A Re-Examination of Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engel's Views on Polish Independence

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A RE-EXAMINATION OF KARL MARX'S AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS'S VIEWS ON POLISH INDEPENDENCE

By

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INTRODUCTION

Most discussions of Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels's views on the Polish question consist of short articles in historical magazines or chapters in books concerning some other problems, except for a few recent publications in the Polish People's Republic. A considerable part of these discussions is of a polemical nature. The Polish socialists and communists have been repeatedly involved in controversies over the right interpretation of Marx's and Engels's statements on the Polish question.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, when the socialist movement was rapidly gaining ground among the Poles, the heated discussion centered around the question as to whether the Polish socialists ought to continue the fight for national independence in order to assist in the destruction of the reactionary governments Prussia, Austria, and Russia. Drawing on Marx's and Engels's statements, the PPS (Polska Partia Socialisteczna [Polish Socialist Party]) maintained that the two communist leaders had never wavered in their support of the restoration of Poland. Consequently, the PPS continued to fight for a strong and independent Polish
state. But Rosa Luxemburg, the leading Polish Marxist, rejected the policy of the PPS as "patriotic socialism." She insisted that although Marx and Engels had favored the restoration of Poland in the 1840's, they had turned against it later on. Moreover, in view of the rapid economic changes, which would soon bring about the liberation of the oppressed classes, it was no longer necessary to fight against national oppression. Restoration of Poland had become a mere "petit-bourgeois utopia."

The controversy was intensified through the intervention of the Russian Marxist Vladimir Iliich Ulianov (Lenin). He condemned the policy of the PPS as narrowmindedly nationalistic. However, he also ridiculed Rosa Luxemburg for having rejected the right to national self-determination which Marx had favored in the interest of the revolution. But he praised her support of a revolutionary collaboration between the Polish communists in the Polish Kingdom and the Russian communists. In the tradition of Russian radicals since the 1820's, Lenin hoped for the realization of a close Polish-Russian alliance. Although this alliance failed to materialize at the time of the Russian Revolution of 1917, it was finally realized with the creation of a Polish People's Republic under communist rule in 1945.

Since 1945 the Polish communists have maintained that the Polish question has definitely been solved. They no longer seek answers to the problem of Polish political independence in Marx's
and Engels's writings. But they have been faced with a different problem—to defend the viewpoint of the Polish Communist Party which maintains that only a close collaboration with the Soviet Union guarantees the territorial integrity of Poland and Polish independence. After the Polish unrest of 1956 Polish Marxist historians even endorsed the teachings of the realist school of Polish historiography which condemned the nineteenth century uprisings against Russia as a foolish disregard of Polish-Russian power relations. Marx's and Engels's writings have also been searched for evidence in support of Polish-Russian collaboration.

In 1954 Celina Bobińska, a leading Polish Marxist historian, published a study on Marx i Engels a Sprawy Polskie ("Marx and Engels and the Polish Question") in Warsaw. Her intention was to illustrate the fundamental problems from the Polish point of view—for example, the development of the left-wing splinter groups of the Polish national liberation movement towards an understanding of the high demands of Marx and Engels.

On the basis of her studies she concluded that since the 1850's Marx and Engels had welcomed the first signs of a closer Polish-Russian collaboration, while after the Polish insurrection of 1863-64, they had definitely become convinced that "the future of Poland lies in the common revolutionary collaboration with Russia."

2 Ibid., p. 203.
According to Bobińska, Lenin adhered faithfully to Marx's and Engels's concept of Polish-Russian collaboration. He prepared its future realization during his leadership when the Russian proletarian party became the only strong defender of Polish liberation. But Bobińska indicated that the Polish communists had their share in making the contemporary Polish-Russian alliance possible. They relinquished Polish pretensions to the former eastern territories of the old Polish Republic White Russia and the Ukraine. According to Bobińska this complied with Marx's and Engels's wishes. However, she refrained from asking whether the present-day western Polish border was also envisioned by Marx and Engels.

Bobińska's arguments helped to bolster the official Polish communist viewpoint that the Polish People's Republic has truly achieved national independence through the generous support of the Soviet Union. Her arguments also served as a warning to the Polish socialists who are strongly opposed to the contemporary Polish solution. From Bobińska's viewpoint the opposition of the Polish socialists is futile and reactionary because even Marx had considered Polish-Russian collaboration as the only means to achieve liberty.

The Polish social democrats have fought this contention. On January 23, 1962 Adam Ciołkosz, a leading Polish social democrat in the post-war emigration, published a lengthy article in the Polish newspaper Orzeł Biały y Syrena (White Eagle and
Siren [London] in which he charged the Polish communists with having misinterpreted Marx's and Engels's statements on Poland. Since the two men had a true understanding of a "democratic policy," they hoped Poland would become a strong and completely independent state between Germany and Russia.

In Ciolkosz's opinion only the PPS had rightly understood Marx's and Engels's wishes for Poland because it fought for a strong and independent Polish state. Bobińska, instead, has followed in the path of Rosa Luxemburg. She denies the Polish people the right to become the "master of its own history." Ciolkosz insisted that, contrary to Bobińska's opinion, the present day Polish solution has not secured national independence for the Poles. Poland has become a mere "outpost" of the Soviet Union, that is, a negligible member of the Russian bloc. It exists by the grace of the Soviet Union.

Over the years three major contentions have emerged from the Polish controversy concerning the right interpretation of Marx's and Engels's statements on Poland: (1) that Marx and Engels never gave up their hope for the creation of a strong and independent Polish state; (2) that after an initial phase of enthusiasm for the restoration of a great Polish state they finally lost interest in the Polish national question; and, (3) that Marx and Engels believed that the Poles could only secure for themselves an independent national life by close collaboration with the Russians.
In the author's opinion, the variety of interpretations is partially due to the willfulness of the interpreters to select only those statements of Marx and Engels which have suited their purpose. This procedure has been facilitated by the following: (1) many statements of Marx and Engels were intended to fight political opponents, and as a result their statements were contradictory; (2) Marx and Engels never wrote a comprehensive study on the national question, the question of minorities, the peasant question, or the organization of the state—problems which have a bearing on the Polish question.

Such shortcomings have also influenced the interpretation of Marx's and Engels's Polish views in the western world. Western interpretations range from an emphasis on Marx's and Engels's enthusiasm for a restoration of Poland, to a recently more pronounced trend to differentiate, as Rosa Luxemburg did, between an initial phase of great interest in Polish national independence and a second phase of a gradual decline of this interest. Western interpreters in general seem to be more interested in the anti-Russian views of Marx and Engels. Consequently, there is a tendency to interpret their Polish views in the light of their Russian views.

It is surprising that modern historians have not asked to what extent Marx's and Engels's views on the Polish question were a result of their preoccupation with the German question.
which in turn had a bearing on their attitude towards Russia. In the author's opinion, this omission has greatly impeded a complex insight into the views of Marx and Engels. Therefore, it is the major aim of this dissertation to examine the relations between Marx's and Engels's concern with Germany and their attitude on the Polish question.

It is true that Marx and Engels were in the first place social revolutionaries. Their foremost aim was the overthrow of the old political, socio-economic European order and the establishment of a communist society. Consequently, their interest in national, territorial, and foreign political questions was subordinated to that final aim. These questions were often treated as a convenient means to agitate for the final communist revolution.

Although Marx and Engels spent the greater part of their lives outside their mother country, the German question was of major concern to them. While they agitated for a German social revolution, they also supported the demand for the creation of Grossdeutschland, of a German state with strategically safe borders and including the Habsburg territories. Marx and Engels regretted German weakness. Their intense concern with the question of power caused them to admire historical figures like Napoleon I and Peter the Great. But they were also convinced that a German communist revolution would definitely overcome German weakness and would secure for Germany a strong position in Central Europe.
Because of Marx's and Engels's concern with German strength, they opposed the concept of a Slavic union which the Russian political exiles Michael Bakunin (1814-76) and Alexander Herzen (1812-70) had propagandized since the 1840's. In the opinion of these Russians a Polish-Russian alliance would be an initial step towards the liberation of all the Slavs from Turkish as well as German rule. Marx and Engels were quite aware of the consequences of a Slavic power bloc for Germany. They hoped that the Poles would not collaborate with the Russians.

It was not without justification that Slavic leaders, foremost among them Michael Bakunin, maintained that Marx's and Engels's statements on Poland and the Slavic problem were dictated by their interest in Germany. When Marx and Bakunin fought over the leadership of the First International, they were also involved in a controversy over the future reorganization of Central Eastern Europe, that is, after the socialist revolution.

Since the 1860's Marx and Engels had become convinced that the German workers would be the leaders of a future revolution which in their opinion would make an end to Slavophile dreams. But the actual historical development was far different from their expectations. It was Russia which staged the first communist revolution in 1917, and at the end of World War II it was the Soviet Union which emerged as the leading European power. It extended its sphere of influence over Central Eastern Europe and
Eastern Germany. It was also instrumental in the demarkation of the new Polish western border, the Oder-Neisse line. Indeed, the present-day situation coincides to a large degree with the early political hopes of Bakunin, but it has nothing to do with Marx's and Engels's political calculations.
CHAPTER I

THEORY OF REVOLUTION: GERMANY

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels grew up in the post-Napoleonic era in the Rhineland when German dissatisfaction with the anachronistic political and economic structure of the German Confederation was steadily increasing. Since 1815 Germany had been composed of thirty-nine large and small political units surrounded by customs barriers. Political decentralization had its counterpart in the lack of an economic union which presented the greatest obstacle to the development of Germany into a modern state.

Since the twenties the manufacturing bourgeoisie petitioned the German governments for the removal of the customs barriers which had been promised in the Vienna treaties of 1815. At the time of the revolutionary upheavals of 1830-31, the more radical demand for the political unification gained momentum for the first time. A few years later Prussia partially met the
demand for changes with the founding of the Zollverein in 1833 which marked the beginning of the economic union of Germany.\footnote{The founding of the Zollverein was largely due to the conversion of the Prussian enlightened bureaucrats to economic liberalism after 1815. Cf. William Otto Henderson, The State and the Industrial Revolution in Prussia (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1958), pp. 76-95.}

Even before 1833 Prussia had held an influential position in Germany because Prussia possessed the best military organization as well as the largest territory scattered across the five parallel rivers which flow through Northern Germany. The founding of the Zollverein considerably strengthened Prussia's position in Germany and enabled Prussia to take the lead in the economic development of Germany. As the years passed by, more and more members of the influential circles in the German states were attracted to Prussia.

The manufacturing bourgeoisie of the Rhineland, which had been annexed to Prussia in 1815, became the foremost supporters of the extension of the Zollverein to all of the German states. The bourgeoisie advocated political unification under Prussian leadership. Yet, at the outset of the mid-nineteenth century, it was not so certain that the completion of the economic union would prepare the way for German unification by the House of Hohenzollern. It was still possible that Austria might unite Germany. Besides, many of the liberals, predominantly in Southern Germany, were anti-
Prussian, and the radical movement, which was still in its infancy, agitated for a revolution of the masses to achieve German unification.

When Marx and Engels reached adulthood, the Zollverein had contributed to the expansion of manufacturing. In spite of this progress Germany was still predominantly an agricultural country in which two thirds of the population were peasants. Yet, there existed differences in the level of the social and economic development. The most backward conditions prevailed in the territories east of the Elbe river where town life was far less developed than west of that river. Even Berlin, the capital of Prussia, was rather provincial and poor. The peasant masses in East Prussia, Silesia, Pomerania, etc. were ruled by a small privileged class of aristocrats. Except for some areas in Silesia, where manufacturing had made progress, these conditions had more in common with the Eastern European countries, Poland and Russia, than with the rest of Germany.

In 1839 an English observer of German economic conditions reported to his government that since 1833 Germany had made immense progress in all the protected branches of manufacturing, particularly in the production of woolen and cotton goods which were no longer imported from England. Fredrick List, National System of Political Economy, trans. by G. A. Matile (Philadelphia, Pa.: Lippincott & Co., 1856), p. 467.

Southern Germany was as yet untouched by the industrial revolution. It presented a different picture with its mass of burghers, artisans, and peasants which made for social homogeneity. In comparison, the social and economic order was much more differentiated in the Rhineland. The Prussian province was economically the most advanced part of Germany. Commerce and manufacturing were thriving. Cologne, the most important commercial center of Northwestern Germany, had a wealthy bourgeoisie. Although the Rhineland held a preeminent position in the economic life of Germany, even this region had very little which resembled modern industry. Nor did the Rhineland own an industrial center comparable to Manchester in England.

The differences in the level of socio-economic development led to differences in political outlook. In the mid-forties, when Marx and Engels had entered the ranks of European revolutionaries, conservatism prevailed in Eastern Germany and liberalism in Western Germany. The opposition to the reactionary governments was divided. The moderates were willing to make concessions. But the radicals were convinced that the existing conditions could only be changed through a complete reconstruction of Germany.\(^6\) The Rhineland was the center of opposition to the obstructive policies

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of the smaller and larger German governments. Though social and political motives played a certain role in this fight, economic motives prevailed.\(^7\)

The most powerful politico-economic German thinker in the forties was the Southern German liberal Friedrich List. In the twenties he had emigrated to the United States for political reasons. This was a decisive experience in his life which magnified his awareness of the anachronistic economic and political conditions in his mother country after his return in the early thirties. Until his death in 1846 he continued to agitate for the promotion of German industrialization through the extension of the Zollverein to all of Germany.

List opposed the propaganda of the German radicals for a German revolution in order to achieve German political unification. He claimed that a revolution was neither feasible nor practical because the masses were too backward to have nationwide interests.\(^8\) Only the development of a large middle class through the extension of manufacturing would create national feeling. As long as Germany remained a predominantly agricultural country, political

\(^7\)Fritz Cahen, Der rote Handschuh (Frankfurt am Main: Athenaeum Verlag, 1961), p. 77.

\(^8\)The German philosopher Georg Hegel had expressed the same idea in his Philosophy of History. He was convinced that the predominance of agriculture impeded the growth of self-consciousness and of an interest in the political life. The Philosophy of Hegel, trans. and ed. by Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Random House, Inc., 1945), p. 125.
unification would not save Germany from being exploited or threatened by its neighbors. Therefore, List concluded that political unification should come about through an evolutionary process leading to the economic union and the creation of a modern economic order. The Prussian state which had initiated the Zollverein was predestined to take a leading role in the unification of Germany, including the Habsburg territories. 9

Possessing a strong industry, a considerable population, and a large territory extending from the North Sea and Baltic Sea to the Adriatic Sea and from the Rhine to the borders of the Polish Kingdom, the new Germany would become a truly independent and powerful nation in European politics. 10 List's interest in German economic progress was intimately connected with his concern over German political weakness in Europe. It was largely dictated by power political considerations. Yet, his concern with social evils and his desire to raise the living standard of the people should not be overlooked.

The theories of List were particularly welcomed by the Rhenish manufacturing bourgeoisie. It could hardly have been expected that List's demands for the industrialization of Germany

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9 Friedrich List, Gesammelte Schriften, ed. by Ludwig Hausser (3 vols.; Stuttgart and Tuebingen: Cottascher Verlag, 1850-51), II, 446.

10 List, National System, pp. 264-65.
would impress the small bourgeoisie which represented the core of the democratic movement and fought for its survival in a changing world. But in the revolutionary theories of Marx and Engels, which were elaborated in the mid-forties, the demand for industrialization found a foremost place, although for reasons which were very different from those of List. Industrialization was regarded as the preparation for the final liberation of man. Consequently, Marx and Engels were as much concerned as List with the political and economic backwardness and disunity of Germany. Their acquaintances with the economic and political conditions of the Western European countries had increased their consciousness of German backwardness.

Since 1844, when their lifelong friendship began, Marx and Engels agreed that a true revolutionary must be interested in the problems of the day and study them in detail in order to criticize intelligently actual political and social conditions. But a true revolutionary must also be intensely interested in history. An understanding of the past revealed the truth about contemporary conditions and helped to formulate the answer to the future task of solving the social questions.\(^\text{12}\)

Marx and Engels delved repeatedly into the German past and compared it with the more fortunate history of the Western European countries in order to find an answer to the present ills of Germany. They insisted that in France and England the bourgeoisie had performed a historical mission because it had helped to destroy feudalism and to develop both countries into modern states. France was praised as the model of political development which led to the political centralization and to the creation of a unified nation in the French Revolution. But Marx

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\(^{12}\) Cf. Marx's critique of the Young Hegelians for their lack of interest in a "detailed treatment of actual conditions" late in 1842. Mehring, op. cit., p. 46. Cf. Marx's critique of the French socialists in the Deutsch-Franzoesische Jahrbucher (a German radical journal) in February, 1844. Marx stated that their ideas were too abstract and that they studied neither the discrepancies in the "political state" which revealed social truth nor the historical development of society. MEGA, I/1, 573-75. Cf. also Marx and Engels's insistence on the need for an understanding of historical phenomena. Marx and Engels, Die heilige Familie, in MEGA, I/3, 294-300.
and Engels had an even greater admiration for England as the model of economic development which brought about the industrial revolution in the mid-eighteenth century. Both the French Revolution and the English industrial revolution gave birth to modern bourgeois society which meant historical progress over feudal society. 13

Marx and Engels pointed out that the German Empire had not made any political or economic progress since the Middle Ages. They blamed the decay of the German Empire on the German bourgeoisie. Because of a preoccupation with local affairs, the German bourgeoisie had failed to become an active agent in large-scale political measures and economic enterprises. It also had failed to develop Germany into a modern state. Germany's backwardness was fully exploited by the powerful English and French bourgeoisie. Even when the French bourgeoisie staged "the most colossal revolution" in the history of the world and conquered Europe, and when the English bourgeoisie effected the industrial revolution and "the commercial subjugation of the world," the German bourgeoisie was unable "to develop into a class with common national interests." 14

13 Marx and Engels, Die deutsche Ideologie, in MEGA, I/5, 175. Cf. also Die heilige Familie, in MEGA, I/5, 298-99.

14 Die deutsche Ideologie, in MEGA, I/5, 175.
critique of late eighteenth century Germany, Engels stated that a "mean, sneaky, miserable, and shopkeeping spirit" marked the whole German people.\textsuperscript{15} To him their lack of initiative and daring was appalling.

When Engels was an old man, he still lamented the "wretchedness" of German history. In a letter to the German social democrat Franz Mehring of July 14, 1893, he stated:

> In studying German history ... I have always found that a comparison with the corresponding French periods produces a correct idea of proportions because what happens there is the direct opposite of what happens in our country ... There, a rare objective logic during the whole course of the process; with us, more and more dismal dislocation.

