

# *Assassinations and Socialism*

*By August Bebel*



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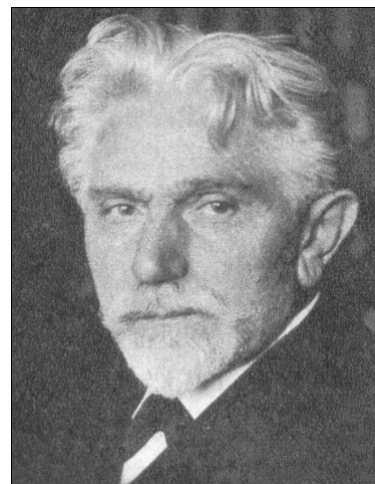
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# Assassinations and Socialism

**By August Bebel**

From a Speech Delivered at Berlin, November 2, 1898.

(Translated for the *Daily People* from the German  
by Boris Reinstein.)<sup>1</sup>



**AUGUST BEBEL (1840–1913)**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

A large portion of the German capitalist class has not yet forgotten the anti-Socialist law. They grieved greatly when the law was revoked, and they are still fishing desperately for an opportunity to replace it by a new exceptional law, or to render the Common Law more rigorous. Their main support in this endeavor was Prince Bismarck. Differences of opinion as to the manner in which the Social Democracy should be treated led to his resignation. As he never forgot that fact, he faithfully preserved, to the end of his life, his old hatred for the Social Democracy.

Bismarck caused it repeatedly to be stated in his personal organ, the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, that there is nothing left to be done but to provoke the Social Democrats to commit acts of despair, to draw them out into the open street, and there to shoot them down. (Shame! Shame!) Please, no indignation. Let us rather rejoice at the brutal frankness of our enemies.

The summer of 1894 arrived with the assassination of President Carnot, of France, by Caserio, in Lyons. One is justified in asking, Is it any of Germany's business if somebody is assassinated in a neighboring country? No German statesmen were either directly or indirectly concerned in the affair. Nobody from any quarter whatever had even attempted to insinuate as much. And still, the fact that a foreign Anarchist in a foreign country committed the deed sufficed to set the

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<sup>1</sup> [Boris Reinstein's translation of August Bebel's 1898 address *Assassinations and Socialism* was published in the New York *Daily People* of Sunday, April 19, 1908 (*Weekly People* of Saturday, April 28, 1908) and as a New York Labor News Company pamphlet under the same title in May of that year.]

## *Assassinations and Socialism*

German capitalists in motion against the small handful of German Anarchists—but still more against the so-much-hated Social Democracy.

At that hour a Prince in southwestern Germany dropped the remark that the time had come to give the signal for a general campaign against the Social Democracy; and in September of the same year, at a convention of the National Liberals, held in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, it was decided at a secret session to request the Government to take action against the Social Democracy, if not with a new anti-Socialist law, at least by rendering the Common Law more rigorous. And it was done even so.

The downfall of Caprivi, Bismarck's successor as Chancellor of Germany, was undoubtedly largely brought about by his belief that any kind of a law against the Social Democracy would do more harm than good. He then held an opinion which in 1890 was shared by the Kaiser. But this opinion no longer prevailed in the highest circles of Government. When Count Caprivi fell, Prince Hohenlohe appeared before the Reichstag with the so-called anti-Revolution bill. (Umsturzvorlage.)

In the plenary sessions of the Reichstag, as well as in the sessions of the committee, we did all we could to prevent the adoption of that bill. But the Center, the Catholic clerical party of Germany, was fired with the wish of taking advantage of the law as it then existed, especially if made more rigorous, in order to smite the so-called Spiritual Fathers of the Revolution—the liberal professors with their wicked, semi-atheistic views. The ultramontanes, in conjunction with the conservatives, succeeded in forcing the slightly amended demands of the Government through the committee, but their attempt to go further by incorporating additional clauses in the anti-Revolution bill, by means of which they hoped to be able to “get at” Science itself, finally brought on the shipwreck of the bill. In the face of the stormy opposition from the entire world of science and art—an opposition that was supported by the liberal element of the capitalist class itself—the Government was finally compelled to withdraw its bill.

But the purpose and thought of stabbing the Social Democracy to the heart remained. When, in September of this year, 1898, Empress Elizabeth of Austria was stabbed to death at Geneva, Switzerland, our enemies again believed the day had come. A few days after the murder, which naturally caused the indignation of the entire civilized world, our greatest manufacturers sent to the Kaiser that now well-known telegram, which was to inspire new exceptional measures. The telegram read:

## Assassinations and Socialism

The terrible deed, which caused the death of Her Majesty the Empress of Austria, is a new horrifying evidence of the aims of Anarchism and of the tendencies that lead to Anarchism. Under the impression of this deed, which shocks so deeply our hearts, we know that we are as one with Your Majesty in the consciousness of the duty to oppose with all the means of most severe legislation, the attempts to destroy our religion, our love for our exalted Ruling House and for the Fatherland. We, the undersigned representatives of German industry, therefore take the liberty to offer to Your Majesty, with our profoundest respect, the assurance that we stand faithfully by Your Majesty in the struggle against the impious enemies of our state and moral institutions. In our unshakable confidence in the power and wisdom of Your Majesty we shall advance and support with utmost energy all those measures which Your Majesty shall deem good for the suppression of the criminal aims of a conscienceless fanaticism and for the maintenance of the threatened authority of the state.

With profoundest respect we remain,

CENTRAL FEDERATION OF GERMAN MANUFACTURERS;  
ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN OWNERS OF IRON-WORKS;  
MINE-OWNERS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UPPER MINING DISTRICTS  
OF DORTMUND;  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF RHEINLAND  
AND WESTFALIA.

By order:

VON HASSLER. SERVAES. LUEG. JENCKE.

