Fourthly, the programme puts forward as its sole social demand—Lassalle’s state aid in its most naked form, as Lassalle stole it from Buechez. And this after Bracke1 has very well exposed this demand in its entire nullity and after almost all, if not all, our party speakers have been obliged to come out against this state aid in fighting the Lassalleans! Lower than this our Party could not abase itself. Internationalism brought down to Amand Gögg2 and socialism to the bourgeois republican Buchez, who put forward this demand in opposition to the socialists, in order to supplant them!

In the best of cases, however, “state aid” in the Lassallean sense is only one particular measure among many others designed to attain the end here lamely described as “paving the way for a solution of the social question”—as if a theoretically unsolved social question still existed for us! So if we say: the German workers’ party strives for the abolition of wage labour, and with it of class differences, by the establishment of cooperative production on a national scale in industry and agriculture; it supports every measure adapted to the attainment of this end!—then no Lassallean can have anything against it.

Fifthly, there is not a word about the organisation of the working class as a class by means of the trade unions. And that is a very essential point, for this is the real class organisation of the proletariat, in which it carries on its daily struggles with capital, in which it trains itself, and which nowadays even amid the worst reaction (as in Paris at present) can simply no longer be smashed. Considering the importance which this form of organisation has also attained in Germany, it would be absolutely necessary in our opinion to mention it in the pro-

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1 Wilhelm Bracke (1842-90). One of the leaders of the Eisenachers. He stood very close to Marx and Engels and supported them, though not very energetically, in their struggle against the opportunist errors of the Gotha Programme. In 1873 he wrote a pamphlet The Lassallean Proposal, in which he criticised the Lassallean demand for “state aid” for producers’ cooperative societies.—Ed.

2 Amand Gögg (1820-97). A petty-bourgeois democrat from Baden. He took part in the Revolution of 1848-49; in the sixties he conducted pacific propaganda. He was one of the leaders of the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom.—Ed.
proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. We would therefore propose to replace the word “state” everywhere by the word Gemeinwesen [community], a good old German word which can very well represent the French word commune.2

“The removal of all social and political inequality” is also a very questionable phrase in place of “the abolition of all class differences.” Between one country and another, one province and another and even one place and another there will always exist a certain inequality in the conditions of life, which

1 We quote here a forgotten statement of Engels on the withering away of the state and on the dictatorship of the proletariat from a letter of his to the American Socialist, van Patten, April 18, 1883:

“Since 1845 Marx and I have held the view that one of the ultimate results of the future proletarian revolution will be the gradual dissolution and final disappearance of the political organisation known by the name, by armed force, the economic oppression of the labouring majority by the minority which alone possesses wealth. With the disappearance of an exclusively wealth-possessing minority, there also disappears the necessity for the power of armed oppression, or state power. At the same time, however, it was always our view that in order to attain this and the other far more important aims of the future social revolution, the working class must first take possession of the organised political power of the state and by its aid crush the resistance of the capitalist class and organise society anew. This is to be found already in The Communist Manifesto, of 1848, chapter II, conclusion.

“The anarchists put the thing upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must begin by doing away with the political organisation of the state. But after its victory the sole organisation that the state may require very considerable alterations before it can fulfil its new functions. But to destroy it at such a moment would be to destroy the only organism power, hold down its capitalist adversaries and carry out the economic revolution of society without which the whole victory must end in a new defeat and in a mass slaughter of the workers similar to those after the Paris Commune.” (The Correspondence of Marx and Engels, pp. 410-417.)—Ed.

2Lenin characterises this passage in Engels’ letter as follows: “This is probably the most striking and certainly the sharpest passage, so to speak, against the state” in the writings of Marx and Engels. And he further formulates, in eight points, the basic thoughts of Marx and Engels in regard to the state. (See note 2, p. 584.)—Ed.

ON THE CRITIQUE OF THE GONHA PROGRAMME

can be reduced to a minimum but never entirely removed, Mountain dwellers will always have different conditions of life from those of people living on plains. The idea of socialist society as the realm of equality is a one-sided French idea resting upon the old “liberty, equality, fraternity”—an idea which was justified as a stage of development in its own time and place but which, like all the one-sided ideas of the earlier socialist schools, should now be overcome, for they only produce confusion in people’s heads and more precise modes of presentation have been found.

I will stop, although almost every word in this programme, which has, moreover, been put together in a flat and feeble style, could be criticised. It is of such a character that if it is accepted Marx and I can never give our adherence to the new party established on this basis, and shall have very seriously to consider what our attitude towards it—in public as well—should be. You must remember that abroad we are made responsible for any and every utterance and action of the German Social-Democratic Workers’ Party. Thus Bakunin in his pamphlet, Statehood and Anarchy—where we have to answer for every thoughtless word spoken or written by Liebknecht since the Demokratisches Wochenblatt [Democratic Weekly] was started. People imagine, indeed, that we issue our orders for the whole business from here, while you know as well as I that we hardly ever interfere in

1 Why Marx and Engels did not come forward publicly against this opportunist programme after its acceptance is explained in the letter of Engels to Bracke of October 11, 1875.

“Fortunately the programme has fared better than it deserves. Both workers and bourgeois and petty bourgeois read into it what ought properly to be in it but is not in it, and it has not occurred to anyone to investigate publicly a single one of those wonderful propositions as to its real content. This has made it possible for us to keep silent on this programme. It comes to this that one cannot translate these propositions into any foreign language without being compelled either to write down palpably crazy stuff or to insert a communist meaning into them, and the latter has been done so far by friend and foe. I myself have had to do so in the translation for our Spanish friends.”—Ed.

2 See note 3 on p. 552 of the present volume.—Ed.

The organ of the Einzehalser prior to their formal separation from the petty-bourgeois radical People’s Party of Saxony. It was edited by W. Liebknecht and published in Leipzig in 1868-69.—Ed.
internal party affairs in the smallest way, and even then only in order to make good, so far as is possible, blunders, and only theoretical blunders, which have in our opinion been committed. But you will see for yourself that this programme marks a turning point which may very easily compel us to refuse any and every responsibility for the party which recognises it.

As a rule, the official programme of a party is less important than what it does. But a new programme is after all a banner publicly raised, and the outside world judges the party from it. It should therefore on no account include a step backwards, as this one does in comparison with the Eisenach programme. One should surely also take into consideration what the workers of other countries will say to this programme, what impression will be produced by this bending of the knee to Lassalleanism on the part of the whole German socialist proletariat.

At the same time I am convinced that a union on this basis will never last a year. Are the best minds in our party to lend themselves to grinding out repetitions, learnt off by rote, of the Lassallean statements on the iron law of wages and state aid? I should like to see you doing it, for instance! And if they did do this they would be hissed by their audiences. And I am sure the Lassalleans will insist on just these points of their programme like the Jew Shylock on his pound of flesh. The separation will come; but we shall have “rehabilitated” Hasselmann, Hasenclever, Töjcke and Co.; we shall come out of the separation weaker and the Lassalleans stronger; our party will have lost its political virginity and will never again be able to come out whole-hearted against the Lassallean phrases which it will have inscribed for a time on its own banner; and if the Lassalleans then once more say that they are the most genuine, the only workers’ party, while our people are bourgeois, the programme will be there to prove it. All the socialist measures in it are theirs, and all our party has put into it are the demands of that same petty-bourgeois democracy which is nevertheless also described by it in the same programme as a part of the “reactionary mass.”

I had left this letter lying as after all you are to be freed on April 1, in honour of Bismarck’s birthday, and I did not want to expose it to the chance of being seized in any attempt to smuggle it in. And now a letter has just come from Bracke, who has also his grave doubts about the programme and wants to know our opinion. I am therefore sending this letter to him to forward, so that he can read it and so that I need not write out all this stuff over again. Moreover, I have also told the unvarnished truth to Ramm—to Liebknecht I only wrote briefly. I cannot forgive him for never telling us a single word about the thing (while Ramm and others thought he had given us exact information) until it was too late, so to speak. But indeed this is what he has always done—hence the large amount of disagreeable correspondence which both Marx and I have had with him but this time it is really too much and we are certainly not going to co-operate.

See that you contrive to come here in the summer. You will,

1 On account of the revolutionary internationalist position they took up during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, Liebknecht and Bebel were sentenced in March 1872 in the famous Leipzig trial for state treason to two years’ imprisonment in a fortress. Bebel’s term of imprisonment ended on May 14, 1874, but six weeks later he was again imprisoned in Zwiezkau (Saxony) for a further nine months for “high treason.” He was finally released on April 1, 1875, which happened to coincide with Bismarck’s birthday.—Ed.

2 Bracke in his letter to Engels of March 25, 1875, sharply criticised the Gotha Programme. He said: “The acceptance of this programme is impossible for me and Bebel also is of the same opinion as regards himself.” Bracke directed his main attack against the point of the programme on the establishment of producers’ co-operatives by state aid. According to Bracke’s opinion, the acceptance of this point turned the party into a sect. He writes: “Since Bebel appears to be determined to take up the struggle, I should feel myself compelled at least to support him with all my strength. I should, however, like very much to know in advance how you and Marx regard the matter. Your experience is riper, your understanding is better than mine. If you agree in regard to this, then I will make a proposal to Bebel so that we can come forward to the congress with a common draft programme.” Bebel, however, did not justify Bracke’s hopes and did not come out against the programme.—Ed.

3 Ramm, A German Social-Democrat, one of the editors of the Leipzig Volkstaat, the central organ of the Eisenach party. He did not play any leading role in the party.—Ed.
of course, stay with me, and if the weather is good we can go to the seaside for a day or two, which will be really beneficial to you after your long spell in jail.

Your sincere friend,

F. E.

FREDERICK ENGELS TO KARL KAUTSKY

London, February 23, 1891

Dear Kautsky:

You will have received my hasty congratulations of the day before yesterday. So now to return again to our mutons, the Marx letter.

The fear that it would put a weapon in the hands of our opponents was unfounded. Malicious insinuations, of course, are being attached to everything and anything, but on the whole the impression made on the opponents was one of complete disconcertion at this ruthless self-criticism and the feeling, what an inner power must be possessed by a party that can afford such a thing! That can be seen from the hostile newspapers that you sent me (for which many thanks) and from those to which I have otherwise had access. And, frankly speaking, that was also my intention when I published the document. That at the first moment some persons here and there could not but be unpleasantly affected by it, of that I was aware, but it was not to be avoided and it was amply outweighed by my view of the material contents. I knew, also, that the party was fully strong enough to bear it, and I reckoned that it would today also put up with this frank language used fifteen years ago, that it would

1 This letter from Engels to Kautsky throws light on the history of the publication of Marx’s Critique of the Gotha Programme in 1891. The letter shows how hostily the Critique was received by the leaders of German Social-Democracy. Extremely valuable also in this letter is Engels’ ruthless criticism of Lassalle: the sketch of a work projected by Engels, in order “to clear away the Lassalle legend once for all.” Kautsky also helped to spread this legend. He glorified Lassalle as the leader and teacher of the German proletariat and put him on a level with Marx. For further details see the notes to this letter.—Ed.

2 Kautsky was then editor of the weekly journal, Die Neue Zeit, the theoretical organ of German Social-Democracy, in which Engels published Marx’s Critique.—Ed.

ON THE CRITIQUE OF THE GOTA PROGRAMME

point with justifiable pride to this test of strength and would say: Where is there another party that can dare the like? That has been left, meanwhile, to the Sächsische and Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung and to the Züricher Post.1

That in No. 21 of the Neue Zeit you take on yourself the responsibility for the publication is very gallant of you but do not forget that, after all, I gave the first impulse and moreover to a certain extent I put you in a position in which you had no choice.2 I claim, therefore, the main responsibility for myself. As far as details are concerned, one can certainly always have different opinions about them. I have deleted and altered everything that you and Dietz3 have objected to, and if Dietz had marked even more I would still, as far as possible, have been amenable even then, of that I have always given you proof. But, as far as the main point is concerned, it was my duty to publish the thing when once the programme had come up for discussion. And especially now, after Liebknecht’s report in Halle, in which he uses his extracts from it, in part uncronemoniously as his own property, and in part on the other hand at objects of attack without mentioning the source,4 Marx would certainly have confronted this version with the original

1 Of these papers the first two were Social-Democratic, the third, bourgeois.—Ed.

2 Engels is referring to the fact that when he sent Kautsky the text of Marx’s Critique of the Gotha Programme for publication, he notified Kautsky that if it was not published in the Neue Zeit he (Engels) would publish it in the Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung—i.e., that one way or another Marx’s Critique would be made public.—Ed.

3 W. Dietz (1846-1922), German Social-Democrat, member of the Rolchtag, manager of the party publishing house in Stuttgart, which also issued the Neue Zeit. He always belonged to the Right opportunist wing of German Social-Democracy; during the World War he was a social-chauvinist.—Ed.

4 Although in making his report at the Halle Congress in 1890, W. Liebknecht admitted that the old programme required revision, he nevertheless praised it in every possible way as the “battle standard,” the “guiding star” of the party, etc. While analysing each point of the Gotha Programme separately and in places putting forward the objections raised by Marx and Engels—but without mentioning their names—Liebknecht ended his examination of each point with the conclusion that the point was “of unassailable importance” “in principle” or “in essence,” even if it required re-editing.—Ed.
and it was my duty in his place to do the same. Unfortunately, at that time I had not yet got the document, I only found it later after much search.

You say that Bebel writes to you that Marx’s treatment of Lassalle has caused bad blood among the old Lassalleans. That may be, People do not know the real story and nothing appears to have happened to enlighten them about it. If these people do not know that Lassalle’s whole greatness rests on this, that for years Marx allowed him to parade the results of Marx’s research as his own and, owing to defective education in economics, to distort them into the bargain, then that is not my fault. But I am Marx’s literary executor and as such I also have my duty to perform.

Lassalle has belonged to history for twenty-six years. While under the Exceptional Law historical criticism of him has been left in abeyance, the time is at last at hand when it must have its say and Lassalle’s position in relation to Marx be made clear. The legend that conceals and glorifies the true stature of Lassalle cannot become an article of faith of the party. However highly one may estimate Lassalle’s services to the movement, his historical role in it remains an equivocal one. Lassalle the socialist is accompanied step by step by Lassalle the demagogue. Lassalle, the conductor of the Hatzfeld law suit, appears everywhere, showing through Lassalle the agitator and organiser; 2

1 This reproach was directed above all against Kautsky. In his endeavours to weaken the effect of Marx’s criticism of Lassalleanism, Kautsky published in No. 21 of the Neue Zeit an article entitled “Our Programmes” in which he opportunistically diminished the practical significance of Marx’s criticism, marked himself off from it and emphasised the great “services” of Lassalle. Among other things, he said “the standpoint which Marx adopted towards Lassalle is the standpoint of German Social-Democracy. . . . Social-Democracy has a different attitude to Lassalle from that of Marx. . . . How could we forget the man from whose writings all we older party comrades and even the majority of the younger have derived their first socialist knowledge, their first enthusiasm for socialism! We study and examine attentively what Marx says about his pupil Lassalle, but we do not forget that the latter also was one of our first teachers and champions.” (Neue Zeit, 1890-91, Vol. I, p. 680.)—Ed.

2 During nearly a decade (1845-54) Lassalle conducted as a lawyer a very complicated and for its time a very sensational divorce case of the Countess Sophie Hatzfeld, in the course of which he made use of the most

the same cynicism in choice of methods, the same preference for surrounding himself with rowdy and corrupt people who can be used as mere tools and discarded. Until 1862, a specifically Prussian vulgar democrat in practice, with strong Bonapartist leanings (I have just looked through his letters to Marx), he suddenly turned round from purely personal causes and began his agitation; and before two years had gone by he was demanding that the workers should take the part of the monarchy against the bourgeoisie, and intriguing with Bismarck, one of his own kin in character, in a way that was bound to lead to the actual betrayal of the movement, if fortunately for him he had not been shot in time. In his agitational writings, the correct things that he borrowed from Marx are so much interwoven with his own invariably false expositions that the two are hardly to be separated. The section of the workers that feels itself injured by Marx’s judgment only knows Lassalle through his two years of agitation, and they also see them through coloured spectacles. But historical criticism cannot stand eternally, hat in hand, before such prejudices. It was my duty finally to settle accounts between Marx and Lassalle. That has been done. For the time being I can content myself with that. Moreover, I myself have other things to do now. And the published ruthless judgment of Marx on Lassalle will by itself have its effect and give others courage. But should I be forced to it, there would be no choice for me; I should have to clear away the Lassalle legend once for all.

That voices have been raised in the fraction saying that the Neue Zeit should be placed under censorship is indeed a fine affair. Is the ghost of the fraction’s dictatorship during the Anti-Socialist Law (which was of course necessary and excellently carried out) 3 now appearing, or is it due to remembrance of varied lawyer’s tricks and did not shrink from employing every means to win the case.—Ed.

3 During the period of the Anti-Socialist Law (1878-90) when all legal working-class organisations were forbidden, the Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag was the highest organ of the party. Although the fraction consisted to a considerable extent of opportunists, the leadership of the party was in the hands of Bebel who based himself on the masses of the
the late strict organisation of Schweitzer? It is in fact a brilliant idea to put German socialist science, after its liberation from Bismarck’s Anti-Socialist Law, under a new socialist law manufactured and carried out by the Social-Democratic Party officials themselves. For the rest, it is ordained that the desires of the ambitious will not be realised.

