

And then the Crown Prince spoke. And he said: My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. He gave you Bethmann-Hollweg; but I will give you Michaelis.

And the German people accepted Michaelis from the hands of the military clique, headed by the Crown Prince and Ludendorff. Germany, including its Socialists, stand where they stood in the early days of August, 1914. It does seem as if Germany is immovable.

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But this is only the surface of things. Below the surface Germany is undergoing a change, corresponding to the change which is taking place in the rest of the world. The change is, perhaps, not rapid enough to suit us, and we are apt to grow impatient, but it is going on all the same, and in the end it is bound to tell.

When the German Reichstag, including the official Socialists, said "*we* stand where we stood in August, 1914," the "*we*" did not mean the same thing that it did in August, 1914. For, besides the official or governmental Socialists, led by the Scheidemann-David-Suedekum combination, there is now the Independent Social-Democratic Party, which refused to stand where the German people and the German Socialists placed themselves on August 4th, 1914. And here we come to the most interesting part of the "German crisis"—its hopeful part. But before discussing it, we must make a digression.

The bureaucratic socialist press of this country considers it its duty to lie about what is going on in Germany. This is done presumably in the honest belief that the interest of the "cause" are better served just now by lying than by telling the truth. We shall not enter upon a general discussion of that subject here. We mention it at all because during the crisis that we are discussing here this lying policy was worked to such an extent that the Socialists of this country, or at least those of them who rely upon the official Socialist press for their information, have quite a perverted idea as to the facts in the

case. Before commenting on them, we are, therefore, compelled to correct some misapprehensions of fact. The two most important facts to remember in this connection are: First, that the Reichstag resolution did *not* accept the Russian peace formula, and, second, that the German Socialists who remained true to their Socialist principles did *not* vote for the resolution. It is this that supplied the ray of hope in an otherwise hopeless situation.

The action of the Independent Soc.-Dem. Party of Germany in refusing to say with the majority of the "nation" and the majority of the Socialists, "we stand where we stood on August 4th, 1914," is an occurrence of the greatest historical importance: it shows that the German people are not immovable, and that the process of change which is destined to bring the German people abreast of its neighbors to the East and West had already begun. It shows that a large portion of the German proletariat has broken the chains which the Scheidemanns have placed upon it on the fateful day of August 4th, 1914, and that, henceforth, it proposes to be really free.

It must be remembered that the minority-Socialists were placed in a particularly difficult position with respect to this resolution. Ostensibly it was a peace-resolution, intended to force the German Government to adopt a moderate peace policy. To vote against this resolution looked like obstructing a move in favor of peace. It also looked like a refusal to help the German people in their fight to obtain a modicum of influence upon their government. And the German Scheidemanns, like our own, know how to utilize such a situation for their own advantage.

Under these circumstances it required an unusual amount of courage, as well as of political wisdom, to vote against the Reichstag "Peace" Resolution. That the Independent Socialists mustered the courage is proof that they have strong backing in the masses of the German working classes. That they possessed the wisdom augurs well for their future career as the spokesmen of the German proletariat. The German proletariat is in a fair way of redeeming itself.