Thus this telegram was signed by four representatives of the upper capitalist class of Germany, as typical as they can be picked together in the German Empire, and who are at the head of all measures directed against the working class.

The gentlemen talk in the telegram about the "protection of our religion." That makes us only smile. What is, then, the religion of those gentlemen? I don't think I am much mistaken when I say: "The gentlemen have no more faith than I have; that is none at all!" (Lively approval.) "Religion must be preserved for the people," was once said, years ago, by a very high personage. But the gentlemen do not consider themselves belonging to the people. (Lively approval.) Religion is for them only the string by means of which the masses are to be held in contentedness, subjection, and dependence, during their sojourn in this vale of sorrows. (Laughter.)

The telegram speaks also of the "love for our exalted Ruling House." This passage puts me in mind of an article published in 1892 or 1893 in the *Koelnische Zeitung*, the paper from which those gentlemen get their daily supply of political wisdom. At that time the Prussian Diet was considering the property-tax bill. When

## Assassinations and Socialism

Herr Miguel, the Secretary of the Treasury, reformed the direct taxes in a sensible way, he realized that a sharp declaration of property was necessary to prevent the capitalists from cheating the Government Treasury too much. Therefore, when the income-tax bill was adopted it was followed by the proposition of a so-called supplementary tax law, that is, by a moderate property-tax bill with compulsory declaration of property. That bill does not by any means tax the capitalists severely; the property tax, compared with the one existing in some cantons of Switzerland, is exceedingly low. But this bill was sufficient to induce the *Koelnische Zeitung* to strike an attitude of most determined opposition. "When such tax bills get into the Prussian Diet," said that paper, "one is compelled to subject one's own monarchistic faith to closest scrutiny." (Laughter.) The gentlemen discovered then that they eventually could also be republicans. (Laughter.) They are only *monarchists for a purpose*, that is, monarchistic only because this form of government, for the time being, happens to suit their interests in the best way.

Such was at that time the love of the Rheinisch-Westphalian capitalists for our "exalted Ruling House."

And how is it with the Fatherland that these gentlemen are talking about? Was it not Herr von Hassler, who stands at the head of the German textile industry, who declared himself in 1871 against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, the same as the Social Democracy did, only for entirely different reasons, namely, because he feared the competition of the textile industry of Alsace? And, as is well known, every Socialist and democrat who was opposed to the annexation, was then considered a traitor to the Fatherland. Still Herr von Hassler and the German manufacturers in the textile industry were opposed to it. Thus their love for the Fatherland rests in their pocketbook. (Laughter.) All these beautiful assurances are only hollow phrases; they are only intended to influence public opinion in order to politically gag and handcuff the working class of Germany, and prevent them also from carrying their economic conflicts with the manufacturers to a successful issue. (Loud applause.) This is the secret behind that telegram.

Just so they proceeded in 1878, when the attempts of the idiot Hoedel and of the degenerate Nobiling to shoot Kaiser Wilhelm I were charged to us. Then, too, they wanted to paralyze the working people in order to be able to carry through with all the greater ease that great robber expedition against the working classes—the new protective policy. The paper of the Court Pastor, A. D. Stoecker (Laughter), was therefore quite right when it said of that telegram of the great

## Assassinations and Socialism

manufacturers that the gentlemen who sent such a telegram were only prompted by their own selfishness.

Further, the gentlemen are endeavoring to make the Anarchists and Social Democrats appear as one. Without desiring to go to-day into a theoretical analysis of the differences between the Social Democracy and Anarchism, I will say that the fact alone, that in every civilized country the representatives of both movements are found engaged in a most bitter conflict with each other, should suffice to prove to every honestly thinking man that the Social-Democracy has nothing in common with the Anarchists and vice versa. As the Anarchists look to Proudhon, Max Stirner, Bakunin, etc., as their spiritual fathers, so do we to Marx, Engels and Lassalle, who always stood in sharp opposition to the former. One can hardly find two men more opposed to each other in all their views than Bakunin—one may say the father of the “Propaganda of Deed”—and Karl Marx, the enemy of every policy of conspiracy and assassination. Bakunin, the representative of the most extreme individualism, the man who thought his social ideal could be realized by means of riots and acts of violence committed against individuals in power, and, on the other hand, Karl Marx and Engels, the founders of the materialist conception of history, according to which the power of single individuals, for good or for evil, is a limited one and can only be used by them in a certain manner so long as they act as representatives of certain class interests.

The Anarchists are the consistent, only extreme, branches of the *capitalist liberals* (“Quite true!”) with whose philosophy they have much in common, while the Social Democracy, in accordance with the Marxian doctrine of the class struggle, is the political representative of the proletariat which, in the measure as it becomes class-conscious, organizes itself in the folds of the Social Democracy in order to conquer political power and with its help to establish a new social order, on the basis of complete equal rights and equal obligations of all.

The principle that even the most powerful person can only act as the representative of class interests, can, in an especially clear manner, be demonstrated in the person of Bismarck. There is no other person whom the Social Democracy had so much reason to hate, as him, and the Social Democracy was not more hated by anybody than by just that Bismarck. Our love and our hatred were, as you see, mutual. (Laughter.) But one would search in vain the entire Social Democratic press and literature for an expression of the thought that it would be a lucky thing if that man were removed. We shall never have such a thought in



## Assassinations and Socialism

similar cases. But how often did the capitalist press express the idea that, were it not for Bismarck, we would not, to this day, have a united Germany? There cannot be a more mischievous notion than this. The unity of Germany would have come without Bismarck as well. The idea of unity and liberty was in the sixties so powerful among all the German people that it would have been realized, whether with the assistance of the Hohenzollerns or against their will. The unity of Germany was not only a political but an economic necessity, primarily in the interests of the capitalist class and its development. The idea of unity would have ultimately broken through with elementary force. At this juncture Bismarck made use of the tendency, in *his own fashion, in the interest of the Hohenzollern dynasty*, and at the same time *in the interest of the capitalist class and of the Junkers*, the landed nobility. The offspring of this compromise is the Constitution of the German Empire, the provisions of which strive to reconcile the interests of these three factors. Finally even a man like Bismarck had to leave his post. "What a misfortune for Germany!" cried the press devoted to him. Well, what did happen to Germany since then? (Laughter.) Even Bismarck himself could not have ruled it much differently than it was ruled since his days.