The article in the Vorwärts does not stir me much. I shall wait for Liebknecht’s historical account and shall then reply to both in as friendly a tone as possible. In the Vorwärts article there are only a few inaccuracies to be corrected (e.g., that we did not desire unity, that events proved Marx wrong, etc.) and a few obvious things to be confirmed. With this answer I intend party membership and on the illegal organ, the Sozialdemokrat, published in Zurich and later in London. This paper was in general edited in accordance with the directions of Engels.—Ed.

That is to say, the organisation of the Lassalleans, the General Association of German Workers, the leader of which, from 1864 to 1871, was Johann Baptist Schweitzer (1833–75), Schweitzer was editor of the central organ, chairman of the party and a member of the Reichstag. He continued Lassalle’s policy of intriguing with Bismarck who, as was revealed a few years ago, financed the paper. He guided the association, following Lassalle’s tradition, in a dictatorial fashion, attempting to maintain his dictatorial power even when a strong opposition had developed against him, and he endeavoured to extend this power to the trade union organisations to the foundation of which—only under the pressure of the masses, it is true—he had proceeded in 1868.—Ed.

The leading article in the Vorwärts, the central organ of German Social-Democracy, expressed the official position of the party leadership on Marx’s Critique. The article contained a sharp condemnation of Marx’s estimate of Lassalle and considered it a merit of the party that it had accepted the Gotha draft programme in opposition to Marx’s opinion. It was further asserted in the article that the development of the party had proved Marx wrong and that the Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag and the party leadership had in no case expressed their agreement to the publication of the Critique. The article says: “The German Social-Democrats are not Marxians, not Lassalleans—they are Social-Democrats.” (Neue Zeit, 1890-91, Vol. I, p. 684.)—Ed.

1 Liebknecht intended to write a special article on the history of the Gotha Programme for the Neue Zeit. According to Kautsky, “an article . . . which would give a history of our party programme in general and particularly of those conditions which made it possible for the Gotha Programme in 1875 to represent the expression of the theoretical consciousness of the majority of the party.” (Ibid., p. 681.) Kautsky wrote in the above-mentioned article, entitled “Our Programmes”: “In this respect . . . the programme letter required a supplement. Engels could not give this.”—Ed.
LETTERS ON THE STRUGGLE FOR THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

KARL MARX to FREDERICK ENGELS

[London], November 4, 1864

... The Working Men's International Association.

Some time ago London workers had sent an address about Poland to Paris workers and summoned them to common action in this matter.

The Parisians on their part sent over a deputation headed by a worker called Tolain, the real workers' candidate at the last election in Paris, a very nice fellow. (His companions too were quite nice lads.) A public meeting in St. Martin's Hall was summoned for September 28, 1864, by Odger (shoemaker, President of the Council here of all London Trades Unions and also especially of the Trades Unions Suffrage Agitation Society, which is in contact with Bright) and Cremer, mason and Secretary of the Masons' Union. (These two organised the big meeting of the Trade Unions in St. James' Hall for North America, under Bright, ditto the Garibaldi demonstrations.) A certain Le Lubez was sent to ask me if I would take part on behalf of the German workers, and especially if I would supply a German worker to speak at the meeting. I provided them with Ecarius, who came off splendidly, and was likewise present myself as a mute figure on the platform. I knew that this time real "powers" were involved both on the London and Paris sides and therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule of declining any such invitations.

(Le Lubez is a young Frenchman, i.e., in the thirties, who has however grown up in Jersey and London, speaks English excellently and is a very good intermediary between the French and English workers.) (Music teacher and French lessons.)

At the meeting, which was packed to suffocation (for evidently there is a revival of the working classes taking place now), Major Wolf (Thurn-Taxis, Garibaldi's adjutant) represented the London Italian Working Men's Society. It was decided to found a "Working Men's International Association," of which the General Council should be in London and should act as a "medium of

in their letters to third persons they were in full agreement with one another. Hence, the letters written by Engels during Marx's lifetime to Becker, Sorge, Bebel, Bernstein and others express the views of both leaders of the international proletariat.

The first letter deals with the founding of the First International, which "laid the foundation for the proletarian international struggle for socialism" (Lenin), and with the conditions in which the Inaugural Address of the First International was drawn up.—Ed.

This refers to the Civil War in the United States of America between the industrial north and the slaveholding south (1861-65).—Ed.
co-operation” between the workers’ societies in Germany, Italy, France and England. Ditto that a General Working Men’s Congress should be summoned in Belgium 1 in 1865. A provisional committee was appointed at the meeting; Odger, Cremer and many others, some of them old Chartists, old Owenites, etc., for England; Major Wolff, Fontana and other Italians for Italy; Le Lubéz, etc., for France, Eccarius and I for Germany. The committee was empowered to co-opt as many members as it chose.

So far so good. I attended the first meeting of the committee. A sub-committee (including myself) was appointed to draft a declaration of principles and provisional statues. Being unwell I was prevented from attending the meeting of the sub-committee and the meeting of the whole committee which followed.

In these two meetings which I had missed—that of the sub-committee and the subsequent one of the whole committee—the following had taken place:

Major Wolff had handed in the règlement [statutes] of the Italian Workers’ Unions (which possess a central organisation but, as later transpired, are really associated benefit societies) to be used for the new Association. I saw the stuff later. It was evidently a compilation of Mazzini’s so you already know the spirit and phraseology in which the real question, the workers’ question, was dealt with. Also how nationalities were shoved in.

In addition an old Owenite, Weston—now a manufacturer himself, a very amiable and worthy man—had drawn up a programme of indescribable breadth and full of the most extreme confusion.

The subsequent general committee meeting instructed the sub-committee to remodel Weston’s programme and Wolff’s regulations. Wolff himself left in order to attend the Congress of Italian Working Men’s Association in Naples and get them to decide on joining the London Central Association.

1 The First Congress of the International met, not in 1865, but in 1866, and not in Belgium, but in Switzerland (in Geneva).—Ed.

Another meeting of the sub-committee—which I again failed to attend, because I was informed of the rendezvous too late. At this a “declaration of principles” and a new version of Wolff’s statues were put forward by Le Lubéz and accepted by the committee for submission to the general committee. The general committee met on October 18. As Eccarius had written me that delay would be dangerous I appeared, and was really frightened when I heard the worthy Le Lubéz read out an appallingly wordy, badly written and utterly undigested preamble, pretending to be a declaration of principles, in which Mazzini could be detected everywhere, the whole being crusted over with the vaguest tags of French socialism. Added to this the Italian statutes were taken over in the main, and these, apart from all their other faults, aim at something which is in fact utterly impossible, a sort of central government of the European working classes (with Mazzini in the background, of course). I put up a mild opposition and after a lot of talking backwards and forwards Eccarius proposed that the sub-committee should submit the thing to further “editing.” On the other hand the “sentiments” contained in Lubéz’s declaration were voted for.

Two days later, on October 20, Cremer (for the English), Fontana (Italy) and Le Lubéz assembled in my house. (Weston was prevented.) Hitherto I had never had the documents (those of Wolff and Le Lubéz) in my hand so could not prepare anything, but was firmly determined that if possible not one single line of the stuff should be allowed to stand. In order to gain time I proposed that before we “edited” the preamble we should “discuss” the rules. This took place. It was an hour after midnight by the time the first of forty rules was agreed to. Cremer said (and this was what I had aimed at) : We have nothing to put before the committee which meets on October 25. We must postpone the meeting till November. The sub-committee can then get together on October 27 and attempt to reach a definite conclusion. This was agreed to and the “papers” “left behind” for my opinion.

I saw that it was impossible to make anything out of the
stuff. In order to justify the extremely strange way in which I intended to present the “sentiments” already “voted for,” I wrote an *Address to the Working Classes* (which was not in the original plan: a sort of review of the adventures of the working classes since 1845); on the pretext that everything material was included in this Address and that we ought not to repeat the same thing three times over I altered the whole preamble, threw out the declaration of principles and finally replaced the forty rules by ten. In so far as international politics come into the address I speak of countries, not of nationalities, and denounce Russia, not the lesser nations. My proposals were all accepted by the sub-committee. Only I was obliged to insert two phrases about “duty” and “right,” into the preamble to the statutes, ditto “truth, morality and justice,” but these are placed in such a way that they can do no harm. . .

It was very difficult to frame the thing so that our view should appear in a form acceptable from the present standpoint of the workers’ movement. In a few weeks the same people will be holding meetings for the franchise with Bright and Cobden. It will take time before the reawakened movement allows the old boldness of speech. It will be necessary to be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo* [bold in matter—mild in manner]. As soon as the stuff is printed you will get it. ¹

**Karl Marx to Dr. Kugelmann**

*London*, February 23, 1865

I received your very interesting letter yesterday and shall now deal with the separate points you raise.

First of all I shall briefly describe my attitude to Lassalle. During the period of his practical agitation relations between us were suspended: 1) because of the self-flattering bragging over, to which he added the most shameless plagiarism from my writings, etc.; 2) because I condemned his political tactics; 3) because,

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¹ See the *Inaugural Address* of the First International, p. 432 of the present volume.—*Ed.*
marck to annex Schleswig-Holstein, that is, he was to proclaim its incorporation in the name of the "workers," etc. In return for which Bismarck promised universal suffrage and a few socialist charters. It is a pity that Lassalle could not play the comedy through to the end. The hoax would have made him look damned ridiculous and foolish, and would have put a stop for ever to all attempts of that sort.

Lassalle went astray because he was a "Realpolitiker" of the type of Herr Miquel, but cut on a larger pattern and with bigger aims. (By the bye, I had long ago seen sufficiently far through Miquel to explain his coming forward by the fact that the Nationalverein offered an excellent excuse for a petty Hanoverian lawyer to make his voice heard outside his own four walls by all Germany, and thus cause the enhanced "reality" of himself to react again on the Hanoverian homeland, playing the "Hanoverian Mirabeau" under Prussian protection.) Just as Miquel and his present friends snatched at the "new era" inaugurated by the Prussian prince regent, in order to join the Nationalverein and to fasten on to the "Prussian top," just as they developed their "civic pride" generally under Prussian protection, so Lassalle wanted to play the Marquis Posa of the proletariat with Philip II of the Uckermark, Bismarck acting as intermediary between him and the Prussian kingdom. He only imitated the gentlemen of the Nationalverein; but while these invoked the Prussian "reaction" in the interests of the middle class, Lassalle shook hands with Bismarck in the interests of the proletariat. These gentlemen had greater justification than Lassalle, in so far as the bourgeois is accustomed to regard the interest immediately in front of his nose as "reality," and as in fact this class has concluded a compromise everywhere, even with feudalism, whereas, in the very nature of the case, the working class must be sincerely revolutionary.

For a theatrically vain nature like Lassalle (who was not, however, to be bribed by paltry trash like office, a mayoralty, etc.), it was a most tempting thought: an act directly on behalf of the proletariat, and executed by Ferdinand Lassalle! He was in fact too ignorant of the real economic conditions attending such an act to be critically true to himself. The German workers, on the other hand, were too "demoralised"-by the despicable "practical politics" which had induced the German bourgeoisie to tolerate the reaction of 1849-59 and the stupefying of the people, not to hail such a quack saviour, who promised to get them at one bound into the promised land.

Well, to pick up again the threads broken off above. Hardly was the Sozialdemokrat founded than it became clear that old Hatzfeld wanted to execute Lassalle's "testament." Through Wagner (of the Kreuzzeitung) she was in touch with Bismarck. She placed the Arbeiterverein (Allgemeiner Deutscher), the Sozialdemokrat, etc., at his disposal. The annexation of Schleswig-Holstein was to be proclaimed in the Sozialdemokrat, Bismarck to be recognised in general as patron, etc. The whole pretty plan was frustrated because we had Liebknecht in Berlin and on the editorial board of the Sozialdemokrat. Although Engels and I were not pleased with the editing of the paper, with its licksplitter cult of Lassalle, its occasional coquetting with Bismarck, etc., it was of course more important to stand publicly by the paper for the time being, in order to thwart old Hatzfeld's intrigues and the complete compromising of the workers' party. We therefore made bonne mine à mauvais jeu although privately we were always writing to the Sozialdemokrat that Bismarck must be opposed just as much as the progressives. We even put up with the intrigues of that affected coxcomb Bernhard Becker-who takes the importance conferred upon him in Lassalle's testament quite

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1 The Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were intimately associated with Denmark for centuries. Prussia was striving for their annexation. Lassalle advised Bismarck to declare war against Denmark and annex Schleswig-Holstein; and he promised "in the name of the workers" to support Bismarck in this undertaking, if Bismarck, for his part, would promise to grant universal suffrage.-Ed.

2 The Nationalverein [National Association] founded in September 1859, was an organisation of part of the Prussian bourgeoisie which made propaganda for the union of all the German states, with the exception of Austria, under the hegemony of Prussia. From this National Association arose later on the big bourgeois National Liberal Party, one of the main supports of Bismarck's policy.-Ed.

3 The best of a bad job.-Ed.
seriously—against the International Working Men's Association.

Meanwhile Herr Schweitzer's articles in the Sozialdemokrat became more and more Bismarckian. I had written to him earlier that the progressives could be intimidated on the coalition question, but that the Prussian government would never concede the complete abolition of the Combination Laws, because that would involve making a breach in the bureaucracy, would give the workers' adult status, would shatter the Gesindeordnung, abolish the flogging regime of the aristocracy in the countryside, etc., etc., which Bismarck would never allow, which was altogether incompatible with the Prussian bureaucratic state. I added that if the Chamber rejected the Combination Laws, the government would have recourse to phrases (such phrases, for example, as that the social question demanded "more thoroughgoing" measures, etc.) in order to retain them. All this proved to be correct. And what did Herr von Schweitzer do? He wrote an article for Bismarck and saved all his heroes for such infinitesimal petit as Schulze, Faucher, etc.

I think that Schweitzer and Co. have honest intentions, but they are "Realpolitiker." They want to accommodate themselves to existing circumstances and not to surrender this privilege of "real politics" to the exclusive use of Herr Miquel and Co. (The latter seem to want to keep for themselves the right of intermixture with the Prussian government.) They know that the workers' press and the workers' movement in Prussia (and therefore in the rest of Germany) exist solely par la grace de la police. So they want to take the circumstances as they are, and not irritate the government, just like our "republican" Realpolitiker, who are willing to "put up with" a Hohenzollern emperor.

Since I am not a "Realpolitiker," I have found it necessary to sever all connection with the Sozialdemokrat in a public declaration signed by myself and Engels (which you will probably see soon in one paper or another). You will understand at the same time why at the present moment I can do nothing in Prussia. The government there has refused point blank to

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1 Infinite small people.—Ed.

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I had great fears for the first Congress at Geneva. On the whole, however, it turned out better than I expected. The effect in France, England and America was unhoped for. I could

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3 At the first Congress of the International, at Geneva in September 1866, the Statutes and organisation of the International, the trade union and co-operative question and a series of other questions were discussed.
not, and did not want to go there, but wrote the programme for the London delegation. I deliberately restricted it to those points which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by the workers and give direct nourishment and impetus to the requirements of the class struggle and the organisation of the workers into a class. The Parisian gentlemen had their heads full of the emptiest Proudhonist phrases. They babble about science and know nothing. They scorn all revolutionary action, i.e., action arising out of the class struggle itself, all concentrated social movements, and therefore all those which can be carried through by political means (e.g., the legal limitation of the working day). Under the pretext of freedom, and of anti-governmentalism or anti-authoritarian individualism, these gentlemen who for sixteen years have so calmly endured the most miserable despotism, and still endure it—actually preach the ordinary bourgeois science, only Proudhonistically idealised! Proudhon has done enormous mischief. His sham criticism and sham opposition to the utopians (he himself is only a philistine utopian, whereas in the utopias of a Fourier, an Owen, etc., there is the presentiment and imaginative expression of a new world) attracted and corrupted first the "brilliant youth," the students, and then the workmen, particularly those of Paris, who, as workers in luxury trades, are strongly attached, without knowing it, to the old rubbish. Ignorant, vain, presumptuous, chattering, dogmatic, arrogant, they were on the point of spoiling everything, for they came to the Congress in numbers which bore no proportion whatever to the number of their members. I shall have a dig at them in the report without mentioning names.

I was very pleased with the American Workers' Congress at Baltimore which took place at the same time. The slogan there was organisation for the struggle against capitalism, and curious-

...At the next congress in Brussels² I shall personally deal these fools of Proudhonists the finishing blow. I have managed the whole thing diplomatically and did not want to come out personally until my book was published and our Association had stuck root. I will give them a hiding too in the official report of the General Council (despite all their efforts, the Parisian babblers could not prevent our re-election).³

Meanwhile our Association has made great progress. The wretched Star, which tried to ignore us entirely, announced yesterday in a leading article that we were more important than the Peace Congress. Schulze-Delitzsch was not able to prevent his Workers' Association in Berlin from joining us. The swine among the English trade unionists, who thought we went "too far," are now coming running to us. Besides the Courir Français, Girardin's Liberté, the Siècle, Mode, Gazette de France, etc.,

²Sixteen years after the coup d'état of Louis Bonaparte (see The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte in the present volume).—Ed.
³With the co-operation of the General Council of the International the English trade unions developed a wide campaign during 1866-67 for electoral reform (extension of the franchise to wider circles of workers and to the poorer strata of the population).—Ed.
⁴Marx refers to the line in Virgil's Aeneid: Quorum magna pars fui (in which I played a large part).—Ed.
⁵The Brussels Congress of the First International took place in 1868. Marx was not present at that congress but he led its work.—Ed.
have given reports of our Congress. Things are moving. And in the next revolution, which is perhaps nearer than it appears, see (i.e., you and I) will have this powerful engine in our hands. Compare this with the results of Mazzini's, etc., operations during the last thirty years! And without any financial means, moreover. With the intrigues of the Proudhonists in Paris, of Mazzini in Italy, of the jealous Odger, Cremer, and Potter in London, with the Schulze-Delitzschites and Lassalleans in Germany! We can be very well content!

