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FRIEDRICH ENGELS
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FRIEDRICH ENGELS
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Einleitung

Der vorliegende Band enthält die von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels von Juli 1851 bis Dezember 1852 geschriebenen Werke, Artikel, Entwürfe, Erklärungen und Dokumente. In diesem Zeitraum führten sie vor allem mit Schriften wie „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“, „Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ und „Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln“ die Ende 1849 begonnene theoretische Auswertung der europäischen Revolution von 1848/49 zu einem relativen Abschluß.

In den Jahren 1851 und 1852 konsolidierten sich in ganz Europa die Kräfte der Reaktion. Louis Bonapartes Staatsstreich vom 2. Dezember 1851 setzte der Zweiten Republik in Frankreich ein Ende, beseitigte die letzten der im Februar 1848 errungenen demokratischen Institutionen und schuf mit der Errichtung der bonapartistischen Diktatur neben dem Zarismus ein zweites Bollwerk der Reaktion in Europa, einen Herd internationaler Konflikte und militärischer Abenteuer.

Hatten in den ersten Monaten nach der militärischen Niederschlagung der revolutionären Bewegungen in Deutschland, Ungarn und Italien vom Frühjahr und Sommer 1849 noch Aussichten auf einen baldigen neuen Ausbruch revolutionärer Kämpfe bestanden, so konnten nach dem bonapartistischen Staatsstreich keine Zweifel mehr daran bestehen, daß sich die konterrevolutionäre Ordnung politisch zeitweilig gefestigt hatte. Unter diesen Bedingungen wurde es noch wichtiger als schon seit Ende 1849, die Situation gründlich zu analysieren, das theoretische Rüstzeug der proletarischen Revolutionäre zu überprüfen, die Ursachen für die Niederlage der Revolution aufzudecken und Schlußfolgerungen für die Strategie und Taktik der Arbeiterbewegung in der Reaktionsperiode sowie bei künftigen revolutionären Kämpfen zu ziehen.

Der chronologische Rahmen des vorliegenden Bandes ist zugleich im

wesentlichen identisch mit der letzten Phase in der Tätigkeit des Bundes der Kommunisten, d.h. von der Verhaftung der Mitglieder der Kölner Zentralbehörde bis zum Kölner Kommunistenprozeß. Obwohl die Wirksamkeit des Bundes auf dem europäischen Kontinent eingestellt werden mußte, wirkte dessen Kreis London unter der faktischen Leitung von Marx bis Ende 1852 aktiv weiter. Gerade in dieser Phase beeinflusste er wesentlich den linken Flügel des Chartismus, inspirierte und unterstützte in Wahrnehmung seiner statutengemäßen Funktion als leitender Kreis für Amerika den Beginn der Propagierung des Marxismus in den USA und organisierte die Verteidigung für die in Köln Angeklagten sowie Solidaritätssammlungen für die Opfer dieses Prozesses. Zahlreiche Seiten des vorliegenden Bandes widerspiegeln diese umfangreiche Parteitätigkeit von Marx und Engels. Die Verurteilung der Kölner Kommunisten im November 1852 bildete eine tiefgehende Zäsur in der Geschichte der deutschen und der internationalen Arbeiterbewegung.

Es gehörte für Marx und Engels zu den Kampfbedingungen dieser außerordentlich schweren Zeit, daß für den Druck größerer Werke in Deutschland sowie für die Herausgabe eigener Organe keinerlei Möglichkeiten mehr bestanden. Ihre publizistische Wirksamkeit war daher im wesentlichen beschränkt auf die Mitarbeit an Joseph Weydemeyers „Revolution“ in New York, Ernest Jones' chartistischen Blättern „Notes to the People“ und „People's Paper“ in London, auf den Beginn ihrer Korrespondenz-tätigkeit für die „New-York Tribune“ sowie auf ihren Einfluß auf einige – vorwiegend deutschsprachige – kleinere Zeitungen in den USA. (Detaillierte Angaben über diese Mitarbeit enthält der Abschnitt „Zur publizistischen Tätigkeit von Marx und Engels von Juli 1851 bis Dezember 1852“ an der Spitze des wissenschaftlichen Apparats.) Mit Ausnahme des Pamphlets „Die großen Männer des Exils“ und der als Broschüre konzipierten „Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln“ wurden sämtliche Arbeiten des vorliegenden Bandes für Tages- oder Wochenzeitungen geschrieben.

Dieser von den Verhältnissen aufgezwungene äußere Rahmen beeinträchtigte jedoch nicht den wissenschaftlichen Charakter und die Tiefgründigkeit der theoretischen Analyse. Die im vorliegenden Band vereinigten Arbeiten repräsentieren eine bedeutende Weiterentwicklung auf wesentlichen Gebieten der marxistischen Theorie. Marx und Engels wandten die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung auf die neuen Erscheinungen des gesellschaftlichen Lebens an, konkretisierten und entwickelten sie dabei. Dies betraf in erster Linie das Verhältnis von ökonomischer und politischer Entwicklung, die Rolle des Staates, die Wechselwirkungen von Klassen, politischen Parteien und ideologischen Richtungen.

Marx und Engels gingen davon aus, daß Revolutionen als Lokomotiven der Geschichte (siehe MEGA² I/10. S. 187) der gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen Analyse unvergleichlich mehr Ausgangsmaterial liefern als evolutionäre Entwicklungsphasen, daß es daher eine unabdingbare Aufgabe wahrer Revolutionäre ist, das vorliegende historische Material, d. h. die Erfahrungen der Revolution selbst sowie auch die neuen Erscheinungen bei der Errichtung nachrevolutionärer reaktionärer Herrschaftsformen, wissenschaftlich aufzuarbeiten. Diesen schon Anfang 1850 postulierten Grundsatz stellte Engels auch an den Beginn seiner Artikelserie „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“ (siehe S. 3/4), mit der der vorliegende Band eröffnet wird. Die Artikelserie war zugleich der Beginn der langjährigen Mitarbeit von Marx und Engels an der „New-York Tribune“.

„Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“ behandelt die Ursachen, das Wesen und die maßgebenden Kräfte der Revolution von 1848/49 in Deutschland und Österreich. Es war die erste zusammenhängende Darstellung dieser Revolution aus der Feder eines der Begründer des Marxismus. Nachdem sie diese Ereignisse bereits in ihren Artikeln in der „Neuen Rheinischen Zeitung“ unmittelbar aktuell, dann im Jahre 1850 in verschiedenen Arbeiten – darunter vor allem der „Deutschen Reichsverfassungskampagne“ – in verallgemeinerter Darstellung behandelt hatten, bot die vorliegende Bearbeitung eine noch reifere Verallgemeinerungsstufe und enthielt eine Vielzahl wichtiger politischer und theoretischer Schlußfolgerungen. Damit war der Grund gelegt für jede wissenschaftliche Analyse der bürgerlich-demokratischen Revolution von 1848/49 in Deutschland, und in dieser Form ging die Einschätzung durch Marx und Engels in die spätere Geschichtskonzeption der revolutionären Arbeiterbewegung ein. „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“ enthält die Mehrzahl jener Erfahrungen, die Marx und Engels während ihrer persönlichen Beteiligung an diesen Kämpfen sowie bei deren theoretischer Verallgemeinerung gewonnen hatten und von denen sie – nach Lenins Worten – in der folgenden Zeit „bei der Beurteilung der Geschehnisse der Arbeiterbewegung und der Demokratie der verschiedenen Länder“ ausgingen. „Zu diesem Punkt kehren sie stets zurück, um das innere Wesen der verschiedenen Klassen und ihrer Tendenzen in klarster und reinsten Form zu bestimmen.“ (W. I. Lenin: Gegen den Boykott. In: Werke. Bd. 13. Berlin 1982. S. 24.)

Bei der Darstellung der politischen Ereignisse ging Engels von der ökonomischen Basis aus. Wie schon in seiner „Deutschen Reichsverfassungskampagne“ und im „Deutschen Bauernkrieg“ stellte er an den Beginn wieder eine Analyse der handelnden Klassen; sie bildet den Hauptinhalt von Kapitel I des Werkes „Revolution and Counter-Revolution“. Dabei

vermittelte er ein sehr differenziertes Bild der ökonomischen und sozialen Entwicklung in den deutschen Staaten.

Ein weiterer grundlegender Aspekt war für Engels die internationale oder zumindest europäische Verflechtung der Revolutionsergebnisse in Deutschland. In „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“ wurden erstmals solche Wendepunkte der gesamteuropäischen Revolution wie die Pariser Juniinsurrektion und der Wiener Oktoberaufstand von 1848, aber auch die große Rolle der verschiedenen nationalen Bewegungen in eine reife Gesamtdarstellung der Revolution in Deutschland einbezogen.

Entscheidend geprägt von den ökonomischen Bedingungen und den internationalen Ereignissen, entwickelte sich immer deutlicher die von Engels im einzelnen aufgezeigte Revolutionsfurcht der liberalen preußischen Großbourgeoisie, ihre Sucht nach einem Kompromiß mit den Kräften der feudal-junkerlichen Reaktion, entfaltete sich das Bild von der Unentschlossenheit und dem Schwanken des Kleinbürgertums, das trotz revolutionärer Energie einzelner seiner Vertreter nicht mehr imstande war, wie am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts in Frankreich, die Volksbewegung zeitweilig zu führen und die Revolution ein Stück voranzutreiben. Engels sprach es auch klar aus, daß das deutsche Proletariat in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bei weitem noch nicht entwickelt und organisiert genug war, bereits die Führung der Bewegung in einer bürgerlich-demokratischen Revolution zu übernehmen. Aber in seiner konsequenten Parteinahme und in seinem kämpferischen Einsatz für den gesellschaftlichen Fortschritt deutete das Proletariat bereits seine künftige Stellung an. In der Reichsverfassungskampagne von 1849 „the working classes represented the real and well-understood interest of the nation at large, in hastening as much as possible that revolutionary course which, for the old societies of civilized Europe, has now become a historical necessity“ (S. 78).

Im Hintergrund von Engels' Darstellung lag die Frage verborgen, unter welchen Bedingungen die Arbeiterklasse zur führenden Kraft einer Nation, zur Interessenvertreterin der Mehrheit der arbeitenden Klassen werden könne und die Volksmassen bei der Zuendeführung der bürgerlich-demokratischen sowie beim Übergang zur sozialistischen Revolution zu führen vermag. Im November 1852 hat Engels diese Fragestellung dann auch explizit formuliert (siehe S. 437). Unter diesem Gesichtspunkt erhielten solche Probleme wie die Kriterien für das Heranreifen einer revolutionären Situation, denen Engels den Hauptteil der ersten vier Fortsetzungen seiner Artikelserie widmete, sowie die militärische Führung einer bewaffneten Erhebung erhöhte Bedeutung. Er entwickelte die Lehre vom Vorteil der ständigen Offensive und von der Notwendigkeit des kühnen Wagnisses im entscheidenden Augenblick (siehe S. 61/62). Ein Aufruf zu revolutionärer

Entschlossenheit ist der Hinweis: „No country in a state of revolution and involved in external war can tolerate a *Vendée* in its very heart.“ (S. 65.) Gekrönt wurden diese Lehren von den Ausführungen über den Aufstand als einer Kunst (siehe S. 76). All das fand die ausdrückliche Billigung W. I. Lenins, der sich bei der Vorbereitung und Leitung der Großen Sozialistischen Oktoberrevolution mehrfach auf Engels' Werk berief.

Entschlossenheit ist in einer Revolution jedoch nicht nur in militärischen Fragen gefordert. Engels ging im sechsten Beitrag z. B. ausführlich auf die für die Revolution folgenschwere Tatsache ein, daß in Preußen nach der Märzrevolution 1848 der gesamte alte Staats- und Beamtenapparat beibehalten wurde. — In seiner Forderung nach entschlossener Lösung der nationalen Frage durch die bürgerlich-demokratische Revolution kam Engels aber im Hinblick auf die Lebensfähigkeit kleiner Nationen des damaligen österreichischen Kaiserreiches zu einer unexakten Voraussage, die er später korrigierte.

Engels konnte mit Recht feststellen, daß er in der Artikelserie „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“ wesentliche Prinzipien der proletarischen Partei in Übereinstimmung mit denen des „Manifestes der Kommunistischen Partei“ dargelegt hatte (siehe S. 437). In wirkungsvoller Argumentation waren mit einfacher Sprache bleibende Lehren für bevorstehende Kämpfe formuliert worden.

Die europäische Revolution von 1848/49 hatte unter den vergleichsweise entwickelten gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts stattgefunden. Erstmals war die Arbeiterklasse als selbständig handelnder Faktor in einer großen Revolution aufgetreten, hatte in Paris die erste proletarische Insurrektion durchgeführt und schließlich Ende 1851 die französische Bourgeoisie zu einer neuen, verschleierte Form ihrer Machtausübung, dem Bonapartismus, gezwungen. Solche revolutionären Ereignisse „makes a nation pass in five years over more ground than it would have done in a century under ordinary circumstances“ (S. 30). Sie lieferten zugleich der intensiven, mehrjährigen und allseitigen wissenschaftlichen Analyse von Marx und Engels den Stoff für wesentliche Fortschritte in der weiteren Ausarbeitung ihrer Theorie. Den Höhepunkt bildete hierin Marx' Werk „Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“. Engels wertete noch Jahrzehnte später Marx' Schrift als ein Beispiel „von der wunderbaren, zuerst im ‚18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte‘ bewährten Gabe des Verfassers, den Charakter, die Tragweite und die notwendigen Folgen großer geschichtlicher Ereignisse klar zu erfassen, zur Zeit, wo diese Ereignisse sich noch vor unseren Augen abspielen oder erst eben vollendet sind“ (Der Bürgerkrieg in Frankreich. Adresse des Generalraths der Internationalen Arbeiter-Association. Dritte deutsche Auflage, ver-

mehrt durch die Adressen des Generalraths über den deutsch-französischen Krieg und durch eine Einleitung von Friedrich Engels. Berlin 1891. S. 3.)

Differenzierter als je vorher analysierte Marx im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ das komplizierte Verhältnis von objektiven ökonomischen Bedingungen, bestimmten Klassenkräften und parlamentarischen Parteien. In einem Musterbeispiel materialistischer Geschichtsschreibung zeigte er, über wie viele Illusionen und Phrasen, Kompromisse und Rückschläge hinweg sich im politischen Leben eines Landes schließlich die grundlegenden, materiellen, ökonomischen Bedürfnisse der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung Bahn brechen. Und noch indirekter, noch vermittelter wirken die Gesetzmäßigkeiten des historischen Materialismus im ideologischen Klassenkampf. Zum Beispiel müssen bürgerliche Ideologen durchaus nicht selbst Bourgeois, sie „können ihrer Bildung und ihrer individuellen Lage nach himmelweit von ihnen getrennt sein“. Entscheidend ist, „daß sie im Kopfe nicht über die Schranken hinauskommen, worüber jener nicht im Leben hinauskommt, daß sie daher zu denselben Aufgaben und Lösungen theoretisch getrieben werden, wohin jenen das materielle Interesse und die gesellschaftliche Lage praktisch treiben“. (S. 124.)

Noch im hohen Alter hat Engels mehrfach darauf verwiesen, daß dem „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ eine tiefe Einsicht in die Dialektik von Objektivem und Subjektivem des Geschichtsprozesses zugrunde lag; er nannte dieses Werk als Beweis dafür, daß Marxismus niemals mit ökonomischem Determinismus identisch war, daß er keineswegs „alle und jede Rückwirkung der politischen usw. Reflexe der ökonomischen Bewegung auf diese Bewegung selbst“ leugnet. Dies sei, schrieb Engels am 27. Oktober 1890 an Conrad Schmidt, besonders an Marx’ „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ zu studieren, „wo es sich doch fast nur um die *besondré* Rolle handelt, die die politischen Kämpfe und Ereignisse spielen, natürlich innerhalb ihrer *allgemeinen* Abhängigkeit von ökonomischen Bedingungen“.

Die rasch wachsende Einsicht in diese ökonomischen Bedingungen, verbunden mit umfassenden historischen und politischen Kenntnissen, erlaubte es Marx, sofort nach dem bonapartistischen Staatsstreich in einer glänzenden Beweiskette zu zeigen, daß die gesamte Geschichte Frankreichs seit dem Februar 1848 eine Folge konterrevolutionärer Akte der herrschenden Bourgeoisie war, eine Geschichte ständiger Versuche, die auf den Februarbarrikaden errungenen demokratischen Rechte wieder zu liquidieren, um die arbeitenden Volksmassen desto sicherer und bequemer ausbeuten zu können. Auch hinter den verwirrendsten politischen Kombinationen der französischen Bourgeoisie und ihres Parlaments standen

zwischen Februar 1848 und Dezember 1851 die Angst vor dem Proletariat und der alles beherrschende Wille zur Erhaltung ihrer Klassenherrschaft – zunächst in der „unnatürlichen“ Allianz aller bürgerlichen und verbürgerlicht-monarchistischen Fraktionen unter dem gemeinsamen Nenner der (von vielen von ihnen insgeheim verabscheuten) parlamentarischen Republik, nach dem 2. Dezember 1851 in der noch „unnatürlicheren“ Form der bonapartistischen Diktatur.

Aus der daraus resultierenden parallelen Entwicklung von ständiger Verengung des Kreises der Herrschenden einerseits und ständigem Abbau der bürgerlich-demokratischen Rechte andererseits abstrahierte Marx im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ die Erkenntnis von der Revolution „in absteigender Linie“ (S. 118). Im Gegensatz zur Großen Französischen Revolution, in der sich bis zum Thermidor 1794 die jeweils entschiedenere Fraktion durchgesetzt und schließlich von einer noch weitergehenden verdrängt worden war – die Revolution also eine aufsteigende Linie hatte –, ging in den 1848 beginnenden Kämpfen von Anfang an die führende Rolle mit jeder folgenden Etappe an Kräfte über, die immer weniger an Weiterführung der Revolution und immer mehr an Vereinbarung mit der Konterrevolution interessiert waren.

Als Ergebnis vergleichender Revolutionsanalyse stellte Marx' Erkenntnis eine wichtige Weiterentwicklung der proletarischen Revolutionstheorie dar, insbesondere eine Präzisierung der Theorie der permanenten Revolution, die Marx und Engels Anfang 1850 entwickelt hatten (siehe MEGA² I/10. S. 192 und 258–263). Zu einer Revolution in absteigender Linie muß es naturgemäß dann kommen, wenn die Bourgeoisie schon nicht mehr als konsequent antifeudale, sondern aus Furcht vor dem erstarkenden Proletariat in Stadt und Land bereits als „vermittelnde“, den Fortgang der Revolution verratende, als letztlich konterrevolutionäre Kraft auftritt, während das Proletariat auf dieser Stufe der Entfaltung kapitalistischer Gesellschaftsverhältnisse noch nicht die Kraft aufbringen kann, diese Politik umzukehren und damit die Revolution in eine aufsteigende Linie zu zwingen, mit anderen Worten: sie permanent zu machen.

Diese Erkenntnis war zugleich ein weiterer Teilschritt zum tieferen Verständnis der Langfristigkeit des gesellschaftlichen Prozesses bis zum vollständigen Heranreifen der Bedingungen für den Sturz des Kapitalismus. Solange es das Proletariat objektiv, aus Gründen der Unentwickeltheit kapitalistischer Produktionsverhältnisse, nicht vermochte, sich selbst und die Masse der Werktätigen in Stadt und Land von der großbürgerlichen Politik konsequent zu lösen und für eine Politik des Vorantreibens der bürgerlich-demokratischen Revolution zu gewinnen, war an den Übergang zur proletarischen Revolution nicht zu denken. Engels sprach dies schon

im Oktober 1851 klar aus: „The working class movement itself never is independent, never is of an exclusively proletarian character, until all the different factions of the middle class, and particularly its most progressive faction, the large manufacturers, have conquered political power and remodeled the State according to their wants.“ (S. 10.) Und erst auf dieser – Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts noch nirgendwo erreichten – Entwicklungsstufe der Gesellschaft kann gesagt werden, „that the great problem of the nineteenth century, the abolition of the proletariat, is at last brought forward fairly and in its proper light“ (ebenda).

Im Kampf der Bourgeoisie gegen die konsequente Zuendeführung der bürgerlich-demokratischen Revolution enthüllten sich besonders deutlich Begrenztheit, Widersprüchlichkeit und formaler Charakter der bürgerlichen Demokratie. Unter diesem Aspekt analysierte Marx im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ besonders ausführlich das Wahlsystem und die Verfassung der französischen Republik.

Das allgemeine Wahlrecht war in Frankreich im Februar 1848 als eine der grundlegenden Errungenschaften auf den Barrikaden von Paris erkämpft und der bürgerlichen Republik zugrunde gelegt worden. Am 10. März 1850 kollidierten die Interessen der französischen Bourgeoisie mit dem allgemeinen Wahlrecht – Marx hatte dies in den „Klassenkämpfen in Frankreich“ sofort eingehend analysiert (siehe MEGA² I/10. S. 195) –, und es wurde im Mai 1850 aufgehoben. Dies war eines der sichtbarsten Zeichen für den Verlauf der Revolution in absteigender Linie. Wie Marx im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ hervorhob, wollte es jedoch die Dialektik der Geschichte, daß die wirkliche Aufhebung des allgemeinen Wahlrechts in Frankreich (für schließlich zwei Jahrzehnte) im Grunde mit seiner zeitweiligen Wiedereinführung durch Louis Bonaparte im Dezember 1851 erfolgte. Eine exakte Analyse dieser Problematik war damals um so notwendiger, als das allgemeine Wahlrecht zu gleicher Zeit in Frankreich zu einer Waffe der konterrevolutionären Bourgeoisie und des Bonapartismus wurde, während es in Großbritannien eine proletarische Forderung war und seine Einführung dort die weitreichendsten revolutionären Folgen gehabt hätte.

Marx führte im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ auch seine langjährige Analyse von Verfassungsdokumenten weiter, vor allem die der bürgerlich-republikanischen französischen Verfassung vom 4. November 1848, die er erst ein halbes Jahr zuvor eingehend untersucht hatte (MEGA² I/10. S. 535–548). Die Einschätzung von Rolle und Charakter jener Verfassung, die durch den bonapartistischen Staatsstreich beseitigt worden war, bildet den Kern von Abschnitt II des Werkes „Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“. Die im Februar 1848 errungenen bürgerlich-demokratischen

Rechte wurden zwar formal garantiert, zugleich aber durch ein System von Einschränkungen faktisch aufgehoben, indem jeder Verfassungsparagraph „seine eigne Antithese“ in sich enthielt, „nämlich in der allgemeinen Phrase die Freiheit, in der Randglosse die Aufhebung der Freiheit“. (S. 109.)

Marx zeigte darüber hinaus, daß bereits die Verfassung von 1848 nicht nur den Konflikt zwischen Nationalversammlung und Präsidenten in einer Vielzahl von Paragraphen enthielt, sondern auch als Lösung dieses Konflikts seitens des Präsidenten, d. h. Louis Bonapartes, lediglich den Staatsstreich offenließ.

Diese Achillesferse der Verfassung war nur äußerlich durch bestimmte Personen bedingt, zugrunde lag ihr die Schwierigkeit für die französische Bourgeoisie, nach der Juniinsurrektion und in einer noch nicht abgeschlossenen Revolutionsphase ihre Macht gegen die Interessen des Volkes aufrechtzuerhalten, was es zugleich notwendig machte, massiv gegen noch weit verbreitete demokratische und vulgärsozialistische Illusionen aufzutreten. Ende 1851 ging es aber nicht mehr nur um allgemeines Wahlrecht, Parlamentarismus und Republik, sondern darum, daß *alle* gegen den Feudalismus geschmiedeten Waffen sich nun *gegen* die Bourgeoisie richteten, „daß alle sogenannten bürgerlichen Freiheiten und Fortschrittsorgane ihre Klassenherrschaft zugleich an der gesellschaftlichen Grundlage und an der politischen Spitze angriffen und bedrohten, also ‚sozialistisch‘ geworden waren“. Dies hatte die – von der Masse der Bourgeoisie zunächst selbst nicht begriffene – „Konsequenz, daß ihr *eignes parlamentarisches Régime*, daß ihre *politische Herrschaft* überhaupt nun auch als *sozialistisch* dem allgemeinen Verdammungsurtheil verfallen mußte“. (S. 135.)

Marx zeigte im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“, daß eine Revolution in absteigender Linie einem Endpunkt zustrebt, der eine relativ dauerhafte Lösung der Herrschaftsprobleme der Bourgeoisie verspricht. Diese Lösung war 1851 für Frankreich der Bonapartismus. Er nahm der Gesamtmasse der Bourgeoisie „die Mühen und Gefahren der Herrschaft“ ab (S. 166).

Es lag in den kapitalistischen Produktionsverhältnissen der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts und in der damit gesetzmäßig verbundenen Zuspitzung des Klassenkampfes zwischen Bourgeoisie und Proletariat begründet, „daß in demselben Maße wie die faktische Herrschaft der Bourgeoisie sich entwickelte, ihre moralische Herrschaft über die Volksmassen verloren ging“ (S. 139). Marx erwog in diesem Zusammenhang den Gedanken, ob unter diesen „modernen Produktionsbedingungen“ die demokratische Republik überhaupt noch die normale Entwicklungsform der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft sein konnte, oder nicht vielmehr bereits „*nur die revolu-*

tionäre Zerstörungsform“ für die kapitalistische Ordnung bedeutete. (S. 106.)

Später ist Marx mehrfach auf diese für die allgemeinen Kampfbedingungen der Arbeiterbewegung wesentliche Frage zurückgekommen. In der Ausgabe des „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ von 1869 änderte er „*revolutionäre Zerstörungsform*“ in „*politische Umwälzungsform*“ (Variante 106.4), und zwei Jahre darauf erfolgten bei der theoretischen Auswertung der Pariser Kommune weitere Überlegungen zu dieser Problematik (siehe S. 698–699).

Was die konkrete Situation 1851 in Frankreich betraf, so wurde es für die herrschende Bourgeoisie täglich schwieriger und gefährlicher, die parlamentarische Republik beizubehalten, zugleich war sie jedoch in der seit der Februarrevolution geschaffenen Lage „die einzig mögliche Form für die Herrschaft der Gesamtbourgeoisie“ (S. 155). Dieser Widerspruch zerrieb die „Partei der Ordnung“ in weniger als vier Jahren und ermöglichte den leichten Sieg des Bonapartismus.

Marx' Darstellung der Vorgeschichte des Staatsstreichs vom 2. Dezember 1851 – und das ist faktisch der Inhalt des Werkes „Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ – war zugleich die Enthüllung des *Wesens* des Bonapartismus. Denn aufgrund seiner Genesis und seiner Funktion im Klassenkampf konnte er gar nichts anderes sein als eine Diktatur der konterrevolutionärsten Elemente der Bourgeoisie, gestützt auf eine Militärclique und eine besondere, bezahlte, deklassierte Terrororganisation wie die „Gesellschaft des 10. Dezember“, getarnt durch ein umfassendes System der Demagogie sowie durch die teilweise bzw. zeitweise Ausschaltung der Bourgeoisie von der unmittelbaren Ausübung der Staatsmacht, was den Schein der Selbständigkeit, des Über-den-Klassen-Stehens dieser Staatsmacht unterstützte. Der Bonapartismus war aber nicht möglich ohne blutige Unterdrückungsmaßnahmen des Militärs gegen die Arbeiterklasse, Teile der Bauernschaft und selbst gegen einige Vertreter der Bourgeoisie.

Marx definierte den Bonapartismus als das Eingeständnis der Bourgeoisie, „daß ihr eignes Interesse gebiete, sie der Gefahr des Selbstregierens zu überheben, daß um die Ruhe im Lande herzustellen, vor Allem das Bourgeois-Parlament zur Ruhe gebracht, um ihre gesellschaftliche Macht unverehrt zu erhalten, ihre politische Macht gebrochen werden müsse, daß die Privatbourgeois nur fortfahren können, die andern Klassen zu exploitiren und sich ungetrübt des Eigenthums, der Familie, der Religion und der Ordnung zu erfreuen, unter der Bedingung, daß ihre Klasse neben den andern Klassen zu gleicher politischer Nichtigkeit verdammt werde, daß um ihren Beutel zu retten, die Krone ihr abgeschlagen und das Schwert, das sie beschützen solle, zugleich als Damoklesschwert über ihr eignes

Haupt gehängt werden müsse“ (S. 136). Die im vorliegenden Band erstmals veröffentlichten Varianten zu dieser Textstelle zeigen, wie hartnäckig Marx um die Formulierung dieses wichtigen Gedankens rang.

Marx' Analyse des Bonapartismus wurde von der Geschichte in vollem Maße bestätigt; ihre Richtigkeit zeigte sich vor aller Augen beim Sturz von Napoleon III und der Errichtung der Pariser Kommune von 1871. Auf Marx' Werk gestützt, formulierte Lenin jene bekannte Definition des Bonapartismus als einer „Regierungsform, die hervorwächst aus dem konterrevolutionären Wesen der Bourgeoisie in einer Zeit der demokratischen Umgestaltungen und der demokratischen Revolution“ (W. I. Lenin: Sie sahen den Wald vor lauter Bäumen nicht. In: Werke. Bd. 25. Berlin 1981. S. 260).

Eine der Voraussetzungen für die Errichtung des Bonapartismus war die Haltung der Bauern, die bei den Wahlen vom 20./21. Dezember 1851 in überwiegender Mehrheit für Louis Bonaparte stimmten. Ursachen für dieses Votum sah Marx in der noch weit verbreiteten Anhänglichkeit an Napoléon I^{er} (der die 1792 geschaffene selbständige Parzelle juristisch gesichert hatte), in der bauernfeindlichen Steuerpolitik der französischen Bourgeoisie seit 1848, vor allem aber in der außerordentlichen Rückständigkeit des französischen Dorfes. Millionen Stimmen für den Staatsstreich stammten von politisch unerfahrenen, kaum des Lesens kundigen, eingeschüchterten und vom kulturellen Leben der Städte sowie auch voneinander isolierten, verschuldeten Parzellenbauern. Die Parzelle hatte sich überlebt. Sie verhinderte die Anwendung von Wissenschaft und Technik, sie verlegte den Weg zur landwirtschaftlichen Großproduktion und zur vollen Entfaltung des Kapitalismus. Stattdessen hatten Wucherer und Finanzkapitalisten die französischen Bauern mittels einer riesigen Hypothekenschuld in eine „Sklaverei vom Kapital“ versetzt (S. 183), d. h., das Kapital trat nicht als Produktivkraft, sondern vorwiegend parasitär auf. Die landwirtschaftliche Produktion stagnierte, Pauperismus war auf dem Lande weit verbreitet.

Marx' Analyse der ökonomischen Entwicklung des französischen Parzelleneigentums führte zu dem Schluß, daß ein Anwachsen der Widersprüche zwischen Bauernschaft und Bourgeoisie unvermeidlich war. Ihre richtig verstandenen Interessen mußten die Bauern schließlich zu der Erkenntnis führen, daß sie „ihren natürlichen Verbündeten und Führer in dem *städtischen Proletariat*“ finden, „dessen Aufgabe der Umsturz der bürgerlichen Ordnung ist“. (S. 183.)

Den Gedanken von der Notwendigkeit des Bündnisses der Arbeiterklasse mit den Bauern hatte Marx schon 1848 in den 17 „Forderungen der Kommunistischen Partei in Deutschland“ und 1850 in den „Klassenkämpfen

in Frankreich“ formuliert. Im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ erhielten diese Forderungen durch die historisch-ökonomische Analyse des Parzelleneigentums eine – bei weitem nicht nur auf Frankreich beschränkte – umfassendere Begründung. In der Revolutionstheorie des Marxismus wurde noch fester, noch umfassender die Lehre verankert, daß das Vordringen einer bürgerlich-demokratischen Revolution und der Übergang zur proletarischen Revolution nur als Volksbewegung aller Werktätigen möglich ist, deren Kern das feste (weil zutiefst materiell begründete) Aktionsbündnis von Arbeitern und werktätigen Bauern ist. Marx kleidete diesen Gedanken in die einprägsamen Worte: „Mit der Verzweiflung an der napoleonischen Restauration scheidet der französische Bauer von dem Glauben an seine Parzelle, stürzt das ganze auf diese Parzelle aufgeführte Staatsgebäude zusammen, und erhält die *proletarische Revolution des Chors, ohne das ihr Sologesang in allen Bauernnationen zum Sterbelied wird.*“ (S. 185.)