The basic conception of the comparatively insignificant part played in history by the individual distinguishes us from the Anarchists. Anarchism is, as I said, individualism developed to an extreme. Nobody showed that clearer than Stirner in his book "The Individual and His Property." But this doctrine of the importance of the individual—developed to its extreme consequences—explains how people who have no capacity for keen thinking, who are easily led by passionate impulses, or are easily influenced by suspicious outside suggestions and whisperings, attack bodily single individuals occupying influential positions, because they hold such individuals responsible for the evils of society.

Only thus is the thought possible. "If we succeed in removing an influential individual, then a great, heroic deed is committed for the emancipation of mankind." And with this in the minds of morbid natures is associated the idea: "It does not matter who is hit so long as the victim belongs to the highest spheres."

If this distorted, insane thought did not inspire Luccheni, the man who stabbed in Geneva Empress Elizabeth of Austria, how could he have murdered in cold blood a woman who never played a part in political life; who, contrary to many other royal women, made no claim to political influence; whom nobody could help respecting, because she stood intellectually so much higher than most of the royal women and

## Assassinations and Socialism

admired a poet Heine as only a Social Democrat can admire him? (Applause.)

But it would be highly unfair if one wanted to hold all Anarchists responsible for such a deed. The Anarchist papers sneer at us, claiming that we see the hand of the police in every attempted or executed assassination. For example, their organ, the *Socialist*, which brands us in the bargain as reactionists, writes:

In any case it is well that it is we, Anarchists, who first of all take the standpoint of critics regarding the assassinations or plans of assassinations, that the future may have in store for humanity. There is one thing that distinguishes us from the reactionists, as well as from the Social Democrats—even if we were not to consider the latter class as reactionists; we do not judge of things from standpoints dictated by political considerations,—on the contrary, we seek only one thing, the truth.

I am not much worried about that paper's characterizing us as reactionists. Herr von Puttkamer, former Minister of the Interior in Germany, notorious for his *agent provocateur* policy against the Socialists, also characterized us as “revolutionists in nightgown and slippers” and claimed: “I like Johann Most much better than you fellows!” (Laughter.) I readily believe that, should we have done what Most, himself in a safe port, advised to do, Bismarck and Puttkamer would have been tickled to death. (Applause.)

The reference in the *Socialist* to the assassination committed by Luccheni is a very clumsy one. Should it ever happen, that a bill for a new exceptional law will be introduced in the Reichstag, I bet one thousand to one that those statements made by the *Socialist* will be found in the preamble to that bill! I can tell you, my Anarchist gentlemen, clumsier than you do, one cannot put his foot into it! How can you supply the enemies with such weapons! You must still be quite inexperienced! You will say: “We did not say there anything out of the way.” But people read between the lines, too. In the *Neues Leben*—another Anarchist organ that I am entirely unacquainted with—the assertion is made that the attempted assassinations at Niederwald were arranged by Anarchists, and at the same time it is understood that it is out of sheer cowardice that the Social Democracy denies its identity with Anarchism. That statement was in my opinion made for a deliberate purpose. If the author of that article had his quarters in the great red building on



## Assassinations and Socialism

Alexander Place, he could not have written it more suitably for his purposes! (Lively approval.)

In view of these facts a neat discussion between us and the Anarchists is timely; but it would be wrong to conclude from such clumsy utterances in the Anarchist press, that the Anarchists in Germany are prepared to commit assassinations.

In what do our German Anarchists see at present their main task? To organize the workers into unions and to set up consumers' leagues, to which they ascribe considerable influence on the social life. True, I don't believe that. May the unions be ever so necessary and useful, we agree in one thing—they alone will not do. And still less will the consumers' leagues do, which also have a certain usefulness, provided they are well conducted. I am not opposed to the organization of such leagues, but I also do not spend my time setting them up. Thirty-five years ago I established a consumers' league, but since then I promised to myself not to do it again. (Laughter.) However, there is no reason to oppose consumers' leagues as such; many Social Democrats, especially in Saxony, belong to them, even if these leagues are no panacea for all ills. But to claim of men, who want to set up unions and consumers' leagues, that they practice assassinations is a shameless slander! (Laughter and applause.)

We stand by the law of evolution. However natural the desire of the masses of the working people to free themselves to-day, rather than to-morrow, from social misery and economic and political oppression, we know it will not sooner be possible for us to reach our aim than when the general development, which we strive to accelerate by organizing the working class for the struggle, will have advanced to the point when we will be strong enough to transform society. From this standpoint we can and will consider as *enemies* and *fight with determination* all persons in power, who oppose us, but we will never imagine that by removing such persons by means of violence we gain any special advantage. Rather on the contrary—reaction's sails are furnished with wind. (Quite true.) We see that to be the result of attempted or executed assassinations in Italy, France, Belgium, Russia, and, last but not least, Germany.

On the other hand our capitalist enemies have *the least* right to be indignant over the Anarchists. The belief in the supreme influence of important personages in influential positions on the course of history is of an entirely capitalistic, bourgeois, origin. (Quite true.) No other class in history, from the days of the ancient Greeks

## **Assassinations and Socialism**

down to our own age, believed, as much as that very bourgeois class, that, to remove the person of an individual in power, means to commit a great historic act.

