



Clara Zetkin

Selected Writings

EDITED BY PHILIP S. FONER

FOREWORDS BY ANGELA Y. DAVIS AND ROSALYN BAXANDALL

"Clara Zetkin's arguments in support of women workers contain a logic which can be effectively employed today in defense of strong affirmative action programs, not only for women but for the racially and nationally oppressed as well. . . . Her analysis of the relationship between the woman suffrage campaign and the struggles of working women . . . is significant not only because of its important historical value but also . . . with respect to the class nature of contemporary women's struggles . . . in the United States."

—From the foreword by Angela Y. Davis



Here is an essential collection of essays and speeches from 1889 to 1933, long unavailable in the United States, on women's equality, labor, peace and socialism. Zetkin broke new ground by exploring the intersections of gender and class. In these writings, she describes the political process that ultimately allowed for socialized reproduction—namely the establishment by the Soviet revolutionary government of communal kitchens, laundries and child care facilities.



Clara Zetkin was a German Marxist theorist, activist and advocate for women's rights. In 1911, she organized the first International Women's Day.



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History

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Clara Zetkin, ca. 1925

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ANGELA Y. DAVIS

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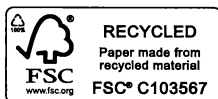
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Translated by Kai Schoenhals

FOR THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN

*Speech at the International Workers'
Congress, Paris, July 19th.*

Accompanied by heavy applause, Citizen Zetkin, delegate of the working women of Berlin,¹ now began to speak² on the question of women's work.³ She explained that she had no intention to talk about the situation of female workers because their situation was no different from that of male workers. Instead, with the consent of those that had sent her, she intended to illuminate the general principles of women's work. Since that question was surrounded by a great deal of confusion, it was incumbent upon this workers' congress to address itself clearly to this topic by probing the underlying principles.

She declared that it was not surprising that reactionary elements hold reactionary views about women's work [work outside the home]. What is most surprising, however, is the fact that one encounters the erroneous concept in the Socialist camp, too, that women's work should be abolished. The question of women's emancipation, which in the final analysis is the question of women's work, is an economic question and one is entitled to expect a greater degree of economic understanding from Socialists than the above-mentioned point of view implies.

The Socialists must know that given the present economic development, women's work is a necessity, that the natural tendency of women's work is either to reduce the working hours that every individual must render to society or to augment the wealth of society, that it is not women's work per se which in competition with men's work lowers wages, but rather the exploitation of female labor by the capitalists who appropriate it.

Above all, the Socialists must know that social slavery or freedom rests upon economic dependence or independence.

Those who have proclaimed on their banners the liberation of

all those being bearing a human countenance, ought not to condemn half of humanity to political and social slavery through economic dependence. Just as the workers are subjugated by the capitalists, women are subjugated by men and they will continue to be in that position as long as they are not economically independent. The quintessential prerequisite for their economic independence is work. If one wants to transform women into free human beings and into equal members of society just like men, then there is no necessity to abolish or limit women's work except in a few special cases.

Women workers who strive for social equality do not expect to obtain their emancipation from the women's movement of the bourgeoisie which allegedly fights for women's rights. That edifice is built on sand and has no realistic foundation. Women workers are totally convinced that the question of the emancipation of women is not an isolated one but rather constitutes a part of the great social question. They know very clearly that this question in today's society cannot be solved without a basic transformation of society. The question of the emancipation of women is a child of modern times, born by the machine age.

The emancipation of women means the complete transformation of their social position and a revolution in their economic role. The old form of production, with its incomplete means of work, tied women to their families and limited their range of activities to the interior of the home. Within the circle of their families, women comprised an extraordinarily productive force. They produced almost all family commodities. Given the former level of production and trade, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to produce these articles outside the family. As long as these ancient ways of production predominated, so long women were economically productive. . . .

Machine production has killed the economic activities of women within their families. Large-scale industry produces all articles cheaper, faster and more massively than small individual workshops which worked with tools of a dwarfish nature. Women must often pay more for the raw materials than they purchase than for the finished product of machine-dominated, large-scale industry. Besides that purchase price (of raw materials), she must contribute her time and labor. As a consequence, productive activity within the family became economic nonsense and a waste of time and effort. Even though a woman

involved in production within her family circle might be of use to some individuals, this sort of activity nevertheless constitutes a loss for society as a whole.

That is the reason why the housekeeper of the good old times has all but vanished. Large-scale industry has rendered the production of goods within the home unnecessary and has made the domestic activity of women meaningless. At the same time, it has created the basis for the activity of women within society. Mechanical production, which can do without muscular power and qualified work, has made it possible that women may be employed on a large-scale basis. Women entered industry with the desire to augment the income of their families. With the development of modern industry, female industrial labor became a necessity. Thus with every modern improvement, male labor became superfluous, thousands of workers were thrown out into the street, a reserve army of the poor was created and wages became continuously lower.

In former times, the man's wage along with the productive activity of his wife at home had sufficed to insure the existence of his family. Now it is hardly enough for the survival of a single worker. A married male worker must, by necessity, count upon the salary of his wife.

This factor freed women of their economic dependence upon men. Women who are active in industry cannot possibly remain exclusively at home as the mere economic appendices of men. Thus they became aware of their economic power which made them self-sufficient and independent of men; and, once women have attained their economic independence from men, there is no reason why they should remain socially dependent upon them. At this moment, however, this newly found economic independence does not help women but aids only the capitalists. Due to their monopoly of the means of production, the capitalists have usurped these new economic factors and made them work exclusively to their advantage. Women who had been liberated from the economic dependence upon their husbands merely changed masters and are now subjugated by the capitalists. The slave of the husband became the slave of the employer. Women, nevertheless, gained from this transformation; they are no longer disadvantaged economically vis-a-vis men but have become equals. The capitalists, however, are not content just to exploit women per se; they use female labor to exploit male labor even more thoroughly.

Women's work was, to begin with, cheaper than men's work. A man's wage was originally calculated to cover the expenses of his entire family. A woman's wage from the beginning was designed to cover merely the costs of sustaining a single person and only partially at that because it was assumed that a woman would continue to work at home after finishing her tasks at the factory. Furthermore, the products manufactured with primitive work tools by women domestically represented only a small quantity of the middle-level output by society. This persuaded people to deduce that women produce less than men and consequently ought to obtain less pay for their work. To these reasons for inferior wages must be added the fact that in general women have less requirements than men.

What made women's labor particularly attractive to the capitalists was not only its lower price but also the greater submissiveness of women. The capitalists speculate on the two following factors: the female worker must be paid as poorly as possible and the competition of female labor must be employed to lower the wages of male workers as much as possible. In the same manner the capitalists use child labor to depress women's wages and the work of machines to depress all human labor. The capitalist system alone must be blamed for the fact that women's work has the opposite result of its natural tendency; it results in a longer work day instead of a considerably shorter one. It is not tantamount to an increase in society's wealth, by which is meant a higher standard of living for every individual member of society; it results merely in an increase of profits for a handful of capitalists and, at the same time, in the constantly growing poverty of the masses. The pernicious consequences of women's labor, which are so painfully felt today, will only disappear once the capitalist system of production passes out of existence.

In order not to succumb to his competitors, the capitalist must make the greatest effort to maintain the largest difference between the cost (manufacturing) price and the selling price of his goods. Thus he seeks to produce as cheaply and to sell as expensively as possible. The capitalist, therefore, has every interest to prolong the work day as far as possible and to give to the worker the most ridiculously low pay. This endeavor stands in opposition to the interests of female workers just as much as male workers. Thus there is no real opposition between the interests of male and female workers but there certainly exists

an irreconcilable contrast between the interests of the capitalists and of the working class.

Economic reasons speak against the support for the prohibition of female labor. The current economic situation is such that neither the capitalist nor the male citizen can do without women's labor. The capitalist must maintain it in order to remain competitive and the male citizen count on it if he plans to establish a family. The outlawing of women's work by legislation would not improve the wages of men. The capitalists would very soon replace the lack of cheap female labor by the employment of more efficient machinery—and very shortly everything would be just as it was before.

It has been shown that after extensive strikes whose outcome was favorable to the workers, the capitalists destroyed the successes achieved by the workers with the aid of more efficient machinery.

If one demands the abolition or limitation of women's work because of the competition it creates, one might just as well use the same logic and abolish machines in order to demand the recreation of the medieval guild system which determined the exact number of workers that were to be employed in each type of work.

Besides economic reasons, there are reasons of principle which speak out against a prohibition of female labor. Women must base themselves upon principles when they protest with all of their might against such attempts. They must put up the fiercest and, at the same time, most justified resistance because they know that their social and political equality with men rests solely upon their economic independence which enables them to work outside of their families for society.

From the standpoint of principle, we women protest most emphatically against a limitation of women's work. Because we do not want to separate our cause from that of the working class in general, we will not formulate any special demands. We demand no other type of protection than that which labor demands in general from the capitalists.⁴

We will permit only one exception: that of a pregnant woman whose condition requires special protective measures in the interest of the woman herself as well as of her progeny. We do not recognize any special woman's question and we do not recognize any special female worker's question! We do not expect our

full emancipation by our admittance into what is called the free enterprise system or equal schooling with men (even though the demand for these two rights is perfectly natural and just) or the granting of political rights. Those countries which allegedly maintain universal, free and direct suffrage show us its relatively insignificant worth. The right to vote which is not accompanied by economic freedom is more or less a change without direction. There would exist no social problem in the countries maintaining universal suffrage if social emancipation would be dependent upon the attainment of political rights. The emancipation of women as well as all of humankind will only occur within the framework of the emancipation of labor from capital. Only within a socialist society will women as well as workers attain their full rights.

In view of these facts, women who are seriously interested in their liberation have really no choice but to join the Social-Democratic Party,⁵ which is the only one that fights for the emancipation of labor.

Without the assistance of men, indeed often against their wishes, women stepped under the banner of Socialism. One has to admit that in certain cases they were irresistibly pushed towards this step against their own intentions, simply by their clear realization of the economic situation.

But now they are standing under this banner and they will remain under it! They will fight under it for their emancipation and for their recognition as equal human beings.

By walking hand in hand with the Social-Democratic Party, they are ready to share all burdens and sacrifices that this fight entails but they are also fiercely determined to demand, after the achievement of victory, all of the rights which are rightfully theirs. As far as the sacrifices and duties as well as the rights are concerned, they want no more and no less than those of their male comrades who were accepted under equal circumstances into the ranks of the warriors.

(Loud applause—which is repeated after citizen Aveling⁶ has translated this discourse into English and French).

[Protocol of the International Workingmen's Congress at Paris. Held from July 14th until July 20th, 1889. Nürnberg 1890, pp. 80-85.] □

WOMEN'S WORK AND THE ORGANIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS

The Party Congress of Cologne will have to address itself to the question of trade union organization, i.e., the relationship between the political and trade union movement. The question will be dealt with because of the urgings of trade union circles. Recently the trade unions have declined; within the trade union movement there is a tendency to blame, among other factors, the attitude of the political movement for this phenomenon. In our opinion, the political labor press correctly rejected the above-mentioned accusations and welcomed the fact that the Cologne Party Congress, by once again addressing this issue, will help to overcome the existing distrust on the part of the unions.

There remains the indubitable fact that in all capitalist countries, women's work in industry plays an ever larger role. The number of industrial branches in which women nowadays toil and drudge from morning till night increases with every year.

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Employed in 1882</u>		<u>Women as % of All Employed</u>
	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	
Lace Production	5,676	30,204	84.1
Clothing, Linen, Finery	279,978	440,870	61.2
Spinning	69,272	100,459	59.2
Haberdashery Items	13,526	17,478	56.4
Service and Restaurants	172,841	141,407	45.0
Tobacco Production	64,477	48,919	43.1
Embroidery and Weaving	42,819	31,010	42.0
Paper Manufacturing	37,685	20,847	35.6
Textiles	336,400	155,396	31.6
Messenger Service	9,212	3,265	26.2
Commerce	536,221	181,296	25.3
Bookbinding and Carton Making	31,312	10,409	24.9

Factories which have traditionally employed women, employ more and more women workers. It is not only that the number of all industrially employed women is constantly growing, but their number in relation to the men who are working in industry and trade is also on the increase.

Some branches of industry (one has only to think of clothing) are virtually dominated by women's labor which constantly reduces and replaces men's labor.

For understandable reasons, particularly during periods of recession (like the one we are experiencing right now),¹ the number of women workers has increased in both relative and absolute terms whereas the number of employed male laborers has decreased. As we have already reported, during 1892 in Saxony the number of male workers over 16 years of age decreased by 1,633 whereas the number of female workers of similar age increased by 2,466.

According to the Viennese university instructor, J. Singer, five million women were working in Germany's industry during the last few years.²

The business survey of 1882 points out that out of 7,340,789 individually employed persons in Germany, 1,509,167 (20.6%) were women. Thus there were 21 women for every 100 persons involved in industrial production.

The extent of women's industrial work is also clearly demonstrated by the most recent annual reports of the factory inspectors. In the factories protected by law, there were employed: in Saxony 241,088 male workers and 123,548 female laborers, in Baden 84,806 male workers and 41,491 female workers, in Hessen 41,778 male workers and 12,210 female workers, in Saxony-Altenburg 9,553 male laborers and 4,043 female workers etc. In Württemberg there were 27,719 adult female workers and in Prussia over 250,000 (this number does not include all those women working as domestic servants and in the mining industry).

These statistics give only an approximate idea of the extent to which female labor is being used since the myriad of women who work in factories which are not "under the protection of the law" and do not, therefore, come under factory inspection, have not been included. How extensive is just the number of women who slave away as domestic servants!

The reasons for the constantly growing use of female laborers have been repeatedly pointed out: their cheapness and the im-

provement of the mechanical means and methods of production. The automatic machine, which in many cases does not even stand in need of having to be regulated, works with the powers of a giant, possesses unbelievable skill, speed and exactness and renders muscle power and acquired skills superfluous. The capitalist entrepreneur can employ only female labor at those places where he previously had to use male employees. And he just loves to hire women because female labor is cheap, much cheaper than male labor.

Even though the productive capacity of female workers does not lag behind that of male workers, the difference between men's and women's wages is very significant. The latter is often only half of the former and often only a third.

According to the Leipzig Chamber of Commerce, the following weekly wages were paid:

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
	(Marks)	(Marks)
Fabrication of Lace	20-35	7-15
Factory for Paper Lanterns	16-22	7.50-10
Woolen Industry	15-27	7.20-10.20
Cloth Glove Factory	12-30	6-15
Fabrication of Leather and Leather Goods	12-28	7-18
Linen and Jute Factory	12-27	5-10
Sugar Factory	10.50-31	7.50-10
Rubber Factory	9-27	6-17

In 1892, the Leipzig Health Insurance Office made a statistical analysis of wages which determined that 60% of the women workers have weekly earnings of below or up to 9 marks, 32% up to 12 marks and only 7% up to 15 or 19 to 21 marks. As far as earnings are concerned, men, too, do not fare well but they do better than their female counterparts; 37% of the men earn up to 15 marks, 30% up to 19 marks and 33% up to 21 marks.

The women laborers of Berlin's chemical industry earn highly unfavorable wages; 74% of them have a weekly wage of only up to 10 marks and 50 pfennigs. Of the remaining 26%, only 2% have a weekly salary of up to 24 marks.

From Hessen, Bavaria, Saxony, Thuringia, Württemberg, i.e., from all of God's little German fatherlands, the factory inspectors report that the wages of women workers are far below those of male laborers. Factory Inspector Worrishoffer of Baden undertook a very thorough investigation of the social situation of factory workers. It, too, demonstrates very clearly the miserable

earnings of women who work in industry. Worrishoffer divided male and female workers according to their earnings into three wage groups: a low one with a weekly salary of less than 15 marks, a medium one whose weekly wages amount to 15 to 24 marks and a high one whose weekly salary is more than 24 marks. Of the female workers of Mannheim, 99.2% belong to the low category, 0.7% to the medium and 0.1% to the higher wage group. In other words, of 100 women workers in Mannheim, 99 have a weekly salary of below 15 marks and 27 [of these] have a salary of up to 10 marks. These statistics amply illustrate the fact that the living conditions of these female workers correspond to their miserable earnings. It is easily understandable that these customary starvation wages for female laborers push thousands of them from the proletariat into the lumpenproletariat. Their dire straits force some of them to take up part-time or temporary prostitution so that by selling their bodies, they may earn the piece of bread that they cannot secure by the sale of their labor.

But it is not just the women workers who suffer because of the miserable payment of their labor. The male workers, too, suffer because of it. As a consequence of their low wages, the women are transformed from mere competitors into unfair competitors who push down the wages of men. Cheap women's labor eliminates the work of men and if the men want to continue to earn their daily bread, they must put up with low wages. Thus women's work is not only a cheap form of labor, it also cheapens the work of men and for that reason it is doubly appreciated by the capitalist, who craves profits. An entire branch of industry—the textile business—is living proof of how women's work is used to depress wages. The low salaries paid to textile workers is in part the result of the extensive use of female labor in that industry. The wool and cotton barons have used the cheap work of women in order to lower the working and living conditions of an entire category of the proletariat to a level that defies culture.

The transfer of hundreds of thousands of female laborers to the modernized means of production that increase productivity ten or even a hundredfold should have resulted (and did result in some cases) in a higher standard of living for the proletariat, given a rationally organized society. But as far as the proletariat is concerned, capitalism has changed blessing into curse and wealth into bitter poverty. The economic advantages of the

industrial activity of proletarian women only aid the tiny minority of the sacrosanct guild of coupon clippers and extortionists of profit.

Frightened by the economic consequences of women's work and the abuses connected with it, organized labor demanded for a while the prohibition of female labor. It was viewing this question merely from the narrow viewpoint of the wage question. Thanks to Socialist propaganda, the class-conscious proletariat has learned to view this question from another angle, from the angle of its historical importance for the liberation of women and the liberation of the proletariat. It understands now how impossible it is to abolish the industrial labor of women. Thus it has dropped its former demand and it attempts to lessen the bad economic consequences of women's work within capitalist society (and only within it!) by two other means; by the legal protection of female workers and by their inclusion in trade union organizations. We have already mentioned above the necessity and the advantageous effects of the legal protection of women workers. The above-listed statistics concerning the extent of women's industrial labor and the low wages paid to the female labor force as well as the universally known fact of the wage-depressing influence of female work all speak clearly for the necessity and the significance of organizing working women into trade unions.