Das Thema der proletarischen Revolution ließ Marx, ebenso wie zwei Jahre zuvor in den „Klassenkämpfen in Frankreich“, lediglich in einigen Sätzen anklingen. Es war ihm bewußt, daß sie damals nicht unmittelbar auf der Tagesordnung stand; aber die umfassende Analyse bürgerlicher Revolutionen in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts wäre schon unvollkommen gewesen, ohne die grundlegenden Unterschiede zur proletarischen Revolution wenigstens anzudeuten.

Von großer theoretischer Bedeutung ist Marx' Bemerkung von der Kurzlebigkeit bürgerlicher im Vergleich mit proletarischen Revolutionen (siehe S. 101/102). Er ging davon aus, daß letztere aufgrund ihrer welthistorischen Aufgabe, der Beseitigung jeglicher Klassenherrschaft, einen wesentlich längeren Zeitraum umfassen müssen. Dabei hatte Engels etwa zur gleichen Zeit darauf hingewiesen, daß bereits bürgerliche Revolutionen einige Jahrzehnte benötigen, daß die englische Bourgeoisie von 1640 bis 1688, die französische von 1789 bis 1830 für ihre soziale und politische Vorherrschaft gegenüber dem Feudalismus gekämpft hatte (siehe S. 3). Marx verwendete im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ den Revolutionsbegriff im weiten Sinne; er umfaßte den gesamten historischen Weg der Arbeiterklasse von der Organisierung ihrer Kräfte für den Kampf um die Macht über den langwierigen und wechselvollen Verlauf dieses Kampfes selbst bis zur radikalen Umgestaltung der vorhandenen kapitalistischen Gesellschaft und der Errichtung der Grundlagen einer grundsätzlich neuen Ordnung.

Diesen mehrere Jahrzehnte währenden Prozeß begriff Marx bereits Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts als durchaus nicht einfach und widerspruchsfrei. Er rechnete mit Fehlern und Rückschlägen im langen und wechselvollen

Verlauf der proletarischen Revolution, die sie aber überwindet durch ihre Gründlichkeit, ihre Selbstkritik und ständige innere Erneuerung. Fortschritte der Revolution machte Marx abhängig vom schrittweisen Begreifen der „Ungeheuerlichkeit ihrer eignen Zwecke“ (S.102), d.h. des riesigen Umfangs und der gewaltigen Tiefe der Aufgaben dieser Revolution, vom Abstreifen „allen Aberglauben[s] an die Vergangenheit“, vom unablässigen Bemühen, den „Inhalt über die Phrase“ obsiegen zu lassen (S.101). Hierin lagen bereits wesentliche Hinweise auf die hohe Bedeutung der Bewußtheit der Massen, des subjektiven Faktors der proletarischen Revolution gegenüber allen vorangegangenen Revolutionen.

Bei seinem Vergleich von bürgerlicher und proletarischer Revolution wandte sich Marx der Kernfrage jeder Revolution, der Frage der Macht, ausführlicher als den anderen Kriterien zu. Der entscheidende Unterschied besteht nach Marx' Feststellungen im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ darin, daß alle bürgerlichen Revolutionen den vorgefundenen Staatsapparat als ihre Hauptbeute betrachteten, ihn beibehielten und weiter ausbauten, weil sie die Macht der Ausbeuterklassen aufrechterhielten, während die proletarische Revolution ihn von Grund auf beseitigen wird, da sie diesen von Natur aus parasitären, jede Volksinitiative erstickenden Apparat nicht nötig hat, weil sie einen völlig neuen Typ der Macht und der staatlichen Zentralisation verkörpert, demgegenüber die feudalistisch-kapitalistische „Bureaukratie ... nur die niedrige und brutale“ Form der Zentralisation ist (S.185).

Marx hatte schon 1843/1844 seine umfangreichen Studien zur Geschichte Frankreichs seit der Herausbildung des Feudalismus (siehe MEGA® IV/2) auf das Wechselverhältnis zwischen Staat und sich herausbildender bürgerlicher Gesellschaft konzentriert. Nach dem bonapartistischen Staatsstreich erkannte er als erster, daß der staatliche militärisch-bürokratische Unterdrückungsapparat in Frankreich bereits im Feudalismus, als eine der historischen Erscheinungen des Absolutismus, entstanden war. Die bürgerlichen Revolutionen von 1789, 1830 und auch 1848 hatten diese zentrale Staatsmaschine nicht zerstört, sondern im Gegenteil immer weiter ausgebaut und verfeinert, zu ihrer Aufrechterhaltung immer mehr Steuern erhoben und neue Behörden geschaffen. Die fortschreitende kapitalistische Entwicklung in Frankreich erweiterte und beschleunigte diesen Prozeß wesentlich. Sie schuf eine „Staatsmacht, deren Arbeit fabrikmäßig geteilt und zentralisiert ist“ und die diese Arbeitsteilung in demselben Maße erweiterte, „als die Theilung der Arbeit innerhalb der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft neue Gruppen von Interessen schuf, also neues Material für die Staatsverwaltung“. (S.178.)

Marx' allgemeine Schlußfolgerung daraus lautete: „Alle Umwälzungen

vervollkommneten diese Maschine statt sie zu brechen.“ (S. 179.) Die erste Aufgabe der proletarischen Revolution wird es daher sein, „alle ihre Kräfte der Zerstörung gegen sie zu konzentrieren“ (S. 178).

Mit dem wachen Haß eines wahren Revolutionärs prangerte Marx jenen „Parasitenkörper“ der staatlichen Exekutivgewalt in Frankreich an, der schon damals „über ein Beamtenheer von mehr als einer halben Million von Individuen“ verfügte (S. 132), „neben einer Armee von einer andern halben Million“ (S. 178).

In diesem Zusammenhang entwickelte Marx seine Lehre von dem in allen klassengespaltenen Gesellschaftsordnungen bestehenden Gegensatz zwischen Staat und eigentlicher, wirklicher Gesellschaft weiter. Dieser Gegensatz spitzt sich im entwickelten Kapitalismus außerordentlich zu, er erreicht einen Punkt, „wo der Staat die bürgerliche Gesellschaft von ihren umfassendsten Lebensäußerungen bis zu ihren unbedeutendsten Regungen hinab, von ihren allgemeinsten Daseinsweisen bis zur Privatexistenz der Individuen umstrickt, kontrolliert, maßregelt, überwacht und bevormundet“, wo er „durch die außerordentlichste Centralisation eine Allgegenwart, Allwissenheit, eine beschleunigte Bewegungsfähigkeit und Schnellkraft gewinnt, die nur in der hilflosen Unselbstständigkeit, in der zerfahrenen Unförmlichkeit des wirklichen Gesellschaftskörpers ein Analogon“ findet. (S. 132.) Marx betrachtete es daher als eine der wesentlichsten geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen für den Beginn der proletarischen Revolution, diesen „Gegensatz der Staatsgewalt zur Gesellschaft rein herauszuarbeiten“ (S. 185).

In diesem großen, welthistorischen Zusammenhang sah er die Aufgabe der Zertrümmerung des alten, militärisch-bürokratischen Staatsapparats als eine der Grundaufgaben der Diktatur des Proletariats. Es war, wie Lenin 1917 betonte, alles andere als ein Zufall, wenn Marx gerade am 5. März 1852, d. h. in eben jenen Wochen, in denen er das Manuskript des „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ abschloß, an Weydemeyer schrieb, die nur ihm eigenen Entdeckungen seien die Bindung der Klassen an bestimmte historische Entwicklungsphasen der Produktion, die Notwendigkeit der Diktatur des Proletariats und ihres Endziels, der Aufhebung aller Klassen und der Herausbildung einer klassenlosen Gesellschaft.

Unmittelbar vor der Großen Sozialistischen Oktoberrevolution beschäftigte sich Lenin besonders gründlich mit dem „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ und schrieb über Marx' Lehre von der notwendigen Zerschlagung des alten Staatsapparats: „In diesen großartigen Ausführungen macht der Marxismus im Vergleich zum ‚Kommunistischen Manifest‘ einen gewaltigen Schritt vorwärts. Dort wird die Frage des Staates noch äußerst abstrakt, in ganz allgemeinen Begriffen und Wendungen behandelt. Hier

wird die Frage konkret gestellt, und es wird eine äußerst genaue, bestimmte, praktisch-greifbare Schlußfolgerung gezogen: Alle früheren Revolutionen haben die Staatsmaschinerie vervollkommenet, man muß sie aber zerschlagen, zerbrechen.

Diese Folgerung ist das Hauptsächliche, das Grundlegende in der Lehre des Marxismus vom Staat.“ (W. I. Lenin: Staat und Revolution. In: Werke. Bd. 25. Berlin 1981. S. 418.)

Marx' tiefere Einsicht in Geschichte und Wesen des Staatsapparats der Ausbeutergesellschaften war auch eine der Voraussetzungen für seine klarsichtige Analyse des Bonapartismus. Terror und offene Gaunereien der Bonapartisten waren nur dem äußeren Anschein nach eine Perversion, in ihrem Wesen jedoch eine Konsequenz bourgeoiser staatlicher Machtausübung. Louis Bonaparte verjagte das bürgerliche Parlament, zerriß die bürgerliche Verfassung und beendete die Zweite Republik, aber auch er betrachtete den gesamten exekutiven Staatsapparat, das Militär und die Ministerien, das Steuerwesen, die Verwaltungs- und Justizbehörden als seine Hauptbeute. Seine ganze „Größe“, die selbst solche seiner Gegner wie Victor Hugo und Pierre-Joseph Proudhon verwirrte, beruhte allein darauf, daß er diesen Apparat weit skrupelloser benutzte, als es die bürgerlich-republikanischen Fraktionen vor dem 2. Dezember 1851 getan hatten. Er verkörperte die „Gewalt ohne Phrase“ (S. 177).

Schon in früheren Schriften hatte Marx darauf verwiesen, daß der Staatsapparat einer bürgerlichen Gesellschaft aufgrund seiner Unterdrückungsfunktion niemals so klein und wohlfeil sein kann, wie dies Bourgeois-Sozialisten wie Émile de Girardin oder kleinbürgerliche Sozialisten wie Proudhon erträumten. Aber erst nach dem 2. Dezember 1851 untersuchte Marx genauer den Staatsapparat als System, die Geschichte der bis in den Absolutismus zurückreichenden staatlichen Machtkonzentration, die zunehmende Verselbständigung einer Staatsmaschine bis hin zum zunächst nicht für möglich gehaltenen vollständigen Sieg der Exekutivgewalt über die Legislativgewalt in Form der bonapartistischen Diktatur. Marx enthüllte es als den Grundzug der französischen Politik in den drei Jahren vor dem Staatsstreich — und dieser Gedanke zieht sich durch den ganzen „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ —, daß in allen einzelnen Auseinandersetzungen die von Louis Bonaparte repräsentierte Exekutive an Boden gewann, das Parlament dagegen ständig zurückwich, in „parlamentarische[n] Kretinismus“ verfiel (S. 155), sich zersplitterte, vertagte, an Einfluß verlor.

Diese Entwicklung war unter den damaligen konkreten Bedingungen Frankreichs gesetzmäßig. Wenn auch formal die Möglichkeit bestand, daß die Nationalversammlung die Exekutive einer radikalen Reform unterwarf, d. h. „die Staatsverwaltung vereinfachte, das Beamtenheer möglichst ver-

ringerte, endlich die bürgerliche Gesellschaft und die öffentliche Meinung ihre eignen von der Regierungsgewalt unabhängigen Organe erschaffen ließ“ (S. 132), so war dieser Ausweg der Legislative, der parlamentarisch-republikanischen Gesamtbourgeoisie prinzipiell abgeschnitten; denn „das *materielle Interesse* der französischen Bourgeoisie ist gerade auf das Innigste mit der Erhaltung jener breiten und vielverzweigten Staatsmaschine verwebt. Hier bringt sie ihre überschüssige Bevölkerung unter und ergänzt in der Form von Staatsgehalten, was sie nicht in der Form von Profiten, Zinsen, Renten und Honoraren einstecken kann. Andererseits zwang ihr *politisches Interesse* sie, die Repression, also die Mittel und das Personal der Staatsgewalt täglich zu vermehren, während sie gleichzeitig einen ununterbrochenen Krieg gegen die öffentliche Meinung führen und die selbstständigen Bewegungsorgane der Gesellschaft mißtrauisch verfolgen, verstümmeln, lähmen mußte, wo es ihr nicht gelang sie gänzlich zu amputieren“ (S. 132/133).

In diesem größeren theoretischen Zusammenhang nahm Marx dem Bonapartismus zugleich den Anschein von etwas ganz Ungewöhnlichem. Die Zweite Republik hatte durch den Staatsstreich „nichts verloren, als ihre rhetorischen Arabesken, die Anstandsformen, mit einem Wort den Schein der Respektabilität. Das jetzige Frankreich war fertig in der parlamentarischen Republik enthalten. Es bedurfte nur eines Bajonetstichs, damit die Blase platze und das Ungeheuer in die Augen springe.“ (S. 175.)

Den durch und durch bourgeoisen Charakter der bonapartistischen Diktatur erkannte auch die herrschende Bourgeoisie Großbritanniens; die Londoner Börse reagierte positiv auf die Fortschritte von Louis Bonaparte. Dies registrierte Marx aufmerksam bereits während seiner Arbeit am „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ (siehe S. 164 und 166/167).

In allen kapitalistisch entwickelten Ländern waren als Reaktion auf den Befreiungskampf der Arbeiterklasse konterrevolutionäre Schritte des Staatsapparats in der verschiedensten Art zu erwarten, die Marx als Verschärfung der Unterdrückung der Gesellschaft durch den Staat wertete. Solche Tendenzen erkannte er Mitte 1852 auch in Großbritannien. In seinem Artikel „The Elections—Tories and Whigs“ schrieb er, es sei das Bestreben der Tories: „To maintain a political power, the social foundation of which has ceased to exist. And how can this be attained? By nothing short of a *Counter-Revolution*, that is to say, by a réaction of the State against Society.“ (S. 319.)

In einer Vielzahl von Artikeln wandten sich Marx und Engels der konkreten Analyse der zeitgenössischen ökonomischen und politischen Verhältnisse Großbritanniens als dem damals bei weitem entwickeltsten kapitalistischen Lande zu. Engels untersuchte in seiner Serie „England“ einige

Aspekte der britischen Politik unmittelbar nach dem Staatsstreich von Louis Bonaparte; Marx lieferte ein halbes Jahr später, nach den britischen Unterhauswahlen vom Juli 1852, in einer Reihe von Beiträgen eine Gesamtübersicht (S. 315–361), wobei er von der analytischen Betrachtung der Parteienstruktur immer mehr zu den ökonomischen Grundlagen der politischen Verhältnisse überging. Solchen Beiträgen wie „Pauperism and Free Trade—The Approaching Commercial Crisis“ und „Political Consequences of the Commercial Excitement“ lag ein gewaltiges Faktenmaterial zugrunde, das Marx in seinen bereits Ende 1849 wieder aufgenommenen ökonomischen Studien erarbeitet hatte (siehe MEGA² IV/7–IV/11).

Diese äußerst umfangreichen und intensiven Studien, die neben rein politökonomischen Fragen auch solche über Technologie, Kolonien, Kulturgeschichte und andere Gebiete umfaßten, bildeten in den Jahren 1851 und 1852 den eigentlichen Schwerpunkt der theoretischen Arbeit von Marx und damit auch den Hintergrund für Erkenntnisse, die in den Schriften des vorliegenden Bandes veröffentlicht werden. Andererseits beeinflußten aktuelle Problemstellungen die Richtung der politökonomischen Forschung, z. B. in der Geld-, Grundrenten- und Krisentheorie; das war damals von entscheidender Bedeutung für die Strategie der Arbeiterbewegung. In diesem synthetischen Forschungsprozeß reiften wichtige Einsichten in das Wesen der Struktur- und Entwicklungszusammenhänge der gesamten menschlichen Geschichte, was vor allem der erstmals im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ verwendete Terminus „Gesellschaftsformation“ (S. 97) signalisierte. Lenin bezeichnete ihn als den Grundbegriff des historischen Materialismus, denn erst diese Verallgemeinerung bot „die Möglichkeit, von der Beschreibung der gesellschaftlichen Erscheinungen (und ihrer Beurteilung vom Standpunkt des Ideals) zu ihrer streng wissenschaftlichen Analyse überzugehen, die beispielsweise das hervorhebt, was das eine kapitalistische Land von einem anderen unterscheidet, und das untersucht, was ihnen allen gemeinsam ist“ (W. I. Lenin: Was sind die „Volksfreunde“ und wie kämpfen sie gegen die Sozialdemokraten? In: Werke. Bd. 1. Berlin 1984. S. 131).

Die durchgängige Problembehandlung wird auch besonders deutlich am Beispiel der Zwischenkrise von 1851. Im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ zeigte Marx deren starke Auswirkungen auf die französische Industrie, während es der britischen Bourgeoisie auf einer höheren Stufe industrieller Entwicklung möglich war, diese Zwischenkrise mit einigen Importeinschränkungen und Profitverzicht leicht zu überstehen und sogar zu investieren (siehe S. 167/168). Im Oktober 1852 kam Marx in dem Artikel „Pauperism and Free Trade ...“ auf dieses Problem zurück und legte dar, daß ein höheres industrielles Niveau keineswegs vor den Aus-

wirkungen einer wirklichen Überproduktionskrise bewahre, sondern genau im Gegenteil gerade die industrielle Bourgeoisie treffen werde: „The more surplus capital concentrates itself in industrial production, instead of dividing its stream amongst the manifold channels of speculation, the more extensive, the more lasting, the more direct will the crisis fall upon the working masses and upon the very *élite* of the middle class.“ (S. 347.)

In Ansätzen gelangte Marx in diesem Artikel zu einer Relativierung des bis dahin zu unvermittelt gesehenen Zusammenhangs von Krise und Revolution. Mit der Feststellung, der periodische Zyklus gehe „in regular succession ... through the different states of quiescence—next improvement—growing confidence—activity—prosperity—excitement—overtrading—convulsion—pressure—stagnation—distress—ending again in quiescence“ (S. 344), wurde die Überproduktionskrise als eine „normale“ Erscheinung in den kapitalistischen Reproduktionsprozeß eingeordnet und nicht mehr als Anzeichen dafür gesehen, daß die Entwicklung der Produktivkräfte ihre kapitalistische Hülle bereits sprengt, wie dies Engels noch zwei Jahre zuvor vermutet hatte (siehe MEGA² I/10. S. 314). Auch diese Teilerkenntnis fügte sich ein in die aus mehreren Quellen gespeiste Einsicht von Marx und Engels in die Langfristigkeit von Entwicklungsprozessen der bestehenden kapitalistischen ökonomischen Gesellschaftsformation.

Unter diesem allgemeinen Gesichtspunkt wurde es notwendiger als bis dahin vermutet, solche Probleme wie Arbeiteraristokratie, Reformismus in der Arbeiterbewegung, Rolle von allgemeinem Wahlrecht, von Genossenschaften und Gewerkschaften sowie eines friedlichen Weges der Revolution im Rahmen der proletarischen Revolutionstheorie zu erörtern. Dies geschah weitgehend in Artikeln, die von Ernest Jones und Georg Eccarius geschrieben und in der chartistischen Presse veröffentlicht wurden. Für einige von ihnen konnte der Nachweis der direkten Hilfe und Mitarbeit von Marx erbracht werden, so daß sie im vorliegenden Band erstmals innerhalb einer Marx-Engels-Ausgabe erscheinen („The Well-being of the Working Classes“, „Three to One; Or, the Strength of the Working-Class“, „The Coming Crisis and why It Is Coming“). Auf mehrere der hier erstmals auftauchenden theoretischen Ansätze griffen Marx und Engels später, während der Tätigkeit der Internationalen Arbeiterassoziation, zurück und entwickelten sie weiter.

Am gründlichsten erörtert wurde schon 1851/1852 die Bedeutung des allgemeinen Wahlrechts unter gesellschaftlichen und politischen Bedingungen wie denen Großbritanniens. Seine Einführung wäre – nach Marx' Worten – „the equivalent for political power for the working class of England“ gewesen (S. 327). Dabei war „political power“ keineswegs ein Synonym für Diktatur des Proletariats; unter direktem Einfluß von Marx

wurde in der Artikelserie „A Review of the Literature on the Coup d'Etat“ dazu vielmehr erklärt, das allgemeine Wahlrecht, einmal erkämpft, sei „only the first decisive step in the revolutionary direction, the piece of ground necessary for the organisation of their army, the open field in which the hitherto disguised war of classes can at last be fairly fought out, the means in a word, and not the end, of the people's emancipation“ (S. 507). Da die Arbeiterklasse damals in den Industriebezirken Großbritanniens längst die überwiegende Mehrheit der Bevölkerung bildete, hätte ihr uneingeschränktes allgemeines Wahlrecht selbstverständlich bedeutende politische Macht verliehen. Marx wies aber darauf hin, daß ihr diese aufgrund ihrer Zahl nicht automatisch zugefallen wäre, sondern daß das britische Proletariat auch „in a long, though underground civil war ... has gained a clear consciousness of its position as a class“ (S. 327).

Das war eine Anspielung auf die großen Traditionen der chartistischen Bewegung, die im April 1848 zwar eine bedeutende Niederlage erlitten hatte, deren linker, von Jones geführter Flügel sich aber in vielen Fragen den ideologischen Positionen des Marxismus annäherte. Die im vorliegenden Band dokumentierte aktive Mitarbeit von Marx und Engels an den von Jones herausgegebenen Chartistenorganen war Ausdruck eines frühen Versuchs, die Bildung einer revolutionären Massenpartei der Arbeiterklasse auf nationaler Ebene und unter den Bedingungen einer bereits ausgeprägten kapitalistischen Klassen- und Sozialstruktur praktisch voranzubringen. Die Ansichten von Marx und Engels über die damals objektiv gegebenen Rahmenbedingungen für den Kampf um die Konstituierung großer revolutionärer Parteien sind kurz zusammengefaßt am Schluß des Artikels „Attempts to Form a New Opposition Party“, in dem Marx im November 1852 schrieb: „The mass of the Chartists, too, are at the present moment absorbed by material production; but on all points the nucleus of the party is reorganized, and the communications reestablished, in England as well as in Scotland, and in the event of a commercial and political crisis, the importance of the present noiseless activity at the head-quarters of Chartism will be felt all over Great Britain.“ (S. 361.)

Während Marx und Engels größten Wert darauf legten, die nichtrevolutionäre Periode zum gründlichen Studium zu nutzen, setzten einige Vertreter der Arbeiterbewegung und vor allem der Vulgärdemokratie auf Abenteuerum, Voluntarismus und Revolutionsspielerei. Eine mit dem Kampf um die Selbständigkeit der proletarischen Bewegung aufs engste verbundene Problematik, die sich durch den gesamten Band hindurchzieht, ist die von Marx und Engels geführte Polemik gegen die abenteuerliche Politik der kleinbürgerlichen Emigration.

Diese Polemik beruhte theoretisch auf der in der Märzansprache von

1850 dargelegten Politik der Kommunisten und betrifft in gleicher Weise französische, deutsche, ungarische, österreichische und italienische Vertreter des Kleinbürgertums, vorwiegend in London und den USA wirkend. Wie schon 1847 in der Polemik mit Karl Heinzen griffen Marx und Engels solche Politiker nicht in ihrer Eigenschaft als Demokraten an, sondern als Vulgärdemokraten, die die Sache der Revolution diskreditierten, verstärkt zur Waffe des Antikommunismus griffen und sich in einigen Fällen sogar als direkte oder indirekte Helfershelfer der politischen Polizei erwiesen.

Marx' Erkenntnisse über das Wesen des Bonapartismus ermöglichten ein wesentlich schärferes Erfassen der Abenteuerlichkeit bestimmter politischer Handlungen. Schon bei den allerersten Kontakten Giuseppe Mazzinis und Lajos Kossuths zu Louis Bonaparte griff Marx zu öffentlichen Enthüllungen und veranlaßte auch Ernest Jones, Adolf Cluß und Joseph Weydemeyer, in diesem Sinne aufzutreten (siehe „Kossuth, Mazzini, and Louis Napoleon“, „A Reply to Kossuth's ‚Secretary‘“, „What Is Kossuth?“).

Gerade in den Jahren 1851/1852 gehörte es objektiv zur Parteipflicht von Marx, Engels und ihren Kampfgefährten, mit allen zu Gebote stehenden publizistischen Mitteln gegen Abenteuerum und Revolutionsspielerei anzugehen. In einer Zeit verschärfter Repressalien der Reaktion gegen alle wahrhaften Demokraten und gegen die Kommunisten mußte sich die proletarische Partei klar und unmißverständlich von jeglichem „linken“ Abenteuerum, von Scheinkonspirationen, Revolutionsanleihen und ähnlichem abgrenzen. Daher zieht sich diese Seite ihrer Tätigkeit durch den ganzen vorliegenden Band. Hierher gehören Marx' Skizzen über die Londoner Emigration vom Sommer 1851 ebenso wie seine Auseinandersetzung mit Kossuth vom Herbst 1852, die prinzipiellen Passagen über das Wesen der kleinbürgerlichen Demokratie in „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“, im „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ und schließlich in den „Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln“. In diese Auseinandersetzungen griffen mit Marx' und Engels' Unterstützung auch Eccarius, Jones und Weydemeyer mit Artikeln ein, die im Anhang des vorliegenden Bandes enthalten sind („Erklärung gegen Karl Heinzen“, „Die deutsche Bewegung und ihre ‚Spitzen‘“, „A Review of the Literature on the Coup d'Etat“ und andere). Den Höhepunkt bildete die von Marx und Engels unter Mitwirkung von Ernst Dronke verfaßte Streitschrift „Die großen Männer des Exils“, die jedoch zu Lebzeiten ihrer Verfasser nicht veröffentlicht werden konnte.

Das mit hoher polemischer Meisterschaft gezeichnete Bild einer ganzen Galerie literarischer und politischer Vertreter der Vulgärdemokratie, ihrer Phrasendrescherei und ihres Karrierismus diente der Verteidigung der politischen, organisatorischen und ideologischen Selbständigkeit der Arbei-

terbewegung. Das Pamphlet zeigt, wohin die Ignorierung der realen Situation, der tatsächlichen Kampfbedingungen führen muß.

Das Auftreten von Marx und Engels als Vertreter der kommunistischen Bewegung fand in dieser Zeit seinen offensichtlichsten Ausdruck in der Verteidigung der in Köln inhaftierten führenden Mitglieder des Bundes der Kommunisten, gegen die die preußische Reaktion den ersten großen antikommunistischen Tendenzprozeß vorbereitete. Marx und Engels alarmierten die Öffentlichkeit, traten gegen die mehrfache Verschleppung des Prozesses und gegen die unerhört harten Haftbedingungen auf, erklärten die politischen Hintergründe und Zusammenhänge des Prozesses sowie die kriminellen Methoden der politischen Polizei bei der Beschaffung und der Fälschung von Prozeßmaterialien, erarbeiteten die politische Linie für die Verteidigung und lieferten entscheidendes Entlastungsmaterial, organisierten Solidaritätssammlungen und gaben unmittelbar nach Prozeßende eine historische Wertung dieses Ereignisses.

Diese Tätigkeit durchzieht den gesamten vorliegenden Band. Von ihr sprechen vor allem Marx' Schrift „Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln“, aber auch eine Reihe von Presseerklärungen seit dem 4. Oktober 1851, Engels' Liste der nach Köln gesandten Dokumente, verschiedene Stellungnahmen zum Abschluß des Prozesses („Public Statement to Editors of the English Press“, „The Trial at Cologne“, „A Final Declaration on the Late Cologne Trials“, „The Late Trial at Cologne“) und der „Aufruf zur Unterstützung der in Köln verurteilten Vertreter des Proletariats und ihrer Familien“.

Eine ganze Reihe von Dokumenten des Anhangs macht deutlich, in welchem großem Umfang Marx und Engels andere Bundesmitglieder (Adolf Cluß, Wilhelm Pieper, Joseph Weydemeyer) in diese vielseitige und angestrengte politische Arbeit einbezogen. Dies betrifft auch die Verteidigungsrede von Karl Schneider II und die von Charles Dana verfaßte Pressenotiz „Justice in Prussia“. Die meisten dieser Materialien werden im vorliegenden Band erstmals in einer Marx-Engels-Ausgabe abgedruckt, da der Nachweis der unmittelbaren Hilfe oder direkten Mitarbeit von Marx und Engels geführt werden konnte.

Die „Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln“ waren ein erster Beitrag zur „historischen Vindikation der Partei“, der Marx acht Jahre später das Pamphlet „Herr Vogt“ widmete (siehe MEGA² I/18). Mit der erstmaligen Teilveröffentlichung seiner Rede in der Sitzung der Zentralbehörde des Bundes der Kommunisten vom 15. September 1850 (MEGA² I/10. S. 577–580) sowie anderer Angaben legte Marx einen Grundstein zur Parteigeschichtsschreibung. Vor allem aber schuf Marx mit seinen „Enthüllungen ...“ die erste Kampfschrift gegen das reaktionäre Preußentum.

Der in der Vorbereitung und Durchführung des Kölner Kommunistenprozesses dokumentierte Antikommunismus war der konzentrierteste Ausdruck der zeitweilig siegreichen Konterrevolution, die in Preußen aufgrund des junkerlich-bourgeoisien Klassenkompromisses besonders reaktionäre Züge annahm. Marx zeichnete Wilhelm Stieber als Symbolgestalt dieser Entwicklung, und die Begriffe Preußen und Stieber sollten in der Tat bis zu dem von Marx vorausgesagten „Jena!“ (S. 422) des preußischen Staates zusammengehören.

Marx ging von der Verteidigung zur Anklage über, indem er nicht nur die Polizeiprovokationen und Urkundenfälschungen, die Erpressung falscher Aussagen und andere Gesetzesverletzungen anprangerte, sondern die *Notwendigkeit* für die herrschenden Klassen Preußens zeigte, zu diesen kriminellen Methoden zu greifen. Die angeklagten Kommunisten *mußten* verurteilt werden, gleichgültig ob es Beweise gab oder nicht, um das reaktionäre System der Machtausübung aufrechtzuerhalten, in dem die alten feudalen Kräfte die entscheidenden staatlichen Funktionen, die Großbourgeoisie die wirtschaftliche Macht innehatten. Im Grunde standen Anklage und Geschworene in Köln vor demselben Dilemma wie die französische Bourgeoisie bis zum 2. Dezember 1851: Entweder Gefährdung der Ausbeuterherrschaft oder Herrschaft der bonapartistischen „Dezemberbande“, entweder Gefährdung des Machtkompromisses oder Herrschaft der politischen Polizei. Wie Louis Bonaparte das allgemeine Wahlrecht, so korrumpierte Stieber die demokratische Institution des Geschworenengerichts. Der Kölner Prozeß zeigte, „daß die Jury ein Standgericht der privilegierten Klassen ist, eingerichtet, um die Lücken des Gesetzes durch die Breite des bürgerlichen Gewissens auszufüllen“ (S. 422). Marx' „Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozeß zu Köln“ nahmen die spätere Korrektur des Kölner Urteils durch die Geschichte vorweg: Schuldig waren nicht die Kommunisten, die besten Vorkämpfer des gesellschaftlichen Fortschritts, schuldig war die zeitweilig siegreiche Konterrevolution.

Nach dem Kölner Urteil stellte der Bund der Kommunisten auf Marx' Antrag im November 1852 seine Tätigkeit in Großbritannien ein und erklärte das Weiterbestehen des Bundes auch auf dem europäischen Kontinent für nicht mehr zeitgemäß. Nachdem die revolutionäre Arbeiterbewegung aus inneren Entwicklungsgründen und aus äußeren Umständen die Phase der Geheimgesellschaften endgültig hinter sich ließ, die offene Tätigkeit als „*Oppositions-Partei der Zukunft*“ (S. 414) gegen eine reine Bourgeoisieherrschaft aber in der nachrevolutionären Reaktionsperiode noch nicht möglich war, mußte sich die kommunistische Partei zeitweilig auf die Gebiete der theoretischen und publizistischen Arbeit zurückziehen und ihre organisatorische Tätigkeit auf ein Minimum beschränken.

