

# J'ACCUSE

An Address in Court

BY

FRIEDRICH ADLER

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PRICE, 10 CENTS

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PUBLISHED BY

THE SOCIALIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

119 LAFAYETTE STREET

NEW YORK CITY



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## INTRODUCTION

Like the flare of a rocket against the black sky of night the shot that felled the Austrian Prime Minister **Stürgkh** in September, 1916, illuminated the conditions that reigned in Austria during the first years of the war. For he who had fallen belonged to the small band of criminals who had brought about the outbreak of the world war; he who felled him was one of those from whom the international proletariat had hoped and expected great things for the future of the working-class.

And yet Adler committed the deed that startled the world not from a feeling of personal animosity toward the Austrian tyrant. His deed was rather an attack upon conditions in Austria, a protest against the indifference of the Austrian people, an agonized outcry against the complete failure of the Austrian social-democratic movement to uphold the principles of international Socialism during the war.

Friedrich Adler lived and worked in Switzerland until shortly before the war broke out. He belonged to the radical wing of the Social-Democracy, and thus stood, from the very beginning of the war, in opposition to his father and to the Austrian Party. But this conflict antedated the war. Long before the outbreak, father and son had developed along widely divergent paths of thought and action. In Victor Adler, who was even more influential in the Austrian movement than Bebel in that of Germany, the political stagnation of the Double Monarchy had produced a spirit of pessimism that manifested itself in a policy of narrow, middle-class opportunism. The small incidental work of reform became, under his leadership, the center of gravity of the whole Socialist movement; compromises were made the A B C of politics. He and with him the Party gave in order to take, and thus inevitably lost all largeness of will and of action. Friedrich Adler, Fritz as he was called, is a natural scientist, and has made a name for himself in that capacity. And as a scientist it was natural that he should oppose this small-minded point of view, the "shop-

keeper!' policy of his Party. He recognized the dangers that threatened the whole movement from the pursuit of such tactics, and feared that they would ultimately estrange the working-class from Socialism, to deliver it in the hands of a social-reformist bourgeois party.

On the other hand, his quiet studious nature revolted against the idea of loud propaganda, and made it impossible for him to place himself, as Karl Liebknecht had done in Germany, at the head of an energetic and determined opposition. He remained the secretary of the 'Party even after he realized that he was in opposition to every step taken by its leaders. He voiced his criticism in the "Kampf," the splendid organ of the Austrian Social-Democracy, of which he was the editor, calling to his comrades again and again in spite of their complete mental alienation, to reconsider their actions.

As time went by, however, Friedrich Adler realized the futility of his efforts to reach the leaders of the movement through the "Kampf" or in their executive meetings. He, therefore, founded a weekly propaganda paper called "Das Volk" in July, 1916, in order to appeal to the rank and file of the movement. Meanwhile conditions in Austria were going from bad to worse. Every attempt to speak freely and openly was brutally suppressed. The prisons were crowded. There was no parliament through which one might have spoken indirectly to the masses, meetings could not be held. In short, it had become impossible to reach the party membership by means of any of the regular channels, while the leaders were quietly living their bureaucratic, social-patriotic life in calm placidity.

The hopelessness of the existing affairs seems to have worked a change in Fritz Adler. On the day preceeding his attack upon Stürgkh he called upon the Executive Committee to arrange mass demonstrations, urging that the Party must act or bear the responsibility for the whole Austrian misery in the eyes of the people. Eut the gentlemen who for two years had supported the government, if not directly and actively, at least indirectly by their silence, could not at this late hour become its accusers. The

Executive Committee voted down Friedrich Adler's motions and contented itself with a mild remonstrance to the Prime Minister.

The plan to arouse the masses by sacrificing himself had long ago matured within him. Now, when all other means had failed, he made his last desperate attempt. There was no hatred for his victim in the act. On the contrary, he admired the strong personality of this representative of reactionary brutal Austrian bureaucracy. The deed was done simply as a last appeal to the masses, as an outcry of protest against the government and against the Party.

It was no easy task that Friedrich Adler set out to accomplish. For the death penalty that awaited him was nothing compared to the tragedy that lay in the lack of comprehension by his own comrades, in their insistence that madness and desperation alone had driven him to do this awful thing. Yet it needed only a few weeks to show how necessary this deed of Adler had been.

Time wipes out all small and small-minded considerations of the human race. It brings into the foreground the important factors, the outstanding issues of past events. And thus, today, we can see, as most of us could not see, at the time when it occurred, the motives that actuated Friedrich Adler and the fruits his deed has borne.

Three weeks after this man, who had been, even in the light of Austrian tyrannical conditions, an arch-reactionary and an arch-oppressor, the Austrian government called a conference of party leaders, and declared its readiness to convene Parliament.

Parliament was called and has been in session ever since with the usual interruptions. Austria-Hungary once more possesses at least the semblance of a people's government. The voice of the people, even though weak, and distorted by its mouthpiece, the Austrian Socialist movement under social-patriotic leadership, is once more heard. Even that is better than the erstwhile personal regime under Stürgkh, under Paragraph 14.

We have decided to print this speech because it is a powerful blow, not only against the rotten government of Austria, but above all against the traitorous attitude of the government

Socialists. For what Friedrich Adler says in his plaidoyer against the official Social-Democracy of Austria is true, in the same **measure**, of those of the other countries where **the** Socialist movement has become the lackey of the capitalist class.

Friedrich Adler's death-sentence has been commuted to eight years imprisonment at hard labor. We can, therefore, hope **that** this true champion of international Socialism will yet live to see the Social Revolution, the emancipation of the working-class the world over.

# **J'accuse!**

## **Friedrich Adler's Address in Court**

### **I.**

In the first place I must oppose the legend that has been woven about my person. I recognized, from the beginning that my act would be attributed to a temporary state of mental aberration. I was prepared for the cry of the whole press that only an insane man could have done such a deed at a time when all the rest of the population was in complete harmony with the regime -of Count Stiirgkh.

I expected that the press of the government Socialists in Austria as well as in Germany would try to cast me off as one who had lost his reason, and I have since, after I have had the opportunity to see the Berlin "Vorwärts" read, under a great headline, "The Deed of a Maniac," what they have had to say about it. The "Vorwärts" at that time had already been endowed with an editorial department favorable not to the working class but to the government. I was, of course, prepared for the repudiation of the Vienna "Arbeiter-Zeitung" and its attempt to line up all the psychological moments it could find to prove that I had not been in complete possession of my mental faculties.

Eight days later, when the new government came into power, the situation was materially changed. The change of public sentiment concerning the Stiirgkh regime that was reflected in the public press eight days after my act was astounding. Already a certain understanding of my motives had taken root in the population and in the press. The feeling that after all a man who is not satisfied with Austrian conditions need not necessarily be insane, gained in strength. During the investigation I fought vehemently to establish my sanity. It is true, I was unable to prevent my attorney from acting in accordance with what he conceived to be his duty as council, from protesting against the findings of alienists who declared me in complete

possession of my mental faculties, and from demanding a faculty decision upon my mental condition.

