ARTHUR ROSENBERG

FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

A Contribution to the Political History of the Past 150 Years

Translated from the German by George Rosen

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would run into gross misunderstandings if one should infer the attitude of Marx and Engels towards revolutionary democracy during the years 1845 to 1849 only from their writings after the miscarriage of the revolution.

Thus the chief source for this book is the correspondence between Marx and Engels, as it has now been published in the exemplary four-volume edition of the Marx-Engels Institute. A rich source for the history of early democracy is Volume VI of the first section of the great complete edition of the works of Marx and Engels, which contains the writings of both men from May 1846 to March 1848. Besides this, the other writings and collected letters of Marx and Engels were used as far as they belong within the bounds of this book. Of the copious literature on Marx and Engels the works of Karl Korsch and Gustav Mayer were especially valuable to me. The following authorities were important for my understanding of these topics: Mathiez for the great French Revolution; Beard for Jefferson and the older American democracy; Seignobos for the history of the French parties during the nineteenth century; Bergsträsser and Veit Valentin for German revolutionary and party history. I have substantiated my own conception of the Russian Revolution and the German Republic more fully in the books *History of Bolshevism, Origin of the German Republic,* and *History of the German Republic.*

I wrote the greatest part of my book in Liverpool and received the most cordial assistance from the Liverpool University Library while doing so. While at work on the conclusion of the book I received the same friendly aid from the International Institute of Social Research in New York. Finally I must thank my friend Dr. Franz Neumann, especially for his co-operation in procuring the literature.

ARTHUR ROSENBERG

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PREFACE

FOR THE AMERICAN EDITION

The text of the American edition follows that of the German edition without any change. Only the Notes have been added especially for the American edition.

The recent events which culminated in the so-called Peace of Munich brought about a big defeat for European democracy. The breakdown of the French Popular Front has been stressed in the text of this book. Now it is clear that the defeat of the French Popular Front is a historical event of first-class importance, for it wholly paralysed the democratic force in France. Only because the French government was ready to capitulate at any moment after the beginning of the Czechoslovak crisis did the endeavours of the Labour Party and Tory democracy in England also become useless, enabling the governing Right wing of the Conservative Party to follow its own tendencies and co-operate with the French will to retreat. Once more France has been proved to be the centre of the social struggle in Europe. As in 1871, so in 1938 the failure of French democracy became the failure of democracy throughout Europe. Czechoslovak democracy, isolated and abandoned by all its "friends," has now to share the fate of the workers of Vienna.

During the last weeks international public opinion has been speaking again of the "weakness" of democracy. But

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himself a good democrat, was the most violent opponent of all communistic efforts among the working classes.

Now let us listen to a voice from the opposing camp during the Revolution of 1848–9. In November 1849 the conservative deputy von Bismarck declared in the Prussian Landtag: "Landed property is desired not only by those who already have a temporary use of land, but also by those who do not have it. Throughout the whole of last year the numerous class of day labourers in the eastern provinces — for instance, in Pomerania and Prussia — has been stirred up to such demands by the promises of the Democrats. In the loyal provinces at that time the elections of Deputy Bucher and his political friends, for example, were made possible by promises of land. . . . It is a deplorable fact that the envy of the day labourer towards the landed peasant is rising, for he sees that the fruits of the revolution are being harvested only by the wealthy, without benefiting him. The demands of the day labourers are by no means restricted to this: that the plots of land whose use forms a part of their wages should be bestowed upon them, for no one can exist on that alone. They go further: they demand complete division, not only of the manor estates, but also of the farms."

Nor did the deputy von Bismarck desire to proclaim any political discoveries from the platform of the Prussian Landtag; but he used the political expressions that everyone understood. To the Prussian junkers at that time the democrats were the men of the agrarian revolution, the Red agitators, who summoned the agrarian labourers to divide not only the manor estates but also the larger farms. At that time the deputy Lothar Bucher was the type of this agrarian rebel to the junker von Bismarck. As a result of historical circumstances the junker von Bismarck later became the Reich Chancellor Prince Bismarck and the communist Bucher the Royal Prussian Privy Councillor Bucher, the most loyal and most valuable collaborator of Bismarck.

against a non-existent hereditary monarchy or aristocracy; the right of the Republicans to exist lay only in their opposition to financial capital. Just as classic democracy aimed at the erection of a class government of the poorer citizens within the state in opposition to the rich, so did both modern movements in America and in France. Thus the ancient name of democracy justly celebrated its resurrection in both countries. It was entirely common in the daily political life of America to designate the adherents of the Republican Party as democrats, and the patriots of Robespierre's group likewise felt themselves to be democrats, since they opposed the rights of the " people " to the privileges of the aristocracy. Instead of further evidence here, it is only necessary to recall the words of Babeuf cited above.

The often misused and falsely applied concept of the so-called Renaissance of Antiquity is fixed around 1500 in Italy in the ordinary text-books. Actually the political and social renaissance of antiquity in modern Europe belongs to the eighteenth century, when with the growing power of bourgeois society the political and social forms of antiquity again became possible. It was not only the objective agreement of social facts that created the similarity between the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth century and of antiquity. The leading popular politicians and political philosophers of the eighteenth century were completely conscious of the connexion. They had not spent their schooldays studying the classics of antiquity in vain. Even for educated people who had already left their school years far behind them, antiquity played a much greater role than it does today.

The republicans of the eighteenth century usually began their historical controversy with the monarchy with the Tarquins and Tiberius. The revolutionary mind was inspired by the deeds of the enemies of the tyrants and the tyrannicides of antiquity. All this had now suddenly stepped out of the dusty school-books and had taken on new life. Robespierre's thoughts lived entirely in the Roman

conditions had opportunity enough to do so. The journey over the Atlantic Ocean was, to be sure, still a long adventure at that time. Yet the economic and social relations between America and the mother country were so close at all times that in the United States, too, all the facts concerning the English development were known.

Nevertheless democracy in America at that time, as well as in France, had failed completely when faced with the problems of modern times. Jefferson and the other leaders of the American Republicans persuaded themselves that modern capitalism could be kept away from America and that the United States could be fixed permanently at the stage of a snug little farm. In France Robespierre and his friends were indeed forced by the necessity of war to interfere with economic relations. But they, too, lacked all insight into the economic relations of their time. It was entirely correct that they wanted to solve the agrarian question in the interest of the small proprietor. Beyond that, however, they had no economic plan. Robespierre was ready to expropriate the so-called " Suspects " and to divide their property among the poor patriots. The division of heaps of paper at that time, however, would not have made anyone happy. Only a few large industrial plants existed in France, and they could not be divided. Practically therefore, nothing of economic significance would have remained but to divide a number of large estates and to equip the new proprietors with furniture, and so forth. Even if Robespierre did not share the agrarian prejudice of Jefferson, still his social ideals likewise revolved around the independent and satisfied small farmer, and it is no accident that in France during the Great Revolution, socialism and communism hide behind the slogan of the " agrarian law " — that is, of division of the land.

One can attempt to imagine what would have happened in France if Robespierre had remained the victor on the 9th of Thermidor. Soon thereafter he would have concluded a moderate peace abroad, he would have reduced the terror

oneself whose fate contains a greater tragedy, the destiny of Robespierre, who fell in open warfare on the battlefield of the Revolution and counter-revolution, or the fate of Jefferson, who died as a peaceful old man and as a universally honoured father of his country, who in the last years of his life could only delude himself with difficulty concerning the wreck of his work. Jefferson lived just long enough to see, for instance, what dimensions the slave question had assumed and how uncertain it made the existence of the Union.

After 1815 America went its own way in its social development. In Europe, however, democracy also spread farther and farther outside of France, until it was finally able, in 1848, to challenge the collective ruling forces to a struggle. Nevertheless France still remained the chief country of European democracy, where all the problems were seen most clearly and where all the conclusions were drawn most completely.

3. *From Napoleon I to Louis Philippe*

With the death of Babeuf and the destruction of his party, democracy as a political movement in France was eliminated for a time. After the short transitional period of the Directory, the bourgeois-capitalistic state consolidated itself under the dictatorship of Napoleon I. The Emperor Napoleon was the brilliant representative of the advancing French bourgeoisie, which was eager for conquest, and of the new French army, which arose during the Revolution. At the same time, however, Napoleon enjoyed an amazing popularity among the broad labouring masses of the people. The French peasants saw in the Emperor the protector of their free possessions, acquired during the Revolution. The Emperor provided a correct and punctual administration. In the general economic rise the peasant could sell his products favourably, and every peasant boy who had made

chaos. As a result the Parisian proletariat, which had been deserted by the political parties, became the tool of adventurers and police spies. An armed uprising of the Parisian workers, for the purpose of carrying out a second revolution, was never quite so hopeless as in May 1848. Owing to the inept tactics of the democrats a profound estrangement had taken place between the workers of Paris and the peasantry. It is not true that Paris had regularly had the leadership of the French revolutions and that the provinces used to follow the slogans of the capital. On the contrary, actually the Parisian movements were victorious only if they were in accord with the wishes of the majority of the French people. The storming of the Bastille was only significant because at the same time the peasants throughout France were also about to storm their local Bastilles. In May and June of 1793 the party of the Mountain was victorious only because the great majority of the French people despised the Roland clique. The Revolution of 1830 had been fought by the Parisians in complete agreement with the provincials, and the movement against Louis Philippe during the winter of 1847–8 had actually started in the provinces and had later spread to Paris.

The counter-revolutionary current, which achieved a temporary predominance in the rural areas and in the provincial towns during April and May 1848, necessarily doomed every revolt in Paris to complete isolation. If the villages and the provincial towns opposed the revolt, and if the bourgeois middle class hated the "anarchists" and "terrorists," then it could be assumed that the regular army as well as the bourgeois section of the National Guard would fire fanatically upon the workers. In addition there was the fatal separation between the unemployed, who were strongly organized in the national workshops and who still supported the government, and the workers in the factories who were in favour of Socialist Democracy. The secret wire-pullers of the French administrative apparatus had seen to it that

ceived for four months; they had been used to fight socialism as long as they were needed and now, because they were no longer needed, were being kicked out.

In this desperate situation the class consciousness of some of these relief workers awoke again and they attempted to get in touch with the revolutionary workers in the factories. They reminded themselves of 1793, 1830, and February 24, 1848. As members of the National Guard they were armed, and they had grown accustomed to a certain degree of military organization in the national workshops. They preferred to die honourably rather than to starve to death slowly in the name of the democratic Republic. On June 23 the revolt began in the working-class quarters of Paris. No political party and no prominent leader sided with the workers. Since the Democratic Party no longer existed and since the so-called successors of the party of the Mountain had deplorably renounced their task, the simple workers of Paris fought alone for the tradition of Robespierre.

The first victim of the revolt was the liberal-democratic government. On the morning of June 24 a group of excited deputies forced their way into the offices of the Executive Commission and demanded the immediate resignation of the five members. The latter declared that they would yield only to a formal decree of the National Assembly. They did not have to wait very long for the decree. The National Assembly transferred complete executive power to General Cavaignac, and with that the Executive Commission was deposed. If Socialist Democracy had collapsed in France on the 15th of May, then the 24th of June was the end of liberal democracy. Opinions may vary as to which group disappeared more deplorably from the arena.

When the revolt of the workers began in Paris on June 23, the spectacle of May 15 was repeated. The insurgents met with no resistance at first and were able to take possession of the working-class quarters and to erect barricades there. Had the government also thrown its entire armed force into

the working-class districts of Paris on the same day on which it published the decrees concerning the national workshops, then a revolt of such dimensions would hardly have resulted. However, the friends of a military dictatorship wanted a real street struggle, so that they would be able to settle accounts thoroughly with socialism and democracy. Now they had attained their aim. The cunning provocation with which Cavaignac's party prepared the revolt of June 1848 finds its closest analogy in the behaviour of the Tsarist government of Russia in January 1905, when it also allowed the labour movement of the priest Gapon to develop in order to have an opportunity for the blood-bath which it desired.

The revolt of the Parisian workers was completely hopeless from the beginning. But they fought with the courage of despair. It was only after a three-day struggle, which resulted in the deaths of thousands of victims, that General Cavaignac was victorious. The general remained at the head of the government, gathered his Ministry from the Right wing of the so-called moderate republicans, and suppressed every oppositional impulse of the masses with brutal violence. In the meantime the majority of the National Assembly completed its labours with the composition of a republican Constitution for France. General suffrage remained in existence, for the ruling class was not afraid of it, as long as it was capable of suppressing any opposition with the help of the police, the courts, and the army. If the ruling capitalistic military dictatorship could suppress every party and every club, every meeting and every newspaper whose opinion displeased it, then general suffrage was an empty formality.

This was the opinion of the French government party when it introduced direct election of the president by the people into the Constitution. Nevertheless general suffrage played a mean trick on Cavaignac's party. The French people were supposed to elect the president of the Republic on the 10th of December. The great majority of the wealthy

had then separated from Marx and Engels. After the outbreak of the Revolution, Ruge worked for the cause of bourgeois democracy in Germany. Democrats of the south-German type controlled the Diets of southern Germany and formed the nucleus of the Left wing in the Frankfurt National Assembly. The bourgeois Left wing in the new Prussian Parliament in Berlin pursued approximately the same political course.

There was, however, a small group of men among the petty-bourgeois south-German democrats who were not satisfied with the general slogans of liberty and who wanted to act in a revolutionary manner. The most outstanding of these men was Hecker, a deputy in the Diet of Baden. He rejected all compromises with the monarchy, such as the German democrats were making everywhere. His goal was a democratic German republic, which the armed people were to establish by force of arms. The historical tradition with which Hecker was imbued derived from the great German Peasant War of 1525. He was much further removed from the modern working-class movement, since he was chiefly influenced by the petty-bourgeois conditions of his native country. Hecker was the only one of the German politicians of 1848 who actually made an impression on the broad masses of the people and enjoyed personal authority. In April Hecker decided to rise in revolt with the aim of expelling the German princes and of erecting a republic. Thus Hecker challenged not only the German princes and the nobility but also the entire official liberal movement.

In April 1848 Hecker began his revolt in Konstanz in Baden. His undertaking was by no means a putsch, but was well founded upon an objective appraisal of the existent political conditions. As a result of the impression left by the recent events of March the German governments were still morally paralysed. The army and the police were confused and incapable of any action. If the German people were really in earnest about the slogans of liberty and nation,

Constitution for many centuries. In Hungary at least the upper classes had a tradition of parliamentary self-government, which was reminiscent of England. Besides, the Hungarian government had taken advantage of the transitory weakness of the Habsburgs in March 1848 to develop an army, in which the troops of the house of Habsburg who had been recruited in Hungary were under the control of the Hungarian authorities.