In außerordentlicher inhaltlicher Übereinstimmung analysierte Marx in den „Enthüllungen ...“, Engels in seinem Artikel „The Late Trial at Cologne“ die für die Partei entstandene Lage. Sie waren die Sprecher jener Kräfte, „which knew, that the upsetting of an existing Government was but a passing stage in the great impending struggle, and which intended to keep together and to prepare the party, whose nucleus they formed, for the last, decisive combat which must one day or another crush forever in Europe the domination, not of mere ,tyrants‘, ,despots‘ and ,usurpers‘, but of a power far superior, and far more formidable than theirs; that of capital over labor“ (S. 436/437).

Editorische Hinweise

Der Band enthält sämtliche überlieferten Schriften von Marx und Engels aus der Zeit von Juli 1851 bis Dezember 1852 in chronologischer Reihenfolge. Maßgeblich für die Einordnung war der Beginn der Niederschrift. In Fortsetzungen erschienene Arbeiten – das betrifft vor allem „Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany“ und den „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ – werden geschlossen dargeboten, und zwar zum Zeitpunkt des Entstehens der ersten Folge.

Der Anhang enthält, ebenfalls in chronologischer Folge, 18 Artikel, Erklärungen und Reden, die mit Marx' oder Engels' Hilfe von Adolf Cluß, Charles Dana, Georg Eccarius, Ernest Jones, Wilhelm Pieper, Karl Schneider II und Joseph Weydemeyer verfaßt wurden, sowie drei dubiose Artikel.

Die von Marx geleistete Arbeit beim Redigieren der Rohübersetzung von Bertalan Szemeres Buch „Graf Ludwig Batthyány, Arthur Görgei, Ludwig Kossuth“ kann nicht durch Edierten Text widergespiegelt werden; sie wird am Schluß des wissenschaftlichen Apparats beschrieben (S. 1135 bis 1138).

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Eindeutige Schreib- und Druckfehler werden im Edierten Text korrigiert und nicht in die Korrekturenverzeichnisse aufgenommen. Darunter fallen auch Druckfehler, die aufgrund von Autorkorrekturen in Druckvorlagen, Wiederveröffentlichungen und Druckfehlerberichtigungen ermittelt werden konnten. Im textkritischen Apparat wird jeweils darauf aufmerksam gemacht. Sinnverändernde Korrekturen werden stets im Korrekturenverzeichnis ausgewiesen. Schreib- und Druckfehler, deren Korrektur in verschiedenartiger Weise möglich ist bzw. die nicht eindeutig als solche zu bestimmen sind, werden in Fällen, wo vieles für eine bestimmte Lösung spricht, im Edierten Text berichtigt, in unklaren Fällen jedoch nicht bereinigt. Beide Verfahren sind im Korrekturenverzeichnis vermerkt.

Der durchgängige Vergleich mit den Originalen der Handschriften bzw. den Erstdrucken und späteren autorisierten Drucken ermöglichte eine Reihe von Verbesserungen in der Textwiedergabe, die sämtlich in den Korrekturenverzeichnissen angeführt sind.

Versehen bei Faktenangaben sowie bei der Schreibweise von Namen, soweit sie eindeutig als solche bestimmbar sind, werden im Edierten Text korrigiert. Diese Berichtigungen werden im Korrekturenverzeichnis ausgewiesen. Ist der Sachverhalt nicht eindeutig, wird keine Veränderung vorgenommen. Notwendige Hinweise bieten dann die Erläuterungen.

Die Interpunktion der zugrunde gelegten Handschrift bzw. des Druckes wird beibehalten. Nur offensichtliche Interpunktionsfehler werden im Edierten Text ohne Kennzeichnung korrigiert, vorausgesetzt, es tritt dadurch keine Sinnänderung ein. Das Setzen der An- und Abführungszeichen sowie der Gebrauch halber Anführungszeichen erfolgt in einheitlicher Weise, auch wenn dies von der jeweiligen Textgrundlage abweicht. Fehlende Akzente auf französischen Namen wurden stillschweigend ergänzt.

Abkürzungen werden ohne Kennzeichnung ausgeschrieben, ausgenommen solche, deren Ausschreibung ungebräuchlich ist (z. B., d. h., usw., etc., bzw. u. a.). In bibliographischen Angaben bleiben Abkürzungen von Personennamen und übliche Abkürzungen (Zitaten- und Literaturnachweise von Marx und Engels) bestehen.

Die verschiedenen Hervorhebungsstufen in den handschriftlichen und gedruckten Textgrundlagen werden im Edierten Text einheitlich folgendermaßen wiedergegeben: erste Hervorhebungsstufe – kursiv; zweite Hervorhebungsstufe – gesperrt; dritte Hervorhebungsstufe – kursiv gesperrt. Im übrigen bleibt das Schrift- bzw. Druckbild der zugrunde gelegten Zeugen (Schriftart, Schriftgröße usw.) unberücksichtigt. Antiquadruck bei lateinischen Zitaten bzw. Personen- oder Zeitungsnamen in Druckvorlagen

mit ansonsten gotischer Schrift wird als damals – sehr uneinheitlich – verwendete Druckeigenheit im Edierten Text nicht wiedergegeben. Alle hierzu erforderlichen Angaben bieten die Zeugenbeschreibungen.

Beginn und Ende einer Seite der handschriftlichen bzw. gedruckten Textgrundlage werden im Edierten Text kenntlich gemacht, und die Paginierung wird – wenn vorhanden – mitgeteilt (siehe Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen, Siglen und Zeichen). Wurde die Paginierung der Handschriften redaktionell ergänzt, so wird die Seitenzahl in eckige Klammern gesetzt. Liegt ein Zeitungsdruck zugrunde, erfolgt keine Angabe des Seiten- bzw. Spaltenwechsels; zu Beginn des betreffenden Edierten Textes werden aber Nummer und Datum der Zeitung vermerkt.

Zum Edierten Text derjenigen Arbeiten von Marx und Engels, die zuerst als Artikel in der NYT erschienen, ist anzumerken, daß die tägliche Ausgabe dieser Zeitung (NYDT) bereits in den Jahren 1851/1852 in mehreren, geringfügig voneinander differierenden Teilaufgaben herausgegeben wurde (wahrscheinlich eine Früh- und zwei Nachmittagsausgaben). Es gab offenbar Fälle, daß aus London eintreffende Korrespondenzen noch in eine spätere Teilaufgabe aufgenommen und dann in der Morgenausgabe des folgenden Tages wiederholt wurden. Daraus erklären sich gelegentliche Differenzen in Bibliographien über Datum und Nummer der betreffenden NYDT-Ausgabe für die Erstveröffentlichung eines Artikels von Marx bzw. Engels. Eine eindeutige Klärung des Sachverhalts war uns nicht in allen Fällen möglich, da die noch vorhandenen Jahrgänge der Zeitung aus Exemplaren verschiedener Teilaufgaben zusammengesetzt sind, d. h. stets nur eine Tagesausgabe enthalten. Soweit wir feststellen konnten, gab es darüber hinaus zumindest 1851 auch mehrmals eindeutige Druckfehler in der Angabe von Datum und Nummer im Titelkopf der NYDT selbst. Es ist daher möglich, daß, häufiger als im vorliegenden Band verzeichnet, Korrespondenzen von Marx bzw. Engels sowohl in einer Nachmittagsausgabe als auch in der Frühausgabe des folgenden Tages abgedruckt worden sind. Aufgrund der bisherigen Erfahrungen ist aber nicht anzunehmen, daß dabei der Text verändert wurde.

Im vorliegenden Band wurde für den Edierten Text ein von der Recordak Corporation, New York City, hergestellter Film der NYDT verwendet und mit dem in der Bibliothek des Instituts für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der KPdSU in Moskau aufbewahrten Original dieser Zeitung verglichen.

Über Eingriffe der New-Yorker Redaktion, d. h. Charles Danas, in die von Marx übersandten Manuskripte liegen für die Zeit bis Ende 1852 keine direkten Zeugnisse vor. Da sie aber z. B. 1853 vorkamen (siehe MEGA² I/12. S. 685), müssen sie auch für Artikel des vorliegenden Bandes als möglich angenommen werden. Die Bearbeiter gingen jedoch davon aus, daß diese

Eingriffe nur geringfügig waren und daher der überlieferte Text der NYT als authentisch zu betrachten ist. Eine gewisse Überprüfung dieses Sachverhalts ermöglicht das überlieferte Fragment des deutschsprachigen Manuskripts für die Artikel „The Elections—Tories and Whigs“ und „The Chartists“ (S. 315–317), das erstmals veröffentlicht wird.

Bei solchen orthographischen Formen wie „reorganization“, „coöperation“ oder „reestablished“ handelt es sich um Auswirkungen eines Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts im amerikanischen Englisch durchgeführten Experiments. Diese auch in der NYT zeitweise verwendeten Schreibweisen setzten sich nicht durch. Als Bestandteil der verwendeten Druckvorlagen wurden sie aber im Edierten Text beibehalten.

Zu jeder in den Band aufgenommenen Arbeit wird ein wissenschaftlicher Apparat geboten. Er besteht aus dem Teil Entstehung und Überlieferung (einschließlich Zeugenbeschreibung und Begründung des editorischen Verfahrens), dem Variantenverzeichnis, dem Korrekturenverzeichnis und den Erläuterungen (siehe dazu auch die Abschnitte VIII und IX des Vorworts zur Gesamtausgabe im Band 1 der Ersten Abteilung). In der Kopfleiste werden die Entstehungszeit sowie die Seitenzahlen des betreffenden Edierten Textes mitgeteilt.

Zu einigen Gruppen von Arbeiten wird außerdem eine zusammenfassende Darstellung der Entstehung, zeitgenössischen Wirkung und Überlieferung gegeben. Das betrifft den Apparatteil „Zur publizistischen Tätigkeit von Marx und Engels von Juli 1851 bis Dezember 1852“. Er behandelt ihre Mitarbeit an der „New-York Tribune“, den Chartistenorganen „Notes to the People“ und „The People’s Paper“, der New-Yorker „Revolution“, der „Turn-Zeitung“, der „New-Yorker Criminal-Zeitung“ und einigen anderen vorwiegend deutschsprachigen Zeitungen in den USA und erörtert den Einfluß von Marx und Engels auf sie. In diesem Apparatteil werden Angaben vermittelt, die mehr oder weniger auf alle in die betreffende Gruppe aufgenommenen Arbeiten zutreffen.

Der wissenschaftliche Apparat zu jeder einzelnen Arbeit beginnt mit der Darlegung ihrer Entstehung und Überlieferung; von der jeweiligen Wirkungsgeschichte wird nur das unmittelbare zeitgenössische Echo erfaßt. Bei Handschriften, die zu Lebzeiten von Marx und Engels nicht veröffentlicht wurden, ist ihre Erstveröffentlichung angegeben bzw. wird auf die erstmalige Veröffentlichung im vorliegenden Band hingewiesen.

In den Zeugenbeschreibungen werden alle für die Textentwicklung belangvollen überlieferten Zeugen mit einer Sigle versehen (siehe Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen, Siglen und Zeichen) aufgeführt und zusätzlich mit Zahlenexponenten bezeichnet. Diese Numerierung erfolgt unabhängig

vom Charakter der einzelnen Zeugen fortlaufend in der Reihenfolge ihrer Entstehung (z. B. **J¹**, **K²**, **D³**). Nicht autorisierte Zeugen werden mit kleinen Buchstaben bezeichnet (z. B. **j¹**, **d²**). Nicht überlieferte Textzeugen, die in einigen Fällen für die stemmatologische Folge von Bedeutung sind und daher verzeichnet werden müssen, werden mit der Sigle **X** bzw. **x** versehen und erhalten eine gesonderte durchlaufende Zählung (z. B. **X¹**, **x²**, **J¹**, **K²**, **D³**, **K³**). Ist der Schreiber eines nicht von Marx oder Engels selbst stammenden Textzeugen bekannt (z. B. Jenny Marx), so tritt vor den Zahlenexponenten der Sigle ein Buchstabenexponent (z. B. **H¹¹**).

Das Variantenverzeichnis enthält alle von Marx bzw. Engels vorgenommenen Textänderungen, die den Text inhaltlich oder stilistisch weiterentwickeln. Diese Varianten treten auf als Textreduzierungen (Tilgungen nicht korrupter Textstellen), Textergänzungen (Einfügungen, Zusätze), Textersetzungen und Textumstellungen. Demzufolge werden folgende Textänderungen nicht verzeichnet: von Marx oder Engels korrigierte Schreib- oder Druckfehler; von Marx bzw. Engels vorgenommene Veränderungen der Orthographie oder der Interpunktion, die keinen Einfluß auf die Sinngebung haben (sie werden in den Zeugenbeschreibungen generalisierend erwähnt); Schreibansätze, die keinen erkennbaren Sinn ergeben oder bei denen der Sinn der ursprünglich von den Autoren beabsichtigten Aussage nicht wenigstens mit Wahrscheinlichkeit rekonstruiert werden kann; solche innerhandschriftlichen Sofortkorrekturen, die formale Berichtigungen grammatischer oder stilistischer Versehen darstellen, jedoch weder die inhaltliche Aussage des Textes verändern noch den Stil der gesamten Darstellung modifizieren.

Das Variantenverzeichnis verzeichnet von Werkstelle zu Werkstelle fortschreitend alle varianten Fassungen einer Textstelle, die innerhalb eines oder mehrerer Textzeugen überliefert sind, wobei Stützworte (aus dem Edierten Text) gegeben werden. Die innerhandschriftlichen Varianten zu einer Werkstelle werden entweder mit Hilfe diakritischer Zeichen hintereinander oder mit der Methode der Zeilenparallelisierung untereinander dargeboten. Das Variantenverzeichnis benutzt eine im wesentlichen diskursive Verzeichnungsform, d. h., es wird der Inhalt der Textveränderungen festgehalten, jedoch nicht die Form, in der diese Änderungen durchgeführt werden.

Die verschiedenen Varianten werden mit Hilfe diakritischer Zeichen dargestellt (siehe Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen, Siglen und Zeichen). Sofortvarianten treten auch in der Form von Abbrechungen auf, d. h. als Textänderungen, bei denen die Autoren die Gedankenführung unterbrechen und ihr (meist durch Tilgung, aber auch durch Ersetzung von Wörtern oder Wortteilen, Änderungen von Flexionsendungen und Einfügungen)

einen neuen Verlauf geben. Abbrechungen, die in der Handschrift vollständig getilgt wurden, werden folgendermaßen dargestellt: Nach dem Stützwort aus dem Edierten Text folgt in Winkelklammern der getilgte Passus und danach das Abbrechungszeichen. Die neue Version der Fortsetzung dieses Satzes ist im Edierten Text nachzulesen.

Bei der Darbietung von Varianten verschiedener Textzeugen einer Arbeit wird zunächst die variierende Stelle des Edierten Textes (bei Textersetzungen und -reduzierungen mit Stützworten) angegeben; nach dem abgrenzenden Lemmazeichen folgt die Sigle des abweichenden Textzeugen mit der Variante und der Wiederholung der Stützworte.

Einige Textumformungen, vor allem größere Textersetzungen, werden mit Hilfe der Zeilenparallelisierung dargestellt. Dabei werden Varianten einer Werkstelle in chronologischer Folge partiturähnlich untereinander gestellt, wobei jede Schicht, die links einen Zähler erhält, durch die nächstfolgende ersetzt wird. Die jeweils letzte Schicht ist identisch mit dem Edierten Text. Unverändert bleibende Wörter werden nicht wiederholt, sondern durch Unterführungszeichen gekennzeichnet. Der durchgehende Strich bezeichnet entweder eine Textreduzierung gegenüber der vorhergehenden Schicht oder ist nur ein Dehnungsstrich, um den Raum für eine Texterweiterung in der folgenden Schicht offenzuhalten. Man kann sowohl jede Schicht für sich im Zusammenhang (horizontal) lesen als auch die Entwicklung einzelner Werkstellen von Schicht zu Schicht (vertikal) überblicken. Partielle Textveränderungen innerhalb einer Schicht werden durch Gabelungen dargestellt, die mit *a*, *b* usw. bezeichnet sind. Durch Parallelisierung werden auch kleinere Textänderungen innerhalb größerer Textreduzierungen, -ersetzungen oder -erweiterungen dargestellt, da somit der Bereich der „inneren“ Variante ohne zusätzliche Zeichen erkennbar ist.

Besondere Probleme für die Variantendarbietung warfen die beiden handschriftlichen Fragmente zum „18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte“ auf. In einem Falle wird auf die Methode der Zeilengruppenparallelisierung zurückgegriffen (Variante 136.4–15), obgleich diese eigentlich nur für die Wiedergabe innerhalb *einer* besonders komplizierten Handschrift vorgesehen ist. Das zweite Fragment wird innerhalb des Variantenapparats vollständig abgedruckt (Variante 144.18–34), die innerhandschriftlichen Varianten sind im Anschluß daran verzeichnet.

Besonderheiten der Überlieferungslage geboten bei der Wiedergabe der Verteidigungsrede von Karl Schneider II im Kölner Kommunistenprozeß die Verzeichnung von Lesarten, d. h. Abweichungen gegenüber dem Edierten Text in einer nicht autorisierten Vorlage, die für die textkritische Analyse herangezogen werden mußte.

Die Erläuterungen geben alle für das Verständnis des Textes (einschließlich der Varianten) erforderlichen Erklärungen und Hinweise, soweit dies nicht schon im Apparatteil Entstehung und Überlieferung geschehen ist. Sie bieten ferner die Übersetzung griechischer und lateinischer Textstellen. Wichtiger Bestandteil der Erläuterungen ist der Nachweis der von Marx und Engels benutzten Literatur. Abweichungen zwischen der Zitierweise der Autoren und der benutzten Quelle werden verzeichnet, wenn diese inhaltlich belangvoll oder für eine vorgenommene oder mögliche Textrevision von Bedeutung sind. Außerdem werden alle von den Autoren gegenüber der Quelle vorgenommenen Hervorhebungen mitgeteilt. Bei Zitaten aus der Weltliteratur wird in der Regel auf die Angabe einer konkreten Ausgabe verzichtet.

Verweisungen auf bereits vorliegende MEGA²-Bände erfolgen unter Verwendung der im Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen entschlüsselten Siglen. In allen anderen Fällen wird bei Zitaten aus Arbeiten von Marx und Engels direkt auf den Erstdruck oder auf das handschriftliche Manuskript verwiesen.

Der wissenschaftliche Apparat enthält außerdem ein Verzeichnis nicht überlieferter Arbeiten.

Die Register erfassen den Edierten Text und die Varianten.

Das Literaturregister umfaßt alle Literatur (Bücher, Broschüren, Zeitschriftenaufsätze, Zeitungsartikel, Dokumente, Reden usw.), die in den Texten direkt oder indirekt zitiert bzw. direkt oder indirekt erwähnt wird. Die Titel anonymer Veröffentlichungen werden nach dem ersten Wort, das kein bestimmter oder unbestimmter Artikel ist, eingeordnet. Ist kein Titel vorhanden, wird in Ausnahmefällen ein Titel fingiert; in der Regel werden jedoch die ersten Worte des Textes mit Auslassungspunkten angeführt. Wenn bei Zeitungskorrespondenzen ein Titel in der jeweiligen Inhaltsübersicht vorhanden ist, wird dieser in runde Klammern gesetzt. Nicht aufgenommen werden allgemeine Hinweise auf Verträge, Verfassungen u.ä. sowie auf Manuskripte, Archivmaterialien und Briefe, die zum Zeitpunkt der Abfassung des Textes noch unveröffentlicht waren und zum Teil auch heute noch sind.

Das Namenregister stellt die in den Texten direkt oder indirekt genannten Personennamen zusammen, wobei literarische und mythologische Namen einbezogen werden. Aufgenommen werden auch die Verfasser von Veröffentlichungen, die im Text selbst nicht genannt, deren Arbeiten aber direkt oder indirekt genannt oder zitiert werden. Die alphabetische Einordnung der Namen erfolgt nach ihrer authentischen Schreibweise, bei griechischen und kyrillischen Buchstaben nach der entsprechenden tran-

skribierten Form. Alle von der authentischen Form abweichenden Schreibweisen des Edierten Textes werden im Register der authentischen Schreibweise in runden Klammern zugefügt und, wenn notwendig, gesondert als Verweisung angeführt. Verschlüsselte Namen im Edierten Text sind in Erläuterungen erklärt.

Das Sachregister umfaßt die Begriffe, die den wesentlichen Inhalt der Arbeiten von Marx und Engels und die Entwicklung ihrer Auffassungen zwischen Juli 1851 und Dezember 1852 widerspiegeln. Es ist im Prinzip in der Redaktionssprache und in moderner Orthographie abgefaßt. Die Schlagworte sind unmittelbar dem Edierten Text entnommen oder lehnen sich weitgehend an diesen an. Daher werden sie in einigen Fällen in der Sprache des jeweiligen Originals gegeben, bzw. steht der originalsprachige Begriff in Klammern hinter dem Schlagwort in der Redaktionssprache.

Der vorliegende Band wurde bearbeitet von Martin Hundt (Leitung), Ingrid Donner, Editha Nagl, Ingolf Neunübel und Sieglinde v. Treskow. Außerdem wirkten Birgit Jarchow und Käte Schwank mit. Das Literaturregister wurde von Editha Nagl, das Namenregister von Sieglinde v. Treskow, das Sachregister von Ingolf Neunübel erarbeitet.

Der Band wurde seitens der Redaktionskommission betreut und begutachtet von Rolf Dlubek. Gutachter des IML beim ZK der KPdSU waren Wera Morosowa und Lew Tschurbanow. Wertvolle Hinweise zu einzelnen Fragen gaben Jelena Arshanowa (Moskau), Hans-Jürgen Bochinski (Berlin), Galina Golowina (Moskau), Hans-Peter Jaeck (Berlin), Natalja Kudrjaschowa (Moskau) und Velta Pospelowa (Moskau). Eine Überprüfung der englischsprachigen Texte erfolgte durch ein von Sabine Nathan geleitetes Kollektiv der Sektion Anglistik/Amerikanistik der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Die Herausgeber danken allen wissenschaftlichen Einrichtungen, die bei der Vorbereitung des Bandes Unterstützung gewährten. Einsichtnahme in die Originale von Marx und Engels ermöglichten das Internationale Institut für Sozialgeschichte in Amsterdam und das Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Wien. Dokumente für den wissenschaftlichen Apparat stellten dankenswerterweise das Staatsarchiv Potsdam und die Stadt- und Landesbibliothek Dortmund zur Verfügung.

**KARL MARX
FRIEDRICH ENGELS
WERKE · ARTIKEL · ENTWÜRFE
JULI 1851
BIS DEZEMBER 1852**

Friedrich Engels
Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3283, 25. Oktober 1851

I.

Revolution and Counter-Revolution.

The first act of the revolutionary drama on the Continent of Europe has closed. The “powers that were” before the hurricane of 1848, are again “the powers that be,” and the more or less popular rulers of a day, provisional
5 governors, triumvirs, dictators, with their tail of representatives, civil commissioners, military commissioners, prefects, judges, generals, officers and soldiers, are thrown upon foreign shores, and “transported beyond the seas” to England or America, there to form new governments „*in partibus infidelium*,”
10 European committees, central committees, national committees, and to announce their advent with proclamations quite as solemn as those of any less imaginary potentates.

A more signal defeat than that undergone by the continental revolutionary party—or rather parties—upon all points of the line of battle, cannot be
15 imagined. But what of that? Has not the struggle of the British middle classes for their social and political supremacy embraced forty-eight, that of the French middle classes forty years of unexampled struggles? And was their triumph ever nearer than at the very moment when restored monarchy thought itself more firmly settled than ever? The times of that superstition
20 which attributed revolutions to the ill-will of a few agitators, have long passed away. Every one knows now-a-days, that wherever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background, which is prevented by outworn institutions from satisfying itself. The want may not yet be felt as strongly, as generally, as might insure immediate success, but
25 every attempt at forcible repression will only bring it forth stronger and stronger, until it bursts its fetters. If, then, we have been beaten, we have nothing else to do but to begin again from the beginning. And fortunately,

the probably very short interval of rest which is allowed us between the close of the first and the beginning of the second act of the movement, gives us time for a very necessary piece of work: the study of the causes that necessitated both the late outbreak, and its defeat; causes that are not to be sought for in the accidental efforts, talents, faults, errors or treacheries of some of the leaders, but in the general social state and conditions of existence of each of the convulsed nations. That the sudden movements of February and March, 1848, were not the work of single individuals, but spontaneous, irresistible manifestations of national wants and necessities, more or less clearly understood, but very distinctly felt by numerous classes in every country, is a fact recognized every where; but when you inquire into the causes of the counter-revolutionary successes, there you are met on every hand with the ready reply that it was Mr. This or Citizen That, who "betrayed" the people. Which reply may be very true, or not, according to circumstances, but under no circumstances does it explain anything—not even show how it came to pass that the "people" allowed themselves to be thus betrayed. And what a poor chance stands a political party whose entire stock in trade consists in a knowledge of the solitary fact, that Citizen So-and-so is not to be trusted.

The inquiry into, and the exposition of, the causes both of the revolutionary convulsion and its suppression, are, besides, of paramount importance in a historical point of view. All these petty personal quarrels and recriminations—all these contradictory assertions, that it was Marrast, or Ledru Rollin, or Louis Blanc, or any other member of the Provisional Government, or the whole of them, that steered the revolution amidst the rocks upon which it foundered—of what interest can they be, what light can they afford to the American or Englishman, who observed all these various movements from a distance too great to allow of his distinguishing any of the details of operations? No man in his senses will ever believe that eleven men, mostly of very indifferent capacity, either for good or evil, were able in three months to ruin a nation of thirty-six millions, unless those thirty-six millions saw as little of their way before them as the eleven did. But how it came to pass, that these thirty-six millions were at once called upon to decide for themselves which way to go, although partly groping in dim twilight, and how then they got lost and their old leaders were for a moment allowed to return to their leadership, that is just the question.

If, then, we try to lay before the readers of *The Tribune* the causes which, while they necessitated the German Revolution of 1848, led quite as inevitably to its momentary repression in 1849 and '50, we shall not be expected to give a complete history of the events as they passed in that country. Later events, and the judgment of coming generations, will decide what portion

of that confused mass of seemingly accidental, incoherent and incongruous facts is to form a part of the world's history. The time for such a task has not yet arrived; we must confine ourselves to the limits of the possible, and be satisfied, if we can find rational causes, based upon undeniable facts, to explain the chief events, the principal vicissitudes of that movement, and to give us a clue as to the direction which the next and perhaps not very distant outbreak will impart to the German people.

And firstly, what was the state of Germany at the outbreak of the revolution?

The composition of the different classes of the people which form the groundwork of every political organization was, in Germany, more complicated than in any other country. While in England and France feudalism was entirely destroyed, or at least reduced, as in the former country, to a few insignificant forms, by a powerful and wealthy middle class, concentrated in large towns, and particularly in the Capital, the feudal nobility in Germany had retained a great portion of their ancient privileges. The feudal system of tenure was prevalent almost everywhere. The Lords of the Land had even retained the jurisdiction over their tenants. Deprived of their political privileges, of the right to control the Princes, they had preserved almost all their mediæval supremacy over the peasantry of their demesnes, as well as their exemption from taxes. Feudalism was more flourishing in some localities than in others, but nowhere except on the left bank of the Rhine was it entirely destroyed. This feudal nobility, then extremely numerous and partly very wealthy, was considered, officially, the first "Order" in the country. It furnished the higher Government officials, it almost exclusively officered the army.

The Bourgeoisie of Germany was by far not as wealthy and concentrated as that of France or England. The ancient manufactures of Germany had been destroyed by the introduction of steam, and by the rapidly extending supremacy of English manufactures; the more modern manufactures, started under the Napoleonic continental system, established in other parts of the country, did not compensate for the loss of the old ones, nor suffice to create a manufacturing interest strong enough to force its wants upon the notice of Governments jealous of every extension of non-noble wealth and power. If France carried her silk manufactures victorious through fifty years of revolutions and wars, Germany, during the same time, all but lost her ancient linen trade. The manufacturing districts, besides, were few and far between; situated far inland, and using, mostly, foreign, Dutch or Belgian ports for their imports and exports, they had little or no interest in common with the large seaport-towns on the North Sea and the Baltic; they were, above all, unable to create large manufacturing and trading centers, such as Paris and

Lyons, London and Manchester. The causes of this backwardness of German manufactures were manifold, but, two will suffice to account for it: the unfavorable geographical situation of the country, at a distance from the Atlantic, which had become the great highway for the world's trade, and the continuous wars in which Germany was involved, and which were fought on her soil, from the sixteenth century to the present day. It was this want of numbers, and particularly of anything like concentrated numbers, which prevented the German Middle Classes from attaining that political supremacy which the English *bourgeois* has enjoyed ever since 1688, and which the French conquered in 1789. And yet, ever since 1815, the wealth, and with the wealth, the political importance of the Middle Class in Germany, was continually growing. Governments were, although reluctantly, compelled to bow at least to its more immediate material interests. It may even be truly said, that from 1815 to 1830, and from 1832 to 1840, every particle of political influence, which, having been allowed to the middle class in the Constitutions of the smaller States, was again wrested from them during the above two periods of political reäction—that every such particle was compensated for by some more practical advantage allowed to them. Every political defeat of the middle class drew after it a victory on the field of commercial legislation. And, certainly, the Prussian Protective Tariff of 1818, and the formation of the *Zollverein*, were worth a good deal more to the traders and manufacturers of Germany than the equivocal right of expressing, in the chambers of some diminutive dukedom, their want of confidence in ministers who laughed at their votes. Thus, with growing wealth and extending trade, the *Bourgeoisie* soon arrived at a stage where it found the development of its most important interests checked by the political constitution of the country—by its random division among thirty-six princes with conflicting tendencies and caprices; by the feudal fetters upon agriculture and the trade connected with it; by the prying superintendence to which an ignorant and presumptuous bureaucracy subjected all its transactions. At the same time, the extension and consolidation of the *Zollverein*, the general introduction of steam communication, the growing competition in the home trade, brought the commercial classes of the different States and Provinces closer together, equalized their interests, centralized their strength. The natural consequence was the passing of the whole mass of them into the camp of the Liberal Opposition, and the gaining of the first serious struggle of the German Middle Class for political power. This change may be dated from 1840, from the moment when the *Bourgeoisie* of Prussia assumed the lead of the Middle Class movement of Germany. We shall hereafter revert to this Liberal Opposition movement of 1840-47.

The great mass of the nation, which neither belonged to the nobility nor

to the bourgeoisie, consisted, in the towns, of the small trading and shopkeeping class and the working people, and in the country, of the peasantry.

The small trading and shopkeeping class is exceedingly numerous in Germany, in consequence of the stunted development which the large capitalists and manufacturers, as a class, have had in that country. In the larger towns it forms almost the majority of the inhabitants; in the smaller ones it entirely predominates, from the absence of wealthier competitors for influence. This class, a most important one in every modern body politic, and in all modern revolutions, is still more important in Germany, where during the recent struggles it generally played the decisive part. Its intermediate position between the class of larger capitalists, traders and manufacturers, the bourgeoisie, properly so called, and the proletarian or industrial class, determines its character. Aspiring to the position of the first, the least adverse turn of fortune hurls the individuals of this class down into the ranks of the second. In monarchical and feudal countries the custom of the court and aristocracy becomes necessary to its existence; the loss of this custom might ruin a great part of it. In the smaller towns, a military garrison, a county government, a court of law with its followers, form very often the base of its prosperity; withdraw these and down go the shopkeepers, the tailors, the shoemakers, the joiners. Thus, eternally tossed about between the hope of entering the ranks of the wealthier class, and the fear of being reduced to the state of proletarians or even paupers; between the hope of promoting their interests by conquering a share in the direction of public affairs, and the dread of rousing, by ill-timed opposition, the ire of a Government which disposes of their very existence, because it has the power of removing their best customers; possessed of small means, the insecurity of the possession of which is in the inverse ratio of the amount; this class is extremely vacillating in its views. Humble and crouchingly submissive under a powerful feudal or monarchical government, it turns to the side of Liberalism when the middle class is in the ascendent; it becomes seized with violent Democratic fits as soon as the middle class has secured its own supremacy, but falls back into the abject despondency of fear as soon as the class below itself, the proletarians, attempt an independent movement. We shall, by and by, see this class, in Germany, pass alternately from one of these stages to the other.

