half the country. Let us continue. The peasants, from their half, pay 195 million rubles land tax annually, the nobles—13 million! The lands of the nobles are on the average twice as fertile as those of the peasants because during the arrangements for redemption of the *corvée* the state not only took the greater part but also the best part of the land from the peasants and gave it to the nobles, and indeed for this worst land the peasants had to pay the nobility the price of the best.<sup>1</sup> And the Russian nobility has no interest in the existence of the Russian state!

The peasants—taken in the mass—have been brought by the redemption settlements into a most miserable and wholly untenable position. Not only has the greatest and best part of their land been taken from them, so that in all the fertile parts of the country the peasant land is far too small—for Russian agricultural conditions—for them to be able to live from it. Not only were they charged an excessive price for it, advanced to them by the state and for which they now have to pay interest and amortisation to the state. Not only is almost the whole burden of the land tax thrown upon them, while the nobility escapes almost scot-free—so that the land tax alone consumes the entire ground rent value of the peasant land and more, and all further payments, which the peasant has to

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<sup>1</sup>An exception occurred only in Poland, where the government desired to ruin the nobility, which was hostile to it, but to win over the peasants. [Note by F. Engels.]

make and which we will speak of immediately, are direct deductions from that part of his income which represents his wages. No. In addition to the land tax, to the interest and amortisation instalments on the money advanced by the state, since the recent introduction of local government there are the provincial and district taxes as well. The most essential result of this "reform" was fresh tax burdens for the peasant. The state retained its revenue as a whole, but passed on a large part of its expenditure to the provinces and districts, which imposed new taxes to meet them, and in Russia it is the rule that the higher estates of society are practically free from taxation and the peasant pays almost everything.

Such a situation is ideal for the usurer, and with the almost unparalleled talent of the Russians for trade on a low level, for taking full advantage of favourable business situations and the swindling inseparable from this—Peter I long ago said that a Russian could get the better of three Jews—the usurer everywhere makes his appearance. When the time approaches for the taxes to fall due, the usurer appears, the kulak—frequently a rich peasant of the same village—and offers his ready cash. The peasant must have the money at all costs and must accept the conditions of the usurer without demur. In that way he only gets deeper and deeper into difficulty, needs more and more ready cash. At harvest time the grain dealer arrives; the need for money forces the peasant to sell a part of the grain which he and his family require for food. The grain dealer spreads false rumours to lower the prices, pays a low price and often even part of this in all sorts of high-priced goods; for the truck system is also highly developed in Russia. The great corn exports of Russia are based therefore, as is clear, quite directly on the hunger of the peasant population. Another method of exploiting the peasant is this: a speculator rents crown-land from the government for a long term of years, and cultivates it himself as long as it gives a good yield without manure, then he divides it up into plots and lets out the exhausted land at high rents to neighbouring peasants who cannot manage on their allotment. Here we have exactly the Irish middlemen, just as above, the English truck system. In short, there is no country in which, in spite of the primitive simplicity of bourgeois society, capitalistic parasitism is so developed, so covers and enmeshes the whole country, the whole mass of the population with its nets as in Russia. And all these blood-suckers of the peasants are supposed to have no interest in the

existence of the Russian state, whose laws and law courts protect their pretty and profitable practices ?

The big bourgeoisie of Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, which has developed with unheard-of rapidity during the last ten years, chiefly due to the railways, and which cheerfully "went smash" with the other countries during the last swindle years, the grain, hemp flax and tallow exporters, whose whole business is built up on the misery of the peasants, the entire Russian large-scale industry which only exists thanks to the protective tariffs granted it by the state, have all these important and rapidly growing elements of the population no interest in the existence of the Russian state ? To say nothing of the countless army of officials which swarms over Russia and plunders it and here constitutes a real estate of society. And when Mr. Tkachov assures us the Russian state has "no roots in the economic life of the people ; it does not embody in itself the interests of any particular estate" and hangs "in the air," it seems to us that it is not the Russian state which hangs in the air, but rather Mr. Tkachov.

