

In the second year of the war Liebknecht was sent to the front as a non-combatant soldier, where he was shortly afterward seriously hurt by a falling tree trunk. In March of the same year Rosa Luxemburg was sentenced to a year in prison for alleged libels of officers' corps and the Crown Prince, in a speech in which she protested against the ill-treatment of the soldiery.

During 1916 Liebknecht was sentenced to 30 months in prison for a speech delivered in a soldier's uniform, at a peace demonstration held on the Potsdamer Platz, Berlin. This sentence was increased to four years on an appeal to a higher court. Various after that there came to this country reports of Liebknecht's illness and death in prison, until he was released, a few weeks before the German revolution broke out, by the Coalition-Socialist-Liberal-Ministry that had been created in Germany as a last desperate attempt to pacify a nation already in the throes of revolution.

The German Revolution

In the few weeks that preceded the German revolutionary uprising Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were in the forefront of events. They addressed gigantic demonstrations. Liebknecht was met with tremendous ovations whenever he appeared in public. The memory of the meetings he addressed from the portico of the Embassy of the revolutionary Russian government will be unforgettable in the memory of those who witnessed them.

And yet, by the strange irony of fate, the very men who had always vehemently opposed revolutionary tactics in the German proletariat, the very men who, up to the last day of the coming of the revolution tried with all means to stem the rising tide that threatened the overthrow of the German military autocracy, assumed the reigns of government upon the Emperor's abdication. Ebert and Scheidemann became the rulers of the new German Republic. But even though majority Socialists stood at the head of the government, the spirit that filled the masses was undeniably revolutionary. Soldiers'

and Workmen's Councils everywhere took over the reigns of government in the cities, and proclamations and orders were usually signed in the name of the "Socialist Republic of Germany." Even the "Vorwärts," the organ of the majority group, spoke of "the social revolution."

The control of the government was placed in the hands of a council made up of three supporters of the Social Democratic Party and three Independents. But at the outset there were radical differences of opinion between the two groups, that were only with difficulty overcome. True to their old theory that Germany would grow into the Socialist state by a process of gradual evolution, the Social Democratic Party remained, as it has always been, opposed to any action that might precipitate the working class of Germany into an active conflict, either within the nation or without. To a proposal made by the Executive Committee of the Independent Social Democratic Party, on November 8th, as a basis for united action, that "in this Republic the entire executive, legislative and judicial power shall rest exclusively in the hands of representatives of the entire laboring population and the soldiers," the Executive of the Social Democratic Party replied: "If this demand means the dictatorship of a part of a class that has not the support of the majority of the people, we must decline it, because it is not in accord with our democratic principles." Street demonstrations everywhere breathed the most revolutionary spirit. The decisions and decrees of the different Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils showed a radicalism and firmness toward the Socialist goal that was refreshing and promising.

And yet, prompted probably by the fear of renewed warfare of the Allies against Germany should the spirit of unrest grow, the leaders of the Independents in the end acquiesced and abandoned their opposition to the National Assembly. For a time even closer affiliation with the Social Democratic Party was under consideration. But the lengths to which the Ebert-Scheidemann group went in their concessions to the capitalists and militaristic clique of Germany, the boldness with which military leaders like Hindenburg and officers of