The working class in Germany is, in its social and political development, as far behind that of England and France as the German Bourgeoisie is behind the Bourgeoisie of those countries. Like master, like man. The evolution of the conditions of existence for a numerous, strong, concentrated and intelligent proletarian class, goes hand in hand with the development of the conditions of existence for a numerous, wealthy, concentrated and powerful

middle class. The working class movement itself never is independent, never is of an exclusively proletarian character, until all the different factions of the middle class, and particularly its most progressive faction, the large manufacturers, have conquered political power and remodeled the State according to their wants. It is then that the inevitable conflict between the employer and the employed becomes imminent and cannot be adjourned any longer; that the working class can no longer be put off with delusive hopes and promises never to be realized; that the great problem of the nineteenth century, the abolition of the proletariat, is at last brought forward fairly and in its proper light. Now, in Germany, the mass of the working class were employed, not by those modern manufacturing lords of which Great Britain furnishes such splendid specimens, but by small tradesmen whose entire manufacturing system is a mere relic of the middle ages. And as there is an enormous difference between the great cotton lord and the petty cobbler or master tailor, so there is a corresponding distance from the wide-awake factory-operative of modern manufacturing Babylons to the bashful journeyman tailor or cabinet-maker of a small country town, who lives in circumstances and works after a plan very little different from those of the like sort of men some five hundred years ago. This general absence of modern conditions of life, of modern modes of industrial production, of course was accompanied by a pretty equally general absence of modern ideas, and it is therefore not to be wondered at if, at the outbreak of the revolution, a large part of the working classes should cry out for the immediate reestablishment of guilds and mediæval privileged trades' corporations. Yet, from the manufacturing districts, where the modern system of production predominated, and in consequence of the facilities of intercommunication and mental development afforded by the migratory life of a large number of the workingmen, a strong nucleus formed itself whose ideas about the emancipation of their class were far clearer and more in accordance with existing facts and historical necessities; but they were a mere minority. If the active movement of the middle classes may be dated from 1840, that of the working class commences its advent by the insurrections of the Silesian and Bohemian factory operatives in 1844, and we shall soon have occasion to pass in review the different stages through which this movement passed.

Lastly, there was the great class of the small farmers, the peasantry, which, with its appendix of farm-laborers, constitutes a considerable majority of the entire nation. But this class again subdivided itself into different fractions. There were, firstly, the more wealthy farmers, what is called in Germany *Gross- and Mittel-Bauern*, proprietors of more or less extensive farms, and each of them commanding the services of several agricultural laborers. This class, placed between the large untaxed feudal land-owners and the

smaller peasantry and farm-laborers, for obvious reasons found in an alliance with the antifeudal middle class of the towns its most natural political course. Then there were, secondly, the small freeholders, predominating in the Rhine country, where feudalism had succumbed before the mighty strokes of the great French Revolution. Similar independent small freeholders also existed here and there in other provinces, where they had succeeded in buying off the feudal charges formerly due upon their lands. This class, however, was a class of freeholders by name only, their property being generally mortgaged to such an extent, and under such onerous conditions, that not the peasant, but the usurer who had advanced the money, was the real landowner. Thirdly, the feudal tenants, who could not be easily turned out of their holdings, but who had to pay a perpetual rent, or to perform in perpetuity a certain amount of labor in favor of the lord of the manor. Lastly, the agricultural laborers, whose condition, in many large farming concerns, was exactly that of the same class in England, and who, in all cases, lived and died poor, ill-fed, and the slaves of their employers. These three latter classes of the agricultural population, the small freeholders, the feudal tenants, and the agricultural laborers, never troubled their heads much about politics before the revolution, but it is evident that this event must have opened to them a new career, full of brilliant prospects. To every one of them the revolution offered advantages, and the movement once fairly engaged in, it was to be expected that, each in their turn, they would join it. But at the same time it is quite as evident, and equally borne out by the history of all modern countries, that the agricultural population, in consequence of its dispersion over a great space, and of the difficulty of bringing about an agreement among any considerable portion of it, never can attempt a successful independent movement; they require the initiatory impulse of the more concentrated, more enlightened, more easily moved people of the towns.

The preceding short sketch of the most important of the classes, which in their aggregate formed the German nation at the outbreak of the recent movements, will already be sufficient to explain a great part of the incoherence, incongruence and apparent contradiction which prevailed in that movement. When interests so varied, so conflicting, so strangely crossing each other, are brought into violent collision; when these contending interests in every district, every province are mixed in different proportions; when, above all, there is no great center in the country, no London, no Paris, the decisions of which, by their weight, may supersede the necessity of fighting out the same quarrel over and over again in every single locality; what else is to be expected but that the contest will dissolve itself into a mass of unconnected struggles, in which an enormous quantity of blood,

energy and capital is spent, but which, for all that remain without any decisive results?

The political dismemberment of Germany into three dozen of more or less important principalities is equally explained by this confusion and multiplicity of the elements which compose the nation, and which again vary in every locality. Where there are no common interests there can be no unity of purpose, much less of action. The German Confederation, it is true, was declared everlastingly indissoluble; yet the Confederation and its organ, the Diet, never represented German unity. The very highest pitch to which centralization was ever carried in Germany was the establishment of the *Zollverein*; by this the States on the North Sea were also forced into a Customs-Union of their own, Austria remaining wrapped up in her separate prohibitive tariff. Germany had the satisfaction to be, for all practical purposes, divided between three independent powers only, instead of between thirty-six. Of course, the paramount supremacy of the Russian Czar, as established in 1814, underwent no change on this account.

Having drawn these preliminary conclusions from our premises, we shall see, in our next, how the aforesaid various classes of the German people were set into movement one after the other, and what character this movement assumed on the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1848.

Karl Marx.

London, September, 1851.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3285, 28. Oktober 1851

II.

The political movement of the middle class, or Bourgeoisie, in Germany, may be dated from 1840. It had been preceded by symptoms showing that the moneyed and industrial class of that country was ripening into a state which would no longer allow it to continue apathetic and passive under the pressure of a half-feudal, half-bureaucratic monarchism. The smaller Princes of Germany, partly to insure to themselves a greater independence against the supremacy of Austria and Prussia, or against the influence of the nobility in their own States, partly in order to consolidate into a whole the disconnected provinces united under their rule by the Congress of Vienna, one after the other granted constitutions of a more or less liberal character. They could do so without any danger to themselves; for if the Diet of the Confederation, this mere puppet of Austria and Prussia, was to encroach upon their inde-

pendence as sovereigns, they knew that in resisting its dictates they would be backed by public opinion and the Chambers; and if, on the contrary, these Chambers grew too strong, they could readily command the power of the Diet to break down all opposition. The Bavarian, Württemberg, Baden, or
5 Hanoverian constitutional institutions could not, under such circumstances, give rise to any serious struggle for political power, and therefore the great bulk of the German middle class kept very generally aloof from the petty squabbles raised in the legislatures of the small States, well knowing that without a fundamental change in the policy and constitution of the two great
10 powers of Germany, no secondary efforts and victories would be of any avail. But at the same time, a race of liberal lawyers, professional oppositionists, sprung up in these small assemblies; the Rottecks, the Welckers, the Roemers, the Jordans, the Stüves, the Eisenmanns, those great "popular men" (Volksmänner,) who after a more or less noisy, but always un-
15 successful, opposition of twenty years, were carried to the summit of power by the revolutionary spring-tide of 1848, and who, after having there shown their utter impotency and insignificance, were hurled down again in a moment. These first specimens, upon German soil, of the trader in politics and opposition, by their speeches and writings made familiar to the German
20 ear the language of constitutionalism, and by their very existence, foreboded the approach of a time when the middle class would seize upon and restore to their proper meaning the political phrases which these talkative attorneys and professors were in the habit of using without knowing much about the sense originally attached to them.

25 German literature, too, labored under the influence of the political excitement into which all Europe had been thrown by the events of 1830. A crude constitutionalism, or a still cruder republicanism, were preached by almost all writers of the time. It became more and more the habit, particularly of the inferior sorts of literati, to make up for the want of cleverness in their
30 productions by political allusions which were sure to attract attention. Poetry, novels, reviews, the drama, every literary production teemed with what was called "tendency," that is with more or less timid exhibitions of an antigovernmental spirit. In order to complete the confusion of ideas reigning after 1830 in Germany, with these elements of political opposition
35 there were mixed up ill-digested university-recollections of German philosophy, and misunderstood gleanings from French socialism, particularly Saint Simonism; and the clique of writers who expatiated upon this heterogeneous conglomerate of ideas, presumptuously called themselves "Young Ger-
40 many," or "the Modern School." They have since repented their youthful sins, but not improved their style of writing.

Lastly, German philosophy, that most complicated, but at the same time

most sure thermometer of the development of the German mind, had declared for the middle class, when Hegel pronounced, in his philosophy of Law, Constitutional Monarchy to be the final and most perfect form of Government. In other words, he proclaimed the approaching advent of the middle classes of the country to political power. His school, after his death, did not stop here. While the more advanced section of his followers, on one hand, subjected every religious belief to the ordeal of a rigorous criticism, and shook to its foundation the ancient fabric of Christianity, they at the same time brought forward bolder political principles than hitherto it had been the fate of German ears to hear expounded, and attempted to restore to glory the memory of the heroes of the first French Revolution. The abstruse philosophical language in which these ideas were clothed, if it obscured the mind of both the writer and the reader, equally blinded the eyes of the censor, and thus it was that the "Young Hegelian" writers enjoyed a liberty of the press unknown in every other branch of literature.

Thus it was evident that public opinion was undergoing a great change in Germany. By degrees, the vast majority of those classes whose education or position in life enabled them, under an absolute monarchy, to gain some political information, and to form anything like an independent political opinion, united into one mighty phalanx of opposition against the existing system. And in passing judgment upon the slowness of political development in Germany, no one ought to omit taking into account the difficulty of obtaining correct information upon any subject in a country, where all sources of information were under control of the Government; where from the Ragged School and Sunday School, to the Newspaper and the University, nothing was said, taught, printed or published, but what had previously obtained its approbation. Look at Vienna, for instance. The people of Vienna, in industry and manufactures, second perhaps, to none in Germany, in spirit, courage, and revolutionary energy, proving themselves far superior to all, were yet more ignorant as to their real interests, and committed more blunders during the revolution, than any others, and this was due in a very great measure, to the almost absolute ignorance with regard to the very commonest political subjects in which Metternich's Government had succeeded in keeping them.

It needs no further explanation why, under such a system, political information was an almost exclusive monopoly of such classes of society as could afford to pay for its being smuggled into the country, and more particularly of those whose interests were most seriously attacked by the existing state of things—namely, the manufacturing and commercial classes. They, therefore, were the first to unite in a mass against the continuance of a more or less disguised absolutism, and from their passing into the ranks of the

opposition must be dated the beginning of the real revolutionary movement in Germany.

The oppositional pronunciamento of the German Bourgeoisie may be dated from 1840, from the death of the late King of Prussia, the last surviving
 5 founder of the Holy Alliance of 1815. The new King was known to be no supporter of the predominantly bureaucratic and military monarchy of his father. What the French middle classes had expected from the advent of Louis XVI., the German Bourgeoisie hoped, in some measure, from Frederic William IV. of Prussia. It was agreed upon all hands that the old system was
 10 exploded, worn out, and must be given up; and what had been borne in silence under the old King, now was loudly proclaimed to be intolerable.

But if Louis XVI., “Louis-le-Désiré,” had been a plain, unpretending simpleton, half-conscious of his own nullity, without any fixed opinions, ruled principally by the habits contracted during his education, “Frederick
 15 William-le-Désiré” was something quite different. While he certainly surpassed his French original in weakness of character, he was neither without pretensions nor without opinions. He had made himself acquainted, in an amateur sort of way, with the rudiments of most sciences, and thought himself, therefore, learned enough to consider final his judgment upon every
 20 subject. He made sure he was a first-rate orator, and there was certainly no commercial traveler in Berlin who could beat him either in prolixity of pretended wit or in fluency of elocution. And above all, he had his opinions. He hated and despised the bureaucratic element of the Prussian Monarchy, but only because all his sympathies were with the feudal element. Himself
 25 one of the founders of and chief contributors to the “Berlin political weekly paper,” the so-called Historical School, (a school living upon the ideas of Bonald, De Maistre, and other writers of the first generation of French Legitimists,) he aimed at a restoration, as complete as possible, of the predominant, social position of the nobility. The King, first nobleman of his
 30 realm, surrounded in the first instance by a splendid court of mighty vassals, princes, dukes and counts; in the second instance, by a numerous and wealthy lower nobility; ruling according to his discretion over his loyal burgesses and peasants, and thus being himself the chief of a complete hierarchy of social ranks or castes, each of which was to enjoy its particular
 35 privileges, and to be separated from the others by the almost insurmountable barrier of birth or of a fixed, inalterable social position; the whole of these castes or “estates of the realm” balancing each other, at the same time, so nicely in power and influence, that a complete independence of action should remain to the King—such was the *beau-ideal* which Frederic William IV. undertook to realize, and which he is again trying to realize at the present
 40 moment.

It took some time before the Prussian Bourgeoisie, not very well versed in theoretical questions, found out the real purport of their King's tendency. But what they very soon found out, was the fact that he was bent upon things quite the reverse of what they wanted. Hardly did the new King find his "gift of the gab" unfettered by his fathers's death, than he set about proclaiming his intentions in speeches without number; and every speech, every act of his went far to estrange from him the sympathies of the Middle Class. He would not have cared much for that, if it had not been for some stern and startling realities which interrupted his poetic dreams. Alas, that romanticism is not very quick at accounts, and that feudalism, ever since Don Quixote, reckons without its host! Frederick William IV. partook too much of that contempt for ready cash which ever has been the noblest inheritance of the sons of the Crusaders. He found, at his accession, a costly, although parsimoniously arranged system of government, and a moderately filled State Treasury. In two years every trace of a surplus was spent in court festivals, royal progresses, largesses, subventions to needy, seedy and greedy noblemen, etc., and the regular taxes were no longer sufficient for the exigencies of either court or government. And thus, his Majesty found himself very soon placed between a glaring deficit on one side, and a law of 1820 on the other, by which any new loan, or any increase of the then existing taxation, was made illegal without the assent of "the future Representation of the People." This representation did not exist; the new King was less inclined than even his father to create it; and if he had been, he knew that public opinion had wonderfully changed since his accession.

Indeed the middle classes, who had partly expected that the new King would at once grant a Constitution, proclaim the Liberty of the Press, Trial by Jury, etc., etc.; in short, himself take the lead of that peaceful revolution which they wanted in order to obtain political supremacy—the middle classes had found out their error and had turned ferociously against the king. In the Rhine Provinces, and more or less generally, all over Prussia, they were so exasperated that they, being short themselves of men able to represent them in the Press, went to the length of an alliance with the extreme philosophical party, of which we have spoken above. The fruit of this alliance was the *Rhenish Gazette*, of Cologne, a paper which was suppressed after fifteen months' existence, but from which may be dated the existence of the Newspaper Press in Germany. This was in 1842.

The poor King, whose commercial difficulties were the keenest satire upon his mediæval propensities, very soon found out that he could not continue to reign without making some slight concession to the popular outcry for that "Representation of the People," which, as the last remnant of the long-forgotten promises of 1813 and 1815, had been embodied in the law of 1820.

He found the least objectionable mode of satisfying this untoward law in calling together the Standing Committees of the Provincial Diets. The Provincial Diets had been instituted in 1823. They consisted, for every one of the eight provinces of the kingdom, of: 1. The higher nobility, the formerly
5 sovereign families of the German Empire, the heads of which were members of the Diet by birthright. 2. Of the representatives of the knights or lower nobility. 3. Of representatives of towns; and 4. Of deputies of the peasantry or small farming class. The whole was arranged in such a manner that in every province the two sections of the nobility always had a majority of the Diet.
10 Every one of these eight Provincial Diets elected a Committee, and these eight Committees were now called to Berlin in order to form a Representative Assembly for the purpose of voting the much-desired loan. It was stated that the treasury was full, and that the loan was required, not for current wants, but for the construction of a State Railway. But the united Committees gave
15 the king a flat refusal, declaring themselves incompetent to act as the Representatives of the People, and called upon his majesty to fulfill the promise of a representative Constitution which his father had given when he wanted the aid of the People against Napoleon.

The sitting of the united Committees proved that the spirit of opposition
20 was no longer confined to the Bourgeoisie. A part of the Peasantry had joined them, and many nobles, being themselves large farmers on their own property, and dealers in corn, wool, spirits and flax, requiring the same guaranties against absolutism, bureaucracy and feudal restoration, had equally pronounced against the Government and for a Representative Con-
25 stitution. The King's plan had signally failed; he had got no money, and had increased the power of the opposition. The subsequent sitting of the Provincial Diets themselves was still more unfortunate for the King. All of them asked for reforms, for the fulfillment of the promises of 1813 and '15, for a Constitution and a free press; the resolutions, to this effect, of some of
30 them, were rather disrespectfully worded, and the ill-humored replies of the exasperated King made the evil still greater.

In the meantime the financial difficulties of the Government went on increasing. For a time abatements made upon the moneys appropriated for the different public services, fraudulent transactions with the "See-
35 handlung," a commercial establishment speculating and trading for account and risk of the State, and long since acting as its money-broker, had sufficed to keep up appearances; increased issues of State paper money had furnished some resources; and the secret, upon the whole, had been pretty well kept. But all these contrivances were soon exhausted. There was another plan
40 tried: the establishment of a Bank, the capital of which was to be furnished partly by the State and partly by private shareholders; the chief direction

to belong to the State, in such a manner as to enable the Government to draw upon the funds of this Bank to a large amount, and thus to repeat the same fraudulent transactions that would no longer do with the "Seehandlung." But, as a matter of course, there were no capitalists to be found who would hand over their money upon such conditions; the statutes of the Bank had to be altered, and the property of the shareholders guaranteed from the encroachments of the Treasury, before any shares were subscribed for. Thus, this plan having failed, there remained nothing but to try a loan—if capitalists could be found who would lend their cash without requiring the permission and guarantee of that mysterious "future Representation of the People." Rothschild was applied to, and he declared that if the loan was to be guaranteed by this "Representation of the People," he would undertake the thing at a moment's notice—if not, he could not have anything to do with the transaction.

Thus every hope of obtaining money had vanished, and there was no possibility of escaping the fatal "Representation of the People." Rothschild's refusal was known in Autumn, 1846, and in February of the next year the King called together all the eight Provincial Diets to Berlin, forming them into one "United Diet." This Diet was to do the work required, in case of need, by the law of 1820; it was to vote loans and increased taxes, but beyond that it was to have no rights. Its voice upon general legislation was to be merely consultative; it was to assemble, not at fixed periods, but whenever it pleased the King; it was to discuss nothing but what the Government pleased to lay before it. Of course, the members were very little satisfied with the part they were expected to perform. They repeated the wishes they had enounced when they met in the provincial assemblies; the relations between them and the Government soon became acrimonious, and when the loan, which was again stated to be required for railway-constructions, was demanded from them, they again refused to grant it.

This vote very soon brought their sitting to a close. The King, more and more exasperated, dismissed them with a reprimand, but still remained without money. And, indeed, he had every reason to be alarmed at his position, seeing that the Liberal league, headed by the middle classes, comprising a large part of the lower nobility and all the manifold discontents that had been accumulated in the different sections of the lower orders—that this Liberal league was determined to have what it wanted. In vain the King had declared, in the opening speech, that he would never, never grant a Constitution in the modern sense of the word; the Liberal league insisted upon such a modern, anti-feudal, representative Constitution, with all its sequels, liberty of the press, trial by jury, etc.; and before they got it, not a farthing of money would they grant. There was one thing evident: that things could

not go on long in this manner, and that either one of the parties must give way, or that a rupture, a bloody struggle must ensue. And the middle classes knew that they were on the eve of a revolution, and they prepared themselves for it. They sought to obtain, by every possible means, the support of the
5 working class of the towns, and of the peasantry in the agricultural districts, and it is well known that there was, in the latter end of 1847, hardly a single prominent political character among the Bourgeoisie who did not proclaim himself a "Socialist," in order to insure to himself the sympathy of the proletarian class. We shall see these "Socialists" at work by and by.

10 This eagerness of the leading Bourgeoisie to adopt at least the outward show of Socialism, was caused by a great change that had come over the working classes of Germany. There had been, ever since 1840, a fraction of German workmen who, traveling in France and Switzerland, had more or less imbibed the crude Socialist and Communist notions then current among
15 the French workmen. The increasing attention paid to similar ideas in France, ever since 1840, made Socialism and Communism fashionable in Germany also, and as far back as 1843, all newspapers teemed with discussions of social questions. A school of Socialists very soon formed itself in Germany, distinguished more for the obscurity than for the novelty of its ideas; its
20 principal efforts consisted in the translation of French, Fourierist, Saint-Simonian, and other doctrines, into the abstruse language of German philosophy. The German Communist School, entirely different from this sect, was formed about the same time.

In 1844 there occurred the Silesian weavers' riots, followed by the in-
25 surrection of the Calico Printers in Prague. These riots, cruelly suppressed, riots of working men, not against the Government but against their employers, created a deep sensation, and gave a new stimulus to Socialist and Communist propaganda amongst the working people. So did the Bread riots during the year of famine, 1847. In short, in the same manner as Con-
30 stitutional opposition rallied around its banner the great bulk of the propertied classes, (with the exception of the large Feudal land-holders,) so the working classes of the larger towns looked for their emancipation to the Socialist and Communist doctrines, although, under the then existing press-laws, they could be made to know only very little about them. They could
35 not be expected to have any very definite ideas as to what they wanted—they only knew that the programme of the Constitutional Bourgeoisie did not contain all they wanted, and that their wants were in no wise contained in the Constitutional circle of ideas.

There was then no separate republican party in Germany. People were
40 either constitutional monarchists, or more or less clearly defined Socialists or Communists.

With such elements, the slightest collision must have brought about a great revolution.—While the higher nobility, and the older civil and military officers, were the only safe supports of the existing system; while the lower nobility, the trading middle classes, the universities, the school-masters of every degree, and even part of the lower ranks of the bureaucracy and military officers, were all leagued against the government; while, behind these, there stood the dissatisfied masses of the peasantry, and of the proletarians of the large towns, supporting, for the time being, the liberal opposition, but already muttering strange words about taking things into their own hands; while the Bourgeoisie was ready to hurl down the government, and the Proletarians were preparing to hurl down the Bourgeoisie in its turn;—this government went on obstinately in a course which must bring about a collision. Germany was, in the beginning of 1848, on the eve of a revolution, and this revolution was sure to come, even had the French revolution of February not hastened it.

What the effects of this Parisian Revolution were upon Germany, we shall see in our next.

Karl Marx.

London, September, 1851.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3293, 6. November 1851

III.

In our last we confined ourselves almost exclusively to that State which, during the years 1840 to 1848, was by far the most important in the German Movement; namely, to Prussia.—It is, however, time to pass a rapid glance over the other States of Germany during the same period.

As to the petty States, they had, ever since the revolutionary movements of 1830, completely passed under the dictatorship of the Diet, that is, of Austria and Prussia. The several constitutions, established as much as a means of defense against the dictates of the larger States, as to insure popularity to their princely authors and unity to heterogeneous assemblies of provinces, formed by the Congress of Vienna, without any leading principle whatever—these constitutions, illusory as they were, had yet proved dangerous to the authority of the petty princes themselves during the excited times of 1830 and 1831. They were all but destroyed; whatever of them was allowed to remain, was less than a shadow, and it required the loquacious, self-complacency of a Welcker, a Rotteck, a Dahlmann, to imagine that any results could possibly flow from the humble opposition, mingled with de-

grading flattery, which they were allowed to show off in the impotent chambers of these petty States.

The more energetic portion of the middle class in these smaller States, very soon after 1840, abandoned all the hopes they had formerly based upon the development of Parliamentary government in these dependencies of Austria and Prussia. No sooner had the Prussian Bourgeoisie, and the classes allied to it, shown a serious resolution to struggle for Parliamentary government in Prussia, than they were allowed to take the lead of the Constitutional movement over all non-Austrian Germany. It is a fact which now will not be any longer contested, that the nucleus of those Constitutionalists of Central Germany, who afterwards seceded from the Frankfort National Assembly, and who, from the place of their separate meetings were called the Gotha party, long before 1848 contemplated a plan which, with little modification, they in 1849 proposed to the representatives of all Germany. They intended a complete exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation, the establishment of a new Confederation with a new fundamental law and with a federal Parliament, under the protection of Prussia, and the incorporation of the more insignificant States into the larger ones. All this was to be carried out the moment Prussia entered into the ranks of constitutional monarchy, established the liberty of the press, assumed a policy independent from that of Russia and Austria, and thus enabled the Constitutionalists of the lesser States to obtain a real control over their respective Governments. The inventor of this scheme was Professor Gervinus, of Heidelberg (Baden). Thus the emancipation of the Prussian Bourgeoisie was to be the signal for that of the middle classes of Germany generally, and for an alliance, offensive and defensive, of both, against Russia and Austria; for Austria was, as we shall see presently, considered as an entirely barbarian country, of which very little was known, and that little not to the credit of its population; Austria, therefore, was not considered as an essential part of Germany.

As to the other classes of society, in the smaller States, they followed, more or less rapidly, in the wake of their equals in Prussia. The shopkeeping class got more and more dissatisfied with their respective Governments, with the increase of taxation, with the curtailments of those political sham-privileges of which they used to boast when comparing themselves to the "slaves of despotism" in Austria and Prussia; but as yet they had nothing definite in their opposition which might stamp them as an independent party, distinct from the Constitutionalism of the higher Bourgeoisie. The dissatisfaction among the peasantry was equally growing, but it is well known that this section of the people, in quiet and peaceful times, will never assert its interests and assume its position as an independent class, except in countries

where universal suffrage is established. The working classes in the trades and manufactures of the towns commenced to be infested with the "poison" of Socialism and Communism, but there being few towns of any importance out of Prussia, and still fewer manufacturing districts, the movement of this class, owing to the want of centers of action and propaganda, was extremely slow in the smaller States. 5

Both in Prussia and in the smaller States, the difficulty of giving vent to political opposition created a sort of religious opposition in the parallel movements of German Catholicism and Free Congregationalism. History affords us numerous examples where, in countries which enjoy the blessings of a State Church, and where political discussion is fettered, the profane and dangerous opposition against the worldly power is hid under the more sanctified and apparently more disinterested struggle against spiritual despotism. Many a government that will not allow of any of its acts being discussed, will hesitate before it creates martyrs and excites the religious fanaticism of the masses. Thus in Germany, in 1845, in every State, either the Roman Catholic or the Protestant religion, or both, were considered part and parcel of the law of the land. In every State, too, the Clergy of either of those denominations, or of both, formed an essential part of the bureaucratic establishment of the Government. To attack Protestant or Catholic orthodoxy, to attack Priestcraft, was, then, to make an underhand attack upon the Government itself. As to the German Catholics, their very existence was an attack upon the Catholic Governments of Germany, particularly Austria and Bavaria, and as such it was taken by those Governments. The Free Congregationalists, Protestant Dissenters somewhat resembling the English and American Unitarians, openly professed their opposition to the clerical and rigidly orthodox tendency of the King of Prussia and his favorite Minister for the Educational and Clerical Department, Mr. Eichhorn. The two new sects, rapidly extending for a moment, the first in Catholic, the second in Protestant countries, had no other distinction but their different origin; as to their tenets, they perfectly agreed upon this most important point—that all definite dogmas were nugatory. This want of any definition was their very essence; they pretended to build that great temple under the roof of which all Germans might unite; they thus represented, in a religious form, another political idea of the day—that of German Unity; and yet, they could never agree among themselves. 10 15 20 25 30 35

The idea of German Unity, which the above-mentioned sects sought to realize at least upon religious ground, by inventing a common religion for all Germans, manufactured expressly for their use, habits, and taste—this idea was indeed very widely spread particularly in the smaller States. Ever since the dissolution of the German Empire, by Napoleon, the cry for a union of 40

all the *disjecta membra* of the German body had been the most general expression of discontent with the established order of things, and most so in the smaller States, where the costliness of the court, an administration, an army, in short the dead-weight of taxation increased in a direct ratio with the smallness and impotency of the State. But what this German Unity was to be when carried out, was a question upon which parties disagreed. The Bourgeoisie, which wanted no serious revolutionary convulsions, were satisfied with what we have seen they considered "practicable," namely, a union of all Germany, exclusive of Austria, under the supremacy of a constitutional government of Prussia; and surely, without conjuring dangerous storms, nothing more could, at that time, be done. The shopkeeping class and the peasantry, as far as these latter troubled themselves about such things, never arrived at any definition of that German Unity they so loudly clamored after; a few dreamers, mostly feudalist reactionists, hoped for the reestablishment of the German Empire; some few ignorant, *soi-disant* radicals, admiring Swiss institutions, of which they had not yet made that practical experience which afterward most ludicrously undeceived them, pronounced for a federated republic; and it was only the most extreme party which, at that time, dared pronounce for a German Republic, one and indivisible. Thus, German Unity was in itself a question big with disunion, discord, and, in the case of certain eventualities, even civil war.

To resume, then, this was the state of Prussia and the smaller States of Germany, at the end of 1847. The middle class, feeling its power, and resolved not to endure much longer the fetters with which a feudal and bureaucratic despotism enchained their commercial transactions, their industrial productivity, their common action as a class; a portion of the landed nobility so far changed into producers of mere marketable commodities as to have the same interests and to make common cause with the middle class; the smaller trading class, dissatisfied, grumbling at the taxes, at the impediments thrown in the way of their business, but without any definite plan for such reforms as should secure their position in the social and political body; the peasantry, oppressed here by feudal exactions, there by money-lenders, usurers, and lawyers; the working people of the towns, infected with the general discontent, equally hating the government and the large industrial capitalists, and catching the contagion of Socialist and Communist ideas; in short, a heterogeneous mass of opposition, springing from various interests, but more or less led on by the Bourgeoisie, in the first ranks of which again marched the Bourgeoisie of Prussia and particularly of the Rhine Province. On the other hand, governments disagreeing upon many points, distrustful of each other, and particularly of that of Prussia, upon which yet they had to rely for protection; in Prussia, a government forsaken by public opinion, forsaken

by even a portion of the nobility, leaning upon an army and a bureaucracy which every day got more infected by the ideas and subjected to the influence of the oppositional Bourgeoisie—a government, besides all this, penniless in the most literal meaning of the word, and which could not procure a single cent to cover its increasing deficit, but by surrendering at discretion to the opposition of the Bourgeoisie. Was there ever a more splendid position for the middle class of any country, while it struggled for power against the established government?

Karl Marx.

London, September, 1851.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3294, 7. November 1851

IV.

We have now to consider Austria, that country which up to March, 1848, was sealed up to the eyes of foreign nations almost as much as China before the late war with England.

As a matter of course, we can here take into consideration nothing but German Austria. The affairs of the Polish, Hungarian or Italian Austrians do not belong to our subject, and as far as they, since 1848, have influenced the fate of the German Austrians, they will have to be taken into account hereafter.