Harmodios and Aristogeiton, who murdered the tyrant Hipparchos, 514 years before Christ, are even up to the present time glorified in colleges as heroes and deliverers of the people. I shall further remind you of Mariana, the Jesuit, who since became famous—he taught under what circumstances each individual had a right to take the life of a tyrant, as he called the Prince who ruled with absolute arbitrary power. His work, called “*De rege et regis institutione*,” in which he defended those views, was burned in 1609 in accordance with a verdict of a Spanish court. That Jesuit saw a tyrant in every ruler who persecuted the Catholic Church and her servants.

And Schiller, how does he glorify the deed of William Tell? And what was that Tell, that Tell of fiction? A cold-blooded murderer who from a safe ambush shot the unsuspecting Gessler, in whom he saw the enemy of his people and the cause of their oppression. Gessler was a tyrant the same as, in the eyes of our bourgeois of the time before the revolutionary days of March, 1848, all autocratic rulers were tyrants.

Then I wish to remind you of that poem of Schiller’s “Die Buergschaft,” which begins with the lines:

To Dionysios, the tyrant, crept  
Damon, a dagger in his cloak....

Not only does not a word in this poem show that Schiller condemns Damon for his contemplated act, on the contrary, he glorifies him for his heroism and the noble motives of his act.

I have prepared a list of attempted or executed assassinations which occurred within the last centuries. The list is by no means complete; still I was astonished at the great number of assassinations that took place, especially during the 19th century.

Among others, attempts were made on the life of Henry III of France by a monk of the Dominican order in 1589; of Henry the IV of France by the teacher Ravailiac in 1610; Charles I of England was executed by order of the Long Parliament under Cromwell in 1649; Pope Clement XIV, it is alleged, was poisoned in 1773 by the Jesuits, whose society he dissolved; Damien made an attempt to assassinate Louis XV of France in 1757; in 1792 Gustav III of Sweden was assassinated by Count

## Assassinations and Socialism

Ankarstrom; Paul I of Russia was assassinated in 1801 by a conspiracy of noblemen, headed by a Count Palen and a Herr von Bennigsen (laughter); attempts were made on the life of Napoleon I by means of an infernal machine, when he was still Consul in 1800, and by the German Staps in 1809; in 1819 Kotzebue, the Russian spy, was assassinated at Mannheim by Ludwig Sand, a student of theology.

In this connection it is quite interesting to observe that the assassination of Kotzebue by Sand was received *with approval* in wide circles of German students and citizens. Even more. A *doctor of theology*, Professor de Wette of the University of Berlin, even considered it as his duty to write to the bereaved mother of Sand a letter of consolation in which, among other things, he says:

The fact that the general public will pronounce your son a criminal and will appear justified in doing so, compels me, after I formed an opinion of my own about the matter, to appear as his defender before you and to protect his memory from dishonor, at least in the midst of his family.

The King was informed that de Wette wrote that letter and he thereupon was dismissed as professor. He left Berlin after having written a letter to the King, wherein he said that he was in poor health, without means, having to care for his wife and two children who needed bringing up, but he would carry his cross with pride. Later de Wette secured a position as professor in Basel, Switzerland.

Further assassinations or attempts at such were made on the Duke of Berry by Lavel in 1820; on Louis Philippe of France, seven attempts, among them that of Fieschi in 1835, which caused the death of fourteen persons, among them Marshall Mortier; attempts on Friedrich Wilhelm IV by Mayor Tschech in 1845 and by the fireworker Sefeloge in 1850; attempts on Franz Joseph of Austria in 1849 and 1853; on Minister Count Rossi in Rome in 1848; on Duke Karl of Parma in 1854; an attempt on Ferdinand III of Naples in 1856; on Napoleon III, three attempts; two in 1855 and the attempt by Orsini in 1858, which caused the death or injuries of 137 persons.

Then on Wilhelm I attempts by Becker at Baden-Baden in 1861 and by Hoedel in 1878 and Nobiling in same year; on Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by the actor Booth in 1865; on General Prim in 1870; on Prince Bismarck attempts by Cohen-Blind in 1866 and by Kullman in 1874; on Alexander II of Russia, five attempts, a fatal attempt in 1881; on Lord Cavendish, Viceroy of Ireland, and under-Secretary of State Burka, by the Fenians in Phoenix Park at Dublin in 1882; an attempt on Queen Isabella of Spain by a priest in 1856; four

## Assassinations and Socialism

attempts on Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, in 1840, 1842, 1872 and 1882; and in this connection it is necessary to observe that none of these attempts was used as a pretext for exceptional measures or for the rendering of the common law more rigorous.

Then there was an attempt on Prince Michael III of Servia in 1868; on King Humbert of Italy by Passanante in 1878; on President Garfield of the United States in 1881; on Crispi in 1889; the assassination of Bulgarian Minister Beltscheff, who was taken for Stambulow, in 1891; the assassination of Stambulow by agents of the Russian Government in 1895; Carnot, President of the French Republic, assassinated by Caserio in 1894; attempt on Canovas, Spanish Prime Minister, in 1897; on the King of Greece in 1897; assassination of the Empress of Austria by Luccheni in 1898.

I shall only remind you in general of the many attempts and assassinations committed during the last twenty years against the highest government officials in Russia alone, as well as of the assassinations of rulers and officials committed in Turkey and Persia, and finally of the many political murders committed in the South American States.

Characteristic is the opinion that prevailed among certain elements of our citizens regarding the attempt made by Cohen-Blind on the life of Bismarck in 1866. Thus Mr. Hopf, member of the local Parliament of Wuerttemberg and later of the Reichstag, wrote in the *Gradaus*: "So long as Germany counts such youths (as Cohen-Blind) among her sons, she is not poor." Marie Kurz in a poem glorified Cohen-Blind for his act. A comic paper in Muenchen published a cartoon presenting the devil in the act of striking the arm of Cohen-Blind, thus directing his revolver away from Bismarck, and exclaiming: "Hold on! This fellow (Bismarck) belongs to me!" (Laughter.)