I desire to declare that I deny all responsibility for any statements made here by my attorney and that I am determined to oppose, most emphatically, any attempt on the part of my counsel to present this plea in my favor. It may be the duty of my attorney to take care of my body but it is my duty to protect my convictions, which are more important than the **hanging of** one *man* more *in Austria* during **the** war. The case is a much more serious one than that which is engrossing my attorney here. I desire, therefore, to say from the start : I did not commit this deed in a fit of mental darkness, but after ripe consideration; I have considered it for a year and a half, have weighed all its effects, from every side. You see it is not a deed inspired by the moment, but a premeditated act, undertaken and carried out with the fullest realization that with it my life is closed. When I entered this house in October I was convinced that I would not leave it alive. I was certain that in view of the political situation of that time there could be but one end, that the court before which I was to be tried could pass no other sentence than one of death by hanging. And I beg of you, much as you may have to bear from me, to be convinced of this, that I shall say not one word to hinder you from passing the only judgment that you as a special court can pass, yet I am convinced, were this a jury trial, I should perhaps look forward to a different judgment.

I am by no means inclined to overestimate the institution of trial by jury but I do believe it possible that the natural feeling of justice of people who have only to decide according to the lights of their conscience might find its expression here ; you, on the other hand are placed here, not to decide according to the dictates of your conscience, but according to the cold letter of the law.

I harbor no delusion, therefore, and will certainly not attempt to overthrow this judgment ; on the contrary, I will do everything to make it clear that there can be no other judgment.

First I should like to speak for a moment of the indictment rendered-by the public prosecutor that was read here. When it was first read to me in November I laughed aloud at the point where it says, "The use of murder as a political weapon can hardly be a subject for discussion among ethical people, in an ordinary state of society." The prosecutor has set himself an easy task, to be sure. He passes lightly over the real problem, in a sentence, by inserting the premise. I agree with the State attorney that in an orderly state of society murder cannot be a political weapon.

But the premise, which is here to be proven, is the question as to whether we are living in an orderly state of society.

And right here the whole matter assumes an entirely new character. I will not go into the question as to the ethical character of our ruling powers. That is a moral question. I will confine myself to the wholly concrete problem, "are we living in an orderly state of society?" Out of this question arises my moral justification for using murder as a political weapon. I cannot here enter upon the whole problem of the disorderly **conditions** of the country, of the real anarchy in **the** Austrian nation. I will return later to the question of constitutionality in so far as it is **re-**lated to Parliament. But I will here, in connection with the words used by the counsel in his motion, calmly and dispassionately state **what** is to me **a justification of myself and of the deed I have committed.**

I maintain that the fact that such trials as this are possible, alone, justifies every act of violence against the rulers of Austria. This trial alone, and all such trials, are to me a moral justification and I **desire** to emphasize in this connection that it was just this state of justice in Austria that has oppressed me most since the war began, that violated my every sense of honor, that made me ashamed of the fact that I am an Austrian. I will show you that the St&-gkh-Hochenburger ministry, as early as July 25, 1915, issued an imperial edict abolishing all jury courts, making way for the violation of our constitutional rights on the very day when diplomatic relations with Servia were severed. This edict, at that time already represented a real coup d'état. I will illus-

trate to you the situation that has been created in Austria by the Stiirgkh-Hochenburger regime by referring you to the ordinance issued on the 25th of July, 1914, providing for trial before a military court of persons who commit a punishable act.

Even at that time this edict was a clarification for me and the impression it made upon me has been deepened during the whole period of the war. If you look at these two ordinances you will find that they embody everything that has been done in Austria since the war began. They have used all kinds of subterfuges. They claim that the nationalist question in Austria is creating many difficulties, etc. What is a government to do if it cannot get along with its parliament, they ask, and see in the abolition of parliament the only possible solution. But later developments showed that these were nothing more than lying pretenses to justify their desire to rule, substituting paragraph 14 for rule by parliament. Yet no one has so systematically ruined parliament as Count Stiirgkh, who foresaw what was coming. However, that is not a subject for discussion. It is not exactly a credit to the possibilities of Austria as a nation to claim that it can be governed only as an absolute monarchy. But the action of the 25th of July, 1914, has nothing to do with the political situation. It is proof of the fact that even before war was declared against Serbia, war had already been declared against the people of Austria, that the government was determined to look upon the constitution as a scrap of paper, to stride rough-shod over everything that is law and right in Austria.

My case has been brought before this forum. But a large number of other cases which in accordance with the law should have been tried before jury courts have nevertheless not been brought before this court, in spite of the abolition of jury courts. All such political crimes, high treason, lèse majesté, disturbance of public peace and order, all crimes which before jury courts were referred by the Imperial Edict of July 25, 1914, to the royal imperial Military Reserve Courts.

That the government no longer trusts the civil courts to dispense justice in the spirit of the reactionary Holzinger, that it

feels impelled to carry all political crimes before senates, before gentlemen whose trustworthiness to carry out every order from above is assured by the fact that they stand ready to defend the front against the enemy at home at a sacrifice of their own moral personality, especially when they are thus in a position to secure their physical existence from the more dangerous attacks of the enemy across the border, is, in a sense, an **honorable distinction conferred** upon you by the powers of absolutism. To a person whose whole life is spent in political activity this turning over of all political crimes to military courts is obviously a matter of some concern.

This is not, believe me, an afterthought that occurs to me in the way of a justification. I have expressed these sentiments from the beginning, in all manner of publications, in an attempt to expose the shame of Austria to the eyes of the world, to show to our own people that we are living in a state whose absolutism is unequalled in the whole world. I have shown, again and again, that justice *in* the interior of Austria has been **reduced** to a war machine. I differ, too, with my attorney, who demands that this court be declared incompetent. I believe that each and every one of **these** gentlemen here, as a citizen, not as a judge, should ask himself, whether he can, with a clear conscience, participate in so flagrant an illegality. As an individual, each and every one of them must admit to himself that this ordinance is illegal. As an individual each of these gentlemen must know that a senate of six judges can have no legal standing. These gentlemen have decided, however, to come together here, to form this senate. I here declare that under no circumstances can I recognize this court as a court of justice. To me it is nothing more than a conference of six gentlemen who have arrogated unto **themselves** the authority to conduct a trial against me, in spite of the fact that **everyone** of them knows that this is against the law. I wish to state further that, in speaking here, I do not admit your right to try me, that I am submitting only to force, to the fact that the soldier who brought me here is armed, that you, if **you** so desire, can send still more armed men. ***I feel that I am simply a victim of force***, standing here only because I know that I cannot hope to resist. I do not, let me repeat, regard this court as an

institution of justice, or as an organ of the law, but as the organ of a criminal government.

