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The Self-Exposure of the German Social Traitors in the Ebert Case.

The German S. D. in Court, as Mirrored in their own Press*).

From the Protocol of Ebert's Statement.

"Without reservation on the side of defence of country."

From the beginning of the war until the end I stood without reservation on the side of defence of native country, and acted accordingly. During the whole war I was opposed to strikes among the workers of war industries. I spoke with particular emphasis to this effect at the national conference of the German Democratic Party on 21. September 1916.

The munition workers' strike in Berlin in January 1918 broke out without the prompting or approval of the Social Democratic Party.

Neither had I personally anything whatever to do with the strike, either directly or indirectly; on the contrary, it took me completely by surprise.

In the morning of 28. January 1918 a rapid succession of workers' delegations from numerous Berlin works presented themselves at the office of the Social Democratic Party, bringing reports on the strike, and requesting that the Central Committee of the Social Democratic Party should send representatives to the strike committee, in order to prevent worse from happening. On behalf of the Party leaders I pointed out that the strike had originated without the cooperation or approval of the Social Democratic Party. The strikers had already elected a strike committee and formulated certain demands. After this nobody could expect the leaders of the Social Democratic Party to undertake the subsequent responsibility. The workers' delegations then asked if the Party leaders would send a delegation to the strike committee, should the delegates' meeting request them to do so. After a long discussion this was replied to in the affirmative.

Here the decisive motive of the Party leaders was to prevent the interests of the country from being injured by the strike, and to try to bring the strike to an end as speedily as possible, by means of negotiations with the government.

*) Almost all underlinings and special emphasis have been made by the Berlin "Vorwärts" itself (Ed.).

After a violent contention in the delegates' meeting itself, the majority of the meeting voted for the motion, and the committee of the Social Democratic Party commissioned Otto Braun, Scheidemann, and myself to undertake the Party representation. Our entry into the strike committee took place with the proviso, declared to the workers' delegation, that the strike committee was to be reorganised on parity lines, that is, that the Social Democratic Party was to be represented in the committee in equal numbers as the Independent Social Democratic Party, and

that a renewed discussion on the demands already formulated was to be made possible.

(Berlin, "Vorwärts", 10. December.)

The Thanks Accorded to the Saviours of the Fatherland!

Today I am of the opinion that the strike would have been very rapidly settled if the German government had not adopted a formalist standpoint. In Cologne the commander of the fortress expressed his thanks to the representatives of social democracy for what they had accomplished in preventing Germany's being injured with relation to abroad. At that time I emphasised, at a strikers' meeting, that the strike was nonsense, since the English munition workers were even foregoing their holidays.

(Berlin, "Rote Fahne", 10. December.)

In Munich, the then Bavarian prime minister, von Daudl, spoke on the strike on 1. February 1918 in the Chamber of Deputies. In the course of his speech he turned to the Social Democrats with the following words:

He thanked them for having now undertaken the leadership of the affair, for from them he hoped that they would guide the movement to a peaceful conclusion, and thus put an end to the insurrection, which was really damaging us seriously in our relations with abroad.

("Vorwärts", 10. December.)

From Dittmann's Evidence.

The Independent Social Democrats also in favour of national defence.

Witness Dittmann:

The Social Democrats, and the Independents as well, had invariably declared openly that defence of native country was the duty of every German. Haase emphasised this on every occasion. Ledebour too invariably opposed defence nihilism.

The chairman asked the deputy Dittmann: It was thus your intention to help the strikers to get their demands acceded to?

Witness Dittmann: I find this question very strange in this connection. The formulation is such that I cannot but assume that you mean we had the intention to press something through by force, in opposition to the interests of the German Reich.

("Vorwärts", 10. December.)

An "Insult".

Martin (barrister): How does this utterance agree with the action taken by the witness with reference to the mutiny in the fleet?

Dittmann (highly excited): I protest against this unheard of attack. I never took any action towards inciting mutiny in the fleet. I shall call you legally to account for this.

Landsberg (barrister): It is perfectly disgraceful to insult the witness here in such a manner.

("Vorwärts", 10. December.)

How it is done.

The witness Eimler, a carpenter, spoke of the attitude taken by the witness Dittmann at a strike meeting:

Dittmann spoke after Ebert. He said that what had brought us together was the will to peace.

He did not speak of the strike, any more than comrade Ebert did.

("Rote Fahne", 10. December.)

The Witness Wuschik.

The Sabotagers of the Munition Workers' Strike.

Witness Wuschik, Party secretary:

From 1916 onwards the growth of the Spartacus movement was observable in the works and factories, rendering necessary the creation of a defensive organisation among the Social Democratic workmen. This organisation, which had the additional object of keeping the Party committee informed, made its first appearance during the food strike in 1917. At that time I was working for the firm Schwartzkopff, where about one third of the workers were SD. When the movement broke out in January, I and several functionaries went to the Party committee, where we first met only the secretary, Hermann Müller. Müller advised us to pass resolutions in the works, demanding that members of our Party committee should enter the strike committee. But this did not appear advisable to us, for it was very questionable whether we should be in a position, under the circumstances, to hold a factory meeting at all. We therefore negotiated immediately with Ebert, Scheidemann, Müller, and Braun. We told them that we should do our utmost to induce the representatives of the functionaries to admit the members of our Party committee into the strike committee.

