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 bourgeoisie 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 revolutions 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 invisible 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 blistering 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!1

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 the powerful

---

1 We shall see.—Ed.
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'êtes que des blagueurs"?\(^2\)

On June 13, the Party of Order had not only broken the Moun-
tain, 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
incurably weakness as compared with the executive power and the
people by excluding its most popular part?\(^2\) By surrendering
numerous deputies without further ado on the demand of the pub-
lic prosecutor, it abolished its own parliamentary inviolability. The
humiliating regulations\(^2\) to which it subjected the Mountain ex-
alted 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

\(^1\) You're nothing but windbags.—Ed.
\(^2\) 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.

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.\(^3\) Platform and press praised the army as

\(^3\) Near Austerlitz, Napoleon I won a great victory over the combined
Russian and Austrian armies in 1805.—Ed.
the power of order, in contrast to the popular masses representing the impotence of anarchy, and extolled Chagnacien as the "bulwark of society," a deception in which he himself finally came to believe. Surruppiciously, however, the troops that seemed doubtful were transferred 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 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 Chagnacien 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. 3 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 this recess the Legitimists intrigued with Em's, 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

3 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.
only propose to discuss when they become events. Here it may
merely be remarked that it was impolitic for the National Assem-
blie 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 of-
ten as the confused noise of parliament grew silent during these
recesses and its body dissolved in the nation, it became inmis-
takably 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 Libërîté, Égalîté, Fraternitë
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 lack-
keys 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.1 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 as to

1 Man of straw.—Ed.

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 Bar-
rot 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 commended 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 in-
dignation concerning the “abominable machinations” that, accord-
ing 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 intemately 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 supple-
mented 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 mainten-
ance 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 constit-

the eighteenth brumaire of Louis Bonaparte

utional 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 1839 onwards the French Fonds* 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 submissiveness 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 “idées napoléoniennes,” 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 bourgeois 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-

---

1 Consolidated government stocks.—Ed.
2 Napoleonic ideas.—Ed.
establishing the wine tax ¹ and the education law ² 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 bourgeoisie, these old apostles of Voltaireanism 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 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 demoralize immature masses.

Whatever amount of passion and declamation might be employed by the Party of Order against the minority from the tribune ³

¹ 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 Fouillot 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.

² See note 3 on p. 284 of this volume.—Ed.

³ The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte ⁴ 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 its 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 1 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 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 13, on Deflotte. Thus did the Parisian petty bourgeoisie, in alliance with the proletariat, revenge

---

1 See p. 286 of the present volume.—Ed.
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 Lalitte, 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, 1839, 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 Molés, in brief, the so-called burggraves1 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 attentat2 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 confortably installed and highly paid vice-president of the Senate. He had spat in the revolutionaries' soup in order that Bonaparte might eat it up.

The Social-Democratic Party, for its part, seemed only to try

---

1 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.
2 Attempt, attack.—Ed.
passionateness the dispassionate standpoint of the philistine who keeps within the law, and by selling 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.1 The National Assembly had violated the sovereignty of the people with its 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

1 Blackmail.—Ed.

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.

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 roués 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,1 pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, maquerues,2 brothel-keepers, porters, literati, organ-grinders, rag-pickers, knife-grinders, tinkers, beggars, in short the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass thrown hither and thither, which the French term la Bohème; 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 class weapon upon which he can base himself unconditionally, he is the real Bonaparte, the Bonaparte sans phrase. An old crafty routed, 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,3 when a trained Swiss vulture had played the part of the Napoleonic eagle. For his insurrection 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 Zettel4 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

---

1 The name given to the idlers and beggars of Naples.—Ed.
2 Procrisse.—Ed.
3 Louis Bonaparte’s first unsuccessful attempt at a coup d’état took place in 1836, in Strasbourg. The invasion of Boulogne—his second unsuccessful attempt to proclaim himself emperor—was in 1840.—Ed.
4 The reference is to Nick Bottom, the weaver (Klaus Zettel) in Shakespeare’s comedy, A Midsummer Night’s Dream.—Ed.
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 Elysée 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 the same manoeuvre on a still larger scale at the army parade at Satory. The Uncle remembered the campaigns of Alexander 1 in Asia, the Nephew the triumphal marches of Bacchus 2 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

1 Alexander of Macedon (356-23 Before our era) made a number of conquering expeditions into Asia.—Ed.
2 According to the Greek myth, Bacchus (or Dionysus), the ancient Greek god of the vine, went all over Asia with a drunken retinue.—Ed.

