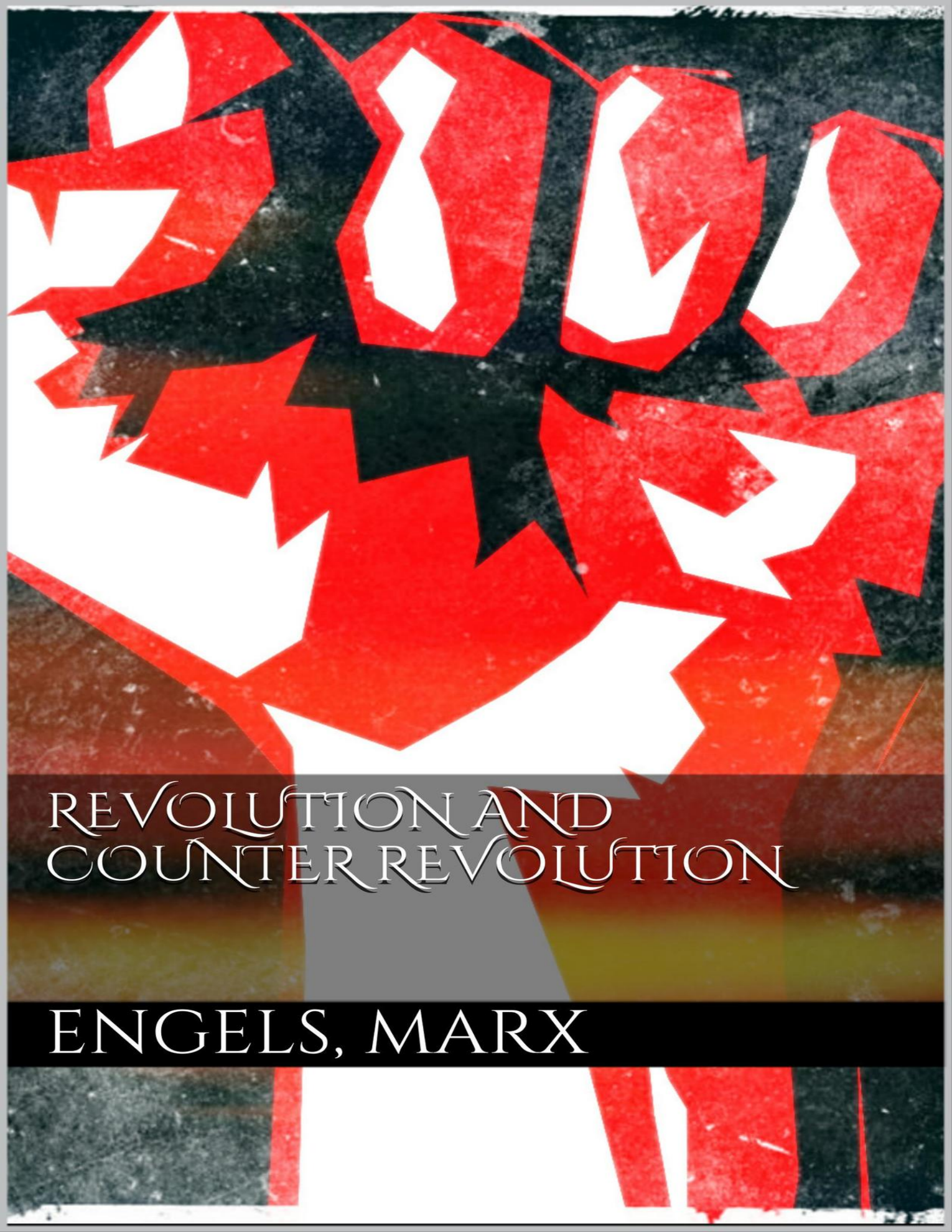
REVOLUTION AND
COUNTER REVOLUTION
ENGELS, MARX


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NOTE BY THE EDITOR

The following articles are now, after forty-five years, for the first time collected and printed in book form. They are an invaluable pendant to Marx's work on the *coup d'état* of Napoleon III. ("Der Achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte.") Both works belong to the same period, and both are what Engels calls "excellent specimens of that marvellous gift ... of Marx ... of apprehending clearly the character, the significance, and the necessary consequences of great historical events at a time when these events are actually in course of taking place, or are only just completed."

