hopeless. They have to convince the men that it is better to come to terms and not to fight. So they must act as spokesmen of the employers to force the capitalists terms upon the workers. It is even worse, when the workers insist on fight in opposition to the decision of the union. Then the union power must be used as a weapon to subdue the workers.

So the labour leader has become the slave of his capitalist task of securing industrial peace – now at the cost of the workers, though as best he could. But he cannot look beyond capitalism; and within the horizon of capitalism he is right that fighting is of no use. The criticism can only mean, that trade unionism stands here at the limits of its power.

Is there another way out then? Could the workers win anything by fighting? Probably they will lose the immediate issue of the fight. But they will gain something else. By not fighting (without having fought submitting) they rouse the spirit of revolt against capitalism itself. They proclaim a new issue. But here the whole working class must join in. To all their fellow workers they show that in capitalism there is no future for them, and that only by fighting not as a union, but as a class unity, they can win. This is the beginning of a revolutionary fight. And when their fellow workers understand this lesson, when solidarity strikes break out in other trades, when a wave of rebellion goes over the country, then in the arrogant hearts of the capitalists there may appear some doubt as to their omnipotence and some willingness to make concessions.

The trade union leader does not understand this, because from his point of view, trade unionism does not reach beyond capitalism. He opposes this kind of fight.

Without having fought and submitting to them

It means

Fighting capitalism in this way means at the same time rebellion against the trade union. The labor leader stands beside the capitalist in their common fear for the workers rebellion.

When the trade unions fought against the capitalist class for better working conditions, the capitalist class hated them; but it had not the power to destroy them, it had to arrange matters with them — [Only clever capitalists appreciated them.] If the trade unions ~~would~~ should fight now and try to raise all the forces of the working class in their fight, the capitalist class will persecute them with all its means. They may see their action repressed as rebellion, ~~hampered by judge indictments~~, their offices destroyed by militia, their leaders ~~and~~ fined and ~~put~~ thrown in jail, ~~their members shot by citizen guards~~, their funds confiscated. On the other hand, if they keep their members from fighting, the capitalist class may consider them as valuable institutions ~~that should~~ to be preserved and protected, and their leaders as deserving citizens. So the trade unions find themselves between the devil and the deep sea: on the one side persecution, which is a hard thing to bear for people who meant to be peaceful citizens, on the other side rebellion of the members, which may undermine the union. The capitalist class, if it is wise, will recognise that a bit of sham fighting must be allowed to uphold the influence of the leaders upon the members.

The conflicts arising here are not anybody's fault; they are an inevitable consequence of capitalist development. Capitalism exists, but it is at the same time on the way to perdition. It must be fought as a living thing but at the same time as a transitory thing. The workers must wage a steady fight for wages and working conditions, while at the same time communist ideas, more or less clear and conscious, awaken in their minds. In them arise Great thoughts of a better future for mankind, deep feelings of a golden world of freedom,

to be won at the cost of immense self sacrifice and devoted fighting. At the same time they cling to the unions, feeling that they are still necessary, trying now and then to transform them into better fighting institutions.

But the spirit of trade unionism, which is in its pure form a capitalist spirit, is not in them.

The divergence between these two tendencies in capitalism and in the class struggle appears now as a rift between the trade union spirit, mainly embodied in their leaders, and the growing revolutionary feeling of the members. This rift becomes apparent in their opposite positions they take in various important social and political questions.

Trade unionism is bound to capitalism; it has its best chances to obtain good wages, when capitalism flourishes. So in times of depression it must hope that prosperity will be restored, and it must try to further it. To the workers, as a class, the prosperity of capitalism is not all important. When it is weakened by crisis or depression, they have the best chances to attack it, and to strengthen the forces of the revolution, and to take the first steps towards freedom.

Capitalism extends its dominion over foreign continents (in order) To make big profits by seizing their natural treasures. It conquers colonies, subjugates the primitive population and exploits them, often with horrible cruelties. The working class, driven by sympathy for these fellow-victims of a mutual oppressor, denounces and opposes colonial exploitation. Trade unionism often supports colonial politics as a way to capitalist prosperity.

With the enormous increase of capital in modern times, Colonies and foreign countries are being used to invest large masses of capital. They become valuable possessions as markets for big industry and there as producers of raw materials. A race for getting colonies, a fierce conflict of interests over the dividing

(of imperialism the middle classes are whirled along in a common exultation of national greatness.
of the world arises between the great capitalist states. In this politics
of imperialism the trade unions take the side with their masters, because
they consider the prosperity of their own national capitalism to be dependent on its
success in the struggle. For the working class imperialism means increasing
power of their exploiters, increasing taxes, increasing oppression, increasing
and brutality
danger of war.

The conflicts of interests between the national capitalisms lead to explode into wars.
World war is the crowning of the policy of imperialism. For the workers
war is not only the destroying of all their feelings of international
brotherhood; it is also the most violent exploitation of their class for capitalist
profit. The working class, as the most numerous and most oppressed class of society
has to bear all the horrors of war; they have to give not only their labor power, but also
their health, their life, their little bit of safety and happiness; their bodies moulder
are torn by explosives,
in the trenches, their limbs, not only they themselves but also their wives and children at home are poisoned by gas.
And when they die, it is not as heroes for which is happiness to die, but as
worthless victims of the gold hunger of worthless masters.

Trade unionism, however, must stand in war on the side of the capitalist class. Its
interests are bound up with national capitalism, the victory of which it assists in arousing
wishes with all its heart. Hence it strong
national feelings and national hatred, it helps the capitalist class
to drive the workers into the war and to beat down all opposition.

