

German Social-Democratic Reichstag group. When it announced on the 4th of August, "In this hour of danger, we will not desert our fatherland," it denied its own words in the same breath. For truly it has deserted its fatherland in its hour of greatest danger. The highest duty of the Social Democracy toward its fatherland demanded that it expose the real background of this imperialistic war, that it rend the net of imperialistic and diplomatic lies that covers the eyes of the people. It was its duty to speak loudly and clearly, to proclaim to the people of Germany that in this war victory and defeat would be equally fateful, to oppose the gagging of the fatherland by a state of seige, to demand that the people alone decide on war and peace, to demand a permanent session of Parliament, for the period of the war, to assume a watchful control over the government by parliament, and over parliament by the people, to demand the immediate removal of all political inequalities, since only a free people can adequately govern its country, and finally, to oppose to the imperialist war, based as it was upon the most reactionary forces in Europe, with the program of Marx, of Engels and Lassalle.

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The great historical hour of the world war obviously demanded a unanimous political accomplishment, a broadminded, inclusive attitude that only the Social Democracy is destined to give. Instead there followed, on the part of the parliamentary representatives, of the working class, a miserable collapse. The Social Democracy did not adopt the wrong policy—it had no policy whatsoever. It has wiped itself out completely as a class party with a world conception of its own, has delivered the country, without a word of protest, to a fate of imperialistic war without, to the dictatorship of the sword within. Nay, more, it has taken the responsibility for the war upon its own shoulders. The declaration of the "Reichstag group" says: "We have voted only the means for our country's defense. We decline all responsibility for the war." But as a matter of fact, the truth lies in exactly the opposite direction. The means for 'national defense,' i. e., for imperialistic mass butchery by the armed forces of the military

monarchy were not voted by the Social Democracy. For the use of the war credits did not in the least depend upon the Social Democracy. They, as a minority, stood against a compact three-quarter majority of the capitalistic Reichstag. The Social-Democratic group accomplished only one thing by voting in favor of the war credits. It placed upon the war the stamp of democratic fatherland defense, supported and sustained the fictions that were propagated by the government concerning actual conditions and problems of the war.

"But what action should the party have taken to give to our opposition to the war and to our war demands weight and emphasis? Should it have proclaimed a general strike? Should it have called upon the soldiers to refuse military service? Thus the question is generally asked. To answer with a simple yes or no were exactly as ridiculous as to decide 'when war breaks out we will make a revolution.' Revolutions are not 'made' and great movements of the people are not produced according to technical recipes that repose in the pockets of the party leaders. Small circles of conspirators may organize a riot for a certain day and a certain hour, can give their small group of supporters the signal to begin. Mass movements in great historical crises cannot be initiated by such primitive measures. The best prepared mass strike may break down miserably at the very moment when the party leaders give the signal, may collapse completely before the first attack. The success of great popular movements depends, aye, the very time and circumstance of their inception is decided by a number of economic, political and psychological factors. The existing degree of tension between the classes, the degree of intelligence of the masses and the degree of ripeness of their spirit of resistance—all these factors that are incalculable, are premises that cannot be artificially created by any party. That is the difference between great historical upheavals, and the small show-demonstrations that a well disciplined party can carry out in times of peace, orderly, well-trained performances, responding obediently to the baton in the hands of the party leaders. The great historical hour itself creates the forms that will carry the revolutionary movement to a successful outcome, creates and im-