Vienna had revolted in favour of the Hungarian cause. Kossuth's Hungarian government should therefore have had every interest in coming to the aid of the Viennese as rapidly as possible and with united forces. A common victory of the Hungarians and the Viennese over the imperial army would have smashed the Habsburg Empire, would have reawakened the Revolution in Italy and allowed events in Germany to take a new turn. Unfortunately Hungarian aid was inadequate and came too late. The Viennese democrats were forced to conduct the struggle against the overwhelming imperial power alone. In Germany the democratic Left wing contented itself with expressions of sympathy. The Left wing of the Frankfurt National Assembly sent several deputies to Vienna. One of them, Robert Blum, who was personally courageous, participated in the defence of the city and was shot in accordance with martial law after the conquest of Vienna by the Austrian army. In 1848, just as later in 1934, the Viennese workers had to suffer because they were superior to the other democrats and socialists of central Europe in courage and understanding. When the imperial army had reconquered Vienna the Revolution in Austria was ended. Now the imperial troops also marched into Hungary. When the King of Sardinia ventured to attempt a new passage at arms in March 1849, he was again beaten by Radetzky. After this Sardinia finally withdrew from the revolutionary struggle.

Nevertheless in the spring of 1849 events took an unexpected turn in various European countries and appeared to

usher in a revival of the revolution. First the Hungarians won a series of victories over the Austrian troops in April and May and again forced them out of the country. In central Italy the republicans had started to act independently. The Pope was driven out of Rome and a republic was proclaimed in Rome with Mazzini at its head. Garibaldi assumed the military leadership of the Roman democrats. Besides the Austrians and Naples, the Roman Republic found itself faced by still another opponent, whose intervention on the side of the counter-revolution would not have been expected by anyone several months earlier. This was France. The new President, Napoleon Bonaparte, wanted to win over the French Catholics to his side by carrying out an action for the benefit of the Pope. French troops landed in Italy and attacked Rome, but in April they were driven back by Garibaldi. The brilliant military achievements of the Roman Republic offer a characteristic contrast to the inadequacy of the royal Sardinian army.

Meanwhile in France the National Assembly had concluded its activity and in May 1849 the regular Parliament, the legislative body, was elected on the basis of the new republican Constitution. Under the stormy tide of Bonapartism, republicanism gradually lost its significance in France, but for the present republican forms were still observed. The elections of May 1849 were very peculiar. President Napoleon was indeed backed by the great majority of the French people, but the development of Bonapartism had proceeded in such a stormy manner that the President did not yet have any organized party of personal adherents. As a result he was forced to depend on one of the old parties temporarily. Napoleon chose the old monarchist party, from which he selected his ministers. During the election campaign the monarchists presented themselves as the friends of President Napoleon and thus obtained a majority in Parliament. On the other hand many voters who had voted for Napoleon during the presidential elec-

perial crown to the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm IV.

The bourgeois-liberal party in the National Assembly, so far as it favoured the Prussian solution of the national question, agreed upon a compromise with the democrats of the Left wing in order to obtain a majority for their constitutional plan. This compromise favoured the south-German Left-wing democrats considerably. If the Constitution of 1848 had actually been put into effect, then the King of Prussia would indeed have had the formal title of Emperor, but little real power. A German imperial parliament, elected by means of general suffrage, would have exercised the supreme power. According to the letter of the Constitution, the south-German petty bourgeoisie would have had supreme power, a completely unnatural condition. The clearest-thinking leaders of north-German capitalism rejected the compromise which their party friends in Frankfurt am Main had concluded with the democrats. They didn't want to have anything to do with a constitution which made the fate of Prussian capitalism and the Prussian army dependent upon general suffrage. King Friedrich Wilhelm IV was even more reluctant to accept the imperial crown under such conditions. In April he refused the Frankfurt offer.

The destruction of the German Constitution by the princes excited the masses profoundly. The workers were just as embittered as the south-German democrats. Early in May the Saxon workers rose in revolt in Dresden and were suppressed by the Prussian army. Disturbances also occurred in other parts of Germany. Most important were the events in Baden. Hecker's ideas had taken root among the Badenese soldiers, with the result that a revolutionary mood, such as existed in no other part of Germany, prevailed among the troops. From the 9th to the 12th of May the soldiers revolted in the most important garrisons of Baden. The Grand Duke, together with his loyal officers and officials, were forced to flee, and consequently the executive committee of the popular democratic societies of Baden,

led by Brentano and Goegg, suddenly and unexpectedly found itself with the entire political power in its hands. The Revolution also triumphed in the neighbouring Rhenish Palatinate. The first days of the Badenese military revolt remind one of the rebellion of the German sailors at the end of October and the beginning of November 1918. It was of the utmost importance to extend the military revolt beyond the boundaries of Baden as rapidly as possible and at the same time to legalize the movement by having the Frankfurt National Assembly adopt it. After the failure of the Constitution almost all the moderate deputies had left Frankfurt am Main. Consequently the Left wing controlled the National Assembly and was still qualified to speak in the name of the German people. It could confer the character of a legal struggle for a legal constitution upon the mutiny of the soldiers in Baden. Once again the possibility of saving the German Revolution was present.

One after another, however, all the hopes of the revolutionaries in Europe were disappointed. When Ledru-Rollin's party attempted to organize a revolutionary street demonstration in Paris on June 13, the demonstrators were dispersed by Napoleon's soldiers without any trouble. With that the soap-bubble of the rejuvenated party of the Mountain burst. Ledru-Rollin went into exile in England, following the example of Louis Blanc. The defeat of the French Mountain party likewise destroyed the chances of the republicans in Italy. After a courageous resistance the Roman Republic succumbed in July to the superior reactionary forces. The Russian Tsar placed his army at the disposal of the house of Habsburg for the purpose of vanquishing the Hungarian Revolution. In the summer of 1849 Hungary was conquered by the combined Russian and Austrian troops. One sees how all four major powers of the European continent, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Bonaparte's France, put aside their differences and first subdued the revolution together.

than the remnants of a period which had been got over. Therefore after 1850 Marx and Engels emphasized the differences which separated them from the official European democrats, in a sharply defined manner, and warned the workers against the slogans of Kossuth, Ledru-Rollin, Ruge, and others. As an individual Ledru-Rollin was no better and no worse in 1851 than he had been in 1847, but during the latter year he had been the representative of a great progressive mass movement, while in 1851 he was only an individual. The change in the tactics of Marx and Engels does not mean that they had abandoned the basic idea of democratic revolution; on the contrary, as long as they lived they remained democrats in the best sense of the word and in the spirit of 1848. They never advised the workers to adopt a narrow-minded class policy and to separate themselves from the other groups of working people. Particularly after 1848, Marx and Engels devoted a large part of their labours to the study of the agrarian question in all countries. Wherever the liberal bourgeoisie fought against feudalism Marx and Engels absolutely demanded that the workers support the struggle of the bourgeoisie, in order to be able to carry the movement beyond its bourgeois-liberal limits after the common victory.

According to the doctrine of Marx and Engels, the proletariat would "organize itself as a nation" at the head of the victorious working people and thus make possible the transition from the capitalistic individual economy to a socialistic collective economy. Nevertheless this statement of faith in democracy and a democratic revolution by no means signifies any agreement with the actions of an impotent and, in view of the objective situation, counter-revolutionary group of leaders. After 1850 Marx and Engels hoped that new parties would arise in the decisive countries with the advent of a new revolutionary wave; these parties would complete the work of 1848. They hoped that these new movements of the future would have a much clearer char-

and oppressed nations. The Hungarian National Party, led by Kossuth, as well as the aristocratic section of the Polish exiles and the liberal-monarchist group of the Italian patriots, entered into negotiations with Napoleon and hoped that he would fulfil their desires. Mazzini, however, remained true to his principles and rejected any association with corrupt Bonapartism, which could only ruin the Italian movements.

While the bourgeois-democratic International disintegrated into its component parts, the proletarian-democratic International of Willich had no better fate. When it was realized that the movement could not achieve any positive successes, new quarrels developed in the Communist Workers' Club in London, which soon brought about its complete disintegration. Willich temporarily approached the bourgeois democrats of the Ruge-Kinkel group and then emigrated to America. Schapper and the rest of the politically interested German workers in England returned to Marx. At the same time the organization of the French socialist exiles lost all significance, and thus the anti-Marxist labour International was only an episode, despite the tumult which it had created in 1850 and 1851.

While all the various groups of European democratic exiles were disintegrating and their leaders were sinking into insignificance, Marx continued to work indefatigably in London. His unparalleled scientific work attracted thinking representatives of the labour movement like an irresistible magnet. The leaders of the English workers resumed their relations with Marx and Engels. This is equally true of the Chartist Party during the last years of its existence, and of the English trade unions as soon as they too began to interest themselves in the political tasks of the proletariat. In a like manner the few people in Germany around 1860 who were concerned with the class politics of the workers also considered Marx as their scientific guide. The political struggle among the European émigrés ended about 1860, although its

Minister, Bismarck, had overstepped the bounds of the Constitution. They ruled in a dictatorial manner, in opposition to Parliament and nine tenths of the people. Apparently a revolutionary situation was developing in Prussia, and in his weaker moments the King himself expected the fate of Louis XVI.

At the beginning of the sixties the nationalist movements had also reawakened. In 1863 a revolt broke out in the Russian part of Poland, which met with intense sympathy in central and western Europe. Hungary was in a state of increasing turbulence, since the Hungarians rejected Viennese centralization in any form, no matter whether it appeared under the cloak of absolutism as after 1849 or of German liberalism after 1860. Owing to the war against Austria, which Napoleon III had conducted together with Sardinia in 1859, the nationalist movement in Italy was again in full swing. At first Napoleon had obtained only the cession of Lombardy by Austria, a meagre result for the Italian patriots. Then, however, the movement of the Italian people went ahead alone. It overflowed into central Italy and in 1860 Garibaldi undertook his famous expedition to Sicily. In the course of a brilliant triumphal march Garibaldi, at the head of his republican and patriotic volunteers, destroyed the corrupt feudal Kingdom of Naples.

The impression which Garibaldi's victories made upon all of Europe was enormous. It was the first time in many years that the democratic revolution had conquered by force of arms. The radical elements of all countries conceived new hopes. The moral authority of the Italian republicans and of their leaders, Garibaldi and Mazzini, who had already stood the test of 1849 so brilliantly, was greater than ever before. However, it was soon evident that the Italian republicans could indeed triumph, but that the liberal monarchists gathered the fruits of their victories. With all their courage and all their love of the broad masses, the Italian republicans had no social program with which they would have been able to

class itself would now have to fill the gap consciously. The proletariat as a class would have to take up the arms which the older democratic movement had cast aside. In theory this was clear and simple, but its practical political execution was all the more difficult. The strength and the weakness of the older democratic movement had been the fact that it had been a mobilization of the " people." On the one hand this explains the phraseological vagueness of most of the older democrats on the social question, but on the other also the impassioned energy with which workers and peasants, artisans and students had united under the democratic banner. In 1848 the democratic idea had actually moved the masses and had carried them to the barricades. Only recently Garibaldi, with his democratic and patriotic slogans, had mobilized all the people in southern Italy to fight against a small ruling group.

The democratic movement had then been wrecked every time on its social contradictions. It had made a glorious beginning, however, by stirring up the people, by arousing the will of the masses to sacrifice their lives for freedom and a better future. If the labour movement now appeared as the successor to the older democratic movement, would it be capable of making the same glorious beginning? Any labour organization was capable of seeing the real problems of social life much more clearly than the older democratic movement had seen them. Would the organized working class, however, be capable of finding the connexion between the minor specialized questions of its daily activities and the great problems of the revolution? Would the workers be capable of organizing the masses of peasants and artisans and others as a part of the working class and then of leading them in an attack upon the ruling system?

In 1848 the political idea had pushed all other considerations into the background. The workers in all countries were convinced that the people must first obtain political power. Everything else would then follow. The movement

was so strong that in many cases it even carried the unpolitical socialists with it. It is typical that in 1848 in France even Proudhon allowed himself to be elected to the National Assembly, not, to be sure, as a member of any party, but as an independent socialist. The defeat of the political revolution necessarily shook the faith of the workers in the power of purely political action and with that also their faith in the older revolutionary democratic movement. During the decade between 1860 and 1870 four tendencies or forms may be recognized according to which the workers sought to shape their class movement in contrast to that of the older democratic tradition. These were the political labour party, the political trade unions, unpolitical anarchism employing peaceful methods, and finally unpolitical anarchism advocating revolutionary methods. Lassalle's party in Germany represented the first form; the second was typified by the English trade unions. The two anarchist groups consisted of the adherents of Proudhon and Bakunin.

During the sixties the Left wing of the bourgeoisie in Germany formed several parties. These were movements of uncompromising liberals, who attempted to win over masses of the petty bourgeoisie and of the working class. The specific German form of the democratic movement of 1848, which had never been anything else but a Left wing of liberalism with petty-bourgeois tendencies, merged with the new parties. In Prussia there was the German Progressive Party and in southern Germany the German People's Party. Men who had been considered democrats in 1848 worked in both parties — for example, Schulze-Delitzsch in the Progressive Party, and Karl Mayer in the People's Party. It is remarkable, however, that in their official names both parties avoided any designation as democrats. It was felt that the word " democrat " was not very suitable for a peaceful and legal bourgeois party, or, as Lassalle bluntly expressed it: " The old, honourable, and intelligible word ' democracy ' was obscured by the furtive, mendacious name of the ' Progressive Party.' "

At the beginning of the sixties the Communist League had long since ceased to exist. Only a few people had any direct connexions with Marx and Engels in England. The workers who had any interest at all in a radical political movement joined the Left wing of the bourgeoisie, the Progressive Party, and the People's Party. Later the two independent Social Democratic parties were formed by the separation of the workers' clubs from the two bourgeois parties. The popular goal of the social-reformist movement among the workers, just as among the distressed petty bourgeoisie, was still the co-operative in the spirit of Louis Blanc. If matters were considered in the right light, the liberal bourgeoisie had no occasion to fear the co-operatives. Thus Schulze-Delitzsch himself founded co-operatives in the name of the Progressive Party, and as a result the workers in Prussia could be really satisfied with their party. The party also led the struggle for political freedom. Particularly in 1863 the Progressive Party opposed the King and Bismarck, and at the same time the workers received their co-operatives. However, Schulze-Delitzsch differed with Louis Blanc by demanding that the co-operatives should not be organized with the help of the state, but that they should be maintained with funds contributed by the members themselves.

It was nevertheless an unnatural condition for the German proletariat, which was constantly growing in number and self-confidence, to remain permanently attached to the leading-strings of the wealthy bourgeoisie. For the workers in 1848 democracy had not meant a policy of class conciliation with the manufacturers and the bankers. After the collapse of revolutionary democracy in 1849 the democratic remnants had hidden themselves beneath the wings of bourgeois liberalism. The fact that the workers had accompanied this retreat for a certain period was only an ex-

pression of the defeat of all the popular forces in Germany. Yet the moment had to come when the German working class, after the decline of the older revolutionary democratic movement, would found its own democratic party.