KARL MARX TO FREDERICK ENGELS

London, March 5, 1869

... Bakunin thinks to himself: if we approve his "radical programme" he can make a big noise about this and compromise us tant soit peu [just a little bit]. If we declare ourselves against it we shall be decried as counter-revolutionaries. Moreover: if we admit them he will see to it that he is supported by some of the riff-raff at the Congress in Basle. I think the answer should be on the following lines:

According to Paragraph 1 of the Statutes every workers' association "aiming at the same end: viz., the protection, advancement and complete emancipation of the working classes" shall be admitted.

As the stage of development reached by different sections of workers in the same country and by the working class in different countries varies very much, the actual movement necessarily expresses itself in very different formal terms.

* This letter deals with the negotiations between the General Council of the International and Bakunin and his followers. Bakunin was an anarchist. The Bakunists on entering the International had maintained their secret organisation, the Alliance de la démocratie socialiste. They carried on a bitter factional struggle against the General Council led by Marx, and they carried on an especially vigorous fight against recognising the necessity of the political struggle of the working class and against centralisation and discipline in the ranks of the International. Bakunin was expelled from the International in 1872.—Ed.

STRUGGLE FOR THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

The community of action which the International Working Men's Association called into being, the exchange of ideas by means of the different organs of the sections in all countries, and, finally, the direct discussions at the General Congresses will by degrees create for the general workers' movement its common theoretical programme also.

With regard to the programme of the "Alliance," therefore, it is not necessary for the General Council to submit it to a critical examination. The Council has not to examine whether it is an adequate, scientific expression of the working class movement. It has only to ask if the general tendency of the programme is not in opposition to the general tendency of the International Working Men's Association—the complete emancipation of the working classes!

This reproach could only apply to one phrase in the programme, par. 2: "Above all things it desires the political, economical and social equalisation of the classes." "The equalisation of the classes," literally interpreted, is nothing but another expression for the "harmony of capital and labour" preached by the bourgeois socialists. Not the logically impossible "equalisation of classes" but the historically necessary "abolition of classes" constitutes the final aim of the International Working Men's Association. But from the context in which this phrase occurs in the programme it would appear that it is only a slip of the pen. The less, therefore, does the General Council doubt that this phrase, which might lead to serious misunderstanding, will be removed from the programme.

This being assumed, it is in accordance with the principle of the International Working Men's Association to leave to each section the responsibility for its own programme. There is therefore nothing to prevent the transformation of the sections of the Alliance into sections of the Working Men's Association.

As soon as this has taken place an enumeration of the newly joined sections according to country, habitation and number must be sent regularly to the General Council...
KARL MARX—FREDERICK ENGELS

KARL MARX TO A. BOLTE

London, November 23, 1871

... The *International* was founded in order to replace the socialist or semi-socialist sects by a real organisation of the working class for struggle. The original statutes and the Inaugural Address show this at the first glance. On the other hand the Internationalists could not have maintained themselves if the course of history had not already smashed up the sectarian system. The development of the system of socialist sects and that of the real workers' movement always stand in inverse ratio to each other. So long as the sects are (historically) justified the working class is not yet ripe for an independent historic movement. As soon as it has attained this maturity all sects are essentially reactionary. Nevertheless what history has shown everywhere was repeated within the International. The antiquated attempts to re-establish and maintain itself within the newly achieved form.

And the history of the International was a continual struggle on the part of the General Council against the sects and amateur experiments which attempted to maintain themselves within the International itself against the genuine movement of the working class. This struggle was conducted at the Congresses, but far more in the private dealings of the General Council with the individual sections.

In Paris, as the Proudhonists (Mutualists) were co-founders of the Association, they naturally had the reins in their hands there for the first years. Later, of course, collectivist, positivist, etc., groups were formed in opposition to them.

In Germany—the Lassalle clique, I myself went on corresponding for two years with the notorious Schweitzer and proved irrefutably to him that Lassalle's organisation is nothing but a sectarian organisation and as such hostile to the organisation of

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1 The Proudhonists called themselves Mutualists; the term arises from the word "mutual," as against the principle of social ownership, the Proudhonists putting forward the slogan of mutual aid.—Ed.
Obviously the General Council does not support in America what it combats in Europe. Resolutions (2) and (3) and IX now give the New York committee legal weapons with which to put an end to all sectarian formations and amateur groups and if necessary to expel them.

The political movement of the working class has as its object, of course, the conquest of political power for the working class, and for this it is naturally necessary that a previous organisation of the working class, itself arising from their economic struggles, should have been developed up to a certain point.

On the other hand, however, every movement in which the working class comes out as a class against the ruling classes and attempts to force them by pressure from without is a political movement. For instance, the attempt in a particular factory or even a particular industry to force a shorter working day out of the capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. On the other hand the movement to force an eight-hour day, etc., is a political movement. And in this way, out of the separate economic movements of the workers there grows up everywhere a political movement, that is to say a movement of the class, with the object of achieving its interests in a general form, in a form possessing a general social force of compulsion. If these movements presuppose a certain degree of previous organisation they are themselves equally a means for the development of this organisation.

Where the working class is not yet far enough advanced in its organisation to undertake a decisive campaign against the collective power, i.e., the political power of the ruling classes, it must at any rate be trained for this by continual agitation against and a hostile attitude towards the policy of the ruling classes. Otherwise it will remain a plaything in their hands, as the September revolution in France showed, and as is also proved up to a certain point by the game Messrs. Gladstone and Co. are bringing off in England even up to the present time.\footnote{For the revolution of September 4, 1870, in France, see The Civil War in France. By the words "Gladstone's game" Marx means the influence of the bourgeois party and of the liberals led by Gladstone on the leaders of the trade unions.—Ed.}

\footnote{The Congress of the bourgeois political League of Peace and Freedom took place in Berne in September 1868. Bakunin took part in it.—Ed.}
majority, depose the authorities, abolish the state and replace it by the organisation of the International. This great act, with which the millennium begins, is called social liquidation.

All this sounds extremely radical, and is so simple that it can be learnt by heart in five minutes; that is why this theory of Bakunin's has also speedily found favour in Spain and Italy, among young lawyers, doctors and other doctrinaires. But the mass of the workers will never allow themselves to be persuaded that the public affairs of their country are not also their own affairs; they are by nature political and whoever tries to make out to them that they should leave politics alone will in the end get left in the lurch. To preach that the workers should in all circumstances abstain from politics is to drive them into the arms of the priests or the bourgeois republicans.

Now as, according to Bakunin, the International is not to be formed for political struggle but in order that it may at once replace the old state organisation as soon as social liquidation takes place, it follows that it must come as near as possible to the Bakunist ideal of the society of the future. In this society there will above all be no authority, for authority—state—-an absolute evil. (How these people propose to run a factory, work a railway or steer a ship without having in the last resort one deciding will, without a unified direction, they do not indeed tell us.) The authority of the majority over the minority also ceases. Every individual and every community is autonomous, but as to how a society, even of only two people, is possible unless each gives up some of his autonomy, Bakunin again remains silent. The International, then, must also be reorganised according to this model. Every section, and in every section every individual, is autonomous. To hell with the Basle resolutions,¹ which bestowed upon the General Council a pernicious authority demoralising even to itself!

² Engels refers to decisions of the Basle Congress of the International (September 1869) which extended the powers of the General Council. The Bakunists conducted a furious campaign for getting these decisions annulled.

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Even if this authority is voluntarily bestowed it must cease simply because it is authority.

Here you have in brief the main points of the swindle.

FREDERICK ENGELS TO AUGUST BEBEL

London, June 20, 1873

... One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for “unity.” Those who have this word most often on their lips are those who sow the most dissension, just as at present the Jura Bakunists in Switzerland, who have provoked all the splits, scream for nothing so much as for unity. These unity fanatics are either the people of limited intelligence who want to stir everything up together into one nondescript brew, which, the moment it is left to settle, throws up the differences again in much more acute opposition because they are now all together in one pot (you have a fine example of this in Germany with the people who preach the reconciliation of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie)—or else they are people who consciously or unconsciously (like Mühilberger, for instance) want to adulterate the movement. For this reason the greatest sectarians and the biggest brawlers and rogues are at certain moments the loudest shouters for unity. Nobody in our lifetime has given us more trouble and been more treacherous than the unity shouters.

Naturally every party leadership wants to see successes and this is quite good too. But there are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice momentary success for more important things. Especially for a party like ours, whose ultimate success is so absolutely certain, and which has developed so enormously in our own lifetime and under our own eyes, momentary success is by no means always and absolutely necessary. Take the International, for instance. After the Commune it had its colossal success. The bourgeoisie, struck all of a heap, ascribed omnipotence to it. The great mass of the membership believed things would stay like that for all eternity. We knew very well that the bubble must burst. All the riff-raff attached themselves to it. The sectarians within it began to flourish and
misused the International in the hope that the most stupid and mean actions would be permitted them. We did not allow that. Well knowing that the bubble must burst some time all the same, our concern was not to delay the catastrophe but to take care that the International emerged from it pure and unadulterated. The bubble burst at the Hague and you know that the majority of Congress members went home sick with disappointment. And yet nearly all these disappointed people, who imagined they would find the ideal of universal brotherhood and reconciliation in the International, had far more bitter quarrels at home than those which broke out at the Hague! Now the sectarian quarrel-mongers are preaching conciliation and decrying us as the intolerant and the dictators. And if we had come out in a conciliatory way at the Hague, if we had hushed up the breaking out of the split—what would have been the result? The sectarians, especially the Bakunists, would have got another year in which to perpetrate, in the name of the International, much greater stupidities and infamies even; the workers, of the most developed countries would have turned away in disgust; the bubble would not have burst but, pierced by pinpricks, would have slowly collapsed; and the next Congress, which would have been bound to bring the crisis anyhow, would have turned into the lowest kind of personal row, because principes had already been sacrificed at the Hague. Then the International would indeed have gone to pieces—gone to pieces through “unity”! Instead of this we have now got rid of the rotten elements with honour to ourselves—the members of the Commune who were present at the last decisive session say that no session of the Commune left such a terrible impression upon them as this session of the tribunal which passed judgment on the traitors to the European proletariat—we have left them to expend all their forces in lying, slander and intrigue for ten months—and where are they? They, the alleged representatives of the great majority of the International, now announce that they do not dare to come to the next Congress (more details in an article which is being sent off for the Volksstaat with this letter). And if we had to do it again we should not, taking it altogether, act any differently—tactical mistakes are of course always committed.

In any case I think the efficient elements among the Lassallean will fall to you of themselves in course of time and that it would therefore be unwise to break off the fruit before it is ripe as the unity people want.

For the rest, old Hegel has already said; A party proves itself a victorious party by the fact that it splits and can stand the split. The movement of the proletariat necessarily passes through different stages of development; at every stage one section of people lags behind and does not join in the further advance....

**FREDERICK ENGELS TO FRIEDRICH SORGE**

London, September 12 (and 17), 1874

... With your resignation the old International is entirely wound up and at an end. And that is well. It belonged to the period of the Second Empire, during which the oppression reigning throughout Europe entailed unity and abstention from all internal polemics upon the workers’ movement, then just reawakening. It was the moment when the common, cosmopolitan interests of the proletariat could be put in the foreground; Germany, Spain, Italy, Denmark had only just come into the movement or were just coming into it. Actually in 1864 the theoretical character of the movement was still very confused everywhere in Europe, that is among the masses. German Communism did not yet exist as a workers’ party, Proudhonism was too weak to be able to insist on its particular fads, Bakunin’s new trash had not so much as come into being in his own head, even the leaders of the English trade unions thought the programme laid down in the Preamble to the Statutes gave them a basis for entering the movement. The first great success was bound to explode this naive conjunction of all fractions. This success was the Commune, which was without any doubt the child of the

1 The Second Empire was the empire of Louis Bonaparte, Napoleon III.—Ed.
2 With regard to the Considérants [Considerations] see the Inaugural Address of the First International in the present volume.—Ed.
International intellectually, although the International did not lift a finger to produce it, and for which the International—thus far with full justification—was held responsible.

When, thanks to the Commune, the International had become a moral force in Europe, the row at once began. Every fraction wanted to exploit the success for itself. The inevitable collapse arrived. Jealousy of the growing power of those people who were really ready to work further along the lines of the old comprehensive programme—the German Communists—drove the Belgian Proudhonists into the arms of the Bakunists adventurers. The Hague Congress was really the end—and for both parties. The only country where something could still be accomplished in the name of the old International was America, and by a happy instinct the executive was transferred there. Now its prestige is exhausted there too and any further effort to galvanise it into new life would be folly and waste of energy. For ten years the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies—and can look back upon its work with pride. But in its old form it has outlived itself. In order to produce a new International after the fashion of the old one, an alliance of all the proletarian parties in every country, a general suppression of the workers' movement like that which predominated from 1849-64 would be necessary. But for this the proletarian world has become too big, too extensive, I think that the next International—after Marx's writings have had some years of influence—will be directly communist and will openly proclaim our principles... 

Karl Marx to Friedrich Sorge

London, October 19, 1877

A rotten spirit is making itself felt in our party in Germany, not so much among the masses as among the leaders (upper class and "workers").

The compromise with the Lassalleans has led to compromise

1 The reference is to the compromise concluded between the Eisenachers and Lassalleans at the unification in Gotha in 1875. For details about this see p. 553 of the present volume.—Ed. 

Struggle for the Proletarian Party

with other half-way elements too; in Berlin (e.g., Most) with Dühring and his "admirers" but also with a whole gang of half-mature students and super-wise doctors who want to give socialism a "higher ideal" orientation, that is to say, to replace its materialistic basis (which demands serious objective study from anyone who tries to use it) by modern mythology with its goddesses of Justice, Freedom, Equality and Fraternity. Dr. Höchberg, who publishes the Zukunft [Future] is a representative of this tendency and has "bought himself into" the party—with the "noblest" intentions, I assume, but I do not give a damn for "intentions." Anything more miserable than his programme of the "future" has seldom seen the light of day with more "modest presumption."

The workers themselves when, like Mr. Most and Co., they give up work and become professional literary men, always set some theoretical mischief going and are always ready to attach themselves to muddleheads from the alleged "learned" caste. Utopian socialism especially, which for tens of years we have been clearing out of the German workers' heads with so much toil and labour—their freedom from it making them theoretically, and therefore also practically, superior to the French and English—utopian socialism, playing with fancy pictures of the future structure of society—is now raging in a much more futile form, not to be compared with the great-French and English utopians, but only with—Weitling. Naturally utopianism, which before the time of materialistic-critical socialism concealed the germs of the latter within itself, coming now after the event can only be silly; silly, stale and basically reactionary... 

Frederick Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

July 1, 1879

... Liebknecht's unseasonable mildness in the Reichstag has naturally enough produced a very unpleasant effect in Latin Europe, and also among the Germans the impression is very disagreeable.1 We said so at once by letter. The old easy-going 

2 Engels refers to the speech of Liebknecht in the German Reichstag on March 17, 1879. In this speech Liebknecht said among other things:
grouising agitation, with occasionally six weeks to six months in prison, has come to an end in Germany for ever. In whatever way the present situation may reach its end, the new movement begins on a more or less revolutionary basis and must therefore have a much more resolute character than the now-expired first period. The phrase of the peaceful achievement of the goal will either no longer be necessary or it will be taken more seriously. Bismarck, by making this phrase impossible and turning the movement into revolutionary channels, did us an enormous service which more than outweighs the trifling harm by temporarily stopping our propaganda.

On the other hand, this tame attitude in the Reichstag has resulted in the revolutionary phrase heroes beginning to strut about again and trying to disorganise the party by cliques and intrigues. The centre of these intrigues is the Workers' Association here.

MARX AND ENGELS TO BEBEL, LIEBKNECHT, BRACKE AND OTHERS

Circular Letter
London, September 1879

... He [Schweitzer] is further reproached with his "rejection of bourgeois democracy." And what has bourgeois democracy got to do with the Social-Democratic Party? If it consists

"... Our party is indeed a party of reform in the strictest sense of the word and not a party aiming at violent revolution, which would be sheer nonsense. ... I deny most emphatically that our efforts are directed towards the overthrow of the "existing state and social order."" (Stenographic Reports on the Proceedings of the German Reichstag, Berlin, 1879, Verlag der "Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," p. 441.)—Ed.

1 In 1879 the London Workers' Educational Association fell into the hands of the supporters of the "Left" opportunism tactics of Johann Most. Most and his followers later slipped down into an openly anarchist position and in 1880 were expelled from the ranks of the German Social-Democracy.—Ed.