These articles were written in 1851-1852, when Marx had been about eighteen months in England. He was living with his wife, three young children, and their life-long friend, Helene Demuth, in two rooms in Dean Street, Soho, almost opposite the Royalty Theatre. For nearly ten years they had been driven from pillar to post. When, in 1843, the Prussian Government suppressed the *Rhenish Gazette* which Marx had edited, he went with his newly-

married wife, Jenny von Westphalen, to Paris. Not long after, his expulsion was demanded by the Prussian Government—it is said that Alexander von Humboldt acted as the agent of Prussia on this occasion—and M. Guizot was, of course, too polite to refuse the request. Marx was expelled, and betook himself to Brussels. Again the Prussian Government requested his expulsion, and where the French Government had complied it was not likely the Belgian would refuse. Marx received marching orders.

But at this same time the French Government that had expelled Marx had gone the way of French Governments, and the new Provisional Government through Ferdinand Flocon invited the "brave et loyal Marx" to return to the country whence "tyranny had banished him, and where he, like all fighting in the sacred cause, the cause of the fraternity of all peoples," would be welcome. The invitation was accepted, and for some months he lived in Paris. Then he returned to Germany in order to start the *New Rhenish Gazette* in Cologne. And the *Rhenish Gazette* writers had very lively times. Marx was twice prosecuted, but as the juries would not convict, the Prussian Government took the nearer way and suppressed the paper.

Again Marx and his family returned to the country whose "doors" had only a few short months before been "thrown open" to him. The sky had changed—and the

Government. "We remained in Paris," my mother says in some biographical notes I have found, "a month. Here also there was to be no resting-place for us. One fine morning the familiar figure of the sergeant of police appeared with the announcement that Karl 'et sa dame' must leave Paris within twenty-four hours. We were graciously told we might be interned at Vannes in the Morbihan. Of course we could not accept such an exile as that, and I again gathered together my small belongings to seek a safe haven in London. Karl had hastened thither before us." The "us" were my mother, Helene Demuth, and the three little children, Jenny (Madame Longuet), Laura (Madame Lafargue), and Edgar, who died at the age of eight.

The haven was safe indeed. But it was storm-tossed. Hundreds of refugees—all more or less destitute—were now in London. There followed years of horrible poverty, of bitter suffering—such suffering as can only be known to the penniless stranger in a strange land. The misery would have been unendurable but for the faith that was in these men and women, and but for their invincible "Humor." I use the German word because I know no English one that quite expresses the same thing—such a combination of humor and good-humor, of light-hearted courage, and high spirits.

That readers of these articles may have some idea of the conditions under which Marx was working, under which

he wrote them and the "Achtzehnte Brumaire," and was preparing his first great economical work, "Zur Kritik der Politischen Oeconomie" (published in 1859), I again quote from my mother's notes. Soon after the arrival of the family a second son was born. He died when about two years old. Then a fifth child, a little girl, was born. When about a year old, she too fell sick and died. "Three days," writes my mother, "the poor child wrestled with death. She suffered so.... Her little dead body lay in the small back room; we all of us" (i.e., my parents, Helene Demuth, and the three elder children) "went into the front room, and when night came we made us beds on the floor, the three living children lying by us. And we wept for the little angel resting near us, cold and dead. The death of the dear child came in the time of our bitterest poverty. Our German friends could not help us; Engels, after vainly trying to get literary work in London, had been obliged to go, under very disadvantageous conditions, into his father's firm, as a clerk, in Manchester; Ernest Jones, who often came to see us at this time, and had promised help, could do nothing.... In the anguish of my heart I went to a French refugee who lived near, and who had sometimes visited us. I told him our sore need. At once with the friendliest kindness he gave me £2. With that we paid for the little coffin in which the poor child now sleeps peacefully. I had no cradle for her when she was born, and even the last small

resting-place was long denied her." ... "It was a terrible time," Liebknecht writes to me (the Editor), "but it was grand nevertheless."