Its interests are bound up with n. c. the victory of which it wishes with all its heart

Trade unionism hates revolution. Revolution upsets all the ordinary
relation between capitalists and workers; in its violent
clashings all those careful tariff regulations are swept away; in the shock
of its gigantic forces the modest skill of the bargaining labor leader

2 looses its value. With all its power trade unionism opposes the ideas of revolution and communism.

Trade unionism abhors communism. Communism takes away the very basis of its existence; in communism, there is no room for trade unions and labor leaders. It is true that in countries with a strong socialist movement, 1 where the bulk of the workers are socialists, the labor leaders must be socialists too, by origin as well as by environment. But then they are right-wing-socialists; and their socialism is restricted to the idea of a commonwealth where instead of greedy capitalists honest labor leaders will manage industrial production.

This opposition is not without significance. Trade unionism is a power in itself. It has at its disposal considerable funds, as material element of power, it has its spiritual influence, upheld and propagated by its periodical papers as mental element of power. It is a power in the hands of the leaders, who make use of it wherever the special interests of trade unionism come into conflict with the revolutionary interests of the working class. Trade unionism, though built up by the workers and consisting of workers, has turned into a power above the workers, a power over the workers. Just as government is a power over and above the people. This is the natural outcome of every firmly built organization.

The forms of trade unionism are different for different countries, owing to the different forms of capitalistic development. Nor do they remain the same always in every country. When they seems to be petrifying, the fighting spirit of the workers sometimes is able to transform them or to build up new types of unionism. Thus in England in the years 1880-90 sprang up the „new unionism" from the masses of poor dockers and other badly paid unskilled workers, bringing a new spirit also into the old craft unions. It is a consequence of new developments of capitalism which, in replacing skilled labor by machine power or in founding new industries, accumulates large bodies of unskilled workers, heavily exploited, unorganized, living in the worst conditions. Till at last in a wave of rebellion, in big strikes, they find the way to unity and class-consciousness. They mould unionism into a new form, adapted to a more highly developed capitalism. Of course, when afterwards capitalism grows to still mightier forms, the new unionism cannot escape the fate of all unionism and then it produces the same inner contradictions.

Its most notable form sprang up in America in the „Industrial Workers of the World." They originated from two forms of capitalist expansion. In the immense woods and plains of the West capitalism reaped the natural riches by Wild West methods of fierce and brutal exploitation; and the workers-adventurers responded with as wild and gallant a defense. And in the Eastern states new industries were founded upon the exploitation of millions of poor immigrants, coming from countries with a low living standard and sweating labor or other most miserable working conditions.

Against the narrow craft spirit of the old unionism of the A.F. of L., which divided the workers of one industrial plant in a number of separate unions, the I.W.W. put the principle: all the workers of one factory, as comrades against one master,

must ~~form~~ form one union, to act as a strong unity against the employer ("This is the principle of industrial unionism").

Against the multitude of often jealous and bickering trade unions ~~the~~ the I.W.W. set up the slogan: one big union for all the workers. The fight of one group is the cause of all. Solidarity extends over the entire class.

Contrary to ~~Against~~ the haughty disdain of the well paid old American skilled labor towards the unorganized immigrants, it was ~~the I.W.W. first led~~ that the I.W.W. led these worst paid proletarians into the fight. They were too poor to pay regularly high fees and build up ordinary trade unions. But when they broke out and revolted in big strikes, it was the IWW who taught them how to fight, who raised relief funds all over the country and who defended their cause in its papers and before the courts. By a glorious series of big battles it infused the spirit of organization and self-reliance into the hearts of these masses.

Contrary to ~~Contrary to~~ the trust in the big funds of the old unions ~~the~~ the Industrial Workers put their confidence in the living solidarity and the force of endurance, upheld by a burning enthousiasm. Instead of ~~Against~~ the heavy stone-masoned buildings of the old unions they represented the flexible construction, with a fluctuating membership, contracting in time of peace, swelling and growing in ~~the~~ the fight itself.

Contrary to ~~Contrary to~~ the conservative capitalist spirit of ~~the~~ trade unionism the Industrial Workers were anticapitalist and stood for Revolution. Therefor they were persecuted with intense hatred by the whole capitalist world. They were thrown into jail and often tortured on false accusations; ~~on their behalf~~ even a special new crime was invented ~~for~~ on their behalf: that of criminal syndicalism. This is contrary to all law and justice ~~for~~ ~~crimes against the existing order stand under the law, but those~~ ~~because it is the point of~~ (as it does) ~~in~~ making use of ~~more than the~~ growing of the ~~bond~~ as the ~~revolution~~ ~~law~~.

[because syndicalism (the French name for fighting unionism), ~~cannot~~ legal means, cannot be a crime against existing laws, revolution itself ~~breaks~~ law.

H can be a crime against

But this attitude is in accordance with the feelings of the capitalist class for ~~which~~ Whom revolution is the worst of all crimes.

Industrial unionism alone as a method of fighting the capitalist class is not sufficient to overthrow ~~the~~ capitalist society and to conquer the world for the working class. It fights the capitalists as employers, on the economic field of production, but ~~can not~~ it has not the means to overthrow their political power, their political stronghold, the State power. Nevertheless the IWW has been ~~still more~~ so far the most revolutionary organization in America. More than any other it has contributed to ~~awaken~~ rouse class consciousness and insight, solidarity and unity in the working class, ~~to~~ to turn its eyes towards communism, and to ~~organize~~ prepare its fighting power.

The lesson of all these fights is that against big capitalism trade unionism cannot win. And that if at times it does win, sometimes it wins, that such victories give only temporary relief. And that yet these fights are necessary and must be fought, always anew. To the bitter end? – no, to the better end.

The reason is obvious. An isolated group of workers against an isolated capitalist boss, this might make equal parties. But an isolated group of workers against a boss, backed by the whole capitalist class, that is hopeless. And such is the case here: the state power, the money power of capitalism, public opinion of the middle classes, excited by the capitalist press, all attack the group of fighting workers.