It is clear that the position of the Russian peasants since the emancipation from serfdom has become an intolerable, and in the long run, an untenable one, and that for this reason alone a revolution in Russia is approaching. The question is only, what can be, what will be the result of this revolution. Mr. Tkachov says it will be a social one. This is pure tautology. Every real revolution is a social one, in that it brings a new class to power and allows it to remodel society in its own image. But he wishes to say it will be a socialist one, it will introduce into Russia the form of society aimed at by West European socialism, even before we in the West succeed in doing so—and that, in a condition of society in which both proletariat and bourgeoisie only appear sporadically and at a low stage of development. And this is supposed to be possible because the Russians are, so to speak, the chosen people of socialism and have artels and communal ownership of land.

The artels, which Mr. Tkachov only mentions incidentally, but which we include here because since the time of Herzen they have played a mysterious role with many Russians—the artels are in Russia a widespread form of association, the simplest form of free co-operation, such as is to be found for hunting among hunting tribes. Word and content are not of Slavonic but of Tartar origin. Both are to be found among the Khirghiz and Yakut peoples, etc., on the one hand, and

among the Lapps, Samoyeds and other Finnish tribes on the other.<sup>1</sup> That is why the artel developed originally in the north and east, by contact with Finns and Tartars, not in the southwest. The severe climate makes necessary industrial activity of various kinds, and so the lack of town development and of capital is replaced by this form of co-operation as far as possible. One of the most characteristic features of the artel, the joint liability of the members for one another towards third parties, is based originally on blood relationship, like the *Gewere* of the ancient Germans, the blood vengeance, etc. Moreover in Russian, the word artel is used for every form not only of collective activity but also of collective institution. In workers' artels, a foreman (*starosta*, elder) is always chosen who fulfils the functions of treasurer, book-keeper, etc., and of manager as far as necessary, and who receives a special salary. Such artels occur :

1. For temporary enterprises, after the completion of which they dissolve ;
2. For the members of one and the same occupation, for instance, porters, etc ;
3. For really industrial, permanent enterprises.

They are established by a contract signed by all the members. If now these members cannot bring together the necessary capital, as very often happens, for instance, in the case of cheese-dairies and fisheries (for nets, boats, etc.), the artel falls a prey to the usurer, who advances the amount lacking at high interest, and thereafter pockets the greater part of the labour proceeds. Still more shamefully exploited however are the artels which hire themselves as a whole to an employer as a wage force. They direct their industrial activity themselves and thus save the capitalist the cost of supervision. The latter lets the members huts to live in and advances them the means of subsistence, whereby again the most disgraceful truck system develops. Such is the case with the lumbermen and tar-makers in the Archangel gubernia, and in many occupations in Siberia, etc. (Cf. Flerovsky, *Polozhenye Rabochevo Klassa v Rossii* [*The Condition of the Working Class in Russia*], St. Petersburg, 1869.) Here then the artel serves to facilitate considerably the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist.

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<sup>1</sup>On the artel, compare *inter alia* : *Sbornik materialov ob artelyakh v Rossii* [*Symposium of Data on Artels in Russia*]. St. Petersburg, 1873. Part I. [Note by F. Engels.]

On the other hand again, there are also artels which themselves employ workers who are *not* members of the association.

It is clear, therefore, that the artel is a co-operative society which has arisen spontaneously and is therefore still very undeveloped, and as such neither exclusively Russian nor even Slavonic. Such societies are formed wherever the need for them exists. For instance, in Switzerland among the dairy farmers, in England among the fishermen, where they even assume very varied forms. The Silesian navvies (Germans, not Poles), who built so many German railways in the 'forties, were organised in complete artels. The predominance of this form in Russia proves, it is true, the existence of a strong impulse to association in the Russian people, but is far from proving their ability to jump without more ado, by aid of this impulse, from the artel into the socialist form of society. For that, it is necessary above all that the artel itself should be capable of development, that it shed its primitive form, in which, as we saw, it serves the workers less than it does capital, and rise *at least* to the standpoint of the West European co-operative societies. But if we are to believe Mr. Tkachov for once (which, after all that has preceded, is certainly more than risky), this is by no means the case. On the contrary, he assures us with a pride highly characteristic of his standpoint :

"As regards the co-operative and credit associations on the German (!) model, recently artificially transplanted into Russia, these have met with complete indifference on the part of the majority of the workers and have been a fiasco almost everywhere."

