

DOCUMENTS

D. K. Buse

EBERT AND THE COMING OF WORLD WAR I: A MONTH FROM HIS DIARY

Friedrich Ebert participated in a critical period of history. His decisions as co-leader of German Social Democracy, chairman of the 1918-1919 government and Reichspräsident extended beyond class and nation to international significance. Yet he remains surprisingly unknown. Though subject to emotional attack or to artificial glorification,¹ thorough research and dispassionate analysis have not been applied in estimating his aims and methods, his contributions and shortcomings.²

Party-stained glasses and democratic-tradition-seeking blinders have not been the only reason why Ebert has been subject to label-pinning or hero-worship. Pertinent sources have not been found, brought forward or evaluated. Not evaluated are the three volumes of speeches,

¹ Examples are the Stalinist implications – C. Schorske, *German Social Democracy* (Cambridge, 1955), p. 124 – or the Lincolnian equations – T. Heuss, “Friedrich Ebert zum Gedächtnis”, in: M. Peters, *Friedrich Ebert* (Berlin, 1954).

² Neither W. Besson, *Friedrich Ebert* (Berlin, 1963), which remains the most insightful biography to date, nor G. Kotowski, *Friedrich Ebert, I: Aufstieg eines deutschen Arbeiterführers* (Berlin, 1963) go much beyond the general presentations of the 1920s: E. Felden, *Eines Menschen Weg* (Bremen, 1927) and *Friedrich Ebert und seine Zeit, ein Gedenkwerk* (Charlottenburg, 1928). Kotowski’s first part of a full-scale biography is particularly disappointing in that though some novel information is presented about the Bremen period, Ebert as man and party politician does not emerge from the background. The idea that Ebert “only in 1917 began to exert decisive influence on the whole politic of his party” (p. xii) is placed in doubt by much evidence Kotowski himself presents from the memoirs of Scheidemann or the minutes of the Parteiausschuss; it is contradicted by the diary published below and by E. Matthias and S. Miller, eds, *Das Kriegstagebuch des Reichstagesabgeordneten Eduard David* (Düsseldorf, 1966), pp. 50, 53, 57, 62, 70, which shows, by the difficulties the rightists had in gaining Ebert and Scheidemann for their plans and policies, that the latter not only had their own aims and methods but that power in the party central lay with them or it would not have been necessary to gain their support. Kotowski’s assertion that Ebert was known neither to the public nor to the leading men of the Wilhelmian state (p. xi) is an acceptance of a myth Scheidemann created but contradicted by the diary below and David, *Kriegstagebuch*, pp. 6 note 12, 141, 127, *passim*. Ebert’s shortcomings only are emphasized by R. N. Hunt, “Friedrich Ebert and the German Revolution of 1918”, in: L. Krieger and F. Stern, eds, *The Responsibility of Power* (1967), chapter 17.

letters and writings published from Ebert's papers.¹ Not brought forward or just being presented are party and public materials which reveal his activities in Bremen,² in the party central,³ in the youth movement,⁴ in the Reichstag and his electoral district of Elberfeld-Barmen,⁵ in the Second International,⁶ during the Revolution of 1918-1919⁷ and the early trials of the Weimar Republic.⁸ Not found are the private papers.⁹

Found now has been a copy of his diary for the crucial month July 14 to August 14, 1914. The significance of this diary excerpt goes beyond additional insights into personality and party functions to a better understanding of the Social Democrats' part in the July Crisis of 1914.

PERSONALITY AND LEADERSHIP

A socialist editor and companion of Ebert for over 20 years, Franz Diederich, wrote that the man who had been a prankster as a child and a rebel as an apprentice, remained hot-blooded and cocky as a local labor leader.¹⁰ Marriage, children and party responsibilities removed the

¹ F. Ebert, Jr, ed., *Friedrich Ebert: Schriften, Aufzeichnungen, Reden* (Dresden, 1926) and *idem, Kämpfe und Ziele* (Dresden, 1927).

² U. Schulz, ed., *Die Bremer Anfänge Friedrich Eberts: Eine Dokumentation* (Bremen, 1968); *idem, Friedrich Ebert in Bremen: Aus seinem parlamentarischen Wirken 1900 bis 1905* (Bremen, 1963); E. Moring, *Die Sozialdemokratie in Bremen 1890-1914* (Hannover, 1968).

³ For example, the minutes of the Parteiausschuss which Ebert chaired exist only as published manuscript printed for internal party use and hence survive in only 3 or 4 copies for each meeting. The most complete collection is at the SPD Archiv, Bonn.

⁴ Pertinent details about Ebert's headship of this organization from 1908 to 1918 are in the laudatory account of one of its secretaries, M. Peters, *Friedrich Ebert* (Berlin, 1954), and more should be available in the proposed 3-volume documentary *Geschichte der Sozialistischen Jugend Bewegung Deutschlands und sozialistische Erziehungsbewegung* edited by the Sozialistische Jugend Deutschlands under guidance of B. Brücher.

⁵ See E. Matthias and E. Pikart, eds, *Die Reichstagsfraktion der deutschen Sozialdemokratie* (Düsseldorf, 1966); the author is preparing an article "Ebert and Wuppertal" to illustrate the relations of a socialist Reichstag member and his constituency.

⁶ An article with very significant documents, "Friedrich Ebert und die Internationale", is to be published by A. Wurmbach in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*.

⁷ The minutes of the Rat der Volksbeauftragten and of the Zentralrat were to have been published by 1969 in addition to an analysis of the Ebert-Groener "Pact".

⁸ Dissertations on cabinet-building and the use of Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution are being prepared in Tübingen and Berlin.

⁹ Their disappearance has not been fully clarified.

¹⁰ Fritz Ebert (Berlin [1919]), p. 5.

defiant air but not the temperament. He became, another life-long friend reported, "conciliatory in the form", but remained "firm in the cause".¹ Ebert was energetic, diligent and highly intelligent. His archrival within the party, Philipp Scheidemann, acknowledged that "all members of the party central were convinced that Ebert was the most talented among us."² In addition, he was lively and emotional. His crying spells,³ gaiety,⁴ and personal irritableness have gone unnoticed.⁵ Overstressed have been his sober analysis and stoical acceptance of all situations.⁶ A Foreign Office report dating from April 1916 describes him as "an upright and humorful man of undoubtable feelings of justice".⁷

To this the diary adds information on a facet of the man which Scheidemann had already emphasized: ambition and haughtiness. Scheidemann had noted a concern for efficiency hinging on the authoritarian, accompanied by a strong distaste for criticism and questioning. Perhaps he over-emphasized Ebert's concern to gather major party and public offices to himself.⁸ For Ebert's power consciousness increased greatly from 1911 when he refused election as a party leader to 1919 when he authored an autobiographical sketch which chronicled his life in the offices he had attained.⁹ The diary confirms this mentality in such phrases as "on my initiative", "also asked for me", "cowardly, hidden polemic", "greatly missed me".