Engels regretted that the German Empire could not prevent "the plundering of German territory on a large scale" because it did not develop into a centralized state like France. But he was relieved to note that

> Since our workingmen have placed Germany at the head of the historical movement, it is easier to swallow the disgrace of the past.\textsuperscript{16}

In the 1840's Engels and Marx had studied with a similar feeling of relief the French conquest of Europe at the turn of the eighteenth century. They argued that the beginning of a regeneration of Germany was due to the French revolutionary wars

\textsuperscript{15}Engels, "Letter I to Northern Star," October 25, 1845, in \textit{MEGA}, I/IV, 482.

and to a foreigner Napoleon I. (Marx and Engels were great admirers of this man.) They claimed it was Napoleon's historical mission to usher Germany into the modern age and to prepare the way for a centralized German state. He had liberated the Germans from the rotten German Empire, created modern communications, and had reduced the great number of smaller states, vestiges of the medieval German political structure, by creating larger ones.¹⁷

Engels criticized the Germans because they did not understand Napoleon's mission to destroy outdated forms of European life. Napoleon was the "great conqueror" who knew how to use power. But the Germans judged him on moral grounds. They called him an "arbitrary despot" although he was "the representative of the revolution in Germany . . . [where] his so-called reign of terror was badly needed."¹⁸ Engels condemned the Wars of Liberation of 1813-14 as an "act of insanity" because they strengthened reactionary forces in Germany. From the historical viewpoint the Germans had no right to revolt against the French occupation and Napoleon because the French nation had initiated the French Revolution, and Napoleon was its symbol and its executor. In Engels's opinion neither individual suffering, nor national

¹⁷Die deutsche Ideologie, in MEGA, I/5, 176-77.
oppression, nor the partition of a nation's territory justified a revolt against the forces which represented progress.

When Marx and Engels turned their attention to the German situation in the post-Napoleonic era, they admitted that a new Germany was in the making. But it was still far behind England and France. Although the German bourgeoisie had finally acquired an interest in nation-wide political and economic problems, it was still confronted with the task of overthrowing the old social order and creating a centralized national state, a task which the French bourgeoisie had performed in 1789. The question which both Marx and Engels asked was whether the German bourgeoisie would carry out that revolution.

Before Marx began to collaborate closely with Engels, he had elaborated a revolutionary theory for Germany which rejected the possibility of a bourgeois revolution. It is quite probable that Marx's experiences in the Rhineland during his collaboration with the liberal newspaper Rheinische Zeitung (Cologne) in 1842-43 supported his doubts regarding the revolutionary initiative of the German bourgeoisie.  

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19 The Rheinische Zeitung was founded in January, 1842 by the wealthy Rhenish bourgeoisie in order to further its economic interests, particularly the extension of the Zollverein to all of Germany. In the beginning Marx was only a contributor to the newspaper, but from October, 1842 to March, 1843 he was its editor. It is noteworthy that the office of an editor was first offered to List whose ideas the wealthy Rhenish bourgeoisie favored. But he declined the offer because at that time he collaborated with the Allgemeine Augsburger Zeitung, the leading liberal German newspaper. Cf. List, Gesammelte Schriften, I, 130.
Through his involvement in the political and economic questions of the day, Marx became convinced that even in the Rhineland, the most progressive part of Germany, feudal conditions were still prevalent. The Diet was not truly representative; the landowners held a strong position in it and were able to use their legislative powers to further their own interests. Marx was exasperated because the bourgeoisie did not firmly oppose the attempt of the landowners to deprive the peasants of their customary rights. The bourgeoisie did not press hard enough for the right of the public to attend the sessions of the Rhenish Diet, and it acquiesced too easily in the tightening Prussian censorship. 20

In 1843 Marx's thoughts centered around the problem of how to achieve the true liberty of man. His increasing antagonism to the bourgeoisie coincided with his rejection of Hegel's ideal state and of French revolutionary principles as a means to achieve that end.

Hegel had taught that man was intended to be free and that his freedom would be realized in a state in which "justice and law . . . were conceived as appertaining to every free man," and in which all citizens would collaborate for the attainment of the common good--the realization of the moral law. 21

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20 Cf. MEGA, I/1, 184-85, 228, 271-76, 300, 303, 328.
21 Philosophy of Hegel, pp. 65, 284.
review Deutsch-Französisch Jahrbücher (Paris), on which Marx collaborated after his emigration to Paris in November, 1843, he argued that the Hegelian ideal state was merely the fully developed "political state." It would not liberate man. This had been proven by the development of the modern political state since the French Revolution.

Although Marx praised the French Revolution as a most significant historical event, he held that it had made serious mistakes which ought to be avoided in the future. The French Revolution merely achieved the partial emancipation of man because it aimed at political liberation.\(^{22}\) It failed to abolish private property, the basis of individual egoism and social antagonism. The modern political state, following the French revolutionary principles, granted freedom of property, of trade, and of religion instead of abolishing these three evils. This permitted the rise of a bourgeois society and of anarchic conditions in the social sphere.

According to Marx the Jewish situation, in particular, proved the shortcomings of the modern political state. Although they were politically emancipated, the Jews remained enslaved to Judaism, the embodiment of the capitalist spirit—of self-interest.\(^{22}\)

\(^{22}\)Marx, "Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie" (1844), in MEGA, I/1, 617. Cf. also Marx, "Zur Judenfrage" (1844), in MEGA, I/1, 596-98.
profit-making, and the rule of money, evils in which the Christian bourgeois society equally indulged. Only by rejecting Judaism and supporting the abolition of private property would the Jews liberate themselves and simultaneously work "for the emancipation of humanity itself."\(^2^3\)

Convinced that the modern political state failed to liberate man fully, Marx concluded that the German revolution must aim at more radical changes and transcend a mere political revolution. Besides, in his opinion the Germans would be unable to follow the example set by the French Revolution. The success of that Revolution was due to the close collaboration between the bourgeoisie and the lower classes. However, the German bourgeoisie lacked both the generosity to identify itself with the "popular mind" and the capacity for leadership. Marx even doubted that the German bourgeoisie had the courage "to conceive the idea of emancipation from its own standpoint." Moreover, the concept of a bourgeois revolution had become "antiquated or at least problematical" because of the "development of social conditions and the progress of political theory."\(^2^4\)

\(^2^3\) "Zur Judenfrage," Ibid., pp. 601-06.

\(^2^4\) "Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie," in MEGA, I/1, 617-18.
While Marx questioned the possibility of a German bourgeois revolution, he passionately believed that Germany was predestined to make a social revolution which would initiate the final liberation of man, including the Jews.

Marx argued that in spite of the political and economic backwardness of Germany the German people were the equals of the English and the French because of their achievements in the philosophical criticism of state and law. This criticism which culminated in Hegel's philosophy also led the Germans to the burning question of the modern age, the question of returning to man his dignity. It was merely a question of turning German philosophical theory into revolutionary action in order to achieve "universal human emancipation."

Marx argued that the essential precondition of the future German revolution was

the formation of a class with radical chains, . . . a class which is the dissolution of all classes, a sphere of society which has a universal character because its sufferings are universal, and claims no particular right because the wrong committed against it is not a particular wrong but wrong as such.25

Marx practically admitted that a German proletariat did not yet exist. It was merely in the process of development as a result of the industrial expansion. But he expected that, as the proletariat grew, it would furnish "philosophy" with the "material weapons"

required to overturn the existing order because the proletariat was prepared to reject the whole social order.

"Philosophy," said Marx, "is the head of this emancipation and the proletariat its heart." He meant that the radical intellectuals who interpreted philosophy were destined to become the new revolutionary leaders—a generous element which would identify itself with the popular mind. When their radical ideas had penetrated the masses, the German proletarian revolution would transcend the partial revolution of the French Jacobins. The German proletariat would emancipate itself and thereby the whole of humanity. "The emancipation of the German is the emancipation of man," proclaimed Marx. The German proletariat would bring about the total transformation of society. The conceptual image of perfection presented by philosophy would become reality. The implication was that Germany could leap with a salto mortale over the necessary stages of its historical development. The German revolution would be both political and social. It would overthrow the old powers and dissolve the old society. Marx's revolutionary expectations went far beyond the modest hopes of the German democrats, including Arnold Ruge, the editor of the Deutsch-Franzoesische Jahrbuecher, for the creation of a German republican democratic state.

26 Ibid., p. 621.
27 Ibid.
When the Silesian weavers revolted in the summer of 1844, Marx interpreted this event as proof that the revolutionary ardor of the German proletariat was superior to that of the Western European proletariat because the German proletariat had already acquired "the consciousness" of being a separate class. Therefore, it was the theoretician of the European proletariat just as the English proletariat was the economist and the French, the politician.\(^{28}\)

In the following months under the influence of Engels, Marx receded from his utopian expectations regarding the German revolution. He accepted Engels's view that the first proletarian revolution would take place in England.

Ever since the winter of 1842-43, Engels had had the opportunity to study social and economic conditions of large-scale industry in England. He became convinced that economic factors represented a decisive historical force, and that they formed the basis of the development of existing class antagonisms. In 1844 he declared that England's salvation from the appalling social conditions lay with the modern English working class which had become the slave of the factory owners. In his book Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England, published in Leipzig in 1845, he

\(^{28}\) Marx, "Der Aufstand der schlesischen Weber," Vorwaerts (Paris), Summer, 1946, quoted in Mehring, op. cit., p. 84.
maintained that England was on the brink of a revolution because class antagonism was rapidly deepening with the extension of large-scale industry. The English revolution would enable the Chartists, the organized English workingmen, to take over political power and to precipitate a social transformation through the overthrow of the bourgeois order based on private property. 29

In 1846 Marx with the assistance of Engels developed the decisive factors of historical materialism. He maintained that the economic production in each historical epoch determined the social structure as well as the political and intellectual history of the period, and that the class struggles of the past had now reached a stage at which the industrial proletariat was destined to free the whole society from exploitation by freeing itself from the exploiting bourgeoisie. 30

This revolutionary theory was further elaborated in the Communist Manifesto. It was largely derived from the observation of conditions in Western Europe, particularly in England. It did not apply to German conditions, and it assumed that England, the most industrialized country, would become the leader of the proletarian revolution.

29 Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England, in MEGA, I/4, 222-23, 246.

30 Cf. in particular Die deutsche Ideologie, in MEGA, I/5, 7-71.
The question is what did the revolution mean to Marx and Engels on the eve of the Revolution of 1848. And here it has to be noted that the two friends were primarily concerned with Germany. This has been too often overlooked. Yet, it influenced their idea of the revolution.

In the pre-March period Marx and Engels frequently discussed German contemporary conditions and problems in newspaper articles. This was one means of agitating for a German revolution.

Before 1848 Marx and Engels had an outspoken preference for Prussia. They were typical Northern Germans with a superiority complex towards the Southern Germans who were regarded as backward and who were often treated with contempt.

At the time that Marx collaborated with the Rheinische Zeitung, he supported the pro-Prussian course of the paper. Thereby, he did not commit any noticeable violence to the convictions he held at that time. Although he loathed "Prussian despotism," he was convinced that Prussia was the most advanced part of Germany: Prussia had initiated liberal economic policies, and in Prussia German philosophical development had reached a climax with Hegel's critique of state and law. Thus, Marx's pro-Prussian sympathies expressed themselves chiefly in a defense

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of Prussian economic policies and in repeated references to North German science as against the superficiality of French and South German theories.

The preference for Prussia was an important element in Marx's and Engels's revolutionary calculations. In 1846 Engels pointed out that the Prussian bourgeoisie, particularly in the Rhineland, was the most progressive German bourgeoisie. It had the greatest interest in the unification of Germany. Therefore, Engels considered Prussia as "the center of modern German history . . . and the battlefield on which the future fate of Germany will be determined." 32 Neither Southern Germany nor Austria would have any decisive influence on the future German revolutionary movement. In Engels's opinion Austria was still a "half-barbarian country" because its "paternalistic despotism" had not yet encountered any opposition. The German revolution would be initiated in Prussia.

In 1847 Engels was definitely convinced that only a bourgeois-democratic revolution was possible in Germany at that time. In his pamphlet Der Status Quo in Deutschland, written in March, 1847, he stressed the progressive character of a capitalist development in Germany and promoted a bourgeois revolution for the

32 Engels, "Letter III to the Northern Star," April 5, 1846, in MEGA, 1/4, 492.
sake of German national development. The revolution was an urgently necessary and inevitable event. Therefore, Engels rejected any fight against liberal measures, and he condemned the "anti-capitalist and anti-liberal tirades of the true socialists", in particular, Moses Hess and Karl Gruen. It was the duty of the communists to support a successful bourgeois rebellion against the absolutist regime in Germany.\(^{33}\)

Marx went along with Engels's belief in the necessity of a bourgeois revolution although he never seems to have been convinced that such an outcome was likely on German soil.

In 1847 Marx and Engels discussed in the Bruesseler Zeitung (Brussels), a radical newspaper, the events in Prussia and particularly in the Rhineland. They advised the German proletariat to support the agitation of the German bourgeoisie for protective tariffs. In the long run bourgeois interests would serve the interests of the proletariat. Protective tariffs would further the expansion of German industry and strengthen the bourgeoisie for her fight against feudalism and absolutism.

The development in Prussia in the spring of 1847 seemed to confirm Engels's hope that a German revolution would soon

\(^{33}\)Engels, "Der Status Quo in Deutschland" (1847), in MEGA, I/6, 231-49. Cf. also Engels's animosity against the true socialists in "Die wahren Sozialisten" (1847), in MEGA, 73-116. (Both manuscripts remained unpublished at the time.)
develop. At that time pressing financial needs compelled the King of Prussia William IV to call together the United Diet, a feudal body along corporative lines. The situation was reminiscent of the spring of 1789 in France when Louis XVI had called a similar body under similar pressures. Marx and Engels advised the proletariat to support the Diet if it demanded trial by jury, equality before the law, abolition of forced labor, freedom of the press and of association, and the convening of a truly representative body. But the Diet merely asked for the right to convene regularly. There the matter rested.

In the Communist Manifesto, which Marx and Engels began to prepare late in 1847, they stressed again the progressive character of a capitalist development in Germany and fought the reactionary nature of all countertendencies, including socialist ones.  

Although the prognosis of the near advent of a radical revolution was entirely derived from the development in Western Europe, Germany was tacitly included as being a member of the progressive West. This was in keeping with Marx's and Engels's earlier statements.

In the Deutsch-Franzoesische Jahrbuecher, Marx had insisted that the Germans, although politically and economically

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34 Cf. Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei, in MEGA, I/6, 549-52.
backward, were the equals of the French and English people in the philosophical field.

In August, 1844 Engels declared proudly: "I may assume that it is generally admitted that Germany, France, and England are the three leading countries of contemporary history." Engels explained that leadership in Europe belonged to these three countries because each one of them had gone through a significant revolution. France had made a political revolution, Germany had achieved a philosophical revolution, and England had passed through a social revolution since the mid-eighteenth century. From a world-historical viewpoint the English revolution was of the greatest importance. Although social oppression existed on the continent, it had become a decisive factor in the historical development only in England. Engels said that in England "the misery and poverty of the working classes . . . has national and, more than that, world-historical significance." While the working classes of France and Germany had not yet succeeded in exercising any significant influence on the development of their countries, the advanced English industrial proletariat was rapidly moving towards a radical social revolution.

35 "Die Lage Englands," Vorwaerts, August 31, 1844, in MEGA, 1/4, 293.
36 Ibid., p. 296.
Although Engels ascribed the greatest significance to the social changes in England, his implication was that all three revolutions were interdependent. As Marx had observed, there was no social revolution without a political revolution nor without a philosophical goal—the restoration of the dignity of man. Consequently, Germany was not to be excluded from a preeminent position in revolutionary Europe.

Engels's insistence on Western European leadership foreshadowed the rigid East-West antithesis which characterizes the Communist Manifesto. Already Hegel had drawn a dividing line between Western Europe which had developed a high concept of individual liberty; and Eastern Europe which was still apathetic because of the predominance of agricultural activities. Although there existed gradual transitions from Western to Eastern Europe in the level of economic development, the Manifesto maintained that the difference between the two parts of Europe was absolute. The exaggeration of Western European superiority was in tune with Marx's and Engels's contempt for the peasants and their supposedly reactionary character, and it corresponded to the prevailing superiority complex of the Western European educated classes.

In the Manifesto, Marx and Engels again stressed the role which the Western European bourgeoisie had played in the overthrow of the medieval feudal structure characterized by particularism, the lack of political centralization, and the prevalence of
agriculture. Since the sixteenth century the immense expansion of world trade and manufacture under the leadership of the Western European bourgeoisie shattered the "old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency" and rescued many people from the "idiocy of rural life." The uninterrupted economic expansion promoted the rise of a new class, the industrial proletariat, predestined to destroy the old reactionary classes--the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the landowning peasantry--to abolish private ownership of the means of production, to end nationalism, and to create a just world order.

The Manifesto excluded any possibility that the revolutionary initiative for man's liberation from oppression could come from Eastern Europe, an idea which at the time was favored by the revolutionary Russian emigrant Michael Bakunin with whom Marx and Engels had collaborated on the Deutsch-Franzoesische Jahrbuecher in 1844. The Manifesto made it quite clear that the development of Eastern Europe had been prevented because it had remained outside the main currents of historical progress. Eastern Europe had not participated in the great age of discoveries nor in the industrial revolution. Consequently, it had failed to overcome medieval conditions. Because of its backwardness Eastern Europe had fallen under the leadership of the Western

\[37\text{MEGA, I/6, 530.}\]
European bourgeoisie:

Just as it [the bourgeoisie] has made the countryside dependent upon the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, the peasant nations on bourgeois nations, the East on the West.38

The Manifesto implied that the coming proletarian revolution would continue Western European leadership. In the _Deutsche Ideologie_ Marx and Engels had already explained that a communist revolution could never proceed from the rural areas but only from the cities.39 This allegation was repeated in the _Communist Manifesto_. Consequently, from the viewpoint of Marx and Engels any revolutionary movement in Eastern Europe, where a large majority of the people were still peasants, could only have a relative significance. It might at best serve as an instrument in furthering the communist revolution. So the Manifesto announced the readiness of the communists to collaborate with the most advanced revolutionary group among the Poles, that is, the left wing of the Polish democrats.40

The question was whether at that time the Polish radicals were willing to collaborate with the communists. Indeed,

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38Ibid.


40MEGA, I/6, 556.
the ideas proclaimed in the Manifesto created a precarious situation for the realization of such collaboration. Polish radicals supported the traditional concept of international solidarity which was propagated by the European Left and which stressed the fraternization of peoples on the basis of equality. Many of the Polish radicals were also in favor of the Slavic idea according to which the Slavs would play an important role in the regeneration of Europe. The Manifesto challenged both ideas. It defended the concept of leadership of the most advanced and most revolutionary people, and it stressed the importance of Western Europe in the future radical revolution.
CHAPTER II

THE POLISH QUESTION

Relations between Poles and Western Europeans after 1815

In November, 1847 Marx and Engels made their first public statements on the Polish question as participants of an international meeting of radicals in London. By that time a long-established tradition of revolutionary contacts existed between Western European and Polish radicals.¹

In the post-Napoleonic era, when the underground Carbonari movement spread from Western to Eastern Europe, hope for a European-wide uprising against the political and territorial arrangements of the Vienna treaties of 1815 stimulated collaboration among French, Italian, German, and Polish Carbonari.²


But the European insurrections of 1830-31 did not develop into a European-wide revolution. The Polish uprising against the Tsarist government, which broke out in the Polish Kingdom on November 20, 1830, remained isolated. The insurgents aimed at the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772. But they did not receive any help from outside. Within a few months the Tsarist government crushed the revolt. Subsequently, Nicholas I deprived the Polish Kingdom of all the constitutional rights granted by Alexander I.