At first Ebert was very gruff, and declared: "I have not the slightest intention of taking part in this movement!"

Those who have made this bed can lie upon it themselves." Scheidemann and Braun were equally unwilling at first, and it was not until after a lengthy discussion that the opinion was arrived at that the members of the Party committee, in the interests of national defence, should enter the strike committee, mainly for the purpose

of guiding the whole movement into peaceful channels and shortening it.

Chairman: Do you know how the members of the Majority SD Party ("majority" social democrats as differing from the "independents", Ed.) entered the strike?

Witness: They entered after the Majority Socialist workers took part. I assume that the well disciplined Right socialist workers took part. I assume that the well-disciplined right socialist workers put pressure on their leaders. When these gentlemen en-

tered the strike committee, it was not their task to promote the strike; for this their standpoint was too antisocialist, too anti-pacifist, too much in favour of the commanders in chief of the army. They took part in the strike for the purpose of preventing its taking any great effect, and with the idea of being ready on the spot should something happen.

Bindewald (barrister): Why did the Social Democratic Party not issue warnings against the strike, like the Christian and Hirsch Duncker trade unions?

Witness Wuschik: If the Party Committee had been anxious for the strike to last as long as possible, and to be carried on with the utmost energy, all it had to do was to give this advice to the workers, many of whom were opposed to the Party committee.

("Vorwärts", 10. December 1924, Evening edition.)

Witness Wuschik:

Certainly. In some works the workers were called up by the military authorities on the third or fourth day of the strike. At that time the Spartacus movement was active in propagating the idea of refusing military service. One workman submitted this question specially to Ebert, and Ebert declared that he could not by any means support this proposition of the radicals; however hard it might be for the individual, the call to military service must be unconditionally obeyed.

("Vorwärts", 10. December 1924, Evening edition.)

Why they Wanted Equal Representation in the Strike Committee.

Witness Wuschik:

However, we did not let loose, and finally succeeded in having three delegates allowed us, the Independent Social Democrats also having three representatives in the strike committee. But we did not obtain this from the meeting itself but from the strike committee, which included Haase, Ledebour, and Dittmann. Further hours of persuasion were required before our Party committee was induced to exercise influence upon the action, for the purpose of bringing it to an end as speedily as possible. Ledebour exerted his utmost eloquence to prevent the admission of the Majority socialists. When he did not succeed in this, he finally observed to me: "Well, Wuschik, now you have throttled the strike, for that is the sole task intended to be accomplished here by your Party friends."

("Vorwärts", 10. December 1924, Evening edition.)

No Political Demands!

Adolf Richter was then briefly interrogated. At the time of the munition workers' strike he participated in the consultations with the Party committee of the SD Party, as functionary of the trade unions, although he himself was an Independent. According to his evidence, President Ebert declared at that time, in the Party committee, that

the Party leaders of the German SD Party would by no means share the responsibility for this strike if political demands should be made in place of the economic demands.

("Vorwärts", 10. December, Evening edition.)

Further Declaration of Ebert.

Ebert:

I was never of the opinion that strikes could shorten the war. I never said to anybody that he should refuse to obey when called up for military service, much less made a public appeal to that effect. Such an utterance on my part would have been inconsistent with my attitude towards the war before and after the strike.

I distinctly recollect that at a session of the SD Party committee at that time the question was raised, from another side, of whether punitive commands to join the army should be obeyed, or not. We were unanimously of the opinion that, should there be any indication that workers would refuse to obey when called up, this tendency should be decidedly combatted. I also distinctly recollect that I informed the then chairman of the general commission of the trade unions, Bauer, of the views of the Party leaders on this subject, Bauer declared himself in agreement with me.

("Vorwärts", 11. December, Evening edition.)

Heine Protects the Overpowered Socialist Workers.

Heine (barrister):

On 28. January the strike broke out among the dock workers of Kiel. On 29. January the social democratic leaders entered the strike committee. The social democrats did not prepare the strike, and their leaders entered the strike committee solely for the purpose of protecting the overpowered socialist workers, and in the interests of national defence.

("Vorwärts", 12. December, Evening edition.)

Kaiser Socialist Scheidemann as Witness.

Scheidemann: I did not hear Wallraf's speech, though there is much contained in it to which I could give my agreement. The strike broke out without our knowing anything about it, and deputations were sent to us asking us to participate. We declined to do this and sent the delegates away. But when our own followers begged us to join the strike committee, we did so with the expressed intention — here I betray no secret — of

putting an end to the strike as speedily as possible by means of negotiations with the government.

There was a strong feeling against us in the functionaries' meeting, as "sabotagers" of the strike.

The workers wanted to stop the electric supply as reply to Kessel's commands.

If we had not entered the strike committee at that time, this court would not be sitting today, precisely as we prevented Russian conditions in 1918. And no newspaper would exist today which could abuse us. What we did was done for love of our Fatherland!

("Vorwärts", 12. December, Evening edition.)

Scheidemann: I hear of this leaflet for the first time. When we entered the strike committee, we did this mainly because of the danger that unknown wirepullers would attempt to seize the movement. It is utter nonsense to maintain that we favoured the strike internally.

We should have been fit for the lunatic asylum had we done this, after pursuing for four years the straight line of defence of native country.