Given the fact that many thousands of female workers are active in industry, it is vital for the trade unions to incorporate them into their movement. In individual industries where female labor plays an important role, any movement advocating better wages, shorter working hours, etc., would be doomed from the start because of the attitude of those women workers who are not organized. Battles which began propitiously enough, ended up in failure because the employers were able to play off non-union female workers against those that are organized in unions. These non-union workers continued to work (or took up work) under any conditions, which transformed them from competitors in dirty work to scabs.

It is not only because of the successful economic battles of trade unions that women should be included in them. The improvement of the starvation wages of female workers and the limitation of competition among them requires their organization into unions.

The fact that the pay for female labor is so much lower than that of male labor has a variety of causes. Certainly one of the reasons for these poor wages for women is the circumstance that female workers are practically unorganized. They lack the strength which comes with unity. They lack the courage, the feeling of power, the spirit of resistance and the ability to resist which is produced by the strength of an organization in which the individual fights for everybody and everybody fights for the individual. Furthermore, they lack the enlightenment and the training which an organization provides. Without an understanding of modern economic life in whose machinery they are inextricably caught up, they will neither be able to take advantage of periods of boom through conscious, calculating and unified conduct nor will they be able to protect themselves against the disadvantages occurring during periods of economic recession. If, under the pressure of unbearable conditions they finally fight back, they usually do so at an inopportune moment and in a disorganized fashion.

This situation exercises a great influence upon the miserable state of women's work and is further reflected by the bitterness that male workers feel about women's competition. Thus in the interest of both men and women workers, it is urgently recommended that the latter be included in the trade unions. The larger the number of organized female workers who fight shoulder to shoulder with their comrades from the factory or workshop for better working conditions, the sooner and the greater will women's wages rise so that soon there may be the realization of the principle: Equal pay for equal work regardless of the difference in sex. The organized female worker who has become the equal of the male worker ceases to be his scab competitor.

The unionized male workers realize more and more just how important it is that the female workers are accepted into the ranks of their organization. During these past few years, there was no lack of effort on the part of the unions in regard to this endeavor. And yet how little has been accomplished and how incredibly much remains to be done in this respect.

According to the Report of the General Commission of the Trade Unions of Germany, out of fifty-two organizations, there are only fourteen that have a membership of both male and female workers. Then there are two organizations that consist only of women and girls. What does all this mean given the large

and steadily growing number of industries which employ women?

Even in those industrial branches in which the trade union organization of women began, these organizations are still in their infancy:

<u>Trade Union Organization</u>	<u>Number of all Members</u>	<u>Number of Female Members</u>	<u>Percentage of Female Members</u>
Tobacco Workers	11,079	2,560	23.1
Textile Workers	6,515	620	9.5
Book Binders	2,752	210	7.6
Brushmakers	858	59	6.9
Cigar Sorters	480	30	6.2
Woodworkers	608	28	4.6
Gold and Silver Workers	1,934	83	4.3
Pastry Makers	395	14	3.5
Gilders	555	16	2.9
Tailors	6,272	131	2.1
Shoemakers	10,150	150	1.5
Metal Workers	26,121	152	0.6
Turners	2,288	1	
Saddle Makers	1,102	1	
Ironers	100	1	
Central League of the Women and Girls	200	200	

NOTE: Female workers who might be organized in local unions have not been included. There are no statistics about their number, which is insignificant anyway.

As far as the percentage of female membership is concerned, the Tobacco Workers rank first, and yet these women workers do not even constitute a fourth of its entire membership. In 1882, 43.1% of all tobacco industry workers were women. In the other four trade unions which come next, as far as the percentage of women that work in the industries they represent are concerned, women workers do not even constitute 10% of the membership. The Organization of Gold and Silver Workers does not have a female membership of even 5% even though there are large numbers of women workers who are employed by the gold and silver industry. In 1882, 60% of all laborers in spinning mills and 30% of all laborers in weaving mills happened to be women, yet the percentage of them who were unionized amounted to only 9½%. These numbers, in conjunction with the slave wages which generally prevail in the textile industry, speak whole volumes about the necessity of unionizing women.

In recognition of this necessity, the trade unions should use all

of their energies to work for the inclusion of women in their organizations.

We certainly do not fail to recognize the difficulties raised by women workers which are detrimental to the solution of this problem. Stupid resignation, lack of a feeling of solidarity, shyness, prejudices of all kinds and fear of the factory tyrant keep many women from joining unions.³ Even more than the just mentioned factors, the lack of time on the part of female workers represents a major obstacle against their mass organization because women are house as well as factory slaves and are forced to bear a double workload. The economic developments, however, as well as the increasing acuteness of the class struggle, educate both male and female laborers and force them to overcome the above-mentioned difficulties.

We certainly recognize the fact that during the past few years, the trade unions have made a serious effort to enroll female workers alongside their male colleagues. But what has been accomplished and aimed for does not come up to the urgency and the importance of the task. Theoretically, most male union members admit that the common unionization of both male and female workers of the same trade has become an unavoidable necessity. In practice, however, many of them do not make the effort that they could be making. Rather there are only a few unions and within them only certain individuals who pursue with energy and perseverance the organization of female workers. The majority of trade union members give them precious little support. They treat such endeavors as a hobby which should be tolerated but not supported "as long as there are still so many indifferent non-union male workers." This point of view is totally wrong.

The unionization of women workers will make significant progress only when it is no longer merely aided by the few, but by every single union member making every effort to enlist their female colleagues from factory and workshop. In order to fulfill this task, two things are necessary. The male workers must stop viewing the female worker primarily as a woman to be courted if she is young, beautiful, pleasant and cheerful (or not). They must stop (depending on their degree of culture or lack of it) molesting them with crude and fresh sexual advances. The workers must rather get accustomed to treat female laborers primarily as female proletarians, as working-class comrades fighting class

slavery and as equal and indispensable co-fighters in the class struggle. The unions make such a big thing out of having all of the members and followers of the political party become members of the unions. It seems to us that it would be much more important to put the emphasis on enrolling the broad, amorphous masses in the labor movement. In our opinion, the main task of the unions is the enlightenment, disciplining and education [of all workers] for the class struggle. In view of the increasing use of female labor and the subsequent results, the labor movement will surely commit suicide if, in its effort to enroll the broad masses of the proletariat, it does not pay the same amount of attention to female workers as it does to male ones.

[*Die Gleichheit*⁴ Stuttgart, November 1, 1893]

□



Clara Zetkin (l.) with Frederick Engels at her side and August Bebel during the International Socialist Workers' Congress, Zurich, 1893.

CONCERNING THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS PETITION

"Last summer, twenty-two women's rights organizations joined in a Rutli League and "most humbly" implored in a petition to the Kaiser, his cabinet council and his allied princes, the legal prohibition of prostitution and the severe punishment of prostitutes, pimps, etc. The obsequiousness of this petition was a reflection of the sociopolitical ignorance that suffused this "plea" and the arrogance of these organizations which "dared" to plead, assuming that they would be regarded as "experts on women's questions."¹

Now an actual total of three women have been dug up who plead in a petition for the female sex to have the right to form associations and hold meetings. A total of three women took the initiative on behalf of the bourgeois women's world to advocate the gaining of a basic right, the lack of which happens to be one of the major signs of the social inferiority of the female sex in Germany!

The petition appeals to the women "of all parties and all classes." Hence, the signatures of the proletarians, the female Social Democrats, are also welcomed.

I do not want to inquire whether it is necessary for proletarian

***The Editors of Vorwärts:** We offer space for the following article without agreeing with all of its aspects. We want to emphasize that we are just as loyal to the principles of our party as Comrade Zetkin and the *Gleichheit*. The live ammunition that Comrade Zetkin expends is out of all proportion to the significance of this battle and should be saved for more important objects of attack. The petition that is being assaulted here did not emanate from women's leagues and a women's rights organization, but from three women who happen to be members of our party. By the way, before the *Vorwärts* took a position on this petition, it was signed by the women of our party.

women to sign a petition for the right to form associations and to hold meetings at the same time the party which represents their interests as much as those of the male proletariat, has submitted a bill concerning this matter in the Reichstag (Imperial Diet). As is well known, the Social-Democratic faction in the Reichstag demands the substitution of the individual state laws concerning the right of forming associations and assemblages by new uniform legislation for the entire empire. This new legislation calls for equal rights of both sexes and, at the same time, the legal guarantee for the unrestricted exercise of the freedom to form coalitions. Thus it does not only request what the petition demands, but even more.

It might seem "expedient" to some people, perhaps even to many (expediency seems to come before principle for quite a few people within our party, too), that the petition obtain the support of unionized male workers and the signatures of proletarian women. A petition which is thus supported by massive signatures seems to them an appropriate demonstration in favor of the Social-Democratic Bill and as proof that all strata of women feel the urgent desire to possess the right of forming associations and of holding assemblies.

In my opinion such a demonstration is permanently extant even without the petition, and the proof of that is rendered constantly and most emphatically by the tough and bitter fight which the closely allied police and legal shysters have been waging for years against the proletarian women's right to form associations and hold meetings.

In this fight the police, by displaying splendid bravery and utter obedience so characteristic of German officialdom, have truly deserved the highest honors bestowed upon them by those that own the means of production. The jurists, on their part, practice such a brilliant interpretation of the law that common sense at times does not appreciate them fully. One dissolution of a proletarian women's organization follows another, prohibition after prohibition of women's assemblies takes place, the expulsion of women from public meetings are a daily occurrence and penalties for women for violating the Law for the Formation of Associations, inundate the courts. During the period from October 1, 1893 until August 31, 1894, proletarian women had to pay the sum of 681 marks for such crimes and this figure is based merely on the cases which came to my personal attention.

But in spite of it all, new unions regularly take the place of those that have been smashed. Again and again women rush to new assemblies and organize yet others.

The proletarian woman who lives in indigence, if not bitter poverty, this proletarian female that is overburdened with chores, constantly makes new sacrifices involving her precious time and her material goods which are needed for the continued existence of unions and organizations. She courageously puts up with official persecution and she bears the penalties which are "legally" imposed upon her. According to my opinion, this fact is unambiguous proof that it is their vital interest and not any frivolity or addiction to found organizations that drives proletarian women to espouse the right to form coalitions. If the Reichstag and the government are unable to comprehend the powerful and penetrating message of this fact, they will be even less susceptible to show consideration for a petition.

Perhaps at this point, the following objection will be raised: "Oh well, even if the petition is of little use, it cannot really do any harm. It deals with the extension of the limited rights of the female sex, ergo by signing it, we will support women's rights." My reply to this is: This is all very well, but if this point of view has any validity, then the petition's content must reflect proletarian concepts or at least (I want to remain modest) it must not stand in sharp contrast to our concepts. But this is not the case at all; on the contrary, the petition originated in bourgeois circles and literally exudes a bourgeois spirit, yes, one may even call it (in reference to some of the details) a narrow-minded bourgeois spirit.

That is why we do not understand at all why Social-Democratic newspapers have gone all out to support this petition, recommending quasi-officially that unionized male workers ought to support it and proletarian women to sign it. Since when is it the custom of the Social-Democratic Party to support petitions which emanate from bourgeois circles and bear the bourgeois trade mark only because they support something positive, something that Social-Democracy has also advocated for a long time? Let us assume that bourgeois democrats had initiated another petition whose purpose and character would be similar to the present women's petition. The Social-Democratic press would have criticized the petition and would have never supported the idea that class conscious workers appear as having

been taken in tow by bourgeois elements. Why should we alter our basic position vis-a-vis the policy of the bourgeois world only because, as chance would have it, one action of this policy has been originated by women who do not demand a reform for the entire population but only for the female sex? If we abandon our principles because of it, then we relinquish our fundamental concept that we will only consider and further the women question within the context of the general social question.*

In Issue 7 of January 9th, the *Vorwärts* assumed an entirely correct attitude towards this petition. It registered it, criticized it and pointed out that it simply took up an ancient Socialist demand. Unfortunately, to my amazement, the *Vorwärts* changed its attitude overnight. And why? Because it was informed that the petition did not deserve any criticism due to the manner in which it evolved. I regret very much that this explanation as well as the reference to an "appendix" persuaded the *Vorwärts* to change its position. Besides, in spite of the "appendix," all the criticism that had been initially raised remains valid. The "appendix" has nothing to do with the petition and the manner in which it came about. It is merely an accompanying letter, a circular addressed to the persons whose support is requested; i.e., signatures for the petition. It reads: "The women's 'own interests' (especially their job situation), which could not be listed in the petition because of its brevity, demand that a law be passed that reflects the spirit of this petition."**

Is this paragraph supposed to be a lecture about the value of the right of women to form associations and hold meetings? If

***The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** We cannot accept the serious transgression which Comrade Zetkin has fabricated here. Unfortunately, the position of women within the state is still totally different from that of men: they are totally without rights. As far as bourgeois women are concerned, they are without any political training so that any step towards independence must be viewed as progress. Let us recall the manner in which Herr von Koller last week labeled the here-criticized petition as a sign of "growing subversive activities." All of this must demonstrate to Comrade Zetkin that there is a difference whether even a petition like this emanates from women or men.

****The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** It was proven to us that the petitioners did not carry out the error in the manner that we subjected to criticism. We did not urge people to sign the petition but merely commented that there were no objections to signing such a document. We already knew at that time that a number of women who belong to our party had signed the petition.

so, we express our gratitude for this lecture, but we do not need it. The proletariat has recognized the value of the freedom to form coalitions for all of its members, regardless of sex, at a much earlier time than the authors of this petition. And, in recognition of this fact, the proletariat fights for the obtainment of the debated right. Is this paragraph supposed to be an asseveration that the originators of this petition are aware of the significance of this right and its basis? We politely acknowledge this sign of sociopolitical enlightenment which is usually lacking among German suffragettes. This paragraph, however, has no significance for the petition. As far as the petition and its possible adoption are concerned, it matters little what its authors and signers thought when they drew it up. What matters are their reasons for advocating it now. The petition contains not a word that it is in the vital interest of women employees to possess the right to form associations and to hold meetings, which have become an irrefutable necessity for them. The petition fails to state the reason why the proletariat backs this demand. It lacks the reason why such a legal reform is so essential, given the fact that newspaper articles (which have not been contradicted) report that Bavarian Center Party delegates intend, during the next session of their Landtag (Provincial Diet) to submit a bill which calls for the right of the female sex to form associations and hold meetings in order to further the livelihood chances of women.

It sounds like a lame excuse when it is asserted in the "appendix" that this reason cannot be divulged because of the brevity of the petition. Why did this consideration for preserving brevity not prevent the appendix from pointing out that the obtainment of the right to form associations was urgently needed because of the mediating influence of women in regard to legislation dealing with "questions of morality."* What the bourgeois women want from the legislature in regard to the "questions of morality" has been sufficiently illuminated by the previously mentioned supplication to the Kaiser.

According to my views, no proletarian women, least of all,

***The Editors of Vorwärts.** We, too, were critical of that, but we found an ameliorating (if not sufficient) excuse in the circumstance that the originator of the petition, for tactical reasons, did not want to forego the signatures of bourgeois women. She would have had to relinquish these signatures if the underlying principles of the petition had been published.

however, the resolute women comrades, can sign a sign a petition which out of consideration for "brevity" skips in silence over the most important reason for its issuance—a reason which supports from a proletarian standpoint the requested reforms. This petition, however, apparently unharmed by "brevity," cites a reason that must evoke ridicule from anybody who possesses a halfway clear and enlightened sociopolitical concept, as an effluence of naive ignorance about social conditions. Proletarian circles have no reason whatsoever to display solidarity with a petition of such a nature whose content is unworthy of their sociopolitical knowledge.

There is an additional reason which makes it impossible for the Socialist movement to support this petition. The petition does not ask the Reichstag or one of its political parties to submit a bill dealing with this reform. It merely asks it to plead with the associated governments to submit such a bill. Thus the petition ignores the competence of the Reichstag in respect to initiating bills and looks at it merely as a messenger boy that opens the gates for the petitioners approaching the exalted government. Such a process cannot be supported by Social-Democracy, which will not participate. Social-Democracy has always fought against the dualism of the legislative powers, a dualism which exists in Germany because our bourgeoisie did not break the power of absolutism but, on the contrary, is cooperating with it in a cowardly fashion. Social-Democracy must put up with the fact that this dualism exists and that the legislative powers—the people's representative body and the government—do not even face each other on equal terms since the former has to submit to the latter. Social-Democracy, however, has always fought with all of the legal means at its disposal to transform the people's representative body into the organ it ought to be. One of the few rights and prerogatives which parliament possesses in this splendid German Empire is the right to submit bills and to make demands in the name of the people instead of begging from the government. This petition, however, avoids the only correct way which leads to the Reichstag.*

***The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** Comrade Zetkin completely forgets that the workers in extraordinarily many cases have turned directly to the Bundesrat (Federal Council) and the Imperial Chancellor. We certainly do not advocate such a path, but we cannot criticize a way of proceeding that has often been employed by our comrades. Furthermore, the party has not yet taken a position in regard to the question of the petition.

Proletarian women cannot and do not want to participate in this process. They do not want to participate at any time, but particularly not at a time when the governments are waging the most bitter battles against the right of the female proletarians to form associations and hold meetings and at a time when the associated governments have submitted the bill on subversion. Proletarian women who expect from their governments a favorable reform of the laws concerning the formation of unions and the holding of meetings would hardly expect to reap figs from thorns and grapes from thistles.

If, in pursuance of a common goal in regard to the petition, the bourgeois women had really intended to achieve a temporary cooperation with the proletarian women, they would naturally have drawn up the petition in such a way that the women workers could have signed it without betraying their cause. Such a draft would have required as an antecedent the agreement of the representatives of the class-conscious female proletarians. As the originators of the petition well know, there exists in Berlin a Women's Agitation Commission.² Why did not the originators of the petition approach this commission with two questions: 1) Would you perhaps agree to support the planned petition and 2) How must the petition read in order to obtain the support and the signatures of the proletarian women without them having to sacrifice any of their principles?

Such behavior, displaying intelligence and courtesy, should have been natural in any effort to acquire the signatures of the proletarian women. The actual draft of the petition as well as the behavior of its authors is characteristic of the concepts of bourgeois women and their relationship to the world of proletarian women. One is enough of a humanitarian under certain circumstances to do something for the "poorer sisters," one is clever enough under all circumstances to accept their manual labor, but to cooperate with them on an equal basis, no Sir!, that is something totally different.

The originators of the petition will point to their good "intentions" and claim that they were not at all conscious of holding views that are opposite to those held by the proletarian women. But this admission will not change our minds as far as their actions are concerned. Not only the greatest crimes but also the greatest stupidities have been committed in the name of good intentions. And that the thought processes of the authors of the

petition ran diametrically opposed to proletarian concepts is characteristic of the abyss which separates us from them.