The fact that I have, from the beginning, denounced the shame of Austria and have openly declared in widely diversified publications that we live in a state whose absolutism is unequalled in the whole world is sufficient proof that there is in Austria to-day no authority that is responsible for Austrian constitutional government.

For this is the crucial point in the Austrian situation and this explains my act: that there is in Austria to-day no authority that is competent concerning Austrian constitutionality.

Everyone in Austria says : That does not concern me, I am not competent. The responsibility rests with him who has enacted this imperial decree. And if we deserve to be quite specific on this point we must admit that the Emperor is not responsible because, according to the constitution, he is irresponsible. No, the ministry is responsible and so this whole question of responsibility and of everything that is done in Austria becomes more and more complicated because the Austrian, in his good nature, does not feel as a citizen, but as a subject, while the instruments of government, on the other hand, do not consider themselves competent to test the legality of actions from above.

Thus, in the whole of Austria, no one is competent but the ministers and they have turned the constitution into a scrap of paper and have refused to be called to account. I ask you, therefore, what is to be done when there is no institution through which these eleven people may be called to account, what method remains but that of force? What other possibility is there, when a ministry rules by force, to call it to account, except the methods which they themselves are using. Does not, under such circumstances, force become a necessity, just as you have always said of war? In a state, which is called an orderly society, under such circumstances is there anything left but force? I will not speak of the right of revolution. The Social Democratic Party, upon whose program I have always stood and still stand today, does not deny force and has not condemned its use.

It has declared in its program that it **will** use, for the realization of its aims, all effective means that are in accord with the natural sense of justice of the people.

True, we have a special supreme court to which the ministry is responsible-and this brings me to the second important point. Count Stiirgkh not only inhibited the popular courts as soon as the war broke out, but more than three years ago deprived the Supreme Court of its power as well. Thus he has rid himself of the only court before which he 'could be called to account.

He destroyed the popular courts by abolishing trial by **jury**, i. e., removing the popular judges while the public prosecutor remained in office. The supreme court, on the other hand, was made powerless by exactly the opposite process. Here the judges were retained in their honorable positions, but the prosecuting power, the parliament of the people, was annihilated.

Stiirgkh has removed the one body that could have impeached him, refused to call it for three years, against the dictates of the Austrian Constitution. Nay, more, on the day before he fell, he bluntly refused even to consult parliament. When President Sylvester called a **conference** of party chairmen to discuss the removal of the Austrian Parliament, Count Stiirgkh announced, in an interview **published** by the Chekhic news agency, that he would refuse to recognize such a conference, that he certainly would not attend its sessions, and that he had not the slightest intention of establishing even the legal premises for the functioning of the law which provides for ministerial responsibility.

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With a full realization of what they were doing Hochenburger and Stiirgkh prepared their coup **d'état**. Therefore the **justification** for my deed is to me, as a citizen, fully given. The question is not, is the use of force justifiable, but, what right have I, as an individual, to use force? In my opinion, when law is trodden to earth, every citizen has the right to take the law into his own hands. Since the government has placed itself outside the plane of legal redress every citizen is justified in calling it to account outside the plane of legal action; nay, further, he is not only

justified but rather in duty bound to do so. Only a morally degraded nation, a nation devoid of all pride of citizenship could bear it. Is the use of force effective ? This question it is some-, what more difficult to answer. Here, too, I must differ with my attorney who will say that it was not effective, that it was not in accord with the tactical ideas of the social democracy, that it was a deviation from the principles which I have represented. I will relieve him from answering this difficult question and will show why my deed, which is in accord with my natural feelings of right, was likewise effective under the existing extraordinary conditions. Before entering upon this point, however, let me say a word to the remark made by the state's attorney to the effect that I have lived so long in foreign countries, a fact that explains to him the whole deed, since I have lost the natural love of my native land. By this remark the state's attorney intimates that I am an enemy of *Austria*. The state's attorney mentions that I accused the *Arbeiter Zeitung* of patriotic excesses, that I attacked Dr. Renner for his Austrianism. I do not claim to be a patriot. I have never made this claim, neither before nor during ~~the~~ war, nor will you believe that I, in order to gain your sympathy, will throw my convictions aside and say, "I am a patriot." You will see later that an entirely different train of thought has guided me. I have heard the word patriot frequently used in Austria as an abuse and this is not surprising, for patriotism in Austria is a peculiar thing. Long before the war Austrian patriotism was denounced not only by social-democrats but even by bourgeois as something inferior. The intelligent bourgeoisie was everywhere not patriotic but nationalistic ; I need only call your attention to the fact that those people of the *Deutsche National Verband*, who to-day are so indignant at the unpatriotic activity of the Chekhs at one time called us the "k. k. (imperial) social democracy," to express their deepest contempt. At that time, the *German* bourgeoisie openly declared that its ideal was not Austria but the national state, that it belonged to the state of its nationality.

But in the course of developments this war has evolved a change of *functions* in *the* conception of *Fatherland*.

In former times there were no fatherlands, but simply *na-*

tions which had to be governed. Since the 70's the ideal of a rational state has come to life in the bourgeoisie and so Austria was looked upon as a remnant of olden times, that was expected sooner or later to fall apart into separate national entities. Now this idea of the fatherland has met a new conception, one that is no longer based upon nationalist lines, but upon questions of economic interests. The bourgeoisie has discovered its interest in the conservation of the economic field of Austria, an interest not only in Austria but in the foundation of a great Central European empire with the King of Prussia, of course, at its head, to whom Austria shall be subservient. Its ideal is no longer national independence but national rule. They are no longer satisfied with the class rule of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat, they aspire to establish a kingdom from Berlin to Bagdad, over which the German people, i. e., the German bourgeoisie, shall rule.

Since the beginning of the war the same national and economic policy has made itself felt in other nations. We have seen that among the Chekhs, too, economic interests have come into a sharp conflict with national interests. But the same change of functions has taken place within the Social Democracy. When Bebel attacked Bismarck most violently, it was not because he had created the German Imperial government in place of a German Republic, but because he had created a Prussian Germany in place of a Greater Germany, for which the German deincocracy of that time and with it the labor democracy had been fighting. Now we see in this war that the labor movement has deviated from this old national principle, that **the Social Democrats have adopted the imperialist mode of thought**, and are defending a program in which they do not defend the German national state-which would correspond with the national defense of the French and the Belgians, but the integrity of the German Empire, including even its colonies. There was a period in the war when Social-democrats sacrificed the international character of their movement by openly supporting a policy of might and strategic securities. There have been Social-Democrats who have gone so far as to surrender themselves to the shameless policy of conquest of an imperialist bourgeoisie. These words of the prose-

cutor cannot harm me. I do not say that it is inspiring to be an Austrian. I consider it to be a misfortune that must be borne, a misfortune especially where a Stürgkh is at the head of the nation. The party has always maintained that Austria can exist only as a federation of national states ; much energy was spent in the effort to spread recognition of the necessity of democracy in the nation. I cannot, of course, foretell what will become of this nation in this war. There are only two eventualities, and I have furthered neither of these eventualities, but have, rather, occupied a strictly neutral position toward Austria. **The Socialist** cause, I have always maintained, **is far greater than any temporary state** formation, and we must therefore refuse to compromise or bind its fate by an intimate identity with the fate of a nation, a mistake that was made in the past, I regret to say, by a number, of my former friends.' Little as I shall claim the title patriot, I nevertheless refuse to be termed anti-patriot, particularly when this is represented as the motive for my deed. To be sure, Austria plays a part in my motives, not the national, but the moral existence of Austria, the Austrian **spirit**.