But does not the working class back the strikers? The millions of other workers do not consider this fight as their own cause. Certainly, they sympathize, and often collect money for the strikers, and this may give some relief – if its distribution is not forbidden by a judge's injunction. But this easy-going sympathy leaves the real fight to the striking group alone. The millions stand aloof, passive. So the fight cannot be won, except in some special cases, when the capitalists for business reasons prefer to grant some concessions. Because there is too little unity and still less wisdom in the workers. Because the working class does not fight as one indivisible unity.

The matter will be different, of course, if the mass of the workers really considers such a contest as directly concerning them; if they find that their own future is at stake, and they stand with all their power behind

But, to be sure, this is not to be ~~considered~~ taken as a truly expedient recipe, ~~at last fortunately~~ luckily hit upon, ~~to~~ and ensure victory.

the strikers. If they go into the fight themselves and extend the strike to other factories, to ever more branches of industry, then the state power, the capitalist power has to be divided and cannot be used entirely against a separate group of workers. It has to face the collective power of the working class.

Extension of the strike, ever more widely, up to a general strike in the end, has often been advised as a means to avert a defeat. But, to be sure, this is not a happily to be taken as a truly expedient recipe, luckily hit upon and ensuring for certain victory. If such were the case trade unions certainly would have made use of it repeatedly as regular tactics. It can not as a simple tactical measure be proclaimed at will by union leaders. It must come forth from the deepest feelings of the masses, as the expression of their spontaneous initiative; and this is only aroused when the issue of the fight is or grows larger than a simple wage contest of one groups. Only then the workers will put all their force, their enthusiasm, their solidarity, their power of endurance into it.

And they will need them. For also capitalism will bring into the field stronger forces than before. It may have been defeated, taken by surprise, by the unexpected exhibition of proletarian force, and so have made concessions; but then, afterwards, it will gather new forces out of the deepest roots of its power and proceed to win back its position. So the victory is not certain. There is no clear and open road to victory; the road itself must be hewn and built through the capitalist jungle at the cost of immense efforts.

But even so it will mean a great progress. A wave of solidarity has gone through the masses, they have felt the immense power of class unity, their self confidence is raised, they have shaken off the narrow groups egoism. They have learnt new wisdom: through Through their own deeds

Through their own deeds

~~their understanding~~ key: ~~their understanding~~: what capitalism means; how they stand as a class over against the capitalist class; they have seen a glimpse of their way to freedom.

Thus the narrow field of trade union struggle widens into the broad field of ~~class struggle~~ class struggle. But now the workers themselves must change. They have to take a wider view of the world. From their work within the factory walls their mind must widen to encompass society at large. Their spirit must rise above the petty things around them. They have to face the state; they enter the realms of politics; the problems of revolution must be dealt with.

—

Political fight and social-democracy

Political power is the most important stronghold of the capitalist class. If the workers want to win freedom, if they strive to overthrow the capitalist system, they will have to vanquish this power. They have to wage a political fight to conquer the State.

In America politics have always been the battlefield of capitalist parties, organizations or gangs of politicians, to whom government and state power meant business. Business for themselves and their adherents, who took possession of the government offices, business for their capitalist friends, who got land, concessions, profitable contracts, mines, all the treasures of the soil. Politics was a dirty business here.

In Europe politics had a different meaning. Politics were a fight of fundamental principles. Formerly government had been in the hands of kings and nobility. The people — collective name for middle and small capitalists, artizans, farmers — had to conquer it in a series of revolutions: in England 1648, in France 1789. These revolutions were class fights, necessary for the progress of society. The greatness of their aims incited the young capitalist class and its representatives to great deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice. Without enthusiasm and idealism they could not win power. Henceforth the political fights, partly in parliament, partly in revolutionary street-actions, retained this character of class struggles, the source of idealistic exaltations. The party platforms were expressions of opposed class interests; the party struggles were contests between classes, first between capitalists and landed aristocracy, then between small and big capitalists, between agrarian and industrial capital, between capitalists and workers. Though in later times the full and uncontested capitalist power brought decay of political morals and abuse of power for personal graft, this was not

the distinctive character of politics. To serve their class honestly was, as a rule, the aim of capitalist politicians.

In America the young capitalist class won its liberty and dominance by a war of independence against a foreign power. It never knew what a class fight against a feudal dominating class means. Therefore politics, which always are a contest of interests, could never take on the idealistic character of a fight for general the common necessary life interests of the whole class. It could only be a contest of mean egoistic personal or group interests.

The workers have to conquer political supremacy from another ruling class. As the capitalist class did in Europe. Hence European, not American standards of politics have to guide them here.

As in former revolutions the rising capitalist class conquered the political power from the feudal classes, so the rising working class in the coming proletarian revolution will conquer the political power from the capitalist class. The workers will use this political power, as the new dominant class, to destroy the capitalist system and to replace it by communism.

This was the principle first set up by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto." Afterwards it was taken up as its basis by Social Democracy.

Is it possible for a government, when in the hands of the working class, to change the economic system from capitalism into communism or socialism? This change is a change from private property to collective property. The right of property is fixed and regulated by law; the laws are made by the government. The class that is master of the political power can make the laws according to its needs and interests. This does now the capitalist class, so the working class will do after the victory.

The state of to day is the repressive power of the ruling class; but after the victory

of the working class it will be the collective representative of this class. As the instrument of the workers the state — or its smaller parts, provinces, communes, towns — takes in hand the production. Its function, instead of a governing of persons becomes a management of affairs.