I am convinced that I do not only speak in my name but in that of the majority of class-conscious women when I declare:

Not a single proletarian signature for this petition!

Stuttgart, January 12th, 1895.

[*Vorwärts*³ Central Organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, January 24, 1895] □

A REPLY

In regard to the comments of the *Vorwärts* concerning my article about the Women's Rights Petition, I want to reply as follows:* I did not at all assert that the critical petition was the labor of women's rights organizations. On the contrary, I stressed that it was the work of three bourgeois women. I emphasized this fact at the very beginning of my article, alluding furthermore to the petition to the Kaiser concerning the prohibition of prostitution by order of the cabinet, a petition which had received the massive support of bourgeois suffragettes. I did all this with the purpose of illuminating the bourgeois women's movement in its entirety, to show its half-heartedness and the comparatively more decisive conduct of the three female authors of the petition.

The fact that the petition was co-authored by a member of our party and signed by a few women comrades does not make it any better nor any more immune from criticism. Whatever confronts the public and especially our party, must not be judged according to the persons involved or their intentions, but whether it corresponds to our fundamental principles or not. I can well understand that some women comrades signed the petition.

The special law-less position [without legal rights] of the female sex which, given her social subjugation as a member of the proletariat, affects the proletarian woman particularly hard, makes it understandable that brave women comrades at times

*The Editors of *Vorwärts*. Unfortunately, the plethora of material that we had to print made it impossible until now to publish the following reply of Comrade Zetkin at an earlier time.

let the fact that they are females supersede their positions as class-conscious women proletarians and Social-Democrats. Far be it from me to throw stones at them because of this, but be it also far from me to approve of this conduct. And farthest be it for me to use their conduct in order to view any criticism of the petition as inappropriate. Let the male and female comrades draw their own general conclusions from the different stand-points that I and the *Vorwärts* represent on this controversy over the petition.

Certainly any step towards the independence of bourgeois women must be regarded as progress. But I believe that the recognition of this fact must not lead to the phenomenon that the politically mature proletarian women's movement participates in the uncertain, clumsy and groping steps of the bourgeois suffragettes or to overestimate them. If Herr von Koller views the petition as evidence of a growing subversive movement and lends great importance to it, then we must attribute his opinion to his utterly desperate attempts to scrape together official proof about "subversive tendencies," proof that he hunts out with sweat running down his face. If his judgment of and his enmity towards the petition are taken as the criteria for our judgment and attitude, then we must also render great importance to the police bugbear of the Anarchists and the Anarchists must be taboo for us, along with everything else against which the reaction is turning its momentary wrath.*

I am sure that both male and female comrades will agree with me that a criticism of the petition is fully justified because it is not only deficient but stands in stark contrast to our concepts. The "suggestion" that the petitioners did not make the mistakes that were criticized by the *Vorwärts* in the manner that we denounced them does not change anything. Because the petition itself is not touched by the "suggestion," i.e., the circular, it becomes neither more nor less meaningful.

I understand that the authors of the petition maintained "tactical considerations" for the bourgeois women. Why, however, did they not maintain the same "tactical considerations" for the proletarian women? Why did they make all concessions to the

***The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** Comrade Zetkin forgets that on the one hand, we will never let external circumstances change our tactics but, on the other hand, our tone vis-a-vis our opponents will have to change if they are attacked by enemies that also happen to be ours.

prejudices of bourgeois women and demand from the proletarian women the sacrifice of their concepts? If one wanted their support, one should have known that what is good for the goose is also good for the gander.*

I know very well that workers, too, have turned in many cases to the Bundesrat (Federal Council) and the Imperial Chancellor. But what reason is there for the petitioners to request the reform of the Union and Assemblage Laws from, of all places, the government rather than the Reichstag? And can one expect the female proletarians to go along with this petition at the very moment when the government is getting ready for the total suppression of the working class? And can such a petition be recommended quasi-officially by the Socialists?

The *Vorwärts* comments that it did not call for the signing of the petition but that it had merely stated that it had no objections to those who wanted to sign it. I believe that I have amply demonstrated that from our standpoint, everything speaks out against the signing of this document. Many female comrades have entirely failed to detect the fine nuances of the *Vorwärts'* attitude towards the petition. I obtained proof of this in black and white when I received literally dozens of inquiries; in fact, so many of them that I expressed my attitude towards this problem in several party papers which expressed their thorough agreement with me.

I had good reason to use the harsh tone that was criticized by the *Vorwärts*. The phenomenon of the latest direction of the bourgeois suffragette fad, which I would like to label "ethical,"**

***The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** It is exactly these "tactical considerations" which explain the action of the three women. That the proletarian women want the right to form unions was clear to them since our program and innumerable resolutions of ours say as much. Thus the female comrades needed these tactical considerations much less than the much more politically retarded women of the bourgeoisie. If the authors of the petition had acted according to the plan of Comrade Zetkin, the tactical considerations would have cancelled each other out and the petition would not have been co-signed by the women of the bourgeoisie. So much for our explanation. We, too, consider common action by the bourgeoisie and the proletariat normally as impossible. If, however, such an attempt is made in good faith, one should intelligently weigh the pros and cons before energetically condemning it.

****The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** No other newspaper of the party has more energetically drawn the line between the Ethical Movement and Social Democracy which is firmly based on the class struggle.

has here and there caused confusion in the ranks of our female comrades.¹ This new direction of the women's rights movement demands more than previous efforts. It is a step above the previous variety because of its recognition of social problems, its recognition and criticism of social harm and its advocacy of certain social reforms. And that is why illusions arose in the Socialist camp about the nature of its direction and the significance of it to our proletarian women's movement. Only recently, somebody belonging to our party wrote to me "that these women basically advocate the same things we do"!* In view of the prevailing uncertainty in judgments of the above-mentioned bourgeois course, it seemed to me appropriate to use such a harsh tone. I hope that by now all such illusions have once and for all been laid to rest by Frau von Gizycki's emphatic denial that she had declared her support for the Social-Democratic Women's Movement (*Vorwärts* 23 December 1894).

Since none of the comments of the *Vorwärts* dealt with the basic and objective parts of my article but, on the contrary, addressed minor matters, I may assume that this paper agrees with the nucleus of my observations.** Yet in view of this situation, it would be most appropriate if it would state succinctly whether or not it is recommending to the women comrades to sign this petition.***

Finally, I would like to make a few important personal observations. My statements solely addressed themselves to the turn-about of the *Vorwärts* in the matter of the petition and my expression of regret concerning that. There was no sharp attack. The only somewhat harsh passage against the *Vorwärts* that my article originally contained was expunged by the editors. In the course of my exposition, I have neither referred to *Gleichheit* nor cited it in any way. Nowhere and never have I upheld the *Gleichheit* as truer to principles than the *Vorwärts*. Then what was it that possessed the *Vorwärts* to start talking about the

***The Editors of *Vorwärts*.**² Surely the *Vorwärts* cannot be held responsible for the political obscurantism of this or that woman.

****The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** We do not hesitate to agree with Comrade Zetkin by and large but we do believe that she is making much too much ado about nothing.

*****The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** It is natural, that after having published the declaration of the Women's Agitation Commission, the *Vorwärts* sees no reason to recommend the signing of the petition.

Gleichheit? When and where have I copied the *Vorwärts* by praising my own adherence to principles? I have duly registered the self-praise which the *Vorwärts* displayed since it is my duty and obligation to peruse all comments of that paper.

Whether this registration had changed anything regarding my judgment of the *Vorwärts* is written on another page which must not be consulted at this most inappropriate time and with the *Vorwärts* representing a most inappropriate location.*

***The Editors of *Vorwärts*.** That we will calmly leave up to Comrade Zetkin.

Stuttgart, 25 January 1895

[*Vorwärts* Central Organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, February 7, 1895] □

ONLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PROLETARIAN WOMAN WILL SOCIALISM BE VICTORIOUS

*Speech at the Party Congress of
the Social Democratic Party
of Germany, Gotha, October 16th¹*

The investigations of Bachofen,² Morgan³ and others seem to prove that the social suppression of women coincided with the creation of private property. The contrast within the family between the husband as proprietor and the wife as non-proprietor became the basis for the economic dependence and the social illegality of the female sex. This social illegality represents, according to Engels,⁴ one of the first and oldest forms of class rule. He states: "Within the family, the husband constitutes the bourgeoisie and the wife the proletariat." Nonetheless, a women's question in the modern sense of the word did not exist. It was only the capitalist mode of production which created the societal transformation that brought forth the modern women's question by destroying the old family economic system which provided both livelihood and life's meaning for the great mass of women during the pre-capitalistic period. We must, however, not transfer to the ancient economic activities of women those concepts (the concepts of futility and pettiness), that we connect with the activities of women in our times. As long as the old type of family still existed, a woman found a meaningful life by productive activity. Thus she was not conscious of her social illegality even though the development of her potentials as an individual was strictly limited.

The period of the Renaissance is the storm and stress period of the awakening of modern individuality that was able to develop fully and completely in the most diverse directions. We encoun-

ter individuals who are giants in both good and evil, who spurn the commandments of both religion and morals and despise equally both heaven and hell. We discover women at the center of the social, artistic and political life. And yet there is not a trace of a women's movement. This is all the more characteristic because at that time the old family economic system began to crumble under the impact of the division of labor. Thousands upon thousands of women no longer found their livelihood and their lives' meaning within the family. But this women's question, as far as one can designate it as such, was solved at that time by convents, charitable institutions and religious orders.

The machines, the modern mode of production, slowly undermined domestic production and not just for thousands but for millions of women the question arose: Where do we now find our livelihood? Where do we find a meaningful life as well as a job that gives us mental satisfaction? Millions were now forced to find their livelihood and their meaningful lives outside of their families and within society as a whole. At that moment they became aware of the fact that their social illegality stood in opposition to their most basic interests. It was from this moment on that there existed the modern women's question. Here are a few statistics to demonstrate how the modern mode of production works to make the women's question even more acute. During 1882, 5½ million out of 23 million women and girls in Germany were fully employed; i.e., a quarter of the female population could no longer find its livelihood within the family. According to the Census of 1895, the number of employed women in agriculture, in the broadest meaning of this term, has increased since 1882 by more than 8%, in the narrow sense by 6%, while at the same time the number of men employed in agriculture has decreased by 3%, i.e., to 11%. In the area of industry and mining, the number of employed women workers has increased by 35%, that of men by only 28%. In the retail trade, the number of women employed has increased by more than 94%, that of men by only 38%. These dry numbers stress much more the urgency of solving the women's question than any highfalutin declamations.

The women's question, however, is only present within those classes of society who are themselves the products of the capitalist mode of production. Thus it is that we find no women's question in peasant circles that possess a natural (although

severely curtailed and punctured) economy. But we certainly find a women's question within those classes of society who are the very children of the modern mode of production. There is a women's question for the women of the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia and the Upper Ten Thousand. It assumes a different form according to the class situation of each one of these strata.

How does the women's question shape up as far as the Upper Ten Thousand are concerned? The woman of the Upper Ten Thousand, thanks to her property, may freely develop her individuality and live as she pleases. In her role as wife, however, she is still dependent upon her husband. The guardianship of the weaker sex has survived in the family law which still states: And he shall be your master. And how is the family of the Upper Ten Thousand constituted in which the wife is legally subjugated by the husband? At its very founding, such a family lacks the moral prerequisites. Not individuality but money decides the matrimony. Its motto is: What capital joins, sentimental morality must not part. (Bravo!) Thus in this marriage, two prostitutions are taken for one virtue. The eventual family life develops accordingly. Wherever a woman is no longer forced to fulfill her duties, she devolves her duties as spouse, mother and housewife upon paid servants. If the women of these circles have the desire to give their lives a serious purpose, they must, first of all, raise the demand to dispose of their property in an independent and free manner. This demand, therefore, represents the core of the demands raised by the women's movement of the Upper Ten Thousand. These women, in their fight for the realization of their demand vis-a-vis the masculine world of their class, fight exactly the same battle that the bourgeoisie fought against all of the privileged estates; i.e., a battle to remove all social differences based upon the possession of property. The fact that this demand does not deal with the rights of the individual is proven by Herr von Stumm's advocacy of it in the Reichstag. Just when would Herr von Stumm ever advocate the rights of a person? This man in Germany signifies more than a personality, he is capital itself turned into flesh and blood (How accurate!) and if this man has put in an appearance in a cheap masquerade for women's rights, then it only happened because he was forced to dance before capitalism's Ark of the Covenant. This is the Herr von Stumm who is always ready to put his

workers on short rations if they do not dance to his tune and he would certainly welcome it with a satisfied smile if the state as employer would also put those professors and scholars who meddle in social politics on short rations.⁵ Herr von Stumm endeavors nothing more than instituting the entail for movable female property in case of female inheritance because there are fathers who have acquired property but were not careful in the choice of their children, leaving only daughters as heirs. Capitalism honors even lowly womanhood and permits it to dispose of its fortunes. That is the final phase of the emancipation of private property.

How does the women's question appear in the circles of the petit-bourgeoisie, the middle class and the bourgeois intelligentsia? Here it is not property which dissolves the family, but mainly the concomitant symptoms of capitalist production. To the degree this production completes its triumphal march, the middle class and the petit-bourgeoisie are hurtling further and further towards their destruction. Within the bourgeois intelligentsia, another circumstance leads to the worsening of the living conditions: capitalism needs the intelligent and scientifically trained work force. It therefore favored an overproduction of mental-work proletarians and contributed to the phenomenon that the formerly respected and profitable societal positions of members of the professional class are more and more eroding. To the same degree, however, the number of marriages is decreasing; although on the one hand the material basis is worsening, on the other hand the individual's expectations of life are increasing, so that a man of that background will think twice or even thrice before he enters into a marriage. The age limit for the founding of a family is raised higher and higher and a man is under no pressure to marry since there exist in our time enough societal institutions which offer to an old bachelor a comfortable life without a legitimate wife. The capitalist exploitation of the proletarian work force through its starvation wages, sees to it that there is a large supply of prostitutes which corresponds to the demand by the men. Thus within the bourgeois circles, the number of unmarried women increases all the time. The wives and daughters of these circles are pushed out into society so that they may establish for themselves their own livelihood which is not only supposed to provide them with bread but also with mental satisfaction. In these circles women

are not equal to men in the form of possessors of private property as they are in the upper circles. The women of these circles have yet to achieve their economic equality with men and they can only do so by making two demands: The demand for equal professional training and the demand for equal job opportunities for both sexes. In economic terms, this means nothing less than the realization of free access to all jobs and the untrammelled competition between men and women. The realization of this demand unleashes a conflict of interest between the men and women of the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. The competition of the women in the professional world is the driving force for the resistance of men against the demands of bourgeois women's rights advocates. It is, pure and simple, the fear of competition. All other reasons which are listed against the mental work of women, such as the smaller brain of women or their allegedly natural avocation to be a mother are only pretexts. This battle of competition pushes the women of these social strata towards demanding their political rights so that they may, by fighting politically, tear down all barriers which have been created against their economic activity.

So far I have addressed myself only to the basic and purely economic substructure. We would, however, perform an injustice to the bourgeois women's rights movement if we would regard it as solely motivated by economics. No, this movement also contains a more profound spiritual and moral aspect. The bourgeois woman not only demands her own bread but she also requests spiritual nourishment and wants to develop her individuality. It is exactly among these strata that we find these tragic, yet psychologically interesting *Nora* figures, women who are tired of living like dolls in doll houses and who want to share in the development of modern culture. The economic as well as the intellectual and moral endeavors of bourgeois women's rights advocates are completely justified.

As far as the proletarian woman is concerned, it is capitalism's need to exploit and to search incessantly for a cheap labor force that has created the women's question. It is for this reason, too, that the proletarian woman has become enmeshed in the mechanism of the economic life of our period and has been driven into the workshop and to the machines. She went out into the economic life in order to aid her husband in making a living, but the capitalist mode of production transformed her into an

unfair competitor. She wanted to bring prosperity to her family, but instead misery descended upon it. The proletarian woman obtained her own employment because she wanted to create a more sunny and pleasant life for her children, but instead she became almost entirely separated from them. She became an equal of the man as a worker; the machine rendered muscular force superfluous and everywhere women's work showed the same results in production as men's work. And since women constitute a cheap labor force and above all a submissive one that only in the rarest of cases dares to kick against the thorns of capitalist exploitation, the capitalists multiply the possibilities of women's work in industry. As a result of all this, the proletarian woman has achieved her independence. But verily, the price was very high and for the moment they have gained very little. If during the Age of the Family, a man had the right (just think of the law of Electoral Bavaria!) to tame his wife occasionally with a whip, capitalism is now taming her with scorpions. In former times, the rule of a man over his wife was ameliorated by their personal relationship. Between an employer and his worker, however, exists only a cash nexus. The proletarian woman has gained her economic independence, but neither as a human being nor as a woman or wife has she had the possibility to develop her individuality. For her task as a wife and a mother, there remain only the breadcrumbs which the capitalist production drops from the table.

Therefore the liberation struggle of the proletarian woman cannot be similar to the struggle that the bourgeois woman wages against the male of her class. On the contrary, it must be a joint struggle with the male of her class against the entire class of capitalists. She does not need to fight against the men of her class in order to tear down the barriers which have been raised against her participation in the free competition of the market place. Capitalism's need to exploit and the development of the modern mode of production totally relieves her of having to fight such a struggle. On the contrary, new barriers need to be erected against the exploitation of the proletarian woman. Her rights as wife and mother need to be restored and permanently secured. Her final aim is not the free competition with the man, but the achievement of the political rule of the proletariat. The proletarian woman fights hand in hand with the man of her class against capitalist society. To be sure, she also agrees with the

demands of the bourgeois women's movement, but she regards the fulfillment of these demands simply as a means to enable that movement to enter the battle, equipped with the same weapons, alongside the proletariat.

Bourgeois society is not fundamentally opposed to the bourgeois women's movement, which is proven by the fact that in various states reforms of private and public laws concerning women have been initiated. There are two reasons why the accomplishment of these reforms seems to take an exceptionally long time in Germany: First of all, men fear the battle of competition in the liberal professions and secondly, one has to take into account the very slow and weak development of bourgeois democracy in Germany which does not live up to its historical task because of its class fear of the proletariat. It fears that the realization of such reforms will only bring advantages to Social-Democracy. The less a bourgeois democracy allows itself to be hypnotized by such a fear, the more it is prepared to undertake reforms. England is a good example. England is the only country that still possesses a truly powerful bourgeoisie, whereas the German bourgeoisie, shaking in fear of the proletariat, shies away from carrying out political and social reforms. As far as Germany is concerned, there is the additional factor of widespread Philistine views. The Philistine braid of prejudice reaches far down the back of the German bourgeoisie. To be sure, this fear of the bourgeois democracy is very short-sighted. The granting of political equality to women does not change the actual balance of power. The proletarian woman ends up in the proletariat, the bourgeois woman in the bourgeois camp. We must not let ourselves be fooled by Socialist trends in the bourgeois women's movement which last only as long as bourgeois women feel oppressed.