Heine (barrister): Did not the greater importance accruing to the strike through the participation of the Social Democratic Party have the effect of extending the movement?

Scheidemann: By our participation in the strike the workers were united, and thus the movement could be much more quickly settled than would otherwise have been possible. If anonymous wirepullers had got the matter into their hands, there is simply no saying what might have happened.

("Vorwärts", 12. December, Evening edition.)

Chairman: Could you issue the slogan for the breaking off of the strike?

Scheidemann: That was entirely impossible. All we could do was to take part, in order to bring the affair to a favourable end.

("Vorwärts", 12. December, Evening edition.)

Scheidemann: . . . We exerted every endeavour to induce the general commission of the trade unions to take part. This was in accordance with the intentions of the government.

("Vorwärts", 12. December, Evening edition.)

Ebert Ready to Cry — for the Sake of the Fatherland.

Heine (barrister): Do you remember that Ebert declared that the Philistine view of peace at any price did not come in question for the social democratic workers?

Scheidemann: Yes indeed; he declared that national defence was unconditionally imperative. At this session Ebert was called away to receive important military information from Major v. Bussche. This information was so affecting that Ebert almost wept when repeating it to the Party committee. He said: "Now it is more than ever our duty not to fail at this moment."

Scheidemann: It was not that we rejected the demands themselves as such, for these were good enough in themselves, but we could not agree to the use of the strike as weapon of extortion.

("Vorwärts", 12. December, Evening edition.)

Against the Amnesty.

Landsberg: Was the demand for an amnesty a particularly critical point?

Scheidemann: The case was precisely the same as today, when our party rejects the amnesty demands made on such a large scale by the communists.

(Berlin "Rote Fahne", 12. December.)

Their King's Evidence.

Dr. Landsberg (barrister): Did you not consult with Prince Max of Baden on 23. September 1918?

Scheidemann: Prince Max of Baden declared to Ebert and me that he would not undertake the government unless the social democrats participated. The tenor of his speech was that we had held strictly to the line of defence of native country, and that we must hold to national defence.

Noske as Witness.**Noske and Ebert: two Friends of Irreproachable Character.**

Noske was then heard on the preparations for the January strike. He declared: On Ebert's suggestion I became the intermediary between the Party and the government in September 1918. I am thoroughly familiar with Ebert's standpoint with regard to the strike, for I was his intimate friend, and there was hardly any political problem which we did not discuss together. I must say that I

am surprised at the way in which a man of such irreproachable character and great patriotism as Ebert has been dragged through the press and meetings during the last few years.

When the revolution set in, after shots were fired in consequence of the events in the navy at Kiel, the Admiralty feared — not that a revolution might break out — but that the shooting might bring about a strike of the dock workers. It was Ebert who proposed sending me to Kiel, since my relations to the navy might enable me to prevent a rising among the workers. As you will probably know, I went to Kiel; I did not however find any strikers there, but 30,000 mutineers. I say all this for the purpose of illustrating my close connection with Mr. Ebert.

("Vorwärts", 13. December.)

He Managed to Break up the Strike.

Landsberg (barrister): It is said that the fictitious letter sent by Mr. Pfütze to Kloth contained the statement that a secret Party resolution had been passed, to the effect that the Party should externally disapprove of the strike during the war, but should support it internally.

Witness Noske: That is perfectly ridiculous. The Party never came to any such decision. Had I desired it, there would have been a strike at Chemnitz in January. I do not know who it was in Berlin who suggested my being sent to Chemnitz during the critical days of January. In Chemnitz the question of a strike was actually being discussed, and, when the movement threatened to break down in Berlin, it was intended to organise the insurrection on a broader basis. I attribute it essentially to my efforts that these radical tendencies were defeated. The now fugitive Brandler, late government director in Saxony, and the radical deputy Heckert, were in Chemnitz at that time, and endeavoured to organise the strike. I succeeded in first postponing the vote on the strike since I knew that the Berlin strike would break down meanwhile. The radicals reproached me later on for dragging the matter out and thus breaking up the strike.

("Vorwärts", 13. December.)

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The Party Committees of the German S. D. Party Induces the Commander in Chief of the Army to order the Arrest of Rosa Luxemburg.

Witness General Vriesberg:

I should like to emphasise the following:

One day an agent of the Social Democratic Party came to us and requested the arrest of Rosa Luxemburg or of another woman. We made the arrest.

I was the more astonished that it was precisely Mr. Ebert who then attacked us severely in the Reichstag, and spoke of the case with the introductory words: "Another word on the military Terror".

("Vorwärts", 15. December.)

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Upon this von Stein, general of the artillery, former minister of war, was heard.

Chairman: The defence asserts that from 1916 onwards the German S. D. Party deliberately thwarted the measures of national defence.

Witness: I cannot say anything about that, as the Party leaders did not invite me to their meetings. But there were difficulties enough.

On one occasion, when a metal workers' meeting was about to be held, we were applied to by an agent of the Social Democratic Party, who asked us to forbid the meeting, as their Right socialist wing was going to be driven to the wall by the radicals.

I prohibited the meeting, and was subsequently severely criticised by Scheidemann in the Reichstag for doing so. This I did not understand.

("Vorwärts", 15. December.)

*

Gröner on the Social Democrats.