When the German workers began to become politically independent, they found a great leader in Lassalle. He was by far the most important thinker among the younger politicians and sociologists in Germany who had accepted the teachings of Marx. Lassalle used the differences of opinion within the progressive workers' clubs in order to enter into a struggle with Schulze-Delitzsch and the bourgeoisie. He explained the facts of the class struggle very trenchantly to the workers. He demanded general suffrage for the German workers, a right which they possessed neither in Prussia nor in southern Germany nor in Austria at that time. He demanded that the state should aid the productive co-operatives of the workers. Only in this way would it be possible to obtain any positive results, while the co-operatives of Schulze-Delitzsch would expire owing to a lack of funds.

In 1863 Lassalle founded the General German Workers' Society. It was the first independent and vital working-class party on German soil. The Communist League had been but a small group without any independent following among the masses. Lassalle's Workers' Society was a democratic party, for he demanded general suffrage and the assumption of political power by the working class. Marx and Engels greeted the founding of Lassalle's party with mixed emotions. They were disturbed first of all by the co-operative theory, which Lassalle had not borrowed from Marx, but rather from Louis Blanc. Marx did not believe that the controversy over the correct form of co-operatives was a particularly suitable starting-point for a new labour party. Marx feared that the propaganda for co-operatives would lead to nothing but confusion and reverses. The worst of it was that a few producers' co-operatives might very easily be founded with some help from the state, even un-

ernment, which would be possible even in Berlin, is certainly very different from any flirtation or even any pseudo-compromise with the government. . . . There is no longer any doubt that Lassalle's unfortunate illusion of a socialistic intervention by a Prussian government will be followed by disappointment. The logic of facts will speak. However, the honour of the labour party demands that it reject all such illusions, even before their emptiness has been demonstrated by experience. The working class is revolutionary or it is nothing."

Marx did Schweitzer a great wrong, when he considered him in any way an agent of the Prussian government. Schweitzer, and Lassalle before him, never betrayed the working class and democracy, even for one moment, in the interest of Bismarck. Schweitzer's tactics are explained rather by the practical needs of his party and by the desires and sentiments of the German workers themselves. The small party of the Lassalleans was in an enormously difficult situation at that time. In order to attain any significance, the party first had to separate a considerable number of workers from bourgeois liberalism. This was possible only by carrying on an intense polemical agitation against the liberal catchwords. If the party had simultaneously begun such a propaganda campaign among the rural population, it would have dissipated its forces and would probably have achieved nothing in either field. On the other hand it was just the class-conscious part of the German proletariat that desired a genuine labour party, a party which clearly and definitely represented the workers and would not mingle the cause of the workers with the causes of other groups.

Marx and Engels, on the other hand, were not concerned with the problem of founding some kind of socialist party in Germany as rapidly as possible, but only with advancing the revolution in Germany. But a revolution in Prussia was impossible if the urban workers isolated themselves. The workers must unite with the poor rural population and defeat the military monarchy together, thus completing the actual bourgeois revolution in Germany without waiting for the bourgeoisie. Marx and Engels demanded of Lassalle's party that it behave like a party of revolutionary democrats. It should continue the work of 1848, but it must get rid of all petty-bourgeois admixtures and phrases. At that time, however, it was difficult to interest just that part of the European proletariat which was most class-conscious in a policy of this kind. The more clearly the vanguard of the proletariat realized its own position within bourgeois society, the greater became its tendency to isolate itself and to emphasize those qualities which were specifically proletarian and which differentiated it from all the groups and tendencies of the wealthy classes. At this stage the radical proletarian movement tended particularly to see the nobility and the peasants, the manufacturers and the intellectuals as "a uniform reactionary mass." However, in this manner the working class isolated itself and made it impossible for itself to carry on a revolutionary policy.

It has already been emphasized that Lassalle reproached the liberal bourgeoisie and particularly the bourgeois radicals with the fact that they renounced the name of democrats. The result was that the rising independent labour movement claimed the democratic name for itself. The political German labour movement began to call itself "social-democratic," in accord with the tradition of 1848. Linguistically this name was unobjectionable, since it was intended to designate a movement which demanded self-government by the people based upon general suffrage and at the same time the social transformation of society in the interest of the labouring masses. Historically, however, the designation was less correct, for, by their policy of class isolation, the new labour parties abandoned the essential idea of the historical democratic movement.

Marx and Engels were not at all satisfied with the characterization of their labour movement as "social-democratic."

man labour party could have been to unite all the opponents of Bismarck's system. However, Liebknecht and his friends were not capable of steering an independent course in the great political questions of the day. To be sure, they represented the trade interests of the German workers courageously, but at the same time they were completely under the influence of the People's Party's anti-Prussian particularism. Just for the sake of annoying Bismarck the leaders of the Social Democratic Labour Party waxed enthusiastic over Austria, over the rulers of the petty German states who had been deposed by Prussia, and over the narrow-mindedness of the petty states. The anger with which Marx and Engels observed Wilhelm Liebknecht and his tactics is entirely comprehensible. This example again illustrates how difficult it was at that time for an independent labour party in Europe to steer its own political course. As soon as the workers and their leaders abandoned the well-known road of revolutionary democracy, they were confronted by tangled forests of unexplored political territory. Every advance was dangerous and as a rule it was easy to go astray.

The founding of an independent labour party was not due to Lassalle's ambitions, but developed out of the conditions of the period. The corresponding events in France prove this. Ever since Napoleon III had begun to feel insecure and had observed the growth of the opposition, he had begun to toy with the labour movement. In 1862 the imperial government had permitted the French workers to elect a kind of industrial representative body. These workers' delegates were to represent the French proletariat at the London World Exposition, which was then being held. This contact between the French and English workers, which had been encouraged by Napoleon III, was later to become important for the origin of the First International. In a positive sense Napoleon did nothing for the French workers. However, at least a few working-class organizations, with moderate aims, were now legalized in France. In Paris these

labour groups determined to play an independent part in the parliamentary elections of 1863. The labour candidates appealed to the electorate with declarations in which they emphasized the class differences between the workers and the capitalists, as well as the necessity for an independent labour party, with extraordinary clarity. This occurred in the same year during which Lassalle started his great agitational campaign in Germany.

The two movements were completely independent of each other. The leaders of the political labour movement in Paris were exceedingly honest men, who had nothing to do with Napoleon's manœuvres. However, they had a perfectly good right to utilize as advantageously as possible the increased freedom which the working class had obtained. Nevertheless the nomination of independent labour candidates in Paris at such a time meant a split in the ranks of those who opposed Bonaparte. Just as the German liberals had considered Lassalle's agitation as an aid to Bismarck, the French bourgeois republicans also regarded the nomination of labour candidates as one of Bonaparte's manœuvres. It is characteristic that in 1863 the labour candidates in Paris were decisively defeated, and received but a few hundred votes. During the early period the electoral successes of the two socialist parties in Germany were just as moderate. From 1867 to 1877 five general elections, based upon general suffrage, were held in northern Germany, but the first Social Democratic deputies were not elected in Berlin until 1877. The idea of an independent labour party, separated from the bourgeois-democratic or bourgeois-republican opposition, gained adherents among the proletariat very slowly.

The second form of proletarian dissociation from the policies of the older democratic parties developed in England. Together with all possible kinds of personal, local, and more accidental factors, two main causes were important for the decline of the Chartist Party. First of all the complete col-

lapse of the revolutionary democratic movement on the European continent after 1849 also tended to paralyse the related movement in England. Furthermore the one-sided concentration of Chartist propaganda on the political franchise no longer satisfied the English working class. To be sure, the politically thinking English workers still demanded electoral reform, but they gradually felt themselves repelled by a party which continued to speak only of parliamentary reform and disregarded the practical daily needs of the proletariat. In the long run, the promise of the Chartists that everything would change after the electoral reform did not satisfy the English workers. As a result, during the sixties they turned to their trade societies, the unions, and also found a political haven in them.

This does not mean that the English workers had now become fundamental opponents of political activity. On the contrary, the English trade unions fought with increased zeal for general suffrage at that time and were very influential particularly in international political questions. Yet the English workers no longer believed that only a democratic political party of the proletariat could advance their interests. Perhaps pressure exerted by the workers who were organized in unions on the existing bourgeois parties could accomplish the same, if not more. In England, too, the masses were evidently drifting away from the older ideal of a democratic party of the working people.

In Germany and France the friends of independent labour parties agreed with the politically active English trade-unionists by attributing great significance to political activity within the bounds of the existing states and their constitutions. The Germans and the French wanted to have their labour deputies in Parliament; the English wanted to exert pressure on the bourgeois parliamentary parties from outside. All of them believed in the importance of political activity in Parliament and in the state. Alongside of these groups, however, a completely different movement developed

among the European workers. This tendency also opposed the traditional democratic ideas. It went beyond this, however, and completely rejected all political activity within the framework of the existing political order. It has already been pointed out that the older utopian socialism had rejected the use of political methods for the transformation of the state. The complete collapse of the European revolution in 1849 and the failure of all the political movements of the masses, which had been started with so much enthusiasm and devotion, appeared to bear out the views of these sceptics.

From the beginning many utopian socialists had exhibited anarchist tendencies; that is, they demanded the dissolution of all centralized political organizations based upon compulsion, and their replacement by smaller, loosely connected, self-governing communities. This older criticism of centralization and of political states based upon compulsion was developed by Proudhon. Not only did he absolutely reject the existing capitalistic and feudal states, but he also distrusted intensely any attempt to realize socialism by means of a large centralized organization based upon force. People who think like Proudhon do not consider it a great advance for the working class to be commanded by an organization of government officials, even though it takes place in the name of "socialism." At the present time the followers of Proudhon's ideas generally refer to Soviet Russia as proof of the correctness of their fears. Proudhon and his school did not consider any revolution progressive as long as it was directed by a centralized party machine, since such revolutions only led the masses from one form of dependency to another.

The rejection of the political party is closely connected with the criticism of the centralized state. A party is, in a certain sense, a state in miniature and tends ultimately to become the state itself. A party embodies authority just as a state does. Even though a party may make extremely radical demands and promise its followers republicanism, de-

leaders and with complete self-government by the members. Tolain, one of the labour candidates in the recent elections, came to London as the representative of the Paris workers. On September 24, 1864 a large international labour meeting was held in London. Besides the English and the French representatives, several delegates of the Italian workers' societies which supported Mazzini participated in the meeting. Marx was invited to take part as the representative of the German workers. Marx recognized that he was dealing with a serious movement and accepted the invitation.

At the meeting in London it was decided to organize an international workers' association, which for the present would include the English, French, Italian, and German labour organizations. The workers of other countries were invited to join. A general council with its seat in London took over the direction of the International. Marx soon obtained a decisive influence in the General Council. He drew up the program of the International and directed its policies.

It is worth noting that Marx and Engels did not found the "first" International, but that the idea came from the workers themselves, chiefly from the English unions, and Marx then accepted the plan of the English workers. Furthermore it was not the narrower trade interests of the workers that led to the founding of the International, but rather broad, general questions of international policy. The immediate occasion for the founding of the International was not a strike, but a demonstration of sympathy for Poland, a matter which had no direct connexion with the workers' jobs. The formation of the International would have been inconceivable without the older tradition of collaboration of the European democratic movement. The foreign policy of the Chartists furnished the most important precedent for the International. The London meeting of 1864 was the direct continuation of the London assemblies of the Fraternal Democrats before and after 1848. The First International was an imposing attempt on the part of the European

working class to resume a course of action which had been abandoned by the older democratic movement. The basic idea was to change the economic conditions of the working class in the leading countries by means of political victories of the proletarian democratic movement.

The narrower trade interests of the workers certainly played an important part in the publications and at the congresses of the International, and Marx attempted at all times to demonstrate the connexion between the small daily cares of the proletarians and the larger political movements. In 1867 the International procured money from the London unions to support striking bronze-workers in Paris. This act of international proletarian solidarity caused a great sensation and contributed substantially to the victory of the striking Paris workers. Marx was proud of this success. Nevertheless Marx and Engels never regarded economic matters as the essential business of the International. From 1866 to 1869 the International held its congresses annually, either in Switzerland or in Belgium. Marx and Engels did not attend the congresses and did not consider their resolutions on economic and social matters as very important. Nor did Marx become excited if the congress of the International sometimes passed a Proudhonist resolution. What was said at the meetings of the International was not so important as the fact that the International itself existed.

The first practical purpose which Marx endeavoured to carry out by means of the International was to influence the English labour movement directly through the medium of the General Council. As a result the International actually was capable of leading the struggle of the English workers for the franchise. Beyond that, however, the International gave Marx the possibility of influencing the French workers, a fact which might become very important as soon as the long awaited new revolution broke out in Paris. The collaboration of the English and French workers, which had proved so felicitous during strikes, might put a new face

on European politics if it was employed correctly after the next French revolution. If, in the meantime, the English workers obtained the franchise and were thus in a position to determine their country's policy, and if this new democratic England combined with a new French republic, then the foundation would finally have been laid for the rise of the proletariat. How far such an Anglo-French combination could be supported by a revived democratic movement in America, on the one hand, and by related movements in central and eastern Europe remained to be ascertained.

To be sure, Marx saw clearly that for the present the International was only a loose federation, composed of the most diverse elements. The English trade-unionists were not socialists at all. The French adherents of the International were chiefly Proudhonists, and they followed the "authoritarian" activity of the General Council with the greatest distrust. In 1865 Marx broke openly with the German Lassalleans, nor did the narrow-minded, particularistic tactics of Liebknecht's party tend to strengthen the International. The Italian societies which belonged to the International were influenced by Mazzini at first and later accepted Bakunin's ideas. The groups of the International in the smaller countries were also very diversified and often opposed the General Council. In all these crises and difficulties the English members should have been the chief support of the International. However, the leaders of the English trade unions were both personally and politically connected with bourgeois liberalism, a condition which represented a constant source of differences and contradictions.

Marx felt that only a single large group of workers which actually agreed with him intrinsically existed in Europe, but it was just this group that did not belong officially to the International. This group consisted of the revolutionary workers of Paris. It was known that they existed and their line of action was eagerly awaited. But they had no party.

In France the police did not allow the formation of a revolutionary workers' party, nor was there anyone among the émigrés who would actually have been able to speak in the name of this section of the Parisian workers. In September 1867 Marx wrote in a letter: "The worst of it is that we haven't even a single person in Paris who could get in touch with the working-class sections (and they form the majority) that are hostile to the Proudhonists." Marx sympathized sincerely with old Blanqui. He was actually the only one among the leaders of the democratic movement of 1848 whom Marx valued highly as an individual. Blanqui reciprocated this feeling of sympathy. However, opportunities to get in touch with Blanqui, inside or outside of prison, were rare, and the practical significance of such attempts was small, since Blanqui had no party and was actually only a great, half-mythical name for the workers of Paris. Since the French revolutionary workers had no organization, Marx was forced to allow the theorizing and captious Proudhonists within the International to speak in the name of France.