The Government of Prince Metternich turned upon two hinges; firstly, to keep every one of the different nations, subjected to the Austrian rule, in check by all other nations similarly conditioned; secondly, and this always has been the fundamental principle of absolute monarchies, to rely for support upon two classes, the feudal landlords and the large stock-jobbing capitalists; and to balance, at the same time, the influence and power of either of these classes by that of the other, so as to leave full independence of action to the Government. The landed nobility, whose entire income consisted in feudal revenues of all sorts, could not but support a government which proved their only protection against that down-trodden class of serfs upon whose spoils they lived; and whenever the less wealthy portion of them, as in Galicia, in 1846, rose in opposition against the Government, Metternich, in an instant, let loose upon them these very serfs, who at any rate profited by the occasion to wreak a terrible vengeance upon their more immediate oppressors. On the other hand, the large capitalists of the Exchange were chained to Metternich's Government by the vast share they had in the public

funds of the country. Austria, restored to her full power in 1815, restoring and maintaining in Italy absolute monarchy ever since 1820, freed of part of her liabilities by the bankruptcy of 1810, had after the peace very soon reëstablished her credit in the great European money markets, and in proportion as her credit grew, she had drawn against it. Thus all the large European money dealers had engaged considerable portions of their capital in the Austrian funds; they all of them were interested in upholding the credit of that country, and as Austrian public credit, in order to be upheld, ever required new loans, they were obliged from time to time to advance new capital in order to keep up the credit of the securities for that which they already had advanced. The long peace after 1815, and the apparent impossibility of a thousand years old empire, like Austria, being upset, increased the credit of Metternich's Government in a wonderful ratio, and made it even independent of the good-will of the Vienna bankers and stock-jobbers; for as long as Metternich could obtain plenty of money at Frankfort and Amsterdam, he had, of course, the satisfaction of seeing the Austrian capitalists at his feet. They were, besides, in every other respect at his mercy; the large profits which bankers, stock-jobbers and government contractors always contrive to draw out of an absolute monarchy, were compensated for by the almost unlimited power which the Government possessed over their persons and fortunes; and not the smallest shadow of an opposition was, therefore, to be expected from this quarter. Thus, Metternich was sure of the support of the two most powerful and influential classes of the empire, and he possessed, besides, an army and a bureaucracy which, for all purposes of absolutism, could not be better constituted. The civil and military officers in the Austrian service form a race of their own; their fathers have been in the service of the *Kaiser*, and so will their sons be; they belong to none of the multifarious nationalities congregated under the wing of the double-headed eagle; they are, and ever have been, removed from one end of the empire to the other, from Poland to Italy, from Germany to Transylvania; Hungarian, Pole, German, Rumanian, Italian, Croat, every individual not stamped with "imperial and royal" authority, etc., bearing a separate national character, is equally despised by them; they have no nationality, or rather they alone make up the really Austrian nation. It is evident what a pliable and at the same time powerful instrument, in the hands of an intelligent and energetic chief, such a civil and military hierarchy must be.

As to the other classes of the population, Metternich, in the true spirit of a statesman of the *ancien régime*, cared little for their support. He had, with regard to them, but one policy; to draw as much as possible out of them in the shape of taxation, and at the same time, to keep them quiet. The trading and manufacturing middle class was but of slow growth in Austria. The trade

of the Danube was comparatively unimportant; the country possessed but one port, Trieste, and the trade of this port was very limited. As to the manufacturers, they enjoyed considerable protection, amounting even in most cases to the complete exclusion of all foreign competition; but this advantage had been granted to them principally with a view to increase their tax-paying capabilities, and was in a high degree counterpoised by internal restrictions on manufactures, privileges of guilds and other feudal corporations, which were scrupulously upheld as long as they did not impede the purposes and views of the government. The petty tradesmen were encased in the narrow bounds of these mediæval guilds, which kept the different trades in a perpetual war of privilege against each other, and at the same time, by all but excluding individuals of the working class from the possibility of raising themselves in the social scale, gave a sort of hereditary stability to the members of those involuntary associations. Lastly, the peasant and the working man were treated as mere taxable matter, and the only care that was taken of them, was to keep them as much as possible in the same conditions of life in which they then existed, and in which their fathers had existed before them. For this purpose, every old established hereditary authority was upheld in the same manner as that of the State; the authority of the landlord over the petty tenant-farmer, that of the manufacturer over the operative, of the small master over the journeyman and apprentice, of the father over the son, was every where rigidly maintained by the government, and every branch of disobedience punished, the same as a transgression of the law, by that universal instrument of Austrian justice—the stick.

Finally, to wind up into one comprehensive system all these attempts at creating an artificial stability, the intellectual food allowed to the nation was selected with the minutest caution, and dealt out as sparingly as possible. Education was everywhere in the hands of the Catholic priesthood, whose chiefs, in the same manner as the large feudal land-owners, were deeply interested in the conservation of the existing system. The Universities were organized in a manner which allowed them to produce nothing but special men, that might or might not obtain great proficiency in sundry particular branches of knowledge, but which, at all events, excluded that universal liberal education which other universities are expected to impart. There was absolutely no newspaper press, except in Hungary, and the Hungarian papers were prohibited in all other parts of the monarchy. As to general literature, its range had not widened for a century; it had been narrowed again after the death of Joseph II. And all around the frontier, wherever the Austrian States touched upon a civilized country, a *cordon* of literary censors was established in connection with the *cordon* of custom-house officials, preventing any foreign book or newspaper from passing into Austria be-

fore its contents had been twice or three times thoroughly sifted, and found pure of even the slightest contamination of the malignant spirit of the age.

For about thirty years after 1815, this system worked with wonderful success. Austria remained almost unknown to Europe, and Europe was quite as little known in Austria. The social state of every class of the population, and of the population as a whole, appeared not to have undergone the slightest change. Whatever rancor there might exist from class to class—and the existence of this rancor was, for Metternich, a principal condition of government, which he even fostered by making the higher classes the instruments of all government exactions, and thus throwing the odium upon them—whatever hatred the people might bear to the inferior officials of the State, there existed, upon the whole, little or no dissatisfaction with the Central Government. The Emperor was adored, and old Francis the First seemed to be borne out by facts, when, doubting of the durability of this system, he complacently added: “and yet it will hold while I live, and Metternich.”

But there was a slow underground movement going on which baffled all Metternich's efforts. The wealth and influence of the manufacturing and trading middle-class increased. The introduction of machinery and steam-power in manufactures upset in Austria, as it had done everywhere else, the old relations and vital conditions of whole classes of society; it changed serfs into freemen, small farmers into manufacturing operatives; it undermined the old feudal trades-corporations and destroyed the means of existence of many of them. The new commercial and manufacturing population came every where into collision with the old feudal institutions.—The middle classes, more and more induced by their business to travel abroad introduced some mythical knowledge of the civilized countries situated beyond the imperial line of customs; the introduction of railways, finally, accelerated both the industrial and intellectual movement. There was, too, a dangerous part in the Austrian State-establishment, viz.: the Hungarian feudal Constitution, with its parliamentary proceedings and its struggles of the impoverished and oppositional mass of the nobility against the government and its allies, the magnates. Presburg, the seat of the Diet, was at the very gates of Vienna. All the elements contributed to create among the middle classes of the towns, a spirit, not exactly of opposition, for opposition was as yet impossible, but of discontent; a general wish for reforms, more of an administrative than of a constitutional nature. And in the same manner as in Prussia, a portion of the bureaucracy joined the Bourgeoisie. Among this hereditary caste of officials the traditions of Joseph II. were not forgotten; the more educated functionaries of the government, who themselves some-

times meddled with imaginary possible reforms, by far preferred the progressive and intellectual despotism of that Emperor to the “paternal” despotism of Metternich. A portion of the poorer nobility equally sided with the middle class, and as to the lower classes of the population, who always had found plenty of grounds to complain of their superiors, if not of the government, they in most cases could not but adhere to the reformatory wishes of the Bourgeoisie. 5

It was about this time, say 1843 or 1844, that a particular branch of literature, agreeably to this change, was established in Germany. A few Austrian writers, novelists, literary critics, bad poets, the whole of them of very indifferent ability, but gifted with that peculiar industrialism proper to the Jewish race, established themselves in Leipsic and other German towns out of Austria, and there, out of the reach of Metternich, published a number of books and pamphlets on Austrian affairs. They and their publishers made “a roaring trade” of it. All Germany was eager to become initiated into the secrets of the policy of European China; and the Austrians themselves, who obtained these publications by the wholesale smuggling carried on upon the Bohemian frontier, were still more curious. Of course, the secrets let out in these publications were of no great importance, and the reform-plans schemed out by their well-wishing authors bore the stamp of an innocuousness almost amounting to political virginity. A constitution and a free press for Austria were things considered unattainable; administrative reforms, extension of the rights of the provincial diets, admission of foreign books and newspapers, and a less severe censorship—the loyal and humble desires of these good Austrians did hardly go any further. 10 15 20 25

At all events, the growing impossibility of preventing the literary intercourse of Austria with the rest of Germany, and through Germany with the world, contributed much toward the formation of an anti-governmental public opinion, and brought at least some little political information within the reach of part of the Austrian population. Thus, by the end of 1847, Austria was seized, although in an inferior degree, by that political and politico-religious agitation which then prevailed in all Germany; and if its progress in Austria was more silent, it did nevertheless find revolutionary elements enough to work upon. There was the peasant, serf or feudal tenant, ground down into the dust by lordly or government exactions; then the factory operative, forced, by the stick of the policeman, to work upon any terms the manufacturer chose to grant; then the journeyman, debarred by the corporative laws from any chance of gaining an independence in his trade; then the merchant, stumbling, at every step in business, over absurd regulations; then the manufacturer, in uninterrupted conflict with trades-guilds jealous of their privileges, or with greedy and meddling officials; then the schoolmaster, the 30 35 40

savant, the better-educated functionary, vainly struggling against an ignorant and presumptuous clergy, or a stupid and dictating superior. In short, there was not a single class satisfied, for the small concessions Government was obliged now and then to make were made not at its own expense, for the
 5 Treasury could not afford that, but at the expense of the high aristocracy and clergy; and, as to the great bankers and fund-holders, the late events in Italy, the increasing opposition of the Hungarian Diet, and the unwonted spirit of discontent and cry for reform manifesting themselves all over the Empire, were not of a nature to strengthen their faith in the solidity and
 10 solvency of the Austrian Empire.

Thus Austria, too, was marching, slowly but surely, toward a mighty change, when of a sudden an event broke out in France which at once brought down the impending storm, and gave the lie to old Francis's assertion, that the building would hold out both during his and Metternich's lifetime.

15 Karl Marx.

London, September, 1851.

New-York Daily Tribune.
 Nr. 3298, 12. November 1851

V.

On the 24th of February, 1848, Louis Philippe was driven out of Paris and the French Republic was proclaimed. On the 13th of March following the
 20 people of Vienna broke the power of Prince Metternich and made him flee shamefully out of the country. On the 18th of March the people of Berlin rose in arms, and, after an obstinate struggle of eighteen hours, had the satisfaction of seeing the King surrender himself over to their hands. Simultaneous outbreaks of a more or less violent nature, but all with the same
 25 success, occurred in the capitals of the smaller States of Germany. The German people, if they had not accomplished their first revolution, were at least fairly launched into the revolutionary career.

As to the incidents of these various insurrections, we cannot enter here into the details of them: what we have to explain is their character, and the
 30 position which the different classes of the population took up with regard to them.

The revolution of Vienna may be said to have been made by an almost unanimous population. The bourgeoisie, with the exception of the bankers and stockjobbers, the petty trading class, the working people one and all,
 35 arose at once against a government detested by all, a government so uni-

versally hated, that the small minority of nobles and money-lords which had supported it, made itself invisible on the very first attack. The middle classes had been kept in such a degree of political ignorance by Metternich, that to them the news from Paris about the reign of Anarchy, Socialism and Terror, and about impending struggles between the class of capitalists and the class of laborers, proved quite unintelligible. They, in their political innocence, either could attach no meaning to these news, or they believed them to be fiendish inventions of Metternich, to frighten them into obedience. They, besides, had never seen working men act as a class, or stand up for their own distinct class interests. They had, from their past experience, no idea of the possibility of any differences springing up between classes that now were so heartily united in upsetting a government hated by all. They saw the working people agree with themselves upon all points; a constitution, trial by jury, liberty of the press, etc. Thus, they were, in March, 1848, at least, heart and soul with the movement, and the movement, on the other hand, at once constituted them the (at least in theory) predominant class of the State.

But it is the fate of all revolutions that this union of different classes, which in some degree is always the necessary condition of any revolution, cannot subsist long. No sooner is the victory gained against the common enemy, than the victors become divided among themselves into different camps and turn their weapons against each other. It is this rapid and passionate development of class-antagonism which, in old and complicated social organisms, makes a revolution such a powerful agent of social and political progress; it is this incessantly quick upshooting of new parties succeeding each other in power which, during those violent commotions, makes a nation pass in five years over more ground than it would have done in a century under ordinary circumstances.

The revolution, in Vienna, made the middle class the theoretically predominant class; that is to say, the concessions wrung from the Government were such as, once carried out practically and adhered to for a time, would inevitably have secured the supremacy of the middle class. But, practically, the supremacy of that class was far from being established. It is true that by the establishment of a National Guard, which gave arms to the bourgeoisie and petty tradesmen, that class obtained both force and importance; it is true, that by the installation of a "Committee of Safety," a sort of revolutionary, irresponsible government, in which the Bourgeoisie predominated, it was placed at the head of power. But at the same time, the working classes were partially armed too; they and the students had borne the brunt of the fight, as far as fight there had been; and the students, about 4,000 strong, well armed and far better disciplined than the National Guard, formed the nucleus, the

real strength of the revolutionary force, and were noways willing to act as a mere instrument in the hands of the Committee of Safety. Though they recognized it and even were its most enthusiastic supporters, they yet formed a sort of independent and rather turbulent body, deliberating for themselves
5 in the "Aula," keeping an intermediate position between the bourgeoisie and the working classes, preventing, by constant agitation, things to settle down to the old every-day tranquillity, and very often forcing their resolutions upon the Committee of Safety. The working men, on the other hand, almost entirely thrown out of employment, had to be employed in public works at
10 the expense of the State, and the money for this purpose had of course to be taken out of the purse of the tax-payers or out of the chest of the city of Vienna. All this could not but become very unpleasant to the tradesmen of Vienna. The manufactures of the city, calculated for the consumption of the rich and aristocratic courts of a large country, were as a matter of course
15 entirely stopped by the revolution, by the flight of the aristocracy and court; trade was at a stand-still, and the continuous agitation and excitement kept up by the students and working people was certainly not the means to "restore confidence," as the phrase went. Thus, a certain coolness very soon sprung up between the middle classes on the one side, and the turbulent
20 students and working people on the other; and if, for a long time, this coolness was not ripened into open hostility, it was because the Ministry, and particularly the Court, in their impatience to restore the old order of things, constantly justified the suspicions and the turbulent activity of the more revolutionary parties, and constantly made arise, even before the eyes of the middle
25 classes, the spectre of old Metternichian despotism. Thus on the 15th of May, and again on the 26th, there were fresh risings of all classes in Vienna, on account of the Government having tried to attack or to undermine some of the newly conquered liberties, and on each occasion, the alliance between the National Guard or armed middle class, the students, and the working men,
30 was again cemented for a time.

As to the other classes of the population, the aristocracy and the money-lords had disappeared, and the peasantry were busily engaged everywhere in removing, down to the very last vestiges, of feudalism. Thanks to the war in Italy, and the occupation which Vienna and Hungary gave to the Court,
35 they were left at full liberty, and succeeded in their work of liberation, in Austria, better than in any other part of Germany. The Austrian Diet very shortly after had only to confirm the steps already practically taken by the peasantry, and whatever else the Government of Prince Schwarzenberg may be enabled to restore, it will never have the power of reëstablishing the feudal
40 servitude of the peasantry. And if Austria at the present moment is again comparatively tranquil, and even strong, it is principally because the great

majority of the people, the peasants, have been real gainers by the revolution, and because whatever else has been attacked by the restored Government, these palpable, substantial advantages, conquered by the peasantry, are as yet untouched.

Karl Marx. 5

London, October, 1851.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3312, 28. November 1851

VI.

The second center of revolutionary action was Berlin. And from what has been stated in the foregoing papers, it may be guessed that there this action was far from having that unanimous support of almost all classes by which it was accompanied in Vienna. In Prussia the Bourgeoisie had been already involved in actual struggles with the Government; a rupture had been the result of the "United Diet;" a Bourgeois revolution was impending and that revolution might have been, in its first outbreak, quite as unanimous as that of Vienna, had it not been for the Paris revolution of February.—That event precipitated everything, while, at the same time, it was carried out under a banner totally different from that under which the Prussian Bourgeoisie was preparing to defy its Government. The revolution of February upset, in France, the very same sort of Government which the Prussian Bourgeoisie were going to set up in their own country. The revolution of February announced itself as a revolution of the working classes against the middle classes; it proclaimed the downfall of middle-class government and the emancipation of the working man. Now the Prussian Bourgeoisie had of late had quite enough of working-class agitation in their own country. After the first terror of the Silesian riots had passed away, they had even tried to give this agitation a turn in their own favor; but they always had retained a salutary horror of revolutionary Socialism and Communism; and therefore, when they saw men at the head of the Government in Paris whom they considered as the most dangerous enemies of property, order, religion, family, and of the other *penates* of the modern Bourgeois, they at once experienced a considerable cooling down of their own revolutionary ardor. They knew that the moment must be seized, and that without the aid of the working masses they would be defeated; and yet their courage failed them. Thus they sided with the Government in the first partial and provincial outbreaks, tried to keep the people quiet in Berlin, who during five days met in crowds before the royal palace to discuss the news and ask for changes in the Government;

and when at last, after the news of the downfall of Metternich, the King made some slight concessions, the Bourgeoisie considered the revolution as completed, and went to thank his Majesty for having fulfilled all the wishes of his people. But then followed the attack of the military on the crowd, the
5 barricades, the struggle, and the defeat of Royalty. Then everything was changed; the very working classes, which, it had been the tendency of the Bourgeoisie to keep in the background, had been pushed forward, had fought and conquered, and all at once were conscious of their strength. Restrictions of suffrage, of the liberty of the press, of the right to sit on Juries, of the
10 right of meeting—restrictions that would have been very agreeable to the Bourgeoisie, because they would have touched upon such classes only as were beneath it—now were no longer possible. The danger of a repetition of the Parisian scenes of “anarchy” was imminent. Before this danger all former differences disappeared. Against the victorious working-man, although he
15 had not yet uttered any specific demands for himself, the friends and the foes of many years united, and the alliance between the Bourgeoisie and the supporters of the overturned system was concluded upon the very barricades of Berlin. The necessary concessions, but no more than was unavoidable, were to be made; a ministry of the opposition leaders of the United Diet was
20 to be formed, and in return for its services in saving the Crown, it was to have the support of all the props of the old Government, the feudal aristocracy, the bureaucracy, the army. These were the conditions upon which Messrs. Camphausen and Hansemann undertook the formation of a Cabinet.

25 Such was the dread evinced, by the new ministers, of the aroused masses, that in their eyes every means was good if it only tended to strengthen the shaken foundations of authority. They, poor deluded wretches, thought every danger of a restoration of the old system had passed away; and thus they made use of the whole of the old state machinery for the purpose of
30 restoring “order.” Not a single bureaucrat or military officer was dismissed; not the slightest change was made in the old bureaucratic system of administration. These precious constitutional and responsible ministers even restored to their posts those functionaries whom the people, in the first heat of revolutionary ardor, had driven away on account of their former acts of
35 bureaucratic overbearing. There was nothing altered, in Prussia, but the persons of the ministers; even the ministerial staffs in the different departments were not touched upon, and all the constitutional place-hunters, who had formed the chorus of the newly-elevated rulers, and who had expected their share of power and office, were told to wait until restored
40 stability allowed changes to be operated in the bureaucratic personnel which now were not without danger.

The King, chap-fallen in the highest degree after the insurrection of the 18th of March, very soon found out that he was quite as necessary to these “liberal” ministers as they were to him. The throne had been spared by the insurrection; the throne was the last existing obstacle to “anarchy;” the liberal middle class and its leaders, now in the ministry, had therefore every interest to keep on excellent terms with the crown. The King, and the reactionary camarilla that surrounded him, were not slow in discovering this, and profited by the circumstance in order to fetter the march of the ministry even in those petty reforms that were from time to time intended. 5

The first care of the ministry was to give a sort of legal appearance to the recent violent changes. The United Diet was convoked, in spite of all popular opposition, in order to vote, as the legal and constitutional organ of the people, a new electoral law for the election of an assembly, which was to agree with the crown upon a new Constitution. The elections were to be indirect, the mass of voters electing a number of electors, who then were to choose the representative. In spite of all opposition, this system of double elections passed. The United Diet was then asked for a loan of twenty-five millions of dollars, opposed by the popular party, but equally agreed to. 10 15

These acts of the ministry gave a most rapid development to the popular, or as it now called itself, the democratic party. This party, headed by the petty trading and shopkeeping class, and uniting under its banner, in the beginning of the revolution the large majority of the working people, demanded direct and universal suffrage, the same as established in France, a single Legislative Assembly, and full and open recognition of the revolution of the 18th March, as the base of the new governmental system. The more moderate faction would be satisfied with a thus “democratized” monarchy, the more advanced demanded the ultimate establishment of the Republic. Both factions agreed in recognizing the German National Assembly at Frankfort as the supreme authority of the country, while the Constitutionalists and Reactionists affected a great horror of the sovereignty of this body, which they professed to consider as utterly revolutionary. 20 25 30

The independent movement of the working classes had, by the revolution, been broken up for a time. The immediate wants and circumstances of the movement were such as not to allow of any of the specific demands of the Proletarian party to be put in the foreground. In fact, as long as the ground was not cleared for the independent action of the working men, as long as direct and universal suffrage was not yet established, as long as the 36 larger and smaller States continued to cut up Germany into numberless morsels, what else could the Proletarian party do but watch the—for them all-important—movement of Paris, and struggle in common with the petty shopkeepers 35 40

for the attainment of those rights which would allow them to fight, afterward, their own battle?

There were only three points, then, by which the Proletarian party in its political action essentially distinguished itself from the petty trading class, or properly so-called democratic party: firstly, in judging differently the French movement, with regard to which the democrats attacked, and the Proletarian Revolutionists defended the extreme party in Paris; secondly, in proclaiming the necessity of establishing a German Republic, one and indivisible, while the very extremest ultras among the democrats only dared to sigh for a Federative Republic; and thirdly, in showing upon every occasion, that revolutionary boldness and readiness for action, in which any party, headed by and composed principally of petty tradesmen, will always be deficient.

The Proletarian, or really revolutionary party, succeeded only very gradually in withdrawing the mass of the working people from the influence of the democrats, whose tail they formed in the beginning of the revolution. But in due time the indecision, weakness and cowardice of the democratic leaders did the rest, and it may now be said to be one of the principal results of the last years' convulsions, that wherever the working class is concentrated in anything like considerable masses, they are entirely freed from that democratic influence which led them into an endless series of blunders and misfortunes during 1848 and 1849. But we had better not anticipate; the events of these two years will give us plenty of opportunities to show the democratic gentlemen at work.

The peasantry in Prussia, the same as in Austria, but with less energy, feudalism pressing, upon the whole, not quite so hard upon them here, had profited by the revolution to free themselves at once from all feudal shackles. But here, from the reasons stated before, the middle classes at once turned against them, their oldest, their most indispensable allies; the democrats, equally frightened with the Bourgeois by what was called attacks upon private property, failed equally to support them; and thus, after three months' emancipation, after bloody struggles and military executions, particularly in Silesia, feudalism was restored by the hands of the, until yesterday, anti-feudal Bourgeoisie. There is not a more damning fact to be brought against them than this. Similar treason against its best allies, against itself, never was committed by any party in history, and whatever humiliation and chastisement may be in store for this middle-class-party, it has deserved by this one act every morsel of it.

Karl Marx.

London, October, 1851.

VII.

It will perhaps be in the recollection of our readers that in the six preceding papers we followed up the revolutionary movement of Germany to the two great popular victories of March 13, in Vienna, and March 18, in Berlin. We saw, both in Austria and Prussia, the establishment of Constitutional Governments and the proclamation, as leading rules for all future policy, of liberal or middle-class principles; and the only difference observable between the two great centers of action was this, that in Prussia the liberal Bourgeoisie in the persons of two wealthy merchants, Messrs. Camphausen and Hansemann, directly seized upon the reins of power; while in Austria, where the Bourgeoisie was, politically, far less educated, the liberal *Bureaucratie* walked into office and professed to hold power in trust for them. We have further seen, how the parties and classes of society, that were heretofore all united in their opposition to the old Government, got divided among themselves after the victory or even during the struggle; and how that same liberal Bourgeoisie that alone profited from the victory, turned round immediately upon its allies of yesterday, assumed a hostile attitude against every class or party of a more advanced character, and concluded an alliance with the conquered feudal and bureaucratic interests. It was in fact evident, even from the beginning of the revolutionary drama, that the liberal Bourgeoisie could not hold its ground against the vanquished, but not destroyed, feudal and bureaucratic parties except by relying upon the assistance of the popular and more advanced parties; and that it equally required, against the torrent of these more advanced masses, the assistance of the feudal nobility and of the *bureaucratie*. Thus, it was clear enough, that the Bourgeoisie, in Austria and Prussia, did not possess sufficient strength to maintain their power and to adapt the institutions of the country to their own wants and ideas. The liberal Bourgeois Ministry was only a halting place from which, according to the turn circumstances might take, the country would either have to go on to the more advanced stage of Unitarian Republicanism, or to relapse into the old clerico-feudal and bureaucratic *régime*. At all events, the real, decisive struggle was yet to come; the events of March had only engaged the combat.

Austria and Prussia being the two ruling States of Germany, every decisive revolutionary victory in Vienna or Berlin would have been decisive for all Germany. And as far as they went, the events of March, 1848, in these two cities, decided the turn of German affairs. It would, then, be superfluous to recur to the movements that occurred in the minor States; and we might,

indeed, confine ourselves to the consideration of Austrian and Prussian affairs exclusively, if the existence of these minor States had not given rise to a body which was, by its very existence, a most striking proof of the abnormal situation of Germany and of the incompleteness of the late revolution; a body so abnormal, so ludicrous by its very position, and yet so full of its own importance, that history will, most likely, never afford a *pendant* to it. This body was the so-called *German National Assembly* at Frankfort-on-the-Main.

After the popular victories of Vienna and Berlin, it was a matter of course that there should be a Representative Assembly for all Germany. This body was consequently elected, and met at Frankfort, by the side of the old Federative Diet. The German National Assembly was expected, by the people, to settle every matter in dispute, and to act as the highest legislative authority for the whole of the German Confederation. But at the same time the Diet which had convoked it had in no way fixed its attributions. No one knew whether its decrees were to have force of law, or whether they were to be subject to the sanction of the Diet or of the individual Governments. In this perplexity, if the Assembly had been possessed of the least energy, it would have immediately dissolved and sent home the Diet—than which no corporate body was more unpopular in Germany—and replaced it by a Federal Government chosen from among its own members. It would have declared itself the only legal expression of the sovereign will of the German people, and thus attached legal validity to every one of its decrees. It would, above all, have secured to itself an organized and armed force in the country sufficient to put down any opposition on the part of the Governments. And all this was easy, very easy at that early period of the revolution. But that would have been expecting a great deal too much from an Assembly composed in its majority of liberal attorneys and *doctrinaire* professors, an Assembly which, while it pretended to embody the very essence of German intellect and science, was in reality nothing but a stage where old and worn-out political characters exhibited their involuntary ludicrousness and their impotence of thought, as well as action, before the eyes of all Germany. This Assembly of old women was, from the first day of its existence, more frightened of the least popular movement than of all the reactionary plots of all the German Governments put together. It deliberated under the eyes of the Diet, nay, it almost craved the Diet's sanction to its decrees, for its first resolutions had to be promulgated by that odious body. Instead of asserting its own sovereignty, it studiously avoided the discussion of any such dangerous questions. Instead of surrounding itself by a popular force, it passed to the order of the day over all the violent encroachments of the Governments; Mayence, under its very eyes, was placed in a state of siege

and the people there disarmed, and the National Assembly did not stir. Later on it elected Archduke John of Austria Regent of Germany, and declared that all its resolutions were to have the force of law; but then, Archduke John was only instituted in his new dignity after the consent of all the Governments had been obtained, and he was instituted not by the Assembly, but by the Diet; and as to the legal force of the decrees of the Assembly, that point was never recognized by the larger Governments, nor enforced by the Assembly itself; it therefore remained in suspense.—Thus we had the strange spectacle of an Assembly pretending to be the only legal representative of a great and sovereign nation, and yet never possessing either the will or the force to make its claims recognized. The debates of this body, without any practical result, were not even of any theoretical value, reproducing as they did, nothing but the most hackneyed common-place themes of superannuated philosophical and juridical schools; every sentence that was said or rather stammered forth in that Assembly, having been printed a thousand times over and a thousand times better long before. 5 10 15

Thus, the pretended new central authority of Germany left every thing as it had found it. So far from realizing the long-demanded unity of Germany, it did not dispossess the most insignificant of the princes who ruled her; it did not draw closer the bonds of union between her separated provinces; it never moved a single step to break down the custom-house barriers that separated Hanover from Prussia and Prussia from Austria; it did not even make the slightest attempt to remove the obnoxious dues that everywhere obstruct river navigation in Prussia. But the less this Assembly did, the more it blustered. It created a German Fleet—upon paper; it annexed Poland and Schleswig; it allowed German Austria to carry on war against Italy, and yet prohibited the Italians from following up the Austrians into their safe retreat in Germany; it gave three cheers and one cheer more for the French Republic and it received Hungarian Embassies, which certainly went home with far more confused ideas about Germany than what they had come with. 20 25 30

This Assembly had been, in the beginning of the Revolution, the bugbear of all German Governments. They had counted upon a very dictatorial and revolutionary action on its part—on account of the very want of definiteness in which it had been found necessary to leave its competency. These Governments, therefore, got up a most comprehensive system of intrigues in order to weaken the influence of this dreaded body; but they proved to have more luck than wits, for this Assembly did the work of the Governments better than they themselves could have done. The chief feature among these intrigues was the convocation of local legislative assemblies, and in consequence, not only the lesser States convoked their Legislatures, but Prussia and Austria also called Constituent Assemblies. In these, as in the Frankfort 35 40

House of Representatives, the liberal middle-class, or its allies, liberal lawyers and bureaucrats, had the majority, and the turn affairs took in each of them was nearly the same. The only difference is this, that the German National Assembly was the parliament of an imaginary country, as it had
5 declined the task of forming what nevertheless was its own first condition of existence, viz.: an United Germany; that it discussed the imaginary, and never-to-be-carried-out measures of an imaginary Government of its own creation, and that it passed imaginary resolutions for which nobody cared; while in Austria and Prussia the constituent bodies were at least real parlia-
10 ments, upsetting and creating real ministries, and forcing, for a time at least, their resolutions upon the Princes with whom they had to contend. They, too, were cowardly, and lacked enlarged views of revolutionary resolution; they, too, betrayed the people, and restored power to the hands of feudal, bureaucratic and military despotism. But then, they were at least obliged to
15 discuss practical questions of immediate interest, and to live upon earth with other people, while the Frankfort humbugs were never happier than when they could roam in "the airy realms of dream," *im Luftreich des Traums*. Thus the proceedings of the Berlin and Vienna Constituents form an important part of German revolutionary history, while the lucubrations of the
20 Frankfort collective tom-foolery merely interest the collector of literary and antiquarian curiosities.

The people of Germany, deeply feeling the necessity of doing away with the obnoxious territorial division that scattered and annihilated the collective force of the nation, for some time expected to find in the Frankfort National
25 Assembly at least the beginning of a new era. But the childish conduct of that set of wiseacres soon disenchanted the national enthusiasm. The disgraceful proceedings occasioned by the armistice of Malmoe, (September, 1848,) made the popular indignation burst out against a body, which, it had been hoped, would give the nation a fair field for action, and which instead,
30 carried away by unequaled cowardice, only restored to their former solidity the foundations upon which the present counter-revolutionary system is built.

Karl Marx.

London, January, 1852.

VIII.