The retired Reichsminister Gröner was then heard, and made the following statement:

I am not aware that the social democrats did any harm to the defence of the country. On the contrary, I have always found Mr. Ebert to possess the fullest understanding for national defence.

Heine (barrister): Do you know anything about Mr. Ebert's activity for keeping the army together after the breakdown?

Witness: Yes indeed. The present president Ebert did his utmost to carry out the wishes of the military headquarters. At that time Mr. Ebert discussed the situation with us every day, in full agreement, and endeavoured to carry out everything which we suggested and recommended.

("Vorwärts", 15. December.)

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A Letter from Hindenburg to Ebert.

Heine (barrister): Are you aware that general Field Marshall Hindenburg was prepared to cooperate with Mr. Ebert?

Witness General Gröner: General Field Marshall von Hindenburg was in entire agreement with this co-operation. He was also agreed with our entering into an alliance with Mr. Ebert at that time. I know of a letter in which Excellency von Hindenburg wrote to Mr. Ebert that he, like Mr. Ebert himself, was willing to place certain feelings and wishes in the background for the sake of the welfare of the Fatherland, and would work in collaboration with him.

Landsberg (barrister): Can you confirm the statement that the letter written by Hindenburg on 8. December 1918 commenced with the following wording:

Dear Mr. Ebert! That I apply to you in the following lines is explicable by the fact that I have been told that you, as a faithful German, loving your Fatherland above everything else, are prepared to place in the background your personal opinions and wishes, as I too have been obliged to do, in order to serve the Fatherland in its need. For this reason I have allied myself with you to save our people from the threatened ruin. I should like to remind you of your appeal of 9. November, in which you say:

"The new government of the Reich cannot fulfil its task unless the whole of the authorities in town and country lend a helping hand. I know that many will find it difficult to work with the new men who have undertaken to rule the Reich, but I appeal to their love for our people. If our organisations fail us at this difficult hour, Germany will be plunged into anarchy and the profoundest misery. Help us by fearless and persevering work everyone remaining at his post, until the hour of release arrives."

This is followed by several points dealing with discipline in the army, and with the necessity of the speedy convention of the National Assembly. The letter then goes on:

"The fate of the German people has been placed in your hands. It depends on your decision whether the German Reich will revive. I am ready and with me the whole army, to help you without reservation for this aim. We all know that after the regrettable issue of the war, the reconstruction of the Reich is only possible on a new basis and in new forms. What we want is that the restoration of the state is not postponed for generations by a foolishness and blindness completely destroying every pillar of our social and economic life...

signed: Hindenburg.

Witness: I can fully confirm the authenticity of this letter.

("Vorwärts", 15. December.)

The Social Patriot David Bears Witness that the Ebert Socialists Wanted to Hold out During the War.

The next witness, the retired representative and minister of the Reich Dr. David, was then heard with reference to the assertions made by the witness Kloth on a change of policy on the part of the social democrats during the war.

The witness declared that such an assertion was not in the least in accordance with the truth.

The social democratic Reichstag fraction, even after the outbreak of the Russian revolution, still continued the policy of national defence and granting of war credits. At that time Mr. Ebert openly defended this policy, stating as justification that we had to go on granting credits because the will to peace was lacking on the other side.

Herr Ebert invariably opposed the pessimists, and stated clearly and unequivocally that there could be no question of peace at any price. He never abandoned hope that the situation, even the military situation, would improve. When Austria and Turkey collapsed, and when our military headquarters failed us, the majority of the fraction were in favour of either granting no more credits or of entering the government. Despite all this, Herr Ebert did his utmost towards inducing the Party to sacrifice even this to the country. This suffices to show the assertion, that we had changed our policy, to be false.

("Vorwärts", 15. December.)

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Fehrenbach Confirms the Fact that Social Democracy is not Revolutionary.

Heine (barrister): Have you reason to believe that the policy of the Social Democratic Party has been detrimental to national defence?

Witness Fehrenbach (the onetime clerical chancellor of the Reich): I can only say that the great majority of the social democrats — apart from split off groups — has felt as patriotically as any other party. I am of the opinion that the whole revolutionary trend of feeling obtaining in November 1918 was not supported by the Majority socialists. Ebert himself once told me that at that time he negotiated until far into the night with trade union leaders, in the endeavour to prevent a general strike or a revolutionary movement.

("Vorwärts", 15. December.)

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Herr Stampfer and the Commanders in Chief of the Army.

Bindewald (barrister) moved that the head mayor Scheidemann be again called upon to appear the next day, in order to give information as to whether he wrote the article published in "Vorwärts" on 29. January 1918 in which the munition workers' strike was fully approved of.

Chairman: The investigation made at the time showed the article to have been written either by Herrn Stampfer himself or by Herrn Kuttner.

Dr. Landsberg (barrister):

I should like to observe here that at that time our military headquarters expressed to Herrn Stampfer their regret that proceedings had been taken against Herrn Stampfer on account of this article.

("Vorwärts", 16. December.)

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The Bourgeois Professor Bears Witness: "Superior and Quiet People".

Evidence given by Alfred Weber, professor at Heidelberg:

I have come forward as witness on my own initiative. In the spring of 1918, after the Brest Litovsk negotiations, I considered the situation to be internally politically endangered, and believed it to be highly probable that radical elements would gain power over the working class.

I considered the best purpose to be attained by making it possible for the Majority socialists, as superior and quiet people, to retain their hold upon the working class.

