

When we come to America we constantly talk and write as though American Socialists had the power to affect appreciably the foreign policy of the United States. The first step to right reasoning is to admit that in this domain we are almost if not quite negligible. This may not be pleasing to our vanity, but it is the truth. It is to say the least asinine to predicate our action on the hypothesis that we have the power to wage a successful fight against, let us say, conscription. It is even doubtful if in such a fight we could show strength enough to amount to an effective protest. Personally I have no disposition at present to oppose conscription to raise an army to defend democracy and humanity, but if I had I would wish a better medium of protest than the present Socialist organization. But this is merely an illustration of my point that in discussing tactics we should consider not what it would be fine to do were we able to do it, but rather what with our present power and prestige, or lack of it, we are able to do that will further our ends.

But let us get back to the general question of the attitude of Socialists toward War. From about 1905 to 1913 it did appear to the more optimistic among us that the loose coalition or federation of the divers national Socialist parties adhering to the Second International was in a fair way to develop into the embryo of a true International Socialist Movement. We began to lose this illusion in 1907 when Hervé proposed to the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart that on the menaced outbreak of war the Socialists of the countries concerned should do their utmost by general strikes, particularly in the munition and transportation industries, to make the threatened war impossible. For the Socialists from most countries this was probably an academic question, as they had not the power to act effectively in this way. But for the Germans it was a very practical question. And the Germans would have none of it. They proved they were not internationalists, but Germans; or, to be more exact, Kaiserites, as from that day to this they have never hesitated to sacrifice the welfare of the German people to the wishes and policies of the Junker-bossed Kaiser. They have proved up

to the hilt the truth of Hervé's impassioned charge: "*Vous avez peur! Vous avez peur, vous Allemands!*"

Yes, alas, they were afraid; afraid to do anything that might lessen, however little, the power of the great political machine they had been so long building; afraid to appear disloyal to the Kaiser; afraid, madly afraid, of losing votes and seats in the Reichstag.

They had the power in 1907 to prevent Germany from waging a successful offensive war. There has never been a day or hour since when they have not had this power. They have ever been and still are afraid to use it; and yet this cowardly, narrowly national Socialist party has even now the effrontery to prate of "internationalism" in its eagerness to serve its royal master by intrigues at Stockholm!

For more than thirty years the vast army, the scientific military preparedness of Germany, has been the chief, practically the only serious menace to the peace of the world. This statement will surprise some of you; make some of you indignant. You will ask: Why was the German army more of a menace than the British navy? I might content myself by pointing out that with an army one can overrun and devastate the lands of a neighbor (witness Belgium and Serbia), while with a navy one cannot. Remember that it was more than two years after the present war started before England had an army that was not in the German sense "contemptible."

But even had England had an army comparable to the German murder-machine, still its menace would have been slight compared to the awful threat that for three decades has kept thoughtful men from sleeping sound o' nights—the threat of German invasion of foreign soil.

Why is this true? For several reasons. The economic one has never been put more clearly than by Louis B. Boudin in his book, "Socialism and War." He shows and proves that a capitalist country, in which the textile industries are predominant, tends on the whole to be peaceful and non-aggressive; but that just as soon as the Scepter passes from Cotton, Wool and Flax to Iron and Steel the country begins to