13, the "bulwark of society," the candidate of the Party of Order for presidential honours, the suspected Monk 3 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!" 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 Elysée papers attacked Changarnier; the papers of the Party of Order attacked Bonaparte; 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 Elysée, 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

1 General Monk who served under Charles I, then under Cromwell and later under Charles II. See footnote 2 on p. 244.—Ed.
2 Hurrah for Napoleon! Hurrah for the sausages!—Ed.
3 Bonapartist newspapers.—Ed.
General Schramm War Minister in his place. On November 12, he
sent to the National Assembly a message of American prolixity,
overloaded with detail, replete with order, desirous of reconcilia-
tion, constitutionally acquiescent, treating of all and sundry, but
not of the question brûlantes1 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 mes-
sage 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 solu-
tions 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 inter-
vening period may pass by without agitation or disturbance. I have opened
my heart to you with sincerity; you will answer my frankness with your
trust, my good intentions with your co-operation, and God will do the rest."

The respectable, hypocritically moderate, virtuously com-
nonce 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 hinde-
ered it in walking and now even prevented it from storming for-
ward! Moreover, by the official disbanding of the Society of De-

---

1 Burning questions.—Ed.
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 Decembrists for planning the murder of Dupin and Changarnier. In reference to this, at the very first sitting the questors 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, Barroche, 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 questors, 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 Barroche 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 wrinkles 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 chicaneers, 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 rags 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 hypocriminal pretext or not at all worth fighting about. The parliamentary storm becomes a storm in a teacup; 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 tranquility 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 cités ouvrières and figured at the head of the list himself with a considerable sum. The hard-hearted bourgeoisie 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 Pénal. 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 bourgeoisie and, above all, the bourgeoisie 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 Pénal, Bonaparte, who precisely because he was a Bohemian, a princely lumpen-proletarian, had the advantage over a rascally bourgeoisie 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 he had begun during the recess of the National Assembly, the separation of the military power from parliament, the removal of Changarnier.

1 Workers' cities.—Ed.

Marx Selected Works 13
An Elysée 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 interpelled 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 protégé 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 enthusiastic wits and scoffers.

The same evening, the ministers were summoned to the Elysée; 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 see anything more than a general refusal of 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 Mesars. Burgraves betook themselves to the Elysée 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, that has to leave action to the government and content itself with growling remonstrances post festum.

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 blasé public. Upon Remusat's proposal

2 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.

2 After the event.—Ed.

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, foodstuffs 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 reconciliation, 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 stigmatisé 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 Chagnonville. 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 prerogatives, and particularly in regard to the abolition of universal suffrage? They therefore reduced the 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 avenged 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 befooled 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 Benoît 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 slack; the unemployed hands considerably increased, ten thousand workers, at least, were without bread in Paris; innumerable factories stood idle in Rouen, Mülhausen, Lyons, Roubaix, Turcoing, St. Etienne, Elbeuf, etc. Under these circumstances, on April 11 Bonaparte could venture to restore the ministry of January 18, Messers, Rouher, Fould, Baroche, etc., reinforced by M. Léon 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-parlia-

mentary 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'état, 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, they saw in it a universal conspiracy against the republic. 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 revolutionary 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 unconditionally 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 royals 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 royals 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 bourgeoisie 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, but like the dynastic intrigues generally, only played at while the National Assembly was in recess, during the entractes behind the scenes and having rather the character of sentimental 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 Clarmont, from Clarmont 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, Berreyer, Benoît d’Azy and Saint-Priest, travel to Clarmont in order to persuade the Orleans, but in vain. The fusionists perceive too late that the interests of the two bourgeoise 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, Duchâtel, etc., who likewise hastened to Clarmont to advocate the fusion, in fact represented merely the Katsenjammer over the July Revolution, the despair felt in regard to the bourgeois monarchy and the monarchical rule of the bourgeoisie, 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, Thiéry, Bazé, etc., persuaded Louis Philippe’s family all the more easily that if any immediate monarchist restoration 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.