I thus endeavoured to act as intermediary. I finally consulted with Herr Ebert and Herr Scheidemann, and was able to assume that this was not disagreeable to the secretary of state Roedern.

We consulted upon the best way of putting an end to the strike as speedily as possible.

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Formal Satisfaction.

Witness Professor Alfred Weber: I can only say that Ebert's conduct was entirely the contrary of what it would have been if he had been desirous of aggravating the strike, or of gaining any political advantage from it. On the contrary, Ebert told me that the point of first importance was to bring the workers to reason. We should then be able to calculate upon the rapid settlement of the strike. I cannot remember any further details.

The question was, as these gentlemen told me, to give the workers the formal satisfaction that their economic wishes — political questions were not mentioned at all — were at least being listened to. With this information I went next day to Roedern, and told him that I had the definite impression that the strike, should it take place, would be settled within a very brief period.

("Rote Fahne", 17. December.)

*

Counter Measures Taken by the Committee of the German Metal Workers' Union against the Strike.

Heine (barrister): I have a letter from Schlicke (Chairman of the Metal Workers' Union) in which he opposes General von Wriesberg's declaration, and

states that he journeyed to Stuttgart as member of the Army Commission, with the knowledge of his then superior, General v. Wriesberg, for the express purpose of consulting with the committee of the German Metal Workers' Union on measures to be taken against the strike.

("Rote Fahne", 17. December.)

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"A Tactical Manoeuvre."

Dr. Martin (barrister): Was the number of strikers increased by the participation of the social democrats?

Witness Henning (police councillor): That can scarcely have been the case. The participation of the S. D. Party was a tactical manoeuvre; the Party feared that it would otherwise be crushed against the wall by the Independent Social Democrats. The greater number of the workers belonged to the Independents.

("Vorwärts", 17. December.)

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Ebert does not Speak of the Strike.

Witness Kindler (carpenter): Ebert expressly emphasised that we were all under military authority, and that anyone failing to obey was liable to punishment.

Chairman: Was Ebert applauded?

Witness: On the contrary he had to stand a great deal. Such expressions as "strike saboteur" and "betrayal of the workers".

Chairman: But had he mentioned the strike at all?

Witness: No. This was why the audience called out to him to come to the point. After Ebert's speech we did not know any more than before. He spoke of "food shortage" and tried to quiet us down in general.

("Vorwärts", 17. December.)

*

Ebert as Strike Speaker: Supply Weapons for the Front.

Witness Lehnhoff (Editor of the "Berliner Tageblatt", who attended the strike meeting on the Treptow common where Ebert spoke): I was accustomed to Ebert's fresh and energetic way of

speaking, and from the very beginning I had the impression that the speaker was much depressed; his address was also extremely colourless. He declared that it was the duty of the workers at home to support their brothers and fathers at the front, and to supply them with the best possible weapons. The workers in France and England were not missing a single working hour in their efforts to help their brothers at the front. We must do our utmost to bring about a peace which would enable Germany to live.

It struck me that Ebert did not utter one revolutionary word. ("Vorwärts", 17. December.)

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Richard Müller on the S. D. Party and the January strike.

Witness Richard Müller: At the beginning of 1918 the feeling in favour of revolution increased, and we had to hold back certain strata of the workers, as we considered united action to be the only right method. We revolutionary leaders fixed the day on which the strike was to start for the 28. January. On 27. January I called the important group of metal turners together in Berlin, and said to them: "The strike begins tomorrow!". As a matter of fact 300,000 to 400,000 workers downed tool in Berlin on 28. January, I wished the social democrats to join the strike committee.

The first meeting of the strike committee took place in the evening of the 28., between 6 and 7 o'clock, and was participated in by deputies belonging to the Social Democratic and Independent Socialist parties. At this meeting, at which I acted as chairman, Ebert expressed the wish for equal representation in the strike committee, but we rejected this motion. Ebert declared a discussion on the demands to be absolutely necessary. We then discussed organisatory questions referring to the strike. At this moment we received news that the affair was getting shaky, and the police were coming, whereupon the social democrats made themselves scarce.

On 29. January, between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning, we met again in the Trade Union Buildings. Scheidemann was present. I do not remember whether Ebert was there. Scheidemann reported that the secretary of state, Wallraf, had refused to receive representatives of the striking workers...

We had resolved that the deputies should not go to Wallraf alone, for we had no confidence in the Social Democrats, and wanted to keep the Independents under observation as well.

("Vorwärts", 17. December.)

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In Order to Regain the Confidence of the Workers.

Witness Richard Müller: The excitement was very great among the workers in January 1918, the influence of the Social Democrats and the trade unions very small. It was thus an excellent opportunity for these gentlemen to join the strike committee, and thus to regain the confidence of the workers, I am also of the opinion that if the affair had turned out differently at that time, these gentlemen would have acted just as they did act later.

With reference to defence of native country, vacillation has scarcely been observable in the standpoint of the S.D. Party. From the very beginning it preached the principles of holding out and of national defence. In order to prove this I should have to produce innumerable articles and resolutions here, but, as I have already stated, the Right wing of social democracy has maintained a fairly consistent attitude on this question.

("Vorwärts", 17. December.)

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Wels as Witness.

"Stop such Things at any Price!"