The fate of the Polish uprising called forth an immense reaction of sympathy for the Poles among all the Europeans who desired changes. The conviction was widespread that the Polish revolt had prevented Nicholas I from realizing his plan to invade France, suppress the Paris uprising, and restore the status quo. The enthusiasm for the Poles was accompanied by a tremendous spread of Russophobia in Europe which had earlier been restricted to France.³

Suddenly a large number of Europeans became convinced that the Russian Empire had emerged from the Napoleonic Wars as a

power to be reckoned with in European affairs. In fact, within one century, since Peter the Great had turned the face of Russia towards the West, the Russian Empire had made a formidable westward advance due to the progressive dismemberment of the Polish Republic (Rzeczpospolita Polska) since 1772. The Fifth Partition of Poland, dictated by the Vienna treaties of 1815, had turned Poznania and West Prussia over to Prussia, and Galicia to Austria. The Russian Empire retained Lithuania, White Russia, and the Eastern Ukraine, 83% (about 239,000 sq. mi.) of the former Polish territories. Since 1815 the western border of the Russian Empire had extended from Finland to the Black Sea. Moreover, with the creation of the Polish Kingdom ruled by the Russian Tsar the Empire had acquired a western outpost which was driven like a wedge into Central Eastern Europe.

The expansionist drive of Russia filled European liberals and radicals with great apprehension for the future fate of

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4The Rzeczpospolita Polska which originated from the Union of Lublin in 1569 is also called Historical Poland, or Polish Commonwealth, or Polish-Lithuanian State. For general information on Polish history see the standard work: The Cambridge History of Poland, from Augustus II to Pilsudski (1697-1935), ed. by W. F. Reddaway, J. H. Penson, O. Halecki, R. Dyboski. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1941), and Oskar Halecki, A History of Poland, trans. by Monica M. Gardner (rev. ed.; New York: Roy Publishers, 1966).

European liberty and civilization. Although Prussia and Austria collaborated with Russia for the preservation of the status quo in Europe, Russia was considered the worst enemy of progress. It was stigmatized as the center of European reaction and as a barbaric country. Both liberals and radicals agitated for the dissolution of the Russian Empire and the restoration of Poland. But only the radicals were unanimous in their demand for a revolutionary war against Russia waged by the revolutionary European people.6

The agitation for a war against Russia and European revolutionary solidarity was supported by the radical Polish emigrants who had participated in the Polish uprising, among them Joachim Lelewel (1786-1861), the former head of the Polish Carbonari in the 1820's; Karol Stolzman (1793-1854); and Stanisław Worcell (1799-1857).

After their arrival in Western Europe, these men contacted former members of the Carbonari movement (which had

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6Although the English and French liberal bourgeoisie regarded Poland as a welcome ally against the Russian power, it had no interest in European wars and did not wish to rush into a war for the Poles. Among the leading German liberals the Southern Germans became the foremost champions of a war against Russia. But their interest in the Poles was largely determined by their opposition to Prussia. Cf. Georg W. Hallgarten, Studien über die deutsche Polenfreundschaft in der Periode der Kauz-Revolution (Munich and Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1928), pp. 2, 11.
disintegrated in 1831) and particularly the Italian radical, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-72). In the following years Mazzini became the foremost defender of Polish liberation. Mazzini was convinced that a future European revolution would only be successful if it transcended the goal of the French Revolution, the realization of individual liberty. It must proclaim the right to national liberty because in a large part of Europe it did not yet exist.\(^7\)

In a letter to Lelewel of June 25, 1832, Mazzini expressed his belief that a revolutionary reorganization of Europe, which would include the restoration of Poland, could only be the result of the "universal association of the nations."\(^8\) In Switzerland on April 15, 1834, Lelewel's compatriots Stolzman and Ludwik Mierosławski (1814-78), together with Italian and German emigrants, helped Mazzini to found the organization Young Europe. Mazzini was convinced that Poles, Germans, and Italians were predestined to initiate the movement for European unification because they had not yet achieved a unified national state. Young Europe was conceived

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as the vanguard of that movement. The statutes of the organization proclaimed that "nationality is sacred." They condemned national oppression, stressed the right of each nation to liberty and equality, and demanded the founding of a European republican federation in order to protect the liberated nations from any kind of overlordship in the future and in order to realize the "brotherhood of mankind." 9

From the beginning the organization Young Europe was weakened because it did not succeed in bringing together all the major revolutionary groups within a given nation. The Polish Democratic Society (Towarzystwo Demokratyczne Polskie), which was founded in 1832 in Paris, was unwilling to support Young Europe although the Polish members felt that it was an excellent instrument "to fortify the cause of Polish democracy . . . and to ensure the collaboration of foreign democrats." 10 The organization was dissolved by order of the Swiss government in 1836. It was the first important international of revolutionaries in the fight against the monarchic order in Europe.

During the following years members of the left wing of the Democratic Society continued to associate with Mazzini and his

9 Giuseppe Mazzini, Scritti editi ed inediti, ed. under the direction of Mazzini (9 vols.; Milano: G. Daelli, Editore, 1861-77), V, 34.

followers. Until his death in 1857 Stanisław Worcell, the "father of Polish socialism," was a close friend of Mazzini. 11

Mazzini's ideas were especially attractive to the Polish democrats because he stressed the right to national self-determination. Moreover, Mazzini never wavered in his support of the restoration of a democratic Poland from "the Baltic to the Black Sea and from the mouth of the Niemen to that of the Dnieper" as a bulwark against Russia. A restored Poland would prevent the Russian Empire from forcing all the Slavs into a "monstrous unitary empire which would impose its dictatorship upon all of Europe." It would enable the Poles, the "most Westernized Slavs," to spread Western European ideals among the more backward Eastern Slavs and to continue their ancient civilizing mission among them. 12

The political concept of a restored Poland as a European bulwark against Russia corresponded to the traditional Polish propaganda in Western Europe ever since the late eighteenth century. This propaganda was now taken up by the Polish Democratic


12 Giuseppe Mazzini, Lettere slave, with a Foreword by Fabrizio Canfora (Bari: Giuseppe Laterza & Figli, 1939), pp. 73-74.
Society. The political program of the Society outlined in the Manifesto of 1836 called for the restoration of Poland "from the Oder and the Carpathian mountains to the Borysthenes and the Dwina, [and] from the Baltic to the Black Sea."\(^{14}\)

The political program also included a demand for the liberation of the peasants. This was largely due to the influence of the left-wing democrats led by Lelewel. Their insistence upon the social revolution led to contacts with the Chartist movement in England, and even with the communist German Workers Educational League (Deutscher Arbeiterbildungsverein) in London, and with the secret communist League of the Just, the precursor of the Communist League.\(^{15}\) Yet, these contacts were much less enduring than those with the Mazzinians.

\(^{13}\)For information on Polish anti-Russian propaganda see Feldman, Geschichte der Politischen Ideen, pp. 43 ff.


In the thirties and forties the aforementioned revolutionary groups, including a variety of others like the Fraternal Democrats and the exiled Société Démocratique Française, maintained contacts through international meetings which continued to propagandize the idea of international solidarity and the fraternization of the people. Meetings were frequently held in support of the restoration of Poland, and special committees for the regeneration of Poland were organized. The English Chartist leaders George Julian Harney and Ernest Jones were actively engaged in the pro-Polish propaganda campaign. 16

In these international circles of the mid-forties, Marx and Engels met with Polish left-wing democrats, among them Stanisław Worcell, Ludwik Oborski, and Joachim Lelewel. 17 From November, 1847 to February, 1848, Marx collaborated with Lelewel in the newly founded international organization, the Democratic Association (L'Association Démocratique) in Brussels, of which Marx and Lelewel were vice-presidents. At that time Marx and Engels were great admirers of the aging Lelewel who was not only

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17 In the mid-forties Marx and Engels worked together with the German Workers Educational League and the Fraternal Democrats which the Chartists also collaborated with. Marx and Engels were on friendly terms with the Chartists, Feargus O'Connor, Jones, and Harney. Engels wrote for the Chartist newspaper, Northern Star. Cf. Hovell, op. cit., pp. 285-6. For Marx and Engels's Polish contacts cf. Bobińska, op. cit., pp. 70-3.
an outstanding Polish revolutionary, the "father of Polish democracy," but also a remarkable historian. Indeed Lelewel remained the only Pole of renown with whom they entertained close and very friendly relations. These relations ended with the outbreak of the Revolution of 1848.

An Interpretation of Polish History

During the period of their enthusiasm for Lelewel, Marx and Engels favored the basic concept of his revolutionary theory that an agrarian democracy was the proper solution for Poland, a concept which they rejected in later years. Lelewel derived his belief in the agrarian democracy from his democratic and romanticist interpretation of the Polish past which he presented to the Western European public in his two-volume work *L'histoire de Pologne* published in 1844 in Paris. Although Engels did not mention the book before the summer of 1848 in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (Cologne), it may be assumed that Marx and Engels had become acquainted with Lelewel's work before 1848, and that a great deal of information on Polish conditions was derived from it.

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19 (Since Marx and Engels did not know Polish, they only had access to the translated Polish literature. There is no evidence that in the forties Marx and Engels had a thorough knowledge of it.) In the summer of 1848 Engels also referred to a work by Ludwik Mierosławski on the insurrection of 1830-31, *Débat entre la révolution et la contre-révolution en Pologne*. Engels thought highly of the book. Many years earlier, Engels had praised
Yet, their interpretation of the Polish past was different from Lelewel's.

Lelewel was a Slavophile. He maintained that the democratic principle of individual liberty and equality which the West had only recently discovered had been an integral part of the Slavic social and political structure of the early Middle Ages. In the later Middle Ages under the rule of the Piasts, the Poles were able to infuse an expanding civilization with the ancient democratic traditions of the Slavs. They created an aristocratic democracy which was far superior to the Western European feudal system based on the "enslavement" of the individual.

According to Lelewel the principle of equal rights shared by all the Polish nobles attracted the nobles of Lithuania and Rus (roughly modern White Russia and the Ukraine) to such an extent that they were willing to enter into a union with the Poles in

the "excellent" work on the Polish insurrection by the Polish count Roman Soltyk. In his opinion it was superior to another work on the Polish uprising by the German Friedrich von Smitt published in Berlin in 1839. Engels was certain that Smitt had written the book "by order of the King of Prussia." Cf. Engels's letter to Wilhelm Graeber, October 8, 1839, in MEGA, I/2, 539.


Ibid., I, 78, 91; II/2, 61-65, 83.
Lelewel considered the Union of Lublin as the climax of Polish history. It represented the "first" attempt in Europe to organize a vast political entity on the basis of a voluntary federation. Lelewel suggested that the Europeans ought to learn from the Poles and use the federal principle for a regeneration of Europe.

Lelewel maintained that the Union enabled the Poles to perform a civilizing mission among the more backward White-Russians, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians. But the Poles failed to accomplish the second task—to integrate the vast territory of the Union, which extended to the Dnieper, under the guiding principle of the extension of liberty.

Lelewel claimed this failure was due to the infiltration of Polish political thought at the turn of the sixteenth century with the paternalistic notion of Roman law and the principle of absolute power. Under the influence of these Western European concepts, the Polish nobles sought concentration of power. They curtailed the liberties of the townspeople and enslaved the

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23 Lelewel, op. cit., II/2, 107.
peasants completely. They also aimed at the subjugation of the Cossacks. The Polish nobles rejected the demand of the Cossacks to send representatives to the Polish sejm (Diet). They would not grant aristocratic privileges to the Cossacks and were reluctant to include the Cossacks into the Union as equal partners of Poles and Lithuanians.

Lelewel concluded that the revolt of the Cossacks in the 1640's, which developed into a widespread peasant uprising, marked the beginning of the decay of the Polish Republic. The revolt led to the first triumph of the Tsar of Moscow over the Poles when the Cossacks placed their territory east of the Dnieper under his protection with the treaty of Pereiaslav in 1654.

In Lelewel's opinion the restriction of liberty was the

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24 "These unhappy people [the peasants] were regarded by their seigneurs as non-human beings with whom they could do what they wanted, sell them like cattle, force them to work like animals, and take their life." Lelewel, op. cit., II/2, 248.

25 Ibid., pp. 264 ff. In 1963 the Slavic Review published a series of articles which reopened the old controversy over the significance of the Rzeczpospolita Polska. The noted Polish historian Oscar Halecki maintained that it had been a true federation based on a large amount of local autonomy. But Joseph Jackstas and Oswald Backus III opposed this view. They argued that the main aim of the Poles was to extend their own power in the Union. At first they enlarged their territorial possessions at the expense of Lithuania, and in the seventeenth century they tried to destroy the Cossacks. The oppressive Polish policies weakened the Union and led to its decay. Cf. Oswald P. Backus III, Oskar Halecki, and Joseph Jakstas, "The Question of Rzeczpospolita Polska," Slavic Review, XXII (September, 1963), 411-32, 439-50.
main cause of Poland's decay. He did not lament the economic backwardness of the Polish Republic. He claimed that the lack of prosperous towns and a wealthy middle class had at least prevented the Polish kings from establishing absolutism, the enemy of individual liberty, in Poland. Consequently, Lelewel believed that the regeneration of Poland depended in the first place upon the restoration of the ancient Slavic democratic principles and the extension of liberty and equality to all the people.

Lelewel's interpretation of the Polish past had little in common with Marx's and Engels's approach to history. He did not measure the progress of a nation by its ability to create a unified national state and to expand the manufacturing activities. Nevertheless, Marx and Engels retained a great esteem for Lelewel as a historian, but only because he had taken up the social question and had presented the enslavement of the peasants as a major question of Polish history. They did not share Lelewel's enthusiasm for the democratic spirit of the Slavs, the aristocratic democracy, and the civilizing mission of the Poles. Nor did they care for Lelewel's support of political decentralization and federalism nor for his antagonism to the Western European development.

26 In 1858 Marx stated that Lelewel belonged to the historians who "initiated a real progress in contemporary historiography . . . because they penetrated from the outward political forms to the internal social life . . . With his
In their interpretation of Polish history, Marx and Engels followed the same method which they applied to German history. They compared Polish history with the ideal historical pattern—the Western European development from medieval decentralization to a progressive political centralization, and from the medieval prevalence of agriculture to the growth of towns and the expansion of commerce and manufacturing. The result was that they could not help but consider Polish history a failure.

Other Germans had done so. Georg Hegel had a very low opinion of the Polish past. To him the celebrated ancient Polish liberty was merely an instrument of the nobles to limit the King's power. The nobles had wished to preserve the backward medieval institution of an elective monarchy. But they lacked political insight. By preventing the development of a strong political center, the nobles had permitted the destruction of Poland to take place. Polish history served as a warning that "the state must have absolute authority in order to survive."°

Friedrich List also attributed the decay of the Polish Republic to the short-sightedness of the nobles who did everything thorough examination of the economic conditions which made of the free Polish peasant a serf, the venerable Lelewel has done more to explain the reasons for the subjugation of his fatherland than the whole gang of scribblers whose repertoire consists of invectives against Russia." New York Daily Tribune, May 11, 1858.

°The Philosophy of Hegel, pp. 46-65.
to maintain the old feudal order. List stressed their lack of economic insight. The Polish nobles were unable to understand that in the modern age the survival of the state depended upon its economic strength. Consequently, they had opposed the adoption of the Western European mercantilist policies. However, only the development of a native industry and of populous cities would have strengthened Poland and preserved its "independence and political preponderance over less civilized neighbors." Poland was "erased from the list of nations for want of a strong middle class" interested in economic progress.28

The basic position of Hegel and List concerning Polish history was also adopted by Marx and Engels. They maintained that the decay of Poland and the ensuing Polish partitions resulted from the continuation of a medieval political, economic, and social system.

Although Marx's and Engels's statements on the Polish past extend over several decades, they may be treated in a comprehensive manner at this point because their basic interpretation of Polish history remained consistent. This interpretation also agreed with their evaluation of the historical development as presented in the Communist Manifesto.

28 Friedrich List, "Die Freiheit und die Beschraenkungen des auslaendischen Handels vom historischen Gesichtspunkt" (1839), in Gesammelte Schriften, II, 65. Cf. also List, National System of Political Economy, p. 273.
Marx and Engels repeatedly acknowledged a certain analogy in the history of Poland and Germany when they compared it with the Western European development towards the elimination of the feudal system since the sixteenth century. Engels observed that in England feudalism was undermined through the alliance of the gentry with the towns. In France this was done through the political centralization under an absolute monarch who profited from the opposition between the nobility and the bourgeoisie. Simultaneously, Poland and Germany were unable to overcome medieval decentralization which resulted in the lack of a strong political center in both countries. While Germany consisted of a great number of large and small political units, Poland was composed of a conglomerate of feudal provinces.

Engels insisted that the Polish political system was even more backward than the German. Germany had developed in the Middle Ages a "complex feudal hierarchy" which was a "much higher form" of political organization than the Polish aristocratic democracy. In later centuries centralization was at least achieved in the single German states under absolutist rule. But the Polish aristocratic democracy "based on bondage" perpetuated the complete weakness at the center. According to Engels it was "one of the most primitive systems of social organization" and
reminiscent of conditions in the territories conquered by the Germanic peoples at the beginning of the Middle Ages. 29

Engels related the political backwardness of Poland to the economic conditions. The Polish constitution prevented "unified national action" because the *liberum veto* allowed any deputy to dissolve the Diet and even to annull its previous decisions. 30 Simultaneously, the lack of prosperous towns and an expanding industry increased the internal weakness of Poland and diminished its defensive strength at a time when Poland's "neighbors progressed, formed a middle class, developed commerce and industry, and created large towns." 31 The political and economic weakness sentenced Poland to perish. The country became an "easy prey" of its powerful neighbors who devastated it in never-ending wars and turned it into their "tavern."

Over the years Marx's and Engels's basic conviction that the political, social, and economic backwardness of the Polish republic helped to destroy that state remained unchanged. But


31Frederic Engels, "What have the Working Classes to do with Poland?" (1866), *Archiv fuer die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung,* VI (1916), 218.
when they dealt with the question of the ultimate causes of Polish backwardness, they made some startling and contradictory statements. Such repeated inconsistencies were for the most part dictated by a desire to ridicule an opponent. They indicate how necessary it is to be careful in the interpretation of Marx's and Engels's statements and to differentiate between basic positions and transitory assertions derived from their temporary involvement in some polemics.

Generally, Marx and Engels attributed the economic backwardness of the Polish Republic to the feudal aristocracy who subjugated the common people to further their own agricultural interests. But in 1848 Engels ventured the staggering explanation that the German emigrants had the greatest responsibility for Polish economic and political backwardness. His intention was to ridicule the popular German argument that for centuries the German emigrants had performed a civilizing mission in the Slavic countries, including Poland.

Engels stated that the history of the Slavs proved their inability to initiate the development of towns and trades. The Slavs were "predominantly an agricultural people, hardly qualified for the management of urban trade." 32 Engels claimed that the

German eastward emigration since the Middle Ages had not promoted economic, political, or cultural progress among the Slavs. The Germans had reached "the peak of their development with the petit-bourgeoisie of the medieval towns" where the desire for great enterprises was absent. They never outgrew the petit-bourgeois mentality. Consequently, the German emigrants in the Slavic towns did not rise above their old position of artisans and small traders. This was also true in Poland.