1 Louis Philippe died on August 26, 1850, in Clarmont (England).—Ed.

The “morning-after” feeling.—Ed.
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 Joffre agitation gained ground, so much the more eager and earnest became the negotiations between Bonaparte’s minister, Faucher, and the Legitimists.

The disintegration 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, between Villelèle and Polignac. The Orleanists relived the golden days of the toursneys between Guizot, Molé, 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 Larochjaquin, on the other, and of the conflict-weary Orleanists led by Molé, Broglie, Montalembert and Odilon Barrot, agreed with the Bonapartist representatives on the following indefinite and broadly framed 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

---

1 This refers to the conflict during the restoration period between Louis XVIII, who reigned 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.*

2 *May 31, 1850*—the day the Legislative Assembly revoked universal suffrage.—*Ed.*
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, Berruyer and Falloux, of deserting Henry V and going over to the Bonapartist camp. Their lily minds\(^1\) 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 their prin-

---

\(^1\) The lily was the emblem of the Bourbons.—Ed.

---

THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE OF LOUIS BONAPARTE

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 del-
uge 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 Chamberlain’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 bourgeoisie 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 maintenance 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 parlia-
ment, 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 ditziest 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 26, 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 threefold 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 bourgeoisie with the prejudice of the French bourgeoisie. 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 1847, 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."

- Now picture to yourself the French bourgeoisie, 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'état and the restoration of universal suffrage, by the struggle between parliament and the executive power, by the Frond war between Orleanists and Legitimists, by the communist conspiracies in the south of France, by alleged Jaccourée in the Departments of Niévre 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 protraction 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’état. As early as January 29, 1849, barely a month after his election, he had made a pro-

* Quoted from The Economist, January 10, 1852, pp. 29-30.—Ed.

** Peasant risings. "Jacques Bonhomme" (John Goodfellow) was the nickname given to the French peasant.—Ed.
posal about it to Changarnier. In the summer of 1849 his own Prime Minister, Odilon Barrot, had covertly denounced the policy of coups d'état; 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 Messager de l'Assemblée had published an account of their conversation. During every parliamentary storm, the Bonapartist journals threatened a coup d'état, 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'état 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 3 of the danger it had once again escaped. During the months of September and October rumours of a coup d'état 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'état. 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'état 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 continual-

3 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.

ly 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'état had become so familiar to the Parisians as a spectacle, 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'état 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 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 Thorigny 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 Questors' Bill the legislative power appealed from the people to the army. The Questors' 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 requisition troops, instead of requisitioning them at once, it betrayed the doubt about its own powers. By rejecting the Questors' 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 Chagnonier; on the other, the fear of Bonaparte. It must be confessed that the position was no heroic one.

On November 16, 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 chauvinism, 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 Massaniello, had enchanted the dames des halles, the fishwives—to be sure, one fishwife outweighed seventeen burggraves in real power—just as after the introduction of the Questors' Bill he enraptured the lieutenants whom he entertained in the Élysée, so now, on November 25, he swept off their feet the industrial bourgeoisie, who had gathered at the circus to receive at his hands prize medals for the London Industrial Exhibition. I give the significant portion of his speech as reported in the Journal des Débats:

"With such hopes 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, bravos, stormy bravos.]

Thus did the industrial bourgeoisie applaud with servile bravos the coup d'état of December 2, the annihilation of parliament, the downfall of its own rule, the dictatorship of Bonaparte. The
Karl Marx

The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte

The eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte and the February Revolution. Before hastening to a close, let us briefly summarise its history:


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.