Ebert's interests extended beyond the party organization. As expected from a political leader during a crisis, party affairs received

¹ Hermann Müller, "Friedrich Ebert", in: *Die Gesellschaft*, II (1925), Pt 1, p. 301.

² *Memoiren eines Sozialdemokraten* (Dresden, 1928), I, p. 360.

³ David, *Kriegstagebuch*, p. 285; R. Nadolny, *Mein Beitrag* (Wiesbaden, 1955), p. 76, give examples.

⁴ Examples: *Geheimes Preussisches Staatsarchiv Berlin*, Nachlass Eugen Schiffer, Dossier 2, 274 and 292. Also *Kämpfe und Ziele*, p. 209.

⁵ Scheidemann, *Memoiren*, I, p. 360; Nadolny, *Beitrag*, p. 70; David, *Kriegstagebuch*, p. 251.

⁶ Kotowski, *Ebert*, I, pp. 156-157 attempts to revise the staid image which emerged as leaders of the Weimar Republic tried to prove they were not frivolous in public affairs as Wilhelm II had been. However, Kotowski at the same time attempts to make Ebert the man who smoothed the way for cooperation and comradeship in the party central (p. 152). This contradicts the personality traits, especially the petty jealousy and concern to have his own way, that Kotowski has found in Ebert's character (pp. 153, 157). Where Ebert did play the moderator was in party-union relations; see *Protokolle der Konferenzen der Vertreter der Zentralvorstände* (Berlin, 1903ff.) especially minutes of meetings 16-17 December, 1907 and 22-23 March, 1909.

⁷ *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtiges Amt Bonn*, *Europa Generalia* 82, No 1, Vol. 26.

⁸ Scheidemann, *Memoiren*, I, p. 100.

⁹ Ebert, *Schriften* I, pp. 129-130.

first priority and he had no time to detail his thoughts about philosophy of war or Jaurès' death. But the breadth of his interests and sympathies may be judged from the full reportage he gives mobilization's impact upon everyday life. His detailed account – the only time he could fully devote himself to diary keeping – of his train travels and of the patriotism contacted, imply too that not only the “workers in the field and on the train had been captured by a mighty enthusiasm.” The “deep impress” which the Reichstag session of August 4 made upon him reveals that he did not remain a dispassionate observer of the raging spirit of national unity. And that affected his role as party leader.

From the diary of Eduard David, one of the most informative sources for Social Democracy during the war, the fact emerges very clearly that Ebert, unlike Scheidemann, did not join the group on the right within the party.¹ He tried to practice a policy of neutral leadership in which he worked for the whole party just as later he attempted to work for the whole nation. The impossibility of succeeding in this attempt explains Ebert's personal disillusionment. However, the impossibility stemmed partly from himself, for the diary points to where his heart lay already in August 1914. Hence how impartially and objectively he acted “to keep the external unity of the party at all costs”,² is questionable: he found Ledebour and Stadthagen's demeanor “disgusting”, despite admitting to himself that the applause for the chancellor by the “rightists” required “condemnation”.

The lengths to which patriotism misled the socialists comes forth in the leaders' belief France and Italy might have mobilized already July 23. For there is no dismissing remark – “comedy” or “lots of luck” – which Ebert usually entered in his diary when he doubted or disbelieved.³ He was not so taken by the emotions of the day, however, as some of his colleagues who reversed their party stances. But Ebert's favoring the vote for war credits seems to have been a surprise for his co-leader; a fact which illustrates how decisively the war began to clarify positions within the party.⁴ For even a few days before mobili-

¹ David, *Kriegstagebuch*, pp. 50, 55; also J. Kuczynski, *Der Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges und die deutsche Sozialdemokratie* (Berlin, 1957), pp. 209-211.

² David, *Kriegstagebuch*, p. 83.

³ See the diary entry August 13 and diary entries in Ebert, *Schriften*, II, p. 111.

⁴ This throws even more doubt upon the thesis of Schorske, *German Social Democracy*, that a split among German socialists was the inevitable result of ideological, organizational and tactical differences. See also the criticisms of W. Maehl, “Recent Literature on the German Socialists”, in: *Journal of Modern History*, XXXIII, 3 (Sept., 1961), pp. 292ff., K. Epstein, “Three American Studies of German Socialism”, in: *World Politics*, XI, 4 (July, 1959), pp. 629-651, and the especially perceptive remarks by S. Miller, “Zum dritten August 1914”, in: *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, IV (1964), pp. 515-523.

zation, Ebert could address a letter to *all* members in the party central relating his worries that war might release new plans by the group around Rosa Luxemburg.¹ Luxemburg's own refusal to shake hands with Scheidemann, so pointedly noted in the diary, underscores how much internal-party relations were twisted by war, how much the conflict of personalities contributed to the conflict of principles.

Eduard David's assertion that the "internal history of the party during the war has yet to be written" because the world outside misjudged who carried real influence,² holds special validity for Friedrich Ebert. Ebert's activities in the party central before the war have been known and judged primarily upon information related at party congresses.³ Almost the same pattern has been followed for the war.⁴ Ebert's diary, slightly distorted due to the strain of events, relates his responsibilities. Besides reaffirming that he was the organization's top administrator – its work horse, in fact –, it leaves little doubt about his part in the decision-making, in the leadership of the party.

Ebert's responsibilities were press and organization statistics when he first achieved the party's national level. Soon finances, organizational questions, such as relations between the national and regional level, and headship of the youth movement were added.⁵ In 1911 his functions were "equivalent to those carried out by a full-time leader".⁶ That statement was authored by the head of the trade union movement with whom Ebert had been the tying link for the party central since 1907. There he faithfully and fairly represented the party's viewpoint.⁷ Even after he became party leader in 1913 his intimate relations with the unions continued: in April 1914 he headed an arbitration committee to decide a purely unionist conflict.⁸ The diary confirms that connections with the unions went through his hands, though decisions were discussed and reviewed by the party central. The novel function which the diary reveals in this context is Ebert's part in the social security system involving the appointed and the

¹ Ebert, *Schriften*, I, p. 309; reprinted in Kotowski, *Ebert*, I, p. 225.

² David, *Kriegstagebuch*, pp. 189-190. David naturally thought of himself.

³ See Schorske, *German Social Democracy*, p. 120, *passim*; Besson, *Ebert*, pp. 38ff.; Kotowski, *Ebert*, I, ch. 5 and 6.

⁴ A. J. Berlau, *The German Social Democratic Party* (New York, 1949) has relied extensively upon newspapers; Kotowski, *Ebert*, I, has employed the minutes of the *Parteiausschuss*.