According to Engels the Germans helped to prolong medieval conditions in Poland because they were unable to exploit the excellent opportunities for large-scale commercial and industrial enterprises, but, above all, because they were separatists.

The Germans . . . obstructed centralization, the most powerful political means for the fast development of a country, by their different language, by separating themselves from the Polish people, and by their thousandfold different privileges and municipal laws.33 They also prevented the formation of Polish towns with a Polish bourgeoisie. German backwardness had hindered the modernization of Poland and the creation of a unified nation state.

Several months later, when Engels fought Pan-Slav demands, he contradicted himself without any scruples. He praised the German civilizing mission among the Slavs. He declared that the

33Ibid.
German reconquest of the territories between the Elbe and Warthe rivers, which had been inhabited by the Slavs since the seventh century, was "in the interest of civilization." The Germans had reached a higher stage of industrial, commercial, agricultural, and cultural development. Germanization enabled the Slavs to participate in a "historical development which would have remained entirely foreign to them had they been left to themselves." Especially, the subjugation of the Austrian Slavs to German rule was one of the "worthiest deeds" in Germany history. Engels made one reservation regarding the Poles. Although they had as little inclination towards the trades as the other Slavs, they were less retrograde.34

But two years later, in 1851, when Engels returned to the subject of the German Drang nach Osten, he insisted that even the Poles had profited from German superiority. He stated that among the Slavs "the Western Slavs (Poles and Czechs), in particular, are essentially an agricultural race."35 Consequently, it was quite natural that the Germans and also the Jews, who were "certainly Germans rather than Slavs," developed trade and manufacture in the Slavic towns and organized commercial relations

34Friedrich Engels, "Demokratischer Panslavismus," NRZ, February 16, 1849.

with the rural areas. The annexation of the western Polish territories by the Germans was due to the economic inferiority of the Polish Republic. It represented the last phase of the long process of disintegration which the Slavic element underwent since the Middle Ages.

In 1902 the German Marxist historian Franz Mehring criticized in a scholarly fashion the shortcomings of Marx and Engels in their interpretation of the Polish historical development. He agreed that Marx and Engels were right to attribute Poland's decay to the lack of political centralization and urban development. However, their analysis of the ultimate causes of Polish backwardness was wrong. It was unreasonable to ascribe Polish conditions to the presence of German emigrants or to the supposed inability of the Poles to organize an urban industry. The economic abilities of individuals and nations, said Mehring, were not determined by their racial origin. Besides, Marx's and Engels's contention concerning the Poles had been disproved by the industrial progress in the Polish Kingdom since the 1850's. Apparently Mehring assumed that Marx's and Engels's statements on Germans and Poles were made in good faith and were free of any polemical implications.

According to Mehring the geographical position of Poland was the major cause of its decay.\textsuperscript{37} Already in the Middle Ages, when Constantinople was the center of world trade, Poland lay outside of the great trade routes. With the discovery of the New World the Polish state was still further removed from the great trade routes. This had a worse effect upon Poland than upon Germany because the Polish economy was more backward. The urban development, which had just begun, was ended, while the power of the great landowners increased.

When Poland became the granary of Western Europe in the modern age, the landowners monopolized the production of grain as well as the grain trade. They enforced the prohibition of the exportation of Polish goods and the unlimited importation of foreign goods. They enslaved the peasants and ruined the Polish merchants and artisans. Mehring observed that by ruining the towns the landowners also destroyed the basis of the great political, social, and economic evolution which marked the passage from the Middle Ages to the modern age in Western Europe.\textsuperscript{38}

Twentieth century historians have verified Mehring's assumption that the growth of grain export led to social changes.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p. 26.

\textsuperscript{38}It is noteworthy that Mehring's critical approach to the writings of Marx and Engels is completely absent in the work of the contemporary Marxist historian Celina Bobińska. Cf. Bobińska, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 39-53.
and the enslavement of the peasants. The Polish historian Jan Rutkowski has stated that a system of tribute-payments in money and in kind prevailed in the High Middle Ages when new land was colonized. The Peace of Torun (1466), which had given Poland an outlet to the Baltic Sea, marked the beginning of the transition to an extensive system of labour services. This development coincided with the growth of grain export.\footnote{Jan Rutkowski, \textit{Histoire économique de la Pologne avant les partages}, trans. by Marie Rakowska, Paris: Université, institut d'études slaves, bibliothèque polonaise, Vol. I (Paris: Champion, 1927), pp. 31-36.}

The Ukrainian historian Michael Hrushevsky also emphasized the influence of the grain export upon the social structure. He declared that in the Ukraine of the sixteenth century (then a part of Poland) "serfdom made its initial appearance in Western Ukraine where the demand for grain (for export) first appeared in the latter half of the sixteenth century."\footnote{Hrushevsky, \textit{A History of the Ukraine}, pp. 172-74.} The findings of these historians confirmed that in the Polish Republic commercial expansion, accompanied by the growth of a money economy, did not weaken feudalism but strengthened it.

In the mid-fifties Marx and Engels no longer adhered to the simple statement made in the \textit{Communist Manifesto} that the development of commerce undermined feudalism. In his work \textit{Das
Kapital, whose basic ideas were formulated in 1857-58, Marx stated that commercial expansion must not necessarily lead to the destruction of feudalism.⁴¹

Neither Marx nor Engels applied this new insight to their interpretation of the Polish past. Both were aware of the recrudescence of feudalism in Eastern Europe in the modern age. Engels called it a "second serfdom." However, he did not go into an analysis of this phenomenon.⁴²

When, in 1856, Marx discussed the reappearance of servitude in the Polish Republic, he ascribed it to the end of "the wars of conquest and colonization." He maintained that, contrary to the assumption of Lelewel and his school, the gmina

⁴¹Marx observed that the "dissolving influence" which commerce will have upon the old economic order depends upon the character of this system, "its solidity and internal articulation"; and, in particular, "what new mode of production will take the place of the old mode of production itself." In connection with this observation Marx mentioned that "in the antique world the effect of commerce and the development of merchant capital always results in slave economy." Capital, III, 390, quoted in Maurice Dobb, Studies in the Development of Capitalism (rev. ed.; New York: International Publishers, 1965), p. 42. Cf. the comments of the English economist Maurice Dobb on the influence of the growth of a money economy upon the medieval social structure and his comments on Marx's position. "There seems, in fact, to be as much evidence that the growth of a money economy per se led to an intensification of serfdom as there is evidence that it was the cause of the feudal decline." Dobb, opus. cit., pp. 37-43.

(the ancient agrarian commune) had never been fully independent. Because of the patriarchal relations between the domains of the aristocracy and the gmina, the peasants enjoyed only a relative freedom. When the aristocracy was no longer able to acquire new land through conquests or colonization, these patriarchal relations led to "servitude." The peasants, who were "incapable of playing the role of a real middle class, became ... the Lumpenproletariat (wretched proletariat) of the aristocracy." 

Marx made this statement at the time when he prepared Das Kapital. In this work he discussed the dissolution of the peasant classes in Western Europe under the impact of the Industrial Revolution. This process was presented as the necessary preparation for the entrance into the new age of man's freedom.

From the beginning of the fifties Marx and Engels were definitely against a repetition of the agrarian policies of the French Revolution. They claimed that if ownership of the land were granted to the peasants, this would only delay the liberation of the rural proletariat. Simultaneously, they had


44 In 1850 Marx and Engels warned the members of the Communist League not to repeat the mistakes of the French Revolution which had surrendered the landed estates to the peasants but left the problem of the rural proletariat unsolved. The German workers, they wrote, "must demand that the confiscated property remains public property and be converted into workers' settlements, to be cultivated by the associated agricultural proletariat." This passage occurs in "The Address of the Central
also lost interest in Lelewel's concept of a peasant democracy as a means to solve the Polish question. Indeed, that interest seems to have been restricted to the years 1847-48. But even then it was not rooted in their ideology because in the Communist Manifesto Marx and Engels had expressed the conviction that the peasants were not an independent revolutionary force, and that as landowners they were even a reactionary force.

During the brief period when Marx and Engels favored the Polish demand for a peasant democracy, they were predominantly interested in the second phase of Polish history which began with the First Partition of Poland in 1772. This phase was characterized by growing awareness of the political and agrarian problems which considerably deepened after the insurrection of 1830-31.

Marx and Engels shared the view of Lelewel and his school that the so-called period of reforms following the First Partition of Poland would have saved the Polish Republic if the partition powers had not destroyed this reform work. Like Lelewel they regarded the Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791 as the climax of this period. Yet, Lelewel had some reservations about the Constitution.

Lelewel, who was opposed to the concentration of political power, criticized the attempt of the magnates to replace the elective monarchy with a hereditary one in 1791. In his opinion the hereditary monarchy was a regression from the aristocratic republic which at least safeguarded partial liberty.

However, Lelewel observed that the Constitution meant progress in so far as it had lessened class differences. The bourgeoisie was granted the right to send eighty representatives to the Diet. The peasants were placed under the protection of the Common Law and were guaranteed individual liberty. But Lelewel lamented that the bourgeois representatives had little influence upon the decisions of the Diet, and that the stipulations regarding the peasants were wholly inadequate. The Constitution failed to grant the peasants the right of citizenship and the right to own the land they tilled. The extension of liberty, said Lelewel, was meaningless without the confirmation of the property principle.45

45Lelewel, op. cit., I, 221-22, II/1, 128-29. Cf. the comments of the Ukrainian socialist, Mykhaylo Lozynskyj, on the Constitution of May 3, 1791. He observed that even if the Constitution had been put into practice, the peasants would have remained at the mercy of the big landowners because they owned nothing. The peasants would have been unable to exercise their right—granted to them in par. 4 of the Constitution—to negotiate directly with the landowners and to exchange their residence for another one, under the condition of having fulfilled their contract. Mykhaylo Lozynskyj, Marx-Engels-Liebknecht pro vidbudovania Polshchi ("Marx-Engels-Liebknecht on the Restoration of Poland") (Lviv: n.p., 1906), p. 13.
Engel's evaluation of the Constitution of 1791 was less cautious than Lelewel's. First of all, he did not agree with Lelewel's opposition to the centralization of power. In fact, he viewed the rise of the magnates since the seventeenth century as "the only way to overcome the antiquated conditions of Polish democracy" at that time. The destruction of the old constitution could have become the basis for a successful reorganization of Poland. The Polish magnates forfeited this possibility by an alliance with Poland's oppressors at the time of the First Partition in 1772 in order to preserve their power.

According to Engel the betrayal of Polish interests by the magnates brought about an alliance . . . of the szlachta [gentry], the bourgeoisie, and partially the peasants against the oppressors of Poland and against the magnates.46 The alliance meant progress because the allies fought not only for political independence, but also for social changes.

In Engel's opinion the Constitution of 1791 was the "first attempt at reform" by the revolutionary forces released in 1772. The Constitution proved "how well the Poles had understood that their independence was inseparable from the destruction of the magnates and the agrarian reform."47 The Poles were the first

46 NRZ, August 20, 1848.
47 Ibid.
Eastern Europeans who proclaimed that the "patriarchal-feudal barbarism" in Eastern Europe could only be destroyed through an "agrarian revolution" similar to that of the French Revolution of 1789 in the rural areas. This was the "merit" of the Polish nation.

In his interpretation of the Constitution Engels simply discarded the fact that this document was the work of the Polish aristocracy (the magnates and the szlachta), and that the intended reforms were rather modest because the aristocracy would not legislate against itself. Besides, his expectation of a successful peasant uprising in Poland contradicted his conviction, shared by Marx, that the victory of a peasant uprising depended upon bourgeois leadership. But urban development was weak in Poland, and a politically active Polish bourgeoisie was just beginning to develop.

48 Cf. the interpretation of the French agrarian revolution by the Russian historian Nikolai Kareew. He pointed out that at the beginning of the French Revolution, when the bourgeoisie had to collaborate with the nobles, the peasants were merely freed from obligatory services. Extensive land reforms were only brought about when the bourgeoisie dominated the revolutionary scene. The bourgeoisie confiscated the land of the nobles and granted a large part of it to the peasants as their property. But these far-reaching agrarian reforms had actually not been planned by the bourgeoisie. They resulted from the desire to consolidate bourgeois power. Nikolai I. Kareew, Les paysans et la question paysanne en France dans le dernier quart du XVIIIe siècle, trans. by C. W. Woynarowska (Paris: W. Giard & E. Brière, 1899), pp. 541-42.
Mehring called Engels's interpretation of the Constitution of 1791 "the worst of the historical errors" made by Engels. He attributed Engels's lack of historical insight to the influence of Lelewel and his "illusions" about the reformers of 1791. However, Lelewel was much more critical of the Constitution. Mehring would not admit that Engels's overstatements were rather conditioned by his campaign in 1848 against those German political groups who did not wish to get involved in a war against Russia for the sake of the Poles. Engels was anxious to prove that it was necessary to support the Poles because they were revolutionary. He insisted that they had overcome the feudal mentality in 1791. Since that time the Poles had played a vital role in the revolutionary fight against the reactionary powers Russia, Prussia, and Austria because they did not merely aim at national independence but also at a social revolution.

Actually neither Marx nor Engels had any illusions about the revolutionary intentions of the szlachta. Thus, in 1856 Marx referred to the aristocratic character of the uprising of 1793, and he criticized Tadeusz Kościuszko, the leader of the insurgents, because he had been reluctant to organize a peasant revolt knowing that it would have been directed against the aristocrats.

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49 Aus dem literarischen Nachlass, III (Introduction), 33.
Engels was particularly critical of the insurrection of 1830-31. This insurrection had been led by the magnates, among them Prince Adam Czartoryski, who were not interested in winning the masses through far-reaching peasant reforms. Even the progressive members of the szlachta favored only moderate reforms. Although Lelewel became a member of the provisional government, he was unable to further the cause of agrarian reforms which the Polish radicals considered as a prerequisite of a successful Polish insurrection. The Diet made only one concession. Land was promised to those peasants who would participate in the insurrection, but this did not effect a mass uprising.

Whenever Engels discussed the insurrection of 1830-31, he stressed the lack of revolutionary initiative. On February 22, 1848 he stated:

The insurrection of 1830 was neither a national revolution (it excluded three quarters of Poland) nor a social and political revolution; it did not bring about any changes in the conditions of the people; it was a conservative revolution.51

A year later, on February 18, 1849, Engels made the sarcastic remark that the insurrection had only one significance--namely, it contributed to the success of the Paris insurrection. Therefore, "the whole of Europe sympathized with the magnates who indeed initiated the movement."52

51 MEGA, I/6, 412-13.
52 NRZ, February 18, 1849. Cf. Mazzini's letter to Lelewel, December 20, 1831, in which Mazzini stated that the Polish
In 1850 Engels compared the insurrection of 1830-31 with the uprising of the German nobles against the princes early in the sixteenth century. The German uprising failed because the nobles were not willing to abolish servitude which alone would have secured the support of the peasants against the princes. The Polish insurrection failed for similar reasons. The szlachta made no attempt to win the collaboration of the peasants through their emancipation. It had not the least desire to renounce voluntarily all its privileges and the greater part of the sources of income. The szlachta preferred to collaborate with the magnates.53

While Engels condemned the szlachta, he praised Lelewel for having supported the political liberation of the Polish people, including the Jews, and land reforms in 1830-31.54 He called Lelewel a highly gifted man "who wished to turn the national cause into a cause of liberty, and who wished to identify the interests of all the European people with those of the Polish people."55

insurrection of 1830-31 conferred upon Poland "the right to belong to the great European federation" because the insurrection saved the Paris uprising. Mazzini, Scritti editi ed inediti, II, 275.

53Neue Rheinische Zeitung, No. 5, May-October, 1850, pp. 258-59.
54Engels's speech of February 22, 1848, in MEGA, I/6, 413. Cf. also NRZ, August 20, 1848.
55MEGA, I/6, 413.
Neither Marx nor Engels showed any interest in the agitation of the Polish Democratic Society for the restoration of Poland in the thirties and forties. They could hardly have cared for this organization. Most of its members, even the intelligentsia, belonged to the szlachta. This contributed to a wavering policy of the Democratic Society regarding the peasant question because the szlachta was not interested in major political or social changes.

The Manifesto of the Democratic Society, published in 1836, proclaimed the political liberation of the people and also the "unconditional restoration of the ownership of the soil to the peasants." This corresponded to the wishes of Lelewel, the leader of the left-wing democrats. But the discussions on the Manifesto revealed the opposition to extensive land reforms.


57 In 1833 Lelewel stated that since the peasants had never legally surrendered their right of landownership to the szlachta, they were still the rightful owners of the land. "Treść Kubrakiewicza uwagi nad konstytucja 3 maja-co do prawa własności gruntu (July 5, 1833)," ("Remarks of Kubrakiewich on the Constitution of May 3 regarding the right to landed property") in Joachim Lelewel, Lotniki-piśmiennictwa tużaczki polskiej ("Writings of Polish Emigrants") (Brussels: 1859), p. 35, quoted in Leslie, Reform and Insurrection, p. 7.

58 Only tenant farmers were to be granted full ownership of the land. No redistribution of the land was intended. Cf. "Uwagi Centralizacyjy przy dyckussyi nad Manifesten" ("Remarks of the Central Committee of the Democratic Society on the discussions of the Manifesto") Manifest Towarzystwa Demokratycznego Polskiego (Poitiers: 1863), p. 67, quoted in Leslie, op. cit., p. 13.
In the following years the Democratic Society became less radical. The majority of its members were mainly interested in the restoration of the borders of 1772. The agitation for peasant reforms was reduced to a political expedient.

When in the mid-forties the Democratic Society prepared another uprising in the Grand Duchy of Poznania (then called Posen) and in Galicia, the insurrectional instructions stressed above all the fight for the territorial restoration of Poland, and, secondly, the political liberation of the people and the need for land reforms. Ownership of the land was to be granted to the tenant farmers, but the landless would receive "five acres of land" only if they actively participated in the insurrection against the occupation powers.

The same moderate program was proclaimed in a Manifesto issued by the provisional revolutionary government in Cracow on the first day of the Cracow insurrection (February 22, 1846). The Manifesto promised the abolition of serfdom and feudal obligations, and offered land from the domains to "the man who

59. Ludwik Mierosławski, the agent of the Democratic Society in Posen, told his collaborators that the insurrection would best be furthered by granting land to the peasants. Yet, he also declared that the Sejm of a liberated Poland was to have the final decision on the peasant question: "It is not our concern," he said, "to solve the economic and social questions, but these questions are a useful political means." Bolesław Limanowski, Historya demokracji polskiej w epoce porozbiorowej ("History of Polish Democracy in the Post-Partition Epoch") Zurich: n.p., 1901), p. 58.

60. Limanowski, op. cit., p. 60.
fights for the people." In spite of these promises the peasants did not actively support the uprising. They remained indifferent even when the insurrection took a more radical turn under the influence of Edward Dembowski, a leading defender of the communal ownership of the land, and when revolutionary decrees abolished the aristocracy as a class, with all its titles and privileges.

The Cracow insurrection ended in complete failure on March 4, 1846. It is noteworthy that Marx and Engels did not comment on the insurrection before February 22, 1848. Yet, the

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61 Ibid.