Even when I was still a boy at high school, I always felt that the greatest, the most unforgivable sin, is the sin against the spirit, and that is a national sin in Austria. If you desire to comprehend my deed and all that has led to it, an understanding of my revolt and my opposition to this sin that has smothered every vestige of manliness in Austria must run, like a red line, through your consideration.

We are living in a state that was recaptured for Catholicism in a counter reformation of fire and sword. We are a state that has nothing but scorn for the convictions of men, a state that has never recognized the right of the individual to act according to his convictions. We are a state in which the slavish servility of all classes of the population have led to happenings that stand before me as a burning mask of shame upon our people.

It is the state's lack of principle that has bred in me a hatred, not against Austria as a country, but against Austria as an immoral entity, against its lying spirit. This Austrian spirit exists in all of its parts and in all of its nations ; all are degraded

by it, and in all it is being fostered by lawlessness. And if you wish to understand what brought me here, it was that this lying spirit has entered into my party, that Dr. Karl Renner, who is nothing less than the Lueger of the Social Democracy, has brought this readiness to betray one's convictions, this readiness to humbug into our movement. I have become ashamed of the odium that it reflects upon us.

In this whole crisis I have tried in vain to shake off the filth that has been spewed by these politicians on that which has always filled my whole being. I have attempted again and again to get away to place myself in opposition to those who have betrayed the spirit of my party. That is the real cause for my deed. It was a protest against this spirit that has entered our movement.

I am not so naive as to believe that politics can be played with open cards. The brutal political fight has always been distasteful to me. I have never used a lie, have never resorted to trickery to gain my ends ; but neither have I reproached others who made use of trickery in warfare-political as well as real. I am no truth fanatic, but I do believe that every man must have certain principles that should shape his actions. There is such a thing as a compromise between principles; but certainly no political party should act according to *hidden* principles. I must act with those principles that we all avow.

A political party must always act according to its own principles. We have seen the Austrian party acting according to German nationalistic principles, as represented by Leuthner, Pernerstorfer and Hartmann, to whom the International is not the highest law, acting under the influence of people like Dr. Rennet-, whose highest ideals are embodied in the Austrian state. I have the highest respect for Pernerstorfer, who is an honest, open German-Austrian nationalist. I have no objections to his convictions, but I have nothing but contempt for a party that will tolerate a political opponent as its chairman. I can understand that Leuthner should stand on German nationalist ground, and will not respect him the less because of it. But that a Social-democratic party that, according to its program, is an international party, that the masses who profess allegiance to this interna-

tional party should allow a man who is an open German nationalist and practically the mouthpiece of the foreign office in Berlin, to daily conduct the **political** columns of the Arbeiterzeitung, is quite another matter. The situation becomes worse when Dr. Renner concocts from all sorts of half arguments a demagogic **argument**. For only thus can we look upon the smuggling of his own inner Austro-national convictions as real, international **principles** into the party. That **the** party has lost its honesty to itself, that is the thing that has brought me here.

Though the public prosecutor says that I stand completely isolated in the party, he must admit that all the contempt that I feel for the Austrian system is shared by a large majority of the Executive Committee, that, as a matter of fact, only one man, Dr. Renner, justifies every form of arbitrary action. But Dr. **Renner** cannot be considered representative of the party. These words can mean, then, merely that I stand alone in my act, in my use of terrorist methods. From this the prosecutor concludes that I discussed the matter with no one else. There were good reasons why I should not do so, for I hesitated to burden my friends with a responsibility that, in the end, only one would have to bear, to make them, too, the victims of persecution.

My act was not entirely beyond **comprehension**. There were men everywhere who understood and appreciated the motives that actuated me. The Swiss periodical "**Neues Leben**" printed an article by Martov, which clearly explains my motives. To this man my state of mind was clear, because he was a real **Social-Democrat**, because he had lived in Austria long enough to know our misery and hopelessness.

\* \* \*

**It** will not be easy to reconstruct the situation that has developed since last October, for in these seven months a whole epoch has transpired. And yet it will be easy, for in this time, in many respects, the world has approached my point of view. Many a thing that was looked upon as an utter absurdity at the time has meanwhile become common property. Notice the contempt with which the indictment speaks of the International. And yet the very internationalism that, according to the prosecutor, was wiped

off the earth, has risen in the estimation of the whole world; it has become the hope of the Austrian government. The prosecutor accuses me of having associated with a group of revolutionists in Switzerland ; yet no one to-day cultivates the society of these very revolutionists more zealously than Count Czernin, the Prime Minister. They are the revolutionists who to-day have a certain measure of influence in Russia, and upon whose influence Austrian peace hopes are built. I cannot say that this method of clinging to these people appeals to me any more than does the fact that our Austrian party members go to Stockholm, not because they have remained international, but because they, like the government Socialists of Germany, have been officially sent as *commis voyageurs* of the foreign office.

The Austrian minority, which was very small in this country where free speech was impossible, while it was very large in Germany, **this minority will not be & presented in Stockholm.** But it will be spoken of in Stockholm-your sentence will accomplish that. And the **real greetings from Austria** to the Stockholm Conference will be **the death sentence that you will pass upon me.**

The prosecutor says that I called out "Down with Absolutism ! We want peace !" This cry was not heard by a single witness. It is true, I desired to demonstrate for peace without indemnities, without annexations. But if I had said that seven months ago in this hall I would have been considered a fool, while to-day this demand is a strong factor in the negotiations of our own government. On the 23d of October there was not a sign of constitutional government to be seen in Austria. To-day we are approaching a reconvening of Parliament, and the necessity of Parliament is much more generally recognized than before. I demonstrated furthermore for **more revolutionary tactics.**

I have, all my life, been a revolutionist. I have seen in the daily political activity of the party a **weapon** for the revolution and have never regarded revolution as a catch phrase of political activity. Had I spoken of revolution seven months ago you would have laughed at the idea of a revolution in times of war. The counsel would have called for alienists and you would have thought him justified. But to-day, not only the **Arbeiter-**

Zeitung, but the entire capitalist press rejoices over the Russian revolution. To be sure, these gentlemen have ever been enthusiastic for freedom in other countries. And to-day even the Arbeiter-Zeitung celebrates the revolution in Russia.