⁵ See Besson, *Ebert*, pp. 40ff.; Kotowski, *Ebert*, I, ch. 5.

⁶ *Protokoll des Parteitages* (Berlin, 1911), p. 371.

⁷ *Protokolle der Konferenzen der Vertreter der Zentralvorstände* (Berlin, 903ff.), in particular sessions of April 24, 1910 and May 4-6, 1914.

⁸ Results were published in *Correspondenzblatt der Generalkommission* (1914), pp. 274-275.

employed, the leaders and the literary men of both unions and party.¹ Nor had he in 1914 ceased to be directly involved in matters of party funds, the press or relations with regional parties.² Considering the fact that many international contacts, in particular to the Austrian and Swiss movements, also ran through his hands, it is no exaggeration to claim that the party's organization was largely controlled by Friedrich Ebert. That is certainly why Haase had missed Ebert's presence so forcefully during the first four days of August, 1914.

Decisive proof that Ebert's organizational talents and leadership abilities were recognized is that it was he who went to Switzerland "in case it came to an attack upon the party". It was left to him and Otto Braun as to what measures would be necessary if the party had to take up exile as in the previous century. That possibility they faced by beginning to work out an information system between Switzerland and Germany. And even before knowing whether it was safe Ebert returned to try to assure a smoothly functioning organization.

The August 5 meeting of the party central, recorded in the diary, focused upon Ebert's proposals. The trade unions had made wartime preparations already on August 1. That these party decisions had not been made without Ebert or before his return, indicates that if Ebert did not, like Bebel, rule German Social Democracy, he did run it.³

IDEOLOGY AND ACTIVITY

Before and during the first World War, European socialists attributed the origins of war to a relentless capitalism. Paradoxically, they falsely pinned hope upon the pacifistic potential of the masses. Their anti-war arsenal contained announcements and demonstrations.⁴ Direct action had been shunned by the majority, particularly the Germans, at the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International. An ideological reason supported the practical considerations behind the

¹ An annual report for this insurance system with 3617 members in 1914 is in *ibid.*, pp. 294-296.

² Beside examples in the diary entries August 7-12, see Ebert's part in the Württemberg party and press strife best revealed in the printed manuscript *Der Parteivorstand zum Redaktionswechsel der Schwäb. Tagwacht. Protokoll der Presskommission über die gemeinsame Sitzung am 15. November 1914* (Stuttgart, 1914).

³ For a complimentary view as to why Haase did not make his weight felt in the party central see K. R. Calkins, "The Election of Hugo Haase to the Co-chairmanship of the SPD and the Crisis of Pre-war German Social Democracy", in: *IRSH*, XIII (1968), pp. 174-188, esp. 187.

⁴ E. Haase, ed., *Hugo Haase* (Berlin, 1929), p. 101, presents a letter from Haase to Vaillant dated May 1914 in which Haase informs that the party central in Germany unanimously rejected the idea of a general strike.

Stuttgart decision. Marxism embodied an historical determinism which had been interpreted to a fatalistic acceptance of the way of the world, even into a world war. Until during the first World War, when Lenin and the radical left reemphasized the need to unleash the tiger of history (world revolution) and to attempt to immediately ride him to power, the interpretation of Marx which found focus upon the total ripening of capitalism, held sway far beyond Germany.¹ World war was the logical result of the ripening and self-destructive process. Concern was registered, demonstrations held, but no action attempted by the European socialists.

Ebert adhered to this ideological fatalism. He explained the origins of the war in January 1915 to his constituents: "the events were stronger than our powers, socialism was still not strong enough to put through its will." "All great capitalistic states have registered an increased expansion in their economic life during the last decade. Industry and trade have pushed more than ever across their own national boundaries. The fight for markets was fought more intensively. In conjunction with the fight for markets ran the fight for territory. The division of parts of Africa and East Asia became more and more the burning issues of world politics. So the economic conflicts led to political conflicts, to continued gigantic armament increases and finally to world war." This account, ideologically acceptable to all Marxists, was accompanied by the belief "when the majority of the people supports socialism, when the peoples are controllers of their own destiny, then they shall no longer destroy themselves."² In short, until the democratic, just and peaceful rule of socialism, destiny remained capitalistic – which included world wars.

Ebert and the majority within the German party were particularly prone to this "Marxism": they became anti-revolutionary in waiting for capitalism to ripen and in trying to gain a socialist majority through parliament. But the anti-revolutionary thinking and acting of 1918 were a distant result of the July Crisis and cannot account for Social Democratic efforts in 1914.

After demonstrations July 28 and 29, 1914, European socialists acted as though the destinies of peoples were beyond their control; they tried to control the destinies of their movements. Hence Ebert and Braun travelled to Switzerland. No peace-making attempts are registe-

¹ This was the theoretically "correct" line of Karl Kautsky who had written the Austrian as well as the German party program. The best analysis remains E. Matthias, "Kautsky und der Kautskyanismus", in: *Marxismusstudien*, II (1957), pp. 151-197.

² Elberfeld *Freie Presse* 22. Januar 1915. For Ebert's views on war see *Protokoll des Parteitag*es (Berlin, 1912), pp. 6ff., 215ff.

red during their stay.¹ Haase had been instructed to prorogue the scheduled meeting of the International “until further notice”. Hermann Müller travelled to Paris not to agree to a common French-German action against war, but to inform his French counterparts that the congress of the International called for Paris could not be held.² The Social Democrats had even assured the government on July 29, two days before Müller left, that “no action (general or particular strike, sabotage or the like) was planned or need be feared.”³ All action focused on defense of their organization.

Thus in addition to the slow integration into the state of things German if not the German state, a revisionist theory of capitalism and imperialism,⁴ and an increasing *Praktizismus*,⁵ an overriding concern with the existence of the organization determined socialist tactics during the July Crisis.

The precautionary measures prove that the Social Democrats were not privy to the German governments calculations in risking war. Exactly the opposite of the socialists assumptions proved true: the government was not working for peace;⁶ it was not about to act against Social Democracy.⁷

If the degree of distrust exhibited was not unwarranted,⁸ surprising is the degree of trust placed in the same government after the initial crisis. Still, the German, like other European socialists, were working with, not for,⁹ the government, as issues such as annexations certify. As an astute historian observed: the fact that the socialists should have co-operated with the government to defend the nation is understandable; that they accepted the *Burgfrieden* and gave up all opposition is not.¹⁰ On the one hand, the diary makes it less understandable, for Haase, one of the staunchest opponents of the war credits, seemingly

¹ Kotowski, Ebert, I, p. 226 note 20.

² Müller's explanation went to the party press in March, 1915.