62 In Western Galicia the Polish peasants rose in open revolt against the insurgent szlachta. Leslie has maintained that this uprising was caused by the general opposition of the Polish nobles to agrarian reforms. The peasants believed that the insurgent szlachta desired to enslave them still more. Leslie, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

63 Edward Dembowski has been highly praised by the East German Marxist Felix-H. Gentzen as "the ideologist of the peasant plebeian masses" and "the most consistent revolutionary democrat." Felix-Heinrich Gentzen, Grosspolen im Januaraufstand; das Grossherzogtum Posen, 1830-1864, Schriftenreihe des Institutes fuer allgemeine Geschichte der Humboldt Universitaet, Berlin, Vol. I (Berlin: Ruetter & Loening, 1958), p. 34. Dembowski was convinced that only a revolution would solve the peasant question. It would destroy the feudal order and make an end to the domination of the great landowners. Then "a new order of social justice would be established, no longer based on individual property, but on the common ownership of the national wealth." Mlynarski, Źródła polskiej demokracji ("Documents on Polish Democracy") (Warsaw: 1950), pp. 125, 126, quoted in Gentzen, p. 34. But in spite of his radical leanings Dembowski had to seek not only the support of the intellectuals in Warsaw, but also of the smaller landowners in Western Galicia to further his revolutionary aims. Leslie, op. cit., p. 15.
uprising had called forth a great excitement among the radical circles, particularly in Paris. On March 18 and 22, 1846 the radical Paris newspaper Democratie Pacifique hailed the insurrection as an event of immense importance. According to this newspaper the Poles, who earlier had merely fought for national independence, had finally caught up with the European democratic movement. They proclaimed "the liberation of the oppressed people and social reforms." This proved that the Poles had understood that the peasant question was the leading question in Eastern Europe. They were the only revolutionary force in Eastern Europe and would undermine Austrian and Russian autocracy. 64

Marx and Engels discussed the Cracow uprising for the first time on February 22, 1848 when the international Democratic Association of Brussels held a meeting to commemorate this event. Marx admitted in his speech that the uprising represented an important revolutionary progress of the Poles. However, he insisted that compared to the aims of a communist revolution the uprising had a limited significance. The insurgents did not intend to abolish private property. They wished to destroy feudalism by granting political equality to the people and the ownership of the land to the peasants. The insurrection was merely a re-enactment of the French Revolution.

64Limanowski, op. cit., p. 85.
Nevertheless, Marx praised the Poles because they were the first Europeans who had outgrown national aspirations and had combined "the cause of nationality with the cause of democracy and the liberation of the oppressed classes." The Cracow insurgents understood that mere national liberation from foreign rule would not result in the liberation of the people from an oppressive government. They were deeply convinced that only a democratic Poland can be independent, and that Polish democracy . . . without an agrarian movement which turns the serfs into modern free landowners is impossible.65

Marx concluded that since the Cracow uprising the liberation of the Poles had become "the point of honor of all the European democrats."

Engels used similar arguments in his speech. He praised Lelewel for having inspired the insurrection which was marked by a "democratic . . . almost proletarian boldness." He insisted that the insurgents did not care whether their demands endangered the interests of the aristocracy. They subordinated their national aspirations to a higher aim--the destruction of "feudal aristocratic Poland" and the creation of a "modern, civilized democratic Poland" which could truly become the "advanced sentinel of civilization." Engels remark implied that the Poles had not

65 MEGA, I/6, 411.
yet fulfilled a civilizing mission. Engels observed that because of the Cracow insurrection the Polish question had become the immediate concern of all the European democrats. "Until the year 1846 our duty was to revenge a crime. From now on we must support allies, and we will do it." 66

Apparently Marx and Engels were convinced that the Cracow insurrection had gotten rid of aristocratic leadership, which did not correspond to the facts. Furthermore, Marx and Engels did not distinguish between the two phases of the insurrection. When they insisted that the aims of the insurgents did not go beyond those of the French revolutionaries, they must have had in mind the first phase of the insurrection because its last phase was marked by the attempt of Dembowski to introduce the communal ownership of the land. However, the first manifestoes merely promised a partial curtailment of aristocratic privileges. Only Dembowski proclaimed the end of aristocratic rule, of all privileges and titles.

There is no evidence that Marx and Engels knew anything about Dembowski, 67 or that they were interested in the Polish

66Ibid., p. 414.

67Cf. Bobińska's statement: "Apparently Marx and Engels did not know much about the actual persons and groups who were responsible for the revolutionary democratic character of this insurrection." Bobińska, op. cit., p. 91.
socialist group Lud Polski which was founded by Polish emigrants in England in the 1830's. This group, which rejected the private property principle, agitated for the communal ownership of the land and the liquidation of the great landed estates, long before such demands were voiced in the Polish territories (e.g. by the radical Plebeian League in Poznania). 68

In later years Marx and Engels acknowledged the existence of a socialist trend among the Poles. They stated several times that the Cracow insurrection had also socialist tendencies. When in the fifties Marx referred to the political trends of the Polish emigration, he not only mentioned the aristocratic and democratic but also the "socialist" group which was pushed into the foreground by the Cracow uprising of 1846. 69

In spite of their doctrine which stressed the economic basis of historical progress, Marx and Engels did not discuss in detail the actual economic changes in contemporary Poland—not even in 1847-48 at the time of their most enthusiastic statements on the revolutionary spirit of the Poles. No sources

68 Ibid., p. 78.
are available which disclose the extent of Marx's and Engels's information about economic changes in mid-nineteenth century Poland.

In January, 1848, Engels spoke about economic changes in Eastern Europe. He stated that in "Russia industry develops at a powerful pace and turns more and more even boyars into bourgeois." But in relation to Poland he merely spoke of the restriction of servitude which helped to weaken the aristocracy and to create a free class of peasants "of which the bourgeoisie is everywhere in need."\(^7\) Engels did not mention that since 1820 the Polish Kingdom had entered the industrial period. Many foreign manufacturers, particularly from Germany, were invited to come to Poland. The transition to big industry began in the course of the fifties. The Russian-Polish customs union of the mid-fifties especially contributed to the industrial expansion. In the following years Łódz rapidly became the center of the textile industry.\(^7\) There is no indication that Marx and Engels ever showed any particular interest in the progress of industrialization in mid-nineteenth century Poland which slowly but surely undermined the old social structure.

In the late forties, when Marx and Engels displayed a great enthusiasm for the revolutionary spirit of the Poles, they


\(^7\)Aus dem literarischen Nachlass, III (Introduction), 44.
apparently expected changes in Poland rather from the readiness of the Poles to stage insurrections than from a modern economic development. This was contrary to their basic convictions. Consequently, the Poles were assigned a subordinate role in the revolutionary scheme.

Comments on a Polish Revolution

The question has yet to be answered what kind of future policies Marx and Engels expected of the radical Poles on the eve of the Revolution of 1848. Their viewpoint can be derived from the speeches they made on November 29, 1847 at the London meeting of the Fraternal Democrats, and on February 22, 1848 at the Brussels meeting of the Democratic Association—meetings which were organized to commemorate the Polish uprisings of 1830-31 and of 1846 respectively.

Marx's and Engels's speeches were primarily manifestations of their communist ideology. It was the current conviction of the European radicals that the enmity between the nations was the result of the "conspiracy of the kings." The overthrow of the territorial and political arrangements of the Vienna treaties and of the monarchic order would make an end to national hostilities. Marx offered a different explanation. He maintained that the private property principle was not only responsible for the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, but also of the poorer nation by the wealthier one. This caused the
hostility between classes as well as nations. When private property was abolished, the nations would be able to unite.

In order that the nations can really associate, they must have common interests. In order to have common interests, the present property relations must be abolished because they cause the exploitation of one nation by the other.72

Marx called upon the Chartists, who were present at the London meeting, to initiate the proletarian revolution. As on other occasions, he stressed the point that England was the most industrialized country. Therefore, if the English bourgeoisie were destroyed, then the power of the bourgeoisie would be weakened everywhere. The victorious revolution of the English proletariat would be "the signal for the liberation of all the oppressed nations."

In his speech Marx made no attempt to flatter the national feelings of the Poles. In his laconic way Marx declared: "Indeed, the old Poland is lost." The old European society was doomed to perish through the abolition of private property. This would also liberate the Poles from oppression. Marx advised the Poles to expect their final liberation from the English proletariat.

The victory of the English proletariat over the English bourgeoisie is . . . decisive for the victory of all the

oppressed people over their oppressors. Therefore, Poland is not to be liberated in Poland but in England. With one sentence Marx shoved aside the aspirations of the Poles to play a leading role as protectors of European liberty. He presented the Polish question as a mere appendix to the leading question which according to him was the English proletarian revolution. This corresponded to the revolutionary theories of the Communist Manifesto. A backward country like Poland could not play a decisive revolutionary role.

Engels also maintained in his speech that "the liberation of all the European countries" depended upon the victory of the English workingmen over the established political and social order.

In their Brussels speeches Marx and Engels avoided such extremist statements. This might have been due to the presence of Lelewel and of a less radical audience. Now, the two friends preferred to stress the importance of independent revolutionary action in Poland. They insisted that if the peasants were liberated through a Polish social revolution, this would help to undermine the status quo in all of Eastern Europe. Beyond that,

73 Ibid.
74 Ibid., p. 361.
75 "Reden von Marx und Engels ueber Polen in Bruessel am 22. Februar, 1848," MEGA, I/6, 409-14.
Engels's main concern was to propagandize the need for a revolutionary collaboration between the Germans and Poles.

In his London speech of November, 1847, Engels had already referred to the question of German-Polish relations. He stated that German participation in the Polish partition was a dark stain in the history of the German nation which ought to be erased. This was a current argument of German radicals in the fight against the established German governments. Engels maintained that the liberation of the Poles from German overlordship would be the major task of the German radicals in the future German revolution. Polish liberation was the prerequisite of German unification. "A nation," said Engels, cannot be free if it continues to oppress other nations.  

Only two years earlier, when discussing the territorial settlements of the Vienna Treaties of 1815, Engels had complained that the Germans had not profited from their victory over Napoleon. The lack of political leadership and "partly a sort of ridiculous disinterestedness" prevented the Germans from strengthening their position in Europe. Not only was France enabled to keep Germany weak by supporting particularism, but the two great German states Prussia and Austria even allowed Russia to advance further west though this was against their own
immediate interests. In Engels's opinion Prussia and Austria should have annexed as much of Polish territory as possible. He lamented that "Russia got the best part of Poland." But he consoled himself with the thought that soon a complete reorganization of European society would put an end to "such imbecilities."

The discrepancy between the statements of November, 1845 and November, 1847 resulted from the different objectives which Engels pursued each time. In 1845 he intended to ridicule the shortcomings of German diplomacy which were the result of German disunity. Then, he ascribed German disunity to German backwardness and French rivalry. However, in 1847 Engels emphasized that German participation in the partition of Poland prevented the unification of Germany. This time, he was anxious to convey the message to the Poles that the German radicals had the greatest interest in the liberation of the Poles because they desired the unification of Germany. Therefore, the Poles should rely upon the German revolution for their liberation.

In his Brussels speech Engels elaborated this argument. He spoke of the irrevocable alliance between Germans and Poles which had been founded at the time of the Cracow insurrection.

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when the Poles revealed their "democratic passions." He stressed the need for a German-Polish revolutionary collaboration against Russia and Austria. Both the German and the Polish people had "the same enemies, the same oppressors." Engels remarked: "The Russian government lies as heavy upon us as upon the Poles." The first condition of the liberation of the Germans and Poles was the overthrow of the old political order in Germany and the destruction of the Prussian and Austrian governments. But the success of a German democratic revolution would depend upon a common war of Germans and Poles against "the barbarian hordes of Austria and Russia." When Russia was driven beyond the Dniester and Dwina rivers, the reactionary Prussian and Austrian governments would be overthrown, and only then would Poland and Germany be free.78 A liberated Poland would become the shield of a democratic Germany. Engels made no definite statements as to the territorial extension of the new Poland. He defended the ideas current among Western European radicals that Russia must be destroyed to secure revolutionary changes in Europe, and that a democratic Poland must be an ally of the West.

Whatever Marx and Engels said about the revolutionary progress of the Poles, they did not retreat from their principle proclaimed in the Communist Manifesto that the more advanced
country must effect the liberation of the less advanced one. Although Polish revolutionary unrest might help to undermine the established order, the revolution must proceed from West to East. In case of a communist revolution of the English proletariat, the Poles were to expect their definite social liberation from England. But in case of a democratic revolution in Germany, Polish national liberation would be effected under the leadership of the Germans. Collaboration with the Poles, which Marx and Engels supported in their speeches as well as in the Communist Manifesto, was not to be based on the principle of the equality of the collaborators.

The question was whether the left-wing Polish democrats were willing to collaborate with the communists. In this respect the attitude of leading Polish left-wing democrats towards the Democratic Association of Brussels is revealing.

This organization had originally been founded in August, 1847 with the assistance of the London Communist League to which Marx and Engels belonged. Early in November, 1847 it was reorganized as an international left-wing democratic union. Marx and Lelewel became vice-presidents under the presidency of the Belgian Lucien Jottrand. The organization was supported by the Chartists, by French, Dutch, and Swiss democrats, by members of communist groups in Brussels and London, and by the
Fraternal Democrats. It agitated for the federation of all the nations on the basis of equality.\textsuperscript{79}

Although the Democratic Association supported the right to national independence, Lelewel soon found himself in a difficult position. His compatriots believed that the organization was communist, and that its German members tried to interfere with Polish affairs when they helped to prepare the Brussels' meeting of November 29, 1847 in commemoration of the Polish insurrection of 1830.\textsuperscript{80}

Lelewel's friends, Stanisław Worcell, Józef Wysocki, and Karol Stolzman, were outraged when Marx, as the official representative of the Democratic Association, attended the London meeting.

\textsuperscript{79}In an address to the Brussels organization the Fraternal Democrats stated that the aims of the European democrats should be "the sovereignty of the people and the fraternity of the nations." But this aim could only be achieved with the help of "the real people, the proletariat," which was predestined to become the "savior of humanity." While the landowners and the capitalists were only interested in dividing the nations, the proletariat alone wished to bring about their fraterization. The Belgian historian Louis Bertrand has called this document the forerunner of the Communist Manifesto. Louis Bertrand, \textit{L'histoire de la démocratie et du socialisme en Belgique depuis 1830} (2 vols.; Brussels: Dechêne, 1906), 1, 266-67.

celebration of the November insurrection, prepared by the Fraternal Democrats, and contacted the Chartists at this meeting. Wysocki, in particular, sharply criticized Lelewel for the relations of the Democratic Association with the "radical communists," meaning the Chartists.81

Repeatedly Lelewel tried to reassure his compatriots concerning the principles of the organization. There was no need to be alarmed over the "imaginary communism" of the organization and the so-called German interference with Polish affairs. Besides, it really did not matter whether communists belonged to it or not. The organization was "useful," and it might be of "advantage" to the Polish cause. Lelewel also rejected the opposition to the Chartists. He remarked: "They alone have excellently taken up the Polish question in London."82

In his search for supporters of the Polish cause, Lelewel had no scruples about associating with communists. He continued to entertain friendly relations with Marx and Engels. He did not shrink from signing a resolution of the London Communist League nor from participating in the New Year's celebration of the German Workingmen's Association with which Marx and Engels collaborated.83

81 Ibid., pp. 418-19.
82 Ibid., p. 419.
83 Marx, "Do meetingu w Genewie," Archiv fuer die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung, VI (1916), 221. Cf. also Listy emigracyjne Joachima Lelewela, III, 422.
On this occasion Lelewel proposed a toast "to the welfare and prosperity of a united, indivisible, democratic, and powerful Germany." Lelewel shared the hope of many Polish democrats that a democratic Germany would give up its Polish possessions.

When, after the Paris insurrection of February 28, 1848, Marx and Engels went first to Paris and then to the Rhineland, their relations with Lelewel ended abruptly. Marx's and Engels's hope, expressed in the Communist Manifesto, for a fruitful collaboration with the most revolutionary Poles—meaning the left wing of the Polish democrats—was not fulfilled for the time being.

Bobinska has remarked that a strong bond existed between the communists Marx and Engels and the democrat Lelewel because they shared a common "belief in the indestructible revolutionary powers of the Polish people and in the European revolution." However, this common belief was not sufficient as a basis for a lasting collaboration because their basic political principles were so contrary.

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84 Joachim Lelewel, Polska, dzieje i rzeczy jej ("Poland, Its History and Problems") (Posen: 1864), XX, 555, quoted in Bobinska, op. cit., p. 71.

85 With the exception of a short letter addressed by Lelewel to Marx in February, 1849, no correspondence occurred until 1860 when Marx wrote a brief insignificant letter to Lelewel. Cf. Bobinska, op. cit., p. 73.

86 Bobinska, op. cit., p. 71.
As was earlier explained, Lelewel considered private property as the basis of man's liberty. He believed in the revolutionary capacities of the peasants. Although he favored collaboration of the Polish democrats with the West, he did not think that Polish liberation depended upon the importation of Western European political concepts into Poland. As a Slavophile he believed that the revival of the ancient Slavic democratic principles would secure liberty for the Slavs. Marx and Engels, instead, condemned the property principle as an instrument of oppression. They believed that the revolutionary principles which were born in the West would effect the true liberation of man, that the industrial proletariat would be instrumental in staging the final revolution, and that this revolution would proceed from West to East.

Lelewel shared Marx's and Engels's conviction that there existed a basic antagonism between Eastern and Western Europe which was the result of the different historical development of the two parts of Europe. But while Marx and Engels praised the political and economic progress of Western Europe, Lelewel insisted upon the moral superiority of the Slavs. Their different viewpoints symbolized the tensions between Eastern and Western Europeans.

Lelewel's belief in the democratic spirit of the Slavs was generally shared by the Polish democrats. The Slavophile
trend among the Poles helped to keep open a line of communication with Russian revolutionaries. In the mid-1840's the Russian emigrant Michael Bakunin, who at the time had become a well-known figure in Western European radical circles, tried to exploit Polish Slavophilism in order to further Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration. There is reason to believe that his propaganda stimulated Marx's and Engels's interest in the Polish fate.

Bobińska, who has emphasized the common bond which united Marx and Engels with Lelewel has been reluctant to interpret the relations between Lelewel and Bakunin. Yet, these relations were based on a much firmer ground because the basic political convictions of the two men were very similar. Besides, their relations indicated at least the possibility of Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration which at that time was hardly taken into serious consideration by Western European radicals.

Already in the 1820's the secret Polish National Patriotic Society (Towarzystwo Patriotyczne Narodowe) collaborated with the Russian underground in the hope that the overthrow

87Bobińska has only superficially referred to the relations between Lelewel and Bakunin. Bobińska, op. cit., p. 73.
of Tsarism would bring about the restoration of Poland. In later years the Polish radicals, among them Lelewel, repeatedly praised the Decembrist uprising of 1825. They also stressed the common racial origin of Poles and Russians. They were not opposed to Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration provided that Poland would be restored.