The less bourgeois democracy comprehends its task, the more important it is for Social-Democracy to advocate the political equality of women. We do not want to make us out to be better than we are. We are not making this demand for the sake of a principle, but in the interests of the proletarian class. The more women's work exercises its detrimental influence upon the standard of living of men, the more urgent becomes the necessity to include them in the economic battle. The more the political struggle affects the existence of each individual, the more urgent becomes the necessity of women's participation in this

political struggle. It was the Anti-Socialist Law ⁶ which for the first time made clear to women what is meant by the terms class justice, class state and class rule. It was this law which taught women the need to learn about the force which so brutally intervened in their family lives. The Anti-Socialist Law has done successful work which could never have been done by hundreds of women agitators and, indeed, we are deeply grateful to the father of the Anti-Socialist Law as well as to all organs of the state (from the minister to the local cop) who have participated in its enforcement and rendered such marvelous involuntary propaganda services. How then can one accuse us Social-Democrats of ingratitude? (Amusement).

Yet another event must be taken into consideration. I am referring to the publication of August Bebel's book *Woman and Socialism*.⁷ This book must not be judged according to its positive aspects or its shortcomings. Rather, it must be judged within the context of the times in which it was written. It was more than a book, it was an event—a great deed. (Very accurate!) The book pointed out for the first time the connection between the women's question and historical development. For the first time, there sounded from this book the appeal: We will only conquer the future if we persuade the women to become our co-fighters. In recognizing this, I am not speaking as a woman but as a party comrade.

What practical conclusions may we now draw for our propaganda work among women? The task of this Party Congress must not be to issue detailed practical suggestions, but to draw up general directions for the proletarian women's movement.

Our guiding thought must be: We must not conduct special women's propaganda, but Socialist agitation among women. The petty, momentary interests of the female world must not be allowed to take up the stage. Our task must be to incorporate the modern proletarian woman in our class battle! (Very true!) We have no special tasks for the agitation among women. Those reforms for women which must be accomplished within the framework of today's society are already demanded within the minimal program of our party.

Women's propaganda must touch upon all those questions which are of great importance to the general proletarian movement. The main task is, indeed, to awaken the women's class consciousness and to incorporate them into the class struggle.

The unionization of female workers is made extremely difficult. During the years 1892 until 1895, the number of female laborers organized in central trade unions grew to around 7,000. If we add to this number the female workers organized in local unions and realize that there are at least 700,000 female workers actively involved in large industrial enterprises, then we begin to realize the magnitude of the organizing work that still lies ahead of us. Our work is made more burdensome by the fact that many women are active in the cottage industry and can, therefore, be organized only with great difficulty. Then we also have to deal with the widely held belief among young girls that their industrial labor is only transitory and will be terminated by their marriage. For many women there is the double obligation to be active in both the factory and the home. All the more necessary is it for female workers to obtain a legally fixed workday. Whereas in England everybody agrees that the elimination of the cottage industry, the establishment of a legal workday and the achievement of higher wages are important prerequisites for the unionization of female workers—in Germany, in addition to these obstacles there is also the enforcement of our unionization and assemblage laws. The complete freedom to form coalitions, which has been legally guaranteed to the female workers by the Empire's legislation, has been rendered illusory by the laws of individual federal states. I do not even want to discuss the manner in which the right to form unions is handled in Saxony (as far as one can even speak of a right there). But in the two largest federal states, in Bavaria and Prussia, the union laws are handled in such a way that women's participation in trade union organizations is becoming more and more of an impossibility. Most recently in Prussia, the district of the "liberal," eternal candidate for minister, Herr von Bennigsen has achieved everything humanly possible in the interpretation of the Law of Unionization and Assemblage. In Bavaria all women are excluded from public meetings. In the Chamber there, Herr von Freilitzsch declared very openly that in the handling of the law of unionization not only the text but also the intention of the legislators should be taken into account. Herr von Freilitzsch is in the most fortunate position to know exactly what were the intentions of the legislators, all of whom have since died, before Bavaria became more lucky than anybody could have imagined in their wildest dreams, by appointing Herr von Freilitzsch as

her minister of police. That does not surprise me at all, because whoever receives an office from God also receives concomitantly intelligence, and in our Age of Spiritualism, Herr von Freilitzsch has thus obtained his official intelligence and by way of the fourth dimension has discovered the intentions of the long deceased legislators. (Amusement).

This situation, however, does not make it possible for the proletarian women to organize themselves together with men. Until now they had to wage a fight against police power and juridical stratagems and on the surface they seemed to have been defeated. In reality, however, they emerged as victors because all those measures which were employed to smash the organization of the proletarian woman only served to arouse her class consciousness. If we want to obtain a powerful women's organization in both the economic and political realms, then we must, first of all, take care of the possibility of women's freedom of movement by fighting against the cottage industry, for shorter working hours and, above all, against what the ruling classes like to call the right to organize.

We cannot determine at this party congress what form our propaganda among women should take. We must, first of all, learn how we ought to do our work among women. In the resolution which has been submitted to you, it is proposed to elect shop stewards among the women whose task it will be to stimulate the union and economic organization of women and to consolidate it in a uniform and planned manner. This proposal is not new; it was adopted in principle at the Party Congress of Frankfurt, and in a few regions it has been enacted most successfully. Time will tell whether this proposal, when introduced on a larger scale, is suited to draw proletarian women to a greater extent into the proletarian movement.

Our propaganda must not be carried out solely in an oral fashion. A large number of passive people do not even come to our meetings and countless wives and mothers cannot come to our meetings. Indeed, it must certainly not be the task of Socialist propaganda among Socialist women to alienate the proletarian woman from her duties as mother and wife. On the contrary, she must be encouraged to carry out these tasks better than ever in the interests of the liberation of the proletariat. The better the conditions within her family, the better her effectiveness at home, the more she will be capable of fighting. The more

she can serve as the educator and molder of her children, the better she will be able to enlighten them so that they may continue to fight on like we did, with the same enthusiasm and willingness to sacrifice for the liberation of the proletariat. When a proletarian then exclaims: "My wife!" he will add mentally, "Comrade of my ideals, companion of my battles, mother of my children for future battles." Many a mother and many a wife who fills her husband and children with class consciousness accomplishes just as much as the female comrades that we see at our meetings. (Vivid agreement).

Thus if the mountain does not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain: We must take Socialism to the women by a planned written propaganda campaign. For such a campaign, I suggest the distribution of pamphlets and I do not mean the traditional pamphlet on which the entire Socialist program and the entire scientific knowledge of our century are condensed on one quarto page. No, we must use small pamphlets which discuss a single practical question from one angle of vision, especially from the point of view of the class struggle, which is the main task. And we must not assume a nonchalant attitude toward the technical production of pamphlets. We must not use, as is our tradition, the worst paper and the worst type of printing. Such a miserable pamphlet will be crumpled up and thrown away by the proletarian woman who does not have the same respect for the printed word that the male proletarian possesses. We must imitate the American and English teetotallers who put out pretty little booklets of four to six pages. Because even a female proletarian is enough of a woman to say to herself: "This little thing is just charming. I will have to pick it up and keep it!" (Much amusement and many cheers.) The sentences which really count must be printed in great big letters. Then the proletarian woman will not be frightened away from reading and her mental attention will be stimulated.

Because of my personal experiences, I cannot advocate the plan of founding a special newspaper for women. My personal experiences are not based upon my position as the editor of *Gleichheit* (which is not designed for the mass of women, but rather their progressive avant-guard), but as a distributor of literature among female workers. Stimulated by the actions of Frau Gnauck-Kühne, I distributed newspapers for weeks at a certain factory. I became convinced that the women there did not

acquire from these papers what is enlightening, but solely what is entertaining and amusing. Therefore, the big sacrifices which are necessary in order to publish a cheap newspaper would not be worth it.

But we also have to create a series of brochures which bring Socialism closer to the woman in her capacity as female proletarian, wife and mother. Except for the powerful brochure of Frau Popp,⁸ we do not have a single one that comes up to the requirements we need. Our daily press, too, must do more than it has done heretofore. Some daily newspapers have made the attempt to enlighten women by the addition of special supplements for women. The *Magdeburger Volksstimme* set an example in this endeavor and Comrade Goldstein at Zwickau has skillfully and successfully emulated it. But until now the daily press has regarded the proletarian woman as a subscriber, flattering her ignorance, her bad and unformed taste, rather than trying to enlighten her.

I repeat that I am only throwing out suggestions for your consideration. Propaganda among women is difficult and burdensome and requires great devotion and great sacrifice, but these sacrifices will be rewarded and must be brought forth. The proletariat will be able to attain its liberation only if it fights together without the difference of nationality and profession. In the same way it can attain its liberation only if it stands together without the distinction of sex. The incorporation of the great masses of proletarian women in the liberation struggle of the proletariat is one of the prerequisites for the victory of the Socialist idea and for the construction of a Socialist society.

Only a Socialist society will solve the conflict that is nowadays produced by the professional activity of women. Once the family as an economic unit will vanish and its place will be taken by the family as a moral unit, the woman will become an equally entitled, equally creative, equally goal-oriented, forward-stepping companion of her husband; her individuality will flourish while at the same time, she will fulfill her task as wife and mother to the highest degree possible.

[Protocol Concerning the Proceedings of the Party Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany Held at Gotha from October 11 to October 16, 1896. Berlin, 1896. pp. 160-168] □

child as a sacrifice to exploitation, rather than to fight with the grimness of an indomitable natural instinct against this exploitation? That must not happen!

Shout in a chorus of millions of voices the slogan: Fight exploitation, protect our children!

[*Die Gleichheit* Stuttgart, May 21, 1902 and June 4, 1902] □

WHAT THE WOMEN OWE TO KARL MARX

On March 14th is the twentieth anniversary of Karl Marx's death in London. Engels, whose life for forty years in both struggle and work was intimately linked to Marx's life,¹ wrote at that time to their mutual friend Comrade Sorge in New York:

Humankind has been shortened by one head, which also happens to be the most significant head of our times.²

His evaluation hit the bull's eye.

It cannot be our task within the framework of this article to discuss what Karl Marx has bestowed upon the proletariat in his role as a man of science, as a revolutionary fighter and what he means today to the proletariat. If we would do this, we would only repeat what is written during these days in the Socialist press of Marx's immensely fertile and profoundly scholarly and practical life's work as well as his gigantic, homogeneous personality which stood so totally devoted in the service of the proletariat. Instead we prefer to indicate what the proletarian, or better yet, the entire women's movement owes to him.

To be sure, Marx never dealt with the women's question "per se" or "as such." Yet he created the most irreplaceable and important weapons for the women's fight to obtain all of their rights. His materialist concept of history has not supplied us with any ready-made formulas concerning the women's question, yet it has done something much more important: It has given us the correct, unerring method to explore and comprehend that question. It was only the materialist concept of history which enabled us to understand the women's question within the flux of universal historical development and the light of universally applicable social relationships and their historical necessity and justification. Only thus did we perceive its driving forces and the aims pursued by them as well as the

conditions which are essential to a solution of these problems.

The old superstition that the position of women in the family and in society was forever unchangeable because it was created on moral precepts or by divine revelation was smashed. Marx revealed that the family, like all other institutions and forms of existence, is subjected to a constant process of ebb and flow which changes with the economic conditions and the property relationships which result from them. It is the development of the productive forces of the economy which push this transformation by changing the mode of production and by coming into conflict with the prevailing economic and property system. On the basis of the revolutionized economic conditions, human thought is revolutionized and it becomes the endeavor of people to adjust their societal superstructure to the changes that have taken place in the economic substructure. Petrified forms of property and personal relationships must then be removed. These changes are wrought by means of the class struggle.

We know from Engels' foreword to his illuminating study, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, that the theories and viewpoints developed in this book are derived in good measure from Marx's unpublished work, which his incomparably loyal and brilliant friend watched over as testamentary executor.

Whatever parts of it can be (and ought to be) dismissed as hypotheses, one thing is for sure: Taken as a whole, this work contains a dazzling number of clear theoretical insights into the complex conditions which gave rise to the present forms of the family and marriage and the influence of economic and property relationships which are connected with it. It teaches us not merely to judge correctly the position of women in the past, but it enables us to comprehend the social, legal and constitutional positions of the female sex today.

Das Kapital shows most convincingly that there are incessant and irresistible historical forces at work in today's society which are revolutionizing this situation from the bottom up and will bring about the equality of women. By masterfully examining the development and nature of capitalist production down to the most refined details, and by discovering its law of motion, i.e., the Theory of Surplus Value, he has conclusively proven in his discussions of women and child labor that capitalism has destroyed the basis for the ancient domestic activity of women,

thereby dissolving the anachronistic form of the family. This has made women economically independent outside of the family and created a firm ground for their equality as wives, mothers and citizens. But something else is clearly illustrated by Marx's works: The proletariat is the only revolutionary class which by establishing Socialism, is able to and must create the indispensable prerequisites for the complete solution of the women's question. Besides the fact that the bourgeois suffragettes neither want nor are able to achieve the social liberation of women proletarians, they are incapable of solving the serious new conflicts which will be fought over the social and legal equality of the sexes within the capitalist order. These conflicts will not vanish until the exploitation of man by man and the contradictions arising therefrom are abolished.

Marx and Engels' common work *The Communist Manifesto* concisely summarizes what *Das Kapital* teaches us in scholarly fashion about the disintegration of the family and its causes:

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labor, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labor of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labor, more or less expensive to use according to their age and sex. . . .

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation. . . .

In the conditions of the proletariat, those of old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family relations. . . .

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution. . . .

The bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting as by the action of modern industry all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor. . . .

Marx, however, does not only show us that historical development demolishes, but he also fills us with the victorious conviction that it constructs a newer, better and more perfect world.

Das Kapital states:

As horrendous and disgusting as the disintegration of the old family system within capitalism appears to be, modern industry, by involv-

ing women and young people of both sexes in the socially organized production processes outside of the domestic sphere, has, nevertheless, created the economic basis for a higher form of the family and the relationship between the two sexes.

Proud and with superior scorn, Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* counter the dirty suspicions cast upon this future ideal by this merciless characterization of present conditions:

The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial.

Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.

Bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for what is hypocritically concealed, an openly legalized community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private.

The women's movement, however, owes much more to Marx than just the fact that he, as no other person before him, shed bright light upon the painful path of the development that leads the female sex from social servitude to freedom and from atrophy to a strong, harmonious existence. By his profound, penetrating analysis of the class contradictions in today's society and its roots, he opened up our eyes to the differences of interest that separate the women of the different classes. In the atmosphere of the materialist concept of history, the "love drive" about a "sisterhood" which supposedly wraps a unifying ribbon around bourgeois ladies and female proletarians, burst like so many scintillating soap bubbles.³ Marx has forged and taught us to use the sword which has severed the connection between the proletariat and the bourgeois women's movement. But he has also forged the chain of discernment by which the former is inextricably tied to the Socialist labor movement and the revolu-

tionary class struggle of the proletariat. Thus he has given our struggle the clarity, grandeur and sublimity of its final goal.

Das Kapital is filled with an immeasurable wealth of facts, perceptions and stimuli concerning women's work, the situation of the female workers and the legal protection of women. It is an inexhaustible spiritual armory for the struggle of our immediate demands as well as the exalted future Socialist goal. Marx teaches us to recognize the small, everyday tasks which are so necessary in raising the fighting ability of the female proletarians. At the same time, he lifts us up to the firm, farseeing recognition of the great revolutionary struggle by the proletariat to conquer political power without the attainment of which, a Socialist society and the liberation of the female sex will remain empty dreams. Above all, he fills us with the conviction that it is this exalted aim that lends value and significance to our daily work. Thus he saves us from losing sight of the great fundamental meaning of our movement when we are beset by a plethora of individual phenomena, tasks and successes and stand in danger of losing our ability, during the enervating daily toil, to view the wide historical horizon which reflects the dawn of a new age. Just as he is the master of revolutionary thought, so he remains the leader of the revolutionary struggle in whose battles it is the duty and the glory of the proletarian women's movement to fight.

[*Die Gleichheit* Stuttgart, March 25, 1903]

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1907

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

A Resolution Introduced at the International Socialist Congress

The International Socialist Congress welcomes joyfully the fact that for the first time an International Socialist Women's Conference has congregated at Stuttgart and it expresses solidarity with the demands made at that Conference.¹ The Socialist parties of all countries are obligated to fight energetically for the introduction of the universal suffrage for women. Their battles waged on behalf of the proletariat's suffrage leading to the democratization of the legislative state and county governing bodies must be simultaneously waged as battles for women's suffrage, which is to be demanded energetically in the propaganda campaigns as well as in the parliaments. In countries where the democratization of men's suffrage has already progressed very far or has been accomplished, the Socialist parties must take up the battle for the introduction of universal women's suffrage. They must, of course, at the same time support all demands which are still made in the interests of full civil rights for the male proletariat. It is the duty of the Socialist women's movements of all countries to participate with all of their energy in all battles waged by the Socialist parties for the democratization of the suffrage, but also to employ the same amount of energy to take part in all battles in which the demand for universal women's suffrage is seriously raised on the basis of its fundamental importance and practical significance. The International Congress recognizes the inappropriateness for every country to announce a timetable for the commencement of the voting rights campaign but, at the same time, it declares that wherever a struggle is to be waged for the right to vote, it must be conducted only according to Socialist principles, i.e., with the demand for universal suffrage for both women and men.

In Support of the Resolution On Women's Right to Vote

I must report to you about the deliberations of the Commission on Women's Suffrage and the resolution before you which was also adopted by the First International Socialist Conference by a vote of 47 to 11. The Socialist women do not consider the women's right to vote as the most significant question, whose solution will remove all social obstacles which exist in the path of the free and harmonious development and activity of the female sex. That is because it does not touch upon the deepest cause: Private property in which is rooted the exploitation and suppression of one human being by another. This is clearly illustrated by the situation of the politically emancipated, yet socially suppressed and exploited male proletariat. The granting of suffrage to the female sex does not eliminate the class differences between the exploiters and the exploited from which are derived the most serious social obstacles to the free and harmonious development of the female proletarian. It also does not eliminate the conflicts which are created for women as members of their sex from the social contradictions that occur between men and women within the capitalist system. On the contrary: The complete political equality of the female sex prepares the ground on which the conflicts will be fought with the greatest intensity. These conflicts are varied, but the most serious and painful one is the conflict between professional work and motherhood. For us Socialists, therefore, women's suffrage cannot be the "final goal" as it is for bourgeois women. However, we yearn most fervently for its acquisition as one phase of the battle towards our final goal. The obtainment of suffrage aids the bourgeois women to tear down the barriers in the form of male prerogatives which tend to limit their educative and professional opportunities. It arms the female proletarians in their battle against class exploitation and class rule, in their effort to acquire their full humanity. It enables them to participate to a higher degree than heretofore in the attainment of political power by the proletariat, for the purpose of erecting a Socialist order which alone will solve the women's question.

