

showed stiff resistance and somewhat reduced the "bill" that France was condemned to pay.

Have we a Bismarck? It seems doubtful. But there is no doubt that the military caste everywhere reasons in the same way, is madly charging down the same incline of victory.

And there is yet another difference. A few days ago our friend, Jean Longuet, brilliantly introduced, at *l'Ecole Socialiste*, his very interesting book on the "Politique exterieure du Marxisme." He pictured the heroic resistance of the first International to the annexationist appetites of a victorious Germany. The Berne conference did not even consider the possibility of such opposition, except perhaps in a few generalities that had neither force nor color.

Where are our Bebel and our Liebknechts?

They are dead, assassinated. And the living failed to speak there where their words might have had real historical significance. And so the blind are leading the lame toward the final cataclysm, in an atmosphere overcharged with electricity.

Poor France! Poor Humanity!

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Headed for Stockholm (via Russia), we arrived at Berne. The allied governments, in their wisdom, why, normal human intelligence fails to comprehend, have at last, after four years of war, condescended to allow us to cross the borders into a neutral state. French and German Socialists have shaken hands—and the world did not totter!

It has been my privilege to be present at all International Congresses, without exception since the second International was founded at Paris in 1889, on the occasion of the first centennial anniversary of the French Revolution. But never have I witnessed a Congress so dull, so poor in thought and so devoid of revolutionary or even of idealistic sentiment than this. A hundred delegates, flanked by at least 200 more or less authentic journalists, were gathered together there in a bare hall. There was no Socialist insignia, no bit of red cloth, not even the traditional bust of Karl Marx or the famous rallying cry "Workers of all countries, unite" without which there has never been an International Congress. Truly, it seemed more like a meeting of old veterans, or of agricultural comitias . . . .

But even more important was the complete absence of frank and fearless expression, the lack of a single popular breath. The

few courageous minority members, and even ex-majority members felt themselves completely submerged by a marsh of stagnation, of auguries and sub-auguries, of hallway diplomats, of old and future ministers, and Socialist ministers actually in office.

After four years of the most terrific struggle that the world has ever seen, after four social revolutions (in Russia, Germany, Austria and Hungary, one had hoped for something better. But they did not dare to broach the most important subject, the question of the responsibility of the different Socialist sections for the assassination of the International. French ex-majority and German majority Socialists generously declared a general amnesty and together formed a solid counter-revolutionary and anti-bolshevik bloc. The reconciliation was made at the expense of Lenin.

Instead of forcing the responsible capitalist regime to face the responsibility of its millions of dead, instead of charging the guilty with their foul murder, they prepared themselves to chastise the Bolsheviki

This struggle, at long distance, against a social revolution, in the midst of its revolutionary period, by a body whose very existence was based upon the principle of the overthrow of the capitalist system, was so comic that even the authors of that gloomy enterprise backed down before the ungrateful task.

All of the most important decisions were put off. It was, in truth a Congress of postponements. It would have been far wiser had the Congress adjourned until a more favorable time when the proletariat, which is now busy with other things, would have an opportunity to make its presence felt. Only once was there at least a semblance of international solidarity. It was the question of the German prisoners. But even here the French ex-majority Socialists found a way out of the difficulty by leaving the initiative, with generous impartiality, to the German minority member, Kurt Eisner, who, in the face of our social patriots, branded the military reactionaries of his own countries, as we were all wont to do in the good old days before the war. Renaudel did not fail to step on the tender corns of the others with the heavy clumsiness that characterizes this shrewd native of Normandy. But nobody whispered a word about our own prisoners, of those Socialists in all countries that are being held by their own bourgeois ruling classes.

Not one problem of Socialist politics, or, for that matter, of world politics, found serious discussion. True, the Bolshevik problem was broached. But even here the discussion centered