Bakunin became acquainted with Lelewel in 1844 in Brussels, a short time after he had collaborated with Marx on the Deutsch-Franzoesische Jahrbuecher. While Bakunin was neither attracted to Marx nor to Engels, whom he met in September, 1844, it seems that his first encounter with Lelewel touched an emotional chord in him. Lelewel was willing to differentiate between the oppressive Russian government and the Russian people,

88Cf. Mykhaylo Lozynskyj, Polskyj i ruskyj revolucyjnyj ruch i Ukraina ("The Polish and Russian Revolutionary Movement and the Ukraine") (Lviv: n.p., 1908), pp. 6-7.

89The German historian Baron Georg Manteuffel-Szoege has compared German-Polish and Russian-Polish relations in the nineteenth century. He pointed out that the former lacked the emotional appeal to common origins and common "supranational beliefs" in the restoration of the ancient Slavic liberties through the destruction of Tsarist autocracy. Manteuffel-Szoege, op. cit., pp. 68, 110. But Manteuffel-Szoege overlooked the Polish-Russian territorial problem which in the nineteenth century, at critical moments, helped to undermine Polish-Russian relations. For a discussion of Polish-Russian relations in the light of the territorial problem see the above quoted work by Mykhaylo Lozynskyj, Polskyj i ruskyj revolucyjnyj ruch i Ukraina.
He was a Slavophile like Bakunin. He also came from a predominately agrarian country and was interested in the peasants as a revolutionary element.  

Bakunin stated in his Confession that his intense interest in Poland began in 1844, in the year when he met Lelewel. It may well be that this encounter with Lelewel stimulated his interest in the Polish question. This was certainly not the only reason. Another reason for his interest was the violent European Russophobia, and the agitation of the radicals for the destruction of Russia and the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772.

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90 The sources on the relations between Lelewel and Bakunin are scanty. Historians who have tried to analyze these relations have arrived at different conclusions. The Ukrainian Mykhaylo Drahomanov stated that Lelewel did not have a decisive influence on Bakunin. The two men simply shared a common belief in the ancient Slavic democracy. Drahomanov assumed that Bakunin may have tried to organize a Slavic League before 1848, and that Lelewel supported Bakunin's attempt. Correspondence de Michel Bakounine, trans. by Marie Stromberg and ed. with a Foreword and Annotations by Mykhaylo Drahomanov (Paris: Perrin et Cie, 1896), p. 360. The anarchist Fritz Brupbacher maintained that Bakunin turned from internationalism to nationalism under the influence of the nationalist Joachim Lelewel. Michel Bakounine, Confession, trans. by Paulette Brupbacher and ed. with a Foreword by Fritz Brupbacher and with Annotations by Max Nettlauf (Paris: Les Editions Rieder, 1922), p. 302. The French historian Benoît-P. Hepner stated that Bakunin conceived his own idea of a revolutionary Pan-Slavism under Lelewel's influence in 1844. Benoît-P. Hepner, Bakounine et le panslavisme révolutionnaire (Paris: Librairie Marcel Rivière et Cie, 1950), p. 225. Edward Halett Carr declared that Lelewel taught Bakunin that Poland had a proper history, and that it was as much oppressed by the Tsarist government as Russia. Edward Halett Carr, Michael Bakunin (London: Macmillan, 1937), p. 147.

91 Bakunin, Confession, p. 71.
Although Bakunin shared the hope of the European radicals for the overthrow of the old European order, since 1844 he became increasingly concerned with the fate of Russia in case of a European revolution. In the following years in articles and in speeches Bakunin insisted that a European war against Russia was not necessary. The Russian people themselves would soon make a revolution and overthrow the Tsarist government. They were "democratic in their instincts and habits." They would also liberate the Poles.

Bakunin ultimately hoped for the creation of a "federal republic composed of all the Slavic states" under the leadership of Russia.92 At the time of the Cracow uprising he proposed to the Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society in Paris to work for Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration in the Polish Kingdom, Lithuania, and Podolia. His ulterior motive was his desire to prepare the creation of the Slavic federal republic. But the Polish Central Committee declined the offer. Although Bakunin was often annoyed by what he called a superiority complex of the Poles in relation to the Russian people, he was firmly convinced that the salvation of a revolutionary Russia lay in a close collaboration with a revolutionary Poland. According to Bakunin the basis for a Russian-Polish alliance was the common

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92 Ibid., p. 94.
racial origin of Russians and Poles, and their common political aim—the overthrow of the Tsarist government. 93 He gave an unmistakable anti-German slant to his agitation for Russian-Polish revolutionary collaboration. He maintained that it would be instrumental in the "destruction of despotism in Europe" and in the liberation of all the Slavs under Turkish as well as under German rule. 94

Bakunin's defense of a Russian-Polish alliance was an attack against the convictions cherished by the European radicals that Russia must be destroyed to save the European revolution, and that Poland must be restored as a bulwark of free Europe.

When in mid-December of 1847 Bakunin was expelled from France at the request of the Russian ambassador for his agitation against the Tsarist government, he went to Brussels. There he was made a member of the Democratic Association. But he did not participate in the activities of the organization, and he did not attend the meetings of the German communists at the invitation of Marx. He disliked the company of Marx and Engels because they


constantly attacked the bourgeoisie but were themselves "ingrained bourgeois from head to foot."\textsuperscript{95} He also became alienated from Lelewel whom he considered as a "complete cypher in politics." Nevertheless, he organized a Polish banquet with Lelewel, held on February 14, 1848, in commemoration of the Decembrists.\textsuperscript{96}

The speech which Bakunin made on this occasion was not printed. According to his statement in his \textit{Confession}, it contained an elaboration of his earlier arguments. He spoke about Russia and Poland, the "mission of the Slavs to regenerate the decadent western world," and about the "imminent" European revolution which would destroy the Austrian Empire.\textsuperscript{97}

Lelewel, who also made a speech, politely warned Bakunin not to dream too much about the future destiny of the Poles and Russians before the overthrow of the Tsarist government. In Lelewel's opinion it was the first duty of the revolutionaries to raise the question of the people's liberty. "Let us awaken their democratic spirit, and then everything will be decided according to the will of both nations."\textsuperscript{98} Although Lelewel stressed the brotherhood of Russians and Poles, he reminded Bakunin of the

\textsuperscript{95}\textit{Carr, Michael Bakunin}, p. 153.

\textsuperscript{96}\textit{Listy emigracyjne Joachima Lelewela}, III, 418.

\textsuperscript{97}\textit{Bakunin, Confession}, p. 96.

\textsuperscript{98}\textit{Lelewel, Polska, dzieje i rzeczy jej}, XX, 546, quoted in Limanowski, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 97.
question of the territorial restoration of Poland which Bakunin had failed to discuss. Lelewel claimed that if the people of the former eastern Polish territories were granted the right to self-determination, they would join the Poles.

It may well be assumed that Marx and Engels knew about Bakunin's propaganda for a revolutionary Russian-Polish collaboration in Brussels although no sources are available. In the light of this assumption Engels's sudden emphasis on the need for a German-Polish alliance against Russia in his Brussels speech of February 22, 1848 may be interpreted as an indirect polemic against Bakunin. Bakunin's concept of a Slavic mission to regenerate Europe, which was to be initiated through the Russian-Polish alliance, was absolutely contrary to the convictions of Marx and Engels. Backward nations could not become the champions of the liberty of man. The Communist Manifesto, issued in February, 1848, advised the Slavic world to expect its liberation from the industrially advanced Western Europeans. In retrospect the statement made in the Communist Manifesto in favor of a collaboration of the communists with the most progressive Poles impresses as a hastily inserted addition to meet the need of the moment, that is, to fight a Russian-Polish collaboration.

It was a favorite argument of Marx and Engels and also of Bakunin that the collaboration with the Poles was the prerequisite for a successful revolution in their own countries.
However, this argument barely veiled their desire for the consolidation of national power. No doubt, both parties considered the Polish alliance also as a means to strengthen their own countries. The Poles had the misfortune that their country was situated between two rising powers. Already in the forties the question was opened as to what would happen to Poland in case of a radical revolution in the neighboring states. The question was not answered during the life-time of Marx and Engels because no radical revolution occurred. The following analysis of Marx's and Engels's policies and statements since the late forties will help to indicate what the fate of Poland might have been in case of a German radical revolution.
CHAPTER III

PROPAGANDA FOR A RADICAL GERMAN REVOLUTION

The Internal Problem

In the *Communist Manifesto*, issued shortly after the Paris uprising of February 24, 1848, Marx and Engels had definitely predicted the imminent outbreak of a European-wide social revolution led by the industrial proletariat. But the European turmoil of 1848-49 bore no close resemblance to their prediction. The revolutionary movement spread neither to England nor to Eastern Europe, and the accent of the revolutionary programs was on gaining political liberty. Besides, Central Europe, where well-defined nation-states did not yet exist, experienced a surge of nationalism which became an integral part of the democratic programs. Marx and Engels adapted their own revolutionary program to this development in order to further their ultimate revolutionary aims. They even became supporters of German imperialist policies.
After the outbreak of the Paris insurrection, both Marx and Engels went to Paris. There, in March, 1848, they organized a revolutionary committee to promote the German Revolution. The committee issued a rather moderate revolutionary program. This was in keeping with the conviction which Marx and Engels had arrived at earlier that Germany was not yet ready for a communist revolution. The program demanded the nationalization of the feudal estates, the mines, and the transport system and the organization of national workshops "in the interest of the German proletariat, the petit-bourgeoisie, and the peasantry." One of the foremost revolutionary demands was the creation of a German republic, one and indivisible.¹ The program did not refer to the future territorial extension of a German republic nor the future fate of the nationalities under German rule.

At the outset of the German revolutionary movement, a radical reorganization of Germany did not seem to be impossible. In mid-March the Vienna and Berlin insurgents had driven the army from the capital cities and forced the governments to hold parliamentary elections. A considerable fraction of the German democratic party agitated for the overthrow of all the existing governments and the reconstruction of Germany on a republican

¹Mehring, Karl Marx; The Story of His Life, p. 154.
democratic basis. It was plausible to suppose that the Revolution might enter a republican phase as it had done in France. But the creation of a German republic depended upon the development of the revolutionary movement into a mass movement.

When in mid-April Marx and Engels arrived in the Rhineland, there was no indication of the emergence of such a mass movement. The labor movement was in an embryonic state. Even the democrats were only a minority and weakened by the lack of central leadership. Marx tried at first to gain the allegiance of the Cologne working class movement. When he failed, he collaborated with the Cologne Democratic Union. He soon became the editor-in-chief of the radical newspaper, the Neue Rheinische Zeitung (Cologne), whose publication had been in preparation by the democrats since early April. Engels became a member of the editorial staff.

2 Cf. the analysis of the German Revolution by the German historian Wilhelm Mommsen. He maintains that the German revolutionary movement was weakened by the split between liberals and democrats in April, 1848. The democrats remained a minority. The majority of the German people were not willing to fight for a radical revolution. This prevented the creation of a German republic. Mommsen, Groesse und Versagen des deutschen Buergertums, pp. 122-30.

NRZ appeared for the first time on June 1, 1848. It was subtitled "An Organ of Democracy." Although Marx and Engels had made every effort to eliminate the direct influence of the democrats on the newspaper, they continued to maintain a tactical alliance with the democrats. They were convinced that the liberals would not advance one step unless driven on by a popular movement.

Marx and Engels tried to stiffen the opposition of the democratic minority to the liberals and the conservatives in the Frankfurt and Berlin Assemblies. They also supported the decision of a democratic Congress, held in Frankfurt in June, 1848, to found a nationwide united democratic organization. When Cologne became the seat of a central committee, representing all the Rhenish and Westphalian democratic associations, Marx became its "intellectual leader." However, the movement for a nationwide central democratic leadership made no progress in the rest of Germany.

The only political issue on which Marx and Engels agreed with the democrats was the demand for a German republic. However,

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4. Hereafter the abbreviation NRZ stands for Neue Rheinische Zeitung.

5. In September, 1848 the Prussian authorities proceeded against the Cologne democratic organization. Even NRZ was suspended from September 27 to October 12, 1848. Cf. Mehring, op. cit., p. 172.
they did not share the predilection of the democrats for the federal principle which was also supported by the liberals.

In the first issue of NRZ the editors proclaimed that the German Revolution must aim at the creation of a German republic, one and indivisible. They explained that they did not wish to "present any utopian demands for the immediate establishment" of a centralized German state. As yet the revolution was in its first stages. It had still to pass through a radical phase. The editors warned the left-wing delegates in the Frankfurt National Assembly that the German question could not be solved by decrees.

German unity and a German constitution can only be achieved through a mass movement which will be forced into action through internal conflicts and a war against the East.6

In the meantime it would be necessary to temporize and, instead of clinging to ideological convictions, to watch the "general trend of the German development" and to take only "the immediately possible and practical steps" in order to further the Revolution.

The democrats were condemned for their support of a federal republicanism. A federation of German autonomous states could not become the final constitution of a united Germany. In the opinion of Marx and Engels federalism was a medievalism.

6NRZ, June 1, 1848.
It did not fit into the modern age. It might only successfully be applied, if at all, to very large areas. NRZ called the democratic leaders, who wished to preserve the old territorial units, including Prussia, in a federal union, "retrograde and petit-bourgeois." The dissolution of Prussia was the first prerequisite of German unification. Even a democratic Prussia would "prevent German unity," that is, the creation of a centralized German state.

The editors of NRZ considered centralization a universal remedy for all the evils in Germany, its political, social, and economic backwardness. Centralization would destroy all the relics of the Middle Ages, above all particularism. It would modernize Germany. A centralized government would facilitate the "concentration of capital and manpower" and permit Germany to participate actively in the modern era of an expanding industrialization. Industrial growth in turn would further economic centralization, the counterpart of political centralization. Industrialization had already helped to remove many old-fashioned custom barriers in Germany. If it could freely develop in a large German centralized state, its modernizing influence would even be greater.8

7Cf. the critique of the Berliner Zeitungshalle, the organ of the Berlin democrats, NRZ, August 27, 1848.

8NRZ, January 5, 1849.
According to NRZ neither the old ruling class nor the bourgeoisie would draw any advantages from the modernization of Germany—its unification or economic expansion. Industrialization would guarantee the predominance of the cities over the rural areas, that is, over the reactionary aristocracy and the priesthood. Industrialization would also destroy the bourgeoisie by ending the private ownership of the means of production. This would benefit the people. As did the Communist Manifesto, NRZ proclaimed that the "rule of the cities was revolutionary." Whoever wished for the unification of Germany and its economic expansion helped to prepare the advent of the communist revolution. Many years later, when Germany was close to being united by Bismarck, Engels triumphantly wrote to Marx that, without knowing it, the Prussian statesman was doing part of their job.  

It may be assumed that even in 1848-49 Marx and Engels would have been satisfied with a solution of the German question which fell short of their radical demand for a centralized German republic, if only it were a step forward. Indeed, they could hardly have expected the realization of their radical

demand because the Germans in general were not in favor of a centralized German state. NRZ's agitation for it was an isolated occurrence.

In June, when the publication of NRZ began, much of the revolutionary ground which had been won in March had been lost again. The prospect that the Revolution might enter a radical phase had diminished considerably. Conservatism was slowly recovering from the initial defeat by the German uprisings. It was significant that the Frankfurt National Constituent Assembly, which had met for the first time on May 18, appointed the Austrian Archduke John as regent of Germany (Reichsregent). This strengthened the position of the princes. Moreover, the liberals, who were opposed to a republican solution of the German question, hoped to win the adherence of the King of Prussia to the national cause in spite of the increasing conservatism of the Prussian government.

From the outset the editors of NRZ scrutinized the German scene for any signs of an approaching internal crisis that might accelerate the Revolution. But even the short lived Vienna uprising in October, 1848 did not strengthen the Revolution.

10 Marx's and Engels's concentration on political problems was reflected in their editorial policy. NRZ rarely covered news concerning the working class. Cf. Noyes, op. cit., p. 116.
As the months passed by, the editors of NRZ became completely disenchanted with the German Revolution. They expressed not only a deep contempt for the liberals, but also for the democrats who lacked a radical revolutionary spirit. Repeatedly they compared the weakness of the German Revolution with the efficiency of the French Revolution. Over and over again the readers were reminded that the French revolutionaries had introduced a new European order through the abolition of feudal and provincial privileges and the creation of a centralized French democracy which welded all the inhabitants of France into one nation of Frenchmen. According to NRZ the French revolutionary achievements resulted from the willingness of the proletariat to accept the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

In the summer of 1848 NRZ maintained that at the outset of the Revolution the German bourgeoisie might have acted the part of the French bourgeoisie in 1789. However, the German bourgeoisie made no attempt to assume "a more or less democratic attitude" in order to win "the people as its ally." In another instance NRZ claimed that the German bourgeoisie could not have exercised revolutionary leadership in Germany even if it

11 NRZ, September 3 and December 5, 1848.
12 Ibid., July 11, 1848.
were truly revolutionary because the German proletariat had become class-conscious.

At the very moment when it [the German bourgeoisie] threatened feudalism and absolutism, it was threatened by the proletariat and by that part of the bourgeoisie which shares the interests and ideas of the proletariat.\(^{13}\)

In order to protect the recently acquired political power, the bourgeoisie struck an alliance with the old society and favored a constitutional monarchy.

NRZ condemned the bourgeoisie because it had not made the slightest attempt to create a centralized German state. This would have been a revolutionary act. It should have been preceded by the organization of a strong revolutionary center such as Paris had been during the French Revolution. The success of the German Revolution could only have been ensured through the creation of a central dictatorial authority exercising executive, legislative, and judicial powers.\(^{14}\) The insurgents failed to accomplish this most urgent task. Consequently, the German Revolution did not develop into a nation-wide unified movement. It consisted of many isolated uprisings throughout Germany. The old territorial divisions and even the old struggle between

\(^{13}\)Ibid., December 15, 1848.

\(^{14}\)Ibid., July 11, 1848.
Prussia and Austria for the hegemony in Germany continued as if the Revolution had never occurred. In the opinion of the editors of NRZ, the German Revolution was nothing but a farce. Germany had become "the laughing stock of all Europe."\(^{15}\)

The existence of a National Constituent Assembly in Frankfurt did not console the editors of NRZ. They did not consider Frankfurt as a revolutionary center. To them the Frankfurt Assembly was merely a classical example of German revolutionary incompetence. Although it claimed to represent all of revolutionary Germany, the Assembly had neither the courage to dictate its own internal and foreign policies to the princes, nor did the Assembly dispose of an efficient army to enforce its will. The old German federal army with its "miserable disunity" had not been replaced by a people's army similar to the levée en masse at the time of the French Revolution.

Marx and Engels were much more concerned about the failure of Berlin to stage a successful revolution than about the weakness of Frankfurt. This is quite understandable when taking into consideration that the two men thought in terms of power. If Berlin had become the center of the Revolution, the revolutionaries would have been able to dispose of the Prussian

\(^{15}\text{Ibid.}\)
army, a powerful tool to enforce revolutionary changes in the rest of Germany.