³ J. Kuczynski, *Der Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges*, p. 78.

⁴ Haupt, *Der Kongress fand nicht statt*, pp. 117ff.

⁵ See the provocative thesis: H. J. Steinberg, *Sozialismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie* (Hannover, 1967).

⁶ F. Stern, “Bethmann Hollweg und der Krieg”, in: *Recht und Staat*, Heft 351-352 (Tübingen, 1968), p. 21.

⁷ E. Zechlin, “Bethmann Hollweg, Kriegsrisiko und SPD 1914”, in: *Der Monat* (Januar, 1966), pp. 22-25.

⁸ Even more than the Zabern Affair, the discovery made in 1910 that the whole party system would be subject to destruction and the arrest of leaders regardless of parliamentary immunity must have been cause for unease. *Protokoll des Parteitages* (Berlin, 1910), p. 430.

⁹ Stern, “Bethmann Hollweg und der Krieg”, p. 38.

¹⁰ Arthur Rosenberg, *Entstehung und Geschichte der Republik* (Frankfurt, 1955), p. 73.

did not question the preposterous claim of French and Italian mobilization July 23. On the other hand, the diary clarifies: a lack of accurate information, a lack of finances, a fear for the future of the organization and a reasoning grounded in ideological expectations curiously mixed with patriotic sentiments – note Ebert’s terminology about Italy’s young industries – made it impossible for the Social Democrats to comprehend the actual situation.

The majority of German socialists thought just as the government desired to have them think, that this was a defensive war.¹ So Ebert makes no mention of the breaking of Belgian neutrality. Though he does not rant about Czarist threats to civilization, he and his colleagues intend to see to it that the Austrian and Swiss socialists are “brought into line”. Yet it was not a sellout by the party leadership. Only in March 1915 did Ebert “declare himself for a clear, reformist tactic with the rejection of all revolutionary attempts; still [remaining] firm to the ‘class struggle’.”² Despite their intentions, which aimed at saving the peace and the party during the July Crisis and thereafter, the German socialists, through the commitment to working with the government, continued to achieve the opposite. “Our relations to the state were mainly the starting point for our differences”,³ Friedrich Ebert concluded on behalf of his fellow socialists in 1917, after party unity had suffered the same fate as peace.

Yet another conclusion may be drawn from the information about the socialist part in the July Crisis. With Rosa Luxemburg reckoning July 28 that Wilhelm II was a factor favoring peace,⁴ with Haase convinced July 29 that the German government and “industrialists wanted peace”,⁵ with one leader not aware how the other would vote on such fundamental issues as war credits and with Molkenbuhr like others changing his mind at the last minute in fear of a “bloodthirsty czarism”,⁶ the view must be advanced that the Social Democrats knew thoroughly neither their state nor their party, perhaps not even themselves until the world war.

¹ Zechlin, “Bethmann Hollweg, Kriegsrisiko und SPD”, pp. 22ff.; Stern, “Bethmann Hollweg und der Krieg”, p. 38. See also E. Pikart, “Der deutsche Reichstag und der Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges”, in: *Der Staat*, V (1966), pp. 47-70.

² David, *Kriegstagebuch*, p. 113.

³ *Protokoll des Parteitages* (Berlin, 1917), p. 230.

⁴ Kuczynski, *Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges*, p. 53.

⁵ Haupt, *Der Kongress fand nicht statt*, p. 189. Rosa Luxemburg who also attended this meeting of the ISB did not contradict Haase.

⁶ Diary entry of 22.12.1914, reprinted in David, *Kriegstagebuch*, p. 4 note 2.

THE DIARY EXCERPT

The document is in the Geheimes Preussisches Staatsarchiv Berlin among the papers of Major Wilhelm Eberhardt. It is located within a small folder entitled "Fritz Ebert. Aus seinem Nachlass u[nter] a[nderm]" which is located in Dossier 28: "Historische Persönlichkeiten (ausser Militär)". The only other items there are newspaper clippings of no special value including a few about Friedrich Ebert, Jr, when, in 1948, he became mayor of the USSR-occupied sector of Berlin.

Wilhelm Eberhardt, son of a general who had been dismissed by Ebert for counter-revolutionary activities in November 1918, had worked during World War I in the administrative offices of the German general staff. In the 1920s he was employed in the Reichsarchiv and became its director in the 1930s. How he obtained the diary entries can only be surmised from the document's subtitle.

The document is a single-spaced, typewritten copy. That the copier, someone other than Eberhardt and with limited typing talents, had difficulty with Ebert's backhanded handwriting is evident from the numerous cross-outs and penned corrections. So, for example, the letter K is mistaken for an R (see entry 29.7), and numerous though minor penned additions correct copying errors. In editing the document, the latter have been included without notation in the text. Additions made in Eberhardt's handwriting are noted.

From the contents it can be seen that the diary entries began to be made 29.7.1914 and with some of the entries it is not clear whether recorded immediately or one or two days later, though the entries after 4.8.1914 are almost certainly from the same day.¹

KRIEGSNOTIZEN DES REICHSPRÄSIDENTEN FRITZ EBERT
(VON SEINER WITWE ZUM LESEN ERHALTEN AM 17.11.1925)

14.7.1914.²

Ich reiste mit meiner Frau und zwei Kindern nach Bre[e]ge auf Rügen.³ Oesterreich verhandelte wegen dem Attentat wohl noch mit Serbien, an neue Kriegsgefahr hat aber von uns niemand gedacht.⁴

¹ The editor is grateful for the assistance of Dr Susanne Miller.

² Scheidemann, *Memoiren*, I, p. 243 speaks of some weeks before the outbreak of war, and Kotowski, *Ebert*, I, p. 224 claims Ebert left Berlin immediately after June 29, 1914.

³ Accompanying the parents to the Baltic were probably the youngest son Karl and the daughter Amalie.

⁴ Kuczynski, *Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges*, pp. 49-61 shows how unaware all German socialists were of the danger; Haupt, *Der Kongress fand nicht statt*, pp. 149ff. shows all European socialists thought similarly.

