

of the German people and the greatness of the German dynasties are two things that to me are as far apart as the north and the south pole."

Neither was this simply stated in the heat of controversy, for it was *a* fundamental, not to say *the* fundamental, principle of Lassalle's national political views. In his carefully studied speech entitled "What Next?" in which he urges the progressive elements to wage an energetic fight against the Bismarck ministry, he calls attention to the need of undermining Bismarck's foreign policy. "Let no one think that this is merely unpatriotic reasoning. Political students like naturalists must take into account all existing forces; there is no telling in what stage of barbarism the world might still be were it not for the fact that the jealousy and antagonism between the governments has been an effective means of making internal progress compulsory. The German nation is not built on sand, so that a defeat of the government would endanger the national existence. If therefore we get into war it might involve the collapse of our various governments, the Saxon, Prussian, Bavarian, etc., but from out of the ashes would arise, like a phoenix, indestructible, the only thing we really care about—the German people."

The petty bourgeois to whom Lassalle explained this relation, greeted it with applause, but permitted themselves a couple of years afterward to be converted by Bismarck to the system of government domination, as a result of which they were the subject of endless ridicule in the party press. To-day, however, they are avenged, and the political management of the Social Patriots reflects clarifying rays on the deserted spheres of former activities. It recalls the motto of the National-Liberals of 1867. If you fail to recognize the psychological moment to discard old values for new ones you betray, as Haenisch puts it, a lack of brains or, as Scheidemann says, an excess of learning.

As in the war of 1859, so in those of 1866 and 1870, there were differences of opinion within the Social Democracy, but they were always limited to the "specific conditions leading up to the war"—there was never any question concerning the fundamental canon, that the working class in each and every war must follow its own independent political course.

After the revolution of 1848 had failed to create a united Germany the German government tried to utilize the growing need of economic unity, for dynastic purposes, to create, not a united Germany, but as the then King William put it, an elongated Prussia. Lassalle and Schweitzer, Marx and Engels, Liebknecht and Bebel agreed absolutely that the German unity which the German proletariat needed could be attained only through national revolution, and they therefore fought uncompromisingly all dynastic aspirations based on a greater Prussia. But they had to concede subsequently on account of the cowardice of the Bourgeoisie and the weakness of the proletariat that a national revolution was utterly impossible, and that the Prussia "of blood and iron" offered more favorable prospects for the proletarian struggle than any futile efforts to put the Bourgeoisie back into power. After Sedan they accepted the Prussian-German Empire, such as it was, as an accomplished fact, furnishing a better basis for the struggle for emancipation than the preceding wretched regime.

There were still traces of a split in the Social Democracy when it came to voting the war credits in July, 1870; all the Social Democratic deputies voted favorably except Liebknecht and Bebel, who abstained from voting. When in December of the same year the second war credit was to be granted, all differences had disappeared, and every single parliamentary deputy voted "No." All the groups of the Social Democracy of that time lined up as a unit against the militarism of the class-controlled government, a stand to which the party has adhered ever since, until the 4th of August, 1914.

Emphatically as Marx and Engels supported the war of 1870 up to Sedan, because the downfall of Napoleon was the supreme interest of the European working class movement, just as decidedly did they oppose the war from that point onward, because it was being waged solely for the annexation of Alsace Lorraine; in other words, for a purpose, whose accomplishment, as they foresaw and foretold, threatened the greatest danger to the working class.