Despite these enormous internal difficulties, Marx was able to maintain a unified International until great and tragic events in European politics made its further existence purposeless. At first Marx was satisfied with the results despite any momentary unpleasantness. In September 1867 he wrote to Engels in the jargon which he had acquired in exile and which he employed for such communications: "Meanwhile our society makes great progress. . . . Les choses marchent, and in the next revolution, which is closer perhaps than we suspect, we, i.e. you and I, will have this mighty engine in our hands. Compare with this the results of Mazzini's etc. operations since 30 years! And all this without funds, despite the intrigues of the Proudhonists in Paris, of Mazzini in Italy, of the jealousies of Odger, Cremer, Potter in London, and despite Schulze-Delitzsch and the Lassalleans in Germany!" (Potter was an English trade-union

leader.) In speaking of the coming revolution Marx apparently thought of an uprising in Paris, which was expected momentarily then.

8. *Napoleon's Collapse*

At first the International actually achieved political successes. One of these was the acquisition of general suffrage in 1867 by the urban workers in England. This result had become possible only because it was supported both by the radical wing of the liberals and also by the revived Conservative Party of Disraeli. With this step England had completed its transformation into a bourgeois democratic state, wherein the organized workers played an important part. In addition in America the Northern states had obtained a decisive victory during 1864–5 and had completely destroyed the slave-holding aristocracy. The International congratulated President Lincoln formally upon his success. The address was composed by Marx, and Lincoln replied with an exceedingly friendly answer. Simultaneously in France, Napoleon's decline grew more evident. The French strike movement, which was supported by the International, helped to render any contradictions more acute. The violence of the imperial police on such occasions embittered even the most peaceful Proudhonists and proved to them that even the most modest social progress would be possible in France only after the expulsion of Napoleon. Napoleon's apparent friendliness for the workers had disappeared long ago.

In Germany at the same time the authority of the ruling class had been greatly strengthened by Bismarck's successes. Since 1866 the liberal bourgeoisie had become completely reconciled to Bismarck. Bismarck was now at the head of a solid bloc composed of the King of Prussia and the minor German princes, the militaristic Prussian nobility, and the liberal bourgeoisie. As Lassalle had predicted, Bismarck had

actually granted general suffrage for the North German Reichstag. Since 1867 the government had received overwhelming majorities in the elections. The Catholic Pan-Germans, the anti-Prussian People's Party, and the two Social Democratic groups were completely impotent politically. A formal and final solution of the German question, through the entrance of the south-German states into the confederation led by Prussia, was apparently only a question of a short time.

From a democratic and socialist point of view, this entire development in Germany was not very gratifying. Nevertheless, in a certain sense it advanced the aims of the International. In the first place the unification of Germany was followed by a powerful development of industry and consequently strengthened the proletariat. The solution of the German question removed the differences which had separated the friends and the opponents of a greater Germany and thus paved the way for the unification of the German labour movement. Even more important at this moment was the fact that anything which strengthened Germany likewise weakened Napoleon and so helped to bring on a French revolution. French public opinion considered the result of the war of 1866 as a serious defeat for France. By his political mistakes Napoleon III had brought about the unification of Italy and then the centralization of Germany under Prussian leadership. The result was that France's international position had become exceedingly serious and unfavourable.

The collapse of Napoleon's American policy followed upon the heels of his diplomatic defeat in Germany. Napoleon had taken advantage of the weakening of the United States during the Civil War to erect a kind of French protectorate in Mexico. In Mexico the party of the great landowners and the Church was opposed by a popular peasant movement. The republican party led by President Juárez represented the interests of the poor rural population. The large landowners, on the other hand, sought aid abroad.

can only be explained on the basis of the odd political situation in France at that time, was held even by the most experienced observers. Thus Engels wrote on August 15, 1870: "The worst of it is — who should be the leader in case a revolutionary movement actually appears in Paris? Rochefort is the most popular and the only useful one — Blanqui appears to be forgotten."

The French elections of 1869 were an improved edition of the 1863 elections. To be sure, the manufactured imperial majority was returned again, but all the large cities, headed by Paris, had definitely voted against Napoleon. The frightened Emperor sought to compromise with the bourgeoisie. He changed the military despotism into a parliamentary monarchy, and he even found a very conservative republican, Ollivier, who was ready to usher in Napoleon's new era as Prime Minister. Napoleon then held a plebiscite to confirm or repudiate the establishment of the new "liberal" Empire. Once again the plebiscite brought victory for the tried and trustworthy imperial electoral swindlers. Paris, however, again repudiated the Empire. The liberal comedy of Ollivier's Ministry was only the beginning of the end, or, as Gambetta expressed it, the bridge between the Republic of 1848 and the republic of the future.

In July 1870 war broke out between Napoleon and Prussia and brought the swindle of the Empire to a bloody conclusion. After the first defeats of the French army in August 1870, everyone prepared for Napoleon's fall. Even the generals speculated on the political future, in which the Red republicans at home appeared much more dangerous than the Prussians. The plan of action which the leader of the main French army, Marshal Bazaine, initiated during the middle of August was dictated entirely by internal political considerations. He wanted to maintain his army, supported by the fortress of Metz, as strong as possible in order to be able to employ it against the revolution in Paris after the conclusion of peace. Consequently Bazaine delayed his departure from

of Carnot, and the new leaders of the French army did their best under desperate conditions.

If the French Republic of 1870–1 was nevertheless denied the success of 1793, it was due to the fact that this time it faced a very different opponent. At the time of Robespierre the French popular army fought against the antiquated armies of European feudalism, which were numerically weak and difficult to manœuvre. On the other hand, owing to a remarkable development the Prussian army of 1870 was simultaneously both the most progressive and the most backward institution in Germany. Its backwardness lay in the fact that the Prussian army recruited its corps of officers chiefly from the feudal nobility of East Elbia, and that the Prussian military machine was the instrument with whose help the militaristic nobility repressed the masses. At the same time, however, since the Wars of Liberation of 1813–15, the Prussian General Staff had appropriated all the methods of modern bourgeois warfare which the French Revolution and Napoleon I had developed. The Prussian General Staff had an army recruited by universal conscription at its disposal, and under the highly gifted leadership of Moltke the German army employed a strategy of extermination, which had nothing in common with the methodical slowness of the eighteenth century.

On the German side the war of 1870 was a struggle for national unification. The German liberal bourgeoisie was united in its support of Bismarck and carried the great mass of the people with it. In 1793 the armies of the European monarchs were so weak that the French popular militia was able to fight all of Europe simultaneously. Furthermore the monarchist troops were so slow and difficult to manœuvre that the French army was able to gain time in order to learn the art of war gradually. In contrast to this, in 1870–1 the Germans had an army of millions, based upon universal conscription, and the German command was so energetic that the French had no time to organize a new army. The Ger-

not have been able to avert disaster. However, the provisional government in Paris saw to it that the dissatisfaction of large groups of the population with the new rulers increased.

The development of the revolution once again made the question of municipal autonomy for Paris a matter of major importance. In 1848 the moderate republicans had immediately seized power in Paris in order to prevent a repetition of the Commune of 1792. In 1870 the members of the government acted in a similar manner. Actually it was not very wise for the new democratic Republic to deny the capital of the country its right to democratic self-government, particularly since the existence of the government depended on the armed Parisian workers, who manned the fortifications and resisted the Prussians. However, just because the power of the provisional government was restricted to the city of Paris for the present, it wanted to retain control and refused to tolerate any other authority. The conservative element predominated among the ministers who had remained in Paris. Either the Germans or Gambetta were in control outside. During the winter of 1870–1 the Paris government was the legal nucleus for a conservative capitalistic reconstruction of France.

If a democratic municipal government had been formed in Paris on the basis of free elections, it would have been composed of revolutionary workers or at least of Gambetta's followers. In case of conflicts the National Guard would have obeyed the municipal government and not the ministers. For all practical purposes Paris would have been a branch of Gambetta's government, and the ministers of Favre's group would have been isolated. This eventuality had to be prevented at all costs. The government appointed Ferry Mayor of Paris and prevented the establishment of a democratic commune. The radical Parisian workers and National Guards, who were again led by Blanqui, began to agitate for a commune. This was by no means an adventure

or a slogan symbolic of socialism or anarchism; the Parisians simply demanded their democratic rights. Riots and demonstrations occurred within besieged Paris. The government helped itself by means of a cunning manœuvre. It held a plebiscite in Paris for the people to express their confidence or lack of confidence in the " government of national defence." In the interest of national defence the majority of the Parisians felt obliged to vote for the government. The result was that Favre and his friends obtained a vote of confidence from the people of Paris. Supported by the plebiscite, they continued to delay the formation of a democratic communal government and were able to proceed against the radical agitators. Blanqui was forced to leave Paris secretly.

In the course of January 1871 the military situation grew more and more hopeless for France. The armies in the field had been defeated and supplies in Paris were rapidly approaching their end. Nevertheless the question of war or peace had been removed from the sphere of objective judgment and had become a party and class question. Gambetta demanded the continuation of the war to the very last, and in this he was supported by the masses of the large cities. On the other hand the wealthy upper class demanded peace, for, once the war was ended, Gambetta's dictatorship and the arming of the working class could also be eliminated. At the end of January the rump government in Paris ceased fighting and concluded an armistice with Bismarck as the first step towards the negotiation of peace. In a strict sense the Favre government was not qualified to undertake such negotiations, for if Paris once capitulated, the members of the government who were present there would be prisoners and would have just as little right to speak for the rest of France as Napoleon had had at the surrender of Sedan, or Bazaine at the capitulation of Metz. The advantages which the wealthy classes in France derived from the non-existence of a democratically elected municipal government in Paris now became evident. Only because no independent munici-

republicans and socialists. Together with Gambetta and Rochefort, Paris had also elected Tolain, the co-founder of the International, as well as old Louis Blanc. Among the Paris deputies who belonged to Gambetta's faction was the young physician and district mayor Clemenceau.

The National Assembly in Bordeaux elected Thiers as Provisional President. Thiers formed a new government composed of monarchists and conservative republicans. Gambetta's party was entirely eliminated. The National Assembly declared itself in favour of an armistice and peace. Bismarck's conditions, which included the cession of Alsace-Lorraine besides the payment of an enormous indemnity, had been accepted. Until this sum had been completely paid, German troops would continue to occupy northern France. Thiers's government and the National Assembly moved to Versailles.

Thiers's next task was to disarm the workers of Paris, who as members of the National Guard were armed. The National Guard of Paris, which had developed in the course of the war, was actually a workers' militia consisting of more than a hundred thousand men and was liberally supplied with guns, cannon, and other war materials. The individual battalions of the National Guard had their councils, and these soldiers' deputies had formed a central body. Until now the conservative French government had prevented the rise of a democratically elected municipal government in Paris; now in its place a new institution, which completely made up for the lacking commune and which was even more dangerous for the ruling class, had developed in Paris. This was the Central Committee of the National Guard, the head of the Red army of Paris.

The siege had brought the entire economic life of Paris to a complete standstill. The unemployed had enlisted in the National Guard. The daily wage of the soldiers of the National Guard was a military form of unemployment relief. In certain respects, therefore, the Paris National Guard

his party would necessarily reappear in the foreground. Unlike 1848, this time bourgeois democracy was no castle in the air; thanks to the activity of Gambetta, it had become the typical patriotic party of France. At least Gambetta's party was the only existing organization through which the French peasants could express their faith in a democratic republic. If the later MacMahon crisis of the seventies is imagined, but coincident with the existence of an unconquered Parisian proletariat, then one can conceive of the political possibilities which then existed.

More than anything else the Parisian workers needed a capable and intelligently directed political party, to a certain extent a renewal of the Socialist Democratic Party of 1848, but without the mistakes which the latter had made. It has already been emphasized repeatedly that such a party did not exist in March 1871. The French section of the International contained a number of honest and intelligent men, but almost all of them were influenced by Proudhonist ideas. They had no desire for political power and were completely incapable of directing the proletariat of Paris. Through an unfortunate accident Blanqui had again been arrested outside of Paris. Thus his advice and his authority were lacking at a time when they would have been most necessary for the workers. An actual Blanquist party — that is, a systematically recruited mass organization — did not exist. The Red soldiers' deputies, who actually had power in Paris then, frequently called themselves Blanquists. This did not mean, however, that a definite party and its organization had obtained power, but only that the armed revolutionary workers called themselves "Blanquists" in order to have a political name of some kind. Actually it was just the revolutionary section of the Parisian proletariat, which had no political leadership of any kind. The old democratic movement had disappeared. A new one had not yet been formed. It now became evident that the attempt of Marx and the International to create a new democratic movement which

machine had also developed since 1860, even though under somewhat different conditions. The reproach which has been and is still being hurled at parliaments, that they " palaver " but do not act, is only a popular, critical formulation of this division of powers. The Commune of Paris, on the other hand, by overcoming the centralized governmental machine, was both the legislative and the executive body. The communal representative body of Paris was divided into several commissions which took the place of the historical ministries.

In Paris all this had arisen more or less spontaneously or as the result of a natural development. At the same time, however, it corresponded to the ideals of the Proudhonists. The Proudhonist minority of the Commune made a virtue of necessity and induced the majority to pass decrees which were to contribute to the reduction of the traditional political order. The decrees of the Paris Commune represent a sketch of a future France in which every community enjoys complete self-government and where the army, police, bureaucracy, and judiciary are replaced by simple executive organs representing the working people. The old centralized national government was to be replaced by a federation of the self-governing urban and rural communities. Thus during the stormy weeks of the Commune the first, as yet unclear beginnings of a new type of democracy became evident. It was based upon the idea that a centralized state, maintained by force, is incompatible with self-government by the labouring masses. A social democracy cannot remain satisfied with simply taking possession of the existing governmental machine, but must destroy it. The new form of communal democracy which was attempted in Paris in 1871 exhibits astonishing analogies to the self-government of the mediæval free cities and of the small republics of antiquity.

All these new thoughts certainly did not help the Paris Commune in its desperate struggle against its foes. Paris remained isolated. Several attempts by workers in other cities

to bring help to the Parisians and to extend the movement failed completely. An alliance directed against the Parisian workers was actually formed by the conservative French government and the new German Empire. In the district which they occupied, the Germans suppressed every movement which was in any way sympathetic to the Commune. The German troops helped to surround Paris and, at the request of Thiers, Bismarck even permitted the return of many French prisoners of war who had formerly belonged to the old imperial army.

Since the Commune was completely helpless in military matters and without initiative, the government army constantly grew larger. Marshal MacMahon, one of the few remaining imperial generals, who still retained a great deal of authority, became the commander-in-chief of the government forces. It is apparent that the so-called republican government of France employed the imperial military machine in order to render the workers of Paris and the real republicans innocuous. A true slaughter was organized among the insurgents and even among the non-combatant population. The number of dead in Paris amounted to at least twenty thousand. In addition thousands of Parisian workers were thrown into prisons and concentration camps or were forced to flee. The defeat of the Commune was accompanied by the physical destruction of the proletarian and republican vanguard of France. To find another example of such a horrible defeat of the working classes one must go back to the Peasant War of 1525.