We Socialists do not demand women's suffrage as a natural right with which women are born. We demand it as a social right

which is anchored in the revolutionized economic activity and in the revolutionized social state and personal consciousness of women. Capitalist production has sent the domestically employed housewife of the good old days to an old-age home. The professional woman, especially the salaried woman who stands right at the center of the economic life of society, has taken her place and become the typical form which female economic activity represents in its most essential social capacity. The professional and trade statistics of all capitalist countries reflect this change. That which women at an earlier time produced within their four walls served the consumption and the welfare of their family. Today, whatever streams out of her industrious hands, whatever her brain thinks of that is useful, acceptable and pleasant, appear as goods on the social market. Millions of women themselves appear as sellers of their labor, the most important social good on society's labor market. Thus a revolution is wrought in her position within the family and society. The woman is detached from the household as the source of her livelihood and she gains her independence from her family and her husband. In many case, too, the family no longer offers her a satisfactory meaning of life. Just like the man under equally hard conditions (and at times under even more difficult ones), she has to take up the fight for the vital necessities against a hostile environment. She needs for this, just like the man, her full political rights because such rights are weapons with which she can and must defend her interests. Together with her social being, her world of perception and thought is being revolutionized. The political impotence which the female sex accepted as natural for so many centuries is [now] viewed by her as an outrageous injustice. By a slow, painful developmental process, women are emerging from the narrowness of family life to the forum of political activity. They are demanding their full political equality as it is symbolized by suffrage as a vital social necessity and a social emancipation. The obtainment of suffrage is the necessary corollary to the economic independence of women.

One would assume that in view of this situation, the entire politically disenfranchised female sex would form one phalanx to fight for universal women's suffrage. But that is not the case at all. The bourgeois women do not even stand united and determined behind the principle of the full political equality of the

female sex. They are even more reluctant to fight energetically, as one united force, for universal women's suffrage. In the final analysis, this is not due to the ignorance and shortsighted tactics of the leaders of the suffragettes' camp, even though they can be correctly blamed for a number of deficiencies. It is the inevitable consequence of the diverse social strata to which women belong. The value of enfranchisement stands in a reverse relationship to the size of the estate. It is of least importance to the women of the Upper Ten Thousand and it means the most to the female proletarians. Thus the struggle for women's suffrage, too, is dominated by class contradictions and class struggle. There cannot be a unified struggle for the entire sex, particularly when this battle does not relate to a bloodless principle, but rather to the concrete and vital question of the women's right to vote. We cannot expect bourgeois women to proceed against their very nature. The female proletarians in their struggle for civil rights cannot, therefore, count on the support of the bourgeois women because the class contradictions preclude that female proletarians will join the bourgeois suffragette movement. All of this does not mean that they should reject the bourgeois suffragettes who want to march behind them or at their side in the battle for the women's right to vote. They may march separately but fight together. But the female proletarians must know that they cannot acquire the right to vote in a struggle of the female sex without class distinctions against the male sex. No, it must be a class struggle of all the exploited without differences of sex against all exploiters no matter what sex they belong to.

In their fight for the attainment of universal women's suffrage, the proletarian women find strong allies in the Socialist parties of all countries. The advocacy of universal women's suffrage by the Socialist parties is not based on ideological and ethical considerations. It is dictated by historical perception but, above all, by an understanding of the class situation as well as the practical battle needs of the proletariat. This proletariat cannot fight its economic and political battles without the participation of its women who, awakened to class consciousness, organized and trained, have been equipped with social rights. Due to the increased employment of women in industry, movements that fight for increased wages can be successful only if they include female workers who have become trained and organized class fighters. But political work, the political work of the proletariat,

must also be shared by women. The intensification of the class struggle between the exploiters and the exploited increases the significance of the awakening of class consciousness in women and their participation in the proletarian movement of emancipation. Contrary to the expectations of bourgeois fools, the strengthening of trade union organizations has not resulted in social peace but in an era of gigantic lockouts and strikes. The resolute involvement of the proletariat in the political life has led to the sharpest intensification of the political battle, an intensification which has led to new methods and means of combat. In Belgium and Holland, the proletariat had to complement its parliamentary struggle by the political mass strike. In Russia it tried the same weapon during the revolution with the greatest success.² In order to grasp the suffrage reform from its enemies, the Austrian proletariat had to keep the revolutionary weapon of the mass strike in readiness. Gigantic strikes and gigantic lockouts, especially, however, revolutionary mass strikes, call for the greatest sacrifices on the part of the proletariat. It cannot, like the possessing classes, devolve these sacrifices upon hirelings and it cannot pay for them out of a well-filled purse. These are sacrifices that every member of this class must personally bear. That is why these sacrifices can only be made if the proletarian women, too, are filled with historical insight into the necessity and the significance of them. Just how significant and indispensable it is that the female proletariat be imbued with Socialist convictions from which a willingness to sacrifice and heroism flow, has just been demonstrated by the brilliant Austrian suffrage battle.³ It would not have ended victoriously without the active participation of the proletarian women. It must be emphasized that the success of our Austrian brothers was to a considerable extent the result of the loyalty, hard work, willingness to sacrifice and courage displayed by our Austrian women comrades. (*Bravo!*)

This brief sketch shows that the proletariat has a vital stake in the political equality of the female sex and that it must fight for the full civil rights for women. This battle arouses the women masses and helps them to acquire a sense of class consciousness. The granting of women's suffrage is the prerequisite for the resolute participation of women proletarians in the proletarian class struggle. At the same time, it creates the strongest incentive to awaken, gather and train the female proletariat with

the same fervor as the enlightenment and organization of the male proletariat is being pursued. As long as women are politically disenfranchised, they are frequently viewed as powerless and the influence which they exercise upon political life is underestimated. At the stock exchange of parliamentary life, only the ballot possesses an exchange value. The shortsighted individuals who view the political struggle only within the framework of ballots and mandates view the efforts to arouse the female proletariat to a class-conscious life merely as a kind of amusement and luxury which Social-Democracy should only indulge in if it possesses an excess of time, energy and money. They overlook the proletariat's compelling class interest in seeing to it that the class struggle also develops within the women's world so that the female proletarians will fight resolutely alongside their brothers. From the moment when women will be emancipated and capable of casting their votes, this interest will become clear to even the most shortsighted individual in our ranks. A race will begin by all parties to obtain the votes of the female proletarians since they constitute the majority of the female sex. The Socialist parties then must make sure that their enlightenment campaign will keep away all the bourgeois parties and their fight for the attainment of civil rights by women must work in that direction. This has been proven by the history of the suffrage battle in Finland and by the first suffrage campaign there which was conducted in a situation in which both men and women had the right to vote. Women's suffrage is an excellent means to push forward into the last, and perhaps the strongest, bulwark of the ignorant masses: The political indifference and backwardness of broad segments of the female proletariat. This fortress aggravates and hurts our current proletarian struggle and threatens the future of our class. That is why we have to do away with it. (*Bravo!*)

In these days of intensified class struggle, the question arises: For what kind of women's suffrage should the Socialist parties fight? Years ago, this question would hardly have mattered. One would have answered: For women's suffrage, period. Then too, limited women's suffrage was regarded as an imperfection and insufficient progress, but still it was viewed as the first phase of the political emancipation of the female sex.⁴ Today this naive concept is no longer justified. Today the Socialist parties must emphatically declare that they can only fight for universal

women's suffrage and that they decisively reject limited women's suffrage as a falsification and mockery of the principle of the equality of women. What was previously done instinctively—by the introduction of limited women's rights in order to strengthen the position of property—is now done consciously. Two tendencies are at work within the bourgeois parties that will break the fundamental resistance against the women's suffrage: The rising external and internal difficulties of large circles of the bourgeois women's world that have to fight for their civil rights and the growing fear of the political advances of the fighting proletariat. In such a situation, the introduction of limited women's suffrage appears as a saving alternative. The proletariat is slated to pay for the costs of maintaining the peace between the men and women of the possessing classes. The possessing classes consider the introduction of limited women's suffrage because they view it as a protective wall against the increasing power of the fighting proletariat. This was first demonstrated by the events in Norway. When universal suffrage in respect to local elections could no longer be denied to the attacking proletariat which was fighting under the leadership of Social-Democracy, this reform was vitiated by the introduction of limited women's suffrage. Bourgeois politicians declared candidly that the limited suffrage for women is designed as a counterweight to the universal suffrage for men. . . .

We regard the limited women's suffrage not so much as the first step towards the emancipation of the female sex, [but] as the final step towards the political emancipation of property. It is a privilege of property and not a universal right. It does not emancipate the female because she is a woman, but rather in spite of the fact that she is a woman. It does not raise her to full citizenship because of her personality but because of her wealth and income. Thus it leaves the great majority of the female sex disenfranchised and it simply credits this disenfranchisement to another account. But beyond the disenfranchised female proletarians, it hits their entire class. It represents a plural vote for the propertied class and strengthens its political power. That is why it is not accurate to view limited women's suffrage as a practical step towards the eventual political emancipation of female proletarians by universal suffrage. On the contrary, by increasing the political power of the proprie-

tary class, it strengthens the reactionary forces which oppose the further democratization of the suffrage in favor of the proletariat and without distinction of sex. One more thing: It allows the pacified bourgeois women to drop out of the battle for political equality of the entire female sex. There is not one country in which the administrative and legislative bodies have been elected by limited women's suffrage where the politically emancipated women have fought with all of their strength for the civil rights of their poor sisters and for universal women's suffrage. The more the tendency of reaction grows to use the introduction of limited women's suffrage as a bulwark against the rising power of the proletariat, the more necessary it becomes to enlighten the female proletarians about this phenomenon. It must be prevented that the female proletarians allow themselves to be abused for a crime against themselves and their class under the motto: Justice for the female sex so that it may perform as servants and serfs.

Our demand for the women's right to vote is no suffragettes' request, but a mass and class demand of the proletariat. It is theoretically and practically the important organic part of the entire Social-Democratic suffrage program. Therefore, there must not only be constant propaganda for this demand but the demand must become the centerpiece of all suffrage battles which the Socialist parties are conducting on behalf of political democracy. A majority of the Commission shared this opinion and decided that every voting rights battle must also be fought as a battle for women's suffrage. Proletarian women and proletarian men will be the winners of this common fight. This was proven above all by the suffrage campaign in Finland. The majority of the Commission could not share the opinion that the demand for women's suffrage should under certain circumstances be withdrawn, for tactical reasons and without a fight, from the voting rights campaigns of the proletariat. The proprietary classes assume a twilight of the gods attitude towards any suffrage demand by the proletariat. They view even the most modest democratization of suffrage as the beginning of the end of their class' splendor and put up the fiercest resistance. It is not the character and the extent of the Socialist suffrage demands which will decide the outcome of the battle, but the power relationship between the exploiting and the exploited classes. It is

not our clever modesty and restraint which will assure us victories, but the power of the proletariat which stands behind our demands.

In consequence, the question arises: Is the broaching of our entire suffrage program, especially the demand for women's suffrage, suited to strengthen the power of the Socialist party and the proletariat? In all seriousness and with great emphasis, we answer this question in the affirmative. The more principled [that] Social-Democracy conducts its suffrage battles, the more thoroughly it will stir up and revolutionize broad strata of the population and fill them with confidence in the earnestness and faithfulness of its actions, which will lead to enthusiasm for its fighting goals. What will be repeated will be the old fable of the rods which cannot be broken because they are tied together in a bundle. The more numerous the politically disenfranchised whose interest Social-Democracy represents in its suffrage battle, the more numerous the disinherited who expect the obtaining of their rights from its victory, the more swells the army of female and male combatants who will help to fight our Socialist battles. And must not a demand have this effect when it concerns itself with the civil rights of one-half of the entire nation's proletariat, the half that the citizens are supposed to educate but from whose council they have been excluded while they are pounding on the gates of parliament? The suffrage battle that Social-Democracy also wages on behalf of women's rights gains a broader basis, a more comprehensive aim and a greater thrust and drive. It forces people to take issue with ancient, deep-rooted prejudices and it therefore shakes up the masses. Finally, it carries uncertainty, confusion and disunion into the camp of the enemy. It causes the social contradiction between the men and women of the proprietary classes to come to the fore.

We are convinced, therefore, that it lies in the very class interest of the proletariat that the Socialist parties must go beyond the mere recognition of the principle of women's suffrage and that they must take up the battle to change principle into practice. Which is not to say that the Social-Democracy of whatever country should commence an electoral battle for women's suffrage at an inappropriate moment. Nor ought it be the case that women's suffrage should constitute the leading issue in every electoral campaign or that electoral campaigns must be conducted with the motto: Women's suffrage or bust! The

role which women's suffrage ought to play depends upon the entire historical background of each country. As far as the suffrage is concerned, the Socialist parties must fight for all demands that they raise on principle in the interest of the proletariat. They will carry home as loot as much as they are able to wrest from the enemy. What is important is that women's suffrage must be emphatically demanded in the course of agitation among the masses or in parliament, and the intensity of the demand must correspond to the importance of the subject. We are aware of the fact that in most countries the conquest of women's suffrage will not occur from one day to the next because of such action. On the other hand, we also know that it is just such an action which will make preparations for a future victory.

In the proletarian battle for the civil rights of the female sex, the Socialist women must be the driving force, not only by participating with all of their energy in the proletarian suffrage battles but also by persuading the mass of female proletarians to become their co-fighters. By incorporating the masses of female proletarians into the ranks of the fighting brothers, they prove two things, i.e., that the masses of women themselves desire the right to vote and that the female proletarians are mature enough to use the suffrage correctly. Let us step forward without hesitation to battle for women's suffrage. It serves to arouse the female proletariat to a class-conscious political life which is of the highest significance for the present and future of the proletariat and its war of liberation. Not the patient bearer of crosses, not the dull slave, but the resolute fighting woman will raise a generation of strong male and female fighters. With every reason, the woman can state that avengers will rise from her bones, children who were nourished by the bold thoughts of her brain and the passionate wishes of her heart, male and female fighters who will not only replace her one day, but even surpass her as far as their battle virtues are concerned.

[*The International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart, August 18, 1907, Berlin 1907, pp. 40-47.*] □

1910

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

In agreement with the class-conscious, political and trade union organizations of the proletariat of their respective countries, the Socialist-women of all countries will hold each year a Women's Day, whose foremost purpose it must be to aid the attainment of women's suffrage. This demand must be handled in conjunction with the entire women's question according to Socialist precepts. The Women's Day must have an international character and is to be prepared carefully.

Clara Zetkin, Käthe Duncker and Comrades,²¹ August 27, 1910.

[From a proposal to the Second International Women's Conference at Copenhagen, August 27, 1910. *Die Gleichheit* Stuttgart, August 29, 1910.] □



Clara Zetkin (l). and Rosa Luxemburg during
the Congress of the Social Democratic Party,
Magdeburg, 1910.

PROLETARIAN WOMEN BE PREPARED

The horrible specter before which the people of Europe tremble has become reality. The war is ready to crush human bodies, dwelling places and fields. Austria has used the senseless outrage of a twenty-year-old Serbian lad against the Successor to the Throne, as a pretext for a criminal outrage against the sovereignty and independence of the Serbian people and in the final analysis, against the peace of Europe.¹ She wants to use this opportune moment because Serbia can hardly hope to obtain help from Russian Tsarism. France at the present moment can hardly support Russian despotism's bellicose plans of conquest. Sessions in the Senate have revealed grave shortcomings in the army, and the reintroduction of the three-year draft has shaken military morale and created bitter dissatisfaction. England is so preoccupied with the situation in Ulster and other tasks of a similar nature that she does not have any great desire to participate in the horrors and crimes of a world war. Thus Austrian imperialism is calculating that it can violate international law in its dealings with Serbia without being challenged by the Triple Entente.² She believes that Serbia's defeat will block Tsarism's push towards the Mediterranean Sea.

The proletarian women know that the expansion of Russian Knout Tsarism would mean the worst type of slavery for all of the people concerned. Yet they also understand that Austro-Hungarian imperialism does not protect the rights and the liberties of people. It merely fights for the interests of the reactionary Hapsburg Dynasty and for the gold and power hunger of the insensitive, unscrupulous magnates and capitalists. Within its own realm, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy has smashed the rights of the different nationalities and even more so the rights of the exploited working-class masses. In spite of the raging

crisis, it has for years increased the price of even the barest necessities and it has used brutality and tricks to hinder the fight against exploitation and misery. Now it crowns its work by forcing the sons of workers to murder and to let themselves be murdered. It does not constitute a vanguard for the welfare and liberty of the people. Its war must never become a murder of the people.

In Germany, the profit- and laurel-seeking warmongers try to deceive the people in respect to this simple truth. They claim that Austria's war, in the final analysis, is directed against the threatening barbarism of Russia; that it represents a Germanic crusade against "arrogantly advancing Slavdom." In an unscrupulous manner, they scream about duty and about the preservation of "German Nibelung Loyalty." They want to see to it that Germany, as a member of the Triple Alliance, will adopt Austria's war as her own and that she will waste the blood and wealth of her people.

The sacrilege of such an activity is as great as the crime of Austrian imperialism. It wants to ignite a world conflagration in the course of which the peoples of Europe will slaughter each other while a handful of powerful and prescient people smilingly reap their profits. This must never be allowed to happen. The proletarians of Germany, men and women, must prove by deeds that they have been enlightened and that they are ready to assume a life in freedom. Their will to maintain peace, alongside the desire for peace on the part of the workers of other countries, especially of France, is the only guarantee that the war of the clerical Hapsburgs will not turn into a general European holocaust. It is true that the Government of the German Empire assures us that it has done and is doing everything in its power to keep the war localized. But the people have already found out that the tongues of the government's representatives are forked like the tongues of snakes. It is also familiar with the ineptitude of the diplomatic agents of the German Empire. And it certainly has no illusions about this unique fact: The international situation is so intricately enmeshed and entangled that one coincidence can destroy all of the good intentions of the governments. One coincidence could very well decide whether the thin thread from which the sword of world war is suspended over humankind will break.