Witness Otto Wels (chairman of the German Socialist Party):

The first meeting, which I attended, took place on 30. January at Friedrichstrasse station. I was alone there, as there was a meeting of the Party committee on the same morning, and Ebert was there holding an address on the strike. I also took part in a second meeting in the Lothringer Strasse, at which Ebert and Scheidemann were present.

We had not had the intention of attending any more strike committee meetings, but we had received information that certain elements were endeavouring to aggravate the strike. We did not believe this, but were determined to stop such things at any price. At the meeting on February 2nd., efforts were

made to persuade me to take sharper measures, but we representatives of the SD. Party declined to do this. We occupied ourselves with the strike solely for the purpose of securing the national defence.

Our attitude towards the strike during the war was not adopted for the special occasion, but was traditional.

In reply to a question from Dr. Landsberg, as to why Wels published the newspaper "Die Fackel", the witness declared that the Party had to have a mouthpiece, and the official organ, the "Vorwärts", had been closed to them by the independent editors.

("Vorwärts", 17. December.)

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Landsbergs Speech for the Defence of Social Treachery.

The Party of National Defence.

When the war broke out on 4. August 1914, the Social Democrats made a declaration in the Reichstag: "We shall not desert our country in the hour of danger." At that time it was hoped that the division of the parties into national and anti-national, into friends and foes of the Reich, would be put an end to once and for all, and that a German would never again doubt the honourable patriotic feeling of another German. This hope was frustrated, though the party of the co-plaintiff*) was not to blame for this, for this party never forgot its duty to the Fatherland during the whole frightful war. One man belonging to this party**) endeavoured to thwart its aims, and though he bore a name highly honoured in this party, he was expelled from it. There were internal struggles in the party; the Reichstag fraction and the organisation dwindled; but in spite of all, Ebert as leader of the party, though he had to calculate with the possibility of losing mighty troops of followers to the radicals, never vacillated for a moment, but held to his conviction that his place was in Germany's camp, and that his party stood

for a honourable peace.

Ebert remained the tower of that wing of the Social Democratic Party standing for national defence. For him this was the pivot of the disagreements with the other socialist party. Under his leadership the Social Democrats voted for the auxiliary service law in the interests of the defence of the country. The characterisation of Ebert as given by General Field Marshall v. Hindenburg is perfectly justified. During the war Ebert proved himself to be the German man whom Hindenburg designates, and this letter honours both writer and recipient. When the admission of the social democrats into the cabinet was demanded later on by Prince Max of Baden, it was again Ebert who succeeded in attaining this object, although the other leaders in the party committee were first opposed to it.

He did not gain any specially high honours by his conduct, he merely did his duty as a German, and therefore it is a very deep insult to him if he is reproached with having acted unpatriotically and contrary to duty. Ebert did not do his duty in war merely for tactical reasons, as one witness has maintained here, as little as Ludwig Frank went voluntarily to the front, from which he never returned, merely for tactical reasons.

("Vorwärts", 20. December.)

*

The Rôle Played by the SD. Party Leaders in the Munition Workers Strike was to Enter the Strike Committee for the Purpose of sabotaging the Struggle.

Landsberg (for the defence): It was the subject of relentless condemnation that our brothers at the front might be exposed defenceless to the fire of the enemy by a strike on the part of the munition workers. In 1917 the Party committee, co-operating with the trade union commission, had been able to prevent a threatened strike of armament workers.

Ebert has announced that he joined the strike committee with the firm determination to put an end to the movement as quickly as possible. It has been ascertained that the action had been secretly prepared by the revolutionary leaders. The social democratic workers were told nothing beforehand, for it was the object of these wirepullers to put the revolutionary

*) Ebert's party. Ed.

**) Karl Liebknecht.

leaders in the place of the trade unions. This is the final and the actual reason of the strike.

At that time the danger for the state did not lie in the strike itself, but in the possible realisation of the aims of the revolutionaries. The seeds of revolution had already germinated to such an extent, that Captain Miersmann was right in saying that a few days abstention from work during the war was not the worst evil, but the fact that embers still glowed among the ashes, and the workers had lost all desire to work. The social democratic leaders were taken by surprise by the outbreak of the strike.

("Vorwärts", 20. December.)

*

"No Allies" of the Strikers.

Landsberg (barrister):

How could they (the social democratic leaders) know of it, when not even the minister of police Drews, with every auxiliary of news service at his disposal, believed in the strike on 26. January. Ebert, as the credible witnesses have here testified, declined to lie on the bed which others had made. Or do you really believe that the social democratic leaders were pleased to co-operate with people who were their bitterest enemies, who abused the social democrats? They would not have done it, had they not been pressed to do so by their own party comrades. And was not the radical wing of the strike committee perfectly aware of the fact that when Ebert, Scheidemann, and Bauer joined the committee, the latter were no allies but men endeavouring to settle the conflict as fast as possible? It is not possible to speak of high treason because men who had recognised the enormous immediate danger to the country now approached the elements who were ready to throw a spark into the powder cask at any moment. It is not necessary to be a social democrat to recognise the purposefulness of this line of conduct, as it was for instance recognised by the Bavarian minister who openly expressed his thanks to the social democrats, in the Bavarian Diet, for their efforts towards the speedy settlement of the strike. ("Vorwärts", 20. December.)