2 In this letter Marx and Engels subjected to critical analysis the article entitled "Rückblicke auf die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland. Kritische Aphorismen" (A Retrospect of the Socialist Movement in Germany, Critical Aphorisms), which appeared in the Zurich Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik [Annual for Social Science and Social Policy]. The authors of this article were Höchberg, Bernstein and Schramm, called by Marx and Engels the "Zurich trinity."—Ed.

of "honest men" it cannot wish for admittance and if it does nevertheless wish to be admitted this can only be in order to start a row.

The Lassallian party "chose to conduct itself in the most one-sided way as a workers' party." The gentlemen who write that are themselves members of a party which conducts itself in the most one-sided way as a workers' party, they are at present invested with offices and dignities in this party. Here there is an absolute incompatibility. If they mean what they write they must leave the party, or at least resign their offices and dignities. If they do not do so, they are admitting that they are proposing to utilise their official position in order to combat the proletarian character of the party. If therefore the party leaves them their offices and dignities it will be betraying itself.

In the opinion of these gentlemen, then, the Social-Democratic Party should not be a one-sided workers' party but an all-sided party of "everyone imbued with a true love of humanity." It must prove this above all by laying aside its crude proletarian passions and placing itself under the guidance of educated, philanthropic bourgeois in order to "cultivate good taste" and "learn good form" (page 85). Then even the "disreputable behaviour" of many leaders will give way to a thoroughly respectable "bourgeois behaviour." (As if the externally disreputable appearance of those here referred to were not the least they can be reproached with!) Then, too, "numerous adherents from the circles of the educated and propertied classes will make their appearance. But these must first be won if the ... agitation conducted is to attain tangible successes.

German socialism has "attached too much importance to the winning of the masses and in so doing has neglected energetic(!) propaganda among the so-called upper strata of society." And then "the party still lacks men fitted to represent it in the Reichstag." It is, however, "desirable and necessary to entrust the mandate to men who have the time and opportunity to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the relevant materials.

The simple worker and small self-employed man ... has nec-
essary leisure for this only in rare and exceptional cases." So elect bourgeois!

In short: the working class of itself is incapable of its own emancipation. For this purpose it must place itself under the leadership of "educated and propertied" bourgeois who alone possess the "time and opportunity" to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers.

And secondly the bourgeoisie is on no account to be fought against but—to be won over by energetic propaganda.

But if one wants to win over the upper strata of society or only its well-disposed elements one must not frighten them on any account. And here the three Zurichers think they have made a reassuring discovery:

"Precisely at the present time, under the pressure of the Socialist Law, the party is showing that it is not inclined to pursue the path of violent bloody revolution but is determined . . . to follow the path of legality, i.e., of reform."

So if the 500,000 to 600,000 Social-Democratic voters—between a tenth and an eighth of the whole electorate and distributed over the whole width of the land—have the sense not to run their heads against a wall and to attempt a "bloody revolution" of one against ten, this proves that they also forbid themselves to take advantage at any future time of a tremendous external event, a sudden revolutionary upsurge arising from it or even a victory of the people gained in a conflict resulting from it. If Berlin should ever again be so uneducated as to have another March 18,1 the Social-Democrats, instead of taking part in the fight as "riff-raff" with a "mania for barricades," (page 88) must rather "follow the path of legality," act pacifically, clear away the barricades and if necessary march with the glorious army against the rough, uneducated, one-sided masses. Or if the gentlemen assert that this is not what they meant, what did they mean then?

1 This refers to the revolutionary barricade fighting in Berlin on March 18-19, 1848.—Ed.

But still better follows.

"The more quiet, objective and well-considered the party is, therefore, in the way it comes out with criticism of existing conditions and proposals for changes in them, the less possible will a repetition become of the present successful strategy (when the Socialist Law was introduced) by which the conscious reaction has intimidated the bourgeoisie by fear of the Red bogey" (page 88).

But in order to relieve the bourgeoisie of the last trace of anxiety it must be clearly and convincingly proved to them that the Red bogey is really only a bogey, and does not exist. But what is the secret of the Red bogey if it is not the bourgeoisie's dread of the inevitable life and death struggle between it and the proletariat? Dread of the inevitable decision of the modern class struggle? Do away with the class struggle and the bourgeoisie and "all independent people" will "not be afraid to go hand in hand with the proletariat." And the ones to be cheated will be precisely the proletariat.

Let the party therefore prove by its humble and repentant attitude that it has once and for all laid aside the "improprieties and excesses" which provoked the Socialist Law. If it voluntarily promises that it only intends to act within the limits of the Socialist Law, Bismarck and the bourgeoisie will surely have the kindness to repeal this then superfluous law!

"Let no one misunderstand us"; we do not want "to give up our party and our programme, but think that for years hence we shall have enough to do if we concentrate our whole strength and energy upon the attainment of certain immediate aims which must in any case be achieved before the realisation of the more far-reaching ends can be thought of." Then the bourgeois, petty bourgeois and workers who are "at present frightened away . . . by the far-reaching demands will join us in masses."

The programme is not to be given up but only postponed—to an indefinite period. One accepts it, though not really for oneself and one's own lifetime but posthumously as an heirloom to be handed down to one's children and grandchildren. In the meantime one devotes one's "whole strength and energy" to all sorts of petty rubbish and the patching up of the capitalist order of society in order at least to produce the appearance of some-
thing happening without at the same time scaring the bourgeoisie. There I must really praise the Communist Miguel, who proved his unshakable belief in the inevitable overthrow of capitalist society in the course of the next few hundred years by heartily carrying on swindles, contributing his honest best to the crash of 1873 and so really doing something to assist the collapse of the existing order.

Another offence against good form was also the "exaggerated attacks on the company promoters," who were after all "only children of their time"; "the abuse of Straussberg and similar people... would therefore have been better omitted." Unfortunately everyone is only a "child of his time" and if this is a sufficient excuse nobody ought ever to be attacked any more, all controversy, all struggle on our part ceases; we quietly accept all the kicks our adversaries give us because we, who are so wise, know that these adversaries are "only children of their time" and cannot act otherwise. Instead of repaying their kicks with interest we ought rather to pity these unfortunate.

Then again the party's support of the Commune had the disadvantage nevertheless "that people who were otherwise well disposed to us were alienated and in general the hatred of the bourgeoisie against us was increased." And further, "the party is not wholly without blame for the introduction of the October Law, for it had increased the hatred of the bourgeoisie in an unnecessary way."

There you have the programme of the three censors of Zurich. In clarity it leaves nothing to be desired. Least of all to us, who are very familiar with the whole of this phraseology from the 1848 days. It is the representatives of the petty bourgeoisie who are here presenting themselves, full of anxiety that the...

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3 The crash of 1873 ended the so-called "Gründertum" (the promoting frenzy), a period of furious speculation and stock exchange gambling which followed on the unification of Germany (1871).—Ed.

3 Straussberg, B. G. (1823-84). German financier, one of the best known participants in the promising frenzy of 1871-73.—Ed.

The Exceptional Law against the Socialists, which prohibited the Social-Democratic Party, came into force on October 19, 1878. The party was driven into illegality. The Exceptional Law was only annulled in 1890.

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proletarian under the pressure of its revolutionary position, may "go too far." Instead of decided political opposition, general compromise; instead of the struggle against the government and the bourgeoisie an attempt to win and to persuade; instead of defiant resistance to ill treatment from above, a humble submission and a confession that the punishment was deserved. Historically necessary conflicts are all reinterpreted as misunderstandings, and all discussion ends with the assurance that after all we are all agreed on the main point. The people who came out as bourgeoisie democrats in 1848 could just as well call themselves social-democrats now. To them the democratic republic was unattainably remote and to these people the overthrow of the capitalist system is equally so and therefore has absolutely no significance for the practical present-day politics; one can mediate, compromise and philanthropise to one's heart's content. It is just the same with the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie. It is recognised on paper because its existence can no longer be denied, but in practice it is hushed up, dilated, attenuated.

The Social-Democratic Party is not to be a workers' party, is not to burden itself with the hatred of the bourgeoisie or of anyone else; should above all conduct energetic propaganda among the bourgeoisie; instead of laying stress on far-reaching aims which frighten the bourgeoisie and are not after all attainable in our generation it should rather devote its whole strength and energy to those small petty-bourgeois patching-up reforms which by providing the old order of society with new props may perhaps transform the ultimate catastrophe into a gradual, piecemeal and so far as is possible peaceful process of dissolution. These are the same people who under the pretence of indefatigable activity not only do nothing themselves but also try to prevent anything happening at all except—chatter; the same people whose fear of every form of action in 1848 and 1849 obstructed the movement at every step and finally brought about its downfall, the same people who see reaction and are then quite astonished to find themselves at last in a blind alley where neither resistance nor flight is possible; the same people who
want to confine history within their narrow petty-bourgeois horizon and over whose heads history invariably proceeds to the order of the day.

As to their socialist content this has been adequately criticised already in the [Communist] Manifesto, chapter on "German or True Socialism." When the class struggle is pushed on one side as a disagreeable "crude" phenomenon, nothing remains as a basis for socialism but "true love of humanity" and empty phraseology about "justice."

It is an inevitable phenomenon, rooted in the course of development, that people from what have hitherto been the ruling classes should also join the militant proletariat and contribute cultural elements to it. We clearly stated this in the [Communist] Manifesto. But here there are two points to be noted:

First, in order to be of use to the proletarian movement these people must also bring real cultural elements to it. But with the great majority of the German bourgeoisie converts that is not the case. Neither the Zukunft [Future] nor the Neue Gesellschaft [New Society] have contributed anything which could advance the movement one step further. Here there is an absolute lack of real cultural material, whether concrete or theoretical. In its place we get attempts to bring superficially adopted socialist ideas into harmony with the most varied theoretical standpoints which these gentlemen have brought with them from the university or elsewhere and of which, owing to the process of decomposition in which the remnants of German philosophy are at present involved, each is more confused than the last. Instead of thoroughly studying the new science themselves to begin with, each of them preferred to trim it to fit the point of view he had already, made a private science of his own without more ado and at once came forward with the claim that he was ready to teach it. Hence there are about as many points of view among these gentry as there are heads; instead of producing clarity in a single case they have only produced desperate confusion—fortunately almost exclusively among themselves. Cultural elements whose first principle is to teach what they have not learnt can be very well dispensed with by the party.

Secondly, if people of this kind from other classes join the proletarian movement, the first condition is that they should not bring any remnants of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc., prejudices with them but should whole-heartedly adopt the proletarian point of view. But these gentlemen, as has been proved, are stuffed and cramped with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas. In such a petty-bourgeois country as Germany these ideas certainly have their own justification. But only outside the Social-Democratic Workers' Party. If these gentlemen form themselves into a Social-Democratic Petty-Bourgeois Party they have a perfect right to do so; one could then negotiate with them, form a bloc according to circumstances, etc. But in a workers' party they are an adulterating element. If reasons exist for tolerating them there for the moment it is also a duty only to tolerate them, to allow them no influence in the party leadership and to remain aware that a break with them is only a matter of time. The time, moreover, seems to have come. How the party can tolerate the authors of this article in its midst any longer is to us incomprehensible. But if the leadership of the party should fall more or less into the hands of such people then the party will simply be castrated and there will be an end of proletarian incisiveness.

As for ourselves, in view of our whole past there is only one path open to us. For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggle as the immediate driving force of history and in particular the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the great lever of the modern social revolution; it is therefore impossible for us to co-operate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the International was formed we expressly formulated the battle-cry: the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. We cannot therefore co-operate with people who say that the workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves and must first be freed from above by philanthropic bourgeois and petty bourgeois. If the new party organ adopts a line corresponding to the views of these gentlemen, and is bourgeois and not proletarian, then nothing remains for us, much though we should regret it, but publicly to declare our
opposition to it, and to dissolve the solidarity with which we have hitherto represented the German Party abroad. But it is to be hoped that things will not come to that... 

Frederick Engels to August Bebel

London, November 14, 1879

... Unpleasant concessions to the German philistine are contained in the third part. What is the point of the entirely superfluous passage about "civil war," and of respectfully touching one's hat to "public opinion" which in Germany will always be that of the pot-house philistine? Why the complete blurring here of the class character of the movement? Why give the anarchists this satisfaction? And, in addition, all these concessions are perfectly useless. The German philistine is the embodiment of cowardice, he only respects those who inspire him with fear. But whoever seeks to curry favour with him he considers his equal, and only respects him as an equal, that is, not at all. And now, after the "storm" of pot-house philistine indignation called "public opinion" has admittedly subsided, now that the burden of taxation has already made the people submissive again in any case, why all this soft soap now? If you only knew what sort of an impression it makes abroad! It is very good that a party organ should be edited by people who are in the midst of the party and of the struggle. But if you were only six months abroad, you would think very differently of this quite unnecessary self-humiliation on the part of the party members in the Reichstag towards the philistine. The storm which broke over the French socialists after the Commune was something very different from the howling at Nobiling in Germany. And with how much more pride and self-confidence did the French behave! Where can you find there such weaknesses, such compliments to the opponent? They were silent when they could not speak freely. They let the petty bourgeois howl till they were tired, they knew their time would again come, and now it is there... 

... We here neither underestimate the difficulties against which the party has to struggle in Germany nor the importance of the successes already won in spite of them and the really model behaviour of the party masses so far. Needless to say, we rejoice over every victory won in Germany just as much as over one gained elsewhere, and even more, since the German party developed from the beginning on the basis of our theoretical views. But for that very reason we are particularly interested in seeing that the practical attitude of the German party and especially the public utterances of the party leadership remain in harmony with the general theory. Our criticism is undoubtedly unpleasant for some; but it must surely be of more advantage to the party and the party leadership than all uncritical compliments to have a couple of people abroad who, uninfluenced by confusing local conditions and details of the fight, from time to time test events and utterances by the theoretical principles valid for all modern proletarian movements, and reflect for it the impression which its actions create outside Germany.

Frederick Engels to Eduard Bernstein

London, October 25, 1881

... But it is true that Guesde came over when it was a matter of drawing up the draft programme for the French Workers' Party. In the presence of Lafargue and myself, here in my room, Marx dictated to him the "considérants" of it: the worker is only free when he becomes the owner of his instruments of labour—this can take place either in individual or collective form. The form of individual ownership is being overcome as a result of economic development and is becoming more completely so from day to day—there remains, therefore, only the collective form of ownership, etc.—a masterpiece of convincing argument making things clear to the masses in a few words, such as I have seldom heard and which in this concise...

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1 In this letter Engels criticises the report of the Social-Democratic deputies in the Reichstag, published in November 1879. The report contained a number of obviously opportunistic passages.—Ed.

2 In June 1879, Nobiling, while of unwound mind, made an attempt on the life of Wilhelm I. This attempt afforded the pretext for the Anti-Socialist Law.—Ed.
form amazed even me. The remaining contents of the programme were then discussed; we put a few things in and others out, but how little Guesde was Marx's mouthpiece is shown by the fact that he insisted on including his crackbrained idea of the minimum du salaire and, as not we but the French are responsible for it, we finally let him have his way, although he admitted that theoretically it was nonsense.

The French then discussed this programme afterwards and accepted it with a few alterations, among which Malon's were no improvement.

But what most annoys the petty carpers who are nothing and would like to be everything is this: by his theoretical and practical achievements Marx has won for himself the position that the best people of all labour movements in the various countries have full confidence in him. They turn to him for advice at decisive moments and generally find that his advice is the best. He has this position in Germany, in France, in Russia, to say nothing of the smaller countries. It is therefore not Marx who imposes his opinion, far less his will, on these people. It is these people themselves who come to him. And that is just the basis of the peculiar influence of Marx, so extremely important for the movement.

Malon also wanted to come here but he wanted to obtain a special invitation from Marx through Lafargue, which of course he did not get; one was ready to discuss with him as with every other person de bonne volonté but invite him! What for? Who has ever been invited like that?

Marx's relations to the other national movements, and in the second place mine too, are the same as to the French. We are continually in touch with them, in so far as it is worth while and opportunity offers, but any attempt at influencing the people against their will would only do us harm and destroy the old confidence from the time of the International. And for that we have too much experience in revolutionaribus rebus.

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1 Minimum wage.—Ed.
2 Of good will.—Ed.
3 In revolutionary matters.—Ed.
indeed also admire the heroism with which these poor devils have held out in such numbers.

But they are not a proper kernel for a great national movement. Under certain circumstances—as between 1865 and 1870—their misery makes them more open to social-democratic views than the men of the big cities, but the same misery also makes them less reliable.

Now the whole situation is different, Berlin, Hamburg, Breslau, Leipzig, Dresden, Mayence, Offenbach, Bremen, Elberfeld, Solingen, Nürnberg, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Hanau as well as Chemnitz and the districts of the Erzgebirge, that gives quite a different foundation.