On December 8, 1856, a soldier, Agesilao Milano, made the above referred-to attempt on the life of Ferdinand II of Naples, nicknamed King Bomba for his bombardment of the city of Naples. The assassin was tried by court-martial and shot. But when in 1860 Garibaldi, supported by Victor Emanuel, drove the Bourbons from Naples, he issued a decree which secured for the mother of the assassin, "in honor of the sacred memory" of the deceased, a pension of 30 ducats a month and for each of his sisters a dowry of 2,000 ducats. This decree was faithfully and honorably carried out by the monarch of Italy. And these monarchs, who at that time endowed the relatives of a cold-blooded murderer, dare now to call an anti-

## *Assassinations and Socialism*

Anarchist conference! (Commotion.)

No class, no layer of society can be acquitted of the charge of having furnished its quota of assassins. But for the development of conditions all assassinations were entirely useless. The process of evolution continued on its way without being in any way influenced by them.

What good did the wholesale assassinations, the murders of tyrants, do the French Republic? Louis XVI was indeed a very harmless little man, and still he, and with him Queen Marie Antoinette, accused of being tyrants, had to lay their heads under the knife of the guillotine, and hundreds of noblemen and priests followed them to the scaffold. But all these executions and massacres could not prevent the monarchy from being later re-established, nor the clergy from acquiring practically more power than before. But one thing the later-returned Bourbons could not change any more, although the bayonets of all Europe were supporting them—the reconstruction of the social order accomplished by the French Revolution, partly by the distribution among millions of the small peasantry of the estates of the clergy and noblemen, who ran away abroad, partly by the splendid modern capitalist legislation, which became the model for all progressive states on the European continent. This caused the total shipwreck of feudalism. Thirteen years after the Bourbons had returned, they had to get out of France again, to return nevermore.

Change the social order from foundation up, give it a corresponding political superstructure and you can leave the enemies with their heads in peace. (Very good.)

It cannot be denied that there are Anarchists who committed assassinations. For instance the assassination of President Carnot, committed by Caserio, was a sincere anarchistic assassination. The same must be said about the assassination committed by Luccheni. But that does not bar the fact that men stood behind Luccheni, who took advantage of his weak mind and induced him to commit that deed.

Reinsdorf, who on the occasion of the dedication of the monument at Niederwald wanted to blow up the German rulers assembled there, was also a sincere Anarchist. But that did not prevent the secret agent of police, Weber Palm, from getting right into the thick of the conspiracy and being present when all the preparations were being made. I wish to add in this connection that in this case they wanted to cause the explosion with dynamite which they themselves had prepared, which they therefore had previously tested in Elberfeld, where they tried

## Assassinations and Socialism

to blow up a restaurant, but failed, because the dynamite was no good. (Laughter.) Fortunately at Niederwald the rain, too, came just in time and put out the fuse.

Let us stop now and consider how many secret police agents helped along in the attempted or executed assassinations of the last decades.

When Bismarck was Federal Ambassador at Frankfort-on-the-Main he wrote to his wife: "For lack of material the police agents lie and exaggerate in a most shameful manner." These agents are engaged to discover contemplated assassinations. Under these circumstances the bad fellows among them—and no decent man would accept a job like that (Laughter)—come easily to the idea: "If other people don't commit assassinations, then, we ourselves must help the thing along." For, if they cannot report that there is something doing, they will be considered superfluous and, of course, they don't want that to happen. So they "help the thing along" by "correcting luck" as the French proverb puts it. (Laughter.) Or they play politics on their own score.

To demonstrate this I need only to remind you of the "reminiscences" of Andrieux, the former Chief of Police of Paris, in which he brags with the greatest cynicism of how he, by aid of police funds, subsidized extreme Anarchist papers and organized Anarchist assassinations, just to give a thorough scare to rich citizens. And then there is that notorious Police Inspector Melville of London, who also operated on these lines. That was revealed by the investigation of the so-called Walsall assassination. Among the assassinations committed by the Fenians there were also some that were the work of the police, as was shown in the Parnell trial.

Everybody remembers how much of such activity was displayed in Belgium by that prince of scoundrels, Pourbaix. Even the Minister Bernaard himself was compelled to admit before the Parliament that Pourbaix was paid to arrange assassinations in order to justify violent persecutions of the *Social Democracy*.

Likewise was Baron von Ungern-Sternberg, nicknamed the "bomb-baron," unmasked as a police agent at the Luttich trial of Anarchists.

And then—our own good friends of the times of the anti-Socialist law. (Laughter.) About them I myself could tell you some interesting stories, for I was among those who helped to unmask them.

There is Schroeder-Brennwald, of Zurich, the chap who was receiving from Molkenmarkt, through police counsellor Krueger, a monthly salary of at first 200 and then 250 marks. At every meeting in Zurich this Schroeder was stirring up people and putting them up to commit acts of violence. But to guard against



## Assassinations and Socialism

expulsion from Switzerland by the authorities of that country he first acquired *citizenship in Switzerland*, presumably by means of funds<sup>2</sup> furnished by the police headquarters of Prussia. (Laughter.) Maybe he saved up that money. (Laughter.)

During the summer of 1883 Schroeder and the police Anarchist Kaufmann called and held in Zurich a conference participated in by thirteen persons. Schroeder acted as chairman. At that conference plans were laid for the assassinations which were later committed in Vienna, Stuttgart and Strassburg by Stellmacher, Kammerer and Kunitzsch. (Commotion.) I am not informed that these unscrupulous scoundrels had informed the police that those murders were being contemplated. Men like Stellmacher and Kammerer paid for their acts with their lives, on the gallows.

