

instrument, merely intended to preserve existing conditions as a sphere of activity. Class solidarity on the other hand is an instrument of offense which is supposed to contain the germs of a future society. It is not for us to investigate here which of these solidarities is superior. Our problem is to deal with the astonishing fact that whereas the Bourgeoisie underwent a great advance in the direction of solidarity, the war, which turns all things upside down, caused the proletariat to suffer to a marked degree, a decline of its previously known and tried integrity.

The existence of the solidarity of the nation alongside of the international solidarity of the working class, is by no means impossible as a mental conception. On the contrary, the last generation of socialists never dreamed that the necessity of defending the home country would break up the International. In fact many socialists were firmly convinced that the proletariat as an international unit would take the side of the attacked nation, and support its defensive fight, if not by actual participation, at least by all other means mental and moral.

Nothing of the sort occurred. The war disrupted the International, its first victim. And when we ask ourselves to-day why this happened, we see that the present period of history which is an epoch of Imperialism, is based on conditions entirely different than were taken into account in former deductions. All peoples felt themselves threatened, all were under the impression that they were the attacked, and not a single one of the lot waged a purely defensive war such as the democratic leaders of former decades had in mind. A war of such a character might still occur as an exception, in the case of little democratic Switzerland, for example. But as a ruling principle, wars of this sort belong to a period when the peoples were still striving to attain national unity, and are utterly excluded in an era in which the objective is maximum industrial growth based on territorial expansion under the supremacy of the Bourgeoisie which even undertakes to absorb or subordinate any resulting agglomeration of nationalities.

Solely on the assumption that the proletarians of all countries would participate in purely defensive wars only, could the ability

of the International to function effectively have been maintained. As this premise did not exist, the participation of the party in the solidarity of action of the classes of the country, excluded solidarity of action by the international proletariat.

Notwithstanding that the political stand taken in Germany and France on August 4 excluded solidarity of action by the International, international thought and sentiment might have and ought to have remained. But even this vanished in very many instances. We still remember the acute reaction that was produced in our ranks when the English iron and steel workers extolled the war as a weapon of the competitive struggle, thus placing their organization in the service of the imperialism of the ruling class.

Since then we have learned to become accustomed to this sort of thing—not only in England. Nearly everywhere, unfortunately, we see time and again, the consequences that must result when social thinking is sacrificed. The socialist movement loses its foundation whenever the interest of the *entire* proletariat is not made the supreme essential. The struggle of the workers united against the common enemy is then supplanted by the fight of the workers against one another.

Whereas in ordinary times of peace, violations against social thinking used to occur principally in subordinate spheres and minor relations, the war developed a disregard for the unity of the movement in its highest phases, involving the disruption of the International. The proletariat was thereby thrown completely out of its course, Socialist thought was undermined, and imperialistic processes of reasoning were given free field. The only thing for us to do, is to return to the position of the communist Manifesto where Marx and Engels described what we have here called social thinking, as the distinguished characteristic of their movement over against all other proletarian movements. They there stated:

"The Communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to