

the inner-political life of Germany seem imminent. So, for instance, when the Russo-Austrian commercial treaties (*Handelsverträge*) were signed, the opposing interests became involved in a bitter controversy. At that time the National-liberal party, the representatives of the steel and iron and manufacturing industries demanded a re-apportionment of election districts. Only their still greater fear of the power of the Social Democracy, whose parliamentary representation would have been decidedly increased by such a measure at that time held the Liberals in check. Since then political conditions in Germany have greatly changed. Since the beginning of the war the majority of the Social-Democracy has become so tame that it eats from the hand of its erstwhile enemy, William, and, for the price of a cosy tête-à-tête of civil peace, throws its "shocking" republicanism into the scrap heap, to the rest of the principles it has sacrificed. The bourgeoisie may therefore take up its old battle against the Junkers without fear. The "unfortunate political constellation" that once prevented it from grasping the supremacy of Germany is no more. The Prussian election reform, and the reapportionment of the German Reichstag election districts mean as a matter of fact, only the establishment of the German manufacturing industry as the most powerful factor in the political future of the German Nation. But the seed too is planted, from which will grow, with ever-increasing bitterness and relentlessness, the struggle between capital and labor. The seed is planted. But its fruit can ripen only with the coming of the social revolution in Germany.

As we have seen, the capitalist class of Germany is better prepared for this final conflict, which can break out with full force only after the war is over, than ever before. The concentration of capital has made incredible progress in the last three years. Tens of thousands of small, hitherto independent manufacturers have been hurled into the ranks of the proletariat, or have been relegated to complete industrial insignificance. The circle that represented the real power behind the throne, the real rulers of Germany, has been drawn closer and closer. It has organized its forces in strong manufacturers and trades associations wielding enormous power; organizations that

possessed more influence over the decisions of Bethmann-Hollweg during the war, than the once so mighty Junker court camarilla. The Court-Jews have pushed aside the old Court-Nobility.

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The condition of the German working class presents a sad contrast. It will emerge from the war, weakened in every respect. Its numbers are decimated, its industrial powers of resistance broken, its political strength practically gone. The German labor unions to-day possess hardly one-third of their former membership, and that in spite—or because?—of the fact that they patriotically resolved, on the second of August, 1914, to discourage all strikes for the period of the war, and to sustain the civil peace on the political field, by suspending the class struggle on the field of industry. The law of forced industrial service has deprived them of the right to strike that they had won after a struggle that has lasted more than a hundred years, and adding insult to injury, has commandeered the labor unions to help in the enforcement of its despotic measures.

The industrial organizations of the German laboring class ceased—just as did almost all national labor groups in the other belligerent countries—to be fighting organizations, and became instead benefit societies, go-betweens between the government and the laboring masses; their functions had undergone a fundamental change. It is true, things will not remain thus after the war is over, for the bourgeoisie does not need the complete annihilation of the right of all workers to strike. For the millions who are employed in transportation and ammunition industries, and directly by the state, the prohibition of strikes will continue—and this alone will make labor conflicts on a large scale, an impossibility in the coming years. The impoverishment of the labor movement, and its complete exhaustion will yet be much more effective preventatives.

The political situation is still more hopeless. The policies of the majority, with its metamorphosis from a fundamental opponent of every capitalist government, and its imperialistic aims