When Johann Most was serving a term in a prison in England, this same police spy Schroeder had Most's *Freiheit* published at Schaffhausen, Switzerland, at his own expense. The money surely did not come out of his own pocket. (Laughter.)

That was a glorious time when our comrades unmasked this Schroeder and the other police organizer of plots, Haupt,<sup>3</sup> to whom the police councillor Krueger wrote that he knew that the next attempt on the life of the Czar of Russia would be arranged in Geneva, and he should send in reports. Was this demand not remarkable in the highest degree? (Laughter.)

And now Herr von Ehrenberg, the former colonel of artillery of Baden! This fellow was unquestionably for good reason suspected of having betrayed to the

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<sup>2</sup> To become a naturalized citizen of Switzerland one has to pay a considerable sum, besides complying with other difficult requirements.—TRANSLATOR.

<sup>3</sup> When the Socialists in Zurich became satisfied that Schroeder and Haupt were secret agents of police of Germany, posing as bloodthirsty revolutionists, they caused the police of Zurich to search their residence. Quantities of dynamite, sums of money from police headquarters of Berlin, and many documents were found in their possession, establishing the above and many other similar facts, and proving beyond question, that the Berlin headquarters of police, acting in conformity with the general policy of Bismarck's man, Puttkamer, the Minister of Interior, were themselves initiating, organizing and supplying dynamite, money, etc., for Anarchistic plots of assassination, subsidizing Anarchistic publications, etc. Bebel and Auer, representing the Social Democratic Labor Party of Germany, came down to Zurich, secured the necessary documents and at the first opportunity deposited them on the table of the Reichstag as evidence of Puttkamer's criminal policy of bloodshed. The sensation created by these revelations was so tremendous all over Germany and Europe, the indignation so universal, that Puttkamer had to resign.

Bismarck, enraged at the scandal, used diplomatic pressure on the powerless Federal Government of Switzerland to compel them to give a calling down to the police of Zurich for having helped to unmask the agents of the German police, and shortly after that he compelled the Swiss Federal Government to expel from Switzerland Edward Bernstein, Schlueter, Motteler and Tauscher, who were publishing in Zurich the *Sozialdemokrat*, organ of the German Party, and were generally looking after the Party's interests.—TRANSLATOR.

## Assassinations and Socialism

General Staff of Italy the fortifications of Switzerland at St. Gotthard. When his residence was searched it was brought to light that Herr von Ehrenberg worked also in the employ of the Prussian police. He prepared regularly written reports of conversations which he claimed to have had with our comrades, among them also with me. Only in those alleged conversations the characters were reversed. We were presented as advocating the most reckless criminal plans, which in reality he himself suggested and defended, while he pictured himself in those reports as opposing the plans. What would have happened if some day those reports had fallen into the hands of certain persons, and if accused, we had no witnesses to prove the spy committed perfidy? Thus, for instance, he attempted to convince me—but in his records claimed that it was I who proposed it—that it would be but child's play to find out the residences of the higher military officers in all the greater cities of Germany, then, in one night, send out our best men and have all those officers murdered simultaneously. (Commotion.) In four articles published in the *Arbeiterstimme*, of Zurich, he explained in a truly classical manner how to conduct a modern street battle, what to do to get the best of artillery and cavalry. At meetings he urged the collection of funds to buy arms for our people. As soon as war broke out with France our comrades, according to him, should break into Baden and Wuerttemberg from Switzerland, should there tear up the tracks and confiscate the contents of the postal and railroad treasuries. And this man, who urged us to do all that, was, as I said, in the employ of the Prussian police. (Hear! Hear!)

Another police preacher and organizer of violent plots was that well-known Friedeman, who was driven out of Berlin and at the gatherings of comrades in Zurich appealed to them, in prose and poetry, to commit acts of violence.

A certain Weiss, a journeyman tinsmith, was arrested in the vicinity of Basel for having put up posters in which the deeds of Kammerer and Stellmacher were glorified. He, too, was in the employ of the German police, as was established during the court proceedings.

A certain Schmidt, who had to disappear from Dresden on account of his crooked conduct, came to Zurich and urged the establishment of a *special fund for assassinations*, contributing twenty francs to start the fund. He also was a police agent. (Laughter.)

And then the secret police agent Ihring-Mahlow, here in Berlin, who announced that he was prepared to teach the manufacture of explosives, for “the parliamentary way is too slow!” (Laughter.)

## *Assassinations and Socialism*

What I mention here is no gossip and no fiction, all these facts can be proven at any moment. After all this experience, is there not reason enough for us to ask, in connection also with an assassination like the one recently committed in Geneva—who is behind that?

Of course Luccheni himself is an Anarchist, but, the same as Hoedel, he is a man, neglected from his childhood up, spoiled and demoralized by the miserable surroundings in which he lived. He is an illegitimate child and grew up at first in a foundling asylum and then outside, without education. Already at the age of ten he had to earn his bread, to-day here, to-morrow elsewhere. Thus he grew up to be the man who was able to commit such a senseless murder, as the one that had the Empress of Austria for victim.