In that "front room" in Dean Street, the children playing about him, Marx worked. I have heard tell how the children would pile up chairs behind him to represent a coach, to which he was harnessed as horse, and would "whip him up" even as he sat at his desk writing.

Marx had been recommended to Mr. C. A. Dana, [1] the managing director of the *New York Tribune* , by Ferdinand Freiligrath, and the first contributions sent by him to America are the series of letters on Germany here reprinted. They seem to have created such a sensation that before the series had been completed Marx was engaged as regular London correspondent. On the 12th of March, 1852, Mr. Dana wrote: "It may perhaps give you pleasure to know that they" (i.e., the "Germany" letters) "are read with satisfaction by a considerable number of persons, and are widely reproduced." From this time on, with short intervals, Marx not only sent letters regularly to the New York paper; he wrote a large number of leading articles for it. "Mr. Marx," says an editorial note in 1853, "has indeed opinions of his own, with some of which we are far from agreeing; but those who do not read his letters neglect one of the most instructive sources of information on the great questions of European politics."

Not the least remarkable among these contributions were those dealing with Lord Palmerston and the Russian Government. "Urquhart's writings on Russia," says Marx, "had interested but not convinced me. In order to arrive at a definite opinion, I made a minute analysis of Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, and of the Diplomatic Blue Books from 1807 to 1850. The first fruits of these studies was a series of articles in the *New York Tribune* , in which I proved Palmerston's relations with the Russian Government.... Shortly after, these studies were reprinted in the Chartist organ edited by Ernest Jones, *The People's Paper* .... Meantime the Glasgow *Sentinel* had reproduced one of these articles, and part of it was issued in pamphlet form by Mr. Tucker, London." [2] And the Sheffield Foreign Affairs Committee thanked Marx for the "great public service rendered by the admirable *exposé* " in his "Kars papers," published both in the *New York Tribune* and the *People's Paper* . A large number of articles on the subject were also printed in the *Free Press* by Marx's old friend, C. D. Collett. I hope to republish these and other articles.

As to the *New York Tribune* , it was at this time an admirably edited paper, with an immense staff of distinguished contributors, [3] both American and European. It was a passionate anti-slavery organ, and also recognized that there "was need for a true organization of society," and that "our evils" were "social, not political."

The paper, and especially Marx's articles, were frequently referred to in the House of Commons, notably by John Bright.

It may also interest readers to know what Marx was paid for his articles—many of them considerably longer even than those here collected. He received £1 for each contribution—not exactly brilliant remuneration.

It will be noted that the twentieth chapter, promised in the nineteenth, does not appear. It may have been written, but was certainly not printed. It was probably crowded out. "I do not know," wrote Mr. Dana, "how long you intend to make the series, and under ordinary circumstances I should desire to have it prolonged as much as possible. But we have a presidential election at hand, which will occupy our columns to a great extent.... Let me suggest to you if possible to condense your survey ... into say half a dozen more articles" (eleven had then been received by Mr. Dana). "Do not, however, close it without an exposition of the forces now remaining at work there (Germany) and active in the preparation of the future." This "exposition" will be found in the article which I have added to the "Germany" series, on the "Cologne Communist Trial." That trial really gives a complete picture of the conditions of Germany under the triumphant Counter-Revolution.

Marx himself nowhere says the series of letters is incomplete, although he occasionally refers to them.

Thus in the letter on the Cologne trial he speaks of the articles, and in 1853 writes: "Those of your readers who, having read my letters on the German Revolution and Counter-Revolution written for the *Tribune* some two years ago, desire to have an immediate intuition of it, will do well to inspect the picture by Mr. Hasenclever now being exhibited in ... New York ... representing the presentation of a workingmen's petition to the magistrates of Düsseldorf in 1848. What the writer could only analyze, the eminent painter has reproduced in its dramatic vitality."

Finally, I would remind English readers that these articles were written when Marx had only been some eighteen months in England, and that he never had any opportunity of reading the proofs. Nevertheless, it has not seemed to me that anything needed correction. I have therefore only removed a few obvious printer's errors.