Is collective management of production, by a state or a town, possible? The answer is given by such public services as are now managed by state on behalf of the capitalist class, for instance the post service. Everybody recognizes that this is more efficient than it were left to the competition of a number of capitalist enterprises trying to make profit out of it. Why not do the same thing with food provisions, with electric power distribution, railways? In most countries the telegraph is considered just as the post as a natural public service. In many countries the railways are a state service. Competition, it is said, lowers the prices and makes the services more efficient for the public. However: „public be damned" was the device of Jay Gould the railway king. Competition means an immense waste of labor, especially in times of rising capitalism with its many petty affairs. Once they are monopolized public management means that the large profits do not come into a few private pockets. Private management, it is said, is more efficient and cheaps. This is partly true, in so far as red tape bureaucracy reigns in public services; partly it means, that in private enterprises the workers can and must be more heavily exploited.

Social democracy tries to bring about socialism by means of democracy.

Democracy means reign of the people. The majority of the people, with universal suffrage, determines the majority of parliament. If there are no other independent aristocratic powers, as a senate, or a monarch,

the majority in parliament determines government.

The workers have been growing into the majority of the people, ~~especially when aided by other poor classes.~~ If they want to replace capitalism by socialism, they have only to vote for Social democracy, which as „Socialist Party" fights the capitalist parties in parliament. When by their majority they bring government into their hands, Hence by parliamentary means, by voting and by fighting in parliament, they may attain their goal in an easy way.

Stated this, indeed the matter seems quite easy. In reality it is beset with enormous difficulties. Who believes that the ruling class will suffer itself to be turned out of power so easily?

We see that this easy scheme of things presupposes democracy. But the working class did not find democracy (as a soft bed spread for her). In many countries the suffrage was restricted to the wealthy classes. Almost everywhere senates, chambers of privileged groups, had and have to test the laws voted by parliament. In many countries kings or emperors, military or aristocratic classes controll and command the government. Hence before being able to use democracy the workers had to establish democracy. The fight for democracy was one of the forms of proletarian class struggle.

The most famous case was the fight for universal suffrage in Belgium 1891 (1893). led by the Belgian Workers Party and the trade unions a series of sheet demonstrations, general strikes and vehement parliamentary discussions brought about the conquest of this primary right. The resistance in parliament was beaten down, because part of the capitalist class, considering universal suffrage less dangerous than the continual unrest

of the masses, soon consented to the demands. Their point is that universal suffrage gives a regular outlet to deep discontent and prevents it from breaking out in serious rebellions. This campaign contributed more than anything else to arouse class consciousness and fighting spirit in the Belgian workers. Other countries followed, in most cases with less trouble.

The success of the workers in this fight shows that democracy, up to a certain point, is necessary in capitalism. To such a point, namely, that the working class on the same terms as the other classes may take part in the general interest fights in capitalism. But not to the point that (by simply) voting it could gain supremacy. This latter truth is evident; the capitalist class, so long as it rules society, cannot tolerate that the exploited class should control government.

The former truth, becoming apparent by the very result of these suffrage fights, The working class rests on the economic structure of capitalism, must consist of free owners of their labor power, and, by their personal liberty, as free contractants they must be able to sell it to the capitalist. If not, they would be coolées or slaves. And capitalist production, with its intricate and complex system of cooperation and its highly developed technics, requiring workers with strong responsabilities, cannot be run by slaves or coolées. These rights of legal freedom and equality are only safe against encroachments from the separate capitalists or functionaries if the working class is able to defend them in regular parliamentary fight. If not, destructive outbursts of class rebellion must ensue.

These are the deeper causes why a resolute fight of the working class

for universal suffrage must meet with success. It means at the same time that hardly more can be obtained while the capitalist class has the superior power. Princes, senates, courts of justice, armed forces and other independent undemocratic powers, dependent only on capital, are ~~kept on permanent~~ maintained to prevent real democracy. And should it be necessary, should the existing bit of democracy appear dangerous, then it will be done away ~~with too~~ with also.

The socialist party grew up as an organization of workers, ~~animated~~ inspired by the radiant socialist goal, stirring up their fellow workers to the class struggle and fighting the capitalist parties outside and inside parliament. ~~Young workers for~~ Young intellectuals, even some members of the capitalist class, joined them, ~~won~~ moved by the great idea of socialism, ~~of~~ freedom for all mankind, and became sometimes prominent spokesmen and capable political leaders. In public meetings and in parliamentary speeches, in their weekly or daily papers and in a number of books, ~~and~~ pamphlets and leaflets ~~they~~ these socialists expounded to the workers ~~the dependence of~~ how capitalism is the source of their wrongs, and its development to socialism the necessary result of the workers class struggle. They denounced ~~the~~ on all occasions the abuses and the tyranny of the capitalist class, (and defended the interests of the working class, wherever it was oppressed. They proposed ~~laws~~ laws or amendments to laws for reform and relief. They stood up for all the poor oppressed classes, for all the victims of oppressing and exploiting capital.

H conflict of interests / conflict of

In this way social-democracy ~~is~~ in Germany first, and then in

many other countries (in Europe did) what trade-unionism had done in England. It awakened the workers to class-consciousness, led them in their first fights against the capitalist class, and taught them class solidarity and idealism. It was closely allied to trade unionism; many labor leaders were socialist parliamentarians at the same time. It embodied the proletarian class struggle in a wider, more general and more abstract form: it fought not only industrial capital but also agrarian capital, colonial capital, big finance. It aroused in the workers a feeling of unity of the whole class, above the trade divisions. It fought a theoretical fight against capitalist scientists. (In an increasing number of valuable studies they) developed and defended, as follower of Marx, the science of society as a process through class struggle to freedom. In a increasing number of valuable studies the world's development; for many dozens of years it embodied the noblest hopes, the deepest idealism, the best revolutionary ideas of the working class.