The proprietors and rulers, too, swear solemnly that they

detest the horrible barbarism of war. Yes, they too tremble before its hellish horrors. And yet it is they who constantly prepare and agitate for war. One has only to listen to the left liberal press which, in the name of all kinds of cultural values, urges Germany to join Austria, thereby challenging Russia and France to join the bloody fray. And yet, the pages of this press are still wet from the maudlin tears which it shed over the psalms of peace heard at the Reconciliation Conference of German-French Parliamentarians at Bern.³ How shamelessly pious Christian newspapers are calling for horrible bloodshed and mass murder while they are daily reciting the commandment of their Almighty: "Thou shalt not kill!" All masks are dropping from the vampire of capitalism which is nourished by the blood and marrow of the popular masses. How could it be otherwise? The killing among nations will never be condemned as fratricide by those who find it perfectly natural that every year hundreds of thousands of people's comrades are slaughtered for profit upon the altars of capitalism.

Only the proletariat uses its broad chest to stem the approaching disaster of a world war. The horrors of this war would already have been upon us if one of the most unscrupulous murderers of people, Tsarism, had not been prevented from plunging upon the craved-for battlefield by the political mass strikes of the Russian proletariat. It has only been the revolutionary struggle of our Russian brothers and sisters which in these fateful days has, until now, preserved world peace. Let us not be more fainthearted than they are. Their glorious battle, waged without guaranteed political rights and in the face of dungeons, exile and death, shows us by deeds what a determined, bold and unified working class is able to accomplish.

Let us not waste a minute. War is standing before the gate. Let us drive it back into the night before its ferocity will strip the unenlightened masses of their last ounce of rationalism and humanity. Leave your factories and workshops, your huts and attics to join the mass protest! Let the rulers and proprietors have no doubt about our serious determination to fight for peace to our last breath.

The exploited masses are strong enough to carry on their shoulders the entire edifice of the new society. They are used to living in poverty while the wealth that they create is being wasted in riotous living by idlers. Every day, while eking out a

living, they face death. And these types of people are supposed to shun deprivations, dangers and death when it comes to fighting for peace and freedom? They are supposed to give way before a military cabal which has just been publicly flogged for the brutal mistreatment of their sons and brothers?⁴ The mighty peace force of the working-class masses must silence the jingoist screaming in the streets. And wherever two or three exploited men or women are assembled, they must express their detestation of war and their support for peace.

For the working class, the brotherhood among peoples is no utopia, and world peace is more than an empty word. A concrete fact supports it; the firm solidarity of all the exploited and suppressed of all nations. This solidarity must not allow proletarians to fire upon proletarians. It must make the masses determined, during a war, to use all available weapons against the war. The might with which the proletarian masses will oppose the fury of war will constitute a victorious battle in their war of liberation. The revolutionary energy and passion of their struggle will expose them to dangers and demand sacrifices. What of it? There comes a moment in the life of each individual and people when everything can be won if one risks everything. Such a moment has come. Proletarian women, be prepared!

[*Die Gleichheit* Stuttgart, August 5, 1914]

□

TO THE SOCIALIST WOMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES

*Comrades! Sisters!*¹ Week after week, there is an increase in the chorus of women's voices in the belligerent as well as in the neutral countries that protests against the terrible conflict which originated from the drive of the capitalist countries for world power and world domination. This battle between the Dual Alliance and the Triple Entente, which has lasted for almost four months now, is pulling ever more people and regions of this earth into its bloody maelstrom.

The best physical, spiritual and moral forces of the people, the riches of their economy, marvelous cooperative organizations, valuable accomplishments of science and wonders of technology, all have been roped into serving the war effort. Heaps of ruins and mountains of dead and maimed people are piling up to an extent that history has not seen heretofore in spite of all the streams of blood and tears that cross her path. This war grinds the welfare and the happiness of millions underfoot. It tears up international treaties, philosophizes with the sword over venerable concepts and institutions and orders people to pray to what they burned yesterday and burn what they prayed to until now. It besmirches all ideals which uncounted generations of all nations and races, under the pains and joys of belonging to humankind, created on the developmental ascent from the animal kingdom to the realm of genuine human freedom. What has happened to the commandments of the Christian God: "Thou shalt not kill!" and "Love thine enemies!"? What has happened to the cosmopolitan ideology which the greatest and noblest spirits of all modern civilized nations praised to high heaven? What has happened to the international Socialist brotherhood of the proletarians of all countries of which we so proudly dreamt?

The longer this war lasts, the more the glittering phrases and

thoughts which were supposed to disguise its capitalist nature before the eyes of the people are fading and are being torn to shreds. The masks, the beautifully decorated covers that fooled so many, are dropping. Before us stands a war of conquest and world power in all of its naked ugliness. . . .

World Peace as a symbol and a guarantee of the international brotherhood of the proletarians of all countries has been especially sacred to us Socialist women because that brotherhood alone will be able to open up the gate to the future Socialist system that we women desire with all of our hearts. And because that is the case, the world war with all of its horrors does not constitute a barrier between us. Unperturbed by the thunder of battle, sabre-rattling speeches and uncritical mass moods, we shall preserve in all countries the old ideals of Socialism, even in these times. From everywhere we stretch our sisterly hands across streams of blood and piles of ruins, united in the old realization and the unshakable determination: We must break through to Socialism!

Our last great common project, the planned conference at Vienna, was supposed to meet in an aura of peace. The iron fist of the world war has prevented it. Now this determination for peace must dictate to us our first great common task. We women Socialists must call upon the women of all countries to oppose the prolongation of this insane genocide. From a million voices our irresistible cry must arise: Enough of killing, enough destruction! No total war until our people bleed to death! Peace! Permanent peace!

Therefore there must be no violation of the independence and dignity of any nation! There must be no annexations and no humiliating demands which would not constitute any guarantee for the security of neighboring states. On the contrary, they would only serve to set off a new burdensome armament race which would in turn lead to renewed world conflict! There must be ample space for peaceful work! Open the way for the fraternization of all people and their cooperation in making international culture bloom!

It is true that we women have only limited political rights in practically all countries, but we are not without social power. Let us make use of every tiny bit of this power. Let us use our words and actions in order to influence the narrow circle of our family and friends as well as the broad public. Let us use every

means of oratory and writing. Let us use individuals as well as masses as they become available in the different countries. We will not be confused or frightened by the roaring of the chauvinistic stream upon which are bouncing the profiteering percentage patriots, the power-hungry imperialist politicians and the unscrupulous demagogues. It is exactly in the face of this stream's roaring that we loudly talk about the cultural values which all nations have contributed to a common human heritage and about the necessity of a large international community of nations. Let us proudly unfurl the banner of Socialism and Socialist peace demands! In all countries, we will be calumniated and persecuted as traitors without a fatherland, who lack intelligence and the sense of altruism. So be it! We know that we help our homeland much more by our efforts towards peace than by the denunciations and belittling of foreign countries or by sabre-rattling warmongering. When the men kill, it is up to us women to fight for the preservation of life. When the men are silent, it is our duty to raise our voices on behalf of our ideals.

Female comrades, sisters! Fulfill the promise which your representative at the memorable Peace Congress of the Socialist International made at Basel: "It is for this reason that even during a war we will be among those advancing, attacking units that fight against war!"

[*Die Gleichheit* Stuttgart, November 7, 1914 but blanked-out by the censors.] See also pp. 36-37, p. 191 n.1. □

1914

LETTER TO HELEEN ANKERSMIT

Wilhelmshöhe, December 3, 1914

Dear Comrade Ankersmit:¹

First of all, I want to send you once again the reassuring message that I apparently received all of your communications. I can only write "apparently." Why this is so, my subsequent lines will tell you. I received the "message" of our English comrades, the equally nice letter of my friend Longman and your own long nice letter as well as a card. I have previously confirmed the receipt of all of these items. But did you receive my confirmation? That is the question. I have twice sent you my Appeal (issued in my capacity as Secretary of the International)² in which I call upon the women comrades of all countries to work for peace.³ I placed one copy of this Appeal between the pages of old issues of the *Gleichheit*. I informed you of this fact on an open post card and asked for an acknowledgement. Although fourteen days have passed, I have yet to receive one. I am herewith enclosing two more copies of the Appeal and I must ask you to publish them as soon as possible in the Dutch party press. Please see to it that a copy of the German text will safely reach our English comrades. Mary Longman will translate it well and most willingly.

Please do not be surprised if I write to you infrequently and in a noncommittal way. It cannot be any other way as long as the mail which leaves Germany must be sent in unsealed envelopes. In addition to the general situation, there is the additional factor that the authorities keep "a special eye" on me because of my views and opinions. There is no doubt that, at least from time to time, I am being shadowed and my correspondence is being "carefully" controlled. Even though such a control is superfluous and ridiculous, it is nonetheless most bothersome. It is not only a symbol of the general situation but also (and that is

WOMEN OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Where are your husbands?

Where are your sons?

For eight months now, they have been at the front. They have been torn from their work and their homes. Adolescents, the support and hope of their parents, men at the prime of their lives, men with greying hair, the supporters of their families: All of them are wearing military uniforms, are vegetating in trenches and are ordered to destroy what diligent labor created.

Millions are already resting in mass graves, hundreds upon hundreds of thousands lie in military hospitals with torn-up bodies, smashed limbs, blinded eyes, destroyed brains and ravished by epidemics or cast down by exhaustion.

Burnt villages and towns, wrecked bridges, devastated forests and ruined fields are the traces of their deeds.

Proletarian Women! One has told you that your husbands and sons left for the war in order to protect their weak women and children and to guard home and hearth.

But what is the reality?

The shoulders of the weak women now have to bear a double burden. Bereft of protection, you are exposed to grief and hardships. Your children are hungry and cold. One threatens to take away the roof over your head. Your hearth is cold and empty.

One has talked to you about a grand brother and sisterhood between the high and the low, of a cessation of strife between poor and rich. Well, the cessation of strife meant that the entrepreneur lowered your wages, the tradesman and unscrupulous speculator raised prices and the landlord threatens to evict you. The state claims impoverishment and the bourgeois welfare authorities cook a meager soup for you and urge you to be thrifty.

What is the purpose of this war which has caused you such terrible suffering?

One tells you, the well-being and the defense of the fatherland. Of what does the well-being of the fatherland consist?

Should it not mean the well-being of its millions, those millions who are being changed to corpses, cripples, unemployed beggars and orphans by this war?

Who endangers the well-being of the fatherland? Is it the men who, clad in other uniforms, stand beyond the frontier, men who did not want this war any more than your men did and who do not know why they should have to murder their brothers? No! The fatherland is endangered by those that reap profit from the hardships of the broad masses and who want to build their domination upon suppression.

Who profits from this war?

Only a tiny minority in each nation.

The manufacturers of rifles and cannons, of armor plate and torpedo boats, the shipyard owners and the suppliers of the armed forces' needs. In the interest of their profits they have fanned the hatred among the people, thus contributing to the outbreak of the war. This war is beneficial for the capitalists in general. Did not the labor of the dispossessed and the exploited masses accumulate goods that those who created them are not allowed to use? They are too poor to pay for them! Labor's sweat has created these goods and labor's blood is supposed to create new foreign markets to dispose of them. Colonies are supposed to be conquered where the capitalists want to rob the natural resources and exploit the cheapest labor force.

Not the defense of the fatherland but its augmentation is the purpose of this war. The capitalist system wants it that way, and without the exploitation and suppression of man by man, that system cannot exist.

The workers have nothing to gain from this war but they stand to lose everything that is dear to them.

Wives of Workers, Women Workers! The men of the belligerent countries have been silenced. The war has dimmed their conscience, paralyzed their will and disfigured their entire being.

But you women who besides your gnawing concern for your dear ones at the front have to bear deprivations and misery, what

are you waiting for in expressing your desire for peace and your protest against this war?

What is holding you back?

Until now you have been patient for your loved ones. Now you must act for your husbands and sons.

Enough of murdering!

This call resounds in many tongues, millions of women raise it. It finds its echo in the trenches where the consciences of the people's sons are stirred up against this murder.

Working Women of the People! In these difficult days, Socialist women from Germany, England, France and Russia have gathered. Your hardships and sufferings have moved their hearts. For your own sake and the sake of your loved ones, they are asking you to work for peace. Just like their minds met across the battlefields, so you must get together from all countries in order to raise the cry: Peace! Peace!

The world war has demanded the greatest sacrifices from you. The sons that you bore in suffering and pain, the men who were your companions during your difficult struggles, have been torn away from you. In comparison with these sacrifices, all other sacrifices must seem small and insignificant.

All humankind is looking upon you women proletarians of the belligerent countries. You are destined to be the heroines and redeemers!

Unify as one will and one deed!

What your husbands and sons cannot yet avert, announce with a million voices:

The laboring people of all countries are a people of brothers. Only the united will of this people can stop the killing.

Socialism alone will assure the future peace of humankind.

Down with capitalism which sacrifices hecatombs of people to the wealth and the power of the possessing class!

Down with War! Break through to Socialism!

[Bern, March 1915, the International Socialist Women's Conference. *Berner Tagwacht* 3 April 1915] □

1917

TO THE SOCIALIST WOMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES

The inevitable clarification process within the German Social-Democracy, among other bad and painful concomitant symptoms, has resulted in my expulsion by the Executive Committee of the Social-Democratic Party from the editorship of the *Gleichheit* which I directed for 27 years.¹ The real reason for this punishment is the principled stand of this periodical. To adjust it to the concepts of the Majority Socialists, to the approval of war credits and the Cessation of Party Strife Policy of the Government and to praise all of the above-mentioned aberrations as historical feats, seemed to me a betrayal of the requirements of international Socialism. To be silent in the face of such policies would have been to assume an attitude of undignified cowardice.

For the task and the very justification of the existence of the *Gleichheit* was to serve the aims of international Socialism. It was designed to make the working women of the population realize that only Socialism is the savior, the world historical deliverer that guarantees everybody full human rights. It was supposed to make available to Socialism the rich streams of spiritual and moral values which today, unrecognized and unused, roar subterraneously among the broad women masses. Thus the obligation was created to measure all emerging questions as well as moot points with the ideas and ideals of international Socialism, regardless of current opinions, undesirous of applause, without fear of criticism and fearless and loyal in the face of hatred and danger. I have done my best to fulfill these obligations of the *Gleichheit* even during the difficult times which were produced for Social-Democracy and the proletariat by the world war. Yes, especially in these times when imperialism has had the effect of the Tower of Babel upon the Socialists

and proletarians of all countries. My punishment is the consequence of my beliefs.

The transformation of the *Gleichheit* is not only of concern to the German women Socialists but affects the interests of the Socialist women of all countries. The *Gleichheit* was the leading intellectual and unifying organ of the Socialist Women's International. This was decided upon by the International Socialist Women's Conferences of Stuttgart and Copenhagen. That decision was not at all based upon the fact that the *Gleichheit* also happened to be an organ (one among many) of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany and that, according to bourgeois law, the executive committee of that party, in its capacity as representative and business agent, was the owner (and according to party statutes, supervisor) of said periodical. What was important was the international dissemination and the international reputation of the *Gleichheit* as well as the trust which the women comrades of all countries placed in it because, loyal to the above-mentioned principles, it discussed the various aspects of the women's question and its universal social and historical application within the framework of Scientific Socialism. What was important was the fact that the *Gleichheit* was directed by me, who in my capacity as Secretary of the International, edited the periodical in agreement with the directives and decisions of our International Women's Conferences and the general International Socialist Congresses. By many years of work and cooperation with the leading women comrades of all countries, I had gained an overview of the entire Socialist women's movement. In my hands, its connecting threads ran together, and enlightened reports as well as positive suggestions were deposited.

The objective and personal prerequisites of the international organ of Socialist women cannot be simply transferred from one editorial board to another just because the Social-Democratic Executive Committee orders it, no more that the name *Gleichheit* may be bestowed upon another periodical which is alien to its nature. The "purged" *Gleichheit* cannot be the organ of the Socialist Women's International. It will merely become one more paper of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, one among many. The women comrades of all countries will have the same relationship to it that they have to all of the other people of the Party. They will certainly not feel any longer a special

relationship of trust. This will be even less the case since the *Gleichheit* will be edited in complete contradistinction to the basic views of its previous editor.

In view of this situation, all reports, contributions etc. of the women comrades of individual countries are to be sent, as before, to me in my capacity as Secretary of the International. It will be, as before, my obvious duty to disseminate and publish these items. In spite of my disciplinary punishment, the Socialist Women's International has not become homeless. A substitute for the "old *Gleichheit*" will shortly make its appearance.² Preparations for that event are practically finished. In addition, the daily newspapers of the Independent Socialist Party³ will regard it as their natural duty and honor to publish whatever the Secretary of the International will send them. I will see to it that these publications will reach the corresponding female comrades of all countries on a regular basis. Special circulars, informational bulletins etc. on my part will reproduce reports and suggestions and thus keep alive the exchange of ideas and the relationships between the various female comrades.

I hope that our foreign female comrades agree with this temporary solution of a problem which will be taken up and resolved permanently at the next International Women's Conference. I trust that they will reciprocate loyalty with loyalty and that they will unanimously uphold those principles for which the *Gleichheit* perished. We women who found in Socialism the country of our souls' longing and humankind's fatherland for future generations, we women must not make deals with unprincipled half-measures and weaknesses. Our place is where the pure red banner waves. The "old" *Gleichheit* has perished. Long live international Socialism. In that spirit, I greet the Socialist women of all countries!

Clara Zetkin
Secretary of the International

[*Leipziger Volkszeitung* June 19, 1917]

□

IN THE MUSLIM WOMEN'S CLUB

A symbol for the broad Oriental women's masses are the Muslim Women's Clubs of the Soviet Republics. Their creation and development are of great historical significance.

In the Orient, the working women who passionately desire a transformation of social conditions that will lead to their liberation are beginning to stir and to act. The lowest of the low, who had been pushed into the deepest depths of social enslavement by traditions, laws and religious decrees, are rising. Diffident and wounded in body and soul, they are nevertheless rising steadily in order to achieve freedom and equality. Lenin correctly judged this event as having the greatest historical significance. He was always most sensitive to even the faintest stirrings of revolutionary energies and he evaluated them always within the framework of the general social transformation of this world. Even if the stirrings of the Oriental women masses appear only as faint lightning at this time, they are the harbinger of the approaching thunderstorm. They confirm the fact that the proletarian revolution will indeed turn out to be a world revolution in which even the last suppressed and enslaved individual will free himself by his own strength. The Muslim Women's Clubs in the Soviet Republics are not the tender breeding grounds for suffragette tendencies but the gathering places and schools for the revolutionary forces.