Die erste Woche las ich keine Zeitung. Den Vorwärts hatte man mir trotz Aufforderung nicht zugeschickt. Erst in der zweiten Woche erhielt ich ihn, aber erst zwei Tage später. Die Postverbindung war sehr schlecht. Von dem österreichischen Ultimatum an Serbien vom [23]. Juli^a erfuhr ich erst am 27. Juli.¹ Ebenso erhielt ich erst an diesem Tage Kenntnis vom Aufruf² des P[artei] V[orstandes], der am 25. Juli in einer Sonderausgabe des V[orwärts] veröffentlicht wurde.
Am

28.7.1914:

fuhr ich nach Berlin zurück, um 4 Uhr war ich im Büro [des Partei Vorstandes].³ [Philipp] Scheidemann⁴ war auch zurückgekehrt. Die Situation wurde besprochen und allerlei Sicherheitsvorkehrungen getroffen.⁵ [Otto] Braun und ich sollten eventuell nach der Schweiz fahren. Am nächsten Tag war Sitzung des I[nternationalen] S[ozialisten] B[üros] in Brüssel.⁶ Im Einvernehmen mit den Kollegen fuhr ich nicht hin. Am andern Morgen telegraphierten wir [Hugo] Haase auf meine Veranlassung er sollte für Vertagung des Int[ernationalen] Kongresses bis auf weiteres eintreten.⁷ Am 26. Juli war Haase ins

^a *Document incorrectly reads 24. Juli*

¹ Ebert's lack of information, and consequent unrest, is fully related in the letter of 27 July to the party central printed in Ebert, *Schriften*, I, p. 309, and reprinted in Kotowski, Ebert, I, p. 225.

² According to E. Haase, ed., Hugo Haase, 24, this declaration stemmed mainly from Haase. Its main contention was that Austria was provoking war. The declaration called for anti-war-demonstrations and demanded Germany control, not support, its ally.

³ Compare Scheidemann, *Memoiren* I, pp. 243 and 247, who claims Ebert returned to Berlin only July 30; also Kotowski, Ebert, I, p. 226.

⁴ Biographical information about socialists mentioned in the diary will be noted only if not readily available as in F. Osterroth, *Biographisches Lexikon des Sozialismus* (Hannover, 1960). First and last names will be supplied on first mention.

⁵ Besides planning the trip to Switzerland, hiding party papers and warning the regional parties, these security measures probably focused upon putting party funds into moveable form. The trade unions while still fearing repression, for example, transferred many of their funds to private accounts; see O. Scheugenpflug, *Johann Sassenbach* (Hannover and Frankfurt, 1959), p. 73.

⁶ The Belgian socialist, C. Huysmans, had on his own initiative as secretary of the ISB called a meeting which convened July 29 and 30. See Haupt, *Der Kongress fand nicht statt*, pp. 150-151. Ebert had assumed a meeting would be necessary before he knew this one had been called; Ebert, *Schriften*, I, p. 309.

⁷ According to the minutes of the meeting, published in Haupt, *Der Kongress fand nicht statt*, p. 179 (and footnotes) on the morning of July 29 "Haase read a telegram signed Braun which stated that on the previous day in Berlin thousands of workers in 27 overfilled meetings and on the street demonstrated against war and for peace." "Groups of 10,000 on Unter den Linden. Clash with police ... On Unter den Linden chauvinists attempted counter demonstration. Hilferding

Reichsamt des Innern gerufen.¹ Man hatte auch nach mir gefragt. Unterstaatssekretär Haller [?] ihm Aufschluss gegeben über den Stand der Dinge und die Stellung der Reichsregierung, die alles tue um den Frieden zu erhalten. Abends Versammlungen und Demonstrationen Unter den Linden.²

29.7.1914:

Die Lage ist gespannter. Mit der [Kontroll Kommission]^a verhandelten wir über die getroffenen Vorkehrungen. [Friedrich] Geyer meinte es hätte peinlich berührt, dass in dieser Zeit nicht alle Mitglieder des P[artei] V[orstandes] anwesend gewesen seien. Als wir ihm aufs Dach stiegen, wollte er nichts gesagt haben.³ [Wilhelm] Bock übergab mir Abends den schriftlichen Bericht der [Kontroll Kommission]^b über den Parteitag; er solle mit unserm veröffentlicht werden.⁴ Der Bericht ist eine feige versteckte Polemik⁵ gegen den P[artei] V[orstand]. Offenbar ein Machwerk der Klara [Zetkin].

^a Document incorrectly reads R.R.

^b Document incorrectly reads R.R.

being deported from Berlin." No mention is made about proroguing the congress, indeed it was Haase who proposed moving the date ahead to August 9 (p. 181).

¹ According to Haase's report at the 1916 party conference, he had been called to the Prussian Ministry of the Interior; see Protokoll der Reichskonferenz (Berlin, 1916), p. 60, and E. Haase, ed., Hugo Haase, p. 25. Otto Braun also participated because Ebert, Scheidemann and Molkenbuhr were not in Berlin. The government revealed its intention to stand by Austria if Russia supported Serbia. Haase criticized this interpretation of German duties. Also discussed were the mass demonstrations planned for July 28. Pikart, "Der Reichstag", pp. 62 and 64, asserts Haase did not inform his colleagues in the party central about the meeting. Actually, the diary shows candidness and cohesion among the leaders.

² See note 7, p. 440 above, and Vorwärts, July 29, 1914.

³ Wilhelm Pfannkuch, Scheidemann and Ebert were holidaying and Haase preoccupied by a law case as the July Crisis gathered momentum. Scheidemann, Memoiren I, p. 245 reports an exceptionally smooth meeting with the control commission.

⁴ The report of the control commission is reprinted in the Protokoll des Parteitages (Berlin, 1917), pp. 49-53.

⁵ Ibid., The control commission had decided to present a full report to the party congress instead of just listing complaints. Ebert's harsh judgement was probably due to the recurring statement that trust must exist between leaders and membership in a democratic organization. Also, the control commission had questioned the right of the party central to terminate the literary section of a party journal because in it Franz Mehring was deploying a different viewpoint than the general editor, Karl Kautsky. The other complaint of the control commission against the the party central, that too much money in one sum was being lent to foreign organizations, may refer to the 300,000 Mark loan which party and unions extended to a co-operative bread factory in Vienna on the pleadings of the Austrian party; see Protokoll der Konferenz von Vertretern der Zentralverbandesvorstände (Berlin, 1914), session of June 27, 1914.

[Albert] Südekum war heute beim Reichskanzler.¹ Die Mitteilungen des Kanzlers finden sich in einem Zirkular, das wir am selben Tage [noch]^a der Parteipresse schickten. Der Kanzler hielt die Lokalisierung des serbisch-österreichischen Krieges noch nicht für ausgeschlossen.² Die Kriegspartei verlangt Massnahmen gegen uns und operiert mit Zeitungsausschnitten besonders aus dem Vorwärts.³ Kanzler liess erkennen, dass er eventuell zum Belagerungszustand greifen müsse. 30.7.1914:

Scheidemann und [Hermann] Müller meinten Braun und ich sollten uns zur Abreise einrichten. Uns schien die Entwicklung noch nicht soweit. Nachmittag um 2 1/2 Uhr brachte ein Extrablatt des Lokalanzeigers den Befehl zur Mobilmachung. Es kam nur eine beschränkte Zahl von Blättern heraus, dann wurde die Mitteilung widerrufen: Es liege ein „Unfug“ vor.⁴ Braun und ich machten ernst. 3 1/2 Uhr fuhren wir über Frankfurt. Von Frankfurt aus war unser Zug überfüllt. Beurlaubte Offiziere und Mannschaften sind telegrafisch zurückgerufen worden.