In its propaganda the future socialist aim and reforms for the present formed a natural unity. This was the basis of its growing power. For the poor oppressed masses, when they listened, socialism was the sweet hope of future happiness, but more important was the immediate relief ing of their wrongs: abolition of long working hours, of child labor, of night labor, insurance against accidents, lower taxes, health measures, school reforms. Only socialists could stand up for them to the utmost: to all objections of the capitalist parties that such reforms were impossible as they could not be financed, the answer was: so much the worse for capitalism, and all the more proof that the latter should disappear. Socialism was the strong arsenal at the back of the fighters for betterment for the workers, for the relief.

Thus social democracy grew to be an important political factor. From a herald of the future, in its first beginnings, it became a reality of the present. Though discussion and propaganda spoke of the future, the real parliamentary and electoral fights dealt with the actual position of the workers in capitalism. They were class struggles over the opposing class interests within capitalism.

The economic conditions intensified this character. During the first development of the socialist parties capitalism lived in a continuous depression; only a short period of prosperity alternated with long periods of crisis. Hence capitalism appeared untenable, no reforms could avail, nothing but socialism could save the workers. But about 1895 a new period of prosperity began, which lasted, with short interruptions, till the world war. Capitalism again was full of vigour, and now reforms appeared to be possible. But also more difficult, because of the increasing power and self confidence of the capitalist class. So fighting was necessary, fighting with all powers, for immediate aims, in attack, but still more in defense. All attention was concentrated upon the struggle of the moment.

Like trade unionism social-democracy had to defend the present day interests within capitalism. Parliamentarism, the struggle of political parties within parliament and their contest at the polls, is the way in which all the different and varying class interests and groups interests in capitalism are struggling and adjusting themselves each according to its importance in society. Also working class interests. The socialist party has to stand for these against other parties. Thus the socialist party is a natural and necessary member in capitalist society. Capitalism is not really complete without a workers political party.

In England the workers had no special party; they voted Whig or Tory. But then a bill was proposed in Parliament to prohibit picketing during strikes. Immediately the trade-unions, up to that time nonpolitical, resolved to found a separate party, the Labour Party, without socialist programm, only having some moderate socialist tendencies, exclusively to defend the actual interests of the workers. In their further development the English Labor Party and the continental socialist parties took gradually the same course.

Socialdemocracy became a power in politics. The party members increased to tens of thousands, its number of votes at the polls to millions; its delegates in parliament, in provincial boards, in town councils formed big bodies. These votes were not all workers votes; the socialist party defended the interests of all small people, even of small capitalists against big capital. To get more votes it inserted into its platforms wishes and interests of such groups. The guiding spirit of many of its parlamentarians was, not the working class against the capitalist class, but the workers and the petty capitalists against big capitalists and landlords. The line of proletarian class struggle was dropped. They argued that in this way a working majority could sooner be won to crush the power of the big capital. They forgot, that even in this case the small capitalists, clearly conscious of their capitalist interests, would prevail over the fooled workers.

Party power became the great goal, not class power. Party-consciousness was confounded with class-consciousness. Party power not in the sense of clear socialist thinking and feeling in the masses, but in the sense of parliamentary power, big fractions and a high number of votes. [A]. Not: the party a means to socialism as its

A) Party power

the great aim – but socialism ~~is~~ the means, the attractive slogan,
to the party as the immediate aim.

With this the masses of ~~the~~ socialist workers were content ~~with it~~. They ~~wished~~ wanted reforms, they wished to be ~~defended~~ protected against „reaction"; and they felt that a big and powerful socialist party in parliament could better ~~defend~~ protect them than a small group. ~~They supposed~~ So it ~~appeared~~ seemed. They forgot that against capitalism for the working class the ~~only~~ only ~~lies in protection or defence of itself~~, lies in its real class power, not in the sham power based upon votes of other classes.

~~Also in this way~~ Also in this way a majority did not come soon enough. So to attain some of its aims the socialist party had to make alliances, alliances with other parties. Sometimes in parliament, sometimes at the polls already, sometimes after the polls. This was called then „constructive policy", which means: reduction of the workers' demands to that minimum that even the capitalist class can not object to.

Now socialists get government posts; they become town mayors, aldermen, even ministers. Not as independant delegates of the working class, but by the consent of their allies, delegates of the capitalist class. This is called „conquest of power step by step", or „not being afraid of taking responsibilities".

~~As aldermen or ministers they cannot take socialist measures of course, the real majority is capitalist~~

What are these responsibilities? As aldermen or ministers they have to manage the general affairs of state or town under capitalism. Of course they cannot take socialist measures. They have to conduct affairs for capitalism. They

certainly try to get some reforms for the workers, as far as capitalism allows it. But most things they have to see to are capitalist interests of society.

So socialdemocrats grow into the role of capitalist politicians. Surely they are different from the hardboiled brutal type of capitalist politicians, who uphold the authority of the ruling class by brute force. They are more humane, they introduce reforms, try to smooth down the class antagonism and to render capitalism more endurable. They think themselves socialist politicians, dealing the first steps in transforming capitalism into socialism. But when fierce struggles arise, strikes or hungerrevolts, they have, as public officials, the duty to send police or militia against the revolting workers. A socialist mayor who assists the strikers from public funds and sends the police against the Pinkertons, is a white raven and would very soon be removed by a higher authority very soon.

Viewed from this ideal of a peaceful capitalism, consisting of satisfied workers and held in check capitalists, socialist politicians consider their method as the clear-sighted progressive democratic policy against the brutal reactionary politics of the other parties. The dividing line is drawn not between the capitalist class and the workers class, but between progressive and reactionary parties. Politics to them are a world in itself, not determined by the economic world of class interests, but a play- and battlefield of party interests, where greedy money magnates buy the other parties. They attack the ruling politicians, not because they stand for capitalist interests against workers interests, but because they are stupid politicians. They recommend themselves as sensible politicians, who would be able to run the affairs of state much better. Of course the capitalist class, full of class consciousness as it is, did not believe this. It prefers a strong power holding the exploited class in subjection with a firm hand. But these politicians are to be remembered, they should be kept in case of a future necessity. It takes notice and draws its conclusions and bears them in mind, in case of a future necessity.