The Muslim Women's Club of Tiflis¹ was founded by the Communist Party and is the special work of its women's division. It was founded in the knowledge that the establishment of the Soviet system had profoundly stirred the psyche of Muslim women. It symbolizes for them the transformation of their lives since Soviet laws know of no domination of men over women and of no prerogative of one sex over the other. Instead, this club proclaims the full equality of women in all social fields and proves that the Soviets are eager to realize this equality. These

women demand passionately that they can realize their new legal status by participating in the transformation of society, building a new structure which will accommodate the talents of the working women. Up till now, however, the demands of the majority of the awakening Muslim women are still being obstructed by age-old prejudices. Thus most of them shrink from asserting their positions alongside their men folk. Between their desire and its realization stands the locked door of the harem. The female and male comrades at Tiflis became convinced that they must create a halfway house for the Muslim women between their secluded domestic existence and the meeting halls. It had to be a place where deep longing would mature into a clear consciousness and will to fight. Guided by the realization that the revolutionary reconstruction of Georgia would be impossible if it had to be achieved against the will and without the cooperation of the Muslim women masses, they created such a site in organizing the Muslim Women's Club.

It was the first creation of this kind which I was to encounter and I was consequently very excited as I headed for this Club. Its members had been notified of my visit; otherwise, I would only have been able to inspect the building and talk to a small number of female Muslim comrades. I was interested, however, in obtaining an impression of the entire community and perhaps even to go beyond that by assessing the impact of the Club upon other women's clubs. Thus I was certainly being expected. The sidewalk and the street around the Club were filled with Muslim women, all of whom had discarded the veil. The car had to slow down to a snail's pace and it never quite reached the entrance. Being more pushed and lifted up than walking, I finally made it to the corridor, up the winding staircase and into the large central room of the Club. Here, too, was the same pushing and shoving, in stifled air. The scene reminded one of the stirrings of an ant heap.

When the Club was founded in 1923, it consisted of forty members and constituted an undeniable success. The Soviets gave it the amount of space which corresponded to its original membership. The establishment of the Club was such a radical innovation that nobody expected a rapid development, but then the unexpected happened. The propaganda for the Club fell on fertile soil. Hardly a year has passed and the organization already has two-hundred members and additional numbers of Muslim

women are applying for membership all the time. There is no doubt that the Soviet government will eventually donate a larger edifice to the Club. However, that new building will have to be situated in a different location so that its influence can reach the large masses of Muslim women. The transfer of the Club will not be as easy as it seems.

Due to the Club's nature, only women were present when I arrived. They were women belonging to the various Muslim mountain and steppe people of Transcaucasia. The bright electric light fell upon their multicolored and richly embroidered veils, which, without covering any faces, served to enhance the gracefulness of their figures and movements. Even more interesting and attractive than their colorful exotic garments were the expressions of absolute rapture on their faces. It was clear that a revelatory message had reached these women who were stirred to the depths of their beings. Every one of them had acquired a new consciousness which was straining to find expression. This feeling united them all, extending far beyond the confines of the Club and even beyond the borders of the country. The proletarian revolution is consoling the old woman as she is entering the twilight of her life; it is calling the mature woman to a new life full of struggle and work, and it exhorts the young girl that is still half a child to prepare herself for the succession.

The assembled women sang the "International." I have heard that Communist hymn of battle and hope sung many hundreds of times with the same unshakable faith and revolutionary readiness by Russian male and female proletarians. But never have I heard the words and melody sung more solemnly and enchantingly than when it came from the mouths of the Muslim women and girls at Tiflis. Their hearts and their whole being were reflected in that song. They sang the "International" in the same mood that a pious Protestant receives the Lord's Supper and is deeply moved by the conviction that by taking the wine and the oblate, he is "in touch with his Lord Jesus Christ and his God." They are overwhelmed and inspired by the feeling that his song deals with recognition of their humanity and human dignity. They realize that this song means the recognition of their total equality with men, which makes them the equals of millions upon millions of human beings around the world.

The above-mentioned mood clearly emerged from the fervent speeches that some of the Muslim women gave at the Club.

Among them was a young female comrade who could hardly speak for excitement. Indescribable joy about their new evaluation and position as women and their incorporation in the globe-circling community of freedom fighters, intermingles with ardent gratitude for the redeeming work of the proletarian revolution and the Soviet system. Sacred oaths are heard which pledge the construction and protection of the Soviet Republics as well as service to the world revolution. But the memories of unspeakable suffering, humiliations, and bitterness also emerge from their speeches. Shall this horror ever return and become the crushing fate of the blossoming daughter? The attentively listening audience passionately exclaims: "Better to die than to suffer such a fate once more!" Strong applause greets this passionate outburst.

One of the speakers burst out: "How was our life before the revolution? Our fathers sold us like young lambs when we were hardly ten or twelve years old—sometimes even younger. Our husbands demanded our affection and love, even when they seemed to us revolting. When our husbands were in the mood for it, they beat us with clubs or whips. We had to serve them day and night like slaves. When they grew tired of us, they told us to go to hell. They rented us out as mistresses to their friends. They starved us when it suited their fancy. They took away our dearest daughters who were the joy of our eyes and the aid for our weak arms. They sold them just as they had bought us. No mullah came to our aid when we were in need. Where could we have found a judge who would have given us legal aid?

"But now, my dear sisters, how everything has changed! The revolution arrived like a mighty thunderstorm. It has smashed injustice and slavery. It has brought justice and freedom to the poor and oppressed. Our father can no longer take us when we are young and force us upon the bed of a strange husband. We are able to select our husband and he must never again become our master; rather he shall be our friend and comrade. We want to work and to fight next to him and help to construct a new society. A new life must begin for everybody. The Soviets have written a new law. It states that we are human beings just like men are and that we are free and have the same rights as they do. We, too, can select the people, both men and women, that we would like to be sent to the Soviets. And we, ourselves, can work in them. When we have grievances toward our husband, a neighbor or a boss,

we take them to the People's Court. It will side with us if we are in the right. Nobody asks us what prophet we follow: Mohammed, Moses or Christ. The Soviets brought us salvation. Eternal gratitude to them!"

The mood and the spirit of the gathering is explained to me by the trained women comrades who have worked for a long time among the Muslim women of Tiflis. These women, with few exceptions, belonged to the lowest strata of the population. Most of them came before the Revolution, lured to Tiflis by the hope that they could find there easier and more amenable living conditions than they had found in their native mountains and steppes. The men became peddlers, day laborers, servants and carriers or whatever menial occupation they could find outside of the home. The wife remained with the children in the miserable hut. With the migration to the city, she has lost the old economic foundations of her existence. Far removed from her former cabin or tent as well as her fields and herds, she lacks even the most primitive means and possibilities for productive work. She can no longer meet even the demands of her own household. Everything has to be purchased and she has no money to buy anything. Only her husband has money. As a consequence of this change, the Muslim women lost their significance in the eyes of their husbands as co-workers preserving the family. The economic basis of the old patriarchal family was shattered. The dominance of the man within the patriarchate, however, continued and under the most unfavorable conditions. Women felt more than ever that they were slave-like, pieces of property of their husbands. Customs, tradition, language and religion separated them from the rest of the urban population, even the poor people. Their misery, loneliness and despair took on extreme forms. They were like leaves that had been torn off a branch with which the wind is playing. In the literal sense of the word, the Revolution came as a redeemer to the Muslim women of Tiflis. Alongside of it, unhopd-for and overwhelming events entered their lives.

The female comrades explain the greatest significance of the Women's Clubs for the Muslim women of the city. It is here that the ones that have the greatest energy, talent and thirst for knowledge gather in order to obtain their first political and social training. It is here that they are able to acquire knowledge of various kinds. Some of them join the Communist Party in

order to train themselves to become propagandists or organizers of their co-religionists. The Club, however, is also a place of refuge for all those Muslim women that need counsel and aid when they want to defend themselves against an injustice or try to save themselves from sinking into misery and obscurantism. The Club contains "Sections for Cultural Work" where white-haired women sit next to budding young girls and attempt with touching zeal to draw letters and to learn how to read. Courses and lectures convey the elementary knowledge of the natural and social sciences. At certain hours during the day, three comrades who have legal expertise are present at the Club to assist with juridical problems. They are particularly appreciated. The proclamation of legal equality cannot, of course, overcome all at once with a magic wand the traditional attitude of men towards the female sex which has developed over the centuries. Very often the women have to fight to obtain justice and that means going to court. The Club also teaches courses in the repairing and sewing of clothes and in embroidering. Most of the urbanized Muslim women have not learned the needlework of their mothers and the younger ones hardly know how to hold a needle.

Naturally (as the female comrades strongly emphasize), it is the aim of the Communists to incorporate the female masses into the Socialisteconomy. This is, however, very difficult as long as Georgia's modern industry is still in its infancy. It will grow rapidly once the first big electric power plant along the Kura River near Tiflis is ready, a plant which the Soviet government is building right now. In the meantime, the Women's Section of the Communist Party helps out in individual cases to obtain jobs for Muslim women.² Some of them work in the carton factory, others in the tobacco and textile industries. After the necessary move of the Club to larger accommodations, the women comrades plan to set up women artels there, which are women collectives. The work in production collectives will raise the self-confidence and feeling of solidarity among the Muslim women and thus contribute to their understanding of Communism as well as the development of the Club. Already it has become a powerful magnet which attracts many Muslim women from the city and its environs. Its influence reaches far beyond the official 200 members. This supposition is no exaggeration because there are about ten women in support of every official

member so that when it comes to important questions and events, the Club has the support of the majority of Muslim women. Every Club member is an advertisement for the Club and carries its message with energy, fervidness and even fanatic religious zeal to friends and relatives.

When the teachers and administrators of the Club went to a side room in order to show me the instructional material and the cupboards and boxes which were filled with hand-embroidered materials, the crowd of Muslim women also pushed into the room. All of them felt the desire to share in the admiration of the Club's activities and to show the joy about their accomplishments: "This is the instructional book which illustrates how people used to work before the Revolution;" "On this blackboard the teacher shows how many illiterates there still are in the Soviet Union;" "Here it shows how we must take care of our infants;" "I have written this;" "I helped to embroider this large blanket and this blouse was made by me;" "I can sew shirts like these." Such exclamations, which resound all around me, express the tie which each individual feels with the work and the learning of the collective. In another side room, legal advisors are literally swamped.

One wants to show me that the Club is also a place for entertainment and for joy. The piano is being played and the dancing begins. The first dance is executed by the five year old daughter of a female comrade and her figure, face and garment remind me of how, as a child, I had imagined the Queen of Sheba and the Semiramis to have looked. The little girl is a charming creature with dark curls and big, burning eyes. Her graceful movements and the expressions on her face adapt themselves amazingly fast to the changing rhythms and character of the music. She is evidently the spoiled little darling of the club. Then young girls are dancing, for the most part singly, but at times as couples. The gracefulness of their movements is far removed from the Oriental dances which one usually sees in our part of the world. These dances are passionate and yet chaste and they differ totally from the ones one sees in the West. There is no provocative display of the body but rather a joyful expression of life and movement.

The dances constitute only a brief episode of the evening. The Revolution, the awakened "new life" steps once again into the foreground of their feelings and thoughts. The questions, exclamations, speeches and assurances which breathe the spirit of

international revolutionary solidarity, all demonstrate how far the formerly narrow horizons of the Muslim women have been extended. The feeling of solidarity has come like a revelation of salvation over the rising women of the Orient and it has given them fiery energy. They know and believe: "In this sign thou shalt conquer!"

When I was leaving the Club, the "International" was heard again both within the building and out in the street, sung by the Muslim women of Tiflis. The newspapers were full of news of the attempts of mighty capitalist groups and their bourgeois governments to prevent the threatening thunderstorm of the proletarian revolution and the mighty historical transformation of this globe. "And yet it moves, because we will move it." This oath, this article of faith resounds from the depths of this world.

[Clara Zetkin "In The Liberated Caucasus" Berlin and Vienna, 1926, p.p. 80-87.] □

NOTES

FOREWORD BY ANGELA Y. DAVIS

1. Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, New York, 1970, pp. 137-38.
2. V.I. Lenin, *The Emancipation of Women*, New York, 1966, p. 81
3. Clara Zetkin, *Social Democracy and Woman Suffrage*, p. 15.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 16
5. Batya Weinbaum, *The Curious Courtship of Women's Liberation & Socialism*, Boston, 1978.
6. Clara Zetkin, *The Toilers Against War*, New York, 1934, p. 73.

INTRODUCTION

1. Luise Dornemann, *Clara Zetkin: Ein Lebensbild*, Berlin, 1957, pp.27-29,32-33.
2. Karen Honeycutt, "Clara Zetkin: A Left-Wing Socialist and Feminist in Wilhelmine Germany," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1975, pp. 22-23,28-29.
3. Jacqueline Strain, "Feminism and Political Radicalism in the German Social Democratic Movement, 1890-1914," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1975, p. 26; Dornemann, *op.cit.*, pp. 13-15.
4. Dornemann, *op.cit.*, pp. 20-23.
5. Honeycutt, *op.cit.*, pp. 30-35; Clara Zetkin, "Auguste Schmidt," *Gleichheit* 12(July,1902): 109-10.
6. C.G.L. Alexander, *Aus Clara Zetkins Leben und Werk*, Berlin, 1927,pp.4-5.
Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864) was the German lawyer and labor leader who founded the General German Workers Union in 1863, and was criticized by Marx as an advocate of opportunism in German Social-Democracy. For a detailed characterization of Lassalle by Marx, see his letter to Kugelmann, February 23,1865, in *The Selected Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 1846-1895*, New York, 1942, pp. 193-97.
7. Alexander, *op.cit.*, p. 5. Wilhelm Liebknecht (1826-1900) was one of the founders and leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party, and became editor of the party paper, *Vorwärts*. Liebknecht was one of the first to enter the Reichstag as a Socialist.

86. For the full text of the appeal, see pp. 167-169.
87. For the full text of the speech, see pp.170-175.
88. It was originally published in the Soviet Union under the title of *Imperialist War Against the Toiling Masses. The Toiling Masses Against Imperialist War*, Moscow, 1933. It was supposed to be published in time for International Anti-War Day, August 1, 1932, but a severe illness, including an attack of malaria, made it impossible for Clara Zetkin to complete the work in time. It was published under the title, *The Toilers Against War* by Workers Library Publishers, New York, 1934. It was also published under that title in England.
89. Clara Zetkin, *The Toilers Against War*, New York, 1934, p.81.
90. *Ibid.*, pp. 127-28.
91. Quoted in Klara Zetkin, *Through Dictatorship to Democracy*, Glasgow, n.d., p.5. The work was translated into English by Eden and Cedar Paul.

FOR THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN

1. Clara Zetkin represented two groups at the Paris Congress: one was the workers associated with the *Berliner Volkstribüne*, and one from the working women of Berlin. (C.G.L. Alexander, *op.cit.*, p.14).
2. The verbatim report of the speech begins with the third paragraph.
3. *Women's work* refers to the entry of women into the industrial labor force.
4. In this period, Clara Zetkin rejected any form of special protection for working women such as laws prohibiting women from being employed in certain types of work deemed dangerous to females. The sole exception was in the case of pregnant women. As we have seen, she later changed her position.
5. The German Social-Democratic Party (SPD) was the party of German Social Democracy. It was organized in 1875 under the leadership of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, the leading disciples of Karl Marx in Germany. The Marxists and Lassalleans joined to form the SPD.
6. Dr. Edward Aveling was one of the British delegates to the Congress. He married Eleanor Marx, Karl Marx's daughter, who was also a delegate.

WOMEN'S WORK AND THE ORGANIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS

1. A worldwide economic depression occurred in 1893. In the United States about three million people were without any means of earning a living in December, 1893.
2. In the United States there were 2,647,000 women gainfully employed in 1880 constituting 15.2 percent of the nation's work force. By 1890 there were over four million gainfully employed women making up 17.2 percent of the total labor force. This figure included almost 300,000 girls under fifteen years of age. (Philip S. Foner, *Women and the American Labor Movement: From Colonial Times to the Eve of World War I*, New York, 1979, p.186.)

3. In this connection it is interesting to note that Leonora M. Barry, the general investigator for the Knights of Labor's Department of Woman's Work, reached somewhat the same conclusion as did Clara Zetkin. In her reports of 1887, 1888, and 1889, she also noted that workingwomen were partially responsible for their continued exploitation. "All this," Barry concluded, "is the result or effect of the environment and conditions surrounding women in the past and present, and can be removed only by constant agitation and education." (*Ibid.* pp. 204-05).
4. *Gleichheit* (Equality) was the socialist women's journal which Clara Zetkin edited from 1892-1917.

THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS' PETITION

1. The conflict between Clara Zetkin and the SPD leadership over her refusal to support bourgeois feminism came to a head over the Party's support for a petition drafted by the radical feminists, Minna Cauer and Lily von Gizycki, together with a member of the SPD, Adele Gehrard. The document called for an end to the assembly and association laws restricting the political activity of women in most German states. The SPD's Central organ and largest daily paper, *Vorwärts*, published the petition, together with a statement of support, recommending that Party members sign. Zetkin also reprinted the petition in *Gleichheit*, but accompanied it with a warning: "We decidedly advise every class conscious member of the proletariat against supporting this petition in any manner." Zetkin's position was that the petition of the radical feminists "breathe[d] a thoroughly bourgeois spirit" and stood "in the most glaring contradiction to our view." Among other things, Zetkin was angered by the failure of the middle-class women to seek a common understanding in advance with women of the working class, thus revealing, as she saw it, a contempt for lower class women. (Karen Honeycutt, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-176.)
2. See p. 24.
3. It was with great difficulty that Zetkin was able to secure publication of her letter in *Vorwärts*. Engels noted this fact in his letter to Victor Adler, January 28, 1895: "Luise is especially happy about the decisive rejection of the Women's League Petition. Take a look at Clara Zetkin's article in Thursday's *Vorwärts* supplement. Clara is correct and was able to have her article published in spite of all the efforts to squelch it. Bravo Clara!" (*Victor Adler's Essays, Speeches and Letters*. Published by the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Workers' Party of German Austria. First issue: Victor Adler and Friedrich Engels, Vienna, 1922, p. 124.)
Victor Adler (1852-1918) was the founder and leader of Austrian social democracy, and a member of the International Socialist Bureau.
Clara Zetkin wrote a fifteen-page letter to Engels explaining in detail her reasons for her uncompromising attitude toward the bourgeois feminist petition.

