

I do not attribute this to the ill will of individuals. Individuals have made mistakes. The great tragedy lay in the labor movement itself, lay in the supremacy that the bureaucratic machine of this labor movement has won over the future aims and interests of the proletariat. As faithful servants the leaders of the proletariat strove to save the organization. But in so doing, they have betrayed their real class interests, they have betrayed the International, and the idea of the Social revolution. They have won small benefits for the workers during the war, it is true. I should be the last to refuse to recognize what was accomplished to protect the working class from many a threatening wrong. But they have sold their birthright for a mess of pottage.

This tragedy is not of Austria alone. I have been accused of being a trouble maker, for venting such attacks upon the labor movement of a country whose opponents are clericals and Nationalists.

Nothing has ever been so repugnant to me as these two Austrian capitalist parties. But it was a terrible disappointment for me to discover that the Austrian Social Democracy, which has been the highest thing in my whole existence, was but a blind leader of the blind in Austria. I cannot measure the Socialist party by capitalist standards, but alone by the standard it has set itself in its own glorious history. And it hurt me, that this party should have adopted the evil traits of its opponents. I came into conflict with the Party Executive Committee particularly because it has become more and more a *counter-revolutionary institution*. The conviction has grown upon me that a *revolution in Austria can come only against the will of the Executive Committee* which will always be a hindrance to the revolutionary movement. And for this Executive Committee I had to work as its first secretary and to attend all of its meetings. I realized then more and more clearly: when once matters become serious, my position will bring me into a sharp inner conflict between my duties as secretary and my own personal convictions. I came to the conclusion that our movement can recover only if it is given

an entirely new leadership. Seitz particularly always harped upon responsibility. Violent methods must be persecuted, for the Executive Committee must bear the responsibility for the blood that is shed. But I maintain that this responsibility must be born. The secret of this whole inner conflict lies in the fact that the party, in these long years of peace has developed organizations, writers, political representatives, in short a whole civil staff, but lacks officers; in the fact that nobody in Austria has realized that, under certain circumstances, force must be used. On the contrary, they have always made it their duty to prevent disturbances. Dr. Renner struck the note that dominated this whole attitude of the party regarding the use of forcible measures. I saw that the idea of force was to be discredited in the eyes of the working class. Dr. Renner is a great, a gifted demagogue, and he may believe that heavy volumes might have turned the absolutism of Stürghk into a more enlightened form of absolutism. But he sought to hide, with peculiar skill, that in Austria as in Russia, it is not a question of a social revolution, that first and foremost the bourgeois revolution must close the accounts of the absolute regime.

This opposition drove me to individual action because the party and its leadership had lost the revolutionary feeling of the working class. What I wished to prove was that only over the heads and against the will of the party authorities in Austria can a real revolutionary upheaval in Austria come, that only by disregarding them will it be possible to use the force that must be used to overthrow the rule of force upon which our government rests. Now Dr. Renner will prove to you at once that individual action is in opposition to social-democratic principles, that it is anarchistic. I was not so childish as to believe that my deed would abolish absolutism in Austria, or that it would bring peace. I have not become an anarchist. Anarchism attributes such possibilities to individual action. I have never believed it. I stand, as I have always stood, for mass action carried out with all effective means that are in accord with the feeling of right of the masses—in times of peace by parliamentary means, but when ab-