However, whether he acted on his own initiative or upon suggestion from others—that is the question which, I hope, will be sufficiently cleared up by the approaching trial in Geneva.<sup>4</sup> Long before Luccheni killed the Austrian Empress, Italian police spies of the worst type, such as Santoro, Mantica, Benedicti and similar individuals of the most reprehensible past and present, were carrying on their work in Geneva and Switzerland generally. In August of this year there was a series of strikes among the workers of Geneva, especially among those of the building industry. The leaders, Italian Social Democrats, endeavored to establish peace between the contending parties. They succeeded, but, strange to say, they were expelled for it from Geneva. Santoro and Mantica had evidently their hand in the case. Our Swiss comrades claim that these two Italian police spies, assisted by the Italian general consul, Mr. Basso, were stirring up the police of Geneva against our Italian comrades of that city so long and so persistently, that they finally consented to expel them. But it is remarkable that the real instigators and troublemakers in strikes remained unmolested, although these too, must have been known to the police of Geneva. Then came the murder committed by Luccheni and the police of Geneva got at last its eyes opened. The miserable creatures that were carrying on their nefarious work in Geneva were more closely examined from all sides, and edifying things were discovered. The past of some of these fellows was

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<sup>4</sup> Concerning the question of accomplices the indictment states that Luccheni emphatically denies having had any; that although no actual participation of an accomplice in his deed is established, it is still possible that the idea of committing that crime is not his own; that while Luccheni is undoubtedly the man who chiefly instigated and directly carried out the crime, still there is a certain reserve in his conduct which, in connection with the evident discrepancies in his statements, points to the fact that Luccheni has much to hide, and that can only be done in the interest of others. During the trial in Geneva, which, as we know, was public, this question was scarcely referred to.

## Assassinations and Socialism

stained by crimes committed by them in Italy; still, many of them were *in the employ of the political police of Italy*.

Is there any wonder, that our sister organ, the *Tagewacht*, of Berne, Switzerland, declared in plain language that the *murder committed by Luccheni* was in fact *committed by the royal Italian police!* And the paper was not prosecuted for the statement. To judge by their personal career these Italian secret police agents are ready to commit any crime and rascality.

Who, for instance, is Santoro? He was a captain of police in Florence. In 1891 dynamite outrages were in Italy a frequent occurrence. One night the police of Florence arrested a suspicious looking individual who carried some object under his cloak. That object proved to be a bomb; *but the cloak under which the bomb was carried belonged to—Santoro!* (Laughter.) The arrested individual, de Angeli, was put behind the bars, but Santoro was appointed by Minister Crispi to the office of director of the Porto Ercole penal colony. Here he maltreated the convicts in the most outrageous manner, so that some of them died; he stole funds appropriated for the food of the convicts, and pocketed moneys sent to these unfortunate creatures by their relatives. When his crimes became known the only punishment he received was removal from the office. Then he placed his services at the command of the radical deputy Cavalotti against Crispi, revealing to the former the various iniquities committed by Crispi. The upshot of it was that Santoro was placed on trial for the rascally and crooked work committed by him while director of the Porto Ercole penal colony and he was sentenced to *eight years imprisonment*. But he got a chance to escape, and, reaching Switzerland, he *again entered the employ of the Italian police*. In Switzerland, too, he continued his criminal swindler's record and is now in jail awaiting trial.

And now Mantica. This fellow was expelled from the corps of Italian officers for reasons unknown to me. At a trial of Sicilian barons, involving an estate, he attempted to bribe the jurymen and in February of 1898 was sentenced to 13 months' imprisonment. He, too, escaped, and, like Santoro, entered the employ of the Italian police in Switzerland and established close, confidential relations with Mr. Basso, the Italian Consul General in Geneva, who shortly after the Geneva murder was suddenly transferred to Corsica. In Geneva Mantica was hanging around using an alias (de Sanctis), lived in grand style and busied himself with amateur journalism and the work of a secret police agent, and was in position to report the Geneva assassination to Italy at a time when nobody knew anything

## Assassinations and Socialism

about it. His chief acquaintances were Anarchists—whom he was madly persecuting—and Socialists in bad odor. Whether or not it can be proven about the Italian police-Anarchists, that they had a direct hand in the murder committed by Luccheni—his trial will show. However, in Switzerland, no more than formerly in England, does anybody think of using the Geneva murder as a pretext to demand exceptional laws—and that demonstrates the tremendous difference between a democratic country and Germany. Even more, in the government spheres as well as among the common people of Switzerland there is much indignation at the Italian Government, which sends to Switzerland those scoundrels of secret police agents and *agents provocateurs*, and then has the audacity to attempt to prescribe to Switzerland rules of conduct.

In the recently reported dynamite outrage in Egypt, too, the Italian police was not unconcerned.

If there ever was one of those dynamite outrages that had all the ear-marks of being a put-up job by the police it is that dynamite plot, that is alleged to have been “discovered” at Alexandria, Egypt. It was characteristic that the first news of it came from England. According to that dispatch a case of bombs was about to be found on the premises of an Italian saloon-keeper. And I really believe that the case was soon found—why not, they knew just where it was! (Much laughter.) The dispatch reported that that case was deposited on the premises of a saloon-keeper by the name of Parrini who, thinking that it contained whisky, proceeded to open it with a hammer in the presence of the police. The police papers write that he evidently intended to blow himself up. Oh, no. He, in his innocence, might have honestly intended to open the case, but the other fellows knew what it contained and they did not care to be blown up. (Laughter.) It is alleged that only Italians participated in this conspiracy. How handy!—that gives the Italian consul a chance to conduct the investigation all to himself. (Laughter.) It is also alleged that the arrested suspects had in their possession copies of the *Agitatore*,—published in Neuchatel, Switzerland—which urged the assassination of King Humbert. That is an impudent yarn. If this allegation were true, then the Swiss Federal Government at Berne would not merely expel the editors of that paper but, on the strength of the well-known Swiss law, the latter would have been sentenced to so-and-so many years of penal servitude for inciting to acts of violence.

In short, silly lies are being circulated in a most outrageous manner. But even if all those stories were true—what has Germany to do with what happens there, in

## Assassinations and Socialism

Alexandria, the meeting place of the most suspicious characters of all Europe? Evidently the notorious police inspector Melville, of London, too, again had his dirty hand in the affair over there.