The date at the head of each chapter refers to the issue of the *Tribune* in which the article appeared, that at the end to the time of writing. I am alone responsible for the headings of the letters as published in this volume.

Eleanor Marx Aveling.

Sydenham, April, 1896.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Mr. C. A. Dana was at this time still in sympathy with Socialism. The effects of Brook Farm had not yet worn off.

[2] "Herr Vogt," pp. 59 and 185. London, 1860.

[3] Including Bruno Bauer, Bayard Taylor, Ripley, and many of the Brook Farmers. The editor was Horace Greeley.

I.

GERMANY AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION.

October 25, 1851.

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

proclamations quite as solemn as those of any less imaginary potentates.

A more signal defeat than that undergone by the continental revolutionary party—or rather parties—upon all points of the line of battle, cannot be imagined. But what of that? Has not the struggle of the British middle classes for their social and political supremacy embraced forty-eight, that of the French middle classes forty years of unexampled struggles? And was their triumph ever nearer than at the very moment when restored monarchy thought itself more firmly settled than ever? The times of that superstition which attributed revolutions to the ill-will of a few agitators have long passed away. Everyone knows nowadays that wherever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background, which is prevented, by outworn institutions, from satisfying itself. The want may not yet be felt as strongly, as generally, as might ensure immediate success; but every attempt at forcible repression will only bring it forth stronger and stronger, until it bursts its fetters. If, then, we have been beaten, we have nothing else to do but to begin again from the beginning. And, fortunately, the probably very short interval of rest which is allowed us between the close of the first and the beginning of the second act of the movement, gives us time for a very necessary piece of work: the study of the causes that necessitated both the

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

The inquiry into, and the exposition of, the causes, both of the revolutionary convulsion and its suppression, are, besides, of paramount importance from a historical point of view. All these petty, personal quarrels and recriminations—all these contradictory assertions that it was Marrast, or Ledru Rollin, or Louis Blanc, or any

other member of the Provisional Government, or the whole of them, that steered the Revolution amidst the rocks upon which it foundered—of what interest can they be, what light can they afford, to the American or Englishman who observed all these various movements from a distance too great to allow of his distinguishing any of the details of operations? No man in his senses will ever believe that eleven men, [4] mostly of very indifferent capacity either for good or evil, were able in three months to ruin a nation of thirty-six millions, unless those thirty-six millions saw as little of their way before them as the eleven did. But how it came to pass that thirty-six millions were at once called upon to decide for themselves which way to go, although partly groping in dim twilight, and how then they got lost and their old leaders were for a moment allowed to return to their leadership, that is just the question.

If, then, we try to lay before the readers of *The Tribune* the causes which, while they necessitated the German Revolution of 1848, led quite as inevitably to its momentary repression in 1849 and 1850, we shall not be expected to give a complete history of events as they passed in that country. Later events, and the judgment of coming generations, will decide what portion of that confused mass of seemingly accidental, incoherent, and incongruous facts is to form a part of the world's history. The time for such a task has not yet arrived; we must

confine ourselves to the limits of the possible, and be satisfied, if we can find rational causes, based upon undeniable facts, to explain the chief events, the principal vicissitudes of that movement, and to give us a clue as to the direction which the next, and perhaps not very distant, outbreak will impart to the German people.

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

The composition of the different classes of the people which form the groundwork of every political organization was, in Germany, more complicated than in any other country. While in England and France feudalism was entirely destroyed, or, at least, reduced, as in the former country, to a few insignificant forms, by a powerful and wealthy middle class, concentrated in large towns, and particularly in the capital, the feudal nobility in Germany had retained a great portion of their ancient privileges. The feudal system of tenure was prevalent almost everywhere. The lords of the land had even retained the jurisdiction over their tenants. Deprived of their political privileges, of the right to control the princes, they had preserved almost all their Mediæval supremacy over the peasantry of their demesnes, as well as their exemption from taxes. Feudalism was more flourishing in some localities than in others, but nowhere except on the left bank of the Rhine was it entirely destroyed. This feudal nobility, then extremely