~~How did his politics work upon the~~ What was the effect of these politics upon the working class? The party-members were haunted by the fear for reaction", i.e capitalist parties trying to repress the workers by force, "taking the place of their party officials in public office. They spent all their energy in the fight for keeping up the influential position of their party. But the great attraction which the socialist ideals exerted upon other workers, was gone. (All parties now put „social reforms" into their platform. The workers largely remained followers of these parties, sticking to their old traditional, often religious divisions.) The growth of the unity of the working class came to an end in a permanent division instead of class-consciousness. A narrow minded faith in foul party slogans came. The enthusiastic devotion to the liberation of the class was drowned in this meddle of dirty politics

The relation between the workers and their political leaders had changed too. When in the beginning the few socialists in parliament raised their voices, accusing capitalist society, the eager energy of the workers behind them, protesting in public meetings, gave weight to their words. But in "constructive politics" afterwards it was the skill and the knowledge of the parliamentarians that determined the result. Every day they were active in parliament, discussing, speeching, accusing, defending, fighting or persuading; they did the real work of the class fight while the workers themselves did nothing but vote once in four or five years. Only small groups of party members were aiding in distributing leaflets, organizing meetings and making speeches there. The politicians in parliament were the important men. Through their knowledge of politics they had the greatest influence.

enabled them to determine

~~It enabled them to determine~~, though ~~in the~~ in the form of party majority decision by ~~decisions~~, the politics and the tactics of the party.

And when they became big men, mayors and ministers, they rose still higher above the masses. Their good will, or their ~~manoeuvring~~ manoeuvrings between the contending interests, determines what the working class shall get. The party becomes a tool in their hands for the carrying out of their politics. The political power of the party is concentrated and embodied in its great political leaders.

When a socialist party grows up to (a big organization, it becomes a body with separate interests and a life of its own. It feels like an organism with a will to live and to fight for its existence. According to its own theory it is the vanguard of the working class, it embodies the working class, its victory will be the victory of the working class. It has a large membership, animated by a common spirit, a lot of daily and scientific papers, to propagate its doctrines, a great literature of books and reviews, an influential system of ideas, a number of able politicians and leaders. For the great political leaders, for the lesser politicians and all its officials the party is the basis of their existence. In them the will of the party to fight for its existence and power is concentrated.

They talk, in accordance with the socialist ideas, of revolution in the far future, as eventually necessary to the victory of socialism. But when revolutionary movements break out, or threaten to break out, it becomes evident, that they fear the revolution. Revolution indeed, by its heavy clashings of the classes, is not an atmosphere conducive to quiet parliamentary work. When the workers break loose in street actions, in general strikes, what will become of the party, built up at one time with so much labor? And

imagine

think imagine

the party itself summoning to revolution! Capitalist government by its military force would be able to crush the whole party immediately without any difficulty.

The socialist party is closely bound up with capitalism. It can only live and flourish in capitalism as its natural world, as a fish can only live in water. It has its functions entirely in capitalism – the function of assembling all the discontent and all the rebellious spirit of the working class and leading it into the quiet bed of parliamentary contest. Not only its roots, the workers exploitation, but all its organs and members live in and by capitalism; parliament, funds, offices and officials, papers, leaders, they are all capitalistic relations. Socialdemocracy, in its youth a clarion waking the workers to unity and class-consciousness, now by its growth, by natural causes, has been tied hand and foot to capitalism.

One test, only, remained still to be made. When capitalism is strong, it is said, there is no other way to fight than by means of trade unionism and parliament. And revolutions cannot be made at free will. But when a revolution comes (and the power of capitalism is shaken), then everything changes. Then socialdemocracy will step into its original function and realize socialism for the workers.

The test was made.

The great war broke out. In all countries socialdemocracy voted for war credits and with its great influence aided their masters, the capitalist class, to drive the workers into the war, and to arouse their national spirit. During four years the socialist leaders were the obedient servants, of the Kaiser in Germany, of their Government in other countries, to crush every rising resistence of the workers.

November 1918; the war was over. The military power of Germany broke down; the whole imperial

and aristocratic ruling apparatus crumbled to pieces. In most countries more or less serious revolutionary movements of the workers ensued; in Russia the Communist Party had been holding government for a year already. In Germany the power fell into the hands of the working class. They had not conquered it in a revolutionary fight; the mighty armour of the capitalist class had simply disappeared. As in an empty space they chose their soldiers- and workers-councils. The leaders of the socialist party took the government in their hands. It had been the great opposition party before the war, and represented the majority of the working class; so there was nobody to oppose them. It knew them. The capitalist class also hailed the new regents. It had still its money power, its spiritual power, its hold on the production; the revolution was only a breakdown of military power, not a breakdown of capitalist power. The working class was not victorious through real superiority; it constituted an only extreme danger owing to the lack of a strong capitalistic government. Hence the socialist party was necessary. The capitalist class knew by instinct — and thereby it showed itself still the strongest class — how to act in the right way: by treating the workers with circumspection, by giving them an appearance of power in putting their leaders at the head of the state. Until capitalism should be sufficiently restored, until it should have built up its political power again. The socialist party was the instrument wherewith to fool the workers.