The modern co-operative society has at least proved that it can run a big industry advantageously on its own account (spinning and weaving in Lancashire). The artel is so far not only incapable of doing this, it must of necessity be destroyed by big industry if it does not develop further.

The communal ownership of the Russian peasants was discovered about the year 1845 by the Prussian *Regierungsrat* [Civil Councillor] Haxthausen and trumpeted to the world as something absolutely wonderful, although Haxthausen could still have found survivals enough of it in his Westphalian homeland, and, as a government official, it was even part of his duty to know them thoroughly. It was from Haxthausen that Herzen, himself a Russian landowner, first learned that

his peasants owned the land in common, and he made use of the fact to describe the Russian peasants as the real bearers of socialism, as born communists in contrast to the workers of the ageing, decayed European West, who have had to acquire socialism artificially and painfully. From Herzen this knowledge came to Bakunin, and from Bakunin to Mr. Tkachov. Let us hear the latter :

“Our people . . . in its great majority . . . is permeated with the principles of communal property ; it is, if one may, use the term, instinctively, traditionally communistic. The idea of collective property is so closely interwoven with the whole world outlook (we shall see immediately how far the world of the Russian peasant extends) of the Russian people, that today, when the government begins to understand that this idea cannot be attained by the principles of a “well-ordered” society, and in the name of these principles wishes to impress the idea of private property on the consciousness and life of the people, it can only succeed in doing so with the help of the bayonet and the knout. It is clear from this that our people, despite its ignorance, stands much nearer to socialism than the peoples of Western Europe, although the latter are more educated.”

In reality communal ownership of the land is an institution which is to be found on a low level of development among all Indo-Germanic races from India to Ireland and even among the Malays who have developed under Indian influence, for instance, in Java. As late as 1608, in the newly conquered north of Ireland, the legally established communal ownership of the land served the English as a pretext for declaring the land as ownerless and for confiscating it as such on behalf of the Crown. In India down to the present time a whole series of forms of communal property is in existence. In Germany it was general ; the common lands still to be found here and there are a relic of it, and, further, very distinct traces of it, temporary division of the common lands, etc. are to be found, especially in the mountains. More exact references and details with regard to old German communal ownership may be consulted in the various writings of *Maurer*, which are classic on this question. In Western Europe, including Poland and Little Russia, at a certain stage in the social development this communal ownership became a fetter, a brake on agricultural production, and was more and more eliminated. In Great Russia (i.e., Russia proper), on the other hand, it has persisted until today, thereby proving in the first place that agricultural

production and the social conditions in the countryside corresponding to it are there still on a very undeveloped level, as is also actually the case. The Russian peasant only lives and has his being in his village, the rest of the world only exists for him in so far as it affects his village. This is so much the case that in Russian the same word "*mir*" means on the one hand "world" and on the other "peasant community." "*Ves mir*," the whole world, means for the peasant the meeting of the community members. Hence, when Mr. Tkachov speaks of the "*world outlook*" of the Russian peasants, he has obviously translated the Russian *mir* incorrectly. Such a complete isolation of the individual communities from one another, which creates throughout the country, it is true, similar, but the very opposite of common, interests, is the natural basis for *oriental despotism*, and from India to Russia this form of society, wherever it prevailed, has always produced it and always found its complement in it. Not only the Russian state in general, but even its specific form, tsarist despotism, instead of hanging in the air, is the necessary and logical product of the Russian social conditions with which, according to Mr. Tkachov, it has "nothing in common"! Further development of Russia in a *bourgeois* direction would here also destroy communal ownership little by little, without its being necessary for the Russian government to intervene with "bayonet and knout." And this all the more because the communally owned land in Russia is not cultivated by the peasants collectively and only the product divided, as is still the case in some districts in India; on the contrary, from time to time the land is divided up among the various heads of families, and each cultivates his allotment for himself. Consequently, great differences in prosperity are possible, among the members of the community, and also actually exist. Almost everywhere, there are a few rich peasants among them—here and there millionaires—who play the usurer and suck the blood of the mass of the peasants. No one knows this better than Mr. Tkachov. While he wishes to fool the German workers into thinking that the "idea of collective ownership" can only be driven out of the Russian peasants, these instinctive, traditional communists, by bayonet and knout he writes on page 15 of his Russian pamphlet: "Among the peasants a class of usurers (*kulaks*), is making its way, a class of people who *buy up* and lease the lands of farmers and nobles—a peasant aristocracy." These are the same kind of bloodsuckers as we