The public prosecutor speaks of the milieu from which I have come. I believe it will be difficult for you to understand this, for it is an entirely different world from the one in which you are accustomed to live. Allow me to illustrate. Originally it was believed that the earth was the center of the world and that the sun and the stars moved around it. When Copernicus said "This solid earth moves," he was at first believed to be insane. When this was impossible, he was dragged before a court of inquisition, to which at that time was assigned the function of a military reserve court, and conducted a trial against him. To-day we can say dispassionately that in a certain sense both were right, that it all depends upon whether one is standing on the earth or transfers oneself to the sun. Both views are logically possible, although logically incompatible. We can never argue from more than one point of view. You are accustomed to see upon this earth the trenches of national warfare, but I have fixed all my hopes, so long as I have been able to think politically, upon those fronts of the class struggle that also exist in the world. If one argues from the point of view of national warfare, one reaches entirely different conclusions, and will easily be inclined to say to me "You are a fool." But when you see that that is useless you would call me malignant, criminal, hireling of the enemy. But I and my friends in Germany are just as little the accomplices of the Entente as our friends in France, in Russia and Italy, who support the International there, would be willing to become the accomplices of the Central Powers. This line of argumentation comes from an entirely different world.

For it makes a great difference, whether you look at the world from the walls that separate the nations from one another, from the walls that the war has built, or whether you see it from the wall that to me has always been the most important, the wall of the classes that separates the exploiters from the exploited.

We Socialists have always looked upon the world from the point of view of the class struggle-until the war began-and have

subordinated everything else in the whole world to this highest point of view. We have looked upon the International as supreme, and yet there are people who say we must change this point of view; in peace the struggle between classes, in war the struggle between nations.

This change of viewpoint, according to the momentary situation, is exceedingly attractive to the Austrian. But even if both points of view were correct, that on the earth and that on the sun, both points of view are nevertheless not of equal value. For the point of view of Copernicus has given to natural science a basis for its entire development, while the point of view of national warfare, the struggle between two competing imperialist powers, leads the world to ruin, leads to hunger, misery, to the destruction of the human race, leads to no higher development of humanity because it aims to establish one group as the rulers of the world.

Whether England or Germany will rule the world, new wars will follow. But the point of view of the International stands higher, because upon it depends the future of the human race, the idea of humanity. We have always said: In fighting the class struggle of the proletariat we are fighting the cause of humanity. As I speak of humanity and progress I recall to you the Congress in Basel, which strove to prevent the war, and which said: "The proletariat feels that at this moment it is the bearer of the future of the human race." This idea of humanity gives to the class struggle of the proletariat a higher value. Yet this idea of humanity was betrayed by the Social Patriots at the beginning of the war and cannot now be revived.

Before the first of May you may have read in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* about this idea of humanity. But what differentiates me from other Social-democrats is that I upheld, at all times, the ideals that they propagated before the war.

I went through an exhausting struggle to bring back my comrades to the International position. The position of the International looks exceedingly naïve. It is the same position that Marx described, when he said, in 1864, that it is simply the attempt to establish the simple laws that regulate relations between

private individuals as the highest law in the relations of nations to each other. This moral of revolutionary democracy, which was first formulated in the Great Revolution, is promulgated in the Constitution of 1791: "The greatness of freedom lies in the maxim-'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you'." Naive as it may be, that is the moral of democracy, the moral that has again been taken up by the Russian revolution, in opposition to land-robbery, that has been handed down from generation to generation with the principle of the equality of all people, by working for peace without annexations and indemnities.

If you wish to understand my struggle you must know that it has been my highest aim to bring my party comrades back to this program. And you will understand what a cataclysm the action of the Social-democrats of Austria has been for me. We were in the midst of preparations for an International congress. We had planned to publish in the Vienna Arbeiter-Zeitung articles from delegates of all nations. And then suddenly there appeared in the Arbeiter-Zeitung of August 5 an article with the title "The Day of the German Nations," an article which stood completely for acceptance of the war. "We will never forget this day of the 4th of **August,**" thus began the article. But our party leaders to-day would like to forget this article, and have said to me again and again that we in Austria had no 4th of August. To this I have always answered: "We had no 4th of August in Austria-the Stiirgkh government never even asked us-but we had something that is much worse, a 5th of August, the day on which that article was printed in the Arbeiter-Zeitung, that harmed us far beyond the border, particularly in Italy, to where this article had been telegraphed." Thus I came into constant conflict with my party and my friends.

I am convinced that the great majority of Social-democrats went into this war only because they believed it to be a war of self-defence, and from the point of view of national **defence** it is to be understood that the nation should defend its entity. That

is still Social-democratic. But then the idea of visiting the defeat that we were trying to avoid, with all its horrors and all its misery, upon others, took possession of us. It was the idea that found expression in the *Arbeiterzeitung* on the 5th of August in the words, "However the die may be cast, we hope, from the depth of our hearts, that it may be cast for the victory of the holy cause of the German people," This word *victory* was emphasized more and more strongly as time went by, and it became the main point of difference between us, for, as Socialists, we must oppose those who seek to profit from this war. Just as the man who is attacked in the forest by robbers and uses all his strength to throw them off, would not think of robbing his attacker when he has him in his power, so should we refuse, in our relations with other nations, to sink down to the level of street robbers. But when I insisted at the national party conference last March that the party executive should demand emphatically of the Central Powers a bid for peace without annexation and without indemnities, I was laughed at and had only sixteen of the 100 delegates on my side. At first I feared that a short victorious war would anchor absolutism firmly for decades to come. But the long months of war, with its horrible ravages and destruction, have awakened in the people a realization of its misery, have inoculated the organism of the people with its anti-toxin, have created the sentiment of which Goethe speaks when he says : "He who desires war in times of peace, has lost, forever, the joy of hope." A short war would have been followed by decades of chauvinistic frenzy on both sides ; war, out of itself, so to speak, creates true pacifism. For the lessons that the war has taught will stick in the minds of even those who, like Funder and his ilk, praised war as a bath of steel.

We have lived through a great historical tragedy and only in the light of this tragedy can I and my motives be understood. The party that was ordained to be the bearer of humanity has become a tool of the government, the instrument of tendencies that should be foreign to its very nature.