The working class expected measures to carry through socialism. For now that the workers' party, socialdemocracy was master of the state, it could make socialist laws to abolish capitalism. Nothing of this kind, however, happened. The new government — to put an end to the workers' councils — ordered a new parliament to be chosen by universal suffrage; and they installed a commission of socialist theorists

and professors to study the question of how production could be socialized. After some years this commission came to the conclusion that this was an enormously difficult matter; society was not yet ripe for socialism; only as a first step, they recommended that banking, big finance and the great concerns should be brought under state control. Big finance heartily laughed at that, because it had already the state under its control.

Socialist theorists said the working class was still too weak for socialism; a socialist society, to be sure; but their chief weakness was their hesitation, their confidence in the socialist leaders.

Was there any other way possible? There certainly was. For the working class the November upheaval could only be the beginning of a revolutionary development. Only a minority was clear in its consciousness of ways and means; a larger part felt vaguely what ought to be done; a big but for the moment unorganized capitalist power stood against it. The only way was: bringing the whole working class into the field to fight for their interests, and thereby preventing the capitalist class from organizing its forces into a new political power.

ought to

A truly revolutionary party, if power had fallen into its hands, would have armed the workers, disarmed the military forces, prevented any efforts of the capitalist class to form armed groups; it would have organized political power in every town, in every district by means of workers delegates, it would have organized production and traffic by means of factory and shop delegates, so that the workers kept them firmly in their hands; at the same time by a wide propaganda explaining the great aims and arousing energy and enthusiasm in the masses. Thus the course would be freed for the whole working class to take active part in the fight, to find their way of efficient class struggle, and to take their future in their own hands.

This was the way of the small groups of communists, the so called Spartacus-groups, which sprang up everywhere in Germany. Against them the socialist leaders in power associated with the

generals of the Kaiser's former army. The communist workers were crushed by a rapidly organized military force, under the command of the socialist leaders. So the path was clear now for a restoration of capitalist power. The socialist party had saved capitalism from a proletarian revolution.

In the new parliament socialdemocracy did not have an absolute majority; but with its allies, the republican capitalist parties, it held the chief government places. Its president became president of the German republic; many of its leaders were made chancellors, ministers, state secretaries, provincial governors, town mayors; its members were no longer excluded from offices, university chairs, dignities. Later on, as capitalism felt its power consolidated, they were replaced gradually in

gradually

Capitalism, however, or rather: as a matter of course, was not attacked in the least. It acted conform to its nature: it made profit, by exploitation of the workers and in every other way. It began by safeguarding its reserves across the frontiers, in the banks of Amsterdam and London; by selling out the productive forces of the country to foreigners. It impoverished and robbed the middle classes by valuta inflation and wild stock speculations. All under the protection of the socialist government officials.

It rationalized industry to prepare for coming world competition and threw the workers on the street.

It concentrated the important production branches in the hands of a few mighty monopolistic syndicates.

For the workers hardly anything had changed. They had the pleasure to see their leaders holding high posts of honor; they were no longer considered a lower class with less rights, as has been the case under the Kaiser; the trade unions were acknowledged as tariff partners. All this was socialism, their president said. But they were either heavily exploited or stricken with unemployment, they were hungry and without hope, while they saw the capitalist class overbearing and growing in richness and power.

The formerly powerful groups, the landowing nobility and the big

capitalist owners of the great concerns, kept aloof. They lived on their estates awaiting their turn. The socialist leaders had not dared to attack them.

The intellectual portion of the capitalist class, saw with growing annoyance how uncultured labor leaders held all the offices and government posts which they wanted for themselves and their academic training. By virtue of their privileges which they considered as the prerogative of their class, they had been insulted by the socialists, who, by virtue of their high posts, had driven out from the high posts. Their nationalist feelings, exasperated as they were by the defeat in war and the heavy burdens laid upon Germany by the victors, were hurt by the internationality – in words – of the new rulers. What their professors had taught them about the doctrine of Marx: stupid workmen taking the government offices and wrecking society, abasing their fatherland, they saw confirmed by the socialists in power. An intense hatred grew in them, against the doctrine and the persons, and they waited their turn to drive them out of office.

And when in Germany the nationalist uprising came the socialist party was incapable of any fight, it made no appeal to the working class; it knew that no worker would lift a hand for her. It was not defeated in battle; it crumbled to dust, as a mouldered structure, at the first kick.

That was the test of socialism in power.

~~But the history is not at an end. In all countries there are still large socialist parties. And they have learned nothing from these events. Because they cannot learn but have to follow their true nature~~

~~New groups arise, with socialist ideas, or split from the corrupted old parties. They will start with the fresh original principles of class struggle, they will avoid the faults of the old socialist parties. In vain. It was no faults, it was the consequences of their nature. A party has to grow, fights for power,~~

But history is not at an end yet. In all countries there are still large socialist parties. What lesson have they learnt from this collapse? Some have learnt nothing and continue in their old course. Because they cannot learn but have to follow their inner nature. But some have learnt a lesson. The lesson that they had not yet gone far enough in renouncing their fundamental principles.

The Belgian Workers Party has adopted and proclaimed a new plan of constructive policy, to bring about a kind of organisation of society. It consists in state control or state direction of banking, capitalist monopolies and key industries; the lesser private capitalist business remaining private enterprises; the former owners, when expropriated, keep their profits. For the middle classes and petty capitalists better conditions will be secured, and the workers will profit by regular work and social measures. With this platform the party tries to win not only the workers but also the middle classes; it desires not to be, as in the beginning, a workers party but an all people's party. This platform proclaims the preservation of capitalist exploitation, of capitalist profit, of capitalist competition, of capitalist waste, with only the state more narrowly connected with big business. It tries to unite all classes, capitalists, workers, farmers against big business, against monopolist capital. In these years of crisis, of capitalist (breakdown) this socialist party presents itself to the capitalist class as the right party to restore capitalism to its former wealth and power by means of a small dose of organisation.