Frederick Engels to August Bebel

London, October 28, 1882

... In France the long expected split has taken place. The original conjunction of Guesde and Lafargue with Malon and Brousse was no doubt unavoidable when the party was founded, but Marx and I never had any illusions that it could last. The issue is purely one of principle: is the struggle to be conducted as a class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie or is it to be permitted that in good opportunist (or as it is called in the socialist translation: possibilist) style the class character of the movement, together with the programme, are everywhere to be dropped where there is a chance of winning more votes. More adherents, by this means? Malon and Brousse, by declaring themselves in favour of the latter alternative, have sacrificed the proletarian class character of the movement and made separation inevitable. All the better. The development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere amidst internal struggles and France, which

The split in the French Workers' Party took place at the congress in St. Etienne (September 23, 1882). The Central Committee in its report to the congress proposed to expel the Marxists from the party. The majority of the congress—32 delegates with Guesde and Lafargue at their head—left the congress, the majority of which was on the side of the opportunists. The Guesdist convenors their own congress in Rouen (September 27, 1882). —Ed.

STRUGGLE FOR THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

is now forming a workers' party for the first time, is no exception. In Germany we have got beyond the first phase of the internal struggle, other phases still lie before us. Unity is quite a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things which stand higher than unity. And when, like Marx and myself, one has fought harder all one's life long against the alleged socialists than against anyone else (for we only regarded the bourgeoisie as a class and hardly ever involved ourselves in conflicts with individual bourgeois), one cannot greatly grieve that the inevitable struggle has broken out.

Frederick Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

London, June 15, 1885

... In a petty-bourgeois country like Germany the party is bound also to have a petty-bourgeois "educated" Right wing, which it shakes off at the decisive moment. Petty-bourgeois socialism in Germany dates from 1844 and was already criticised in The Communist Manifesto. It is as immortal as the German petty bourgeois himself. So long as the Anti-Socialist Laws are in force I am not in favour of our provoking the split, because our weapons are unevenly matched. But if the gentlemen provoke a split themselves by suppressing the proletarian character of the Party and trying to replace it by a stick-in-the-mud aesthetic-sentimental philanthropy without force or life, then we must just take it as it comes. ...
LETTERS ON IRELAND

Frederick Engels to Karl Marx

Manchester, May 23, 1856

In our tour in Ireland we came from Dublin to Galway on the west coast, then twenty miles north inland, then to Limerick, down the Shannon to Tarbett, Tralee, Killarney and back to Dublin. A total of about four to five hundred English miles in the country itself, so that we have seen about two-thirds of the whole country. With the exception of Dublin, which bears the same relation to London as Düsseldorf does to Berlin, and has quite the character of a small one-time capital, all English-built

too, the whole country, and especially the towns, has exactly the appearance of France or Northern Italy. Gendarmes, priests, lawyers, bureaucrats, squires, in pleasing profusion and a total absence of any and every industry, so that it would be difficult to understand what all these parasitic growths found to live on if the misery of the peasants did not supply the other half of the picture. “Strong measures” are visible in every corner of the country, the government meddles with everything, of so-called self-government there is not a trace. Ireland may be regarded as the first English colony and as one which because of its proximity is still governed exactly in the old way, and here one can already observe that the so-called liberty of English citizens is based on the oppression of the colonies. I have never seen so many gendarmes in any country and the drink-sodden expression of the Prussian gendarme is developed to its highest perfection here among the constabulary, who are armed with carbines, bayonets and handcuffs.

Characteristic of this country are its ruins, the oldest from the fifth and sixth centuries, the latest from the nineteenth—with every intervening period. The most ancient are all churches; after 1100, churches and castles; after 1800, the houses of peasants. The whole of the West, but especially in the neighbourhood of Galway, is covered with these ruined peasant houses, most of which have only been deserted since 1846. I never thought that a famine could have such tangible reality. Whole villages are devastated, and there among them lie the splendid parks of the lesser landlords, who are almost the only people still living there, mostly lawyers. Famine, emigration and clearances together have accomplished this. There are not even cattle to be seen in the fields. The land is an utter desert which nobody wants. In County Clare, south of Galway, it is rather better, here there are at least some cattle, and the hills toward Limerick are excellently cultivated, mostly by Scottish farmers, the ruins have been cleared away and the country has a bourgeois appearance. In the South-West there are a lot of mountains and bogs but also wonderfully rich forest growth, beyond that again fine pasture, especially in Tipperary, and towards Dublin land which is,

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1 The three letters of Marx and Engels on Ireland reprinted here afford a classical example of their policy in the national question. Lenin wrote as follows on the position taken up by Marx and Engels in the Irish question:

"On the Irish question also, Marx and Engels pursued a consistently proletarian policy, which really trained the masses in the spirit of democracy and socialism. Only this policy was capable of ridding both Ireland and England of the half century of delay in introducing the necessary changes and the mutilation of these changes by the Liberals to please the reaction.

"The policy of Marx and Engels on the Irish question provided a magnificent model—which preserves its enormous practical significance to this day—of what the attitude of the proletariat in oppressing nations towards national movements should be; it provided a warning against that 'servile haste' with which the petty bourgeoisie of all countries, of all colours and languages, hasten to declare that the alteration of state frontiers created by the violence and privileges of the landlords and the bourgeoisie of one nation is 'utopian.'

"Had the Irish and the English proletariat not adopted Marx's policy, had they not put forward separation of Ireland as their slogan, it would have been the most malicious opportunism on their part, an oblivion to the task of the democrats and the socialists, a surrender to English reaction and the bourgeoisie." (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XVII, "On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination.")—Ed.
one can see, gradually coming into the hands of big farmers.

The country has been completely ruined by the English wars of conquest from 1100 to 1850 (for in reality both the wars and the state of siege lasted as long as that). It is a fact that most of the ruins were produced by destruction during the wars. The people itself has got its peculiar character from this, and despite all their Irish nationalist fanaticism the fellows feel that they are no longer at home in their own country, Ireland for the Saxon! That is now being realised. The Irishman knows he cannot compete with the Englishman, who comes with means in every respect superior; emigration will go on until the predominantly, indeed almost exclusively, Celtic character of the population is all to hell. How often have the Irish started to try and achieve something, and every time they have been crushed, politically and industrially. By consistent oppression they have been artificially converted into an utterly demoralised nation and now fulfil the notorious function of supplying England, America, Australia, etc., with prostitutes, casual labourers, pimps, thieves, swindlers, beggars and other rabble. This demoralised character persists in the aristocracy too. The landowners who everywhere else have taken on bourgeois qualities, are here completely demoralised. Their country seats are surrounded by enormous, wonderfully beautiful parks, but all around is waste land, and where the money is supposed to come from it is impossible to see. These fellows ought to be shot. Of mixed blood, mostly tall, strong handsome chaps, they all wear enormous moustaches under colossal Roman noses, give themselves the sham military airs of retired colonels, travel around the country after all sorts of pleasures, and, if one makes an inquiry, they haven't a penny, are laden with debts and live in dread of the Encumbered Estates Court...

KARL MARX TO DR. KUGELMANN

London, November 29, 1869

... You will probably have seen in the Volksstaat the resolutions against Gladstone which I proposed on the question of the Irish amnesty. I have now attacked Gladstone—and it has attracted attention here—just as I formerly attacked Palmerston. The demagogic refugees here love to fall upon the continental despots from a safe distance. That sort of thing only attracts me, when it happens sultu instantis tyranni.2

Nevertheless both my coming out on this Irish amnesty question and my further proposal to the General Council to discuss the relation of the English working class to Ireland and to frame resolutions on it, have of course other objects besides that of speaking out loudly and decidedly for the oppressed Irish against their oppressors.

I have become more and more convinced—and the only question is to bring this conviction home to the English working class—that it can never do anything decisive here in England until it separates its policy with regard to Ireland in the most definite way from the policy of the ruling classes, until it not only makes common cause with the Irish, but actually takes the initiative in dissolving the Union2 established in 1801 and replacing it by a free federal relationship. And, indeed, this must be done, not as a matter of sympathy with Ireland, but as a demand made in the interests of the English proletariat. If not, the English people will remain tied to the leading-strings of the ruling classes, because it must join with them in a common front against Ireland. Every one of its movements in England itself is crippled by the disunion with the Irish, who form a very important section of the working class in England. The primary condition of emancipation here—the overthrow of the English landed oligarchy—remains impossible because its posi-

2 This refers to Marx's speech at the end of November 1869 in moving his resolution on the Irish question, adopted unanimously by the General Council of the First International after a long and stormy debate. The resolution welcomed the Irish struggle for the amnesty of the imprisoned leaders of the fight for Irish national emancipation; it expressed its protest against the behaviour of the English Prime Minister Gladstone who "clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of mis-government and the people they belong to."—Ed.

2 In the immediate presence of the tyrant.—Ed.

2 The "Act of Union" was passed in England in 1801: it abolished the Irish parliament and made Ireland completely dependent on England.—Ed.
tion here cannot be stormed so long as it maintains its strongly entrenched outposts in Ireland. But there, once affairs are in the hands of the Irish people itself, once it is made its own legislator and ruler, once it becomes autonomous, the abolition of the landed aristocracy (to a large extent the same persons as the English landlords) will be infinitely easier than here, because in Ireland it is not merely a simple economic question, but at the same time a national question, since the landlords there are not like those in England, the traditional dignitaries and representatives, but are the mortally hated oppressors of a nation. And not only does England’s internal social development remain crippled by her present relation with Ireland; her foreign policy and particularly her policy with regard to Russia and America, suffers the same fate.

But since the English working class undoubtedly throws the decisive weight into the scale of social emancipation generally, the lever has to be applied here. As a matter of fact, the English republic under Cromwell met shipwreck in—Ireland.¹ Non bis in idem.² The Irish have played a capital joke on the English government by electing the “convict felon” O’Donovan Rossa³ to parliament. The government papers are already threatening a renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act,⁴ a “renewed system of terror.” In fact, England never has and never can—so long as the present relation lasts—rule Ireland otherwise than by the most abominable reign of terror and the most reprehensible corruption.

Karl Marx to Siegfried Meyer and Karl Vogt
London, April 9, 1870

... After occupying myself with the Irish question ¹ for many years I have come to the conclusion that the decisive blow against the English ruling classes (and it will be decisive for the workers’ movement all over the world) cannot be delivered in England but only in Ireland. On December 1, 1869, the General Council issued a confidential circular ² drawn up by me in French (for the reaction upon England only the French, not the German papers, are important) on the relations of the Irish national struggle to the emancipation of the working class, and therefore on the attitude which the International Working Men’s Association should take towards the Irish question. I will here give you quite shortly the decisive points.

Ireland is the bulwark of the English landed aristocracy. The exploitation of this country is not only one of the main sources of their national wealth, it is their greatest moral strength. They, in fact, represent the domination of England over Ireland. Ireland is therefore the great means by which the English aristocracy maintains its domination in England itself.

If, on the other hand, the English army and police were withdrawn tomorrow there would immediately be an agrarian revolution in Ireland. But the overthrow of the English aristocracy in

¹ In 1641, during the English bourgeois revolution, an insurrection broke out in Ireland which led to the greater part of this island severing itself completely from England. Cromwell did not succeed in crushing the rising until 1649. The “pacification” of Ireland was effected with unprecedented cruelty; it ended with an enormous expropriation of the lands of the Irish population. The soldiers and officers of Cromwell’s army were rewarded, and the suppliers of the army paid, with the land seized from the Irish. All this converted the Irish into opponents of the English republic, into an active power struggling against the English revolution. Ed.

² Not twice for the same thing!—Ed.

³ O’Donovan Rossa—Irish politician and journalist. In 1865 he founded in Dublin the Irish People, the organ of the Irish national and revolutionary society, the Fenian Brotherhood. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on account of the revolutionary character of this paper. In 1869 he was elected a member of parliament for Tipperary. The election was annulled but he was set free and emigrated to America. Ed.

⁴ The Habeas Corpus Act was passed by the English parliament in 1679. It provides that every arrest must be judicially confirmed and the arrested person either brought to trial within a short period or set free.


⁶ The Irish question was put by Marx on the agenda of the session of the General Council held on November 15, 1869. Marx put this question forward in connection with the agitation for the amnesty of the imprisoned Irish Fenians. The circular referred to in this letter has not been preserved. Ed.
Ireland involves and has as a necessary consequence its overthrow in England. And this would fulfil the prerequisites for the proletarian revolution in England. The destruction of the English landed aristocracy in Ireland is an infinitely easier operation than in England itself because the land question has hitherto been the exclusive form of the social question in Ireland, because it is a question of existence, of life and death, for the immense majority of the Irish people and because it is at the same time inseparable from the national question quite apart from the passionate character of the Irish and the fact that they are more revolutionary than the English.

As for the English bourgeoisie, they have in the first place a common interest with the aristocracy in transforming Ireland into a mere pasture land which provides the English market with meat and wool at the cheapest possible prices. Hence it is interested in reducing, by expropriation and forcible emigration, the Irish population to such a small number that English capital, invested in land leased for farming, can function with "security." They have the same interest in clearing the estate of Ireland as they had in clearing the agricultural districts of England and Scotland. The six to ten thousand pound sterling absentee landlord and other Irish revenues which at present flow annually to London have likewise to be taken into account.

But the English bourgeoisie has also much more important interests in the present Irish regime. Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of farming, Ireland supplies its constant surplus to the English labour market and thus forces down wages and lowers the moral and material position of the English working class. And most important of all: every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class population divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life.

In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over himself. He cherishes religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the "niggers" in the former slave states of the U.S.A. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own coin.

He looks upon the English worker as sharing in the guilt for the English domination in Ireland while at the same time serving as its stupid tool.

This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. It is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite their organisation. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power. And of this that class is well aware.

But the evil does not stop there. It continues across the ocean. The antagonism between English and Irish is the hidden basis of the conflict between the United States and England. It makes any honest and serious co-operation between the working classes of the two countries impossible. It enables the governments of both countries, whenever they think fit, to break the edge of the social conflict by their mutual threats and if need be by war with one another.

England, as the metropolis of capital, as the power which

1This refers to the proletariat and the poor farmers of the former slave states of the South.—Ed.
2The colonial exploitation of Ireland by England led to the complete impoverishment of the Irish village; the peasant population had to choose between dying of starvation and emigration. The population sank from eight million in 1846 to four and a half million at the end of the century. Between 1851 and 1905, over four million Irish emigrated to the U.S.A. They formed a considerable portion of the American population particularly in the ranks of the working class, and they retained all their hatred of their English oppressors. The American bourgeoisie was always inclined to utilise this national hatred both in the class struggle inside America and also as a weapon against England, by permitting the organisation of Irish revolutionary conspirative societies on American soil.—Ed.
has hitherto ruled the world market, is for the time being the most important country for the workers’ revolution, and moreover the only country in which the material conditions for this revolution exist up to a certain point. Therefore to hasten the social revolution in England is the most important object of the International Working Men’s Association. The sole means of hastening it is to make Ireland independent.

Hence the task of the “International” is everywhere to put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground and everywhere to side openly with Ireland. The special task of the Central Council in London is to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or human sympathy but the first condition of their own social emancipation. . . .

KARL MARX

THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

Correspondence of the New York Daily Tribune

London, Friday, June 10, 1853

Telegraphic dispatches from Vienna announce that the pacific solution of the Turkish, Sardinian and Swiss questions, is regarded there as a certainty.

Marx and Engels began to study the Eastern question in 1853. Just at this period we find them discussing in correspondence the basic features of the historical development of the Oriental countries. The role of the village-community, the significance of artificial irrigation, questions of peculiarities in the origin of private property in the soil, the bases of Oriental despotism, the role and influence of colonial policy on the development of the largest colonial and semi-colonial countries—such are the questions dealt with in the correspondence between Marx and Engels. The ideas developed in this correspondence are summarised in detail in a series of articles by Marx on China and India. In this period the Taiping insurrection was taking place in China. In India, the Sepoy rising was in course of preparation and broke out in 1857. Thus the study of Oriental problems was for Marx not only of theoretical interest but resulted from the demands of the revolutionary struggle. The economic crisis which broke out in 1847 had already revealed the enormous importance of India and China from the standpoint of the development of capitalism and of the course of the industrial cycle in the mother countries.

Theoretical interest and the practical requirements of the revolutionary struggle alike caused Marx’s attention to be directed to India.

Marx’s articles on India have not lost any of their significance even today. The revisionists, headed by Bernstein, came forward as early as the nineties of the last century with the theory of the civilizing role of colonial policy and later with the theory of the progressive role of imperialism in the colonies. They defended their point of view at the congresses of the Second International in Paris, Amsterdam and Stuttgart. In the post-war period, at the congress in Brussels of 1928, the Second International incorporated this anti-Marxist theory in its official programme. This theory is the real basis of the theory of “decolonisation” defended by the opportunists at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, according to which the imperialist powers, as it were, promote the development and industrialisation of the colonies.

Marx’s articles on India provide an answer to these questions which has not become obsolete even today; they reveal the real role of colonial
Last Night the debate on India was continued in the House of Commons, in the usual dull manner. Mr. Blackett charged the statements of Sir Charles Wood and Sir J. Hogg with bearing the stamp of optimist falsehood. A lot of ministerial and directional advocates rebuked the charge as well as they could, and the inevitable Mr. Hume summed up by calling on ministers to withdraw their bill. Debate adjourned.