*

"... the Restoration of the so Necessary Economic Peace..."

Landsberg (barrister):

Richard Müller wished the strike to culminate in a revolution. Amongst other demands, the leading one was for the amnesty of all political offenders, so that a pistol could be held to the head of the government, and all negotiations rendered impossible and hopeless from the commencement. The social democrats at once required the alteration of the seven known demands of the radical strike committee, but this was refused. Mr. Wallraf would have done better to receive the deputation of striking workmen.

He would have helped the men in the strike committee who were exerting their utmost endeavours for the restoration of the so necessary economic peace.

He refused to receive the deputation, and now the cart was stuck fast in the mud. It was necessary for the social democrats to join the strike committee, for it was necessary to watch over and slow down this rash set of people, if the worst was to be avoided. But the men who undertook this thankless task do not deserve that an effort is now being made to twist their conduct at that time into a rope for their destruction. ("Vorwärts", 20. December.)

*

Not the Betrayer of his Country, but the Saviour of the Fatherland.

Landsberg (barrister):

Now as to the meeting in the Treptow Park. The dignity of the witness Ebert prohibits my inquiring whether he is a more credible witness than a Syrig or a Gobert. It would be perfect madness to assert or assume that Ebert, who lost two sons in the war, should have publicly called upon ten thousand people to refuse to obey when called up for military service. The best defender of the president of the Reich is the witness Lenhoff, the sole witness able to repeat Ebert's speech in detail. At that time Ebert employed the whole of his authority for the purpose of making it clear to the strikers that the strike was dangerous and detrimental, both for the front and for home. This speech was a deed in the truest sense of the word. It showed a strength of character of which the man, whom I have the honour to defend, may be proud. It was his endeavour not only to end the munition

strike, but to remove the ground from under the whole strike movement during the war.

But Ebert would have been lost for all time had he not added to this deed — that of disapproving of the strike — some few sentences sounding pleasant to the workers. I have had the honour, during the most difficult period of Germany's history, of standing by the side of the man who has to fight for his honour before this court today, a man whose life would not have been insured by any insurance company, so great were the risks and dangers threatening him.

If this man, who has to defend himself today against the most serious reproach which can be made against a German, the accusation of high treason against his country — if this man is a traitor to his country, then I wish that we had some tens of thousands of such traitors in Germany. In ancient Athens the men who had served their country were banished. I hope that in Germany there is no place for ostracism.

(“Vorwärts”, 20. December.)

Heine's Speech for the Defence.

His Monarchist Friends.

Speaking of General Wriesberg, Heine made the following observation in his closing speech:

“This man, with whom we spoke and negotiated daily, now declares himself unable to state anything about the standpoint of the Social Democratic Party.”

On the government councillor Henniger: “We learn about him that he was the actual spiritus rector. And this man wanted to render Mr. Ebert harmless long before:

To render the man harmless who was the strongest man for national defence!

We can actually scent the atmosphere of the time preceding the 4. August 1914. Bethmann Hollweg declared this 4. August to be unforgettable. And

the Kaiser said that he knew no more parties. And there were still people who could not comprehend that they had now to shake hands with social democrats.

And Henniger wanted to get him out of the way, this man who was a model of fidelity to the German people!”

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

*

“A preposterous idea”.

With regard to Noske's visit to Chemnitz Heine observed: “It is a perfectly preposterous idea to assert that Noske had any intention of causing a strike in Chemnitz, above all a munition strike. . .”

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

*

In War the Munition Strike is Treason to the Country.

Heine (barrister): “It is of course possible that the incitement and continuation of a workers' strike, especially a munition workers' strike, can in time of war be classified as high treason.

This is possible. It was also the opinion held by the S.D. Party during the war. I am however convinced that the effects of this strike have been exaggerated.”

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

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The Magic Formula of Parity.

Referring to the resistance offered by the revolutionary leaders to Ebert's demand for equal representation in the strike committee, Heine declared:

“Parity, this magic word, heard with such delight by the workers. By means of this magic word the Reich was saved from Bolshevism on 10th November 1918. With the aid of this magic word the S.D. Party was enabled to exercise its political influence, even where, as in Berlin, its organisation had broken down. The S.D. Party could not command when it was aware that the command would not be obeyed. Had the social democrats at that time issued the command: The strike is a crime, we forbid the strike — they would only have aggravated the strike.

In such cases it is necessary to employ moral influence with great care, and there was thus no other way but to join the strike committee. The influence to be exercised upon the strike was not to be in the interests of the Party, as has been asserted without a shadow of proof, but in the interests of the state and the country.”

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

*

Big Words to Bulldoze the Masses!

With reference to the leaflet distributed with Ebert's agreement, Heine declared:

“In leaflets one is inclined to exaggerate; and Scheidemann did the same thing in his speech of November 9. But what else could he have said to the masses? Whether the people had been victorious on the 9. November, or somebody else, these were mere rhetoric flourishes.

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

*

The Masses must be Deceived!

Heine (barrister): Since the social democrats had taken part in several strike committee meetings, they could not protest against the handbill. “It is very easy to say that everyone participating in a harmful business is responsible for it as if things were always to simple and straightforward in politics! An individual standing alone and only having to think of himself can always speak straight forwardly. But he condemns himself thereby to incompetence at dangerous moments. Those who think of the whole

cannot accord themselves the right to show their colours openly.”