31.7.:

Mittags in Zürich. Unsere Schweizer beurteilten die Situation sehr optimistisch. Abends wurde gemeldet, dass das Reich in Kriegszustand erklärt sei. Die Grenzen wurden gesperrt. Nach Berlin hatten wir Mittags telegraphiert, und erwarteten vergeblich Antwort an unsere Deckadresse.

1.8.:

Immer noch keine Antwort. In der Bollegstrasse 34 nahmen wir

^a *Document reads nach with noch added in Eberhardt's handwritings in margin*

¹ According to Haase, Protokoll der Reichskonferenz (Berlin, 1916), p. 60, Südekum was called because other leaders were not available. An exchange of letters revealing the visit's purpose is reprinted in Kuczynski, Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges, pp. 78-80. Haupt, Der Kongress fand nicht statt, p. 169, correctly raises the question whether two visits took place.

² The most recent addition to the long list of publications appearing since the new debate about war origins and war aims began, claims there is no evidence in the diary of Bethmann Hollweg's secretary "of any attempt by Bethmann to stop the crisis, to save the peace". F. Stern, "Bethmann Hollweg und der Krieg", in: Recht und Staat (Tübingen, 1968), Heft 351-352, p. 21. This agrees with E. Zechlin, "Bethmann Hollweg, Kriegsrisiko und SPD", in: Der Monat (January, 1966), pp. 17-32, who has shown that after July 26 the government was concerned only to prove the war was defensive against Russia.

³ The military leaders and the Kaiser were for harsh measures against the socialists; Clemens von Delbruck, Die wirtschaftliche Mobilmachung in Deutschland (München, 1924), p. 156.

⁴ Scheidemann gives a slightly different account in Der Zusammenbruch (Berlin, 1921), p. 4.

Wohnung bei einer Studentenwirtin. Mittags Aufstieg Zürichberg. Abends immer noch keine Antwort. Ultimatum an Russland und Frankreich.¹ [Jean] Jaurès erschossen.²

2.8.:

Keine Antwort von Berlin. Wir werden unruhig. Die Grenzen sind hermetisch abgeschlossen. Was im Reich vorgeht erfahren wir nicht. Selbst die Neue Züricher Zeitung, die dreimal erschien, hatte keine Nachrichten. Die Schweiz mobilisiert alles. Morgens Ausflug mit [Johannes] Sigg.³ Nachmittags auf dem Ütliberg. Kriegsphilosophie. Organisation eines Nachrichtendienstes. Morgen mit dem ersten Zug nach Basel. Abends fallen uns Vorwärts und Berliner Tageblatt vom 1. August in die Hände. P[artei] V[orstand] hat zur Mobilmachung einen Aufruf.⁴ Reichstag ist zum 4. August berufen. In den deutschen Grenzgebieten werden geschlossene Briefe nicht mehr befördert. Unsere beabsichtigte Organisation eines Nachrichtendienstes an der Grenze ist damit hinfällig geworden. Verbindung kann nur vom Reich heraus geschaffen werden. Wir entschlossen uns, dass ich sofort zurückkehre. Abends 11 1/2 Uhr fahre ich über Lindau. Basel ist gesperrt.

Im Reich wird mobilisiert. Teilweise wird schon der Landsturm berufen. Mit fast 2 Stunden Verspätung in Lindau. Allerlei Plaudereien an der österreichischen und bayerischen Grenze. Kein Anschluss. Von Morgens 4 bis 7 Uhr liegen bleiben. Der Bahnhof war überfüllt. Ein wilder Kampf um Speise und Getränke. Nichts bekommen.

3.8.:

Unser Zug nach München fuhr 7, 5 Uhr. Unterwegs stieg ein Reserveoffizier mit Frau und Kindern ein. Die Frau war untröstlich und bekam mehrfach Ohnmachtsanfälle. Im Zuge waren viele Reservisten und immer mehr kamen dazu. Auf den Bahnhöfen standen die Menschen dichtgedrängt, die den Zug mit stürmischen Hurras begrüßten. Aus fast allen Häuschen wurden Tücher geschwenkt. Die Arbeiter auf den Feldern und den an der Bahn befindlichen Betrieben hatte eine mächtige Begeisterung erfasst. Im Zug wurde nur vom Kriege gesprochen.

¹ July 31 the German government demanded an end to mobilization or else it would follow suit which it did at 5 p.m.

² French socialist leader, assassinated in Parisian café July 31.

³ Berlin-born furniture maker who moved to Zürich around 1900, was active in the cooperative movement, the city council and the executive of the canton Zürich.

⁴ Reprinted in Kuczynski, *Ausbruch des ersten Weltkrieges*, pp. 81-82. It is a declaration of resignation: "Were our serious protests, our constantly repeated efforts unsuccessful, are the relationships under which we live once again stronger than our worker-brother will, so we must squarely face that which is coming."

Mit Verspätung nach München. Auf dem Bahnhof herrscht ein fürchterliches Treiben. Reservisten, Reisende aus dem Süden, Ausländer, alles drängt zu den Zügen. Nachts 12 Uhr soll der regelmässige Zugverkehr aufgehoben werden.

In unserm Zug standen in den Abteils und in den Gängen die Leute dichtgedrängt, Kopf an Kopf, Männlein und Weiblein, Alt und Jung. Und jeder war froh, dass er überhaupt mitkam. So gings über Regensburg, Hof nach Leipzig, wo wir mit zweistündiger Verspätung Nachts 12 Uhr ankamen. Ein Glas einfaches Trinkwasser, das mir ein Gepäckträger gegen entsprechendes Trinkgeld besorgte und zwei Regensburger Würstchen war alles, was ich tagsüber genoss.

In Leipzig mussten wir den Zug verlassen, trotzdem er fahrplanmässig nach Berlin fahren sollte. Am andern Morgen um 5 Uhr konnten wir mit dem Militärzug weiterfahren.

4.8.:

Morgens 5 Uhr Bahnhof militärisch besetzt. Einlass nur gegen Vorzeigung des Militärpasses. Ich bin froh in 4. Klasse Platz gefunden zu haben. Mit meiner Reichstagskarte war nichts anzufangen. Fast an jedem Dorf hält der Zug. Überall grosser Jubel. Die Reservisten in meinem Wagen verhalten sich ziemlich ruhig. Nichtsdestoweniger sind sie zuversichtlich und halten den Krieg für notwendig.