For Marx the defeat of the Paris Commune meant the end of the revolutionary plans to which he had devoted his entire life. The initiative of the French workers was destroyed for at least a generation, just as Marx and Engels had predicted since September 1870. It meant that the outlook for proletarian democracy in the other European countries was hopeless for a long time to come. Marx was confronted by a serious decision. Personally he was not at all responsible

for the Paris Commune. From the very beginning he had considered such a revolt as hopeless, and when the uprising of the Parisian workers had become a fact, Marx, in his letters, had criticized their mistakes ruthlessly. The great majority of the members of the Commune had not even been connected with the International, and the minority, because of its Proudhonist opposition, had always made the work of Marx more difficult.

Furthermore the Proudhonist position on the question of the state, which the Commune had accepted, differed completely from that of Marx. To be sure, Marx also regarded the state as the repressive apparatus of the ruling class, and he also hoped that at some future time, while evolving towards communism, the repressive state would "wither away" and would be transformed into a free association of producers. However, in the event of a revolution the working class should not dissolve the centralized political apparatus of the state, but should rather employ it ruthlessly for its own purpose. According to Marx, the first task of the victorious proletariat was to form a strong, fighting, centralized government like that of Robespierre. Marx did not consider such a "dictatorship of the proletariat" as a contrast to democracy, but rather as its armed consummation. During the revolution the proletariat acts in the name of the labouring masses — that is, the overwhelming majority of the nation. Through discipline and the employment of armed force democracy must first conquer its foes. The "withering away" of the state can only occur during a much later period.

In accordance with these ideas Marx would have wanted the Central Committee of the National Guard to seize dictatorial power in Paris after the Revolution of March 18 and to open an offensive against Versailles; for Marx at this moment the peaceful election in the midst of civil war and all the experiments with decentralized self-government were nothing more than Proudhonistic childishness. It would

therefore have been very easy for Marx to criticize the mistakes of the Commune publicly and to refuse any responsibility for the unfortunate events in Paris. But Marx was not so much concerned with maintaining the correctness of his ideas in public as with safeguarding the future of the movement. Despite their mistakes, in a more profound sense the revolutionary workers of Paris were Marx's party comrades; for by his " party " Marx did not mean any accidental society, but the great association of all the revolutionary fighters of all countries. To be sure, the heroic struggle of the Parisian workers irrevocably ended a very long period of democratic development in Europe, but now the main thing was to retain and to utilize the tradition of the Commune for future times.

Thus with the vivid impression of the White Terror of Paris still in mind, Marx, in the name of the International, wrote his famous pamphlet *The Civil War in France*. In it he suppresses completely every theoretical or tactical difference of opinion which he himself had had with the Communards. From beginning to end he approves the Commune, even with its experiments for the immediate dissolution of the centralized state, and presents it as a glowing example to the workers and revolutionaries of all countries. Theoretically this was a partial retreat of Marxism in the face of Proudhonism. For Marx, however, theoretical dogmatism was always unimportant in comparison with the great tasks of movement.

The work of Marx on the Civil War of 1871 has an extraordinary historical significance; for by this bold step Marx annexed the memory of the Commune. It is only since then that Marxism has possessed a revolutionary tradition in the eyes of mankind. By 1870 Marx had already acquired a reputation as an outstanding theoretician of the labour movement, but the general public knew nothing of the political and revolutionary activity of the Marxists. It is only since Marx's resolute public defence of the Commune

regarded, the democratic movement had been completely defeated in all of continental Europe by 1871. In France the monarchist National Assembly ruled in conjunction with the generals. Thiers was ousted from his post in 1873 and Marshal MacMahon became acting head of the state. He was generally considered as the man who would clear the way for a return of the Bourbons. In Germany it was apparent that Bismarck's Empire was not to be shaken in the near future. Within the Habsburg Empire the Hungarians had again obtained autonomy in 1867. Since then the Kingdom of Hungary had been ruled by an oligarchy of the nobility and the wealthy bourgeoisie. In this manner the Hungarian national movement had been completely diverted into the camp of reaction. After the pacification of the ruling class of Hungary, the power of the Habsburgs had also been reinforced in the Austrian half of the Empire. Through the acquisition of Venice and Rome, the national unification of Italy was now essentially completed. Political power was divided among the capitalists of the north, the feudal landlords of the south, the professional politicians, the bureaucrats, and the military. The broad masses were eliminated. Mazzini did not capitulate before the new order in Italy. He criticized the maladministration of the new Kingdom unrelentingly and carried on propaganda for a democratic republic. However, as a genuine representative of the democratic movement of 1848, he did not understand the new movement of the urban and rural Italian proletarians, who had no intention of keeping their hands off private property. Sincere and courageous, but at variance with all classes and isolated, Mazzini died in 1872. A whole period in the history of European democracy was buried with him. Since the defeat of the revolt of 1863–4 the Polish revolutionary movement was also at an end.

Thus since 1871 democracy, proletarian as well as bourgeois, had been eliminated as a vital political force on the European continent, with the exception of Switzerland. In

work in a factory for the existence of the small independent farmer. As long as land is still available for the mass of the people, the industrial proletariat is automatically guaranteed a liberal and high standard of living.

It was this peculiar colonial economy that justified the existence of American democracy, even after 1815. The political franchise which the poor whites — that is, chiefly the workers — obtained in almost all the states of the Union after 1815 was no empty formality, for the colonial economy, based upon the principle of free land, conditioned the nature of American democracy. The existence of free land united capitalists and proletarians, large landowners and small farmers in a community of labour.

In the course of the nineteenth century this idyll of American democracy was first disturbed by the enormous growth of a slave-holding aristocracy in the Southern states. If the slave-barons had succeeded in seizing power in the Union, both the principle of free land and the democratic state would have been destroyed. This collapse of colonial democracy had to be prevented. In the mighty Civil War of the sixties the revived Republican Party, under the leadership of Lincoln, destroyed the slave-holding aristocracy and restored the principle of free land, with all its consequences, to its original importance.

Marx followed Lincoln's political work with the greatest sympathy. Nevertheless he saw clearly that this episode of colonial democracy in the United States was untenable in the long run. In *Capital* Marx emphasizes the fact that the American Civil War brought in its train a colossal national debt, accompanied by increased taxation, the rise of a financial aristocracy, the squandering of a huge part of the public domain on speculative companies for the exploitation of railroads and mines; in brief, the most rapid concentration of capital. " The great Republic has therefore ceased to be the promised land for the emigrating labourer! "

In the Introduction to the 1882 edition of the *Communist*

Another form of bourgeois democracy, which differed from the original type of social democracy, developed in England after 1867. Marx had hoped that the granting of the franchise to the decisive groups of the English industrial workers would lead to the formation of a new political labour party. However, Marx and Engels were soon profoundly disappointed. In the election of 1868 all the Labour candidates were defeated, and when the English unions broke off their relations with the International after 1871, all hope for the revival of a modernized Chartist movement disappeared.

Until the World War the overwhelming majority of the English workers regarded the trade unions as their particular form of class organization, since the latter resolutely defended their trade interests. At the same time, however, the English workers were generally satisfied to elect the parliamentary candidates of the bourgeois parties. The bourgeois parties could depend upon the labour votes if they met the workers' demands half-way. In view of the decline of the Chartist Party, Engels had already intimated the possibility of such a development in 1858. He wrote that it appeared " as if the English proletariat is actually assuming bourgeois characteristics to an ever increasing degree; apparently this most bourgeois of all nations finally wishes to have a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat besides the bourgeoisie itself. To a certain extent this is certainly justified in a nation which exploits the entire world! "

The class compromise upon which English bourgeois democracy rested could not be based upon free land, like the colonial democracy of America, since but few people owned landed property in England. Here the role of free land was taken to some extent by England's economic predominance. The extraordinary success of the English bourgeoisie in commerce, navigation, and colonial policy permitted the possibility of raising the standard of living of at least a part of the working class above the Continental level. Con-

couraged by defeats, and oppressed by powerful military or bureaucratic forces. The defeat of the working class in Europe was rendered graver by the fact that the masses had even lost the slogans and the aims for which former generations had fought. The nature of revolutionary democracy was no longer known and the significance of the " people " for the democratic movement had been forgotten. The European working man prior to 1848 resembled an illiterate, who knew that he could neither read nor write, but who at least wanted to eradicate these defects. After 1871, however, the masses could only be compared to an individual who can neither write nor read, but who hasn't even the slightest idea that such arts exist.

Not only the labouring masses but also the European ruling classes after 1871 had forgotten about revolutionary democracy. The English Liberal historian Justin M'Carthy, for instance, in his *History of Our Own Times,* the first four volumes of which appeared in 1879–80, speaks of Chartism with pitying superiority and takes this opportunity to express the following reflections: " We have in our time outlived the days of political abstractions. The catch-words which thrilled our forefathers with emotion on one side or the other fall with hardly any meaning on our ears. We smile at such phrases as ' the rights of man.' We hardly know what is meant by talking of ' the people ' as the words were used long ago when ' the people ' was understood to mean a vast mass of wronged persons who had no representation and were oppressed by privilege and the aristocracy."

However, M'Carthy informs his reader that these principles and catchwords which have now been superseded formerly meant something. " So it was with ' the people ' and ' the rights of the people ' and ' the rights of labour,' and all the other grandiloquent phrases which seem to us so empty and so meaningless now." An objective investigation of conditions on the European continent would certainly have proved that in 1882 the great majority of the working class

was probably just as unemancipated, oppressed, and exploited as in 1848. The demands of 1848 had not become empty and unnecessary phrases, but people, at least outside of Russia, no longer took them seriously.

In 1882 Friedrich Engels published the first German edition of his famous book *Socialism — Utopian and Scientific.* Even though Engels diverges greatly in his political and historical judgments from the opinions current among the liberal bourgeoisie, yet he agrees with liberalism in disparaging the historical role of revolutionary democracy. Engels derives the fundamental ideas of modern socialism from the eighteenth-century French philosophers of the Enlightenment, then from the classical German philosophers of the nineteenth century, and finally from the great utopian socialists. According to Engels, the concrete facts upon which modern socialism arose were furnished by the development of industrial capitalism. All this is correct as far as it goes, but at the same time it is one-sided, because Engels does not do justice to the historical role of revolutionary democracy.

In this work Engels presents an exceedingly clear and striking characterization of Robespierre's period. " If the conflicts arising from the new social order were first engaged in the process of development, the means for their solution were even more immature. If the poor masses of Paris had been able to seize power momentarily, during the Terror, and to lead the bourgeois revolution to victory, even against the bourgeoisie itself, they would only have proved how impossible it was for them to establish a permanent government under the conditions of the period. The proletariat, which was just about to separate itself from these poor masses and to found a new class, was completely incapable of any independent political action and exhibited itself as an oppressed suffering group, which, due to its inability to help itself, could only be aided condescendingly by members of other classes."

In this passage Engels has presented with his usual mastery the weakness of the movement of 1793 and the causes of its rapid defeat. Nevertheless the fact that the poor masses had been able to seize power, even if only for a historic moment, in France during 1793–4, was enormously important. The entire subsequent history of all the popular European movements has been influenced by this " moment." In 1882, when Engels wrote his book, he himself was still the same revolutionary democrat that he had been from 1848 to 1871, but now he underrated the historic achievements of the so-called Reign of Terror as well as of the Revolution of 1848. His glance was directed towards the future, towards the coming socialist revolution, which the proletariat, trained by the doctrines of Marx, would carry out. In 1882 Engels considered it unnecessary to demonstrate the historical bond which united his own socialist movement with the democratic past, since there were no longer any social classes anywhere in Europe, with the exception of Russia, which could have been moved by an appeal to the traditions of revolutionary democracy. Engels was convinced that the future of the working man was indissolubly tied up with the rise of a socialistic proletariat. The other oppressed social groups, the small peasants, the urban middle class, and so on, could do nothing else except join the proletarian movement. In 1882, therefore, historic revolutionary democracy appeared just as dead to Engels as it did to the above cited Liberal English historian.

In May 1917, with the vivid impression of the Russian Revolution still in mind, the great French historian Mathiez published an article on " Babeuf and Robespierre." In it he discusses the criticism of Robespierre by subsequent generations in France and establishes the fact that until 1870 all revolutionary democrats and socialists regarded him as their prototype. " It was only during our time, with the loss of the revolutionary tradition, chiefly after 1870 and coincident with the invasion of Marxism, that the French democrats and socialists, or at least some of them, allowed them-

selves to be misled by propagandist claims of a political rather than historical nature, with the result that they no longer understood Robespierre, whom their predecessors had admired. It is remarkable, however, that this tradition remained alive abroad, especially in countries where the study of our Revolution served as a means towards their own liberation."

In the last sentence Mathiez apparently was thinking of Russia, where the revolutionary parties had always been based upon the example of 1793. It is absolutely true that in France itself an unbroken revolutionary tradition existed only from 1789 to 1871. The fall of the Commune was also the end of revolutionary democracy. As soon as this political movement ceased to lead a concrete existence, the political and historical writers found it difficult to comprehend it. The politicians of the French burgeoisie regarded the Commune as an atrocity. The workers, to be sure, honoured the memory of the Communards as their class comrades, but when the French labour movement again revived around 1880, it no longer carried on the tradition of the past. Because Robespierre and his friends belonged neither to the bourgeoisie nor to the socialist proletariat, in the strict Marxist sense of the term, it became very difficult to understand the party of the Mountain after 1871. Mathiez was able to restore the historical memory of Robespierre only because he himself in his own person carried on the ideas of the revolutionary democratic tradition. Nevertheless for French politics and society as a whole the fact remained that as a living movement revolutionary democracy had come to an end in 1871.

During the same period the Chartist tradition had been completely forgotten in England. Similarly after 1871 the history of the Revolution of 1848 appeared like news from a strange world to the inhabitants of the German Empire. The German bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, and the middle class had long since abandoned their revolutionary feelings.

At best the national aspect of the movement of 1848 was still recognized; with inadequate means and without success the men of 1848 had aimed at the same goal which Bismarck had subsequently attained in such a glorious manner. The developments in Baden and the Palatinate are typical of the change in German public opinion. They had been the scene of the republican revolt of 1849 and the greatest strongholds of the old German democratic tradition. After 1871 the National Liberal Party, the representative of the bourgeoisie, which was loyal to Bismarck, had a definite majority in both states. In both Baden and the Palatinate the National Liberals were not opposed by the radicals of the Left but by the Centre, the party of the Catholic peasants and petty bourgeoisie. To be sure, the Berlin workers honoured the memory of the March dead, the barricade fighters who had fallen on March 18, 1848, in the same manner as the Parisian proletarians kept alive the memory of the Commune. Nevertheless the socialist workers of the German Empire had no vital connexion with 1848 and consequently the example of that revolution could teach them nothing concerning the present. In Italy and Hungary the tradition of 1848 remained alive even after 1871, but it was only the national side of the revolution, which continued to exist in the cults of Garibaldi or Kossuth, and not the democratic aspect.