From what has been stated in the foregoing articles, it is already evident that unless a fresh revolution was to follow that of March, 1848, things would inevitably return, in Germany, to what they were before this event. But such is the complicated nature of the historical theme upon which we are trying to throw some light, that subsequent events cannot be clearly understood without taking into account what may be called the foreign relations of the German Revolution. And these foreign relations were of the same intricate nature as the home affairs. 5

The whole of the eastern half of Germany, as far as the Elbe, Saale and Bohemian Forest, have, it is well known, been reconquered during the last thousand years, from invaders of Slavonic origin. The greater part of these territories have been Germanized, to the perfect extinction of all Slavonic nationality and language, for several centuries past; and if we except a few totally isolated remnants, amounting in the aggregate to less than a hundred thousand souls, (Kassubians in Pomerania, Wends or Sorbians in Lusatia,) their inhabitants are, to all intents and purposes, Germans. But the case is different along the whole of the frontier of ancient Poland, and in the countries of the Tschechian tongue, in Bohemia and Moravia. Here the two nationalities are mixed up in every district, the towns being generally more or less German, while the Slavonic element prevails in the rural villages, where, however, it is also gradually disintegrated and forced back by the steady advance of German influence. 10 15 20

The reason of this state of things is this. Ever since the time of Charlemagne the Germans have directed their most constant and persevering efforts to the conquest, colonization, or at least civilization of the East of Europe. The conquests of the feudal nobility, between the Elbe and the Oder, and the feudal colonies of the military orders of knights in Prussia and Livonia only laid the ground for a far more extensive and effective system of Germanization by the trading and manufacturing middle classes, which in Germany, as in the rest of Western Europe, rose into social and political importance since the fifteenth century. The Slavonians, and particularly the Western Slavonians, (Poles and Tschechs) are essentially an agricultural race; trade and manufactures never were in great favor with them. The consequence was, that with the increase of population and the origin of cities, in these regions, the production of all articles of manufacture fell into the hands of German immigrants, and the exchange of these commodities against agricultural produce, became the exclusive monopoly of the Jews, who, if 25 30 35

they belong to any nationality, are in these countries certainly rather Germans than Slavonians. This has been, though in a less degree, the case in all the East of Europe. The handicraftsman, the small shopkeeper, the petty manufacturer is a German up to this day in Petersburg, Pesth, Jassy and
5 even Constantinople; while the money-lender, the publican, the hawker—a very important man in these thinly populated countries—is very generally a Jew, whose native tongue is a horribly corrupted German. The importance of the German element in the Slavonic frontier localities, thus rising with the growth of towns, trade and manufactures, was still increased when it was
10 found necessary to import almost every element of mental culture from Germany; after the German merchant, and handicraftsman, the German clergyman, the German schoolmaster, the German *savant* came to establish himself upon Slavonic soil. And lastly, the iron tread of conquering armies, or the cautious, well-premeditated grasp of diplomacy not only followed, but
15 many times went ahead of the slow but sure advance of denationalization by social developments. Thus, great parts of Western Prussia and Posen have been Germanized since the first partition of Poland, by sales and grants of public domains to German colonists, by encouragements given to German capitalists for the establishment of manufactories, etc., in those neighbor-
20 hoods, and very often, too, by excessively despotic measures against the Polish inhabitants of the country.

In this manner, the last seventy years had entirely changed the line of demarcation between the German and Polish nationalities. The revolution of 1848 calling forth, at once, the claim of all oppressed nations to an inde-
25 pendent existence, and to the right of settling their own affairs for themselves, it was quite natural that the Poles should at once demand the restoration of their country within the frontiers of the old Polish Republic before 1772. It is true, this frontier, even at that time, had become obsolete, if taken as the delimitation of German and Polish nationality; it had become more
30 so every year since by the progress of Germanization; but then, the Germans had proclaimed such an enthusiasm for the restoration of Poland, that they must expect to be asked, as a first proof of the reality of their sympathies, to give up *their* share of the plunder. On the other hand, should whole tracts of land, inhabited chiefly by Germans, should large towns, entirely German,
35 be given up to a people that as yet had never given any proofs of its capability of progressing beyond a state of feudalism based upon agricultural serfdom? The question was intricate enough. The only possible solution was in a war with Russia; the question of delimitation between the different revolution-
40 ized nations would have been made a secondary one to that of first establishing a safe frontier against the common enemy; the Poles, by receiving extended territories in the east, would have become more tractable and reason-

able in the west; and Riga and Mitau would have been deemed, after all, quite as important to them as Danzig and Elbing. Thus the advanced party in Germany, deeming a war with Russia necessary to keep up the Continental movement, and considering that the national reëstablishment even of a part of Poland would inevitably lead to such a war, supported the Poles; while the reigning liberal middle class party clearly foresaw its downfall from any national war against Russia, which would have called more active and energetic men to the helm, and therefore, with a feigned enthusiasm for the extension of German nationality, they declared Prussian Poland, the chief seat of Polish revolutionary agitation, to be part and parcel of the German empire that was to be. The promises given to the Poles in the first days of excitement were shamefully broken; Polish armaments, got up with the sanction of the Government, were dispersed and massacred by Prussian artillery; and as soon as the month of April, 1848, within six weeks of the Berlin Revolution, the Polish movement was crushed, and the old national hostility revived between Poles and Germans. This immense and incalculable service to the Russian Autocrat was performed by the liberal merchant-ministers, Camphausen and Hansemann. It must be added, that this Polish campaign was the first means of reorganizing and reassuring the same Prussian army, which afterward turned out the Liberal party and crushed the movement which Messrs. Camphausen and Hansemann had taken such pains to bring about. "Whereby they sinned, thereby are they punished." Such has been the fate of all the upstarts of 1848 and '49, from Ledru Rollin to Changarnier, and from Camphausen down to Haynau.

The question of nationality gave rise to another struggle in Bohemia. This country, inhabited by two millions of Germans, and three millions of Slavonians, of the Tschechian tongue, had great historical recollections, almost all connected with the former supremacy of the Tschechs. But then the force of this branch of the Slavonic family had been broken ever since the wars of the Hussites in the 15th century; the provinces speaking the Tschechian language were divided, one part forming the kingdom of Bohemia, another the principality of Moravia, a third the Carpathian hill-country of the Slovaks, being part of Hungary. The Moravians and Slovaks had long since lost every vestige of national feeling and vitality, although mostly preserving their language. Bohemia was surrounded by thoroughly German countries on three sides out of four. The German element had made great progress on her own territory; even in the capital, in Prague, the two nationalities were pretty equally matched; and everywhere capital, trade, industry and mental culture were in the hands of the Germans. The chief champion of the Tschechian nationality, Professor Palacky, is himself nothing but a learned German run mad, who even now cannot speak the Tschechian language

correctly and without foreign accent. But as it often happens, dying Tschechian nationality—dying according to every fact known in history for the last four hundred years—made in 1848 a last effort to regain its former vitality—an effort whose failure, independently of all revolutionary considerations—was to prove that Bohemia could only exist, henceforth, as a portion of Germany, although part of her inhabitants might yet, for some centuries, continue to speak a non-German language.

Karl Marx.

London, Feb., 1852.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3403, 15. März 1852

10

IX.

Bohemia and Croatia (another disjected member of the Slavonic family, acted upon by the Hungarian as Bohemia by the German,) were the homes of what is called on the European Continent "*Panslavism*." Neither Bohemia nor Croatia was strong enough to exist as a nation by herself. Their respective nationality, gradually undermined by the action of historical causes that inevitably absorbs it into a more energetic stock, could only hope to be restored to something like independence by an alliance with other Slavonic nations. There were twenty-two millions of Poles, forty-five millions of Russians, eight millions of Serbians and Bulgarians—why not form a mighty Confederation of the whole eighty millions of Slavonians, and drive back or exterminate the intruder upon the holy Slavonic soil, the Turk, the Hungarian, and above all the hated, but indispensable *Niemetz*, the German? Thus, in the studies of a few Slavonian *dilettanti* of historical science was this ludicrous, this anti-historical movement got up, a movement which intended nothing less than to subjugate the civilized West under the Barbarian East, the town under the country, trade, manufactures, intelligence, under the primitive agriculture of Slavonian serfs. But behind this ludicrous theory stood the terrible reality of the *Russian Empire*, that empire which by every movement proclaims the pretension of considering all Europe as the domain of the Slavonic race, and especially of the only energetic part of this race, of the Russian; that empire which, with two capitals such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, has not yet found its center of gravity, as long as the "*city of the Czar*," (Constantinople, called in Russian Tzarigrad, the Czar's City,) considered by every Russian peasant as the true metropolis of his religion and his nation, is not actually the residence of its Emperor; that empire, which for the last 150 years has never lost, but always gained territory by every

war it has commenced. And well-known in Central Europe are the intrigues by which Russian policy supported the new-fangled system of Panslavism, a system than which, none better could be invented to suit its purposes. Thus, the Bohemian and Croatian Panslavists, some intentionally, some without knowing it, worked in the direct interest of Russia; they betrayed the revolutionary cause for the shadow of a nationality which, in the best of cases, would have shared the fate of the Polish nationality under Russian sway. It must, however, be said for the honor of the Poles, that they never got to be seriously entangled in these Panslavistic traps; and if a few of the aristocracy turned furious Panslavists, they knew that by Russian subjugation they had less to lose than by a revolt of their own peasant serfs. 5 10

The Bohemians and Croats called, then, a general Slavonic Congress at Prague, for the preparation of the universal Slavonian alliance. This Congress would have proved a decided failure even without the interference of the Austrian military. The several Slavonic languages differ quite as much as the English, the German and the Swedish, and when the proceedings opened, there was no common Slavonic tongue by which the speakers could make themselves understood. French was tried, but was equally unintelligible to the majority, and the poor Slavonic enthusiasts whose only common feeling was a common hatred against the Germans, were at last obliged to express themselves in the hated German language, as the only one that was generally understood! But just then, another Slavonic Congress was assembling in Prague, in the shape of Galician lancers, Croatian and Slovak grenadiers, and Bohemian gunners and cuirassiers; and this real, armed Slavonic Congress under the command of Windischgrätz, in less than twenty-four hours drove the founders of an imaginary Slavonian supremacy out of the town and dispersed them to the winds. 15 20 25

The Bohemian, Moravian, Dalmatian, and part of the Polish Deputies (the aristocracy,) to the Austrian Constituent Diet, made in that Assembly a systematic war upon the German element. The Germans and part of the Poles (the impoverished nobility) were in this assembly the chief supporters of revolutionary progress; the mass of the Slavonic Deputies, in opposing them, were not satisfied with thus showing clearly the reactionary tendencies of their entire movement, but they were degraded enough to tamper and conspire with the very same Austrian Government which had dispersed their meeting at Prague. They, too, were paid for this infamous conduct; after supporting the Government during the insurrection of October, 1848, an event which finally secured to them the majority in the Diet, this now almost exclusively Slavonic Diet was dispersed by Austrian soldiers, the same as the Prague Congress, and the Panslavists threatened with imprisonment if they should stir again. And they have only obtained this, that Slavonic 30 35 40

nationality is now being everywhere undermined by Austrian centralization, a result for which they may thank their own fanaticism and blindness.

If the frontiers of Hungary and Germany had admitted of any doubt, there would certainly have been another quarrel there. But, fortunately, there was
5 no pretext, and the interests of both nations being intimately related, they struggled against the same enemies, viz., the Austrian Government and the Panslavistic fanaticism. The good understanding was not for a moment disturbed. But the Italian revolution entangled a part at least of Germany in an internecine war; and it must be stated here, as a proof how far the
10 Metternichian system had succeeded in keeping back the development of the public mind, that during the first six months of 1848 the same men that had in Vienna mounted the barricades, went, full of enthusiasm, to join the army that fought against the Italian patriots. This deplorable confusion of ideas did not, however, last long.

15 Lastly, there was the war with Denmark about Schleswig and Holstein. These countries, unquestionably German by nationality, language and predilection, are also, from military, naval and commercial grounds, necessary to Germany. Their inhabitants have, for the last three years, struggled hard against Danish intrusion. The right of treaties, besides, was for them. The
20 revolution of March brought them into open collision with the Danes, and Germany supported them. But while in Poland, in Italy, in Bohemia, and later on, in Hungary, military operations were pushed with the utmost vigor, in this, the only popular, the only, at least partially, revolutionary war, a system of resultless marches and counter-marches was adopted, and an interference
25 of foreign diplomacy was submitted to, which led, after many an heroic engagement, to a most miserable end. The German Governments betrayed, during this war, the Schleswig-Holstein revolutionary army on every occasion, and allowed it purposely to be cut up, when dispersed or divided, by the Danes. The German corps of volunteers were treated the same.

30 But while thus the German name earned nothing but hatred on every side, the German constitutional and liberal Governments rubbed their hands for joy. They had succeeded in crushing the Polish and Bohemian movements. They had every where revived the old national animosities, which heretofore had prevented any common understanding and action between the German,
35 the Pole, the Italian. They had accustomed the people to scenes of civil war and repression by the military. The Prussian army had regained its confidence in Poland, the Austrian army in Prague; and while the superabundant patriotism (*"die patriotische Ueberkraft,"* as Heine has it,) of revolutionary, but short-sighted youth, was led, in Schleswig and Lombardy, to be crushed
40 by the grape-shot of the enemy, the regular army, the real instrument of action, both of Prussia and Austria, was placed in a position to regain public

favor by victories over the foreigner. But we repeat: these armies, strengthened by the Liberals as a means of action against the more advanced party, no sooner had recovered their self-confidence and their discipline in some degree, than they turned themselves against the Liberals, and restored to power the men of the old system. When Radetzky, in his camp behind the Adige, received the first orders from the "responsible Ministers" at Vienna, he exclaimed: "Who are these Ministers? They are not the Government of Austria! Austria is, now, nowhere, but in my camp; I and my Army, we are Austria; and when we shall have beaten the Italians we shall reconquer the Empire for the Emperor!" And old Radetzky was right—but the imbecile, "responsible" Ministers at Vienna heeded him not.

Karl Marx.

London, Feb., 1852.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3406, 18. März 1852

X.

As early as the beginning of April, 1848, the revolutionary torrent had found itself stemmed all over the Continent of Europe by the league which those classes of Society that had profited by the first victory, immediately formed with the vanquished. In France, the petty trading class and the republican fraction of the Bourgeoisie had combined with the monarchist Bourgeoisie against the proletarians; in Germany and Italy, the victorious Bourgeoisie had eagerly courted the support of the feudal nobility, the official Bureaucracy and the army, against the mass of the people and the petty traders. Very soon the united Conservative and Counter-revolutionary parties again regained the ascendant. In England, an untimely and ill-prepared popular demonstration (April 10,) turned out in a complete and decisive defeat of the movement party. In France, two similar movements (16th April and 15th May,) were equally defeated. In Italy, King Bomba regained his authority by a single stroke on the 15th of May. In Germany, the different new Bourgeoisie governments and their respective constituent assemblies consolidated themselves, and if the eventful 15th of May gave rise, in Vienna, to a popular victory, this was an event of merely secondary importance, and may be considered the last successful flash of popular energy. In Hungary the movements appeared to turn into the quiet channel of perfect legality, and the Polish movement, as we have seen in our last, was stifled in the bud by Prussian bayonets. But as yet nothing was decided as to the eventual turn which things would take, and every inch of ground lost by the revolutionary

parties in the different countries only tended to close their ranks more and more for the decisive action.

The decisive action drew near. It could be fought in France only; for France, as long as England took no part in the revolutionary strife, or as
 5 Germany remained divided, was, by its national independence, civilization and centralization, the only country to impart the impulse of a mighty convulsion to the surrounding countries. Accordingly, when, on the 23d of June, 1848, the bloody struggle began in Paris, when every succeeding telegraph or mail more clearly exposed the fact to the eyes of Europe, that this struggle
 10 was carried on between the mass of the working people on the one hand, and all the other classes of the Parisian population, supported by the army, on the other; when the fighting went on for several days with an exasperation unequalled in the history of modern civil warfare, but without any apparent advantage for either side—then it became evident to every one that this was
 15 the great decisive battle which would, if the insurrection were victorious, deluge the whole continent with renewed revolutions, or, if it was suppressed, bring about an, at least momentary, restoration of counter-revolutionary rule.

The proletarians of Paris were defeated, decimated, crushed with such an
 20 effect that even now they have not yet recovered from the blow. And immediately, all over Europe, the new and old conservatives and counter-revolutionists raised their heads with an effrontery that showed how well they understood the importance of the event. The press was everywhere attacked, the rights of meeting and association were interfered with, every
 25 little event in every small provincial town was taken profit of to disarm the people, to declare a state of siege, to drill the troops in the new manœuvres and artifices that Cavaignac had taught them. Besides, for the first time since February, the invincibility of a popular insurrection in a large town had been proved to be a delusion; the honor of the armies had been restored; the
 30 troops, hitherto always defeated in street battles of importance, regained confidence in their efficiency even in this kind of struggle.

From this defeat of the *ouvriers* of Paris may be dated the first positive steps and definite plans of the old feudal-bureaucratic party in Germany, to get rid even of their momentary allies, the middle classes, and to restore
 35 Germany to the state she was in before the events of March.—The army again was the decisive power in the State, and the army belonged not to the middle classes, but to themselves. Even in Prussia, where before 1848 a considerable leaning of part of the lower grades of officers toward a constitutional government had been observed, the disorder introduced into the army by the revolution had brought back those reasoning young men to their allegiance; as soon
 40 as the private soldier took a few liberties with regard to the officers, the

necessity of discipline and passive obedience became at once strikingly evident to them. The vanquished nobles and bureaucrats now began to see their way before them; the army, more united than ever, flushed with victory in minor insurrections and in foreign warfare, jealous of the great success the French soldiers had just attained—this army had only to be kept in constant petty conflicts with the people, and, the decisive moment once at hand, it could with one great blow crush the revolutionists and set aside the presumptions of the middle class parliamentarians. And the proper moment for such a decisive blow arrived soon enough. 5

We pass over the sometimes curious, but mostly tedious, parliamentary proceedings and local struggles that occupied, in Germany, the different parties during the summer. Suffice it to say that the supporters of the middle-class interest in spite of numerous parliamentary triumphs, not one of which led to any practical result, very generally felt that their position between the extreme parties became daily more untenable, and that, therefore, they were obliged now, to seek the alliance of the Reàctionists, and the next day, to court the favor of the more popular fractions. This constant vacillation gave the finishing stroke to their character in public opinion, and according to the turn events were taking, the contempt into which they had sunk, profited for the moment principally the Bureaucrats and Feudalists. 10 15 20

By the beginning of autumn the relative position of the different parties had become exasperated and critical enough to make a decisive battle inevitable. The first engagements in this war between the democratic and revolutionary masses and the army took place at Frankfort. Though a mere secondary engagement, it was the first advantage of any note the troops acquired over insurrection, and had a great moral effect. The fancy government established by the Frankfort National Assembly had been allowed by Prussia, for very obvious reasons, to conclude an armistice with Denmark which not only surrendered to Danish vengeance the Germans of Schleswig, but which also entirely disclaimed the more or less revolutionary principles which were generally supposed in the Danish war. This armistice was, by a majority of two or three, rejected in the Frankfort Assembly. A sham Ministerial crisis followed this vote, but three days later the Assembly reconsidered their vote, and were actually induced to cancel it and acknowledge the armistice. This disgraceful proceeding roused the indignation of the people. Barricades were erected, but already sufficient troops had been drawn to Frankfort, and, after six hours fighting, the insurrection was suppressed. Similar but less important movements connected with this event took place in other parts of Germany, (Baden, Cologne,) but were equally defeated. 25 30 35 40

This preliminary engagement gave to the counter-revolutionary party the

one great advantage, that now the only Government which had entirely—at least in semblance—originated with popular election, the Imperial Government of Frankfort, as well as the National Assembly, was ruined in the eyes of the people. This Government and this Assembly had been obliged to
 5 appeal to the bayonets of the troops against the manifestation of the popular will. They were compromised, and what little regard they might have been hitherto enabled to claim, this repudiation of their origin, the dependency upon the anti-popular Governments and their troops, made both the Lieutenant of the Empire, his Ministers and his Deputies, to be henceforth complete
 10 nullities. We shall soon see how first Austria, then Prussia and later on the smaller States too, treated with contempt every order, every request, every deputation they received from this body of impotent dreamers.

We now come to the great counter-stroke, in Germany, of the French battle of June, to that event which was as decisive for Germany as the proletarian
 15 struggle of Paris had been for France; we mean the revolution and subsequent storming of Vienna, in October, 1848. But the importance of this battle is such, and the explanation of the different circumstances that more immediately contributed to its issue, will take up such a portion of *The Tribune's* columns, as to necessitate its being treated in a separate letter.

20 Karl Marx
London, Feb., 1852.

New-York Daily Tribune.
 Nr. 3407, 19. März 1852

XI.

We now come to the decisive events which formed the counter-revolutionary party in Germany, to the Parisian insurrection of June, and which, by a single
 25 blow, turned the scale in favor of the counter-revolutionary party; the insurrection of October, 1848, in Vienna.

We have seen what the position of the different classes was, in Vienna, after the victory of the 13th of March. We have also seen, how the movement of German-Austria was entangled with and impeded by the events in the
 30 non-German provinces of Austria. It only remains for us, then, briefly to survey the causes which led to this last and most formidable rising of German-Austria.

The high Aristocracy and the stockjobbing Bourgeoisie which had formed the principal non-official supports of the Metternichian Government, were
 35 enabled, even after the events of March, to maintain a predominating influence with the Government, not only by the court, the army and the bureaucracy, but still more by the horror of "anarchy," which rapidly spread

among the middle classes. They very soon ventured a few feelers in the shape of a press-law, a nondescript Aristocratic Constitution and an electoral law based upon the old division of "Estates." The so-called constitutional ministry, consisting of half liberal, timid, incapable bureaucrats, on the 14th of May, even ventured a direct attack upon the revolutionary organizations of the masses by dissolving the Central Committee of Delegates of the National Guard and Academic legion, a body formed for the express purpose of controlling the Government and calling out against it in case of need, the popular forces. But this act only provoked the insurrection of the 15th of May, by which the Government was forced to acknowledge the Committee, to repeal the Constitution and the Electoral Law, and to grant the power of framing a new fundamental law to a Constitutional Diet, elected by universal suffrage. All this was confirmed on the following day by an Imperial proclamation. But the reactionary party, which also had its representatives in the ministry, soon got their "Liberal" colleagues to undertake a new attack upon the popular conquests. The Academic Legion, the stronghold of the movement party, the center of continuous agitation, had, on this very account, become obnoxious to the more moderate burghers of Vienna; on the 26th a ministerial decree dissolved it. Perhaps this blow might have succeeded, if it had been carried out by a part of the National Guard only, but the Government, not trusting them either, brought the military forward, and at once the National Guard turned round, united with the Academic Legion, and thus frustrated the ministerial project.

In the meantime, however, the Emperor and his court had, on the 16th of May, left Vienna and fled to Innsbruck. Here, surrounded by the bigoted Tyroleans, whose loyalty was roused again by the danger of an invasion of their country by the Sardo-Lombardian army; supported by the vicinity of Radetzky's troops, within shell-range of whom Innsbruck lay, here the counter-revolutionary party found an asylum, from whence, uncontrolled, unobserved and safe, it might rally its scattered forces, repair and spread again all over the country the network of its plots. Communications were reopened with Radetzky, with Jellachich, and with Windischgrätz, as well as with the reliable men in the administrative hierarchy of the different Provinces; intrigues were set on foot with the Slavonic chiefs; and thus a real force at the disposal of the counter-revolutionary camarilla was formed, while the impotent Ministers in Vienna were allowed to wear their short and feeble popularity out in continual bickerings with the revolutionary masses, and in the debates of the forthcoming constituent Assembly. Thus, the policy of leaving the movement of the capital to itself for a time, a policy which must have led to the omnipotence of the movement party, in a centralized and homogeneous country like France, here, in Austria, in a heterogeneous

political conglomerate, was one of the safest means of reorganizing the strength of the reactionists.

In Vienna, the middle class, persuaded that after three successive defeats, and in the face of a Constituent Assembly based upon universal suffrage, the Court party was no longer an opponent to be dreaded, fell more and more into that weariness and apathy, and that eternal outcry for order and tranquillity, which has everywhere seized this class after violent commotions and consequent derangement of trade. The manufacturers of the Austrian Capital are almost exclusively limited to articles of luxury, for which, since the revolution and the flight of the Court, there had necessarily been very little demand. The shout for a return to a regular system of Government, and for a return of the Court, both of which were expected to bring about a revival of commercial prosperity—this shout became now general among the middle classes. The meeting of the Constituent Assembly, in July, was hailed with delight as the end of the revolutionary era; so was the return of the Court, which, after the victories of Radetzky in Italy, and after the advent of the reactionary Ministry of Doblhoff, considered itself strong enough to brave the popular torrent, and which, at the same time, was wanted in Vienna in order to complete its intrigues with the Slavonic majority of the Diet. While the Constituent Diet discussed the laws on the emancipation of the peasantry from feudal bondage and forced labor for the nobility, the Court completed a master-stroke. On the 19th of August, the Emperor was made to review the National Guard; the imperial family, the courtiers, the general officers, outbid each other in flatteries to the armed burghers, who were already intoxicated with pride at thus seeing themselves publicly acknowledged as one of the important bodies of the State; and immediately afterward a decree, signed by M. Schwarzer, the only popular Minister in the Cabinet, was published, withdrawing the Government aid given hitherto to the workmen out of employ. The trick succeeded; the working classes got up a demonstration; the middle-class National Guards declared for the decree of their Minister; they were launched upon the “Anarchists,” fell like tigers on the unarmed and unresisting workpeople, and massacred a great number of them on the 23d of August. Thus the unity and strength of the revolutionary force was broken; the class-struggle between Bourgeois and Proletarian had come, in Vienna too, to a bloody outbreak, and the counter-revolutionary Camarilla saw the day approaching on which it might strike its grand blow.

The Hungarian affairs very soon offered an opportunity to proclaim openly the principles upon which it intended to act. On the 5th of October an imperial decree in the Vienna official *Gazette*—a decree countersigned by none of the responsible ministers for Hungary—declared the Hungarian Diet dissolved, and named the Ban Jellachich, of Croatia, civil and military

governor of that country—Jellachich, the leader of South-Slavonian reäction, a man who was actually at war with the lawful authorities of Hungary. At the same time orders were given to the troops in Vienna to march out and form part of the army which was to enforce Jellachich's authority. This, however, was showing the cloven foot too openly; every man in Vienna felt that war upon Hungary was war upon the principle of constitutional government, which principle was in the very decree trampled upon by the attempt of the Emperor to make decrees with legal force, without the counter-sign of a responsible minister. The people, the Academic legion, the National Guard of Vienna, on the 6th of October rose in mass and resisted the departure of the troops; some grenadiërs passed over to the people; a short struggle took place between the popular forces and the troops; the minister of war, Latour, was massacred by the people, and in the evening the latter were victors. In the meantime Ban Jellachich, beaten at Stuhlweissenburg by Perczel, had taken refuge near Vienna on German-Austrian territory; the Viennese troops that were to march to his support now took up an ostensibly hostile and defensive position against him; and the Emperor and court had again fled to Olmütz, on semi-Slavonic territory.

But at Olmütz, the Court found itself in very different circumstances to what it had been at Innsbruck. It was now in a position to open immediately the campaign against the revolution. It was surrounded by the Slavonian deputies of the Constituent, who flocked in masses to Olmütz, and by the Slavonian enthusiasts from all parts of the monarchy. The campaign, in their eyes, was to be a war of Slavonian restoration, and of extermination against the two intruders upon what was considered Slavonian soil, against the German and the Magyar. Windischgrätz, the conqueror of Prague, now commander of the army that was concentrated around Vienna, became at once the hero of Slavonian nationality. And his army concentrated rapidly from all sides. From Bohemia, Moravia, Styria, Upper Austria and Italy, marched regiment after regiment on routes that converged at Vienna, to join the troops of Jellachich and the ex-garrison of the capital. Above sixty thousand men were thus united toward the end of October, and soon they commenced hemming in the imperial city on all sides, until, on the 30th of October, they were far enough advanced to venture upon the decisive attack.

In Vienna, in the mean time, confusion and helplessness was prevalent. The middle class, as soon as the victory was gained, became again possessed of their old distrust against the "anarchic" working classes; the working men, mindful of the treatment they had received, six weeks before, at the hands of the armed tradesmen, and of the unsteady, wavering policy of the middle class at large, would not trust to them the defense of the city, and demanded

arms and military organization for themselves. The academic legion, full of zeal for the struggle against imperial despotism, were entirely incapable of understanding the nature of the estrangement of the two classes, or of otherwise comprehending the necessities of the situation. There was confusion
 5 in the public mind, confusion in the ruling councils. The remnant of the Diet, German deputies, and a few Slavonians, acting the part of spies for their friends at Olmütz, besides a few of the more revolutionary Polish deputies, sat in permanency, but instead of taking part resolutely, they lost all their time in idle debates upon the possibility of resisting the imperial army without
 10 overstepping the bounds of Constitutional conventionalities. The Committee of Safety composed of deputies of almost all the popular bodies of Vienna, although resolved to resist, was yet dominated by a majority of burghers and petty tradesmen, who never allowed it to follow up any determined, energetic line of action. The council of the academic legion passed heroic resolutions,
 15 but was noways able to take the lead. The working classes, distrusted, disarmed, disorganized, hardly emerging from the intellectual bondage of the old régime, hardly awaking not to a knowledge, but to a mere instinct of their social position and proper political line of action, could only make themselves heard by loud demonstrations, and could not be expected to be up to the
 20 difficulties of the moment. But they were ready—as ever they were in Germany during the Revolution—to fight to the last, as soon as they obtained arms.

That was the state of things in Vienna. Outside, the reorganized Austrian army, flushed with the victories of Radetzky in Italy; sixty or seventy thousand men, well armed, well organized, and if not well commanded, at least
 25 possessing commanders. Inside, confusion, class-division, disorganization; a national guard of which part was resolved not to fight at all, part irresolute, and only the smallest part ready to act; a proletarian mass, powerful by numbers, but without leaders, without any political education, subject to
 30 panic as well as to fits of fury almost without cause, a prey to every false rumor spread about, quite ready to fight, but unarmed, at least in the beginning, and incompletely armed and barely organized when at last they were led to the battle; a helpless diet, discussing theoretical quibbles while the roof over their heads was almost burning; a leading committee without impulse
 35 or energy. Everything was changed from the days of March and May, when in the counter-revolutionary camp, all was confusion, and when the only organized force was that created by the revolution. There could hardly be a doubt about the issue of such a struggle, and whatever doubt there might be, was settled by the events of the 30th and 31st October and 1st November.
 40

Karl Marx.

London, March. 1852.

XII.

When at last the concentrated army of Windischgrätz commenced the attack upon Vienna, the forces that could be brought forward in defense were exceedingly insufficient for the purpose. Of the National Guard, only a portion was to be brought to the entrenchments. A Proletarian Guard, it is true, had at last been hastily formed, but owing to the lateness of the attempt to thus make available the most numerous, most daring and most energetic part of the population it was too little inured to the use of arms and to the very first rudiments of discipline, to offer a successful resistance. Thus the academic legion, three to four thousand strong, well exercised and disciplined to a certain degree, brave and enthusiastic, was, militarily speaking, the only force which was in a state to do its work successfully. But what were they, together with the few reliable National Guards, and with the confused mass of the armed proletarians, in opposition to the far more numerous regulars of Windischgrätz, not counting even the brigand hordes of Jellachich, hordes that were by the very nature of their habits, very useful in a war from house to house, from lane to lane? And what, but a few old, outworn, ill-mounted and ill-served pieces of ordnance had the insurgents to oppose to that numerous and perfectly appointed artillery, of which Windischgrätz made such an unscrupulous use?

The nearer the danger drew, the more grew the confusion in Vienna. The Diet, up to the last moment, could not collect sufficient energy to call in for aid the Hungarian army of Perczel, encamped a few leagues below the capital. The Committee passed contradictory resolutions, they themselves being, like the popular armed masses, floated up and down with the rising and alternately receding tide of rumors and counter-rumors. There was only one thing upon which all agreed—to respect property; and this was done in a degree almost ludicrous for such times. As to the final arrangement of a plan of defense, very little was done. Bem, the only man present who could have saved Vienna, if any could, then in Vienna an almost unknown foreigner, a Slavonian by birth, gave up the task, overwhelmed as he was by universal distrust. Had he persevered, he might have been lynched as a traitor. Messenhauser, the commander of the insurgent forces, more of a novel-writer than even of a subaltern officer, was totally inadequate to the task; and yet, after eight months of revolutionary struggles, the popular party had not produced or acquired a military man of more ability than he. Thus the contest began. The Viennese, considering their utterly inadequate means of defense, considering their utter absence of military skill and organization

in the ranks, offered a most heroic resistance. In many places the order given by Bem, when he was in command, "to defend that post to the last man," was carried out to the letter. But force prevailed. Barricade after barricade was swept away by the imperial artillery, in the long and wide avenues which
5 form the main streets of the suburbs; and on the evening of the second day's fighting the Croats occupied the range of houses facing the glacis of the Old Town. A feeble and disorderly attack of the Hungarian army had been utterly defeated; and during an armistice, while some parties in the Old Town capitulated, while others hesitated and spread confusion, while the remnants
10 of the academic legion prepared fresh intrenchments, an entrance was made by the Imperialists, and in the midst of this general disorder the Old Town was carried.