A REPLY

1. The reference is to Ethical Culture Society feminists like Lily von Gizycki who had been conducting intense agitation among working class women. In her letter to Engels, Zetkin took the position that as long as the Ethical Culture women stayed in their own circle, one need not criticize them. But when they brought their bourgeois feminist ideas to the working class women, they had to be criticized. "Vigilance against the 'Ethical bacillus' was the more necessary," she maintained, "since already within the SPD, the tendency towards opportunism and reformism is rather great and grows with the expansion of the Party." (Honeycutt, *op.cit.*, p. 178.)
2. The author of this remark was not "this or that woman," but Wilhelm Liebknecht, chief editor of *Vorwärts*.

ONLY WITH THE PROLETARIAN WOMAN

1. Clara Zetkin's speech is considered the first major policy statement of the SPD on the woman question. It was published as a pamphlet and used extensively in agitation on the woman question. The Party Congress also adopted Clara Zetkin's resolution concerning propaganda among women. The resolution demanded that the Party increase organizational efforts among working class women and intensify its agitation for legislative protection of working women, for the appointment of female factory inspectors, for occupational courts for women workers, for active voting rights for women, for equal political rights, equal pay for equal work, equal educational opportunities, and equal status for women in private law.
2. Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815-1887), jurist and anthropologist whose book *Das Mutterrecht* ("Mother Right") published in 1886, presented the first attempt to advance a scientific history of the family as a social institution and suggested that mother right preceded father right. Bachofen adopted the views of U.S. anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan on kinship.
3. Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881), lawyer who made a special study of kinship during his years of research among the American Indians. His famous work, *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization*, was published in 1877. Morgan's emphasis on property in cultural evolution influenced Marx and Engels.
4. The reference is to Engels' *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, first published in 1884.
5. The reference is to Baron Stumm-Halberg (1836-1901), the most prominent Saar industrialist and a Free Conservative political leader.
6. The reference is to Bismarck's anti-socialist law of 1878. Under its terms all social-democratic, socialist, and communist associations, meetings, and publications could be forbidden or dissolved. The law provided that professional Socialist organizers, if found guilty of its violation, could be banned from certain towns or districts. In "imperiled" districts the government also received the power to lift the right of assembly and free political expression, and to expel persons who

seemed to endanger the public peace. Innkeepers, printers, and book dealers were threatened with the loss of their license if they violated the law.

7. August Bebel (1840-1913), one of the founders and leaders of the German Social Democratic Party and the Second International. He was sentenced with Wilhelm Liebknecht to two years' imprisonment for treason for opposing the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. For a discussion of Bebel's *Woman and Socialism*, see pp.21-23.
8. The reference is to Adelheid Popp, one of the leaders of the women's movement in Austrian Social Democracy.

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

1. The "internal enemy" of the capitalists was the working class and the Socialists.
2. Frederick William III (1770-1840), King of Prussia from 1797.
3. The reference is to the Social-Democratic Party (or as it was originally called the Social-Democratic Workers' Party). By 1887 the Party had twelve seats in the federal parliament and its popular vote reached 9 percent of the total national vote.
4. Usually Junkers referred to the Prussian landed aristocracy, but here it is used to refer to ultrareactionary industrialists.
5. Adolph Stocker (1835-1909), conservative court chaplain who launched the Christian-Social Workers Party in 1878.

WHAT THE WOMEN OWE TO KARL MARX

1. Frederick Engels was born in 1820, in Barmen, Germany, the son of a religiously-inclined, tyrannical owner of textile factories in Barmen. Despite pressure upon him to pursue a business career, Engels chose writing and radical journalism. He met Marx briefly in Cologne, but in the summer of 1844, the two struck up a permanent friendship which was to profoundly influence their lives and the whole course of scientific socialism. Engels worked in his father's business in Manchester for nineteen years, financially aiding the desperately poor Marx family. When he had accumulated enough capital for himself, he sold his share of the business and moved to London where he spent the last twenty-five years of his life writing his own important books and articles, editing Marx's works, and helping to direct the course of the Socialist movements in Europe and the United States. He died on August 5, 1895. Engels collaborated with Marx on a number of books and articles—among them, of course, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), and wrote a number of prefaces to Marx's works.
2. The letter was sent from London, March 15, 1883 to Friedrich Adolph Sorge (1827-1906), who emigrated to the United States from Germany in 1852, joined the New York Communist Club in 1858, and actively corresponded with Marx and Engels. Sorge was one of the leaders of the local sections of the First International in the United States. After the General Council of the International was transferred to New York in 1872, Sorge became General Secretary. He was active in the formation of the Socialist Labor Party of the United States.

3. The principle of uniting upper-class and working-class women in a sisterhood that transcended class lines was an objective of the Women's Trade Union League established in the United States in 1903. While the principle was in evidence during the waistmakers' revolt of 1909, the sisterhood proved to be short-lived. (See Foner, *Women and the American Labor Movement*, pp. 343-44, and Nancy Schrom Dye, "Creating a Feminist Alliance: Sisterhood, Feminism or Unionism: The New York Women's Trade Union League and the Labor Movement," *Feminist Studies* 3(Fall, 1975): 111-25.)

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

1. This was the first International Socialist Women's Conference and was attended by 59 women from 15 countries. It met at Stuttgart on August 17, 1907.
2. The reference is to the Russian Revolution of 1905.
3. Clara Zetkin was more critical of the Austrian Socialists, including Socialist women, for supporting the Party's tactic of not even mentioning women's suffrage during the campaigns in 1905 and 1906 for the extension of Austrian suffrage.
4. Limited suffrage included limiting the right to vote to women of property and wealth.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

1. The proposal was adopted as a resolution. For the discussion of the origins of International Women's Day, see pp. 31-32.

PROLETARIAN WOMEN BE PREPARED

1. On June 28, 1914, the student Gavrilko Princip, a Serbian, killed Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria and his wife in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. Supported by Germany, Austro-Hungary delivered an ultimatum to Serbia, which she accepted but with several reservations. Rejecting the reservations the Hapsburg monarchy declared war on July 28. By the first week of August the war had spread to encompass Germany, France, Russia and other countries, bringing about the first World War.
2. The Triple Entente was a military alliance formed by Great Britain, France, and Russia. It was preceded by the Triple Alliance, uniting Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy against France. In 1883 Romania was added to the Triple Alliance.
3. The reference is to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference at Bern., Switzerland, which was held from May 11 to May 12, 1913. The conference was arranged by members of the Swiss National Assembly who invited German and French Parliamentarians. The largest number of German participants consisted of Reichstag deputies of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, among whom were August Bebel and Karl Liebknecht. The conference was to prepare a program against war propaganda and the unbearable increase in the burden of armament in both France and Germany.

4. The reference is to attacks by Rosa Luxemburg on German militarists in numerous articles and at meetings during the first half of 1914.

TO THE SOCIALIST WOMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES

1. The appeal was first published in the *Berner Tagwacht* and then distributed throughout Germany in December, 1914 in the form of a pamphlet. Censorship prevented its publication in *Gleichheit*.

LETTER TO HELEEN ANKERSMIT

1. Heleen Ankersmit (1872-1944) was a member of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party and later the Communist Party of Holland. A long-time comrade and friend of Clara Zetkin, she was an organizer and leader of the Dutch working class women's movement.
2. Clara Zetkin was elected at Stuttgart in 1907 as secretary of the International Women's Bureau of the Second International.
3. The appeal was "To the Socialist Women of All Countries," November, 1914. See pp.114-116.
4. The leaders of the German trade unions were the first Social-Democrats to support the government during the war. On August 2 they called off all strikes then in progress. On the following day the party's delegation in the Reichstag held its caucus in preparation for the meeting of the federal parliament on August 4. "In the hour of peril we shall not leave the fatherland in the lurch," went the statement as the SPD, despite the initial opposition of 14 deputies, voted to support the war effort. In the Reichstag the Social-Democrats joined with other parties in unanimously passing a credit of 5 billion marks. Even Karl Liebknecht yielded to party discipline and voted for the August 4th war credits, but this was to be the last time he would do so.
5. On August 2, 1914, before Germany was at war with France, the German government presented an ultimatum to Belgium demanding from the Belgian government that it should tolerate the passage of German troops. The Belgians would be treated as enemies in case it refused. On August 4, after the Belgians rejected the ultimatum, the Germans invaded Belgium.
6. At the caucus of the SPD's delegation in the Reichstag on August 3, 1914, 14 deputies, among them Hugo Haase (one of the two party chairmen), opposed the party's course in supporting the war. But in the end they yielded to party discipline, and Haase even agreed to act as speaker for the party at the parliamentary session.
7. On November 12, 1914 *Justice*, published in England, printed a statement dated September 10, 1914, made by Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring and Clara Zetkin, which stated that "we and many other German Social-Democrats regard the war from a standpoint that in no way corresponds to that" of the party leadership. They added: "The fact that we are under martial law makes it impossible for us at present to defend our views publicly."
8. Hugo Haase (1863-1919) succeeded August Bebel as leader of the Social-Democratic Party. Although he held pacifist views during the

war he submitted to majority discipline and voted for war credits. He resigned as party head in 1915 and became head of the Independent Social-Democratic Party (USPD) in 1916. Haase was one of the USPD ministers in the coalition government set up in November, 1918 following the Kaiser's abdication. He resigned at the end of December in protest against the government's counterrevolutionary course. He was murdered in 1919.

9. Literally: Let us return to our cheep. The phrase here means: Let us get back to our main subject.
10. The reference is to Luise Zietz. For a biographical sketch, see pp. 184n.62.
11. Angelica Balabanov was one of the delegates to the first International Socialist Women's Conference in Stuttgart in 1907. She represented the Italian movement and served as a principal translator. (See Angelica Balabanov, *My Life as a Rebel* (New York, 1938), p.80.
12. As a member of the Reichstag, Karl Liebknecht could not be arrested for voting and speaking against the war. He was therefore conscripted into the army in an effort to silence him. But there, too, Liebknecht continued to fight against the war.
13. On November 30, 1914 the SPD parliamentary delegates decided by a vote of 82 to 17 to vote for the new war credits. Then on December 2 Karl Liebknecht voted against the war credits. He gave as his reason that the war was "an imperialist war, a war for the capitalist domination of the world market. . . . The war is not a German defensive war. . . ." (Heinz Wohlgemuth, *Karl Liebknecht: Eine Biographie* (Berlin, 1973), pp. 174-75.)

After this Liebknecht, Zetkin, Luxemburg, and Mehring issued a declaration asserting that the war was imperialistic in origin, and would lead to capitalistic expansion and annexation. It was an idle dream to hope that the war could be transformed into one of defense. Rather it had to be opposed and brought to an early end.

WOMEN OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

1. Clara Zetkin wrote this manifesto, which was adopted by a women's conference she convened as the secretary of the International Socialist Women. See also p. 37.

TO THE SOCIALIST WOMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES

1. In May, 1917 the SPD Executive removed Clara Zetkin as editor of *Gleichheit* because of her outspoken criticism of the Party's support of the German war effort.
2. Under the auspices of the Independent Socialists the "Frauenbeilage" (Women's Supplement) of the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* was founded, and Clara Zetkin was placed in charge.
3. In March, 1916, eighteen of the twenty Socialist deputies in the Reichstag who had voted against the fourth war loan, formed the Socialist Collaboration Group under the leadership of Hugo Haase, Wilhelm Dittmann, and Georg Lebedau. In January, 1917, a conference called by the Group met with representatives from all over

Germany and issued a manifesto attacking the capitalist governments on both sides for having failed to formulate war aims. During Easter, 1917 the opposition Socialists held a Congress in Gotha where they founded the Independent Social-Democratic Party.

THE BATTLE FOR POWER AND PEACE IN RUSSIA

1. On March 15 (March 2, old style), the Czar abdicated, and the thousand-year-old Russian monarchy came to an end. The recently dissolved Duma set up a Provisional Committee to maintain order and establish some democratic reforms. The same day leaders of the Petrograd workers and a rebellious garrison created the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, an unofficial but representative body elected by factories and regiments. Similar soviets were quickly set up all over Russia. The Duma Committee established the Provisional Government headed by Prince Georgy Lvov as prime minister, with Alexander Kerensky, a Duma deputy of the moderate Socialist Labour Group as Minister of Justice.
2. The word Bolsheviks is derived from the Russian word meaning majority. At the London Congress of Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party in 1903, there was a split on the question of what kind of revolutionary organization should be built. The Bolsheviks, led by V.I. Lenin, were in the majority; the Mensheviks were in the minority. Most of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party at the time of the March Revolution were in exile abroad or in Petrograd. Lenin returned from exile via Sweden and Finland, to Petrograd in the famous "sealed train" on April 16, 1917. Lenin immediately issued an open call for "All Power to the Soviets!"
3. Although the Bolsheviks grew in membership, the Party was outlawed following the mass demonstrations in Petrograd in July. Lenin went into hiding in Finland, and Kerensky replaced Prince Lvov as prime minister of the Provisional Government.
4. With their slogan, "Peace, Land, and Bread," the Bolsheviks gained more and more support among the peasants, workers, and soldiers. On October 20 (October 7), Lenin returned secretly to Petrograd to urge the policy of armed insurrection.
5. On the morning of November 7 (October 25) the Bolsheviks proclaimed the overthrow of the Provisional Government. That same night the Cabinet members were captured in the Winter Palace. The Second Congress of Soviets proclaimed the Soviets to be the ruling organs in Russia, headed by the Soviet Central Executive Committee and by the Council of People's Commissars as the Cabinet. Lenin was designated chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. After an abortive attempt to return to power was put down, Kerensky went into hiding, and the following year fled to England and then to the United States. By then the great October Revolution had fully triumphed.
6. Friedrich Schiller, *Wilhelm Tell*, Act II, Scene II.

printer, was not published until April, 1916. Its real title was *The Crisis of the German Social-Democracy*, but Junius was the pseudonym under which it was published.

11. While she was in prison Rosa Luxemburg sent many letters to Sonja Liebknecht, wife of Karl Liebknecht to keep her from despairing over her husband's cruel punishment.
12. In 1906 Karl Liebknecht delivered a course of lectures to the Young Socialist League, which he had helped found, on "Militarism and Anti-Militarism." Liebknecht's lectures were published in book form in 1907, which created an immediate sensation in Germany because of its exposure of the class function of capitalist militarism. The books were confiscated by the German authorities, and the author was tried at Leipzig for high treason. He was found guilty of treason and condemned to eighteen months in prison. While still in prison, he was elected to the Prussian Landtag by the workers of Berlin. (Wohlgemuth, *op.cit.*, pp.130-64.)
13. Rosa Luxemburg was born on March 5, 1871, in Zamosc, Russian Poland (now Poland), the youngest of five children of a lower middle class Jewish family. She learned Polish and German from her parents, and became involved in underground activities while still in high school. In 1889, with arrest imminent, she decided to leave Poland and at the end of the year she arrived in Zurich, which was to be her home for the next nine years. She enrolled at the University of Zurich—one of the few institutions which then admitted men and women on an equal basis—and studied mathematics and natural sciences. After a few years she shifted to the school of law, and in 1897 completed a dissertation on the industrial development of Poland, receiving her doctorate in political science. In Zurich she became involved in the international socialist movement. In 1892 she was one of the founding members of the Polish Socialist Party, the first attempt to unite all the various currents of Polish socialism into one organization. But together with Leo Jogiches, her lifelong political collaborator, she came into conflict with that organization's principal leaders. In 1894 she and a small group of Polish émigrés broke away from the PPS and formed the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland, which five years later became the Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania.
14. In 1897 Rosa Luxemburg moved to Germany where she began to play an active role in the SPD. She made a living as a journalist writing for the publications of the Party. But as long as she was a foreigner the German authorities could easily prevent her from being politically active. To meet this problem she married Gustav Lübeck and obtained German citizenship. A divorce was obtained five years later.
15. Published in German in 1913, the work describes imperialism as the result of a dynamic capitalism's expansion into underdeveloped areas of the world.
16. Rosa Luxemburg was deeply moved by the Russian Revolution of 1905. She went to Warsaw, participated in the struggle, and was imprisoned. *The Mass Strike, the Political Party and the Trade Unions* was written in August, 1906 in Finland, where Rosa Luxem-

burg went to recover from her imprisonment. In it she maintained that the mass strike was the single most important tool of the proletariat in attaining a Socialist victory.

17. Rosa Luxemburg returned to Germany and taught at the Social Democratic Party school in Berlin from 1907 to 1914. She tried unsuccessfully to win the SPD leadership to support the mass strike.
18. Karl Liebknecht's father was Wilhelm Liebknecht.
19. Otto Landsberg (1869-1942), one of the group of Majority Socialists in Germany who worked with Ebert, Scheidemann, and Noske to suppress the revolutionary movement.
20. According to reports in the bourgeois and Social-Democratic press, the soldiers of the Guard Cavalry Marksmen Division which had arrested Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, had tried to protect them afterwards. But revelations in the *Rote Fahne* forced the Social Democratic press to admit that the murder had been carried out by members of the Guard Cavalry Marksmen Division. Clara Zetkin was sick at Stuttgart at the time her two friends and comrades were assassinated in Berlin, and was unaware of the real circumstances of the murders.

IN THE MUSLIM WOMEN'S CLUB

1. Tbilis, Georgian Tblisi, is the capital of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, in the southeast of the Soviet Union on the Kura river.
2. In Muslim tradition women are required to stay at home.

SAVE THE SCOTTSBORO BLACK YOUTHS

1. See pp. 15-16 and page 40.
2. Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, and Italian shoemaker and a fisherman who had emigrated to the United States and become involved in the radical movement, were arrested in 1921 and charged falsely with a robbery and murder in South Braintree, Massachusetts more than a year before. The anti-radical feeling of the time guaranteed that despite any real evidence, Sacco and Vanzetti would be found guilty. Despite tremendous defense activities and national and international protests, they were executed on the night of August 23, 1927.
3. Ruby Bates, one of the two prostitutes (the other was Victoria Price) wrote a letter to a boyfriend in which she said that the rape story was false, and that "those police man (sic) made me tell a lie." She also testified later in the second trial that the rape story was a lie.
4. On March 24, 1932 the Alabama Supreme Court upheld by a margin of six to one the conviction of all but one of the eight Scottsboro defendants. They granted Eugene Williams a new trial on the grounds that he was allegedly a juvenile at the time of his conviction. Chief Justice Anderson dissented, insisting that "they did not get a fair and impartial trial that is required and contemplated by our Constitution" (*Powell v. State*, 224 Ala.). On November 7, 1932, the Supreme Court of the United States reversed the lower verdict on the ground that the