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.


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 re-
vision, fusion, prorogation. The Party of Order decomposes into its separate constituents. The breach widens between the bourgeois mass and 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 bourgeoisie, 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 lumpenproletariat 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 républicaine ou cosaque." 1 It had found the solution to it in the "république cosaque." No Circe, by means of black magic, has distorted that work of art, the bourgeois republic, 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

1 Within fifty years Europe will be republican or Cossack.—Ed.
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 tribunal 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 bourgeoisie 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 bourgeoisie 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 bourgeoisie and the small shopkeepers believed that they had gained their end. Those who failed to appear next morning were the bourgeoisie 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 to 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 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 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

1 “This is the complete and final triumph of socialism.”—Ed.
2 I.e., dependence on foreign authority.—Ed.
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!  

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 seignorial privileges of the landowners and towns became transformed into so many attributes of the state power, the feudal dignitaries into paid officials and the motley pattern of conflicting mediæval 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  

1 A reference to Shakespeare's Hamlet. The actual words are: "Old mole! Canst work 'P the earth so fast? A worthy pioneer!"—Ed.
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 Bonapartist are the dynasty of the peasants, that is, the mass of the French people. Not the Bonapartist who submitted to the bourgeois parliament, but the Bonaparte who dispersed it is the chosen of the peasantry. For three years 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, which lays down that la recherche de la paternité est interdite. 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

---

1 The French code of civil law, promulgated on March 31, 1804.—Ed.
2 Inquiry into fatherhood is forbidden.—Ed.
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, but his modern Vendée.

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 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 strangot 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 foribly strengthened the imperialism 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'état, 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 its word, and the majority was still so bound that in precisely the reddest Departments the peasant population voted openly for Bonaparte. 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 side by side with a Napoleon.

After the first revolution had transformed the peasants from semi-villains into freeholders, Napoleon confirmed and regulated the conditions on which they could exploit undisturbed the soil of France which had only just come into their possession and shake 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.

---

1 In the sense of imperial sentiments.—Ed.
2 The Vendée was a province in France. The Vendée peasants were politically backward at the time of the first French bourgeois revolution; it supported the royalist counter-revolution.—Ed.
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 “idées napoléoniennes” 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.] ¹ 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 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

¹ 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.
ty 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 townsmen, 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 "idée napoléonienne" which is most congenial to all of 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 "idée napoléonienne" 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.1

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 possessions against the outer world, glorifying their recently won nationality, plundering and revolutionizing 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 hussiers2 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 remplaçants, of substitutes, just as the second Bonaparte is himself only a remplaçant, the substitute for Napoleon. It now performs its deeds of valour by hounding the

1 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.

2 Ballifia.—Ed.
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.

One sees: all idées napoléoniennes are the ideas of the underdeveloped 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: “Haec dicit dominus Deus ossibus suis: Ecce, ego intromittam in vos spiritum et vitam.” “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 waited 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’état, 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 the 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 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, 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 détail, and halving of the wine tax for the middle class, who drink it en gros. 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 obligé man in France because he had turned all his possessions into his partisans’ obligations to him, so Bonaparte would fain be the most obligé 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 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 état major of the National Guard to the exclusion of privates, and the 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 witticism 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,” 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 haughty 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.” Lest they make a mistake in the years, they count the minutes. At the court, in the ministries, at the head of the adminis-

1 Meaning an agreement by which one gets the lion’s share.—Ed.
2 Persons drawing income from bonds and investments.—Ed.
3 Retail.—Ed.
4 Wholesale.—Ed.
5 General Staff.—Ed.
6 “It is the first flight (thief) of the eagle.” Vol means flight and theft. [Note by Karl Marx.]
7 Thou countest thy goods, thou shouldst first count thy years.—Ed.
tation 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 Bohème that dresses itself in gal-
looned coats with the same caricature of dignity as the high dig-
nitaries of Souloque. One can visualize clearly this upper stra-
tum of the Society of December 10, if one reflects that Veron-
Crevé 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 op-
position, he used to boast of him with the quip: "C'est le roi des
drôles," "he is the king of buffoons." One would do wrong to re-
call the Regency of Louis XV in connection with Louis Bona-
parte's court and clique. For "often already, France has experi-
enced a government of mistresses; but never before, a government
of hommes entretenus."