The decline of the historic democratic movement in Europe was accompanied by a change in the opinion of general suffrage. Until 1848 its friends as well as its foes had taken general suffrage very seriously. It was considered as absolutely self-evident that the acquisition of general suffrage would initiate the unrestricted political and economic rule of the broad masses. In this connexion it is only necessary to recall the determination and the vehemence with which the struggles for the franchise were conducted in England and France before 1848. Yet experience with general suffrage in Europe after 1848 apparently disproved these beliefs. Especially in France the radical workers were unable

to forget that the June struggles of 1848 as well as the suppression of the Commune of 1871 had taken place with the approval of an assembly elected by general suffrage. Napoleon III had employed general suffrage in order to bestow a semblance of popular approval on his shady Empire. In 1867 Bismarck had introduced general suffrage for the Reichstag of the North German Confederation, and in 1871 for the new German Empire. From the point of view of the revolutionary labour movement the results were extremely wretched. The German people continued to present Reich-Chancellor Bismarck with the majorities which he desired. As far as any larger opposition parties existed in the German Reichstag, they represented the interests of the liberal capitalists or of the Catholic petty bourgeoisie.

Now general suffrage no longer appeared to be such a menace to the monarchies and the wealthy upper classes. On the other hand, the radical labour groups doubted that it would ever be possible to defend the true interests of the working people with the help of general suffrage. In so far as democracy and general suffrage were considered as necessarily associated factors, this period marks the beginning of a shallow, vapid interpretation of the concept of democracy, accompanied by its decline, which has continued up to the present. Democracy was no longer regarded as active self-government by the labouring masses for the purpose of effecting their political and social emancipation, but only as a capitalistic form of political organization, which is characterized by the existence of a parliament elected by general suffrage, but which otherwise has no positive value for the masses.

Anyone who judges the historical facts of the nineteenth century objectively must undoubtedly come to the conclusion that the social significance of general suffrage was greatly exaggerated before 1848 and just as greatly underrated afterwards. The temptation to consider general suf-

failed. After that it remained the custom in France for the president of the Republic to appoint only ministers who had the confidence of a majority of the Chamber. If the Chamber refused to give the prime minister a vote of confidence, he had to resign.

After 1879, with the disappearance of MacMahon, the French Republic had become a state ruled by a parliament. The victorious republicans hastened to reintroduce the other bourgeois liberties which are part of a liberal state. Freedom of the press and of assembly were restored, so that radical opposition parties once again had an opportunity to carry on open propaganda. Nevertheless the crowning act was still lacking — an amnesty for the Communards. In 1879 Blanqui, who had again been imprisoned since 1871, was elected to the Chamber from Bordeaux. He was then released by the government. This was an act of poetic justice, a symbol that at least the bourgeois Republic had triumphed in France. In the Chamber it was chiefly the aged Louis Blanc who, as a member of the republican Left wing, advocated an amnesty. Gambetta's influence finally resulted in a favourable decision. All the Communards who were still alive and outlawed were amnestied. As a result it again became possible to build up a radical and socialist labour movement in a legal manner. Even Rochefort could now resume his political activity.

The victory which the French bourgeois republicans had won from 1876 to 1879 was almost a miracle. Since the strongest factor in the ranks of the democrats, the Parisian workers, had been crippled since 1871, Gambetta could rely only on the vacillating peasant and provincial masses in his struggle with the ruling class and its military and police machine. Nevertheless the fact should not be forgotten that the republicans did not owe their triumph to their own strength, but only to their extremely skilful tactical exploitation of the circumstance that their opponents shrank from extreme measures. For this reason the republican victory

was incomplete and it was impossible at first to establish a stable bourgeois democratic regime in France.

On the whole the forces of the old order in France were the same after 1879 as before. There were the large standing army, with its officer corps, the centralized administrative apparatus, the powerful capitalists with all their influence, and finally the Senate, which had the same rights as the Chamber of Deputies. Upon attempting any radical innovations, a réform government supported by the majority of a chamber elected by direct popular suffrage would immediately have come into conflict with the Senate. It was debatable whether a French government required the confidence of the senate besides that of the chamber of deputies in order to carry on a constitutional existence. However, even if a ministry ignored the lack of confidence of the senate and continued to remain in office with the support of the chamber, the senate could still paralyse the political system if it desired. If the senate consistently rejected every government proposal, either the latter would have to resign or the conflict would have to be settled by revolutionary means.

The three vital bourgeois democracies which were able to develop during the nineteenth century, the United States, Switzerland, and Great Britain, all have a highly developed system of local self-government and also lack a large standing army. The United States and England had no general conscription, but only small professional armies, while Switzerland had its militia system. Historical experience justifies the conclusion that a larger standing army, with its corps of professional officers, will always be a state within a state. Up to the present no bourgeois democracy, with its parliamentary institutions, has been capable of completely controlling such a large army, with the result that the army has furnished a basis for anti-democratic tendencies. The same is true of every great centralized administrative apparatus.

In 1879 France, by dint of great efforts, had just become a liberal state with parliamentary government. A transition

The French upper class did not want to endure the exercise of political power by the uneducated masses, or at least by the republican politicians who were delegated by them. Consequently from the very beginning the moderate republicans of France found themselves between two fires. They were attacked simultaneously by the radicals of the Left, who accused them of betraying the republican program, and by the old monarchist-conservatives of the Right, who refused to reconcile themselves to a republic.

In the first place, it was this hostile attitude of the upper classes that prevented the creation of a stable republican government. The second element of insecurity came from the middle classes themselves. The republican peasants and petty bourgeoisie usually voted for the radicals, but generally they themselves didn't know how far they should carry their republican zeal. This uncertainty of the voters automatically transmitted itself to its representatives. After 1879 the French bourgeois Republic was not a definite government of the capitalistic upper class, since the majority of the latter refused to recognize the Republic. At the same time it was not a government representing the broad masses. Before a social-democratic state could have been established in France it would first have been necessary to realize all the reforms that Clemenceau's program contained. But there was also no compromise between the classes, for both sides lacked a desire for such an agreement. Consequently only a makeshift solution remained possible: the bourgeois Republic exhibited itself to the public as the government of the professional republican politicians.

After every new election the republican deputies found themselves in the same embarrassing situation. They had received the votes of their electors because they had been fiery opponents of monarchy and reaction. Now the promises of the politicians were to be realized: a strong, Left republican government is established with a fine program of reform. As soon as steps are taken to carry out the reforms in the form

of laws, however, insurmountable difficulties appear — the resistance of the capitalist and militarist elements, the opposition of the Senate, and so on. In addition the government never knows how far it can actually rely upon the masses if it undertakes any energetic steps. The particularly timorous and cautious members of the government majority begin to desert it during the voting. Finally the day comes when the government no longer has a majority and must resign. Now a new and colourless republican government is formed, which renounces any daring reforms and restricts itself solely to the defence of the existing Constitution and the dispatch of routine business. The exhausted Chamber permits a government of this type to remain in office for a certain period, but then a spirit of opposition again arises on the Left. The realization grows that the government is doing nothing to carry out the necessary republican reforms. The dissatisfaction of the radical deputies grows and finally the government is overthrown. It is followed by a new one, and the cycle is repeated. In other words, after 1879 the class equilibrium of the Third French Republic was always labile, and not stable like that of England or Switzerland. The small group of professional republican politicians and republican capitalists is under fire from the radicals and the conservatives, is thrown back and forth, and appears ready to collapse. Nevertheless it ultimately retains its position because the Right is never strong enough to establish an open capitalistic and military dictatorship, and the Left is not strong enough to create a social democracy.

The remarkable shifting conditions of the Third Republic also contributed to the disproportionate importance which two special problems acquired in France. One was the position of the Catholic Church, and the other the question of the technical method to be employed for general suffrage. In general the religious situation in France has remained unchanged from the Great Revolution to the present day. A considerable majority of the nation was indifferent to re-

positions, and so forth, furnished a fertile soil for corruption. Yet the petty daily task of the republican deputies was a necessary evil and a substitute for the lack of a really free system of self-government. As a result the opponents of the Republic incessantly attacked the system of small electoral districts as the root of evil and corruption. It was not desired to abolish general suffrage itself, but rather to create large electoral districts with voting by lists, proportional representation, and the like. All these projects had the same purpose—to destroy the direct connexion between the individual republican deputies and their constituents by eliminating the small election districts. Once this goal was achieved, the population was again entirely in the power of the bureaucracy, and the bourgeois Republic had lost the only way in which it could still attain a certain degree of popularity.

Towards the end of 1881 Gambetta became Prime Minister. He regarded the possibility of rapidly introducing major reforms with great scepticism and consequently drew the enmity of the radicals in the Chamber upon himself. Gambetta wanted to establish a strong republican government. He demanded absolute trust in himself in order to be able to direct the state with a firm hand. He opposed the accessory government of the deputies. The government paid no attention to the complaints brought forward by the deputies regarding matters relating to their constituencies. Gambetta even resorted to the fateful remedy of abolishing the small electoral districts and introducing voting by lists. As a result of his personal headstrongness Gambetta fell out with the republican majority which absolutely rejected such electoral reforms. Gambetta was overthrown. His Ministry, which had been awaited with such great expectations, ended with an astonishingly rapid failure. Yet despite his parliamentary defeat and his tactical mistakes, Gambetta remained the strongest personality among the bourgeois republicans, and the next crisis would have brought him to the top again.

Gradually the republican parties recognized the threatening danger of the popular Minister of War, who readily allowed himself to be carried along by the wave of national enthusiasm. Boulanger was removed from his post as Minister of War, became corps commander in the provinces at first, and was ultimately discharged from active service in 1888. Boulanger's popularity among the masses became even greater. He now appeared openly as a political leader, with a program of constitutional revision. A strong government, supported by the will of the people, was to be liberated from the bonds which corrupt parliamentarianism had imposed upon it. It was a new edition of the Bonapartist program.

The conservatives determined to place all their organizations and funds at General Boulanger's disposal. It was an extremely favourable situation. Owing to their own mistakes and weakness, the liberals and democrats of the country had lost the sympathy of the masses and any impulse to act. Consequently the representatives of the capitalists, the large landowners, the Church, and the army could appear as the true champions of the insulted and betrayed people. The popular general was the connecting link between the counter-revolution and the masses. As a result of the rise of Boulangism the Radical Party was in great distress. Boulanger attempted to retain his old Radical friends. Rochefort now developed into a herald of Boulangism. On the other hand, all of Boulanger's attempts to win over Clemenceau failed, for the latter recognized that Boulangism, in the form which it had gradually assumed, was only a cloak for the capitalist and monarchist counter-revolution. Clemenceau, and with him the official Radical Party, remained on the side of the Republic; on the other hand, the majority of the radical voters together with Rochefort transferred their allegiance to Boulanger.

The irony of the situation lay in the fact that the moderate republicans were being punished just because they had

stantly restricted by the great monarchies, and in England neo-liberalism was basically irreconcilable with the methods and demands of the British Empire. The neo-liberalism of the nineteenth century was only a transitional episode. It was an illusion of the early industrial capitalists, who believed themselves in a position to renounce the most essential characteristics of the capitalist economy, power and force. During the latter part of the nineteenth century the wealthy bourgeoisie in all the important modern countries abandoned liberalism for imperialism. Neo-liberalism, however, had an astonishing indirect effect. The capitalist bourgeoisie, in whose interest neo-liberalism had originally been invented, rejected these ideas; instead neo-liberalism in the form of liberal democracy was eagerly taken up by the workers and some of the petty bourgeoisie in their desperate quest for a theory which could help them in their struggle against imperialism.

The conversion of the influential industrial groups to imperialism is easily comprehensible. Picture the average small European manufacturer of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries. When a man of this type demanded "liberty" and was ready to make sacrifices for it, it was not because of any abstract idealism. Liberty and popular rights were very concrete necessities for the older European bourgeoisie. Liberty meant that that citizen should not be dependent on the whim of some royal police official. The citizen wanted to be protected against any arbitrary imprisonment or the confiscation of his property on some pretext furnished by the sudden appearance of a government decree. The European bourgeois demanded a constitution, legal security, and protection of person and property as safeguards against absolutism and the caprices of the nobility and bureaucracy. He wanted to free himself as far as possible from the burden of taxation. He considered any expenses for the maintenance of a monarch, a state church, a corps of officials, the nobility and army as unpro-

icy of expansion towards Constantinople, the borders of India, and the Pacific Ocean could easily be employed for bourgeois-imperialistic purposes. Intelligent statesmen, such as the Minister of Finance Witte, aimed at a firm alliance between tsarism, the landowners, and the imperialist bourgeoisie. However, the Russian bureaucracy and nobility were even more backward and duller than the corresponding groups in Prussia. In addition the advance of the revolutionary masses repeatedly agitated the Russian ruling class. Nevertheless, after the defeat of the Russian Revolution of 1905, a kind of compromise was concluded in the new imperial parliament, the Duma, between the tsarist bureaucracy and the capitalistic groups, for the purpose of promoting a common imperialistic policy.

After 1871 Austro-Hungarian foreign policy turned more and more towards the Orient. The occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austrian troops in 1878 was to a certain extent the Habsburg contribution to colonial politics. Beyond that, however, Austrian economic interests extended throughout the entire Balkan Peninsula. To a lesser degree, then, Austria-Hungary also had its form of imperialism — power politics, supported by modern industrial and financial capitalism, together with the growth of the army and navy, protective tariffs, colonial acquisitions and economic interests in backward countries, which were aided by the Austrian government. After 1867 the Hungarian government party, composed of the landowning aristocracy and the modern bourgeoisie of Budapest, became the political representative of the imperial idea within the Habsburg Empire. In Austria, on the other hand, it was impossible to create a really modern imperialist party until the World War. During the last twenty years prior to the World War, the active Austrian imperialists, the officers, high officials, aristocrats, and their capitalist friends, generally gathered around the successor to the crown, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Yet the group around Franz Ferdinand opposed

the powerful position of the Hungarians within the Dual Monarchy and wanted to replace Austro-Hungarian dualism, which had existed since 1867, by centralization. This disagreement prevented united action by the Austro-Hungarian advocates of power politics.

Since the eighties the old German liberalism had completely disintegrated in Austria. Upon the ruins of German liberalism Lueger founded his anti-Semitic petty-bourgeois and peasant Christian Socialist Party. In a certain sense, Lueger's Catholic and loyal imperial party supplied a substitute within the Austrian Parliament for the missing imperialistic party of the bourgeoisie. The German academic youth of Austria likewise turned towards nationalism and anti-Semitism. However, owing to the circumstance that the ruling Austrian officials since Taaffe's time were by no means German nationalists, but, rather, friendly to the Slavs — in a certain sense, supra-national and Catholic — the Austro-German academic youth found no real sphere of activity. It may be said that prior to 1914 the German youth in Austria were generally inhibited imperialists. Consequently the Pan-German and German nationalist movement in Austria, which chiefly influenced large sections of the middle class in the German parts of Bohemia, was very hostile towards the Habsburg system. At the same time the opposition of the Slavic peoples towards the existing Austrian state gained in strength.