I do not attribute this to the ill will of individuals. Individuals have made mistakes. The great tragedy lay in the labor movement itself, lay in the supremacy that the bureaucratic machine of this labor movement has won over the future aims and interests of the proletariat. As faithful servants, the leaders of the proletariat strove to save the organization. But in so doing, they have betrayed their real class interests, they have betrayed the International, and the idea of the Social revolution. They have won small benefits for the workers during the war, it is true. I should be the last to refuse to recognize what was accomplished to protect the working class from many a threatening wrong. But they have sold their birthright for a mess of pottage.

This tragedy is not of Austria alone. I have been accused of being a trouble maker, for venting such attacks upon the labor movement of a country whose opponents are clericals and Nationalists.

Nothing has ever been so repugnant to me as these two Austrian capitalist parties. But it was a terrible disappointment for me to discover that the Austrian Social Democracy, which has been the highest thing in my whole existence, was but a blind leader of the blind in Austria. I cannot measure the Socialist party by capitalist standards, but alone by the standard it has set itself in its own glorious history. And it hurt me, that this party should have adopted the evil traits of its opponents. I came into conflict with the Party Executive Committee particularly because it has become more and more a *counter-revolutionary institution*. The conviction has grown upon me that a *revolution in Austria* can come *only* against *the will of the Executive Committee*, which will always be a hindrance to the revolutionary movement. And for this Executive Committee I had to work as its first secretary and to attend all of its meetings. I realized then more and more clearly: when once matters become serious, my position will

bring me into a sharp inner conflict between my duties as secretary and my own personal convictions. I came to the conclusion that our movement can recover only if it is given an entirely new leadership. Seitz particularly always harped upon responsibility. Violent methods must be persecuted, for the Executive Committee must bear the responsibility for the blood that is shed. But I maintain that this responsibility must be born. The secret of this whole inner conflict lies in the fact that the party, in these long years of peace has developed organizations, writers, political representatives, in short a whole civil staff, but lacks officers; in the fact that nobody in Austria has realized that, under certain circumstances, force must be used. On the contrary, they have always made it their duty to prevent disturbances. Dr. Renner struck the note that dominated this whole attitude of the party regarding the use of forcible measures. I saw that the idea of force was to be discredited in the eyes of the working class. Dr. Renner is a great, a gifted demagogue, and he may believe that heavy volumes might have turned the absolutism of Stürghk into a more enlightened form of absolutism. But he sought to hide, with peculiar skill, the fact that in Austria as in Russia, it is not a question of a social revolution, that first and foremost the bourgeois revolution must close the accounts of the absolute regime.

This opposition drove me to individual action because the party and its leadership had lost the revolutionary feeling of the working class. What I wished to prove was that only over the heads and against the will of the party authorities in Austria can a real revolutionary upheaval in Austria come, that only by disregarding them will it be possible to use the force that must be used to overthrow the rule of force upon which our government rests. Now Dr. Renner will prove to you at once that individual action is in opposition to social-democratic principles, that it is anarchistic. I was not so childish as to believe that my deed would abolish absolutism in Austria, or that it would bring peace. I have not become

an anarchist. Anarchism attributes such possibilities to individual action. I have never believed it. I stand, as I have always stood, for mass action carried out with all effective means that are in accord with the feeling of right of the masses-in times of peace by parliamentary means, but when absolutism has destroyed all parliamentary means, also by force-to be conducted by the masses. Today, as ever, I maintain that mass action must be, and is, decisive, and that my act has been nothing but a modest individual act, not to take the place of mass action, not even to call forth mass action, as some of my friends, who believed that I hoped for a concerted uprising of the people in answer to my deed, have said. What I wanted was to establish the psychological premise for future mass action, in Austria. I did not hope, by my deed, to call forth a revolution, but I wished to force the party to consider its attitude to a revolution. I have never, I should like to call the attention of the public prosecutor to this fact-during the course of the whole war, said a word in favor of forcible uprising because I knew that, in the atmosphere in which I was condemned to live, in the milieu of this Executive Committee and this party, such words cannot be spoken. They have lost all understanding for the fact that force can only be created by action. They, in their cynicism, would have laughed at me. It was necessary, therefore, to present an avowal to the use of force, an avowal that would force the comrades to say, "This man is serious." He sacrifices his life in order to affirm his convictions. I wanted to force them to take a stand, and they have taken a stand. To-day no Renner, no Seitz will dare to say to the workers of Austria that forcible action is impossible in Austria, that forcible measures must not and cannot be used. That was what I desired to accomplish, what seemed to me worth the sacrifice of my life, to force these people to change their attitude.

The argument against individual actions is not altogether sound. My act was an individual act against the background of the masses, and I cannot understand how people whose whole action has been individualistic-an individualistic begging for consideration from the ministers-can condemn individual action when it is directed against a minister. Until 1889 the party made

active use of the tactic of threatening individual authorities. Again and again individual organs of the government have been individually threatened and exposed.

I will add here that I have never over-estimated my deed, either before or after the first police hearing; I do not wish that my deed be over-estimated, either in its object, or in its effect. I simply wished once more **to give the revolutionary spirit a place in our movement.**

It was an open avowal of the policy of force, but it was a symbolic act, a parable as well. By it I wished to show to the masses what could be accomplished on a large scale, that each and every one must be willing to sacrifice his life, that sacrifices should not be invited, but that one must be ready to sacrifice. You object, that I have committed this deed against the principles of the social democracy. That also is not true. The International has admitted parties which, before the war, stood, in their programs, for individual action: the Social Revolutionists of Russia. I was one of their opponents, and have always carried on a sharp theoretical fight against them. **Mass actions must be supreme.**

There is one argument against assassinations that I recognize, to which I have, in fact, given much serious consideration. It is that such assassinations, and the whole policy of secret conspiracy that is the usual accompaniment of absolute rule, can be misused by the police and agents provocateurs. In Austria such agents provocateurs-but perhaps we had better speak of Russia.

But this argument, after all, does not apply in this case. My deed was an isolated attempt, one that could occur only within a certain constellation of events. I do not propose to introduce new fighting methods into our party life. On the contrary I should consider it a grave error should the party concentrate on assassinations. But I am convinced that, in peculiar cases, when the party leaders have lost their revolutionary spirit, as they had in Austria, an individual act may revive this spirit in the party.

It were wrong to value this deed as a coldly, mathematically thought-out act, based purely upon theoretical considera-

tions, and unfeeling logic. Feelings have played an extraordinary part, a double part, in my act. Because of the shame that has befallen my party, and because of the shame that Stiirghk has brought upon Austria. Both motives have worked constantly upon my feelings. In a party meeting some one once said of me: "No one else has brought forth as many manifestos and resolutions during the war as Fritz Adler." I always felt the need of opposing the activity of the party. I tried everything I could to influence the people. My party did not use the right means against the Shame of Austria. My father shared this feeling of shame, in the same measure, in the same degree. In this matter, in spite of all differences between us, he stood completely on my side. I have tried to voice this indignity again and again. I delivered a speech in Ziirich for which I was held for investigation; I published a manifesto; I persuaded my friend Liebknecht to speak in the Prussian House of Representatives of this shame, to the horror of the ruling class. I have tried all possible means to agitate publicly.