Hindustan is an Italy of Asiatic dimensions, the Himalayas for the Alps, the Plains of Bengal for the Plains of Lombardy, the Deccan for the Appenines, and the Isle of Ceylon for the Island of Sicily. The same rich variety in the products of the soil, and the same dismemberment in the political configuration. Just as Italy has, from time to time, been compressed by the conqueror's sword into different national masses, so do we find Hindustan, when not under the pressure of the Mohammedan, or the Mogul, or the Briton, dissolved into as many independent and conflicting states as it numbered towns, or even villages. Yet, in a social point of view, Hindustan is not the Italy, but the Ireland of the East. And this strange combination of Italy and of Ireland, of a world of voluptuousness and of a world of woes, is anticipated in the ancient traditions of the religion of Hindustan. That religion is at once a religion of sensualist exuberance, and a religion of self-torturing ascetism; a religion of the Lingam 1 and of the Juggernaut; 2 the religion of the Monk, and of the Bayadere.

I share not the opinion of those who believe in a golden age of Hindustan, without recurring, however, like Sir Charles Wood, for the confirmation of my view, to the authority of Khuli-Khan. But take, for example, the times of Aurangzeb; 3 policy and refute the views both of the decolonisation theories and of the Narodniki (Populists). They give an estimate of British rule in India, opening up the prospect of revolution in England and in India.—Ed.

1 Lingam religion. The cult of the deity Siva; widespread among the Southern India sect of the Lingayat, with about a million adherents, which preaches mortification of the flesh.—Ed.

2 See p. 663 in the present volume.—Ed.

3 Aurangzeb (Died 1707). The last Mogul emperor of India. After his death the Mogul state in India (1526-1707) came to an end as a centralised whole.—Ed.

the epoch, when the Mogul appeared in the North, and the Portuguese in the south; or the age of Mohammedan invasion, and of the Heptarchy 1 in Southern India; or, if you will, go still more back to antiquity, take the mythological chronology of the Brahmin himself, who places the commencement of Indian misery in an epoch even more remote than the Christian creation of the world.

There cannot, however, remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindustan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before. I do not allude to European despotism, planted upon Asiatic despotism, by the British East India Company, forming a more monstrous combination than any of the divine monsters startling us in the temple of Salsette. 2 This is no distinctive feature of British colonial rule, but only an imitation of the Dutch, and so much so that in order to characterise the working of the British East India Company, it is sufficient to literally repeat what Sir Stanford Raffles, the English governor of Java, said of the old Dutch East India Company:

"The Dutch Company, actuated solely by the spirit of gain and viewing their subjects with less regard or consideration than a West India planter formerly viewed a gang of slaves upon his estate, because the latter had paid the purchase money of human property, which the other had not, employed all the existing machinery of despotism to squeeze from the people their utmost mite of contribution, the last dregs of their labour, and thus aggravated the evils of a capricious and semi-barbarous government, by working it with all the practiced ingenuity of politicians, and all the monopolising selfishness of traders." 3

All the civil wars, invasions, revolutions, conquests, famines, strangely complex, rapid and destructive as the successive action

1 The Heptarchy. The conventional designation of the political dismemberment of India in the period of early feudalism (sixth to eighth centuries of our era). Marx uses this expression to denote the political breakup of India.—Ed.

2 Temple of Salsette. A cave temple situated on the island of that name in the Bombay Presidency. It contains some 5,000 carvings, chiselled in stone like the entire temple itself.—Ed.
in Hindostan may appear, did not go deeper than its surface. England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing. This loss of his old world, with no gain of a new one, imparts a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindu and separates Hindostan, ruled by Britain, from all its ancient traditions, and from the whole of its past history.

There have been in Asia, generally, from immemorial times, but three departments of government, that of finance, or the plunder of the interior; that of war, or the plunder of the exterior; and, finally, the department of public works. Climate and territorial conditions, especially the vast tracts of desert, extending from the Sahara, through Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary, to the most elevated Asiatic highlands, constituted artificial irrigation by canals and waterworks, the basis of Oriental agriculture. As in Egypt and India, inundations are used for fertilising the soil in Mesopotamia, Persia, etc.; advantage is taken of a high level for feeding irrigative canals. This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which in the Occident drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated in the Orient, where civilisation was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralising power of government. Hence an economical function devolved upon all Asiatic governments, the function of providing public works. This artificial fertilisation of the soil, dependent on a central government and immediately decaying with the neglect of irrigation and drainage, explains the otherwise strange fact that we now find whole territories barren and desert that were once brilliantly cultivated, as Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in Yemen, and large provinces of Egypt, Persia and Hindostan; it also explains how a single war of devastation has been able to depopulate a country for centuries, and to strip it of all its civilisation.

Now, the British in East India accepted from their predecessors the department of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works. Hence the deterioration of an agriculture which is not capable of being conducted on the

BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

British principle of free competition, of laissez-faire and laissez-aller. But in Asiatic empires we are quite accustomed to see agriculture deteriorating under one government and reviving again under some other government. There the harvests correspond to good or bad government, as they change in Europe with good or bad seasons. Thus the oppression and neglect of agriculture, bad as it is, could not be looked upon as the final blow dealt to Indian society by the British intruder, had it not been attended by a circumstance of quite different importance, a novelty in the annals of the whole Asiatic world. However changing the political aspect of India's past must appear, its social condition has remained unaltered since its remotest antiquity, until the first decennium of the nineteenth century. The hand-loom and the spinning wheel, producing their regular myriads of spinners and weavers were the pivots of the structure of that society. From immemorial times, Europe received the admirable textures of Indian labour, sending in return for them her precious metals, and furnishing thereby his material to the goldsmith, that indispensable member of Indian society, whose love of finery is so great that even the lowest class, those who go about nearly naked, have commonly a pair of golden earrings and a gold ornament of some kind hung round their necks. Rings on the fingers and toes have also been common. Women as well as children frequently wore massive bracelets and anklets of gold or silver, and statuettes of divinities in gold and silver were met with in the households. It was the British intruder who broke up the Indian hand-loom and destroyed the spinning wheel. England began with driving the Indian cottons from the European market; it then introduced twist into Hindostan and, in the end inundated the very mother country of cotton with cottons. From 1818 to 1836 the export of twist from Great Britain to India rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,290. In 1824 the export of British muslins to India hardly amounted to 1,000,000 yards while in 1837 it surpassed 64,000,000 yards. But at the same time the population of Dacca decreased from 150,000 inhabitants to 20,000. This decline of Indian towns celebrated for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole sur-
face of Hindustan, the union between agricultural and manufacturing industry.

These two circumstances—the Hindu, on the one hand, leaving, like all Oriental peoples, to the central government the care of the great public works, the prime condition of his agriculture and commerce, dispersed, on the other hand, over the surface of the country, and agglomerated in small centres by the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits—these two circumstances had brought about, since the remotest times, a social system of particular features—the so-called village system, which gave to each of these small unions their independent organisation and distinct life. The peculiar character of this system may be judged from the following description, contained in an old official report of the British House of Commons on Indian affairs:

“A village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundred or thousand acres of arable and waste lands: politically viewed it resembles a corporation or township. Its proper establishment of officers and servants consists of the following descriptions: the pontal, or head inhabitant, who has generally the superintendence of the affairs of the village, settles the disputes of the inhabitants, attends to the police and performs the duty of collecting the revenue within his village, a duty which his personal influence and minute acquaintance with the situation and concerns of the people render him the best qualified for this charge. The harram keeps the accounts of cultivation, and registers everything connected with it. The teller and the tole, the duty of the former of which consists in gaining information of crimes and offences, and in escorting and protecting persons travelling from one village to another; the province of the latter appearing to be more immediately confined to the village, consisting among other duties, in guarding the crops and assisting in measuring them. The boundary man, who preserves the limits of the village or gives evidence respecting them in cases of dispute. The superintendent of tanks and watercourses distributes the water for the purposes of agriculture. The Brahmin, who performs the village worship. The schoolmaster, who is seen teaching the children in a village to read and write in the sand. The calendar-Brahmin, or astrologer, etc., these officers and servants generally constitute the establishment of a village; but in some parts of the country it is of less extent; some of the duties and functions above described being united in the same person; in others it exceeds the above-named number of individuals. Under this simple form of municipal government, the inhabitants of the country have lived from time immemorial. The boundaries of the villages have been but seldom altered; and, though the villages themselves have been sometimes injured and even desolated by war, famine or disease, the same name, the same limits, the same interests and even the same families, have continued for ages. The inhabitants gave themselves no trouble about the breaking up and divisions of kingdoms: while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred, or to what sovereign it devolves; its internal economy remains unchanged. The pontal is still the head inhabitant, and still acts as the petty judge or magistrate, and collector or rector of the village.”

These small stereotype forms of social organisation have been to the greater part dissolved, and are disappearing, not so much through the brutal interference of the British tax-gatherer and the British soldier, as to the working of English steam and English free trade. Those family communities were based on domestic industry, in that peculiar combination of hand-weaving, hand-spinning and hand-tilling agriculture which gave them self-supporting power. English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindu spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilised communities, by blowing up their economical basis and thus produced the greatest, and to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia.

Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organisations disorganised and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilisation, and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the resisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the helpless prey of any aggressor who deigned to notice it at all. We must not forget that this undignified, stentorian, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder
itself a religious rite in Hindustan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances, instead of elevating man the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalising worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Hanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow.

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindustan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crime of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution.

Then, whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of an ancient world may have for our personal feelings, we have the right, in point of history, to exclaim with Goethe:

"Selbst diese Qual uns quälen
Du sie mensch lüst vernehmt,
Hat nicht myriaden Seen
Timur's Herrschaft aufgezehrt?"

[Should this torture then torment us
Since it brings us greater pleasure?
Were not through the rule of Timur
Souls devoured without measure?]  

KARL MARX

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I propose in this letter to conclude my observations on India. How came it that English supremacy was established in India? The paramount power of the Great Mogul was broken by the Mogul Viceroyas. The power of the Viceroyas was broken by the Mahrattas.  

1 The title of the feudal Indian Mohammedan emperors of the Turkish Baber dynasty, which ruled from 1526 to 1857.—Ed.

2 A confederation of several Indian feudal states, formed in Central India in the eighteenth century; the power of the Mahrattas was broken by the British, who conquered their territory in 1817 after a series of ferocious wars.—Ed.

3 The holy cow in the Hindu religion, the bearer of wealth and happiness; it is often worshipped as the god of earth and fertility.—Ed.
we call its history, is but the history of the successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society. The question, therefore, is not whether the English had a right to conquer India, but whether we are to prefer India conquered by the Turk, by the Persian, by the Russian, to India conquered by the Briton.

England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, and the other regenerating—the annihilation of old Asiatic society, 1 and the laying the material foundations of Western society in Asia.

Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, who had successively overrun India, soon became Hinduised, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilisation of their subjects. The British were the first conquerors superior, and therefore inaccessible to Hindu civilisation. They destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry, and by levelling all that was great and elevated in the native society. The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that destruction. The work of regeneration hardly transpires through a heap of ruins. Nevertheless it has begun.

The political unity of India, more consolidated, and extending farther than it ever did under the Great Moguls, was the first condition of its regeneration. That unity, imposed by the British sword, will now be strengthened and perpetuated by the electric telegraph. The native army, organised and trained by the British drill-sergeant, was the sine qua non of Indian self-emancipation, and of India ceasing to be the prey of the first foreign intruder. The free press, introduced for the first time into Asiatic society, and managed principally by the common offspring of Hindus and Europeans, is a new and powerful agent of reconstruction. The Zemindaree 2 and Ryotwari 2 themselves, abominable as they are, involve two distinct forms of private property in land—the great desideratum of Asiatic society. From the Indian natives, reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta, under English superintendence, a fresh class is springing, endowed with the requirements for government and imbied with European science. Steam has brought India into regular and rapid communication with Europe, has connected its chief ports with those of the whole southeastern ocean, and has reinvigorated it from the isolated position which was the prime law of its stagnation. The day is not far distant when, by a combination of railways and steam vessels, the distance between England and India, measured by time, will be shortened to eight days; and when that once fabulous country will thus be actually annexed to the Western world.

The ruling classes of Great Britain have had, till now, but an accidental, transitory and exceptional interest in the progress of India. The aristocracy wanted to conquer it, the moneyocracy to plunder it and the millocracy to undersell it. But now the tables are turned. The millocracy have discovered that the transformation of India into a reproductive country has become of vital importance to them, and that, to that end, it is necessary above all to gift her with means of irrigation and of internal communication. They intend now drawing a net of railroads over India. And they will do it. The results must be inappreciable.

It is notorious that the productive powers of India are paralysed by the utter want of means for conveying and exchanging its various produce. Nowhere, more than in India, do we meet with social destitution in the midst of nature's plenty, for want of the means of exchange. It was proved before a Committee of the British House of Commons, which sat in 1838 that

1 Ancient Asiatic society was an Oriental form of feudalism marked by the following characteristic features: state ownership of land, concentration of public works, particularly irrigation, in the hands of the state, and the combination of industry and agriculture within the framework of the village community. In other passages, Marx and Engels use the expression “Asiatic despotism” in place of “Asiatic society.”—Ed.

2 Ryotwari. From the word ryot or peasant cultivator. Under the ryotwari system the peasant cultivator pays land tax directly to the state.—Ed.
"when grain was selling from 6s. to 8s. a quarter at Kandeish, it was sold at 6s. to 7s. at Poona, where the people were dying in the streets of famine, without the possibility of gaining supplies from Kandeish, because the clay roads were impracticable."

The introduction of railroads may be easily made to subserve agricultural purposes by the formation of tanks, where ground is required for embankment, and by the conveyance of water along the different lines. Thus irrigation, the *sine qua non* of farming in the East, might be greatly extended, and the frequently recurring local famines, arising from the want of water, would be averted. The general importance of railways, viewed under this head, must become evident, when we remember that irrigated lands, even in the districts near Ghauts, pay three times as much in taxes, afford ten or twelve times as much employment, and yield twelve or fifteen times as much profit as the same area without irrigation.

Railways will afford the means of diminishing the amount and the cost of the military establishments. Col. Warren, Town Major of the Fort St. William, stated before a Select Committee of the House of Commons:

"The practicability of receiving intelligence from distant parts of the country in as many hours, as at present it requires days and even weeks, and of sending instructions with troops and stores in the more brief period are considerations which cannot be too highly estimated. Troops could be kept at more distant and healthier stations than at present, and much loss of life from sickness would by this means be spared. Stores could not to the same extent be required at the various depots, and the loss by decay, and the destruction incidental to the climate, would also be avoided. The number of troops might be diminished in direct proportion to their effectiveness."

We know that the municipal organisation and the economical basis of the village communities has been broken up, but their worst feature, the dissolution of society into stereotype and disconnected atoms, has survived their vitality.

The village isolation produced the absence of roads in India, and the absence of roads perpetuated the village isolation. On this plan a community existed with a given scale of low conveniences, almost without intercourse with other villages, with-

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out the desires and efforts indispensable to social advance. The British having broken up this self-sufficient *inertia* of the villages, railways will provide the new want of communication and intercourse. Besides,

"one of the effects of the railway system will be to bring into every village affected by it such knowledge of the contrivances and appliances of other countries, and such means of obtaining them, as will first put the hereditary and stipendiary village artisanship of India to full proof of its capabilities, and then supply its defects." (Chapman, *The Cotton and Commerce of India.*)

I know that the English milocracy intend to endow India with railways with the exclusive view of extracting at diminished expenses the cotton and other raw materials for their manufactur-\n\nBut when you have once introduced machinery into the locomotion of a country, which possesses iron and coal, you are unable to withhold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The railway system will therefore become, in India, truly the forerunner of modern industry. This is the more certain as the Hindus are allowed by British authorities themselves to possess particular aptitude for accommodating themselves to entirely new labour, and acquiring the requisite knowledge of machinery. Ample proof of this fact is afforded by the capacities and expertise of the native engineers in the Calcutta mint, where they have been for years employed in working the steam machinery, by the natives attached to the several steam engines in the Hardwar coal districts, and by other instances. Mr. Campbell himself, greatly influenced as he is by the prejudices of the East India Company,1 is obliged to avow "that the great mass of the

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1 The British East India Company was formed in 1599 for monopoly trade with India. Under the pretext of "trade" operations, the company conquered India for British capitalism and ruled it for many years. After the Indian rising of 1857, the company was dissolved and the British government took over directly the administration and exploitation of India.—Ed.
Indian people possesses a great industrial energy, is well fitted to accumulate capital, and remarkable for a mathematical clearness of head, and talent for figures and exact sciences. Their intellects, he says, are excellent. Modern industry, resulting from the railway system will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labour, upon which rest the Indian castes, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power.

All the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social condition of the mass of the people, depending not only on the development of the productive power, but of their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both. Has the bourgeoisie ever done more? Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and people through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?

The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself the new ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindus themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether. At all events, we may safely expect to see, at a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country, whose gentle natives are, to use the expression of Prince Saltkov, even in the most inferior classes, "plus fins et plus adroits que les Italiens," whose submission even is counterbalanced by a certain calm nobility, who, notwithstanding their natural languor, have astonished the British officers by their bravery, whose country has been the source of our languages, our religions, and who represent the type of the ancient German in the Jat and the type of the ancient Greek in the Brahmin.

I cannot part with the subject of India without some concluding remarks.