During the nineties the struggle between the various nationalities and the resulting general confusion led to the paralysis of the parliamentary machine in Vienna, so that the clerical and imperial bureaucracy was compelled to govern in order to maintain the existence of the Empire. The case of Austria proves that an imperialist movement can only become popular and influence the masses if it is based upon a definite nation. In Austria an imperialist nationality of this type was lacking, since the German nationalist movement was irreconcilably opposed to the Habsburg imperial

enterprises and in several agreements with France, which were contrary to the Triple Alliance. Corresponding to the unsolved internal conflicts, Italian foreign policy remained vacillating and equivocal until 1914. It was not until Italy's entry into the World War in 1915 that a decisive step was taken towards imperialism in internal and foreign affairs.

In Russia, Japan, Germany, and Austria-Hungary the imperialistic movements prior to the World War were definitely anti-democratic. In France the imperialists were the allies of the monarchists and the advocates of a dictatorship. In Italy the nationalists grew more and more sceptical of attaining their aims with the help of Parliament and elections. By means of violent demonstrations and by terrorizing the majority of Parliament, which favoured neutrality, the imperialists compelled Italy to enter the war in 1915. In the United States the imperialists employed the traditional democratic machinery, but by the use of ruthless political methods they forced their will upon the masses. Only in England did modern imperialism combine with an indigenous bourgeois-democratic movement.

During the period when Disraeli was carrying out his reorganization of the Conservative Party in Great Britain and had attached the labouring masses to his party by means of the electoral law of 1867, modern trust capitalism hardly existed as yet. The Conservative Party, which united the imperial idea with social progress, was nevertheless the only organization by means of which the modern imperialists could later gain political influence. The union of the English Conservative movement with capitalistic imperialism took place gradually, during the eighties and nineties. Thus because of his views on Ireland, Cecil Rhodes began his political career as an opponent of the Conservative Party, and it was only later that Joseph Chamberlain too abandoned the Left Liberals for the Conservatives. The new tendencies within the British Empire did not definitely manifest themselves until 1895, when, after a short liberal interlude, a new

conservative government was formed, with Chamberlain as Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Conservative Party now espoused the great project of Cecil Rhodes, the creation of a united British Africa extending from the Cape to Cairo. Chamberlain devoted all his energy to the realization of the African plans and to the extension and co-ordination of the British Empire. After the turn of the century Chamberlain also began his propaganda for England's return to a protective tariff. Nevertheless the Conservative Party generally remained a firm advocate of bourgeois democracy, and Chamberlain always took particular pains to win over the English working masses to his ideas.

The years 1895 and 1896 represent the high-water mark of imperialism in the internal and foreign affairs of the major powers. In England the Conservatives were the victors in the elections of 1895, as has been said. During the same year Faure was elected President of the French Republic by the votes of the imperialist bloc. In 1896 after a dramatic election campaign the Republican candidate McKinley became President of the United States. In Germany towards the end of 1894 Wilhelm II had dismissed his vacillating Chancellor Caprivi. He was succeeded by Prince Hohenlohe, who pursued a decidedly imperialistic course. During 1895–6 the government coalition in Germany, consisting of the National Liberals, the Conservatives, and the Centre, was strengthened in the Reichstag. During the same period Germany embarked upon an unsettled policy of colonial acquisition, based upon the personal initiative of Wilhelm II. In addition the navy was enlarged, while at the same time plans were considered to pass a new repressive law against the socialist workers and to abolish general suffrage in the Empire. Contemporaneously in Russia the Minister of Finance, Witte, attempted to arrange an agreement between the Tsar and modern capitalism.

In 1895 Japan also made its first major imperialistic advance in the war with China. Russia, France, and Germany,

other Liberal group supported the government for national reasons.

The decline of liberalism in Germany took place in a corresponding manner. In the spring of 1884 the Independent Liberal Party, led by Eugen Richter, the actual representative of the liberal tradition, still had 100 out of a total of 397 representatives in the Reichstag. When new elections were held in the autumn of 1884 the number of Independent Liberal representatives dropped to 65 and after the elections of 1887 to 32. In 1890, 64 Independent Liberals were elected, but three years later the party split because a group of German liberals wanted to support the Caprivi government; that is, they wanted to arrive at an understanding with the ruling system. In the elections of 1893 Richter's irreconcilable opposition group, the Independent Liberal People's Party, was able to elect only 25 deputies. The Independent Liberal Union elected 13 representatives, while a separate group of south-German liberals, the People's Party, obtained 11 seats. It is evident that around 1893 German liberalism was in a state of complete disintegration, and indeed chiefly because of the problems of imperialism. The Independent Liberal Union supported the greatly increased military budget of the imperial government, which Richter vehemently opposed. The Independent Liberal Union, in contrast to Richter's group, also voted for the naval construction program demanded by the government in 1895. In Germany, then, as well as in England, liberalism disintegrated at the same time and for the same reasons.

16. *Liberal Democracy and the Second International*

During the last third of the nineteenth century declining liberalism could only count upon the constantly decreasing groups of the bourgeoisie which rejected imperialism. Consequently liberalism was compelled to seek contact with

lation of the socialist parties to the general questions of economic policy where they transcended the direct relations of employer and employee? What was the attitude of the socialists to the state and the fatherland in general? What position was a socialist party to take with regard to the questions of foreign policy, the army and navy, colonies, and the problems of imperialism which were acute then?

The answers to all these questions followed from the views which gradually developed among the socialist workers during the latter third of the nineteenth century. The leading socialist theoreticians of the period, men like Kautsky, attempted to unite only those views which were actually present among the workers with the general scientific doctrines of Marxism. It would be completely false and unhistorical, however, to maintain that Kautsky and his friends invented the principles of the Second International. On the contrary, the socialist labour movement during the period of the Second International from 1889 to 1914 is the historical product resulting from the evolution of the European proletariat. This type of labour movement necessarily resulted from the conditions which had developed up to 1889.

The class-consciousness with which the industrial workers of Europe were imbued led them to lay great emphasis on their specific position and on those factors which differentiated them from all other economic groups. The result was that although no socialist party injured the peasants or the artisans with its program, or initiated any movement against the middle class, still the practical activity of every socialist party was restricted chiefly to the industrial workers. To say the least, to the middle classes the socialist parties as labour parties appeared strange. As a result, in practical politics a gap, which was to have serious consequences, appeared between the labour party on the one hand, and all the other parties on the other which, as the so-called "bourgeois" parties, agreed in rejecting socialism. The simple socialist worker furthermore distrusted profoundly all groups of em-

Engels stated correctly that at this period German Social Democracy had already won over the majority of the industrial workers in the large cities. It was also true that until 1914 the Social Democratic Party also attracted certain petty-bourgeois and rural groups that were exasperated by conditions within the Empire and expressed their dissatisfaction by voting for the Reds. Nevertheless the relation of the Social Democrats to the German middle classes, and in general to all the other groups of the population who were not industrial workers, was indeed very different from what Engels imagined. Engels believed that it would be possible to bridge the gap between the socialist party and the middle classes; social democracy as the only actually progressive party of the nation might then be a real popular movement, capable of attracting ever increasing groups without great effort. Actually the rigid contrast of " bourgeois " and " social democratic " and the isolation of the socialist skilled workers, which could not be removed even by the occasional entry of middle-class individuals into their ranks, already existed at that time. However, the Social Democratic Party would only have been able to triumph in a revolution if it had been a party of the people, in the manner of 1848. Engels believed this to be the case, but the actuality of German politics was different.

In a letter written in 1884 Engels had already engaged in noteworthy reflections on the coming German revolution and the role which so-called pure democracy would play in it. He wrote: " This has been the course of every revolution; the most moderate party which is still capable of governing obtains power, but only because the vanquished regard it as their last hope of salvation. Now, it should not be expected that we will be supported by the majority of the voters — that is, of the nation — at the critical moment. The entire bourgeoisie and the remnants of the wealthy feudal class, a large section of the petty bourgeoisie, as well as the rural population will then gather around the bourgeois

powerless and defenceless. For this reason the discussions at the international socialist congresses prior to 1914 all exhibit the same characteristics of ambiguity and helplessness. The delegates discussed measures to be taken by the labour parties in case of any war danger and, understandingly enough, were unable to arrive at any practical plan. There was nothing else left but to utter dire threats against the capitalistic governments, which impressed no one and consequently were of no avail. It would have been even more expedient if the socialist parties had openly declared that they were only a minority in all countries and consequently incapable of preventing a war. Under such circumstances the International agrees that the working class in each country has a right to defend that country, on condition that the parties will employ all their forces to restore peace. A sober statement of this kind, based upon reality, would, however, have contradicted the formal radicalism which ruled the majority of the International. The International therefore maintained its formal gesture of protest against the capitalistic governments until the eve of the World War of 1914. Thus when the parties were later forced to vote war credits and to conclude a truce with their governments, the collapse of the International was all the worse.

In 1929 the leading Austrian Socialist Renner made a notable remark upon the role played by the simple desire for peace in the Second International. In a historical retrospect Renner relates how the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen in 1910 had to take sides in a quarrel among the Austrian workers, over the separation of the majority of the Czech workers from the general Austrian trade-union organization. In this matter they were concerned with the important fundamental question whether the Czech workers had the right to support the struggle of their people for national liberation, and consequently to organize separately within the Czech nation. Renner writes:

"The relation of the Second International to the awaken-

ing nations was a divided one. It greeted their awakening and liberation with sincere sympathy and moral support. But the imperialist struggle of the major powers made use of this movement and turned it into one of the most effective instruments for war. Once in the history of every nation the dilemma arises: liberty or peace? And just at that time this dilemma began to split several socialist parties. Within the Polish Social Democratic Party, as well as in the Czech party and several others, certain groups became convinced of the inevitability of war and began to pin their hopes for national independence on the outcome of the war. Moreover the most extreme Russian group at all times regarded a warlike catastrophe not as an evil to be feared but as the awaited opportunity for liberation. The Second International, however, fought with impassioned sincerity for the maintenance of world peace. In this, too, lay a mighty intellectual advance over the youthful Marxian formula of martial revolutions and revolutionary wars, the two assumed chief levers of history. That war, at a definite stage of development, is no longer revolutionary but reactionary, and that peace becomes an absolute good, is a perception which first matured after the World War and is by no means yet uncontested. In Copenhagen the Second International confirmed the principle: world peace above all; national liberation only by peaceful evolution; a final solution of the national problem will be possible only in a socialist society! It did not express these principles in any resolution, but it acted according to them, by unconditionally condemning Czech separation."

In this passage Renner presented the pacifism of the Second International very clearly and strikingly and declared just as frankly that this basic political principle was not in agreement with the teaching of Marx. Renner regarded the conception that peace is an absolute and ultimate good as an advance over the view of Marx and Engels. It is no concern of the historian to pass judgment on philosophic points of view. Yet when the age of imperialism is considered, one is

led to the conclusion that such a theory of peace as an absolute and ultimate good did not blend very well with the period; for imperialism is the expression of the greatest concentration of violence at home and abroad. Whoever completely rejects violence as an instrument of political struggle during such a period is at a hopeless disadvantage when faced by opponents who rely only upon force. If it was known during the age of imperialism that a political movement would employ peaceful methods under any circumstances, it was no longer necessary to fear it. Because the socialist parties, at least in their official doctrines, always decided in favour of peaceful solutions, they were entirely incapable of pursuing a realistic course in foreign affairs and internal politics, and they actually abandoned the field to their imperialist opponents.

In addition, this pacifistic tendency of the Second International led to another important consequence. In every country the ruling class knew how to present itself and its imperialist policies as *the* national tendency. At the same time the socialists, by speaking only of peace and international understanding and opposing nationalistic power politics, isolated themselves even more from all the other groups of the nation. The unhappy contrast between the socialist minority and the so-called "bourgeois" majority of the nation appeared to have special significance, since the socialists were "anti-national," while the bourgeois groups were nationalists. Since the awakening of national feeling at the right moment is an enormously powerful weapon in a political struggle, the socialists were thus forced into a position where they might sustain the most serious defeats; for in a decisive crisis a nationalist movement sweeps along not only the middle classes but also the majority of the workers. Abstract pacifism has no power of resistance if the existence of the nation is really at stake. Revolutionary democracy during the period of 1848 was actually able to make use of na-

wealthy class. As a result the Catholic Conservative Party remained in power. Until the World War the ruling class in Holland also refused to give the workers an equal franchise.

From 1889 to 1914 not even a consistent attempt was made in any of the previously mentioned countries to drive the ruling imperialists and the feudal or semi-feudal groups from power by means of an alliance between the workers and the middle classes. In France, on the other hand, as a result of the Dreyfus affair, the Left bloc undertook an experiment of this sort. The socialist workers and the peasant and petty-bourgeois radicals united to consolidate bourgeois democracy at least in France. During the early years of the twentieth century it appeared temporarily as if bourgeois democracy would actually triumph in France and would even open the road for social democracy. The offensive of the Left collapsed completely, however, and French political conditions returned to the unstable equilibrium which had already characterized the Third Republic until 1889.

During the period from 1889 to 1914 liberal democracy, as represented by the Second International, had only achieved successes along very definite lines. In the four major powers the capitalists, the colonial politicians, and the militaristic monarchists retained power, and in Belgium and Holland, with their great concentration of capital and their important colonial possessions, democracy also made no progress. In Switzerland, on the other hand, liberal democracy maintained its position, while it advanced victoriously in Scandinavia. All this meant that liberal democracy was unable to defeat imperialism anywhere. It found a favourable soil only in smaller countries that had no acquaintance with power politics and for whom national questions did not exist. Switzerland, too, had neither colonies nor any desires for conquest. It was composed of French, German, and Italian groups that had consciously separated themselves from the corresponding nations. Thus a " nationalities ques-

Besides several minor tendencies, two divergent main currents of thought manifested themselves among the Russian socialist democrats. In 1903 the controversy led to a split in the party. After that the majority faction, or Bolsheviki, opposed the minority group, or Mensheviki. The Mensheviki were a radical socialist labour party, approximately corresponding to the labour parties of western Europe during the same period. They sought to organize as many Russian workers as possible, in so far as the persecutions of the Tsarist police permitted it. The labour party was to be ruled by the democratic self-government of the members. The Social Democratic Party should promote the material interests of the workers, and since the bourgeois revolution was still impending in Russia, the party should also support this revolutionary struggle with all its strength. However, in the opinion of the Mensheviki only the bourgeois parties could lead the Russian bourgeois revolution: It is the duty of the working class to follow the lead of the capitalistic or petty-bourgeois revolutionaries. In an agrarian country like Russia, where the industrial working class is only a minority, the Social Democrats cannot determine the tempo of development.