The immediate consequences of this victory, the brutalities and executions by martial law, the unheard-of cruelties and infamies committed by the
15 Slavonian hordes let loose upon Vienna are too well known to be detailed here. The ulterior consequences, the entire new turn given to German affairs by the defeat of the revolution in Vienna, we shall have reason to notice hereafter. There remain two points to be considered in connection with the storming of Vienna. The people of that capital had two allies: the Hungarians
20 and the German people. Where were they in the hour of trial?

We have seen that the Viennese, with all the generosity of a newly-freed people, had risen for a cause which, though ultimately their own, was, in the first instance and above all, that of the Hungarians. Rather than suffer the Austrian troops to march upon Hungary, they would draw their first and most
25 terrific onslaught upon themselves. And while they thus nobly came forward for the support of their allies, the Hungarians, successful against Jellachich, drove him upon Vienna, and by their victory strengthened the force that was to attack that town. Under these circumstances, it was the clear duty of Hungary to support, without delay and with all disposable forces, not the
30 Diet at Vienna, not the Committee of Safety or any other official body at Vienna, but the *Viennese Revolution*. And if Hungary should even have forgot that Vienna had fought the first battle of Hungary, she owed it to her own safety not to forget that Vienna was the only outpost of Hungarian independence, and that after the fall of Vienna, nothing could meet the
35 advance of the Imperial troops against herself. Now, we know very well all the Hungarians can say and have said in defense of their inactivity during the blockade and storming of Vienna; the insufficient state of their own force, the refusal of the Diet or any other official body in Vienna to call them in, the necessity to keep on constitutional ground, and to avoid complications
40 with the German Central Power. But the fact is, as to the insufficient state of the Hungarian army, that in the first days after the Viennese revolution

and the arrival of Jellachich, nothing was wanted in the shape of regular troops, as the Austrian regulars were very far from being concentrated; and that a courageous, unrelenting following up of the first advantage over Jellachich, even with nothing but the *Landsturm* that had fought at Stuhlweissenburg, would have sufficed to effect a junction with the Viennese, and to adjourn to that day six months every concentration of an Austrian army. In war, and particularly in revolutionary warfare, rapidity of action until some decided advantage is gained is the first rule, and we have no hesitation in saying that upon *merely military grounds* Perczel ought not to have stopped until his junction with the Viennese was effected. There was certainly some risk, but who ever won a battle without risking something? And did the people of Vienna risk nothing, when they drew upon themselves—they, a population of four hundred thousand—the forces that were to march to the conquest of twelve millions of Hungarians? The military fault committed by waiting until the Austrians had united, and by making the feeble demonstration at Schwechat which ended, as it deserved to do, in an inglorious defeat—this military fault certainly incurred more risks than a resolute march upon Vienna, against the disbanded brigands of Jellachich would have done.

But, it is said, such an advance of the Hungarians, unless authorized by some official body, would have been a violation of the German territory, would have brought on complications with the Central Power at Frankfort, and would have been, above all, an abandonment of the legal and constitutional policy which formed the strength of the Hungarian cause. Why, the official bodies in Vienna were nonentities! Was it the Diet, was it the popular Committees, who had risen for Hungary, or was it the people of Vienna, and they alone, who had taken to the musket to stand the brunt of the first battle for Hungary's independence? It was not this nor that official body in Vienna which it was important to uphold—all these bodies might, and would have been, upset very soon in the progress of the revolutionary development—but it was the ascendancy of the revolutionary movement, the unbroken progress of popular action itself, which alone was in question, and which alone could save Hungary from invasion. What forms this revolutionary movement afterward might take, was the business of the Viennese, not of the Hungarians, so long as Vienna and German Austria at large continued their allies against the common enemy. But the question is, whether in this stickling of the Hungarian Government for some quasi-legal authorization, we are not to see the first clear symptom of that pretense to a rather doubtful legality of proceeding, which, if it did not save Hungary, at least told very well, at a later period, before the English middle-class audiences.

As to the pretext of possible conflicts with the Central Power of Germany

at Frankfort, it is quite futile. The Frankfort authorities were *de facto* upset by the victory of the counter-revolution at Vienna; they would have been equally upset had the revolution, there, found the support necessary to defeat its enemies. And lastly, the great argument that Hungary could not leave legal and constitutional ground, may do very well for British free-traders, but it will never be deemed sufficient in the eyes of history. Suppose the people of Vienna had stuck to “legal and constitutional” means on the 13th of March and on the 6th of October, what then of the “legal and constitutional” movement, and of all the glorious battles which, for the first time, brought Hungary to the notice of the civilized world? The very legal and constitutional ground upon which it is asserted the Hungarians moved in 1848 and '49, was conquered for them by the exceedingly illegal and unconstitutional rising of the people of Vienna on the 13th of March. It is not to our purpose here to discuss the revolutionary history of Hungary, but it may be deemed proper if we observe that it is utterly useless to professedly use merely legal means of resistance against an enemy who scorns such scruples; and if we add, that had it not been for this eternal pretense of legality which Görgey seized upon and turned against the Government, the devotion of Görgey's army to its General, and the disgraceful catastrophe of Világos, would have been impossible. And when at last, to save their honor, the Hungarians came across the Leitha, in the latter end of October '48,—was that not quite as illegal as any immediate and resolute attack would have been?

We are known to harbor no unfriendly feelings toward Hungary. We stood by her during the struggle; we may be allowed to say, that our paper, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* has done more than any other to render the Hungarian cause popular in Germany, by explaining the nature of the struggle between the Magyar and Slavonian races, and by following up the Hungarian war in a series of articles which have had paid them the compliment of being plagiarized in almost every subsequent book upon the subject, the works of native Hungarians and “eye-witnesses” not excepted. We even now, in any future continental convulsion, consider Hungary as the necessary and natural ally of Germany. But we have been severe enough upon our own countrymen to have a right to speak out upon our neighbors; and then, we have here to record facts with historical impartiality, and we must say, that in this particular instance, the generous bravery of the people of Vienna was not only far more noble, but also more far-sighted than the cautious circumspection of the Hungarian Government. And, as a German, we may further be allowed to say, that not for all the showy victories and glorious battles of the Hungarian campaign would we exchange that spontaneous, single-handed rising and heroic resistance of the people of Vienna,

our countrymen, which gave Hungary the time to organize the army that could do such great things.

The second ally of Vienna was the German people. But they were everywhere engaged in the same struggle as the Viennese. Frankfort, Baden, Cologne had just been defeated and disarmed. In Berlin and Breslau the people were at daggers drawn with the army, and daily expected to come to blows. Thus it was in every local center of action. Everywhere questions were pending that could only be settled by the force of arms; and now it was that for the first time were severely felt the disastrous consequences of the continuation of the old dismemberment and decentralization of Germany. The different questions in every State, every province, every town were fundamentally the same; but they were brought forward everywhere under different shapes and pretexts, and had everywhere attained different degrees of maturity.—Thus it happened, that while in every locality the decisive gravity of the events at Vienna was felt, yet nowhere could an important blow be struck with any hope of bringing the Viennese succor or making a diversion in their favor: and there remained nothing to aid them but the Parliament and Central Power of Frankfort; they were appealed to on all hands, but what did they do?

The Frankfort Parliament and the bastard-child it had brought to light by incestuous intercourse with the old German Diet, the so-called Central Power, profited by the Viennese movement to show forth their utter nullity. This contemptible assembly, as we have seen, had long since sacrificed its virginity, and young as it was, it was already turning gray-headed and experienced in all the artifices of prating and pseudo-diplomatic prostitution. Of the dreams and illusions of power, of German regeneration and unity, that in the beginning had pervaded it, nothing remained but a set of Teutonic clap-trap phraseology that was repeated on every occasion, and a firm belief of each individual member in his own importance, as well as in the credulity of the public. The original naïveté was discarded; the representatives of the German people had turned practical men, that is to say, they had made it out that the less they did, and the more they prated, the safer would be their position as the umpires of the fate of Germany. Not that they considered their proceedings superfluous; quite the contrary, but they had found out that all really great questions, being to them forbidden ground, had better be let alone, and there, like a set of Byzantine doctors of the Lower Empire, they discussed, with an importance and assiduity worthy of the fate that at last overtook them, theoretical dogmas long ago settled in every part of the civilized world, or microscopical practical questions which never led to any practical result. Thus, the Assembly being a sort of Lancastrian School for the mutual instruction of members, and being, therefore, very important to

themselves, they were persuaded it was doing even more than the German people had a right to expect, and looked upon every one as a traitor to the country who had the impudence to ask them to come to any result.

When the Viennese insurrection broke out, there was a host of interpellations, debates, motions and amendments upon it, which of course led to nothing. The Central Power was to interfere. It sent two Commissioners, Messrs. Welcker, the ex-liberal, and Mosle, to Vienna. The travels of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza form matter for an Odyssey in comparison to the heroic feats and wonderful adventures of these two knight-errants of German Unity. Not daring to go to Vienna, they were bullied by Windischgrätz, wondered at by the idiot Emperor, and impudently hoaxed by the Minister Stadion. Their dispatches and reports are perhaps the only portion of the Frankfort transactions that will retain a place in German literature; they are a perfect satirical romance, ready cut and dried, and an eternal monument of disgrace for the Frankfort Assembly and its government.

The left side of the Assembly had also sent two Commissioners to Vienna, in order to uphold its authority there—Messrs. Froebel and Robert Blum. Blum, when danger drew near, judged rightly that here the great battle of the German Revolution was to be fought, and unhesitatingly resolved to stake his head on the issue. Froebel, on the contrary, was of opinion that it was his duty to preserve himself for the important duties of his post at Frankfort. Blum was considered one of the most eloquent men of the Frankfort Assembly; he certainly was the most popular. His eloquence would not have stood the test of any experienced Parliamentary Assembly; he was too fond of the shallow declamations of a German dissenting preacher, and his arguments wanted both philosophical acumen and acquaintance with practical matter of fact. In politics, he belonged to “moderate Democracy,” a rather indefinite sort of thing, cherished on account of this very want of definiteness in its principles. But with all this, Robert Blum was by nature a thorough, though somewhat polished plebeian, and in decisive moments his plebeian instinct and plebeian energy got the better of his indefinite and therefore indecisive political persuasion and knowledge. In such moments he raised himself far above the usual standard of his capacities.

Thus in Vienna, he saw at a glance that here, and not in the midst of the would-be elegant debates of Frankfort, the fate of his country would have to be decided; he at once made up his mind, gave up all idea of retreat, took a command in the revolutionary force, and behaved with extraordinary coolness and decision. It was he who retarded for a considerable time the taking of the town and covered one of its sides from attack by burning the Tabor bridge over the Danube. Everybody knows how after the storming

he was arrested, tried by a court-martial, and shot. He died like a hero. And the Frankfort Assembly, horror-struck as it was, yet took the bloody insult with a seeming good grace. A resolution was carried, which by the softness and diplomatic decency of its language, was more an insult to the grave of the murdered martyr, than a damning stain upon Austria. But it was not to be expected that this contemptible Assembly should resent the assassination of one of its members, particularly of the leader of the Left. 5

Karl Marx.

London, March, 1852.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3432, 17. April 1852

XIII.

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On the 1st of November Vienna fell, and on the 9th of the same month the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in Berlin showed how much this event had at once raised the spirit and the strength of the counter-revolutionary party all over Germany.

The events of the summer of 1848 in Prussia are soon told. The Constituent Assembly, or rather "the Assembly elected for the purpose of agreeing upon a Constitution with the Crown," and its majority of Representatives of the middle-class interest, had long since forfeited all public esteem by lending itself to all the intrigues of the Court, from fear of the more energetic elements of the population. They had confirmed, or rather restored, the obnoxious privileges of feudalism, and thus betrayed the liberty and the interest of the peasantry. They had neither been able to draw up a constitution, nor to amend in any way the general legislation. They had occupied themselves almost exclusively with nice theoretical distinctions, mere formalities, and questions of constitutional etiquette. The Assembly, in fact, was more a school of parliamentary *savoir vivre* for its members, than a body in which the people could take any interest. The majorities were, besides, very nicely balanced, and almost always decided by the wavering "*Centers*," whose oscillations from Right to Left, and *vice versa*, upset first the Ministry of Camphausen, then that of Auerswald and Hanseemann. But while thus the Liberals, here as everywhere else, let the occasion slip out of their hands, the Court reorganized its elements of strength among the nobility, and the most uncultivated portion of the rural population, as well as in the army and Bureaucracy. After Hanseemann's downfall, a ministry of Bureaucrats and 15
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military officers, all staunch re-actionists, was formed, which, however, seemingly gave way to the demands of the Parliament; and the Assembly, acting upon the commodious principle of "measures, not men," were actually duped into applauding this ministry, while they, of course, had no eyes for
5 the concentration and organization of counter-revolutionary forces which that same ministry carried on pretty openly. At last, the signal being given by the fall of Vienna, the King dismissed his ministers and replaced them by "men of action," under the leadership of the present Premier, M. Manteuffel. Then the dreaming Assembly at once awoke to the danger; it passed a
10 vote of no confidence in the Cabinet, which was at once replied to by a decree removing the Assembly from Berlin, where it might, in case of a conflict, count upon the support of the masses, to Brandenburg, a petty provincial town, dependent entirely upon the Government. The Assembly, however, declared that it could not be adjourned, removed, or dissolved, except with
15 its own consent. In the meantime, General Wrangel entered Berlin at the head of some forty thousand troops. In a meeting of the Municipal Magistrates and the officers of the National Guard, it was resolved not to offer any resistance. And now, after the Assembly and its constituents, the Liberal Bourgeoisie, had allowed the combined reactionary party to occupy every
20 important position and to wrest from their hands almost every means of defense, began that grand comedy of "passive and legal resistance" which they intended to be a glorious imitation of the example of Hampden and of the first efforts of the Americans in the War of Independence. Berlin was declared in a state of siege, and Berlin remained tranquil; the National Guard
25 was dissolved by the Government, and its arms were delivered up with the greatest punctuality. The Assembly was hunted down during a fortnight, from one place of meeting to another, and everywhere dispersed by the military, and the members of the Assembly begged of the citizens to remain tranquil. At last, the Government having declared the Assembly dissolved,
30 it passed a resolution to declare the levying of taxes illegal, and then its members dispersed themselves over the country to organize the refusal of taxes. But they found that they had been woefully mistaken in the choice of their means. After a few agitated weeks, followed by severe measures of the Government against the Opposition, every one gave up the idea of refusing
35 the taxes in order to please a defunct Assembly that had not even had the courage to defend itself.

Whether it was, in the beginning of November, 1848, already too late to try armed resistance, or whether a part of the army, on finding serious
40 opposition, would have turned over to the side of the Assembly, and thus decided the matter in its favor, is a question which may never be solved. But in revolution, as in war, it is always necessary to show a strong front, and

he who attacks is in the advantage; and in revolution, as in war, it is of the highest necessity to stake everything on the decisive moment, whatever the odds may be. There is not a single successful revolution in history that does not prove the truth of these axioms. Now, for the Prussian revolution, the decisive moment had come in November, '48; the Assembly, at the head, 5
officially, of the whole revolutionary interest, did neither show a strong front, for it receded at every advance of the enemy; much less did it attack—for it chose even not to defend itself; and when the decisive moment came, when Wrangel, at the head of forty thousand men, knocked at the gates of Berlin, instead of finding, as he and all his officers fully expected, every street 10
studded with barricades, every window turned into a loop-hole, he found the gates open and the streets obstructed only by peaceful Berliner burghers, enjoying the joke they had played upon him, by delivering themselves up, hands and feet tied, unto the astonished soldiers. It is true, the Assembly 15
and the people, if they had resisted, might have been beaten; Berlin might have been bombarded, and many hundreds might have been killed, without preventing the ultimate victory of the royalist party. But that was no reason why they should surrender their arms at once. A well-contested defeat is a fact of as much revolutionary importance as an easily-won victory. The defeats of Paris, in June, 1848, and of Vienna, in October, certainly did far 20
more in revolutionizing the minds of the people of these two cities than the victories of February and March. The Assembly and the people of Berlin would, probably, have shared the fate of the two towns above-named; but they would have fallen gloriously, and would have left behind themselves, in the minds of the survivors, a wish of revenge, which in revolutionary times 25
is one of the highest incentives to energetic and passionate action. It is a matter of course that, in every struggle, he who takes up the gauntlet risks being beaten; but is that a reason why he should confess himself beaten, and submit to the yoke without drawing the sword?

In a revolution, he who commands a decisive position and surrenders it, 30
instead of forcing the enemy to try his hands at an assault, invariably deserves to be treated as a traitor.

The same decree of the King of Prussia which dissolved the Constituent Assembly, also proclaimed a new Constitution, founded upon the draft which had been made by a Committee of that Assembly, but enlarging, in some 35
points, the powers of the Crown, and rendering doubtful, in others, those of the Parliament. This Constitution established two Chambers, which were to meet soon for the purpose of confirming and revising it.

We need hardly ask where the German National Assembly was during the "legal and peaceful" struggle of the Prussian Constitutionalists. It was, as 40
usual, at Frankfort, occupied with passing very tame resolutions against the

proceedings of the Prussian Government, and admiring the “imposing spectacle of the passive, legal, and unanimous resistance of a whole people against brutal force.” The Central Government sent Commissioners to Berlin, to intercede between the Ministry and the Assembly; but they met the same fate as their predecessors at Olmütz, and were politely shown out. The Left of the National Assembly, i. e., the so-called Radical party, sent also their Commissioners; but after having duly convinced themselves of the utter helplessness of the Berlin Assembly, and confessed their own equal helplessness, they returned to Frankfort, to report progress, and to testify to the admirably peaceful conduct of the population of Berlin. Nay, more: when M. Bassermann, one of the Central Government’s Commissioners, reported that the late stringent measures of the Prussian Ministers were not without foundation, inasmuch as there had of late been seen loitering about the streets of Berlin sundry savage-looking characters, such as always appear previous to anarchical movements, (and which ever since have been named “Bassermannic characters,”) these worthy Deputies of the Left, and energetic representatives of the revolutionary interest, actually arose to make oath and testify that such was not the case! Thus, within two months, the total impotency of the Frankfort Assembly was signally proved. There could be no more glaring proofs that this body was totally inadequate to its task; nay, that it had not even the remotest idea of what its task really was. The fact, that both in Vienna and in Berlin the fate of the revolution was settled, that in both these capitals the most important and vital questions were disposed of, without the existence of the Frankfort Assembly ever being taken the slightest notice of,—this fact alone is sufficient to establish that the body in question was a mere debating-club, composed of a set of dupes, who allowed the governments to use them as a parliamentary puppet, shown to amuse the shop-keepers and petty tradesmen of petty States and petty towns, as long as it was considered convenient to divert the attention of these parties. How long this was considered convenient we shall soon see. But it is a fact worthy of attention, that among all the “eminent” men of this Assembly, there was not one who had the slightest apprehension of the part they were made to perform, and that even up to the present day, ex-members of the Frankfort Club have invariably organs of historical perception quite peculiar to themselves.

Karl Marx.

London, March, 1852

XIV.

The first months of the year 1849 were employed by the Austrian and Prussian Governments in following up the advantages obtained in October and November last. The Austrian Diet, ever since the taking of Vienna, had carried on a merely nominal existence in a small Moravian country-town, named Kremsir. Here the Slavonian Deputies, who, with their constituents, had been mainly instrumental in raising the Austrian Government from its prostration, were singularly punished for their treachery against the European Revolution; as soon as the Government had recovered its strength, it treated the Diet and its Slavonian majority with the utmost contempt, and when the first successes of the imperial arms foreboded a speedy termination of the Hungarian war, the Diet, on the 4th of March, was dissolved and the deputies dispersed by military force. Then at last the Slavonians saw that they were duped, and then they shouted: Let us go to Frankfort and carry on there the opposition which we cannot pursue here! But it was then too late, and the very fact that they had no other alternative than either to remain quiet or to join the impotent Frankfort Assembly,—this fact alone was sufficient to show their utter helplessness.

Thus ended, for the present and most likely for ever, the attempts of the Slavonians of Germany to recover an independent national existence. Scattered remnants of numerous nations, whose nationality and political vitality had long been extinguished, and who in consequence had been obliged, for almost a thousand years, to follow in the wake of a mightier nation, their conqueror, the same as the Welsh in England, the Basques in Spain, the Bas-Bretons in France, and at a more recent period the Spanish and French Creoles in those portions of North America occupied of late by the Anglo-American race—these dying nationalities, the Bohemians, Carinthians, Dalmatians, etc., had tried to profit by the universal confusion of 1848, in order to restore their political *status quo* of A. D. 800. The history of a thousand years ought to have shown them that such a retrogression was impossible; that if all the territory east of the Elbe and Saale had at one time been occupied by kindred Slavonians, this fact merely proved the historical tendency, and at the same time the physical and intellectual power of the German nation to subdue, absorb, and assimilate its ancient eastern neighbors; that this tendency of absorption on the part of the Germans had always been and still was one of the mightiest means by which the civilization of western Europe had been spread in the east of that Continent; that it could only cease whenever the process of Germanization had reached the frontiers of large,

compact, unbroken nations, capable of an independent national life, such as the Hungarians and in some degree the Poles; and that therefore the natural and inevitable fate of these dying nations was to allow this progress of dissolution and absorption by their stronger neighbors to complete itself.

5 Certainly this is no very flattering prospect for the national ambition of the Panslavistic dreamers who succeeded in agitating a portion of the Bohemian and South-Slavonian people; but can they expect that history would retrograde a thousand years in order to please a few phthisical bodies of men, who in every part of the territory they occupy are interspersed and surrounded by Germans, who from times almost immemorial have had for all purposes of civilization no other language but the German, and who lack the very first conditions of national existence, numbers and compactness of territory? Thus, the Panslavistic rising, which everywhere in the German and Hungarian Slavonic territories was the cloak for the restoration to independence of all these numberless petty nations, everywhere clashed with the European revolutionary movements, and the Slavonians, although pretending to fight for liberty, were invariably (the democratic portion of the Poles excepted) found on the side of despotism and reaction. Thus it was in Germany, thus in Hungary, thus even here and there in Turkey. Traitors to the popular cause, supporters and chief props to the Austrian Government's cabal, they placed themselves in the position of outlaws in the eyes of all revolutionary nations. And although nowhere the mass of the people had a part in the petty squabbles about nationality raised by the Panslavistic leaders, for the very reason that they were too ignorant, yet it will never be forgotten that in Prague, in 25 a half-German town, crowds of Slavonian fanatics cheered and repeated the cry: "Rather the Russian knout than German Liberty!"—After their first evaporated effort in 1848, and after the lesson the Austrian Government gave them, it is not likely that another attempt at a later opportunity will be made. But if they should try again under similar pretexts, to ally themselves to the counter-revolutionary force, the duty of Germany is clear. No country in a state of revolution and involved in external war can tolerate a *Vendée* in its very heart.

As to the Constitution proclaimed by the Emperor at the same time with the dissolution of the Diet, there is no need to revert to it, as it never had 35 a practical existence and is now done away with altogether. Absolutism has been restored in Austria to all intents and purposes even since the 4th of March, 1849.

In Prussia the Chambers met in February for the ratification and revision of the new Charter proclaimed by the King. They sat for about six weeks, 40 humble and meek enough in their behavior toward the Government, yet not quite prepared to go the lengths the King and his ministers wished them to

do. Therefore, as soon as a suitable occasion presented itself, they were dissolved.

Thus both Austria and Prussia had for the moment got rid of the shackles of parliamentary control. The Governments now concentrated all power in themselves and could bring that power to bear wherever it was wanted: Austria upon Hungary and Italy, Prussia upon Germany. For Prussia, too, was preparing for a campaign by which "order" was to be restored in the smaller States. 5

Counter-revolution being now paramount in the two great centers of action of Germany, in Vienna and Berlin, there remained only the lesser States in which the struggle was still undecided, although the balance there, too, was leaning more and more against the revolutionary interest. These smaller States, we have said, found a common center in the National Assembly at Frankfort. Now this so-called National Assembly, although its reactionist spirit had long been evident, so much so that the very people of Frankfort had risen in arms against it, yet its origin was of a more or less revolutionary nature; it occupied an abnormal, revolutionary position in January; its competence had never been defined, and it had at last come to the decision—which, however, was never recognized by the larger States—that its resolutions had the force of law. Under these circumstances, and when the constitutionalist-monarchical party saw their positions turned by the recovering absolutists, it is not to be wondered that the liberal, monarchical *Bourgeoisie* of almost the whole of Germany should place their last hopes upon the majority of this Assembly, just as the petty shop-keeping interest, the nucleus of the Democratic party, gathered in their growing distress around the minority of that same body which indeed formed the last compact parliamentary phalanx of Democracy. On the other hand, the larger Governments, and particularly the Prussian Ministry, saw more and more the incompatibility of such an irregular elective body with the restored monarchical system of Germany, and if they did not at once force its dissolution, it was only because the time had not yet come and because Prussia hoped first to use it for the furthering of its own ambitious purposes. 10 15 20 25 30

In the mean time, that poor Assembly itself fell into a greater and greater confusion. Its deputations and commissaries had been treated with the utmost contempt, both in Vienna and Berlin; one of its members, in spite of his parliamentary inviolability, had been executed in Vienna as a common rebel. Its decrees were nowhere heeded; if they were noticed at all by the larger powers, it was merely by protesting notes which disputed the authority of the Assembly to pass laws and resolutions binding upon their governments. The Representative of the Assembly, the Central Executive power, was involved in diplomatic squabbles with almost all the cabinets of Ger- 35 40

many, and in spite of all their efforts neither Assembly nor Central Government could bring Austria or Prussia to state their ultimate views, plans and demands. The Assembly, at last, commenced to see clear, at least so far that it had allowed all power to slip out of its hands, that it was at the mercy of

5 Austria and Prussia, and that if it intended making a federal Constitution for Germany at all, it must set about the thing at once and in good earnest. And many of the vacillating members also saw clearly that they had been egregiously duped by the governments. But what were they, in their impotent position, able to do now? The only thing that could have saved them, would

10 have been promptly and decidedly to pass over into the popular camp; but the success, even of that step, was more than doubtful; and then, where in this helpless crowd of undecided, short-sighted, self-conceited beings who, when the eternal noise of contradictory rumors and diplomatic notes completely stunned them, sought their only consolation and support in the

15 everlastingly repeated assurance that they were the best, the greatest, the wisest men of the country, and that they alone could save Germany—where, we say, among these poor creatures, whom a single year of parliamentary life had turned into complete idiots, where were the men for a prompt and decisive resolution, much less for energetic and consistent action?

20 At last the Austrian Government threw off the mask. In its Constitution of the 4th of March it proclaimed Austria an indivisible monarchy, with common finances, system of customs-duties, of military establishments, thereby effacing every barrier and distinction between the German and non-German provinces. This declaration was made in the face of resolutions

25 and articles of the intended federal Constitution, which had been already passed by the Frankfort Assembly. It was the gauntlet of war thrown down to it by Austria, and the poor Assembly had no other choice but to take it up. This it did with a deal of blustering, but which Austria, in the consciousness of her power, and of the utter nothingness of the Assembly, could well

30 afford to allow to pass. And this precious representation, as it styled itself, of the German people, in order to revenge itself for this insult on the part of Austria, saw nothing better before it than to throw itself, hands and feet tied, at the feet of the Prussian Government. Incredible as it would seem, it bent its knees before the very ministers whom it had condemned as unconstitutional and anti-popular, and whose dismissal it had in vain insisted upon.

35 The details of this disgraceful transaction, and the tragi-comical events that followed, will form the subject of our next.

Karl Marx.

London, April, 1852.

XV.

We now come to the last chapter in the history of the German Revolution: the conflict of the National Assembly with the Governments of the different States, especially of Prussia; the insurrection of Southern and Western Germany, and its final overthrow by Prussia. 5

We have already seen the Frankfort National Assembly at work. We have seen it kicked at by Austria, insulted by Prussia, disobeyed by the lesser States, duped by its own impotent Central "Government," which again was the dupe of all and every prince in the country. But at last things began to look threatening for this weak, vacillating, insipid legislative body. It was forced to come to the conclusion that "the sublime idea of German Unity was threatened in its realization,"—which meant neither more nor less than that the Frankfort Assembly, and all it had done and was about to do, were very likely to end in smoke. Thus it set to work in good earnest in order to bring forth as soon as possible its grand production, the "Imperial Constitution." 10 15

There was, however, one difficulty. What Executive Government was there to be? An Executive Council? No; that would have been, they thought in their wisdom, making Germany a Republic. A "President"? That would come to the same. Thus they must revive the old imperial dignity. But—as of course a prince was to be Emperor—who should it be? Certainly none of the *Dii minorum gentium*, from Reuss-Schleitz-Greiz-Lobenstein-Ebersdorf up to Bavaria; neither Austria nor Prussia would have borne that. It could only be Austria or Prussia. But which of the two? There is no doubt that, under otherwise favorable circumstances, this august Assembly would be sitting up to the present day discussing this important dilemma without being able to come to a conclusion, if the Austrian Government had not cut the Gordian knot and saved them the trouble. 20 25

Austria knew very well that from the moment in which she could again appear before Europe with all her provinces subdued, as a strong and great European power, the very law of political gravitation would draw the remainder of Germany into her orbit, without the help of any authority which an imperial crown conferred by the Frankfort Assembly could give her. Austria had been far stronger, far freer in her movements, since she shook off the powerless crown of the German Empire—a crown which clogged her own independent policy, while it added not one iota to her strength, either within or without of Germany. And supposing the case that Austria could not maintain her footing in Italy and Hungary—why then she was dissolved, 30 35

annihilated in Germany too, and could never pretend to reseize a crown which had slipped her hands while she was in the full possession of her strength. Thus Austria at once declared against all imperialist resurrections, and plainly demanded the restoration of the German Diet, the only central
 5 Government of Germany known and recognized by the treaties of 1815; and on the 4th of March, 1849, issued that Constitution which had no other meaning than to declare Austria an indivisible, centralized and independent monarchy, distinct even from that Germany which the Frankfort Assembly was to reorganize.

10 This open declaration of war left, indeed, the Frankfort wiseacres no other choice but to exclude Austria from Germany, and to create out of the remainder of that country a sort of lower empire, a "Little Germany," the rather shabby imperial mantle of which was to fall on the shoulders of his Majesty of Prussia. This, it will be recollected, was the renewal of an old project
 15 fostered already some six or eight years ago by a party of South and Middle German liberal *doctrinaires*, who considered as a god-send the degrading circumstances by which their old crotchet was now again brought forward as the latest "new move" for the salvation of the country.

They accordingly finished, in February and March, 1849, the debate on
 20 the Imperial Constitution, together with the Declaration of Rights and the Imperial Electoral Law; not, however, without being obliged to make, in a great many points, the most contradictory concessions—now to the Conservative or rather Reàctionary party—now to the more advanced fractions of the Assembly. In fact, it was evident that the leadership of the Assembly,
 25 which had formerly belonged to the Right and Right Center, (the Conservatives and Reàctionists,) was gradually, although slowly, passing toward the Left or Democratic side of that body. The rather dubious position of the Austrian Deputies in an Assembly which had excluded their country from Germany, and in which yet they were called upon to sit and vote, favored
 30 the derangement of its equipoise; and thus, as early as the end of February, the Left Center and the Left found themselves, by the help of the Austrian votes, very generally in a majority, while on other days the Conservative fraction of the Austrians, all of a sudden and for the fun of the thing, voting with the Right, threw the balance again on the other side. They intended by
 35 these sudden *soubresauts* to bring the Assembly into contempt; which, however, was quite unnecessary, the mass of the people being long since convinced of the utter hollowness and futility of anything coming from Frankfort. What a specimen of a Constitution, in the meantime, was framed under such jumping and counter-jumping, may easily be imagined.