Um 2 Uhr Nachmittags in Berlin.¹ Ich gehe gleich in den Reichstag. Scheidemann informiert mich schnell über die tags zuvor stattgefundene Fraktionssitzung.² Es soll sehr stürmisch hergegangen sein, stürmischer als je. Schliesslich hat sich die Fraktion gegen 14 Stimmen (Haase, [Georg] Ledebour, [Karl] Liebknecht, [Paul] Lensch)³ für die Kreditgewährung erklärt. Ich habe Scheidemann erklärt, dass ich mit der Mehrheit gestimmt hätte. Haase war bei der Minderheit. Als ich ihn begrüsst meinte er, er hätte mich in den letzten Tagen sehr vermisst. Später gab ich ihm zu verstehen, dass ich nicht auf seiner Seite gestimmt hätte.

Die Reichstagsitzung hat auf mich einen tiefen Eindruck gemacht. Der Krieg mit Russland und Frankreich war zur Tatsache geworden. England lag auf der Lauer um unter irgendeinem Vorwand ebenfalls loszuschlagen. Italien macht nicht mit und Österreich ist eben Oster-

¹ All authors have followed Scheidemann's claim that Ebert, by not returning until August 6, did not participate in any party decisions; *Memoiren*, I, p. 247; Kautsky, *Sozialisten und Krieg*, p. 441; Kotowski, *Ebert I*, p. 226. Besson, *Ebert*, p. 48, without giving a source states August 2. David *Kriegstagebuch*, p. 12 confirms Ebert's presence in Berlin August 4.

² See E. Matthias and E. Pikart, eds, *Die Reichstagsfraktion der deutschen Sozialdemokratie* (Düsseldorf, 1966), II, pp. 3-4 with notes.

³ *Ibid.*, I, pp. clxxxviii-cxci.

reich. Die Gefahr ist gross, auch unsere Leute standen alle unter diesem Eindruck.¹ Der Reichskanzler sprach geschickt und wirkungsvoll. Er kennt unsere Stellung schon.² Man merkt's, dass ihm diese Tatsache eine grosse Sicherheit gegeben hat.

Bei der Äusserung ...,³ die der Kanzler an uns gewendet machte,³ brachen die Bürgerlichen in anhaltenden stürmischen Beifall aus. Sie erhoben sich, auch die Tribünenbesucher, Bundesrattribüne und alle jubelten uns an. Der grösste Teil der Fraktion erhob sich dabei, jeder ruhig und ernst, ich und auch Scheidemann sind ebenfalls aufgestanden, während Ledebour hinter uns Gift spie.

Nach der Reichskanzlerrede vertagte sich der Reichstag bis 5 Uhr. Zwischendurch fand eine Fraktionssitzung statt.⁴ Regierung will in unserer Erklärung den Passus wegen unserer Stellung zum Eroberungskriege geändert haben.⁵ Ledebour, [Arthur] Stadthagen und einige andere skandalisierten, weil einige Fraktionskollegen eine Stelle der Reichskanzlerrede beklatscht hatten. So sehr das auch zu verurteilen war (es handelt sich besonders um [Eduard] David, [Wolfgang] Heine, [E. Max] Cohen, [Karl] Frohme) das Auftreten Ledebours und Stadthagens war ekelhaft.⁶

In dieser Sitzung machte ich Andeutungen über meine Abwesenheit in den letzten Tagen und die in Aussicht genommenen Massnahmen, falls zum Schlage gegen die Partei ausgeholt wird.

5.8.:

Vorstandssitzung. Meinem Bericht über die Schweizer Mission stimmt man zu, auch meinen Organisationsvorschlägen. Für Braun soll [Hermann] Molkenbuhr nach Zürich. Internationaler Kongress und Parteitag⁷ werden vertagt. Die Tätigkeit unserer Nebenabteilungen

a *Document has in margin* So im Original!

¹ The entry here is a resumé of Bethmann Hollweg's speech. Verhandlungen des Reichstags. Stenographische Berichte, Vol. 306, pp. 3ff.

² Scheidemann, Memoiren, I, p. 250 reports the meeting between chancellor and party leaders on August 3. Late during the same day the Social Democrats' Reichstag declaration was handed to the government.

³ Reference is to the statement: "Our army stands in the field, our fleet is ready to fight, – behind them the whole German nation!"

⁴ Matthias and Pikart, eds, Reichstagsfraktion, II, p. 4.

⁵ Ibid., note 6, which explains that the Foreign Office objected to the phrase that all-out resistance would be offered against any annexationist war. David, Kriegstagebuch, p. 11 attributes the change to Haase.

⁶ Compare *ibid.*, p. 12, and E. Prager, Geschichte der USPD (Berlin, 1921), p. 35.

⁷ The international congress had already been prorogued August 1; the party congress was planned for Würzburg September 13-19.

eingeschränkt.¹ Entsprechende Notiz im Vorwärts. An die Partei soll ein *Aufruf*² veröffentlicht werden: Organisation nach Möglichkeit aufrecht zu erhalten, Auskunftstellen einzurichten.

Wegen Gehaltskürzungen und Unterstützung der Familien Wehrpflichtiger habe ich mit den Gewerkschaften beraten.³ Resultat: Zirkular.⁴ In dem Zirkular werden auch den Parteigeschäften Anweisungen gegeben, um die wirtschaftlichen Folgen des Krieges nach Möglichkeit abzuschwächen.

6.8.:

Man muss sich noch einmal mit dem Wortlaut des Aufrufes befassen. Die Kollegin Louise [Zietz] macht in ihrer Schrullenhaftigkeit und lächerlichen Eigenliebe zur [?] ihren schwülstigen Phrasen allerlei Schwierigkeiten.

Die Hilferufe der Parteigeschäfte kommen schon jetzt [zu]^a. Auch von solchen, von denen man sie nicht vermutete.^b

7.8.:

Mit B[raun] war bisher keine Verbindung zu erlangen. Wir bemühen uns hier Geld zu erhalten.

8.8.:

Noch einen Versuch gemacht an B[raun] mit Telegrammen heranzukommen. Geldbeschaffung ist schwierig.

9. bis 11.8.: [Kein Text]^c

12.8.:

Die Neue Zeit⁵ soll während des Krieges in Berlin gedruckt werden. Redaktion kann sich bei der schlechten Postverbindung mit [Dietz Verlag]^d kaum mehr verständigen. Die Zensur ist in Stuttgart auch

^a *Word zu added in margin in Eberhardt's handwriting*

^b *Document reads after vermutete* "ursprünglicher Text, der durchstrichen: „die man gefestigt hielt“)

^c *Brackets added*

^d *Document reads mit Dick [Dietz?]*

¹ Ebert's report in the Parteiausschuss September 27, 1914, stated that the party school was closed, educational work had stopped, the family-aimed press and the journal *Neue Welt* were not published. *Protokoll des Parteiausschuss* (Berlin, 1917), p. 5.