The conception of the Bolsheviki, which Lenin had already developed repeatedly during the period before 1914 in his books, articles, and speeches, was a very different one. For the first time since the death of Marx and Engels a man appeared who by studying the works of the masters and at the same time by critically observing conditions in his own country revived revolutionary democracy in the spirit of 1848. Lenin was the first Social Democrat who understood the professional isolation of the labour movement and fought it as the chief obstacle of a revolution. Lenin's remark that the ideal of the Social Democrat should be the tribune of the people and not the trade-union secretary actually uncovered in a single sentence the fundamental difference between original Marxism and the theory and practice of the

Second International. At the same time Lenin always paid the greatest attention to the daily needs and worries of the factory workers and during his entire life he valued highly the practical activity of the trade unions. The same is just as true of Marx and Engels. However, what Lenin rejected was the pseudo-radical professional limitation of the labour party and of the proletarian organizations in general, which rendered socialism incapable of carrying out a revolution.

Lenin agreed with the Mensheviki that the coming Russian revolution could only be a bourgeois upheaval. However, it did not by any means follow that the leadership of the bourgeois revolution would have to belong to the capitalistic or petty-bourgeois parties. It was rather the task of the Russian Social Democrats to carry with it the millions of poor oppressed Russian peasants, as well as the workers. Its goal would have to be the establishment of a Russian republic in the form of a " democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," after the overthrow of the Tsar. A Russian republic of this type would still be a bourgeois state based on bourgeois private property. Yet the large landowners would be expropriated, the poor peasants would receive land, and the workers would be able to procure complete freedom of action and all modern social achievements. Russia was on the brink of a bourgeois revolution, but the capitalists and the so-called liberals, with their fear of the broad masses, would have no desire to complete their own bourgeois revolution. Eventually, therefore, the coalition of the labouring classes, the allied workers and peasants, would have to lead the bourgeois revolution to victory against the will of the bourgeoisie. In Lenin's propaganda, there again appears for the first time in Europe a vital conception of social democracy as a revolutionary alliance of all the labouring people for the purpose of overthrowing the privileged upper class.

Until 1914 Lenin not only had borne the name of Social Democrat with pride, but had also advocated the traditional

form of a democratic republic at all times. For Lenin, too, it was self-evident that after the victory of the revolution an all-Russian national assembly, elected by the entire nation, would have to convene in order to decide the organization of the republic. The workers' councils, the Soviets, had already appeared in the Revolution of 1905. They were assemblies of the factory delegates of the fighting and striking workers. Thus the Soviets were important fighting organs of the revolution. However, before 1914 no one thought that one day the Soviets would take the place of a Russian parliament, and before 1917 Lenin, least of all, had any plans of this kind.

Nevertheless, before 1914 Lenin already manifested a certain anti-democratic tendency in the question of party organization. According to Lenin's view, the Social Democratic Party should not be a broad mass party, but rather a small group of professional revolutionaries, whose task it should be to direct the sympathetic masses. This party of professional revolutionaries should be firmly organized and disciplined, with supreme authority resting in the hands of the party leaders. Lenin did not think of a socialist party as a broad self-governing mass movement of the workers; he rather desired a carefully selected revolutionary general staff, absolutely capable of fighting, and obedient to its leaders. On the organization question Lenin's position was in sharp contrast to the other social democratic parties of his time. It can hardly be doubted, however, that Marx and Engels would have acted in a similar manner if they had ever been destined to direct a larger movement independently in a revolution. For in their own party and in the organization led by them Marx and Engels alone determined their course autocratically and never respected the votes of the members. Thus Lenin actually revived original Marxism together with all its contradictions. It was this remarkable internal contrast in his *Weltanschauung* which later made it possible for Lenin to develop the most radical form of popular demo-

cratic self-government in his Soviet system and then soon thereafter to destroy his own new democracy by means of his party dictatorship.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 seriously endangered the existence of tsarism. Not only did the industrial workers strike and fight, but large sections of the peasantry were also carried along by the movement, and revolutionary risings took place in the army and navy. However, since the majority of the troops remained loyal to their officers and to the Tsar, the Revolution was suppressed. Several years elapsed during which the revolutionary forces had to recover from the defeat. After 1912 the rise of a new revolutionary wave was apparent in Russia, and when the World War broke out, the Russian Social Democrats prepared for a decisive battle with tsarism.

2. *The World War and the Third International*

Of the four types of bourgeois democracy that had appeared before 1914, two were locally restricted in their extension. Colonial democracy belonged to the transoceanic countries colonized by the white nations, while imperialist democracy developed in a pure form only in the British Empire. On the other hand, social democracy had a general European significance during the period prior to 1848, and liberal democracy approximately from 1880 to the World War. Both movements had the misfortune that their protests lagged behind the social and economic development of the period. Until the Revolution of 1848 social democracy embodied the resistance of the upright petty bourgeois against early capitalism. Liberal democracy before the World War was the protest of the capitalists, who favoured free competition, against the new form of concentrated monopoly capitalism. Both movements were certainly able to present impressively the moral shortcomings of the prevailing modern economic system, but they were incapable of opposing either early

Party. With his energy and oratorical talent, Lloyd George once again endowed the ideals of Great Britain's imperialist democracy with splendour and power. Imperialist democracy carried with it the masses of the mother country as well as the colonial democracies of the dominions and led England to victory.

The entry of all the eight major powers into the World War meant the triumph of imperialism and the prostration of its opponents. Nevertheless as the war continued to drag on and demanded ever increasing sacrifices and privations from the labouring masses, the opposing groups gained new strength. In Russia the February Revolution of 1917 had first replaced tsarism by a government of the bourgeois imperialists, but the first revolutionary wave was not permitted to subside. With the October Revolution the Bolsheviki under Lenin obtained power, and a democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants was established. The new Russian social democracy, arising from the victorious Revolution, now challenged the imperialism of the seven other major powers to a struggle.

In the experiences of the Russian Revolution Lenin had found a new form for the democratic movement of the labouring masses, in contrast to traditional parliamentary democracy. The Revolution of 1917 had revived the councils of the workers, soldiers, and peasants. Lenin now discovered that the Soviets were the germs of an entirely new political type like the Paris Commune of 1871. The difference between the councils and the bourgeois parliaments does not lie in the external phenomena of electoral techniques, such as direct or indirect elections, or elections on the basis of residence or profession; the decisive point is rather that the councils overcome the traditional differences which until now had separated the legislative parliament from the executive apparatus of administrative and military officials in the larger European states. With the aid of the soldiers' councils the Revolution smashed the centralized power of the army

officers. Simultaneously it eliminated the power of the professional civil servants, of the police and the judiciary. In every locality the workers' or peasants' council is the sole agency of power. There is no other armed power except the workers' militia, and administrative matters are dispatched by simple commissars of the Soviets, who are subject to the constant control of the labouring masses. In this manner the councils are able to eliminate the great political shortcoming of all the previous continental European constitutions, with the exception of Switzerland and Norway — namely, the erection of a wall, by the centralized apparatus of the state, which blocks every advance of the labouring masses on the road towards actual self-government.

The Soviet state as Lenin imagined it and as it actually appeared to arise from the practical developments of the Russian Revolution was actually a revival of the communal type of democracy. The great practical difficulty was the economic, military, and political co-ordination of the local councils, which were particularly dispersed during the period of revolution and civil war, for uniform action within the framework of a great modern state. The Soviet Republic in Russia maintained itself under enormous difficulties, and when the military collapse of Germany and Austria-Hungary took place in 1918, the militaristic monarchies of central Europe were replaced by democratic republics, based upon workers' councils. The radical wave emanating from Russia also overflowed into the Balkans, appeared to carry Italy with it, and even threatened France.

In England, too, the end of the war brought a turning-point of great historical significance. For the first time since the Chartist period millions of workers lost confidence in the bourgeois leadership. While the disunited liberal groups declined to political fragments, the Labour Party rapidly grew to be the second greatest party of the country, a party capable of carrying on a contest for power with the Conservatives. During their entire political life Marx and Engels

renewed social democracy, emanating from Moscow, lasted approximately until 1923. The result was a complete defeat for democracy on all fronts, above all also in Russia itself. The close association of the revived revolutionary labour movement with the fate of the Russian state sealed its doom. As they were in extremely great straits from 1918 to 1920, the Russian Bolsheviki had to be helped rapidly by victorious revolutions abroad. Thus the new Communist parties outside of Russia did not arise organically on the basis of conditions in their own countries and the experiences of their working classes, but they were artificially organized and established from Russia, and in their unfinished state they prematurely threw themselves into struggles to which they were not yet equal. Around 1921 Lenin recognized that there was no longer any hope for a victorious workers' revolution in any country outside of Russia within the near future. Consequently the Bolsheviki beat a retreat. In Russia itself the Soviet Republic was degraded to an empty form. A centralized dictatorship of the Bolshevik Party replaced the self-government of the labouring masses. At the same time the Communist parties outside of Russia changed into propaganda societies for the Soviet government, in which all individual vitality was suppressed from above, and which were no longer of any use as independent forces for a democratic movement of the working people.

During the same period, as the Russian Revolution grew inert and Moscow became the capital of a bureaucratic system of state capitalism, monopoly capitalism strengthened its power in the United States. The nationalist Right bloc ruled France, and in Italy violent imperialism triumphed in the form of a Fascist dictatorship. It has already been emphasized repeatedly that the old self-styled liberal group had been a hindrance to social development in Italy for two generations. After the World War the only question was who would push aside the old so-called Liberals and modernize Italy — the socialists or the consistent imperialists.

Even in the bourgeois-democratic state capitalistic private property occupies a decisive economic position. Yet the capitalists conclude a compromise with the workers, and this compromise is maintained voluntarily by both parties, as a result of their conception of economic needs. Apart from their free will and opinion of economic needs, no decisive physical force is present which compels the masses to enter into the compromise. For if the capitalistic upper class brings the factor of an overwhelming military and police force into such a compromise, it is no longer a compromise. The preponderance of the upper class is then so powerful that the toiling masses can hardly hope to become an equal partner.

It is certainly not a coincidence that those countries that were able to develop stable forms of bourgeois democracy in modern times, such as the United States, Great Britain and its dominions, Switzerland, and Norway, all conform in certain points. Before 1914 all of them had only small standing armies in times of peace, as well as highly developed, decentralized forms of self-government. If the United States during the generation prior to the World War is compared with France during the same period, both republics exhibit a mixture of democratic and anti-democratic elements. If corruption in individual American cities and the events during some strikes in the United States are considered, the anti-democratic forces appear predominant. Nevertheless during this period the situation in the United States was very different from that in France. Corrupt professional politicians could obtain power in an American city only because the majority of the inhabitants were indifferent to public affairs. Yet as soon as the corruption and maladministration grew unbearable, the mass of workers, business men, and others organized. A reform movement developed. At the next election the corrupt politicans were swept away, and the city or state was cleansed of corruption. This continued until the energy of the citizens again subsided and the professional politicians dared to reappear. At any rate in America no one can resist the serious will of the majority of the citizens when they unite and attack their foes. The small army of the federal government plays no part in the situation.

On the other hand in France until 1914 the standing army was always the unknown quantity in every struggle for political power. All the crises of the Third Republic from its establishment until the World War are connected with the army: the MacMahon crisis, the Boulanger affair, the Dreyfus case, and finally the fight over the three-year period of military service. The maintenance of a strong standing army was a necessity for France, in view of her strong militaristic German neighbour. The United States, on the other hand, was in a more fortunate position, since it had no serious military opponent on its own continent. The different military and political situations of the United States and France necessarily produced a varying alignment of the social forces in the respective countries. There was also the additional difference between the loose federal system of government in the United States and the historical, traditional rigid centralization of the French state. Before 1914 American capitalism had already attained a much greater degree of concentration and was certainly much stronger than French capitalism. Yet outside of the economic sphere, in a narrow sense, French capitalism had allies which the American capitalists lacked. For this reason, despite the many negative individual characteristics of American public life, bourgeois democracy in the United States was always more firmly and securely established than in France.

Thus a certain elective affinity is evident between democracy and that type of political organization which can be characterized as "communal." During brief periods of open warfare or civil war a democratic movement also needs a strongly centralized power, like that of 1793, in order to triumph. Nevertheless, according to previous historical experience, a democratic commonwealth can achieve a stable

existence for a longer period only if local self-government predominates. Considerable practical difficulties result, however, if the democratic principle of local autonomy must be combined on a large scale with the necessities of a great modern state and modern unified economic organization. Yet the development of the British Empire and the United States proves that these difficulties are not insurmountable.

Another much discussed question is the relation of democracy to so-called legality. Is democracy, as such, a form of political organization which more than any other guarantees peaceful evolution? Is it permissible to speak of a democratic method, where the ballot decides, in contrast to a method of political force? Here, too, the democratic state must be differentiated from the democratic movement. Every state, no matter what sort of constitution it possesses, asserts its own legality. It demands that its laws be respected by all the inhabitants, and it pursues as a traitor anyone who wants to change the laws forcibly. This is as true of a democratic state as of any other. An absolute monarchy or a capitalistic oligarchy can maintain orderly legality for just as long a period as a democracy. For a hundred and fifty years, from its establishment to the Revolution of 1848, the absolute Kingdom of Prussia, for instance, enjoyed a completely undisturbed, peaceful, and legal internal political development. Necessary reforms were carried out by the absolute monarch in the form of new laws. Similarly from 1688 to 1867 England experienced a period of completely undisturbed legal development under the rule of a capitalistic minority. Thus in the sphere of legality the democratic state can by no means raise any claim to pre-eminence over any other forms of political organization. The same is true with respect to the decision of controversial questions by the ballot and the will of the majority and not by force. It is as true of a democracy as of any other state having a representative ruling body. For centuries before it became a bourgeois

NOTES

The following notes are in addition to the citations made in the text of the book itself and to the authors mentioned in the preface. No notes have been made on the known facts of modern political history. If the reader wants more details and a special bibliography of them, he will find them in the volumes of the *Cambridge Modern History* and in the corresponding articles of the *Encyclopædia of the Social Sciences* and the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

There is a good bibliography on Marx and Marxism for English readers in G. D. H. Cole's *What Marx Really Meant* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf; 1934), pp. 305 ff. Another detailed bibliography is in the article "Marx" by Karl Korsch in the *Encyclopædia of the Social Sciences;* a shorter bibliography in Otto Rühle: *Karl Marx* (New York: Viking Press; 1935).

ABBREVIATIONS:

ME I–IV = Marx-Engels: *Gesamtausgabe, 3. Abteilung, Briefwechsel zwischen Marx und Engels,* Vols. I–IV.
ME VI = *Gesamtausgabe, 1. Abteilung,* Vol. VI.
Kugelmann = *Karl Marx, Briefe an Kugelmann* (Berlin, 1924).

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

p. 3. Babeuf's letter: Mathiez: *Autour de Robespierre* (Paris, 1925), p. 256.
p. 4. Article of Engels: *ME VI,* p. 289.
p. 6. Philipp Stein: *Fürst Bismarck's Reden,* I, p. 129.
p. 7. Engels: *Politisches Vermächtnis* (Berlin, 1920), p. 18.