Now I will tell you what it was that particularly worked upon me. During the investigation I spoke openly and at some length. Here I may confine my remarks to things that are already proven, occurrences that may be read in the papers, that have become notorious. I will speak only of *political oppression*.

I could not rid myself of the feeling of degradation that preyed upon me.

Are we dogs that we allow ourselves to be beaten? Have we no honor, that we should bear it?

You cannot conceive what it means to live under Austrian censorship. A propaganda newspaper, the "Volk," which I edited at that time, was the only German paper in Austria that was wholly suppressed. And I was satisfied that it should be so-for so, at least, it could not be misused by the censorship for its own purposes. But I continued to edit the "Kampf," our scientific organ, under the greatest difficulties, with untold sacrifices. I was constantly placed in the most trying situations.

So, for instance, one of my articles was withheld by the censor for weeks. Then it was returned-~~ne~~ line had been stricken out. Other articles were held back for months-there was method in their madness.

These are illustrations of the contemptible, and partially inefficient character of Austrian censorship. It grated upon my sensibilities and depressed me in spirit. In my capacity as secretary of the party, I became intimately familiar with censorship and its workings. My experiences would seem to the uninitiated incredible. My council has attempted to bring witnesses to describe this state of affairs, but they were not allowed to testify."

Adler now proceeded to describe censorship conditions in Prague in detail, relating how the editor of the "Pravo Lidu" was told by the police that he would be provided with "Socialist" articles for publications in his newspaper. Furthermore he was told in what type, and in what columns reports and patriotic articles were to be printed.

"These are conditions to which no honorable journalist can submit. They created a newspaper in Prague that was unique, embodying as it did the infamy of absolutism and the unprincipled character of the Separatists. I allowed my paper to go to its destruction, rather than to see it so shamefully degraded. All sorts of extortion were practised upon these papers as we!! I spoke of these things on my last visit to Ziirich, and was indicted under Paragraph 65 in consequence.

When the Socialist party headquarters were ordered to fly the Austrian flag on the Emperor's birthday, Deputy Hillebrand went to the Statthalter to protest. He was informed that the ministry had decreed that this be done throughout Bohemia.

**Comrade Adler then spoke of the methods of justice, and particularly of war justice, that had aroused his indignation, again and again, by their flagrant inhumanity.**

In the "Neue Freie Presse" a poem was published that passed the censorship without objections. It contained only a few lines and was the translation of an American song of a mother who protests because her sons are to be drafted into the army, to kill

the sons of other mothers. The song calls to the sons to throw aside their weapons. One of my comrades, Lang of Freiwaldau, discovered the poem, it appealed to him and he was seized with the unfortunate impulse to make 15 or 20 copies of it, which he distributed among a number of comrades. He was haled before court and condemned to death. Later his sentence was commuted to five years in prison. He is now languishing in Möllersdorf, and his health is rapidly failing. I wished to present the Deputy Müller, who is familiar with the facts of the case, before you as a witness. But he was not accepted. This case particularly discouraged me, and I felt it my duty to give it the greatest possible publicity.

The military reserve courts have meted out over 900 years in jail, have passed and executed 26 death sentences. Among the former there is the shameful sentence of five years in jail meted out to a woman for a letter written to her husband.

Here Adler discussed the isolation of Austria by the prohibition of foreign newspapers that entered even into Germany without question, and showed how this hampered the work of Austrian journalists. He recalled internments and arrests, which only now have been somewhat relaxed as the result of an imperial edict. He emphasized that it had taken him two years, as secretary of the party, to regulate and order matters. For two and one-half years no one knew who was ruling in Austria.

Russia and China have their Parliament, we are the only truly degraded nation. We have no popular representation. We are not consulted, when money is needed, nor do our rulers trouble to account for the money they have spent.

During this whole absolutist regime it was Stürgkh who played the leading role. He was always violently opposed to election reform, and was its bitterest enemy in the election reform commission. The whole opposition to the extension of a popular franchise grouped about him. This man later became Prime Minister, and from the beginning, he tried to prove the soundness of his opposition, by showing that Parliament was impossible, by proving, ad absurdum, its ineffectuality. Stürgkh saw, with joy, how Parliament became more and more incapable; and purposely he finally brought about its adjournment.

It was clear to me, even then, that Stiirgkh had far-reaching plans. That he proposed to set aside Parliament completely was evident. Even though it had navigated successfully through the difficulties of the taxation debate, **Stürghk** nevertheless succeeded in bringing about its downfall.

When **war** came, and with it, the most critical period in the history of the Austrian nations, Parliament was not called. Absolutism reigned. And this undiluted absolutism, to which we were subjected, was quite a different thing from **the** absolutism of peace times. It was an open coup **d'état**. The whole fate of the country rested upon one man.

What did our government do during the war?

Stiirgkh conferred with the "Deutschradikale," with Wolf and his followers as to ways and means of forcing new constitutional amendments upon the nation. This party stood ready to support any and every measure. I was assured by its deputies that the industrial future of Austria lay in the hands of Stiirgkh alone. Without even consulting his colleagues he undertook to regulate the whole Hungarian question, and drew up a commercial treaty to be effective for two decades, with Tisza alone, and enforced its measures under Paragraph 14. War starvation was to be kept up for decades to come. By the terms of this treaty, duties on foodstuffs were to be levied, i. e., prices were to be screwed up still higher. Austria, even after the war was over, was to be held upon the very brink of starvation.

During the summer the demand for a parliament became more and more audible. Even feudal lords began to talk constitutionality. Attempts were **made** to force a calling of Parliament. But Stiirgkh was at work, systematically, ruthlessly, coldly calculating to prevent it.

A caucus of social-democratic deputies adopted a resolution, in the first half of September, 1916, demanding the convocation of Parliament as an absolute necessity. Stiirgkh ordered that the public not only be kept in ignorance of this resolution, but receive no news of the session of such a caucus. At this meeting Pernerstorfer told how Stiirgkh had personally done his utmost

to prevent the calling of Parliament, how he had succeeded in keeping from the Emperor all news of what was going on. Stiirgkh practically isolated the Emperor from the outer world. At one time President Sylvester demanded an audience. And this, too, **Stiirgkh** managed to circumvent-so completely had he cut off the emperor from the population. \

**Stiirgkh** was generally recognized by all proletarians as the personal bulwark of opposition against constitutional government. But at that time **numerous** elements in Austria still hoped that it would be possible to re-establish constitutional government in Austria. It was at the time when the feudal lords held their **conference**; when Sylvester called his conference for the middle of October.

This brings me to the concrete situation that immediately preceded my deed.