Before March, 1848, Marx and Engels had regarded Prussia as the future leader of a German revolution. But the Prussian revolutionary movement remained far behind the earlier expectations of Marx and Engels. NRZ ridiculed the Berlin insurgents for having failed to change Berlin into the capital of a new Germany. The newspaper sneered:

Berlin, far from being a German Paris, is not even a Prussian Vienna. It is not a capital. It is a residence.16

The decline of the initial revolutionary drive in Prussia was a severe disappointment to Marx and Engels. The liberal ministry under the bourgeois Ludolf Camphausen, which had been formed on March 18, 1848, had offered no resistance to a close collaboration with the Crown. In April a law was passed which provided for the election of a Prussian Constituent Assembly. The new Prussian Constitution was to be drawn up in agreement with the Crown. Because of this clause the position of the Crown was strengthened, and the Prussian Constituent Assembly, which met in Berlin on May 22, was prevented from acting independently. In the following weeks the opposition of the Prussian conservatives to liberalism was steadily gaining headway. Subsequently, this

16Ibid., August 27, 1848.
led to the formation of increasingly more conservative ministries and the eventual elimination of the Berlin Assembly as an active body in November, 1848.

Marx and Engels observed the political development in Berlin with particular interest because it symbolized the general trend of the Revolution. They tried to stiffen the resistance of the left wing in the Berlin Assembly to the growing conservatism of the government. They led a sharp campaign against the Camphausen and Hansemann ministries because the bourgeois members collaborated with the King and the aristocracy. They ascribed the growth of conservatism to the failure of the liberal bourgeoisie to oust the reactionary civil and military officials, "the defenders of Prussian feudalism," from the government at the outset of the Revolution.

Foreign Politics

NRZ maintained that the weakness of the Revolution was reflected in the lack of an aggressive foreign policy of both Frankfurt and Berlin. The Frankfurt Assembly should have imitated the French revolutionaries who considered it their duty to liberate their neighbors. The editors of NRZ did not mention that this so-called liberation turned into the annexation of the territories closest to France and the creation of dependent sister republics which were tributary to the French government.
What mattered to the editors was that the aggressive French foreign policy had helped to undermine the old political and social order in Europe.

NRZ claimed that Germany had a long tradition of oppressing its neighbors, a tradition which had been established by the reactionary German governments. Since the outbreak of the Revolution even the liberal bourgeoisie had become a strong supporter of oppressive government policies. The liberals failed to collaborate with the insurgents in Italy, Prague, and the Grand Duchy of Poznania against Austrian and Prussian rule.

In the opinion of NRZ only a people's government would make an end to the oppression of Germany's neighbors because it would realize the "international policy of democracy." In the summer of 1848 NRZ stated: "Germany will free itself to the same extent that it will grant liberty to the neighboring nations."\(^\text{17}\) The majority of the German middle class and the German proletariat had already understood that "the liberty of the neighboring peoples ... was a guarantee of their own liberty." The liberation of the peoples under German rule would help to destroy the old ruling classes and their reactionary policies. However, as long as the Russian Empire remained intact, neither the liberation of the oppressed peoples nor the final destruction of the internal enemies of the German Revolution were guaranteed.

\(^{17}\text{Ibid., July 3, 1848.}\)
Although before spring, 1848, Marx and Engels had occasionally referred to Russia, the violent campaign against that state only began with the publication of NRZ. The attacks upon the Russian Empire were the familiar ones. The Russian "colossus" was viewed as the bastion of European reaction, "the enemy of European culture," and a country with a predominantly Asiatic character which threatened Europe, mainly Germany, with a military invasion and destruction. Repeatedly NRZ warned the Germans not to underestimate the military strength of the Russian army. Although the Russian soldiers were underfed, they had a great power of endurance. Russia was a real danger.

According to NRZ Russia was the greatest threat to German unification. As long as the Russian Empire existed, the German reactionaries would always conspire with Russia against German liberation, and Germany would remain under the tutelage of this Empire. The war against Russia was badly needed in order to awaken the revolutionary initiative of the people, to push the German Revolution into a radical phase, and to unite Germany. NRZ insisted that the watchword for the war against Russia should be the restoration of Poland. The Polish question was one of the most important issues in the revolutionary propaganda of Marx and Engels.
The support of the Polish cause had become a tradition in German liberal and radical circles since the 1830's. The general argument was that only the restoration of Poland and the destruction of Russia would allow for the unification of Germany.

In the first month of the German Revolution, liberal newspapers like the Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung and democratic newspapers like the Deutsche Reform (Berlin), issued by Arnold Ruge, supported unanimously the restoration of Poland and a war against Russia. They argued that it was necessary to prevent a Russian invasion of Europe as well as Polish support of Russian Panslavism.

The liberal Prussian ministry under Ludolf Camphausen (March-May, 1848) also favored the restoration of Poland as a means to realize the German national state. The foreign minister Baron von Armim-Suckow, who favored a constitutional German

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18 For information on German pro-Polish propaganda in the period preceding the German Revolution cf. the Cambridge History of Poland, from Augustus II to Pilsudski (1697-1935), p. 355. Cf. also Hermann Buddensieg, "Heidelberg and Krasinski," The Polish Review, VIII (Spring, 1963), 55-67.


monarchy under Prussian leadership, tried to convince the Prussian King Frederick William IV of the necessity to fight Russia and to restore Poland.

The Polish democrats, in turn, addressed manifestoes to the German people in which they called for a German-Polish war against Russia and the restoration of Poland as a means to liberate the Germans from Russian domination. Polish democrats tried to obtain guarantees from the Frankfurt Vor-Parlament for the cession of Poznania and Galicia. The more moderate Poles submitted petitions to the Prussian King Frederick William IV and to the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand I in which they asked for Polish autonomy in Poznania and Galicia respectively.

The question of the immediate surrender of Poznania and Galicia, supported by the German democrats, caused dissent in the Frankfurt Vor-Parlament. Nevertheless, a unanimous resolution was passed on the Polish question. The resolution stated that the partition of Poland was a "disgraceful wrong," and that it was the sacred duty of the German people to work for Polish restoration.

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21 Ibid., pp. 6-8, 77-78.

22 Prince Adam Czartoryski, the leading Polish conservative, wished to solve the Polish question on the basis of legality. Before the outbreak of the Poznanian insurrection he conducted secret negotiations about the creation of an autonomous small Poznanian state united with Prussia in a personal union. Stefan Kieniewicz, Społeczeństwo polskie w powstaniu poznańskim ("The Polish Society in the Posen Insurrection") (Warsaw: Rozprawy Historyczne, Towarzystwa Naukowego Warszawskiego, 1935), pp. 83, 159.
Late in April, 1848 the Frankfurt Committee of the Fifty issued a similar moderate statement in favor of Polish restoration. The National Constituent Assembly was to decide on the fate of Poznania and Galicia.

In the meantime, the initial German and Polish expectations of the immediate outbreak of a war against Russia had faded. The German liberals began to fear a military involvement with Russia. Simultaneously, the events in Poznania contributed to diminish the enthusiasm of the liberals for the Polish cause.

By the end of April the Poznanians staged an insurrection because the Prussian King had not fulfilled his promise to grant autonomy to the Grand Duchy. On April 24 Frederick William IV had issued an order that the predominantly German part of the Grand Duchy should be excluded from a national reorganization of Poznania. On May 2 the Federal Diet ratified this order. The fate of Poznania had been decided without regard to the wishes of Frankfurt. Several days later, on May 9, the Polish insurrection in Poznania was put down by the Prussian army.

In March Prince Czartoryski and radical Poles like Karol Libelt and Ludwik Mieroszewski, who stayed in Berlin, were convinced that the Prussians were only waiting for an invasion of the Polish Kingdom by Polish insurgents and for a Russian attack upon Prussia in order to begin the war against Russia. Cf. Hallgarten, op. cit., pp. 47-48.
In mid-April, when Frankfurt had not come forth with a definite decision on the Polish question, the democrats had still hoped that Prussia at least would initiate the liberation of the Poles. Consequently, they were deeply disappointed with the high-handed procedure of the Prussian government. They violently attacked the reactionary forces in Prussia as the main obstacle to Polish restoration. The Polish question became a convenient means of revolutionary agitation against Prussian reaction.

The editors of NRZ shared the great disappointment of the democrats with Prussian policies. The newspaper repeatedly condemned Prussia’s failure to conduct a vigorous pro-Polish policy at the outset of the German Revolution. Prussia should have profited from the enthusiasm of Germans and Poles for a military cooperation against Russia and from the threat of a Russian invasion of the Grand Duchy. It should have precipitated a clash of arms with Russia by the liberation of the Poles in Poznania. This would have strengthened the Revolution.

NRZ warned that the suppression of the Poznanian insurrection and the partition of Poznania might force the Poles to collaborate with the Russians who were eager to exploit the

\[24\text{Cf. Deutsche Reform, April 18, 1848, quoted in Bleck, op. cit., p. 65.}\]
Prussian mistakes. In June NRZ referred to a Manifesto of Nicholas I published in the Polish Kingdom. The Tsar declared that it was his duty to protect the Catholic Poles in Poznania and Galicia, who were the Christian brothers of the Orthodox Russians, and to organize a crusade against the oppressors of the Slavs.

NRZ ascribed Prussia's failure to make war against Russia to the influence of the Prussian reactionaries in the government. NRZ claimed that the reactionaries wished to maintain good relations with Russia in order to prevent the development of a radical German Revolution. Russia was against the restoration of Poland and even against granting autonomy to the Poles in Poznania, and the policy of the Prussian government reflected this attitude.

NRZ referred to a Russian memorandum which threatened a Russian invasion if the smallest part of Poznania were...
reorganized. 27 NRZ pointed out that in spite of this threat the Prussian government had withdrawn troops from the fortresses of Poznan and Koenigsberg (East Prussia) and sent them to the Rhine where no Russian danger existed. This, according to NRZ, proved that Prussian policy was as much "a Russian one" as before the Revolution. 28 When Russia threatened, Prussia obeyed. Prussia continued to be a mere "eastern province of Russia," regarding the West as an "enemy" and the East as a "friend" and "savior" in spite of its enslavement by Russia.

In the opinion of NRZ, Prussia's failure to lead the German Revolution, to support the liberation of the Poles, and to declare war against Russia was a vicious circle of events which originated from the half-hearted Revolution. The editors were convinced that the Revolution would enter a radical phase if the Russians invaded German territory. They claimed that the German situation showed "numerous analogies" to the French development after 1789. In their opinion the German reactionaries were anxious to enter into a military alliance with Russia which might have the same consequences as in France in 1791. NRZ threatened that in case of a Prusso-Russian alliance, the German people would unite with the French to save the Revolution.

27 NRZ, June 23-24, 1848.
28 Ibid., June 24, 1848.
"Together . . . they will wage the war of the West against the East, of civilization against barbarism, of the republic against autocracy."29 The unification of Germany would be forged in "the storms of war and revolution."

As long as NRZ was published, the editors were forever hoping for an immediate Russian invasion of Germany. In June German-Russian relations were still strained. When the rumor was spread that a Russian invasion was imminent, NRZ rejoiced that Nicholas I might soon intervene in Prussian affairs.

The Bastille has not yet been stormed. Meanwhile, an apostle of the revolution approaches irresistibly from the East . . . The Tsar will save the German Revolution by centralizing it.30

With the same enthusiasm NRZ speculated about the consequences of a Russian invasion of Galicia and Silesia. NRZ assumed that the invasion would cause an uprising of the dissatisfied Silesian workers and peasants who would destroy both the Russian invaders and the Prussian reactionaries.

Silesia will suffer terribly from a Russian invasion, but Silesia itself is absolutely in need of the Russian invasion for its liberation from all the feudal rubbish.31

Many months later, in mid-April, 1849, NRZ speculated again about the effect of a Russian invasion upon Silesia. NRZ still expected

29 Ibid., June 25, 1848.
30 Ibid., June 18, 1848.
31 Ibid., June 20, 1848.
that a Russian invasion would be the signal for a mass uprising of
the Silesian peasants against the nobles who continued to exploit
them in spite of the abolition of serfdom. 32

Late in April, 1849 NRZ hoped that the Revolution would be
pushed into a radical phase through an alliance of the reactionary
powers Russia and Austria against the Hungarian war of independence
which had started in December, 1848. 33 In the last NRZ issue of
May 19, 1849 the expectations of the editors rose to a feverish
height. They proclaimed that the Hungarian war against Austria
had a great revolutionary significance. The war would lead to an
alliance between the revolutionary Hungarians, Poles, and Germans.
NRZ ventured to prophecy that this alliance would result in the
dissolution of Austria and Prussia, while Russia would be pushed
back "to the borders of Asia." Should Austria attempt to prevent
the threatening Central European revolution through an alliance
with Russia, this would merely accelerate the advent of the
revolution. The editors insisted that a Russian invasion of
Hungary would be the signal for a European war against the
reactionary forces. They were obsessed with the idea that a
repetition of the French revolutionary wars was imminent.

A few weeks, maybe a few days, will decide the outcome,
and soon the French, the Magyar, the Polish, and the

32 Ibid., April 13, 1848.
33 Ibid., April 29, 1849.
German revolutionary armies will celebrate their fraternization under the walls of Berlin.\textsuperscript{34} The Revolution would be saved.

Marx's and Engels's expectations of a Russian invasion of Germany rose to such feverish heights because they knew that neither the German liberals nor most of the German democrats were willing to support an aggressive foreign policy which would draw Germany into a war with Russia. Since the spring of 1848 and increasingly so in the summer of 1848 when Russian troops were deployed along the German Eastern border, the majority of the Germans had lost interest in a war against Russia and in the liberation of Poland.\textsuperscript{35} Even the democrats, who continued to favor the restoration of Poland, merely agitated for the convocation of a European Congress in which the two "great civilized nations" of Europe, France and England, and a liberated Germany, were to participate. The task of this Congress would be to effect the liberation of Poland by treaties.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34}NRZ, May 19, 1849.


\textsuperscript{36}Cf. the speech of Arnold Ruge in the Frankfurt Assembly, July 26, 1848, in Stenographischer Bericht über die Verhandlungen der deutschen constituiierenden Nationalversammlung zu Frankfurt am Main, ed. by Prof. Franz Wigard in the name of the Editorial Commission of the National Assembly (9 vols.; Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel und B. G. Teubner, 1848), II, 1185. Cf. also Manifesto of the Central Committee of the German democrats in Cologne, August 1, 1848, NRZ, August 10, 1848.
In the summer of 1848 Engels declared that the foreign policy of the German democrats was as reactionary as that of the bourgeois liberals. The failure of the liberals to declare war against Russia at the outset of the Revolution had prevented the unification of Germany and the destruction of the feudal order. Engels claimed that the liberals preferred to support the pro-Russian foreign policy of the old ruling classes because they knew that a war against Russia would lead to the destruction of the bourgeois class after a "short dream of power."³⁷

As to the democrats, Engels insisted that they were bound to support the status quo in Eastern Europe as much as the liberal bourgeoisie because they defended also the bourgeois property principle. The democrats were not a revolutionary force. They merely paid lip service to Polish liberation. They did not agitate for a war but for the convocation of a European Congress to solve the Polish question. Engels claimed that it was ridiculous to expect the restoration of Poland from a European Congress. In order to achieve this task, the European bourgeoisie would have to exert pressure on Russia. This might lead to open hostilities. But the bourgeoisie did not wish for a war against Russia. Therefore, it would refrain from any

³⁷NRZ, August 20, 1848.
strong measures in support of the Polish cause. Only a revolutionary war against Russia would solve the Polish question and save Germany from the reactionary aristocracy and bourgeoisie. The insinuation that even the democrats would be ruined by the war belonged to NRZ's propaganda tactics which threatened the victory of radicalism, although the radicals were a minority.

While Engels attacked the democrats for merely paying lip service to the Polish cause, the liberals and conservatives condemned the democrats for their continuation of pro-Polish propaganda. This helped to keep the controversy over the Polish question alive in Germany. The controversy centered around the two problems whether German participation in the partition of Poland had been a crime, and whether the restoration of Poland would be in the interest of Germany. The heated battle of arguments, used either to condemn the partition of Poland or to support it, reached a climax in the three days debate on the Polish question in the Frankfurt Assembly.

The majority was convinced that it was in the best interest of Germany not to touch upon the Polish question. The problem of Polish independence was too explosive and might hinder the solution of the German national question. New motions which declared the partition of Poland a "disgraceful wrong" and the restoration of Poland "the sacred duty of the German people" were overruled.
The position of the supporters of the status quo, mainly conservatives and liberals, was most eloquently presented by the democrat Wilhelm Jordan, who subsequently went over into the liberal camp. He condemned the democrats for their lack of a realistic approach to the Polish question. He maintained that their arguments in defense of Polish restoration were not substantiated by facts. The partition of Poland was not a crime but a historical necessity. Poland had not been in step with the historical development towards liberty. It had failed to liberate the serfs. Therefore, it remained weak. Poland alone was responsible for its ruin. Jordan declared: "History . . . always mercilessly stamps out that nation which no longer has the strength to maintain itself among the great nations." Only strong nations had a right to survive.

According to Jordan the democrats were also wrong in assuming that the Poles were revolutionary and that a restored Poland would turn democratic. The insurrections of Cracow and Poznania were not staged to liberate the people but to safeguard the interests of the aristocracy. Even a restored Poland would still be a state composed of "noblemen, Jews, and serfs." It

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38 Stenographischer Bericht, II, 1144.
39 Ibid., p. 1150.
would not be a revolutionary element in Eastern Europe. Consequently, Poland could not become a bulwark of revolutionary Europe. Besides, such a bulwark was not needed. The Russians were on the brink of a revolution. They would liberate the Poles.

Jordan attacked the democrats because they exaggerated the danger of Russian aggressiveness. The restoration of Poland was a much greater danger to Germany. The Poles would never relinquish their claim "to the green bridge of Koenigsberg." A liberated Poland would immediately ally itself with Russia in order to win access to the Baltic Sea, necessary for the existence of a modern Polish state. Only the maintenance of the status quo would serve German interests.

In his speech of July 26 Arnold Ruge presented the democratic viewpoint. He insisted that the partition of Poland was a crime. The Poles had fulfilled a civilizing mission among the Slavs. Furthermore, they had proved their revolutionary spirit by the Constitution of 1791 which promised the extension of liberty, earlier enjoyed only by the nobles, to all the people. The Poles were "a necessary element in the European development." They were the most westernized Slavs and presently

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40 Ibid., p. 1145
41 Ibid., p. 1184.
the ideal propagators of Western European revolutionary ideas among the Slavs. The restoration of Poland would further the liberation of all the Slavs, including the Russians.

Ruge did not share the conviction of Jordan that the relations between nations were marked by perennial hostility, and that power politics alone could save a nation from destruction. Peace between nations, said Ruge, would be assured if a European federal union were organized which guaranteed the enjoyment of liberty and equality to all the European peoples, including the Slavs. But Ruge did not agitate for a war against Russia. He proposed the convocation of a European Congress to solve the Polish question.

On June 27, 1848, when the debates were over, the democrats in the Frankfurt National Assembly issued an appeal to the German people to support the restoration of Poland in the interest of German unification.42 A few days later, on August 1, the Central Committee of the German democrats in Cologne addressed a Manifesto to the Polish people which agitated for the liberation of all the Slavs, including the Poles. The Manifesto supported Polish leadership among the Slavs and the inclusion of all the liberated Slavs in a future European federation.43

42 NRZ, August 3, 1848.
43 Ibid., August 10, 1848.
NRZ published the Manifestoes of the democrats without comment, an indication that the paper did not fully agree with the position of the democrats.