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'état en miniature every
day, Bonaparte throws the entire bourgeois economy into confusion,
lays hands on everything that seemed inviolable to the revolu-
tion 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 he duplicates at Paris in the
cult of the Napoleonie 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 Vendôme column.

1 See note 2 on p. 237 of the present volume.—Ed.
2 In his work, La Cousine Bette, Balzac delineates the thoroughly dis-
solate Parisian philistine in the character of Crevé, which he draws after
the model of Dr. Veron, the proprietor of the Constitutionnel. [Note by
Karl Marx.]
3 Kept men. The words quoted are the words of Madame Girardin.—
[Note by Karl Marx.]
4 One of the "sacred" relics ("the vestment of the Lord"), exhibited in
the Treves cathedral in 1844 for public worship.—Ed.

KARL MARX

SPEECH AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE
PEOPLE'S PAPER

The so-called Revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents—small
fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. How-
ever, they denounced the abyss. Beneath the apparently solid sur-
face, they betrayed oceans of liquid matter, only needing expansion
to rend into fragments continents of hard rock. Noisily and confus-
edly they proclaimed the emancipation of the proletariat, 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 revolu-
tionists of a rather more dangerous character than even citizens
Barbès, 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 fracturing human

1 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.

427
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 character. 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 buried 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.

KARL MARX TO FREDERICK ENGELS

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

1 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 'forties:

"When the revolutionary period of 1848-49 was over, Marx was strongly opposed to any playing at revolution (Schapper and Willrich, 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 break 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, 1855, exchange view with Marx regarding a forthcoming joint declaration of theirs in the press,
of the French and other refugees, have convinced themselves that we are the only "intimate allies" of the Chartist and that though we refrain from public demonstrations and leave open flirtation with Chartism to the Frenchmen, we have 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 Knoten Scherzer (old boy) came forward and in truly awful Straubinger 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 repellant 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[upper] is now furious with the Knoten at the W[indmill]....

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 in the old

Engels wrote (Briefwechsel, Vol III, p. 217): "... in a predominantly agricultural country ... it is dastardly to 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," in Volume I of the present edition.) Ed.

1 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.

2 In Windsmill street was the house in which meetings of the German Workers' Union took place. By the "Knoten at the Windsmill" 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 page 24 of this volume. Ed.

3 Marx refers to the members of the Jacobin Club in Mayence who joined the French revolutionary troops that occupied Mayence in 1792. Ed.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEOPLE'S PAPER

revolution. That would be hard. We who are so enlightened about our worthy brothers on the 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. 1 Then the affair will be splendid.

1 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 servitude, 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, p. 558 in the present volume. Ed.
ADDRESS AND PROVISIONAL RULES OF THE WORKING MEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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 unripped or 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 percent, 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 sheep-walks 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 sudden

1 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

 ADDRESS AND PROVISIONAL RULES OF W.M.I.A. 433

fit of terror. When the garrotte 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 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 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, p. 602 of the present volume.)

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 union, 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." (See p. 443 of the present volume.)

The Inaugural Address ranks after The Communist Manifesto as one of the most important programme documents of the international proletariat. Ed.

1 Garrotters. 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 garrotters. - Ed.
the Civil War in America the operatives of Lancashire and Cheshire 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 nearly precisely to agree with the scanty nourishment to which the pressure of extreme distress had actually reduced the cotton operatives. But now mark! The same learned Doctor was later on again deputized 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

1 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.