Certainly this policy will meet with opposition. New groups will arise with socialist ideas, or will split from the corrupted old parties. They will start with the old fundamental principles of class struggle; they will say they will avoid the errors committed by their elders. In vain. It was no error; it was the logical outcome of their nature. A political party has to grow,

it fights for power, it wants to bring its leaders into parliament, where they become big men above the workers, leading, educating, liberating the workers. When it grows it becomes an organ of capitalist society, with instincts of self preservation having to fear the revolution of the workers.

This does not mean that social democracy was a failure. In young capitalism it had its necessary function to wake the workers to class consciousness. Then the working class could be no more than a member of capitalist society, it had to secure its place there in. But now capitalism has grown old, it is gigantic, it is conquering the whole world, it is shaken by heavy crises, facing revolution, and now the working class is growing large, strong, ripe to fight for its dominion over the world. What was good and right then, is not good and right now that conditions and combatants have changed. Nor does it mean that now the task of social democracy is finished. But its task is now another than in its youth. When the working class is advancing to revolutionary fight, when a part is gallantly attacking, putting forward (of deliberate fighting, new slogans) large masses will be hesitating, (asking whether there are easier ways, trying to avoid the inexorable hard fight). Then social democracy embodies their hesitations, it promises to liberate them with less sacrifices, by peaceful means, it tries to detain them (to prevent them from rallying their advanced comrades.) It appeals to the fear, the lack of self confidence, (—which it calls common sense—) of the working class, intensifying these by theoretical teachings. It tries to hold the workers back from revolution; when in revolution, it tries to hold them back from radical measures, from taking the whole power in their hands alone; when they are victorious, it tries to hold them from expropriating the capitalists, because buying them out will arouse less resistance. Always it tries to deflect the workers from resolute fighting and action for their supreme ends. In

weakening the unity and the fighting spirit of the workers it protects and strengthens capitalism.

When the working class will have won a victory and conquered power ~~and vanquished the capitalist class~~, socialdemocracy will have another chance. Of course it joins (~~if~~ provided it has not missed the connection) and takes part in the victory, in order to have its plan of reconstruction of society carried out. Rallying all the "moderate" elements of defeated capitalism it will try to force this plan upon the working class. This plan is state-socialism. According to democratic socialist ideas the state has the chief function of bringing about socialism. Collective production they understand to be production directed by the state, by the government and its lower organs. The workers are in public service, paid by the state, commanded and supervised by state officials. Of course the leaders of the state are chosen by the working masses themselves; so it is the working people itself, that (according to socialist theory), commands itself. This system of state socialism may appear as a kind of intermediary station; in reality it cheats the workers out of their full communist freedom.

and it partakes in the victory in order to carry out its realization by itself

The Russian Revolution

The Russian Revolution was the prominent event in the workers movement ~~of the last decades~~ of the last years. It gave an enormous ~~push~~ impetus to the revolutionary force of the working class, ~~which~~ soon, however, ~~was soon~~ to be followed by decay.

In the enormous ~~empire~~ Russian empire ~~of~~ ninety percent of the people consisted of peasants, living most miserably ~~in~~ in their villages, ~~kept~~ lives in crass ignorance, tilling the soil with the most primitive tools, ~~and~~ pressed by heavy taxes, having too little land, at the mercy of the great landowners, who possessed the best land, being regularly subjected to famine. In the chief towns ~~there~~ the industry was concentrated in large factories, run mostly by foreign capitalists. The workers, ~~who~~ were also living in misery, originally peasants driven from the villages, learned the first principles of class consciousness from the illegal socialist propaganda and began to fight for their interests by means of strikes, which were violently repressed. There was no capitalist class of any importance, only a class of small ~~tradesmen~~ tradesmen in the towns.

The war of 1905 shook the ~~apparently~~ seemingly strong Czarist government. Then the working class arose in a series of irregular general strikes, not after a preconceived plan, not with precise aims, but simply as revolts against the employers and against the political despotism. Sometimes they were repressed by military force, but they sprang up again and spread like a running fire ~~everywhere~~. Often the soldiers were carried away, then they revolted, and their delegates joined the strike committees. The government, itself an antiquated half asiatic inefficient structure of lazy, cruel and stupid tchinowniks, was paralyzed by these movements, and had to suffer that the workers councils often became the effective ruling power in the towns. At last, when these revolts concentrated in a gigantic universal strike the Czarist government promised a constitution with a parliament and political rights.

Then the inner force of the movement collapsed; the last strikes and revolts were crushed by military force. Czarism was powerful again and tried to introduce some necessary reforms.

This first Russian revolution taught a great lesson to the socialists in Europe. It showed the enormous power a modern proletarian class can exert in general strikes. After the first successful strike for universal suffrage in Belgium such strikes had been tried now and then, directed by political and trade union leaders, for special purposes; but usually they failed. Here in Russia it appeared that, if not directed by leaders, but arising out of a resolute fighting spirit of the masses themselves, they can uproot society. Leaders shrink from the extreme consequences of the fight; the masses that have nothing to loose but their chains, retain their strength even in defeat. Because they are directly engaged they feel instinctively how far their forces reach against the enemy.

In the great world war, nine years later, Russia was the weakest member as to its inner structure. A modern war with its big industrial basis and rigid organization puts such a heavy strain on the state organism, that a half barbaric state as Russia was could not bear it. When provisions failed in the towns revolts broke out and Czarism, seemingly mighty, but to the core rotten, broke down. In the shape of polibical party struggles the different classes of Russian society tried to seize the power. After a development of half a year during 1917, the Bolshewik party won.

The Bolshewik party, officially named the Russian Socialist Party, afterwards taking the name of Communist Party, was an organization of well trained revolutionists, well versed in as well as in political fighting. Marxian learning. They knew that the class struggle of the working class was the basis of social progress, they organized the workers, their