*

“The danger was gigantic.

In order to prevent the revolution being aimed at by Müller and his set, Ebert and his friends joined the strike committee. It is not treason to try and prevent the treason of others.”

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

*

“To keep a hand in the game”.

Heine (barrister): The speech held by Ebert at the Treptow meeting was characterised by Heine as follows:

“The witness Lenhoff has told us most effectively how Ebert spoke as Party tactician. This is entirely a part of the total course of action undertaken by Herr Ebert: to keep up communication, to keep a hand in the game, to undertake loyal negotiation for the purpose of ending the strike in the interests of national defence. This was his aim and these were his means.

(“Rote Fahne”, 21. December.)

*

Heine (barrister): No juridical deduction can discuss away the fact that the S.D. Party joined the strike committee for the purpose of putting an end to the strike. The Left radicals, who wanted to continue the strike, were equally well aware of this.

(“Vorwärts”, 20. December.)

*

“Saving” Germany from the “Russian chaos”, end of 1918.

Heine (barrister):

“The rôle played by Ebert in January 1918, precisely as in November 1918, resulted in saving the Fatherland. As compared with the mutinous sailors, the emissary Liebknecht, and the people rushing about the streets with red flags, men like Ebert, without legitimation (Ebert was the only one who had received a legitimation from the Kaiser) played their rôle ‘simply out of genuine old German sense of duty.’

An 10. November I spoke, on friendly and human terms, with the depressed General v. Wriesberg. At that time he recognised very well what we had accomplished. Many of these old officials held out faithfully and placed themselves at our disposal. It is an injustice that precisely these circles, who helped us at the time to protect ourselves from sinking into the chaos of Russia, should now measure with such narrow judgment the

man without whom the whole of our efforts would have been doomed to failure."

("Rote Fahne", 21. December.)

*

Our Model: Noske.

Heine: It was our whole endeavour to act as Noske acted so that all violence was prevented, with the exception of the loss of a very few officers' lives, and as Noske acted when he succeeded in saving the life of Prince Henry of Prussia."

("Rote Fahne", 21. December.)

*

The Denunciation of Rosa Luxemburg by the Leaders of the German Social Democratic Party.

In the Magdeburg Ebert case General Wriesberg declared on oath that the German S. D. Party induced the authorities, during the war, to arrest Rosa Luxemburg. The "Vorwärts" denies this statement, and sees in it another proof of German National and Communist conspiracy.

I should thus like to call upon the editors of the "Vorwärts" to look up the 1916 volume of the "Chemnitzer Volksstimme", edited by Noske and Heilmann. In June and July 1916 Rosa Luxemburg and I were there repeatedly accused of high treason, with the openly published substantiation that we were issuing illegal leaflets and newspapers. These denunciations on the part of Noske and Heilmann were promptly followed by the

Heine is competent, for in his capacity as member of the state court of justice he has already imposed a hundred years of penal servitude upon workmen.

Heine: "I myself, as member of the state court of justice, am a judge, and have the right to speak there in political cases every few weeks. I know very well how pleasant a task it is to judge mildly.

But I know equally well that the main end of justice is to protect the social order, to maintain and firmly establish the state. There can be no deviation from justice, but it is the duty of a judge to consider the political effects of a verdict."

("Rote Fahne", 21. December.)

arrest of Rosa Luxemburg on 10. July 1916, and by my arrest about two weeks later.

If Noske and Heilmann could publish such denunciations openly for weeks, without being prevented by the committee of the S. D. Party, is it not likely that the Party committee itself was cooperating?

I thus await with pleasure a fresh lawsuit for libel from Messrs Noske, Heilmann, Ebert, Wels, and Co. I shall then be pleased to serve them with a fresh selection of material on the denunciations spread abroad by the S. D. Party, and on the collaboration with the military authorities during the war.

Berlin, 17. December 1924.

Ernst Meyer.

The Letter sent by Ebert, Bauer and David, to Prince Max of Baden.

The Black Red Gold Republic as Catastrophe.

Your Royal Highness!

On the occasion of the first anniversary of the memorable day which brought the German people the greatest turning point in their history, the leaders of the Reich feel themselves impelled to recall the faithful assistance rendered by your Royal Highness in those hours of world historical importance. It will then be clear to all that it was just the tried and tested political leaders chosen by the people who, clearly realising the real possibilities and the lessons of a thousand years of history, though they stood for the abdication of the then bearer of the crown and for the throne renunciation of the crown prince in the unforgettable hours of the 8. November, both in the interfractional committee and in other places, none the less

stood just as energetically for the retention of the monarchy and for the regency of the Kaiser's grandson.

Your Royal Highness is aware, as nobody else is aware, that neither you nor the representatives of the people are to blame

for the unexpected catastrophes into which our suffering people has been plunged,

the revolution and the republic.

As an outward sign of gratefulness and recognition for the great services rendered by your Royal Highness to the people and the Fatherland at that critical period, a special session of the Reich government, held this morning, resolved to **abandon the previous decision of expropriating Mainau Castle for people's welfare purposes, and to present this magnificent ancestral seat of your family to you as your permanent and unassailable property.**

Berlin, 8. November 1919.

President of the Reich:

Ebert.

On behalf of the government:

Bauer.

David.