40 The Left of the Assembly—this *élite* and pride of revolutionary Germany, as it believed itself to be—was entirely intoxicated with the few paltry suc-

cesses it obtained by the good will, or rather the ill will, of a set of Austrian politicians acting under the instigation and for the interest of Austrian despotism. Whenever the slightest approximation to their own not-very-well-defined principles had, in a homeopathically diluted shape, obtained a sort of sanction by the Frankfort Assembly, these Democrats proclaimed that they had saved the country and the people. These poor, weak-minded men, during the course of their generally very obscure lives, had been so little accustomed to anything like success, that they actually believed their paltry amendments, passed with two or three votes' majority, would change the face of Europe. They had from the beginning of their legislative career been more imbued than any other fraction of the Assembly with that incurable malady, *parliamentary cretinism*, a disorder which penetrates its unfortunate victims with the solemn conviction that the whole world, its history and future, are governed and determined by a majority of votes in that particular representative body which has the honor to count them among its members, and that all and everything going on outside the walls of their house—wars, revolutions, railway-constructing, colonizing of whole new continents, California gold discoveries, Central American canals, Russian armies, and whatever else may have some little claim to influence upon the destinies of mankind—is nothing compared to the incommensurable events hinging upon the important question, whatever it may be, just at that moment occupying the attention of their honorable House. Thus it was the Democratic party of the Assembly, by effectually smuggling a few of their nostrums into the "Imperial Constitution," first became bound to support it, although in every essential point it flatly contradicted their own oft-proclaimed principles; and at last, when this mongrel work was abandoned and bequeathed to them by its main authors, accepted the inheritance, and held out for this *monarchical* Constitution even in opposition to everybody who *then* proclaimed their own *republican* principles.

But it must be confessed that in this the contradiction was merely apparent. The indeterminate, self-contradictory, immature character of the Imperial Constitution was the very image of the immature, confused, conflicting political ideas of these democratic gentlemen. And if their own sayings and writings—as far as they could write—were not sufficient proof of this, their actions would furnish such proof; for among sensible people it is a matter of course to judge of a man not by his professions but by his actions; not by what he pretends to be, but by what he does and what he really is; and the deeds of these heroes of German Democracy speak loud enough for themselves, as we shall learn by and by. However, the Imperial Constitution with all its appendages and paraphernalia was definitively passed, and on the 28th of March the King of Prussia was, by 290 votes against 248 who ab-

stained and some 29 who were absent, elected Emperor of Germany, *minus* Austria. The historical irony was complete; the imperial farce executed in the streets of astonished Berlin, three days after the Revolution of March 18, 1848, by Frederick William IV., while in a state which elsewhere would come under the Maine Liquor Law—this disgusting farce, just one year afterward, had been sanctioned by the pretended Representative Assembly of all Germany. That, then, was the result of the German Revolution!

Karl Marx.

London, July, 1852

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3534, 19. August 1852

XVI.

The National Assembly of Frankfort, after having elected the King of Prussia Emperor of Germany (*minus* Austria,) sent a deputation to Berlin to offer him the crown, and then adjourned. On the 3d of April Frederic William received the Deputies. He told them that, although he accepted the right of precedence over all the other Princes of Germany, which this vote of the people's representatives had given him, yet he could not accept the Imperial crown as long as he was not sure that the remaining Princes acknowledged his supremacy and the Imperial Constitution conferring those rights upon him. It would be, he added, for the Governments of Germany to see whether this Constitution was such as could be ratified by them. At all events, Emperor or not, he always would be found ready, he concluded, to draw the sword against either the external or the internal foe. We shall soon see how he kept his promise in a manner rather startling for the National Assembly.

The Frankfort wiseacres, after profound diplomatic inquiry, at last came to the conclusion that this answer amounted to a refusal of the crown. They then (April 12) resolved: That the Imperial Constitution was the law of the land, and must be maintained; and not seeing their way at all before themselves, elected a Committee of Thirty, to make proposals as to the means how this Constitution could be carried out.

This resolution was the signal for the conflict between the Frankfort Assembly and the German Governments, which now broke out.

The middle classes, and especially the smaller trading class, had all at once declared for the new Frankfort Constitution. They could not await any longer the moment which was "to close the revolution." In Austria and Prussia the revolution had, for the moment, been closed by the interference of the armed power; the classes in question would have preferred a less forcible mode of

performing that operation, but they had not had a chance; the thing was done and they had to make the best of it, a resolution which they at once took and carried out most heroically. In the smaller States, where things had been going on comparatively smoothly, the middle classes had long since been thrown back into that showy, but resultless, because powerless, parliamentary agitation which was most congenial to themselves. The different States of Germany, as regarded each of them separately, appeared thus to have attained that new and definitive form which was supposed to enable them to enter, henceforth, the path of peaceful and constitutional development. There only remained one open question, that of the new political organization of the German Confederacy. And this question, the only one which still appeared fraught with danger, it was considered a necessity to resolve at once. Hence the pressure exerted upon the Frankfort Assembly by the middle classes, in order to induce it to get the Constitution ready as soon as possible; hence the resolution among the higher and lower Bourgeoisie to accept and to support this Constitution, whatever it might be, in order to create a settled state of things without delay. Thus, from the very beginning, the agitation for the Imperial Constitution arose out of a reactionary feeling, and sprung up among those classes which were long since tired of the revolution.

But there was another feature in it. The first and fundamental principles of the future German Constitution had been voted during the first months of spring and summer, 1848—a time when popular agitation was still rife. The resolutions then passed—though completely reactionary *then*—now, after the arbitrary acts of the Austrian and Prussian governments, appeared exceedingly liberal, and even democratic. The standard of comparison had changed. The Frankfort Assembly could not, without moral suicide, strike out these once-voted provisions, and model the Imperial Constitution upon those which the Austrian and Prussian Governments had dictated sword in hand. Besides, as we have seen, the majority in that Assembly had changed sides, and the Liberal and Democratic party were rising in influence. Thus the Imperial Constitution not only was distinguished by its apparently exclusive popular origin, but at the same time, full of contradiction as it was, it yet was the most liberal Constitution of all Germany. Its greatest fault was, that it was a mere sheet of paper, with no power to back its provisions.

Under these circumstances it was natural that the so-called Democratic party, that is, the mass of the petty trading class, should cling to the Imperial Constitution. This class had always been more forward in its demands than the Liberal, Monarchico-Constitutional Bourgeoisie; it had shown a bolder front, it had very often threatened armed resistance, it was lavish in its promises to sacrifice its blood and its existence in the struggle for freedom;

but it had already given plenty of proofs that on the day of danger it was nowhere, and that it never felt more comfortable than the day after a decisive defeat, when everything being lost, it had at least the consolation to know that somehow or other the matter was settled. While, therefore, the adhesion

5 of the large bankers, manufacturers and merchants was of a more reserved character, more like a simple demonstration in favor of the Frankfort Constitution, the class just beneath them, our valiant Democratic shop-keepers, came forward in grand style and, as usual, proclaimed they would rather spill their last drop of blood than let the Imperial Constitution fall to the ground.

10 Supported by these two parties, the bourgeois adherents of Constitutional Royalty and the more or less democratic shop-keepers, the agitation for the immediate establishment of the Imperial Constitution gained ground rapidly, and found its most powerful expression in the Parliaments of the several States. The Chambers of Prussia, of Hanover, of Saxony, of Baden, of

15 Wurtemberg, declared in its favor. The struggle between the Governments and the Frankfort Assembly assumed a threatening aspect.

The Governments, however, acted rapidly. The Prussian Chambers were dissolved—anti-constitutionally, as they had to revise and confirm the Constitution; riots broke out at Berlin, provoked intentionally by the Govern-

20 ment; and the next day, the 28th of April, the Prussian Ministry issued a circular note, in which the Imperial Constitution was held up as a most anarchical and revolutionary document, which it was for the Governments of Germany to remodel and purify. Thus Prussia denied, point-blank, that sovereign constituent power which the wise men at Frankfort had always

25 boasted of, but never established. Thus a Congress of Princes, a renewal of the old Federal Diet was called upon to sit in judgment on that Constitution which had already been promulgated as a law. And at the same time Prussia concentrated troops at Kreuznach, three days' march from Frankfort, and called upon the smaller States to follow its example by also dissolving their

30 Chambers as soon as they should give their adhesion to the Frankfort Assembly. This example was speedily followed by Hanover and Saxony.

It was evident that a decision of the struggle by force of arms could not be avoided. The hostility of the Governments, the agitation among the people were daily showing themselves in stronger colors. The military were every-

35 where worked upon by the democratic citizens, and in the South of Germany with great success. Large mass meetings were everywhere held, passing resolutions to support the Imperial Constitution and the National Assembly, if need should be, with force of arms. At Cologne, a meeting of deputies of all the municipal councils of Rhenish Prussia took place for the same pur-

40 pose. In the Palatinate, at Bergen, Fulda, Nuremberg, in the Odenwald, the peasantry met by myriads and worked themselves up into enthusiasm. At

the same time, the Constituent Assembly of France dissolved, and the new elections were prepared amid violent agitation, while on the eastern frontier of Germany the Hungarians had within a month by a succession of brilliant victories, rolled back the tide of Austrian invasion from the Theiss to the Laitha, and were every day expected to take Vienna by storm. Thus, popular imagination being on all hands worked up to the highest pitch, and the aggressive policy of the Governments defining itself more clearly every day, a violent collision could not be avoided, and cowardly imbecility only could persuade itself that the struggle was to come off peaceably. But this cowardly imbecility was most extensively represented in the Frankfort Assembly.

Karl Marx.

London, July, 1852.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3564, 18. September 1852

XVII.

The inevitable conflict between the National Assembly of Frankfort and the States' Government of Germany, at last broke out in open hostilities during the first days of May, 1849. The Austrian deputies, recalled by their Government, had already left the Assembly and returned home, with the exception of a few members of the Left or Democratic party. The great body of the Conservative members, aware of the turn things were about to take, withdrew even before they were called upon to do so by their respective Governments. Thus, even independently of the causes which in the foregoing papers have been shown to strengthen the influence of the Left, the mere desertion of their posts by the members of the Right sufficed to turn the old minority into a majority of the Assembly. The new majority which, at no former time, had dreamt of ever obtaining that good fortune, had profited by their places on the opposition benches to spout against the weakness, the indecision, the indolence of the old majority and of its Imperial Lieutenancy. Now all at once, *they* were called on to replace that old majority. *They* were now to show what they could perform. Of course, *their* career was to be one of energy, determination, activity. *They*, the *élite* of Germany, would soon be able to drive onwards the senile Lieutenant of the Empire and his vacillating ministers, and in case that was impossible, they would—there could be no doubt about it—by force of the sovereign right of the people, depose that impotent Government, and replace it by an energetic, indefatigable Executive, who would assure the salvation of Germany. Poor fellows! *their* rule—if

rule it can be named where no one obeyed—was a still more ridiculous affair than even the rule of their predecessors.

The new majority declared that, in spite of all obstacles, the Imperial Constitution must be carried out, and *at once*; that on the 15th July ensuing the people were to elect the Deputies for the new House of Representatives, and that this House was to meet at Frankfort on the 15th of August following. Now, this was an open declaration of war against those Governments that had not recognized the Imperial Constitution, the foremost among which were Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, comprising more than three-fourths of the German population; a declaration of war which was speedily accepted by them. Prussia and Bavaria, too, recalled the deputies sent from their territories to Frankfort, and hastened their military preparations against the National Assembly; while, on the other hand, the demonstrations of the Democratic party (out of Parliament) in favor of the Imperial Constitution and of the National Assembly, acquired a more turbulent and violent character, and the mass of the working people, led by the men of the most extreme party, were ready to take up arms in a cause which, if it was not their own, at least gave them a chance of somewhat approaching their aims by clearing Germany of its old monarchical encumbrances. Thus everywhere the people and the Governments were at daggers drawn upon this subject; the outbreak was inevitable; the mine was charged and it only wanted a spark to make it explode. The dissolution of the Chambers in Saxony, the calling in of the Landwehr (military reserve) in Prussia, the open resistance of the Governments to the Imperial Constitution, were such sparks; they fell, and all at once the country was in a blaze. In Dresden, on the 4th of May, the people victoriously took possession of the town and drove out the king while all the surrounding districts sent reinforcements to the insurgents. In Rhenish Prussia and Westphalia the Landwehr refused to march, took possession of the arsenals and armed itself in defense of the Imperial Constitution. In the Palatinate the people seized the Bavarian Government officials and the public moneys, and instituted a Committee of Defense, which placed the province under the protection of the National Assembly. In Wurtemberg the people forced the King to acknowledge the Imperial Constitution; and in Baden the army united with the people, forced the Grand Duke to flight and erected a Provisional Government. In other parts of Germany the people only awaited a decisive signal from the National Assembly to rise in arms and place themselves at its disposal.

The position of the National Assembly was far more favorable than could have been expected after its ignoble career. The Western half of Germany had taken up arms in its behalf; the military everywhere were vacillating; in the lesser States they were undoubtedly favorable to the movement.

Austria was prostrated by the victorious advance of the Hungarians, and Russia, that reserve force of the German Governments, was straining all its powers in order to support Austria against the Magyar armies. There was only Prussia to subdue; and with the revolutionary sympathies existing in that country, a chance certainly existed of attaining that end. Everything, then, depended upon the conduct of the Assembly. 5

Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them. Those rules, logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances one has to deal with in such a case, are so plain and simple that the short experience of 1848 had made the Germans pretty well acquainted with them. Firstly, never play with insurrection, unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play. Insurrection is a calculus with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organization, discipline and habitual authority; unless you bring strong odds against them, you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, acts with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small but daily; keep up the moral ascendant which the first successful rising has given to you; rally thus those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse, and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace!* 10 15 20 25

What, then, was the National Assembly of Frankfort to do if it would escape the certain ruin which it was threatened with? First of all, to see clearly through the situation and to convince itself that there was now no other choice than either to submit to the Governments unconditionally or take up the cause of the armed insurrection without reserve or hesitation. Secondly, to publicly recognize all the insurrections that had already broken out, and to call the people to take up arms everywhere in defense of the national representation, outlawing all princes, ministers, and others who should dare to oppose the sovereign people represented by its mandataries. Thirdly, to at once depose the German Imperial Lieutenant, to create a strong, active, *unscrupulous* Executive, to call insurgent troops to Frankfort for its immediate protection, thus offering at the same time a legal pretext for the spread of the insurrection, to organize into a compact body all the forces at its disposal, and, in short, to profit quickly and unhesitatingly by 30 35 40

every available means for strengthening its position and impairing that of its opponents.

Of all this, the virtuous Democrats in the Frankfort Assembly did just the contrary. Not content with letting things take the course they liked, these worthies went so far as to suppress by their opposition all insurrectionary movements which were preparing. Thus, for instance, did Mr. Karl Vogt at Nuremberg. They allowed the insurrections of Saxony, of Rhenish Prussia, of Westphalia to be suppressed without any other help than a posthumous, sentimental protest against the unfeeling violence of the Prussian Government. They kept up an underhand diplomatic intercourse with the South German insurrections, but never gave them the support of their open acknowledgment. They knew that the Lieutenant of the Empire sided with the Governments, and yet they called upon *him*, who never stirred, to oppose the intrigues of these Governments. The Ministers of the Empire, old Conservatives, ridiculed this impotent Assembly in every sitting, and they suffered it. And when William Wolff, a Silesian Deputy, and one of the editors of the *New-Rhenish Gazette*, called upon them to outlaw the Lieutenant of the Empire—who was, he justly said, nothing but the first and greatest traitor to the Empire—he was hooted down by the unanimous and virtuous indignation of those democratic revolutionists! In short, they went on talking, protesting, proclaiming, pronouncing, but never had the courage nor the sense to act; while the hostile troops of the Governments drew nearer and nearer, and their own Executive, the Lieutenant of the Empire, was busily plotting with the German Princes their speedy destruction. Thus, even the last vestige of consideration was lost to this contemptible Assembly; the insurgents who had risen to defend it, ceased to care any more for it, and when at last it came to a shameful end, as we shall see, it died without anybody taking any notice of its unhonored exit.

Karl Marx.

London, August, 1852

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3576, 2. Oktober 1852

XVIII.

In our last we showed that the struggle between the German Governments on the one side and the Frankfort Parliament on the other, had ultimately acquired such a degree of violence that in the first days of May a great portion of Germany broke out in open insurrection: first Dresden, then the Bavarian Palatinate, parts of Rhenish Prussia, and at last Baden.

In all cases, the *real fighting* body of the insurgents, that body which first took up arms and gave battle to the troops, consisted of the *working classes of the towns*. A portion of the poorer country population, laborers and petty farmers, generally joined them after the actual outbreak of the conflict. The greater number of the young men of all classes, below the capitalist class, 5 was to be found, for a time at least, in the ranks of the insurgent armies, but this rather indiscriminate aggregate of young men very soon thinned as soon as the aspect of affairs took a somewhat serious turn. The students particularly, those "representatives of intellect," as they liked to call themselves, 10 were the first to quit their standards, unless they were retained by the bestowal of officer's rank, for which they, of course, had very seldom any qualification.

The working class entered upon this insurrection as they would have done upon any other which promised either to remove some obstacles in their progress toward political dominion and social revolution, or at least to tie 15 the more influential but less courageous classes of society to a more decided and revolutionary course than they had followed hitherto. The working class took up arms with a full knowledge that this was, in the direct bearings of the case, no quarrel of its own; but it followed up its only true policy, to allow no class that has risen on its shoulders (as the Bourgeoisie had done in 1848) 20 to fortify its class-government, without opening, at least, a fair field to the working classes for the struggle for its own interests; and, in any case, to bring matters to a crisis, by which either the nation was fairly and irresistibly launched in the revolutionary career, or else the *status quo* before the revolution restored as near as possible, and thereby a new revolution rendered 25 unavoidable. In both cases the working classes represented the real and well-understood interest of the nation at large, in hastening as much as possible that revolutionary course which, for the old societies of civilized Europe, has now become a historical necessity, before any of them can again aspire to a more quiet and regular development of its resources. 30

As to country people that joined the insurrection, they were principally thrown into the arms of the revolutionary party by the relatively enormous load of taxation, and partly of feudal burdens, pressing upon them. Without any initiative of their own, they formed the tail of the other classes engaged 35 in the insurrection, wavering between the workingmen on one side, and the petty trading class on the other. Their own private social position, in almost every case, decided which way they turned; the agricultural laborer generally supported the city artisan, the small farmer was apt to go hand in hand with the small shop-keeper.

This class of petty tradesmen, the great importance and influence of which 40 we have already several times adverted to, may be considered as the leading

class of the insurrection of May, 1849. There being, this time, none of the large towns of Germany among the centers of the movement, the petty trading class, which in middling and lesser towns always predominates, found the means of getting the direction of the movement into its hands. We have, moreover, seen, that in this struggle for the Imperial Constitution and for the rights of the German Parliament, there were the interests of this peculiar class at stake. The Provisional Governments, formed in all the insurgent districts represented in the majority of each of them, this section of the people, and the length they went to may therefore be fairly taken as the measure of what the German petty bourgeoisie is capable of—capable as we shall see, of nothing but ruining any movement that entrusts itself to its hands.

The petty bourgeoisie, great in boasting, is very impotent for action and very shy in risking anything. The *mesquin* character of its commercial transactions and its credit operations is eminently apt to stamp its character with a want of energy and enterprise; it is, then, to be expected that similar qualities will mark its political career. Accordingly, the petty bourgeoisie encouraged insurrection by big words and great boasting as to what it was going to do; it was eager to seize upon power as soon as the insurrection, much against its will, had broken out; it used this power to no other purpose but to destroy the effects of the insurrection. Wherever an armed conflict had brought matters to a serious crisis there the shopkeepers stood aghast at the dangerous situation created for them; aghast at the people who had taken their boasting appeals to arms in earnest; aghast at the power thus thrust into their own hands; aghast, above all, at the consequences for themselves, for their social positions, for their fortunes, of the policy in which they were forced to engage themselves. Were they not expected to risk “life and property,” as they used to say, for the cause of the insurrection? Were they not forced to take official positions in the insurrection, whereby, in case of defeat, they risked the loss of their capital?—And in case of victory, were they not sure to be immediately turned out of office and seeing their entire policy subverted by the victorious proletarians who formed the main body of their fighting army? Thus placed between opposing dangers which surrounded them on every side, the petty bourgeoisie knew not to turn its power to any other account, than to let everything take its chance, whereby, of course, there was lost what little chance of success there might have been, and thus to ruin the insurrection altogether. Its policy or rather want of policy everywhere was the same, and therefore, the insurrections of May, 1849, in all parts of Germany, are all cut out to the same pattern.

In Dresden, the struggle was kept on for four days in the streets of the town. The shopkeepers of Dresden, the “communal guard,” not only did not

fight, but in many instances favored the proceedings of the troops against the insurgents. These again consisted almost exclusively of workingmen from the surrounding manufacturing districts. They found *an able and cool headed commander in the Russian refugee, Michael Bakunin*, who afterward was taken prisoner, and now is confined in the dungeons of Munkacs, Hungary. The intervention of numerous Prussian troops crushed this insurrection. 5

In Rhenish Prussia, the actual fighting was of little importance. All the large towns being fortresses commanded by citadels, there could be only skirmishing on the part of the insurgents. As soon as a sufficient number of troops had been drawn together, there was an end to armed opposition. 10

In the Palatinate and Baden, on the contrary, a rich fruitful province, and an entire State, fell into the hands of the insurrection. Money, arms, soldiers, warlike stores, everything was ready for use. The soldiers of the regular army themselves joined the insurgents; nay, in Baden, they were among the foremost of them. The insurrections in Saxony and Rhenish Prussia sacrificed themselves in order to gain time for the organization of this South-German movement. Never was there such a favorable position for a Provincial and partial insurrection as this. A revolution was expected in Paris, the Hungarians were at the gates of Vienna, in all the central States of Germany not only the people, but even the troops, were strongly in favor of the insurrection, and only wanted an opportunity to join it openly. And yet, the movement having got once into the hands of the petty Bourgeoisie, was ruined from its very beginning. The petty Bourgeois rulers particularly of Baden—M. Brentano at the head of them—never forgot that by usurping the place and prerogatives of the “lawful” sovereign, the Grand Duke, they were committing high treason. They sat down in their ministerial arm-chairs with the consciousness of criminality in their hearts. What can you expect of such cowards? They not only abandoned the insurrection to its own uncentralized and therefore ineffective spontaneity, they actually did everything in their power to take the sting out of the movement, to unman, to destroy it. And they succeeded, thanks to the zealous support of that deep class of politicians, the “Democratic” heroes of the petty Bourgeoisie, who actually thought they were “saving the country,” while they allowed themselves to be led by their noses by a few men of a sharper cast, such as Brentano. 35

As to the fighting part of the business, never were military operations carried on in a more slovenly, more stolid way than under the Badish General-in-Chief Sigel, an ex-Lieutenant of the regular army. Everything was got into confusion, every good opportunity was lost, every precious moment was loitered away with planning colossal but impracticable projects, until, when at last the talented Pole, Mieroslawski, took up the command, the army 40

was disorganized, beaten, dispirited, badly provided for, opposed to an enemy four times more numerous, and withal he could do nothing more than fight, at Waghäusel, a glorious, though unsuccessful, battle, carry out a clever retreat, offer a last hopeless fight under the walls of Rastatt, and resign. As
5 in every insurrectionary war, where armies are mixed of well-drilled soldiers and raw levies, there was plenty of heroism and plenty of unsoldierlike, often inconceivable panic in the revolutionary army; but imperfect as it could not but be, it had at least the satisfaction that four times its number were not considered sufficient to put it to the rout, and that a hundred thousand regular
10 troops, in a campaign against twenty thousand insurgents, treated them, militarily, with as much respect as if they had had to fight the Old Guard of Napoleon.

In May the insurrection had broken out; by the middle of July, 1849, it was entirely subdued, and the first German Revolution was closed.

15 Karl Marx.

New-York Daily Tribune.
Nr. 3594, 23. Oktober 1852

XIX.

While the South and West of Germany was in open insurrection, and while it took the Governments from the first opening of hostilities at Dresden to the capitulation of Rastadt, rather more than ten weeks, to stifle this final
20 blazing up of the first German Revolution, the National Assembly disappeared from the political theatre without any notice being taken of its exit.

We left this august body at Frankfort, perplexed by the insolent attacks of the Governments upon its dignity, by the impotency and treacherous
25 listlessness of the Central Power it had itself created, by the risings of the petty trading class for its defense, and of the working class for a more revolutionary ultimate end. Desolation and despair reigned supreme among its members; events had at once assumed such a definite and decisive shape, that in a few days the illusions of these learned legislators, as to their real
30 power and influence, were entirely broken down. The Conservatives, at the signal given by the Governments, had already retired from a body which henceforth could not exist any longer, except in defiance of the constituted authorities. The Liberals gave the matter up in utter discomfiture; they, too, threw up their commissions as representatives. Honorable gentlemen de-
35 camped by hundreds. From eight or nine hundred members the number had

dwindled down so rapidly, that now 150, and a few days after 100 were declared a quorum. And even these were difficult to muster, although the whole of the Democratic party remained.

The course to be followed by the remnants of a Parliament was plain enough. They had only to take their stand openly and decidedly with the insurrection, to give it, thereby, whatever strength legality could confer upon it, while they themselves at once acquired an army for their own defense. They had to summon the Central Power to stop all hostilities at once; and if, as could be foreseen, this power neither could nor would do so, to depose it at once and put another more energetic Government in its place. If insurgent troops could not be brought to Frankfort, (which, in the beginning, when the State Governments were little prepared and still hesitating, might have been easily done,) then the Assembly could have adjourned at once to the very center of the insurgent district. All this, done at once, and resolutely, not later than the middle or end of May, might have opened chances both for the insurrection and for the National Assembly.

But such a determined course was not to be expected from the representatives of German Shopocracy. These aspiring statesmen were not at all freed from their illusions. Those members who had lost their fatal belief in the strength and inviolability of the Parliament, had already taken to their heels; the Democrats, who remained, were not so easily induced to give up dreams of power and greatness which they had cherished for a twelvemonth. True to the course they had hitherto pursued, they shrunk back from decisive action until every chance of success, nay, every chance to succumb with, at least, the honors of war, had passed away. In order, then, to develop a factitious, busy-body sort of activity, the sheer impotence of which, coupled with its high pretensions, could not but excite pity and ridicule, they continued insinuating resolutions, addresses, and requests to an Imperial Lieutenant, who not even noticed them, to Ministers, who were in open league with the enemy. And when at last *William Wolff*, member for Striegau, one of the editors of the New Rhenish Gazette, the only really revolutionary man in the whole Assembly, told them that if they meant what they said, they had better give over talking and declare the Imperial Lieutenant, the chief traitor to the country, an outlaw at once; then the entire compressed virtuous indignation of these parliamentary gentlemen burst out with an energy which they never found when the Government heaped insult after insult upon them. Of course—for *Wolff's* proposition was the first sensible word spoken within the walls of St. Paul's Church; of course, for it was the very thing that was to be done—and such plain language, going so direct to the purpose, could not but insult a set of sentimentalists, who were resolute in nothing but irresolution, and who, too cowardly to act, had once for all made up their

minds that in doing nothing, they were doing exactly what was to be done. Every word which cleared up, like lightning, the infatuated but intentional nebulosity of their minds, every hint that was adapted to lead them out of the labyrinth where they obstinated themselves to take up as lasting an abode
 5 as possible, every clear conception of matters as they actually stood, was, of course, a crime against the majesty of this Sovereign Assembly.

Shortly after the position of the honorable gentlemen in Frankfort became untenable, in spite of resolutions, appeals, interpellations and proclamations, they retreated, but not into the insurged districts; that would have been too
 10 resolute a step. They went to Stuttgart, where the Würtemberg Government kept up a sort of expectative neutrality. There, at last, they declared the Lieutenant of the Empire to have forfeited his power, and elected from their own body a Regency of five. This Regency at once proceeded to pass a Militia Law, which was actually in all due force, sent to all the Governments of
 15 Germany. They, the very enemies of the Assembly, were ordered to levy forces in its defense! Then there was created—on paper, of course—an army for the defense of the National Assembly. Divisions, brigades, regiments, batteries, everything was regulated and ordained. Nothing was wanting but reality, for that army, of course, never was called into existence.

One last scheme offered itself to the National Assembly. The Democratic population from all parts of the country sent deputations to place itself at the disposal of the Parliament, and to urge it on to a decisive action. The people, knowing what the intentions of the Würtemberg Government were, implored the National Assembly to force that Government into an open and
 25 active participation with their insurgent neighbors. But No. The National Assembly, in going to Stuttgart, had delivered itself up to the tender mercies of the Würtemberg Government. The members knew it, and repressed the agitation among the people. They thus lost the last remnant of influence which they might yet have retained. They earned the contempt they de-
 30 served, and the Würtemberg Government, pressed by Prussia and the Imperial Lieutenant, put a stop to the Democratic farce by shutting up, on the 18th of June, 1849, the room where the Parliament met, and by ordering the members of the Regency to leave the country.

Next they went to Baden, into the camp of the insurrection, but there they
 35 were now useless. Nobody noticed them. The Regency, however, in the name of the Sovereign German People, continued to save the country by its exertions. It made an attempt to get recognized by foreign powers, by delivering *passports* to anybody who would accept of them. It issued proclamations, and sent Commissioners to insurge those very districts of Würtemberg whose
 40 active assistance it had refused when it was yet time; of course without effect. We have now under our eye an original report sent to the Regency

by one of these Commissioners, Mr. Roesler, (member for Oels,) the contents of which are rather characteristic. It is dated Stuttgart, 30th June, 1849. After describing the adventures of half-a-dozen of these Commissioners in a resultless search for cash, he gives a series of excuses for not having yet gone to his post, and then delivers himself of a most weighty argument respecting possible differences between Prussia, Austria, Bavaria and Würtemberg, with its possible consequences. After having fully considered this, he comes, however, to the conclusion that there is no more chance. Next he proposes to establish relays of trustworthy men for the conveyance of intelligence, and a system of espionage as to the intentions of the Würtemberg Ministry, and the movements of the troops. This letter never reached its address, for when it was written the "Regency" had already passed entirely into the "foreign department," viz., Switzerland; and while poor Mr. Roesler troubled his head about the intentions of the formidable Ministry of a sixth-rate kingdom, a hundred thousand Prussian, Bavarian and Hessian soldiers had already settled the whole affair in the last battle under the walls of Rastadt.

Thus vanished the German Parliament, and with it the first and the last creation of the revolution. Its convocation had been the first evidence that there actually *had been* a revolution in Germany; and it existed as long as this, the first modern German revolution, was not yet brought to a close. Chosen under the influence of the capitalist class, by a dismembered, scattered, rural population, for the most part only awaking from the dumbness of feudalism, this Parliament served to bring in one body upon the political arena, all the great popular names of 1820—1848, and then to utterly ruin them. All the celebrities of the middle-class Liberalism were here collected; the Bourgeoisie expected wonders; it earned shame for itself and for its representatives. The industrial and commercial capitalist class were more severely defeated in Germany than in any other country; they were first worsted, broken, expelled from office in every individual State of Germany, and then put to rout, disgraced and hooted in the Central German Parliament. Political Liberalism, the rule of the Bourgeoisie, be it under a monarchical or republican form of government, is forever impossible in Germany.

In the latter period of its existence, the German Parliament served to disgrace forever that section which had ever since March, 1848, headed the official opposition, the Democrats representing the interests of the small trading, and partially of the farming class. That class was, in May and June, 1849, given a chance to show its means of forming a stable government in Germany. We have seen how it failed; not so much by adverse circumstances as by the actual and continual cowardice in all trying movements that had occurred since the outbreak of the revolution; by showing in politics the same short-sighted, pusillanimous, wavering spirit, which is characteristic of its

commercial operations. In May, 1849, it had, by this course, lost the confidence of the real fighting mass of all European insurrections, the working class.—But yet, it had a fair chance. The German Parliament belonged to it, exclusively, after the Reactionists and Liberals had withdrawn. The rural
5 population was in its favor. Two-thirds of the armies of the smaller States, one-third of the Prussian army, the majority of the Prussian Landwehr, (reserve or militia) were ready to join it, if it only acted resolutely, and with that courage which is the result of a clear insight in the state of things. But the politicians who led on this class, were not more clear-sighted than the
10 host of petty tradesmen which followed them. They proved even to be more infatuated, more ardently attached to delusions voluntarily kept up, more credulous, more incapable of resolutely dealing with facts than the Liberals. Their political importance, too, is reduced below the freezing point. But they not having actually carried their common-place principles into execution,
15 they were, under very favorable circumstances, capable of a momentary resurrection, when this last hope was taken from them, just as it was taken from their colleagues of the „pure Democracy“ in France, by the *coup d'état* of *Louis Bonaparte*.

The defeat of the South-West German insurrection, and the dispersion of
20 the German Parliament, bring the history of the first German Revolution to a close. We have now to show a parting glance upon the victorious members of the counter-revolutionary alliance; we shall do this in our next letter.

Karl Marx.

London, Sept. 24, 1852.