

accept revolutionary action, and the conservatism of which, moreover, is strengthened by the party bureaucrats dominant in its management.

The People's Council is being used by the Socialist Party officials to make votes for the party. This may succeed, temporarily, but its ultimate effect will be to make recruits for the Gompers-Spargo party of "practical" social reform.

Our struggle against war is simply an expression of our general struggle against Capitalism. Our action during war must square with our action and purposes during peace. And it is, therefore, mandatory upon us to scrutinize closely all movements against the war, and our own deeds. In our action against the war we should create reserves for action during peace. The People's Council does not square with our general revolutionary aims, nor does it even adopt temporarily radical action against the war. The party should immediately separate itself from this bourgeois concern.

It is easy to sneer at the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy. It is easy to enthusiastically accept the People's Council. The more difficult task, indispensable, is to cleave to fundamentals and express our own independent action in our own revolutionary way as adherents of *international* Socialism.

J'accuse!

Friedrich Adler's Address in Court

II.

I am convinced that the great majority of Social-democrats went into this war only because they believed it to be a war of self-defence, and from the point of view of national defence it is to be understood that the nation should defend its entity. That is still Social-democratic. But then the idea of visiting the defeat that we were trying to avoid, with all its horrors and all its misery, upon others, took possession of us. It was the idea that found expression in the *Arbeiterzeitung* on the 5th of August in the words, "However the die may be cast, we hope, from the depth of our hearts, that it may be cast for the victory of the holy cause of the German people." This word *victory* was emphasized more and more strongly as time went by, and it became the main point of difference between us, for, as Socialists, we must oppose those who seek to profit from this war. Just as the man who is attacked in the forest by robbers and uses all his strength to throw them off, would not think of robbing his attacker when he has him in his power, so should we refuse, in our relations with other nations, to sink down to the level of street robbers. But when I insisted at the national party conference last March that the party executive should demand emphatically of the Central Powers a bid for peace without annexation and without indemnities, I was laughed at and had only sixteen of the 100 delegates on my side. At first I feared that a short victorious war would anchor absolutism firmly for decades to come. But the long months of war, with its horrible ravages and destruction, have awakened in the people a realization of its misery, have inoculated the organism of the people with its anti-toxin.

We have lived through a great historical tragedy and only in the light of this tragedy can I and my motives be understood. The party that was ordained to be the bearer of humanity has become a tool of the government, the instrument of tendencies that should be foreign to its very nature.