The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its

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home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked. They are the defenders of property, but did any revolutionary party ever originate agrarian revolutions like those in Bengal, in Madras, and in Bombay? Did they not in India, to borrow an expression of that great robber Lord Clive himself, resort to atrocious extortion, when simple corruption could not keep pace with their rapacity? While they prated in Europe about the inviolable sanctity of the national debt, did they not confiscate in India the dividends of the rajas, who had invested their private savings in the Company's own funds. While they combated the French revolution under the pretext of defending "our holy religion," did they not forbid, at the same time Christianity to be propagated in India, and did they not, in order to make money out of the pilgrims streaming to the temples of Orissa and Bengal take up the trade in murder and prostitution perpetrated in the temple of Juggernaut? These are the men of "Property, Order, Family and Religion."

The devastating effects of English industry, when contemplated with regard to India, a country as vast as Europe and containing 150 millions of acres, are palpable and confounding. But we must not forget that they are only the organic results of the whole system of production as it is now constituted.

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1 Marx gave the following characterisation of British agrarian policy in India:

"If ever the history of any people did so, that of the economy of the British in India exhibits mistaken and really stupid (in practice infamous) economic experiments. In Bengal they created a caricature of British large-scale landownership; in Southeast India a caricature of small holdings; in the Northwest they transformed, as far as they could, the Indian economic community with common ownership of land into a caricature of itself." (Marx, Capital, Vol. III.)

In consequence of this policy the village community was broken up and therewith the unity of agriculture and peasant domestic industry, and in this sense an agrarian revolution was accomplished—Ed.

2 Juggernaut. A temple in honour of the Indian god Vishnu to which many worshippers made pilgrimages. On fast days the idol was carried in procession on a triumphal car and many pilgrims threw themselves under the wheels of the holy car and perished. The temple was notorious for prostitution, organised by the priests under the pretext of religious rites. In reality it was a question of income. A part of this income was paid as tribute to the British.—Ed.

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Jats. A race of peasants in Northwest India, supposed to be of Indo-Aryan origin.—Ed.
That production rests on the supreme rule of capital. The centralisation of capital is essential to the existence of capital as an independent power. The destructive influence of that centralisation upon the markets of the world but reveal, in the most gigantic dimensions, the inherent organic laws of political economy now at work in every civilised town. The bourgeois period of history has to create the material basis of the new world—on the one hand universal intercourse founded upon the mutual dependency of mankind, and the means of that intercourse; on the other hand the development of the productive powers of man and the transformation of material production into a scientific domination of natural agencies. Bourgeois industry and commerce create these material conditions of a new world in the same way as geological revolutions have created the surface of the earth. When a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of the bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production, and subjected them to the common control of the most advanced peoples, then only will human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain.

FREDERICK ENGELS

LETTER TO KARL KAUTSKY ON THE COLONIES

London, November 12, 1882

... In my opinion the colonies proper, i.e., the countries occupied with a European population, Canada, the Cape, Australia, will all become independent; on the other hand the countries inhabited by a native population, which are simply subjugated, India, Algiers, the Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish possessions, must be taken over for the time being by the proletariat and

In his work, The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up, Lenin analyses and extends the ideal given in this letter of Engels which deals with the question of the policy that must be pursued by the proletariat in relation to the colonial peoples after seizure of power and the establishment of its dictatorship. Lenin says:

"Engels does not in the least suppose that the 'economic' element will by itself and directly remove all difficulties. An economic revolution will stimulate all peoples to reach out towards socialism: at the same time, however, revolutions—against the socialist state—and wars are also possible. Politics will inevitably adapt itself to economies, but not immediately, not smoothly, simply and not directly. Engels is 'certain' of only one, thoroughly internationalist principle, which he applies to all 'alien peoples', i.e., not only to colonial peoples, namely: to force happiness upon them would mean to undermine the victory of the proletariat.

"The proletarian will not become holy and immune against error and weaknesses merely by virtue of the fact that it has carried out the social revolution. But the possible errors (and selfish interest—attacks to ride on another's back) will inevitably cause it to appreciate this truth.

"We Left Zimmerwaldists are all convinced of what Kautsky, for example, was convinced of before his desertion in 1914 from Marxism to the defence of chauvinism, namely, that the socialist revolution is quite possible in the near future—'one of these days,' as Kautsky himself once put it. National antipathies will not disappear so quickly; the hatred—perfectly legitimate—of the oppressed nation towards its oppressor will continue for a while; it will die down only after the victory of socialism and after the final establishment of completely democratic relations between nations. If we desire to be faithful to socialism we must educate the masses in internationalism now, and such education is impossible in an oppressing nation without the preaching of freedom of secession for the oppressed nations." (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XIX.)—Ed.
led as rapidly as possible towards independence. How this process will develop is difficult to say. India will perhaps, indeed very probably, produce a revolution, and as the proletariat emancipating itself cannot conduct any colonial wars, this would have to be allowed; it would not pass off without all sorts of destruction, of course, but that sort of thing is inseparable from all revolutions. The same might also take place elsewhere, e.g., in Algiers and Egypt, and would certainly be the best thing for us. We shall have enough to do at home. Once Europe is organised and North America, that will furnish such colossal power and such an example that the semi-civilised countries will follow in their wake of their own accord. Economic needs alone will be responsible for this. But as to what social and political phases these countries will then have to pass through before they likewise arrive at socialist organisation, we today can only advance rather idle hypotheses, I think. One thing alone is certain: the victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing. Which of course by no means excludes defensive wars of various kinds...
latter only available to a few people but got for me through friends in Petersburg). The gallant Turks have hastened the explosion by years with the thrashing they have inflicted, not only upon the Russian army and Russian finances, but in a highly personal and individual manner on the dynasty commanding the army (the tsar, heir to the throne and six other Romanovs). The upheaval will begin secundum artem with some playing at constitutionalism and then there will be a fine row. If Mother Nature is not particularly unfavourable towards us we shall still live to see the fun! The stupid nonsense which the Russian students are perpetrating is only a symptom, worthless in itself. But it is a symptom. All sections of Russian society are in complete disintegration economically, morally and intellectually.

This much is certain—the era of revolution has now fairly opened again in Europe. . . Let us hope that this time the lava will flow from East to West and not the other way around, so that we may be spared the 'honour' of French initiative.

How correctly Marx foresaw the concrete conditions of the Russian revolution can be seen from what he wrote immediately after the events of the Franco-Prussian war which had just then broken out. On August 8, 1870 he wrote to Engels:

"Russia, therefore, just as Bonaparte did in 1806-70 will intrigue with Prussia in order to get concessions in relation to Turkey and all this trickery, despite the Russian religion of the Hohenzollerns, will end in war between the tricksters."

And on September 1 of the same year, Marx wrote to Sorge:

"What the Prussian fools do not see is that the present war is leading just as inevitably to a war between Germany and Russia as the War of 1866 led to the war between Prussia and France. That is the best result I expect from it for Germany. Typical 'Prussianism' never has had and never can have any existence except in alliance with and subjection to Russia. And a war No. 2 of this kind will act as the midwife to the inevitable social revolution in Russia."

This prophecy of Marx was exactly fulfilled forty-seven years later. Marx and Engels in a number of their utterances made the mistake in this question of expecting the onset of the revolution too early. But this mistake in the question of the time of onset of the revolution did not prevent their general diagnosis of the situation, their estimate of the driving forces and of the character of the Russian revolution, as well as of its international significance, from being perfectly correct.

We publish here a letter of Marx on Russia and an article of Engels directed against Tkatchov (Sotesales aus Russland [On Social Conditions in Russia]), written in 1875.—Ed.

ON RUSSIA

This time the revolution will begin in the East, hitherto the unbroken bulwark and reserve army of counter-revolution.

Herr Bismarck was pleased to see the thrashing, but it ought not to have gone so far. Russia too much weakened could not hold Austria in check again as she did in the Franco-Prussian War! And if it were even to come to revolution there, where would the last guarantee of the Hohenzollern dynasty be?

For the moment everything depends on the Poles (in the Kingdom of Poland) lying low. If only there are no risings there at the moment! Bismarck would at once intervene and Russian chauvinism would once more side with the tsar. If on the other hand the Poles wait quietly till there is a conflagration in Petersburg and Moscow, and Bismarck then intervenes as a saviour, Prussia will find its—Mexico! 2

I have rammed this home again and again to any Poles I am in contact with who can influence their fellow-countrymen.

Compared with the crisis in the East, the French crisis is quite a secondary event. Still it is to be hoped that the bourgeois republic will be victorious or else the old game will begin all over again, and a nation can repeat the same stupidities once too often.

ON SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA

By Frederick Engels

The following lines were written on the occasion of a controversy into which I was drawn by Mr. Peter Nikitch Tkatchov.

1 At the time of the Franco-Prussian war, Russia not only observed neutrality towards Prussia, but also compelled Austria and Italy to remain neutral.—Ed.

2 An allusion to the Mexican war (1861-67) of Napoleon III undertaken by him to consolidate the tottering structure of his Second Empire with the help of a colonial adventure.

The unsuccessful Mexican adventure spoiled the relations between France and the U.S.A. and England and provided new material for the republican opposition.—Ed.

This refers to the intensification of the political struggle in France in 1877. On May 16, MacMahon, the reactionary president, entrusted the notorious royalist de Broglie with the formation of a ministry against the wish of parliament. He dissolved the hostile chamber and declared new elections. The elections took place in October 1877 and, in spite of the government terror, resulted in a majority for the republicans.—Ed.

1 According to the rules of the art.—Ed.
In an article on the Russian periodical Vperyod [Forward], appearing in London (Volksstaat, 1874, Nos. 117 and 118), I had occasion to mention the name of this gentleman quite incidentally but in such a manner as to draw upon myself his illustrious enmity. Mr. Tkachov immediately published an Open Letter to Mr. Frederick Engels, Zürich, 1874, in which he accused me of all sorts of surprising things, and then, in contrast to my gross ignorance, aired his own opinion of the state of things and of the prospects of a social revolution in Russia. Both form and content of this production bore the usual Bakuninist stamp. As it appeared in German, I considered it worth while to answer it in the Volksstaat. (See Flüchtlingsliteratur [Refugee Literature], Nos. IV and V, Volksstaat 1875, No. 36 and following.) The first part of my answer was mainly taken up with describing the Bakuninist manner of literary controversy, which simply consists in attributing to your opponent a healthy portion of downright lies. Publication in the Volksstaat did ample justice to this predominantly personal part. I omit it here, therefore, and for the reprint desired by the publishers leave only the second part, which deals chiefly with social conditions in Russia, as they have developed since 1861, since the so-called emancipation of the peasants.

The development of things in Russia is of the greatest importance for the German working class. The present Russian empire constitutes the last great stronghold of all Western European reaction. That was strikingly shown in 1848 and 1849. Because Germany failed in 1843 to stir up Poland to revolt and to declare war on the Russian tsar (as the Neue Rheinische Zeitung demanded from the outset), the same tsar was able in 1849 to crush the Hungarian Revolution which had advanced to the very gates of Vienna, and in 1850 to sit in judgment on Austria, Prussia and the small German states in Warsaw, and re-establish the old Federal Diet. And only a few days ago—at the beginning of May 1875—the Russian tsar received the homage of

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2 After the defeat of the Revolution of 1848 Prussia endeavoured to form a federation of German states under its hegemony. In 1850 it succeeded in constituting the "Prussian Union," embracing nineteen states. Russia and

his vassals in Berlin exactly as he did twenty five years ago and proved that he is still today the arbiter of Europe. No revolution in Western Europe can finally conquer as long as the present Russian state exists beside it. Germany, however, is its next-door neighbour, hence Germany is the first to receive the shock of the Russian armies of reaction. The overthrow of Russian tsardom, the dissolution of the Russian empire, is consequently one of the first conditions for the final victory of the German proletariat.

But this overthrow need by no means necessarily be brought about from without, although a foreign war might greatly hasten it. Within the Russian empire itself there are forces working strongly for its ruin.

The first of these is the Pole. Century-long oppression has put them in a position where they must either be revolutionary and support every really revolutionary rising of the West as the first step towards the liberation of Poland or perish. And just now they are in a position in which they can only look for West European allies in the proletarian camp. For the last hundred years they have been continually betrayed by all the bourgeois parties of the West. It is only since 1848, that the bourgeoisie in Germany counts at all. And from then on it has always been anti-Polish. In France Napoleon betrayed Poland in 1812 and in consequence of his treachery lost campaign, crown and empire; in 1830 and 1846 the bourgeois monarchy followed his example; in 1848 the bourgeois republic; and in the Crimean War in 1863, the Second Empire. Each betrayed Poland as basely as the other. And today the radical bourgeois republicans of France are still crawling before the tsar to drive a bargain for a revenge alliance against Prussia in return for a fresh betrayal of Poland, just as the bourgeoisie of the German empire idolise the same tsar as the protector of European peace, i.e., of the German-Prussian annexation booty. Nowhere except among the revolutionary work-

Austria thwarted these plans. In October in Warsaw, and in November in Olmutz, Prussia had to abandon these plans under pressure of the Russian tsar. Only subsequently, by a number of wars, did Prussia succeed in establishing this hegemony.—Ed.
ers do the Poles find honest and unreserved support, because both have the same interest in the overthrow of the common enemy and because the liberation of Poland is equivalent to that overthrow.

But the activity of the Poles is territorially limited. It is confined to Poland, Lithuania, and Little Russia; the real heart of the Russian empire. Great Russia remains practically excluded from its action. The forty million Great Russians are much too big a people and have had much too special a development for it to be possible that a movement could be imposed on them from without. This however is by no means necessary. It is true that the mass of the Russian people, the peasants, have for centuries past vegetated apathetically from generation to generation in a sort of stupor, outside of history, and the only variations which somewhat interrupted this desolate state consisted in isolated fruitless revolts and in renewed oppression by nobility and government. The Russian government itself put an end to this living outside of history (1861) by the abolition of serfdom, which could not be put off any longer, and the redemption of the corvée—a measure drafted with such excessive cunning that it spells certain ruin for the majority both of the peasants and the nobles. Hence the circumstances themselves in which the Russian peasant is now placed drive him into the movement, a movement which certainly is still only in its very earliest beginnings but which is irresistibly driven onward by the economic position of the mass of the peasants which grows worse from day to day. The resentful discontent of the peasants is already a fact with which both the government and all dissatisfied and opposition parties must reckon.

It follows from this that when Russia is spoken of in the following pages, not the whole Russian empire is meant but only Great Russia, i.e., the territory whose most western gubernias are Pskov and Smolensk, the most southern, Kursk and Voronezh.

On the subject matter, Mr. Tkachov tells the German workers that as regards Russia I have not even a "little knowledge," but possess nothing but "ignorance," and feels himself therefore obliged to explain to them the real state of affairs and in particular the reasons why just at the present time a social revolution could be made in Russia with the greatest of ease, much more easily than in Western Europe.

"We have no city proletariat, that is undoubtedly true, but to balance that we have also no bourgeoisie... our workers will have to fight only against the political power—the power of capital is with us still only in germ. And you, sir, are well aware that the fight against the former is much easier than against the latter."

The revolution which modern socialism strives to achieve is, briefly, the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, and the organisation of a new society by the destruction of all class differences. For this, there must be not only a proletariat that carries out this revolution, but also a bourgeoisie in whose hands the social productive forces have so far developed as to allow of the final destruction of class differences. Among savages and semi-savages there often exist likewise no class differences, and every people has passed through such a state. To re-establish this state could not occur to us for the simple reason that class differences necessarily emerge out of it as the social productive forces develop. Only at a certain level of development of the social productive forces, even at a very high level for our modern conditions, will it be possible to raise production to such an extent that the abolition of class differences can be a real progress and lasting without causing stagnation or even decline in the mode of social production. But the productive forces have reached this level of development only in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, therefore, in this respect also is just as necessary a pre-condition of the socialist revolution as the proletariat itself. Hence a man who can say that this revolution can be more easily carried out in a country, because, although having no proletariat, it has no bourgeoisie either, only proves that he has still to learn the ABC of socialism.

The Russian workers—and these workers are, as Mr. Tkachov himself says, "peasants and as such not proletarians but owners"—have therefore an easier task because they do not have to fight with the power of capital, but "simply with the political power," with the Russian state. And this state:
“only appears from a distance as a power... it has no roots in the economic life of the people; it does not embody the interests of any particular estate... In your country the state is no imaginary power. It stands four square on the basis capital; it embodies in itself (11) certain economic interests... In our country this situation is just reversed—the form of our society owes its existence to the state, to a state more or less hanging in the air, one that has nothing in common with the existing social order, and that has its roots in the past, but not in the present.”

We will waste no time over the confused notion that the economic interests need the state, which they themselves create, in order to acquire a body, or the bold contention that the Russian form of society (which must include also the communal ownership of the peasants) owes its existence to the state, or over the contradiction that this same state “has nothing in common” with the existing social order which, however, is supposed to be its very own creation. Let us rather examine at once this “state hanging in the air,” which does not represent the interests of even a single estate.

In European Russia the peasants possess 105 million dessiatines, the nobility (as I here term the big landowners for brevity) 100 million dessiatines, of which about half belong to 15,000 nobles, who consequently each possess on the average 33,000 dessiatines. The land of the peasants is therefore only a trifle bigger than that of the nobles. The nobles, one sees, have not the slightest interest in the existence of the Russian state, which guards them in the possession of half the country. Let us continue. The peasants, from their half, pay 195 million rubles land tax annually, the nobles—13 million! The lands of the nobles are on the average twice as fertile as those of the peasants because during the arrangements for redemption of the covenants the state not only took the greater part but also the best part of the land from the peasants and gave it to the nobles, and indeed for this worst land the peasants had to pay the nobility the price of the best.¹ And the Russian nobility has no interest in the existence of the Russian state!