described more fully above.

What dealt the severest blow to communal ownership was again the redemption of the *corvee*. The greater and better part of the land was allotted to the nobility; for the peasant there remained scarcely enough, often not enough, to live on. In addition the forests were given to the nobles; the wood for fuel, building and implements, which the peasant formerly could fetch there for nothing, he has now to buy. Thus the peasant has nothing now but his house and the bare land, without means to cultivate it, and on the average without land enough to support him and his family from one harvest to the next. Under such circumstances and under the pressure of taxes and usurers, communal ownership of the land is no blessing, it becomes a fetter. The peasants often run away, with or without their family, to earn their living as wandering labourers, and leave their land behind them.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that communal ownership in Russia is long past its flourishing period and to all appearances is moving towards its dissolution. Nevertheless the possibility undeniably exists of transforming this social form into a higher one, if it should last until circumstances are ripe for that, and if it shows itself capable of development in such a way that the peasants no longer cultivate the land separately, but collectively;<sup>2</sup> and to transform it into this higher form, without it being necessary for the Russian peasants to go through the intermediate stage of bourgeois small ownership. This, however, can only happen if, before the complete break-up of communal ownership, a proletarian revolution is successfully carried out in Western Europe, creating for the Russian peasant the pre-conditions necessary for such a transformation, in particular, the material conditions which he needs in order

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<sup>1</sup>On the position of the peasants compare *inter alia* the official report of the Government Commission on Agricultural Production (1873), and further Skaldin, *V Zakhlostyie i v Stolitse* [In the Remote Provinces and in the Capital], St. Petersburg, 1870; the latter publication by a liberal conservative. [Note by F. Engels.]

<sup>2</sup>In Poland, in particular in the Grodno gubernia, where the nobility for the most part was ruined by the rebellion of 1863, the peasants now frequently buy or rent estates from the nobles and cultivate them as a whole and on a collective account. And these peasants for centuries past have not had communal ownership any more and are not Russians, but Poles, Lithuanians and White Russians. [Note by F. Engels.]

to carry through the reconstruction of his whole agricultural system thereby necessarily involved. It is therefore sheer bounce for Mr. Tkachov to say that the Russian peasants, although "owners," stand "nearer to socialism" than the propertyless workers of Western Europe. Exactly the contrary is the case. If anything can still save Russian communal ownership and give it a chance of growing into a new form really capable of life, it is a proletarian revolution in Western Europe.

Mr. Tkachov treats the political revolution just as lightly as he does the economic one. "The Russian people," he relates, "protests incessantly" against its enslavement, now in the form "of religious sects . . . refusal to pay taxes . . . robber bands [the German workers will be glad to know that according to this Schinderhannes is the father of German Social-Democracy] . . . incendiarism . . . revolts . . . and hence the Russian people may be termed instinctive revolutionaries." And thus Tkachov is convinced that "it is only necessary to cause an outburst in a number of places at the same time of all the accumulated bitterness and discontent, which . . . is always boiling in the breasts of our people." Then "the union of the revolutionary forces will come about of itself, and the fight . . . must end favourably for the people's cause. Practical necessity, the instinct of self-preservation" will then create quite of itself "a firm and indissoluble alliance among the revolting villages."

