

a mere question of foreign policy. For to Austria foreign policy has become a question of internal policy, and the internal policy is to a very considerable degree external. They are no longer separable quantities. Austria as it is constituted today, cannot get peace. And even if the fortunes of war should change once again, even under cover of the German bayonets, we cannot live any longer the way we have been living. Unfortunately there are still people who imagine such a thing possible, who only become accessible to reason as far as they are forced from day to day, and who are subject to relapse. But even if the fortunes of war should change once more, the old Austria could not be saved. The disintegration, or rather, the revelation of the disintegration, that has transpired, does not date from the military defeats, which the Central powers have met with recently in the war, not even from the disastrous Piave adventure, with all its consequences. It was inherent in the nation, and this war has only made manifest what has long been the fact—the real inner life of this Austria. Therefore if we want peace, we must first be prepared to confess: That the old Austria cannot get us peace.

The whole world knows that; it cannot be confiscated and cannot be edited out of existence. If we wish to make it possible to secure peace, to secure a peace concluded with us and not a peace of which we are a passive object, we must transform ourselves into a condition of fitness for negotiation. This is the purpose of our motion. A few days ago, we heard a very finely chiseled speech of the prime minister. How good that would have sounded ten years ago, and how useful it would have been then. Perhaps even four years ago, even one year ago. But that we should hear such a speech just at the moment when it can no longer appear the product of a disinterested judgment of things, but as a product of fear, makes it somewhat less effective, or rather, gives it a different effect than was intended.

That the Austrian government is gradually beginning to consider ways and means of giving autonomy to the national-

ities as well as other beautiful things, is real nice, but it comes rather at the eleventh hour. We cannot find fault with people for saying "too late"!

History has already made it an anachronism. This war is verily a melting pot of history. The changes are so rapid that we do not know if a reference made today will have any meaning tomorrow or any foundation in fact, unless we adhere to principles. The prime minister has told us as a matter of course that the situation brought about by the Bulgarian "occurrence" is indeed serious, but surely not critical. The period of crisis comprised a fleeting moment, but it has passed. Nothing is critical now any more, it has been decided. Whoever is in touch with the masses, knows that among the people of every nationality there is not that same feeling of indignation as was the case when Italy entered the *melée*, which act was branded as treachery. The sentiment that animates the masses today, in connection with the Bulgarian occurrence, is not indignation over an act of betrayal, but rather is envy. The Bulgarians are out of it—that is how people feel about it.

How are we now to get peace? Austria is ready for peace, we Social-democrats fully recognized that from the time of the first utterances of Count Czernin. Furthermore, we consider that the political course pursued by Austria rendered a service by exerting a moderating influence on Berlin. But no one can exert an influence greater than his force and power and if our Czernins and their successors can claim any mitigating circumstances, they would lie in the fact that we cannot extract more influence and power from Austria that it contains. Naturally it is an aggravating circumstance, but in spite of this the peace efforts, which have again been repeatedly emanating from Austria of late, should be accorded recognition, even though we must add that this is a minimum of atonement and penance in view of the fact that those same elements that are to-day writing peace notes, flung out the lighted torch in the year 1914. The pens which at that time wrote the first declaration of war are tainted by the guilt of