At that moment everything plainly indicated that, for some time to come, constitutionality in Austria, was dead. In September the reins had been slightly slackened. But the middle of October brought a new period of rigorous censorship, and nothing was permitted to appear in the Arbeiter-Zeitung.

On the day before I committed my deed there came the announcement that to speak of the re-establishment of a constitutional government was against the law. In his movement for the calling of Parliament, Sylvester had called a meeting of the party leaders to the House of Deputies. Hereupon **Stiirgkh declared**, that, so far as he was concerned, there was no such institution as a conference of party leaders, that he refused to discuss it, and that he would not attend its sessions. For me this was decisive. The third, and final decisive movement, also a part of this movement for Parliament, was the following:

A **number** of professors of the Juridical Faculty of the University of Vienna called a meeting in the hall of the Musical Society to discuss "The Parliament." Professor Bernatz was announced as the main speaker. Certainly no stretch of imagination could make this a dangerous demonstration. On the **con-**trary, I fear its intentions were entirely too innocent and harmless. Nevertheless all sorts of difficulties **were** placed in the way

of this meeting. Then finally the police forbade a public gathering altogether, and announced that the meeting could be held only according to the provisions of Paragraph E, as an assemblage of invited guests.

On the 20th of October, in the absence of Seitz, I received a message over the telephone, that the meeting had been prohibited in any form. This was to me of the greatest importance, not as a concrete case, but as a precedent for the future.

Thus matters stood on the 21st of October. Then came the four revolver shots. Two days later a conference was held at Sylvester's home, emphatically demanding the calling of the Reichsrat. Eight days later the Koerber administration was already in sight, and all Austria was openly declaring that conditions had become unbearable, that things must be changed. Everywhere it was taken as a matter of course that a complete upheaval must come.

From more than one point of view, the 21st of October has been a crisis. If my deed had not occurred, we should still be living under the rule of Stürgkh. I felt that we should choke if something was not done. Things had become unbearable. If no one cried out, I would have to cry out.

I must insert here a point I have forgotten to mention: the attitude of our party to the Stiirgkh-Hochenberger Ministry.

The relations between our party and the ministry had been broken. No representative associated with **Hochenberger**. It was impossible to discuss questions of judiciary and of censorship. Nor did the party have the opportunity to renew relations with Stiirgkh after 1916. Not even those whose patriotic fervor had never failed, who had forgotten everything but their patriotism, not even they could approach Stiirghk.

The national conference which voted down my motion, of which I have spoken before, adopted instead a number of very tame proposals to assure their acceptance by the government.

Seitz went to Stiirgkh with copies of the memorandum that was to **be** submitted two days later-that he might be informed, and ready **to answer. Hereupon, in a letter to Seitz,** Stiirgkh declared that lie was not inclined to pay any **attention to the proposals, which would have been, more properly, submitted by mail. After the rebuff the Social democrats did the least** that they could do-they no longer went to Stiirgkh.

I have said before, that my deed was directed, not so much at Count Stiirgkh, but rather at the moral conscience of Austria. I will say further, that Stiirgkh was an opponent whom, in a sense, I respected, because he, personally, was not infected by this sickliness of spirit that had taken hold of Austria. He was of a calibre far superior to those who suffered his oppression. He was no burgher, as Taaffe was, but a *man* who, with a definite purpose and a **determined** and unbreakable will, strove for his object, the establishment of **Absolutism** in Austria. **He** was a man whom one could respect, and whom one must fight without mercy. No Austrian molycoddle, but a real man, standing consciously upon a platform of force, and removable, therefore, by an act of force alone. His was a character that commanded respect. I refuse to respect only those Austrians who tolerated Stiirgkh, who failed to defy him, who proved, by their actions, that every country has the Stiirgkh that it deserves.

The considerations connected with Count Stiirgkh were **intensified just at this time by very depressing experiences** within the party. Above all, the general political situation, **failing as it did to give even the slightest gleam of hope for peace,** affected me terribly. Hopelessly I looked forward to the 5th of November, to the expected Labor Day. What would **happen? I will go there once more, and will move that we demand peace without annexations, and will, perhaps, win two or three new votes in favor of my motion. But the-rest will vote, as a body, against it, and so I will once more have failed in my struggle against the ignorance** of the masses. **I must choose a new method,** in order to shock, to arouse them out of **their apathy; and in this respect, as in many other respects, this method has been effective. The resolution that**

was adopted on November 5, was almost identical with the one I had so often proposed, practically the same, as the one that had, until then, met regularly with defeat. Thus my act has had the effect that I had hoped for. I have never regretted it, and am still convinced that it was a useful one—that I have accomplished what had to be accomplished, to steer the situation out of the deadlock into which it had come.

I realize that I am speaking to-day for the last time, and I should therefore renew the motives that led me to commit this deed in a few sentences, to explain how it happened that I have come to this place, to show you how I look upon this deed from my own moral viewpoint. If you wish to understand what went on within me, you must understand above all, that I am not the anti-patriot that I have been represented to be, that I have acted rather under the spur of necessity. The necessity lay in the fact that I could not tear myself loose from this Austria, that I could not sever the bonds that bound me to the party, although I was not materially dependent upon it. For that is the root of my tragedy, that I could not break away from the Austrian Social democracy and from the whole Socialist movement. I wish to show to you that the question of the murder was a real moral question to me. I am opposed to all murder, and it was not easy for me to commit murder. I have always believed that the killing of a human being is something inhuman, but I was convinced that we are living in a barbaric age, that we are forced to kill. The war is, to me, inhuman, as is also revolution, for in it too, human lives are sacrificed. For we hate murder and violent death. It is our moral duty to work according to the words of Marx, to organize a new society that knows no other aim but labor within, and peace without.

After the public prosecutor and the council for the defense had declared their plaidoyers, Adler requested the privilege of a few closing remarks:

Two views of life are struggling for supremacy in the world. The one is expressed in the great teaching of Christianity: 'Thou shalt not kill.' This teaching is upheld today by the true repre-

sentatives of Christianity, not by those who degrade it, but by those who are accused and slandered by these 'Christians.'

"I know what fate awaits me. But when the sentence has been spoken I will leave this room in the spirit of our old hymn, whose 'words, to me, are not words, but a gospel of truth :

'To arms, to arms ye brave !

The people shall be free.

March on, march on, all hearts resolved,

Will gain the victory.'

I do not know whether a speedy death will release me, or whether fate will condemn me to an endless living death. But, when I stand face to face with my end, I have but one hope, that my nerves and my senses may serve me well to the last moment.

In taking leave of all whom I have loved, and whose love has been my happiness, from all my friends and comrades in all parts of the world, I will remind you, in parting, as a word of comfort, of the depth and purity of that Easter greeting:

'Not all are dead that are buried, for they cannot kill the spirit,  
oh, brothers !



# The Class Struggle

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