2 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, these 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.]

counties (Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Somersetshire) insufficiency of nitrogenous food was the average 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 desired 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 unexamined 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 pitance 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 £23,000,000 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 13,066 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 leads 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 undreamed-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 necessaries 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 antagonisms. 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 marasmi, and political reaction. The defeat of the continental working classes, partly owed to the diplomacy of the English government, acting 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\(^1\) 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 signal; 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 moment-

\(^1\) The gold fields of California and Australia were discovered in 1848.—Ed.
ploying 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 economical monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labour. Remember the snore 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.

ADDRESS AND PROVISIONAL RULES OF W.M.I.A.

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. 1 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 assasinated by, Russia; 2 the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power, whose head is at St. Petersbourg, 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

1 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.

2 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.
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 divisions 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 Sept. 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 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

* Afterwards called the General Council.—Ed.
have power to add to the number of its members. In cases of
urgency, it may convocate 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 combina-
tion, 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 associa-
tions, 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, repre-
sented 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
independent local society shall be precluded from directly cor-
responding with the London Central Council.

8. Until the meeting of the first Congress, the committee chos-
en 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 remov-

ing 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-opera-
tion, the working men's societies, joining the International Asso-
ciation, 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\(^1\) 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 prosecutions 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 the arms of Russia,"\(^4\) 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 fully 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

---

\(^1\) The wars (1813-14) of the German states, led by Prussia in alliance with the teardom, against Napoleon I who annexed part of German territory to France and made the remainder subordinate to him.—Ed.

\(^4\) A quotation from the second Address of the General Council on the Franco-Prussian War. (See p. 471 of the present volume.) 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 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.
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 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 bourgeoisie 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. Forged 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 clearer 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 the 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 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, to explode the last stronghold of the bourgeoisie, the National Assembly. The Second Empire 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 chauvinism, 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;1 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,2 and thence to Wilhelmshöhe.

1 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.

2 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.

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 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 Guard3 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

3 The mobile National Guard—reserve troops created by Napoleon III in 1859 for protection of the towns in case of war.—Ed.
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 property 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 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 Vendôme, 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 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.²

Thus, from March 18 onwards the class character of the Paris movement, which had previously been pushed into the background

³ For the purpose of municipal administration, Paris was divided into arrondissements of which each had a mayor at the head.—Ed.
² Louis XVI was executed during the first French bourgeois revolution (on January 21, 1793).—Ed.
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 the gradual arrival of these troops gave the Versailles forces a decided ascendency. 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 Vannes. 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 Montmartre; 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 Père 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 courts-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. _Idée Générale de la Révolution, 3 ètude._)

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 Possibilists1 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 band of leaders. This

1 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 1892. 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.—Ed.
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 deputees 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 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 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 placethunting 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.

---

Footnote:

1 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.
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 philistines¹ 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.

London, on the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune,
March 18, 1891.

¹ 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.

THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

I

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 ² 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., 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 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 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 Législatif, 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 Revue 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 war-like 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 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, first organized 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, but who put

---

1 The war between France and Germany began on July 19, 1870.—Ed.

2 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-
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 the battle of Sadowa 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:

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 emphasize the unity of German and French workers, who did not approve of the war and had no quarrel with one another.—Ed.

1 The battle at Sadowa (in Bohemia) on July 5, 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.

2 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.

3 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

THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

"We are enemies of all wars, but above all of dynastic wars. . . . 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."

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: Protestants of all countries, unite, we shall never forget that the workmen of all countries are our friends and the despoils 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 Moscowite 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.2
The English working class stretch the hand of fellowship to the French and German working people. They feel deeply 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.  

Europe.” Prussia, as Marx expressed it, became “the fifth wheel of the coach of the European states.”—Ed.

1 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.

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—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 b stroll the European scene as the roaring lion of German patriotism. It re-validated its civic independence by affecting to force upon the Prussian government the secret designs of that same government. It does pence 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 inexpressible 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 garrotte, but murder. If every conqueror took "material guarantees" for breaking the sinews of a nation, the first Napoleon did so by the Tilsit Treaty, \(^3\) and the way he executed it against Prussia and the rest of Germany. Yet, a few years later, his

\(^3\) 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.