

gram was for the liquidation of that heap of organized decay, the Hapsburg monarchy, as well as of two dozen other dwarf monarchies within Germany itself. The overthrow of the German revolution, the treachery of the German bourgeoisie to its own democratic ideals, led to the Bismark regime and to its creature, present day Greater Prussia, twenty-five fatherlands under one helm, the German Empire. Modern Germany is built upon the grave of the March Revolution, upon the wreckage of the right of self-determination of the German people. The present war, supporting Turkey and the Hapsburg monarchy, and strengthening German military autocracy, is a second burial of the March revolutionists, and of the national program of the German people. It is a fiendish jest of history that Socialdemocrats, the heirs of the German patriots of 1848, should go forth in this war with the banner of "self-determination of nations" held aloft in their hands. But, perhaps the third French Republic, with its colonial possessions in form and its colonial horrors in two continents, is the expression of self-determination of the French nation. Or the British nation, with its India, with its South African rule of a million whites over a population of five million colored people. Or perhaps Turkey, or the Empire of the Czar.

Capitalist politicians, in whose eyes the rulers of the people and the ruling classes are the nation, can honestly speak of the "right of national self-determination" in connection with such colonial empires. To the socialist no nation is free whose national existence is based upon the enslavement of another people, for to him colonial peoples, too, are peoples, and, as such, parts of the national state. International socialism recognizes the right of free independent nations, with equal rights. But Socialism, alone, can bring self-determination of their peoples. This slogan of Socialism is, like all its others, no apology for existing conditions, but a guiding post, a spur for the revolutionary, recreative, active policy of the proletariat. So long as capitalist states exist, *i. e.*, so long as imperialistic world policies determine and regulate the inner and the outer life of a nation, there can be no "national self-determination" neither in war nor in peace.

In the present imperialistic milieu there can be no wars of national self-defense. Every socialist policy that depends upon this determining historic milieu, that is willing to fix its policies in the world whirlpool from the point of view of a single nation, is built upon a foundation of sand.

In a discussion of the general causes of the war and of its significance, the question of the "guilty party" is completely beside the issue. Germany certainly has not the right to speak of a war of defense, but France and England have little more justification. They, too, are protecting, not their national, but their world political existence, their old imperialistic possessions from the attacks of the German upstart. Doubtlessly the raids of German and Austrian imperialism in the Orient started the conflagration, but French Imperialism, by devouring Morocco, and English attempts to rape Mesopotamia, and all the other measures that were calculated to secure its rule of force in India, Russia's Baltic policies, aiming toward Constantinople, all of these factors have carried together and piled up, brand for brand, the firewood that fed the conflagration. If capitalist armaments have played an important role as the mainspring of that brand, the outbreak of the catastrophe, it was a competition of armaments, in all nations. And if Germany laid the cornerstone for European competitive armaments by Bismark's policy of 1870, this policy was furthered by that of the second Empire and by the military colonial policies of the third empire, by its expansions in East Asia and in Africa.

The French Socialists had some slight foundation for their illusion of "national defense," because neither the French government nor the French people entertained the slightest warlike desires in July, 1914. "Today everyone in France is honestly, uprightly and without reservation for peace," insisted Jaures in the last speech of his life, on the eve of the war, when he addressed a meeting in the People's House in Brussels. This was absolutely true, and gives the psychological explanation for the indignation of the French Socialists when this criminal war was forced upon their country. But this fact was not sufficient to