² Same as circular referred to in note 4 below.

³ Results are recorded in *Protokolle der Konferenzen der Vertreter der Zentralverbandsvorstände* (Berlin, 1915), p. 30, session of 5 August, 1914. Legien reported the party central's proposed income reduction from between 15 to 30% for party functionaries. Ebert argued the scale be accepted unchanged.

⁴ Text is in *Correspondenzblatt der Generalkommission*, 1914, pp. 486-487 and carries the signature of both the party central and the trade union central. In addition to the issues mentioned by Ebert it asks duty be done especially in bringing in the harvest and integrating women into the economy.

⁵ Main theoretical organ, edited by Karl Kautsky.

schärfer wie hier. [Johann] Dietz [?] ist die Wegnahme des Drucks nicht angenehm. Das Blatt soll nur nach Bedarf erscheinen.¹

Einen Artikel über Sicherung der Lebensmittelversorgung mit einem entsprechenden Programm übergeben wir der Parteipresse. Der Artikel ist von [Karl] Kautsky.²

Wie soll sich unsere Unterstützungsvereinigung³ zu den Kriegsopfern stellen? Morgen soll darüber verhandelt werden.

Rosa [Luxemburg] hat gestern Scheidemann, der sie in der Redaktion [des Vorwärts] begrüßen wollte, den Gruss verweigert. Grund: Stellung der Fraktion zu den Kriegskrediten.

13.8.:

Unterstützungsvereinigung wird von Kriegsteilnehmern Beiträge nicht erheben, aber auch für Kriegsfolgen keine Unterstützung zahlen. Braun ist zurückgekehrt nach 4 tägiger Fahrt.⁴ Molke[nbuhr] war noch nicht dort. Die Schweizer sind zugeknöpft aufs äusserte. Rückten [?] gestern von den Depotgeldern wöchentlich nur 200 Franken aus. Wir erheben von der [Unterstützungsvereinigung]⁵ ein grosses Darlehen.

Die hier festgehaltenen Russen sind in Döberitz untergebracht.⁶ Wie man hört ist Verpflegung und Behandlung erträglich. Eine Anzahl Parteigenossen ist mit anderen auf Intervention freigelassen, sie können hier wohnen bleiben, stehen aber unter polizeilicher Aufsicht. Es fehlen aber Mittel zum Unterhalt. Ganz Judea ist in Aufregung. Allerlei Bohrversuche werden gemacht. H[ase] will bei der Klara [Zetkin] anklopfen, damit sie einen Teil des K[autsky] Schatzes⁷ ausliefert. Viel Glück!

¹ The journal continued to appear regularly though the number of pages dwindled as the war progressed.

² Printed in *Correspondenzblatt der Generalkommission*, 1914, pp. 516-517.

³ See p. 434 above; results of the negotiations with the trade unions in *ibid.*, p. 520.

⁴ According to Scheidemann, *Memoiren*, I, p. 260 and Kautsky, *Sozialisten und Krieg*, p. 441, Braun returned August 10.

⁵ The yearly report of the organization printed in *Correspondenzblatt der Generalkommission*, 1914, pp. 294-296 reveals 16,000 Mark on hand and in the bank out of a capital totaling over a million.

⁶ The fate of these exiles and emigrés could not be discovered. For background, in particular the identification of Russian and Jew see B. Brachmann, *Russische Sozialdemokraten in Berlin 1895-1914* (Berlin, 1962).

⁷ Document reads "K. Schatzes", which may be assumed to refer to the funds that Kautsky and Zetkin held in trust for the Russian Social Democrats. The money was in Kautsky's possession, *ibid.*, p. 94. See also P. Losche, *Der Bolschewismus im Urteil der deutschen Sozialdemokratie 1903-1920* (Berlin, 1967), p. 59-66.

14.8.:

[Adolf Müller aus München]^a hat kürzlich mitgeteilt, dass uns in den nächsten Tagen ein Mann¹ aufsuchen werde, der wichtige Mitteilungen bringt. Heute war er bei Haase. Er ist ein italienischer Grossindustrieller, der gute Anhaltspunkte dafür hat, dass Italien ebenso wie Frankreich schon am 23. Juli mobilisiert hat, und zwar gegen Österreich gerichtet.² Italien braucht für seine junge Industrie Kohlen vom Ausland, dafür kommt in erster Linie England in Betracht. Einige Blätter von Einfluss lassen deutlich ihre Hinneigung zum Dreiverband erkennen. Das A[uswärtige] A[mt] bei dem er vorher war, ist unterrichtet verkennt auch nicht die Gefahr.³ Wir sind bereit auf unsere Leute in Italien einzuwirken, damit sie alles tun, um den Frieden zu erhalten.⁴ Erst wollen wir uns aber beim A[uswärtigen] A[mt] versichern. Österreicher und Schweizer sollen eingereiht werden.⁵ Führer durch die Kriegsgesetze sollen herausgegeben werden.⁶ Geldbeschaffung geregelt. Frankfurter Zeitung meldet heute, dass in der französischen Kammer am 4. August zur selben Stunde in der Reichstag tagte, die Kriegskredite einstimmig ohne Debatte bewilligt wurden.⁷

^a *Document reads A. M. und M. hat with the singular verb indicating that Ebert's handwriting was misread. The identification as Müller, who was a party editor with close ties to the Italians, must remain a guess.*

¹ Could not be identified.

² Blatantly false.

³ An answer to an inquiry at the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtiges Amt did not further clarify the matter.

⁴ Südekum travelled to Italy August 25 to September 4, 1914 but was unsuccessful for the Italians had taken an anti-German position. Südekum Nachlass, 66 in Bundesarchiv Koblenz. See also David Kriegstagebuch, p. 35.

⁵ Must refer to trying to get a press friendly toward Germany. In the session of September 15, 1914, Ebert informed the unions: "As the war broke out Germany was cut off from any contact with the outside. Therefore, the foreign press depended completely on English and French reports. The party central did its best, to inform the press and membership, partly through personal contact. The German-Swiss press in general took a German-friendly stance ... The Italian press took a definitely anti-German position; an attempt was made to explain the position of the German party." Protokoll der Konferenzen von Vertretern der Zentralverbandsvorstände (Berlin, 1915). Further on September 27, 1914, Ebert stated: "With Adler in Vienna we have discussed the whole situation; we are in complete agreement." Protokoll des Parteiausschuss (Berlin, 1914), p. 4.

⁶ Das Recht während des Krieges (Berlin, 1914).

⁷ On July 31 the idea of acting against war measures was given up; later socialists joined the government as well as voting for the war credits.