

future. And this dictatorship of the ruling class is *permanent* in its character.

The essential characteristic of autocracy in Germany is not its feudal remnants, *but the new form of autocracy produced by Imperialism and State Socialism*. What makes a Capitalist war for democracy hopeless and a tragic farce is that the new era of Imperialism makes Capitalism itself the worst foe of the democracy of Capitalism.

War is not the only consequence of Imperialism. It is completely altering the social and governmental structure of every nation that it controls. Imperialism means the merging of Capitalist class interests into a brutal and brutalizing State Socialism. The industrial Middle Class, once the "defender of the democratic faith" against Plutocracy, has struck its colors and compromised with Plutocracy. As long as the home market was the dominant market, the two could afford to fight each other; but Imperialism imposes unity of action upon the Capitalist, as only a unified Capitalism can successfully conquer foreign markets to-day. This has created a new Middle Class, dependent upon Imperialism and concentrated industry, and everywhere this new class is unanimously and violently Imperialistic. Democracy served the ends of the bourgeoisie against feudalism, democracy served the ends of the old Middle Class against Plutocracy; but to-day democracy is in the discard, Imperialism and democracy being incompatible.

There was once a theory that Capitalism requires democracy and the democratic republic. But the brutal fact is that it is not the form of government that matters to Capitalism, but a government that promotes its interests. The democratic republic is fading away because it does not serve the ends of Imperialism. State Socialism is the new form of government—militaristic, autocratic, belligerent. A new autocracy has arisen. Governments must be centralized, powerful, autocratic, to cope with the armed struggles precipitated by Imperialism. Formerly liberal social elements acquiesce in this new autocracy because it promotes their material interests. The severity of international competition compels a nation to develop its maximum efficiency;

the forces of Capitalism must be organized and marshalled—and all this is done through State Socialism and its new autocracy. The liberty of *laissez-faire* is incompatible with the requirements of Imperialism. The democracy of Capitalism is rapidly becoming a thing of the past.

This reactionary trend, away from democracy, is the determining tendency of our day. It is characteristic of all nations. That it has assumed its most brutal and definite form in Germany is simply an indication of speedier development. The tendency was active in Great Britain, France and the United States before the war, and it is being made dominant by the war's stimulus upon Imperialism. And the Pro-Consul system of government that Imperialism imposes upon its possessions and "spheres of influence" reacts upon and destroys democracy at home.

There are certain features about this new autocracy that mislead romantic radicals. One of them is the fact that it provides for the material comforts of the people, and yields certain forms of sham democracy. It is a readjustment. The working class is coddled along through State Socialism to make it ready to lay down their lives for "their" country—when its Imperialism is in danger! Imperialism means international reaction, government and industrial autocracy, but a certain amount of social reform and "democracy" as a bribe to the people. The essential fact, however, is that the trend is away from fundamental democracy. The distinguishing feature of the Imperialistic nation is that it substitutes "kultur" in the place of democracy. Under the illusion that the nation is still the carrier of democracy, European Socialism went out to fight for national freedom—and lo and behold! it was a brutal Imperialism that was being promoted.

Under these circumstances, the revolutionary Socialist refuses to become *particeps criminis* in the wars for democracy waged by a hypocritical Capitalism. It is Imperialism that menaces democracy, and Imperialism alone that we shall fight. In the pre-Imperialistic era Socialism and democracy could be separated; and the demand of Marx for a war of the liberal powers against autocratic Russia was a legitimate one. *To-day the struggle for democ-*