It is impossible to conceive of a revolution more easily and pleasantly. One makes a start in three or four paces simultaneously, and the "instinctive revolutionary," "practical necessity" and the "instinct of self-preservation" do the rest "of itself." Seeing it is so easy, it is simply impossible to conceive why the revolution has not long since been made, the people liberated and Russia transformed into the model socialist country.

The facts are quite different. The Russian people, this instinctive revolutionary, has undoubtedly made numerous isolated peasant revolts against the *nobility* and against individual officials, but *never against the tsar*, except when a *false tsar* put himself at their head and claimed the throne. The last great peasant rising, under Catharine II, was only possible because Yemalyan Pugachov claimed to be her husband, Peter III, who had not been murdered by his wife, but dethroned and imprisoned, and who had now escaped. The tsar is on

the contrary the earthly god of the Russian peasant: *Bog vysok, tsar dalyok*, god is high above and the tsar far away, is his cry in the hour of need. There is no doubt that the mass of the peasant population, especially since the redemption of the *corvee*, has been reduced to a condition which more and more forces on it a fight also against the government and the tsar; but Mr. Tkachov will have to try somewhere else with his fairy tale of the "instinctive revolutionary."

And then, even if the mass of the Russian peasants were so very instinctively revolutionary, even if we imagine that revolutions can be made to order, just as one makes a piece of flowered calico or a kettle—even then I ask, is it permissible for one over twelve years of age to imagine the course of a revolution in *such* an extremely childish manner as is the case here? And remember further that this was written after the first revolution made on this Bakunin model—the Spanish one of 1873—had so brilliantly failed. There, too, the revolution broke out in several places at the same time. There, too it was reckoned that practical necessity, the instinct of self-preservation would of themselves bring about a firm and indissoluble alliance between the revolting communities. And what happened? Every community, every town only defended itself, there was no question of mutual assistance, and with only three thousand men Pavia overthrew one town after the other in a fortnight and put an end to the entire anarchist splendour. (Cf. my *Bakunists at Work*, where this is described in detail.)

There is no doubt Russia is on the eve of a revolution. Her finances are in extreme disorder. Increasing taxation proves of no avail, the interest on old state loans is paid by means of new loans, and every new loan meets with greater difficulties; money can now only be raised under the pretext of building railways! The administration, as of old, corrupt from top to bottom, the officials living more from theft, bribery and extortion than from their salaries. The entire agricultural production—by far the most essential for Russia—thrown into complete disorder by the redemption settlement of 1861; the big landowners without sufficient labour, the peasants without sufficient land, oppressed by taxation and sucked dry by usurers, the yield from agriculture declining from year to year. The whole held together with great difficulty and only outwardly by an oriental despotism whose arbitrariness we in the West simply cannot imagine; a despotism which not

only from day to day comes into more glaring contradiction with the views of the enlightened classes and in particular with those of the rapidly developing bourgeoisie of the capital cities, but which, under its present bearer, has lost faith in itself, one day making concessions to liberalism and the next cancelling them again in terror, and thus bringing itself more and more into disrepute. With all that, a growing recognition among the enlightened strata of the nation concentrated in the capital that this position is untenable, that a revolution is imminent, and the illusion that it will be possible to guide this revolution into a smooth, constitutional channel. Here we have united all the conditions of a revolution, of a revolution which, possibly started by the upper classes of the capital, even perhaps by the government itself, must be rapidly carried further, beyond the first constitutional phase, by the peasants ; of a revolution, which will be of the greatest importance for the whole of Europe if only because it will destroy at one blow the last, so far intact, reserve of the entire European reaction. This revolution is surely approaching. Only two events can delay it : a successful war against Turkey or Austria, for which money and firm alliances are necessary, or—a premature attempt at insurrection which would drive the property-owning classes back into the arms of the government.

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