

during the first days of mobilization. But on the whole such instances must have been rather exceptional among the German Socialists. On the whole, the German Socialists could not have been much different in their make-up and ideas after August 4 than before that fateful day.

How, then, did the somersault of August 4 happen? How account for the complete reversal of policy upon the outbreak of the war?

But deeper than these questions lies the question: Was there such a "complete reversal" as is generally assumed?

There is, of course, no doubt of the fact that there was a radical departure from theretofore accepted policies. But did this departure involve a change of principles—the adoption of a new and different point of view—or was it merely an adjustment of the old principles to new conditions?

We of the radical wing of the Socialist movement are naturally biased in favor of the former view. For many years we have lived in the fond belief that our views are *the* views of the Socialist movement. This belief was fostered by our own hopes, as well as by the homage paid to our views by the opportunists who did share them, either because of the natural proclivity of opportunists to compromise—which leads them sometimes to compromise even with radicals, particularly when it involves only words instead of actions—or because of the "constitutional" aversion of opportunists to all "mere theorizing," which often leads them to accept our theories unthinkingly, until some crisis awakens them to the practical consequences of our theories, when they discard them as "mere formulae." It is therefore natural that we should regard those who have forsaken us in the time of crisis as renegades who became untrue to their own faith. In addition this way of looking at the matter places us tactically in a very strong position in our present fight for our principles. Your being able to call your opponent a "traitor" naturally puts him at a disadvantage. And even the mere fact that *he* changed his position gives you an advantage over him. The assumption, therefore, that there was a "complete reversal"—an abandon-

ment of principle as well as a change of policy—gives us a convenient handle in our onslaughts on the authors of the Policy of August 4.

At first glance the assumption is a justifiable one—for it is clearly in opposition to the professed and proclaimed principles of ante bellum days. And it gathers strength when we consider the new alignment which the Policy of August 4th has brought about in the international movement as well as in Germany herself. This alignment seems to have completely broken up the old alignment of opportunism versus radicalism. Hence, a practically universal consensus of opinion that there is no *continuity* of policy in any part of the Socialist and labor movement from ante bellum days. The war has brought about a complete soltus which affected the entire movement. Amidst the great divergencies of present-day opinion in the ranks of Socialists, one thing seems to be agreed upon: that the differences of opinion now existing in the movement on the questions of peace and war have nothing in common with the differences which existed prior to the war.

Furthermore, it is generally assumed that the lines of demarkation along which Socialists divided prior to the great war have become totally obliterated at its outbreak, and that the lines of cleavage brought about by the war are of such a character as to make a return to the old ones almost impossible. Not as long as the war lasts, at any rate.

At first blush this seems to be an undeniable fact. With the "opportunist" Independent Labor Party upholding the banner of "internationalism" in England against the "radical" Hyndman group of the Socialist movement of that country; with Edward Bernstein, the father of "revisionism," joining with his great antagonist, Karl Kautsky, to form the German minority party, while Cunow and Lensch, two of Kautsky's great supports in the past, desert him to lead the pro-war majority, it would seem a piece of inexcusable hardihood to insist that there was any relation in the sense of continuity between the old-line divisions and the new ones.

Nevertheless, the relation exists. And it is only by un-