But there would be nothing surprising even if we should suppose that some Italians really had a hand in such an affair. Unfortunately it cannot be denied that many Italians readily incline to acts of violence. That is the cause of the bitter animosity which predominates in Switzerland against the Italian workmen. Many of them are really too quick in drawing their knife. As you remember, there was two years ago a riot in Zurich against Italians because one of them had again stabbed a Swiss citizen during a quarrel over trifles. Such and similar cases occur in Switzerland every week. On account of such occurrences the prisons in Switzerland are filled with Italians. Thus it happens, that the reports of such occurrences, read every week in the press, have created an exceedingly bitter antagonism against the large number of Italians living in Switzerland, although the bulk of them are very industrious, sober workmen—that is what makes the employers like them.

But are the Italians blood-thirsty by nature? One cannot claim that. But they are very superstitious, ignorant and neglected in their education. In addition to that the horrible legal conditions, which existed for centuries, which inoculated among the people the conviction that the people have absolutely no rights, have *developed among them the idea of self-help*. Thus the man of the people takes his law into his own hands in his home country, and then practices the same thing abroad, even in a country where well regulated legislation exists, for according to the belief acquired at home he sees in self-help the best protection. It is thus that the idea of self-help degenerates into its extreme, into unbridled license and brings forth evil fruit, which causes much trouble, especially in Switzerland.

One should always remember that every year tens of thousands of young Italians are compelled by the extremely miserable social conditions prevailing in their home country, to go abroad in search of a job.

When united Italy was established in the fifties and sixties of this century, most of the nations of Europe rejoiced at the event, for it removed conditions from the Italian states—including the Church state—which were a disgrace to the civilized world. It appeared to be the mission of the reigning house of Savoy, in whose interest this unity of Italy was primarily established, to establish modern civilized conditions. But no country in Europe was so thoroughly ruined by misrule in the course of a few decades as was the Italian Kingdom. Aristocracy and the



## Assassinations and Socialism

capitalists have so robbed the country that the conditions there are now worse than ever. The high indirect taxes levied in Italy exceed by far those paid in Germany. In Southern Italy there is a tax of 18 centimes (about 3½ cents) on a kilo (about 2 pounds) of bread. Wages are miserable, agricultural conditions shocking. Wide stretches of land are left uncultivated. The owners of the land—the noblemen and capitalists—are too lazy, too indolent and too dissipated; they prefer to squander away in the beautiful cities and other places of the country the fortunes that they squeeze out of the peasants and workmen as tenants. The peasant is groaning under the worst imaginable rent conditions. Three hundred million francs (\$60,000,000) are collected yearly in Italy as land-tax. But the amount must be paid by the poor peasant and tenant. In Lombardy there is a land-tax of 26 francs (over \$5.00) on each hectare of land.

When one considers all these circumstances, one knows also who are the true authors of those assassinations. (Stormy applause.) Right near the sacred Rome, the ancient seat of European civilization, are the Pontine Marshes, the fever-breeding breath of which destroys all life. Still the Italian government has no money to transform them into flourishing fields. But there are plenty of officials to rob the people, and, to maintain a great army and a great navy, there are hundreds upon hundreds of millions squeezed in taxes almost exclusively out of the hard working laborers.

In view of such conditions, that cry to Heaven, the Italian government should be the last to presume to call an anti-Anarchist conference. Not the Anarchists, but the *ministers of the Italian Government* should be placed on trial. They are the ones that should be placed behind the bars! (Loud cries of approval and applause.)

I am through and recommend for your adoption the following resolution:

The mass meeting held November 2nd, 1898, in Keller's Festival Hall, resolves:

The meeting emphatically protests against any attempt to use the cold-blooded murder, committed at Geneva, Switzerland, of the Empress of Austria by a morally degenerate Italian, as a pretext for oppressive measures against opposition parties and factions in Germany, like the measures that were in vogue under the Exceptional Law.

On the other hand the meeting recommends to the so-called Anarchist conference, called by the Italian government, and which is about to convene, to discuss the following question:

“How does it happen that the political assassins of recent years were all Italians and that so many Italians, living abroad, become notorious for

## *Assassinations and Socialism*

their use of the knife?”

The meeting also recommends to the participants in the so-called Anarchist conference, after they have learned the causes of the above mentioned phenomenon, to demand of the Italian government that it energetically combat the unlimited physical and moral corruption and the social and political misrule, to which the working classes of the Italian Kingdom are subjected, on account of the heartless exploitation and oppression by the ruling and governing classes. They can shut off this source of demoralization and crime, as much as possible, by the adoption of thorough measures of social reform, by upholding right and justice and by granting to the working classes political rights and liberties.

Further, the meeting recommends to the so-called Anarchist conference to investigate how it happens that so many so-called “Anarchists” of the most dangerous character are found just among those persons who are entrusted with the posts of guardians of public order and safety, as was demonstrated, among other things, by the publications of the former Chief of Police Andrieux and the confessions of Ravachol in Paris, by the doings of Melville in London, by the actions of Pourbaix and the so-called Bomb-Baron von Ungern-Sternberg of Belgium, by the events that happened during the existence of the anti-Socialist law in Germany and simultaneously in Switzerland and in Austria—witness: Horsch, Schroeder, Haupt, von Ehrenberg, Ihring-Mahlow, Peukert-Vienna, etc.—further, by the conspiracy of Russian government organs in Bulgaria against Battenberg and Minister Stambulow, and quite recently by the intrigues and doings of the Italian police spies in Switzerland—Santoro, Mantica, etc.

The meeting is of the opinion: That the so-called Anarchist conference of European powers has a thankful task to perform, if it tackles it properly and at last starts to sweep in the place where the dirt is mountain high! (Loud applause.)

The meeting adopted the resolution unanimously.

THE END

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