¹ An exception occurred only in Poland, where the government desired to ruin the nobility, which was hostile to it, but to win over the peasants. [Note by F. Engels.]

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The peasants—taken in the mass—have been brought by the redemption settlements into a most miserable and wholly untenable position. Not only has the greatest and best part of their land been taken from them, so that in all the fertile parts of the country the peasant land is far too small—for Russian agricultural conditions—for them to be able to live from it. Not only were they charged an excessive price for it, advanced to them by the state and for which they now have to pay interest and amortisation to the state. Not only is almost the whole burden of the land tax thrown upon them, while the nobility escapes almost scot-free—so that the land tax alone consumes the entire ground rent value of the peasant land and more, and all further payments, which the peasant has to make and which we will speak of immediately, are direct deductions from that part of his income which represents his wages. No. In addition to the land tax, to the interest and amortisation instalments on the money advanced by the state, since the recent introduction of local government there are the provincial and district taxes as well. The most essential result of this “reform” was fresh tax burdens for the peasant. The state retained its revenue as a whole, but passed on a large part of its expenditure to the provinces and districts, which imposed new taxes to meet them, and in Russia it is the rule that the higher estates of society are practically free from taxation and the peasant pays almost everything.

Such a situation is ideal for the usurer, and with the almost unparalleled talent of the Russians for trade on a low level, for taking full advantage of favourable business situations and the swindling inseparable from this—Peter I long ago said that a Russian could get the better of three Jews—the usurer everywhere makes his appearance. When the time approaches for the taxes to fall due, the usurer appears, the kulak—frequently a rich peasant of the same village—and offers his ready cash. The peasant must have the money at all costs and must accept the conditions of the usurer without demur. In that way he only gets deeper and deeper into difficulty, needs more and more ready cash. At harvest time the grain dealer arrives; the need for money forces the peasant to sell a part of the grain which
he and his family require for food. The grain dealer spreads false rumours to lower the prices, pays a low price and often even part of this in all sorts of high-priced goods; for the truck system is also highly developed in Russia. The great corn exports of Russia are based therefore, as is clear, quite directly on the hunger of the peasant population. Another method of exploiting the peasant is this: a speculative rents crown-land from the government for a long term of years, and cultivates it himself as long as it gives a good yield without manure, then he divides it up into plots and lets out the exhausted land at high rents to neighbouring peasants who cannot manage on their allotment. Here we have exactly the Irish middlemen, just as above, the English truck system. In short, there is no country in which, in spite of the primitive simplicity of bourgeois society, capitalistic parasitism is so developed, so covers and enmeshes the whole country, the whole mass of the population with its nets as in Russia. And all these blood-suckers of the peasants are supposed to have no interest in the existence of the Russian state, whose laws and law courts protect their pretty and profitable practices?

The big bourgeoisie of Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, which has developed with unheard-of rapidity during the last ten years, chiefly due to the railways, and which cheerfully "went smash" with the other countries during the last swindle years, the grain, hemp flax and tallow exporters whose whole business is built up on the misery of the peasants, the entire Russian large-scale industry which only exists thanks to the protective tariffs granted it by the state, have all these important and rapidly growing elements of the population no interest in the existence of the Russian state? To say nothing of the countless army of officials which swarms over Russia and plunders it and here constitutes a real estate of society. And when Mr. Tkachov assures us the Russian state has "no roots in the economic life of the people; it does not embody in itself the interests of any particular estate" and hangs "in the air," it seems to us that it is not the Russian state which hangs in the air, but rather Mr. Tkachov.

It is clear that the position of the Russian peasants since the emancipation from serfdom has become an intolerable, and in the long run, an untenable one, and that for this reason alone a revolution in Russia is approaching. The question is only, what can be, what will be the result of this revolution. Mr. Tkachov says it will be a social one. This is pure tautology. Every real revolution is a social one, in that it brings a new class to power and allows it to remodel society in its own image. But he wishes to say it will be a socialist one, it will introduce into Russia the form of society aimed at by West European socialism, even before we in the West succeed in doing so—and that, in a condition of society in which both proletariat and bourgeois only appear sporadically and at a low stage of development. And this is supposed to be possible because the Russians are, so to speak, the chosen people of socialism and have artels and communal ownership of land.

The artels, which Mr. Tkachov only mentions incidentally, but which we include here because since the time of Herzen they have played a mysterious role with many Russians—the artels are in Russia a widespread form of association, the simplest form of free co-operation, such as is to be found for hunting among hunting tribes. Word and content are not of Slavonic but of Tartar origin. Both are to be found among the Kirghiz and Yakut peoples, etc., on the one hand, and among the Lapps, Samoyeds and other Finnish tribes on the other.1 That is why the artel developed originally in the north and east, by contact with Finns and Tartars, not in the southwest. The severe climate makes necessary industrial activity of various kinds, and so the lack of town development and of capital is replaced by this form of co-operation as far as possible. One of the most characteristic features of the artel, the joint liability of the members for one another towards third parties, is based originally on blood relationship, like the Gewerbe of the ancient Germans, the blood vengeance, etc. Moreover in Russian, the word artel is used for every form not only of collective activity but also of collective institution. In workers' artels, a foreman (starets, elder) is

1 On the artel, compare Inter alia: Sbornik materialov ob artelyakh v Rossii [Symposium of Data on Artels in Russia]. St. Petersburg, 1873. Part I. [Note by F. Engels.]
always chosen who fulfils the functions of treasurer, bookkeeper, etc., and of manager as far as necessary, and who receives a special salary. Such artels occur:

1. For temporary enterprises, after the completion of which they dissolve;
2. For the members of one and the same occupation, for instance, porters, etc;
3. For really industrial, permanent enterprises.

They are established by a contract signed by all the members. If now these members cannot bring together the necessary capital, as very often happens, for instance, in the case of cheese-dairies and fisheries (for nets, boats, etc.), the artel falls a prey to the usurer, who advances the amount lacking at high interest, and thereafter pockets the greater part of the labour proceeds. Still more shamefully exploited however are the artels which hire themselves as a whole to an employer as a wage force. They direct their industrial activity themselves and thus save the capitalist the cost of supervision. The latter lets the members huts to live in and advances them the means of subsistence, whereby again the most disgraceful truck system develops. Such is the case with the lumbermen and tar-makers in the Archangel gubernia, and in many occupations in Siberia, etc. (Cf. Flerovsky, Polozhenye Rabocheho Klassa v Rossii [The Condition of the Working Class in Russia], St. Petersburg, 1869.) Here then the artel serves to facilitate considerably the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist. On the other hand again, there are also artels which themselves employ workers who are not members of the association.

It is clear, therefore, that the artel is a co-operative society which has arisen spontaneously and is therefore still very undeveloped, and as such neither exclusively Russian nor even Slavonic. Such societies are formed wherever the need for them exists. For instance, in Switzerland among the dairy farmers, in England among the fishermen, where they even assume very varied forms. The Silesian navvies (Germans, not Poles), who built so many German railways in the 'forties, were organised in complete artels. The predominance of this form in Russia proves,
"Our people . . . in its great majority . . . is permeated with the principles of communal property; it is, if one may use the term, instinctively, traditionally communistic. The idea of collective property is so closely interwoven with the whole world outlook (we shall see immediately how far the world of the Russian peasant extends) of the Russian people, that today, when the government begins to understand that this idea cannot be attained by the principles of a "well-ordered" society, and in the name of those principles wishes to impress the idea of private property on the consciousness and life of the people, it can only succeed in doing so with the help of the bayonet and the knout. It is clear from this that our people, despite its ignorance, stands much nearer to socialism than the peoples of Western Europe, although the latter are more educated."

In reality communal ownership of the land is an institution which is to be found on a low level of development among all Indo-Germanic races from India to Ireland and even among the Malays who have developed under Indian influence, for instance, in Java. As late as 1608, in the newly conquered north of Ireland, the legally established communal ownership of the land served the English as a pretext for declaring the land as ownerless and for confiscating it as such on behalf of the Crown. In India down to the present time a whole series of forms of communal property is in existence. In Germany it was general; the common lands still to be found here and there are a relic of it, and, further, very distinct traces of it, temporary division of the common lands, etc., are to be found, especially in the mountains. More exact references and details with regard to old German communal ownership may be consulted in the various writings of Maurer, which are classic on this question. In Western Europe, including Poland and Little Russia, at a certain stage in the social development this communal ownership became a fetter, a brake on agricultural production, and was more and more eliminated. In Great Russia (i.e., Russia proper), on the other hand, it has persisted until today, thereby proving in the first place that agricultural production and the social conditions in the countryside corresponding to it are there still on a very undeveloped level, as is also actually the case. The Russian peasant only lives and has his being in his village, the rest of the world only exists for him in so far as it affects his village. This is so much the case that in Russian the same word "mir" means on the one hand "world" and on the other "peasant community." "iEs mir," the whole world, means for the peasant the meeting of the community members. Hence, when Mr. Tkachov speaks of the "world outlook" of the Russian peasants, he has obviously translated the Russian mir incorrectly. Such a complete isolation of the individual communities from one another, which creates throughout the country, it is true, similar, but the very opposite of common, interests, is the natural basis for oriental despotism, and from India to Russia this form of society, wherever it prevailed, has always produced it and always found its complement in it. Not only the Russian state in general, but even its specific form, tsarist despotism, instead of hanging in the air, is the necessary and logical product of the Russian social conditions with which, according to Mr. Tkachov, it has "nothing in common"! Further development of Russia in a bourgeois direction would here also destroy communal ownership little by little, without its being necessary for the Russian government to intervene with "bayonet and knout." And this all the more because the communally owned land in Russia is not cultivated by the peasants collectively and only the product divided, as is still the case in some districts in India; on the contrary, from time to time the land is divided up among the various heads of families, and each cultivates his allotment for himself. Consequently, great differences in prosperity are possible, among the members of the community, and also actually exist. Almost everywhere, there are a few rich peasants among them—here and there millionaires—who play the usurer and suck the blood of the mass of the peasants. No one knows this better than Mr. Tkachov. While he wishes to fool the German workers into thinking that the "idea of collective ownership" can only be driven out of the Russian peasants, these instinctive, traditional communists, by bayonet and knout he writes on page 15 of his Russian pamphlet: "Among the peasants a class of usurers (kulaks), is making its way, a class of people who buy up and lease the lands of farmers and nobles—a peasant aristocracy." These are the same kind of bloodsuckers as we described more fully above.
What dealt the severest blow to communal ownership was again the redemption of the corvée. The greater and better part of the land was allotted to the nobility; for the peasant there remained scarcely enough, often not enough, to live on. In addition the forests were given to the nobles; the wood for fuel, building and implements, which the peasant formerly could fetch there for nothing, he has now to buy. Thus the peasant has nothing but his house and the bare land, without means to cultivate it, and on the average without land enough to support him and his family from one harvest to the next. Under such circumstances and under the pressure of taxes and usurers, communal ownership of the land is no blessing, it becomes a fetter. The peasants often run away, with or without their family, to earn their living as wandering labourers, and leave their land behind them.\footnote{On the position of the peasants compare \textit{inter alia} the official report of the Government Commission on Agricultural Production (1873), and further Skaldin, \textit{V Zakhlostei i v Stolitsa (In the Remote Provinces and in the Capital)}, St. Petersburg, 1870; the latter publication by a liberal conservative. (Note by F. Engels.)}

It is clear that communal ownership in Russia is long past its flourishing period and to all appearances is moving towards its dissolution. Nevertheless the possibility undeniably exists of transforming this social form into a higher one, if it should last until circumstances are ripe for that, and if it shows itself capable of development in such a way that the peasants no longer cultivate the land separately, but collectively;\footnote{In Poland, in particular in the Grodno gubernia, where the nobility for the most part was ruined by the rebellion of 1863, the peasants now frequently buy or rent estates from the nobles and cultivate them as a whole and on a \textit{collective} account. And these peasants for centuries past have not had communal ownership any more and are not Russians, but Poles, Lithuanians and White Russians. (Note by F. Engels.)} and to transform it into this higher form, without it being necessary for the Russian peasants to go through the intermediate stage of bourgeois small ownership. This, however, can only happen if, before the complete break-up of communal ownership, a proletarian revolution is successfully carried out in Western Europe, creating for the Russian peasant the pre-conditions necessary for such a transformation, in particular, the material conditions which he needs in order to carry through the reconstruction of his whole agricultural system thereby necessarily involved. It is therefore sheer bounce for Mr. Tchakov to say that the Russian peasants, although “owners,” stand “nearer to socialism” than the propertyless workers of Western Europe. Exactly the contrary is the case. If anything can still save Russian communal ownership and give it a chance of growing into a new form really capable of life, it is a proletarian revolution in Western Europe.

Mr. Tchakov treats the political revolution just as lightly as he does the economic one. “The Russian people,” he relates, “protests incessantly” against its enslavement, now in the form “of religious sects. . . . refusal to pay taxes. . . . robber bands [the German workers will be glad to know that according to this Schinderhanes is the father of German Social-Democracy] . . . incendiaryism . . . revolts. . . . and hence the Russian people may be termed instinctive revolutionaries.” And thus Tchakov is convinced that “it is only necessary to cause an outburst in a number of places at the same time of all the accumulated bitterness and discontent, which . . . is always boiling in the breasts of our people.” Then “the union of the revolutionary forces will come about of itself, and the fight . . . must end favourably for the people’s cause. Practical necessity, the instinct of self-preservation” will then create quite of itself “a firm and indissoluble alliance among the revolting villages.”

It is impossible to conceive of a revolution more easily and pleasantly. One makes a start in three or four places simultaneously, and the “instinctive revolution,” “practical necessity” and the “instinct of self-preservation” do the rest “of itself.” Seeing it is so easy, it is simply impossible to conceive why the revolution has not long since been made, the people liberated and Russia transformed into the model socialist country.

The facts are quite different. The Russian people, this instinctive revolutionary, has undoubtedly made numerous isolated peasant revolts against the nobility and against individual officials, but never against the tsar, except when a \textit{false} tsar put himself at their head and claimed the throne. The last great peasant
rising, under Catharine II, was only possible because Yemalyan Pugachov claimed to be her husband, Peter III, who had not been murdered by his wife, but dethroned and imprisoned, and who had now escaped. The tsar is on the contrary the earthly god of the Russian peasant: *Bog vysok, tsar dalyok*, god is high above and the tsar far away, is his cry in the hour of need. There is no doubt that the mass of the peasant population, especially since the redemption of the *corvéé*, has been reduced to a condition which more and more forces on it a fight also against the government and the tsar; but Mr. Tkachov will have to try somewhere else with his fairy tale of the "instinctive revolutionary."

And then, even if the mass of the Russian peasants were so very instinctively revolutionary, even if we imagine that revolutions can be made to order, just as one makes a piece of flowered calico or a kettle—even then I ask, is it permissible for one over twelve years of age to imagine the course of a revolution in such an extremely childish manner as is the case here? And remember further that this was written after the first revolution made on this Bakunin model—the Spanish one of 1873—had so brilliantly failed. There, too, the revolution broke out in several places at the same time. There too it was reckoned that practical necessity, the instinct of self-preservation would of themselves bring about a firm and indissoluble alliance between the revolting communities. And what happened? Every community, every town only defended itself, there was no question of mutual assistance, and with only three thousand men Pavia overthrew one town after the other in a fortnight and put an end to the entire anarchist splendour. (Cf. my *Bakunists at Work*, where this is described in detail.)

There is no doubt Russia is on the eve of a revolution. Her finances are in extreme disorder. Increasing taxation proves of no avail, the interest on old state loans is paid by means of new loans, and every new loan meets with greater difficulties; money can now only be raised under the pretext of building railways! The administration, as of old, corrupt from top to bottom, the officials living more from theft, bribery and extortion than from their salaries. The entire agricultural production—by far the most essential for Russia—thrown into complete disorder by the redemption settlement of 1861; the big landowners without sufficient labour, the peasants without sufficient land, oppressed by taxation and sucked dry by usurers, the yield from agriculture declining from year to year. The whole held together with great difficulty and only outwardly by an oriental despotism whose arbitrariness we in the West simply cannot imagine; a despotism which not only from day to day comes into more glaring contradiction with the views of the enlightened classes and in particular with those of the rapidly developing bourgeoisie of the capital cities, but which, under its present bearer, has lost faith in itself, one day making concessions to liberalism and the next cancelling them again in terror, and thus bringing itself more and more into disrepute. With all that, a growing recognition among the enlightened strata of the nation concentrated in the capital that this position is untenable, that a revolution is imminent, and the illusion that it will be possible to guide this revolution into a smooth, constitutional channel. Here we have united all the conditions of a revolution, of a revolution which, possibly started by the upper classes of the capital, even perhaps by the government itself, must be rapidly carried further, beyond the first constitutional phase, by the peasants; of a revolution, which will be of the greatest importance for the whole of Europe if only because it will destroy at one blow the last, so far intact, reserve of the entire European reaction. This revolution is surely approaching. Only two events can delay it: a successful war against Turkey or Austria, for which money and firm alliances are necessary, or—a premature attempt at insurrection which would drive the property-owning classes back into the arms of the government.
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