The climactic controversy over the question of Polish restoration in the Frankfurt Assembly gave Engels the opportunity to discuss extensively NRZ's viewpoint on this matter in a series of articles published between August 9 and September 7. Engels attacked the opponents as well as the defenders of Polish restoration. According to him neither the past failures nor the past achievements of a nation had any significance in relation to the question whether this nation had a right to independence or not.

Whatever Poland might have achieved in the past, Engels declared, did not bestow upon the Poles any right to an independent existence in the present if the Poles were not the carriers of a new historical task. Engels referred to the fate of Southern France. In the Middle Ages it created a splendid aristocratic republic, but later on it became a stronghold of reactionary feudalism. Consequently, when its independence was destroyed in the French Revolution, nobody objected to this "merciless" historical judgement because the creation of one nation under a centralized government meant progress in contrast to the outdated social order and the separatism of Southern France.
Engels admitted that Poland had been crushed because it had not participated in historical progress. However, nobody had the right to decree that the Poles must forever submit to the death sentence passed by history. The Poles had gained the right to revolt and to place the "brazen foot of history on the neck of their oppressors" because they sided with social progress. 44

As before the revolution Engels claimed that the Poles had outgrown the feudal mentality and mere nationalist aspirations. The foremost preoccupation of the insurgents in Cracow and Poznania had been the overthrow of the whole feudal order and the creation of a peasant democracy. The social revolution would automatically have effected the liberation of the Poles from foreign rule because the new leaders had no ties with the foreign oppressors. Engels insisted that the Poles had become conscious of the need for political and social changes before the Germans ever did. In the preceding decades, while Germany was still involved in "trivial constitutional and extravagant philosophical ideologies," Poland was already "the seat of Eastern European democracy."

44 Ibid., August 26, 1848.
In Engels's opinion the Poles, not the Russians, were destined to become the revolutionary leaders of the Slavs. They were the first Slavic people who had understood that the peasant democracy was "the only possible means to liberate the Slavs from an "outdated feudal absolutism." Engels predicted that soon the Poles would stage an agrarian revolution in the area between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea which would turn the enslaved peasant masses into free owners of the land. The Poles, not the Russians, would initiate the overthrow of the old order in Eastern Europe. The Polish peasant democracy would become the true bulwark of European revolutionary progress.

When Engels predicted an imminent agrarian revolution in Poland, he actually ascribed revolutionary initiative to the peasants. For the sake of propaganda Engels reversed the statement in the Communist Manifesto that the peasants were unable to stage a revolution and must be led either by the bourgeoisie or by the industrial proletariat.

It is significant that in his articles Engels evaded an analysis of the revolutionary tactics necessary to bring about a victory of the peasant democracy. He restricted himself to rhetorical phrases such as—that Poland was already "the seat of Eastern European democracy," or that "the Poland of the peasant

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45 Ibid., August 20 and September 3, 1848.
democracy" was "the strong son" of the defunct democracy of nobles and would surely be victorious.

By exaggerating Polish radicalism, Engels justified the principle, which he had repeatedly stressed in his NRZ articles, that only a nation which progresses has a right to national independence. Engels claimed that Poland was such a nation. The Poles were on the brink of a radical revolution. A restored Poland would defend democracy.

Engels insisted that the restoration of a democratic Poland ought to concern all the Europeans, particularly the Germans. The Polish nation was one of the "necessary nations" in the nineteenth century. It was destined to safeguard liberty in Europe. Polish restoration was "for nobody more necessary than for the Germans." It would free Germany from the traditional Russian tutelage.

Engels had undertaken the task of steering his argumentation in defense of Polish restoration safely between the cliffs of the basic anti- and pro-Polish arguments used by Jordan and Ruge. But Engels came dangerously close to Jordan's position. He had layed down the principle that the condition of Polish restoration was the creation of a peasant democracy. If this was not achieved, one might as well forget about Polish liberation, and the death sentence passed by history would be final.

46 Ibid., August 20, 1848.
Obviously a major objective of Engels's line of defense of Polish restoration was to ridicule the democratic principle that all nations had a right to independence. Engels never returned to the argument of the peasant democracy. Many months later he preferred to use the Hegelian concept of the historical nation to defend the right of a nation to independence. At that time NRZ was engaged in a defense of the Hungarian independence movement against Austria. Engels maintained that the Hungarians had a right to national independence because they were a historical nation, and he applied this same argument to the Poles. The argument was also used as a tactical means to undermine the democratic nationality principle.

The Border Question: Poznania and Galicia

Whenever in 1848-49 Engels spoke of the restoration of Poland, he meant the restoration of the borders of 1772.

47 Ibid., February 15, 1848.

48 Cf. the comment by Lewis Namier on the agitation of the German liberals and radicals, including Marx and Engels, for the restoration of the borders of 1772. He said that they made a big mistake in assuming that a Polish state in its pre-1772 frontiers was viable and would be powerful. "If in 1848 the national character of a country could still have been determined by the language and politics of the landowning class and the intelligentsia, these vast territories would have been Polish; but in treating them as such . . . the German liberals took no account of the peasants' hatred of the landlords . . . Such regard for social superiorities and disregard of the rights of the masses is comprehensible in middle-class intellectuals, but is comic when displayed by men who professed socialist principles and preached class war: in reality . . . the radicals and Marx and Engels differed but little from their milieu . . . the basic misapprehensions and nonsense of contemporaries are remarkably alike."
Occasional remarks indicated that an even larger territory should be guaranteed to the Poles.

The restoration of Poland cannot mean that of a sham Poland, but of a state which is capable of maintaining its independence. Poland at least has to have the extension of 1772. It must not only possess the territories but also the mouths of its great rivers, and must own at least a wide maritime country on the Baltic Sea.\(^4^9\)

Several months later Engels declared that it was a vital question for Poland "to own the Baltic Sea coast from Danzig to Riga." It was a "question of the free development of all the resources of a great nation."\(^5^0\) At that moment Engels apparently supported also the cession of East Prussia to Poland. It was the only time that Engels made such an extreme statement in favor of Polish aggrandizement.

As to the western borders of Poland \(\text{NRZ}\) supported not only the inclusion of Galicia but also of the whole Grand Duchy of Poznania into a restored Poland. With respect to Poznania \(\text{NRZ}\) defended a much more extreme position than the democrats. The Poznanian question became an important propaganda means against both the Prussian reactionaries and the democrats.\(^5^1\)

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\(^4^9\) NRZ, August 20, 1848.

\(^5^0\) Ibid., February 15, 1849.

On June 9 Engels opened the discussion of the Posen question with an article on the "Seventh Partition of Poland." The occasion was a report on the Poznanian events submitted to the Berlin National Assembly by a special committee of inquiry. The main theme of this article and of the following ones on the Poznanian question was that the partition of Poznania was in the interest of Prussia, not of Germany.

Engels accused the Prussian government of having betrayed the Poles in Poznania and the German Revolution. He admitted that the Prussian liberal ministry under Camphausen had been willing to support the liberation of the Poles in Poznania. But it was not determined enough to defend its position against the reactionary landowners and the generals who demanded the suppression of the Polish movement in Poznania. The vacillating Prussian policy led to the Poznanian insurrection in April. Although this "civil war" was actually forced upon the Prussian ministry by the bureaucrats, the ministry was ultimately responsible because it had failed to remove the supporters of the Prussian Monarchy.

Engels accused the bureaucrats of using the uprising of the Poles to regain their powerful position, even at the price of slaughtering the people, a job which was carried out by the Prussian soldiers. Engels spoke with sarcasm of their services to the counterrevolution. The soldiers performed
"heroic deeds . . . not during the war . . . but after the war." Engels declared that the cruelties perpetrated by the Prussian soldiers against the Poles were only equalled by the atrocities of the Thirty Years' War. He even pitied the persecuted priests although they ranked normally among the top reactionaries against whom terrorism was advocated. On July 8 NRZ called the suppression of the Poznanian uprising a "fanatical war of extermination conducted by the Christian-Germanic race together with the profit-hungry Jews against the Poles—a fight of absolutism and bureaucracy against democracy."

NRZ did not mention that the Polish landowners in Poznania had also sided with the Prussian reactionaries. Even before the outbreak of the April insurrection they had appealed to the Prussian government for support against the restless peasants who attacked the estates. But NRZ did not denounce their policies. It evaded in general derogatory statements about the Poles. Thus, a picture of strong contrasts emerged from the reports on Poznania. On the one side stood the reactionary power-hungry Prussians, on the other, the liberty-loving Poles. A discussion of social tensions in Poznania was not undertaken. Prussia was blamed for having disregarded justice and the rights of the Polish people in Poznania. It failed to honor the principle that political relations must be governed by the moral law.
Engels was particularly critical of the manner in which the whole question of the reorganization of Poznania was handled by the Prussian King. When on April 24, 1848 Frederick William IV ordered the partition of Poznania, he acted independently as if the Berlin and Frankfurt Assemblies did not exist. The same was true with regard to the proclamations of General Ernest v. Pfuel of May 12 and June 4 which limited Polish autonomy to an increasingly smaller area of the Grand Duchy. Engels considered this procedure as a perfidious manoeuvre to push the borders of the reorganized Grand Duchy ever further east until its autonomy would finally be liquidated. Engels did not mention that the partition of Poznania was actually supported by the growing German opposition to the radical Polish demands for the restoration of the western Polish borders of 1772.

According to Engels the Prussian officials had falsified the number of Poles and Germans living in Poznania in order to support the manoeuvres of the Prussian government. They claimed that 50% of the people who lived in the districts which had been incorporated into Prussia were Germans. Engels used the information submitted by the Polish Archbishop of Gniezno and Poznania Leon Przyłęski to the Prussian government to criticize the Prussian official statistical data. Archbishop Przyłęski stated that 1,200,000 people lived in the Grand Duchy. About 250,000 were Germans and Jews. Of these only about 100,000
"mostly Jews and recent German emigrants," were anti-Polish. The Poles were definitely in the majority. On the basis of this information Engels assumed that only 24% Germans lived in the incorporated districts. Many months later he spoke of only 6%. He insisted that the number of Germans had been artificially increased by counting also the Jews who were not Germans. The Germans were ridiculed because they had fraternized with the Jews for the sake of keeping Poznania, and the Jews were condemned because they had placed themselves on the side of reaction.

Whenever there was an opportunity, NRZ supported the opposition of the left wing in the Berlin Assembly to the Poznanian policies of Prussia. The causes of the insurrection in Poznania remained a controversial issue in the Assembly. When the Poznanian question was debated in the Assembly on July 4, the left wing agreed with the Polish delegates that the insurrection was not caused by a deep hatred between Poles and Germans but rather by the agitation of the reactionaries who stirred the two nationalities into fighting one another. The left wing demanded a new investigation of the whole matter. On the same day a resolution was passed that a commission be appointed to investigate the causes of the Poznanian insurrection. NRZ, which sided with the left wing, commented that this inquiry was an "urgently necessary act of justice towards the Poles."

NRZ, April 29, 1849.
Although NRZ supported the attacks of the democrats against the Prussian policies in Poznania, it criticized their demands for the liberation of Poznania as being too moderate. The democrats, who defended the right to national self-determination, demanded that the Poznanians should be granted the liberty to exercise this right. They opposed the demarcation line in Poznania because it was drawn by the Prussian government, not by the people. During the debates on Poznania in the Frankfurt Assembly (July 25-27, 1848), the democrats defended this position against the majority of the delegates who desired to safeguard German national as well as strategical interests.

The debates were occasioned by a motion of the Committee on International Law to ratify the resolutions of the Federal Diet of April 22 and May 2, 1848 on Poznania and to incorporate the predominantly German part of the Grand Duchy into the German Federal Union. The supporters of the partition of Poznania, mainly conservatives and liberals, referred to the necessity to defend the German eastern borders and to unite half a million Germans, who lived in the Grand Duchy, with their fatherland. Jordan criticized the democrats for their willingness to sacrifice vital German interests. According to him the German part of Poznania belonged to Germany by the same right by which
Pomerania had once belonged to Poland—namely, by "the right of the stronger, by the right of conquest."\textsuperscript{53}

The Polish delegates from Poznania defended the integrity of the Grand Duchy. They called the partition of Poznania an arbitrary act. The partition could not be defended on the basis of the nationality principle because the German minority did not live together in a compact group. Besides, even if the Poles were willing to agree to border rectifications, only the government of a restored Poland could make the final decision. Meanwhile, the Vienna treaties remained in force, and these treaties had recognized the historical right of the Poles to Poznania. Even the Prussian King had acknowledged this right when he issued a proclamation guaranteeing the preservation of the Polish nationality.\textsuperscript{54}

The democrats opposed an immediate decision on Poznania. They called for a new impartial inquiry into the Poznanian question and a popular vote in Poznania. A European Congress should act as the arbiter in the Poznanian question.

The majority in the Frankfurt Assembly rejected a postponement of the decision on Poznania. On July 27 the majority

\textsuperscript{53}\textit{Stenographischer Bericht}, II, 1146.

\textsuperscript{54}\textit{Ibid.}, II, 1166-69.
sided with the right wing which had desired an immediate decision. The resolution of the Federal Diet of May 2, which confirmed the Prussian partition of the Grand Duchy, was carried by 342 votes against 31, with another 31 registered as abstaining, and 157 as absent. Sixty-nine of those who had voted for the delaying motion declared that since their demand for a further inquiry had been rejected, their conscience did not permit them to vote on data which they considered insufficient.55

On that same day the democratic representatives in the Frankfurt Assembly protested against the "new partition of Poland" which was decreed without having held "definite inquiries" into the national origin of the inhabitants of Poznania.56

On August 1 the Manifesto addressed to the Polish people by the democratic Central Committee in Cologne condemned Prussia and Austria for not having liberated the Poles. Simultaneously, the Poles were urged to give up the historical-right principle with respect to Poznania. They should agree to the application of the democratic principle of national self-determination to this province. A just German-Polish border could only be drawn if the people in Poznania were granted the right to decide freely on their national status. A European Congress should act as an arbiter in the Poznanian question.57

55 Ibid., p. 1238.
56 NRZ, August 3, 1848.
57 Ibid., August 10, 1848.
Engels sided with the democratic opposition to the decision of the Frankfurt Assembly on the Grand Duchy. However, he did not identify his own position on the Poznanian question with that of the democrats. As in the case of the question of Polish restoration, he steered an independent course. He attacked both the supporters and opponents of the new demarcation line in Poznania.

In his first article on the Frankfurt debates, Engels told the story of a priest who acted the part of a benefactor for birds whose wings he had mutilated. According to Engels Prussia applied a similar method. First, Prussia deprived the Polish peasants of their independence, and then it posed as their benefactor who had improved their lot. Engels ridiculed the Prussian bureaucrats because they were surprised when the peasants

58 Cf. Engels's reluctance to acknowledge any benefits of Prussian rule in Poznania with the statements of the English historian John H. Clapham. He said that the absolutely landless peasant was rare in the Prussian Kingdom, and that the Prussian peasants were better off than the Polish peasants in Poznania in the eighteenth century. "The Polish peasant had no rights. His land, his goods, his services were all at the lord's disposal... It is probable that he found the Prussian government an improvement on his own, even before Prussia began the emancipation." Clapham said that for political reasons "the Polish peasantry in Poznania were sedulously protected, and their position improved in every way after 1815. These poor folks were not dreaming of their lost kings." Clapham called the Prussian policy "an interesting case of calculated humanity" which aimed at the weakening of the Polish landowners. John H. Clapham, The Economic Development of France and Germany 1815-1914 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1945), pp. 39, 44.
participated in the Poznanian uprising. The bureaucrats should have known that "nothing compensates for the loss of national independence, not even the help offered to or forced upon the people."59

Engels's statement that national liberty was the highest good and that no material betterment could make up for its loss can hardly be taken seriously. It clashed with Engels's rejection of a basic right to national independence. This fact has to be taken into consideration when attempting to evaluate Engels's agitation for the complete surrender of Poznania to the Poles. Otherwise, the illusions about the sincerity of his agitation will be perpetuated, notwithstanding the fact that in 1851 Engels himself destroyed this illusion. The support of the surrender of Poznania was a political expedient to fight monarchist Prussia, the Frankfurt Assembly, and the democrats.

The arguments used in the Frankfurt debates that the Germans had a right to Poznania because they were more civilized than the Poles offered Engels a convenient basis of attack. Engels ridiculed the Germans for their superiority complex towards the Slavs which was not justified, particularly not with regard to the Poles. The German emigrants had not promoted any political, cultural, or economic progress.

59NRZ, August 9, 1848.
Engels also rejected the need for military security and the historical-right principle. He called this principle "a garbage doctrine" which the autocrat Frederick II had used to defend his claim to the Netze district. However, it was obsolete in 1848. The democratic revolution should not be concerned with historical rights or wrongs but with the liberation of the oppressed. As to the question of military security, the eastern German border was safe without the possession of the fortresses of Poznania, Kuesrin, Bromberg, and Glogau.

Engels was particularly opposed to the application of the nationality principle in Poznanina. He maintained that the Germans and the Jews, who had lived for centuries among the Poles, had become de facto Polish citizens. He denied the existence of a Polish-German border problem. Yet, on another occasion he admitted to its existence and expressed the belief that this problem could be solved by a reasonable approach.

According to Engels the supporters of the partition of Poznanina did not defend German but Prussian interests. For decades the Prussian treasury had immensely profited from the confiscation of lands belonging either to the Catholic Church or to the Polish aristocracy. Most of these confiscated lands were situated within the incorporated area. The new border line was not determined by "the demands of this or that nationality" or by "so-called strategical reasons." It was determined by "the
position of the domains, the greed of the Prussian government," and by the desire of the Prussian aristocracy to get "a splendid estate for nothing." The new border, said Engels, safeguarded the economic interests of reactionary Prussia and helped to strengthen that state.\footnote{Ibid., August 12, 1848. Cf. the view of the German historian M. Laubert who also maintained that Prussia's interest in Poznania was mainly of an economic nature. Laubert mentioned the expropriation of the Polish aristocracy by the Prussian government since the time of Frederick the Great and the attempt of the government to gain the support of the Polish peasants and the bourgeoisie. Germanization was merely a result of the immediate aim to increase the income of the Prussian state. M. Laubert, Die preussische Polenpolitik von 1772-1914 (3d ed.; Cracow: Burgverlag, 1944), pp. 103 ff.}

In Engels opinion the ratification of the partition of Poznania proved that the Frankfurt Assembly had been unable to assert its independence from the reactionary forces in Prussia. Under the influence of Prussia, Frankfurt decided against a democratic Germany. This situation would continue as long as Prussia and Russia were united in the common desire to keep Poland divided. The victory of democracy was only possible through the restoration of Poland which would destroy Russia and also the Prussian and Austrian Monarchies whose strength depended upon Russian support.

While NRZ followed the debates on the Poznanian question in Frankfurt with an intense interest, it paid little attention to the development in the Berlin Assembly where the left wing
was stronger. Berlin was not willing to ratify the decision of the Frankfurt Assembly on Poznania. It adopted a defiant attitude towards Frankfurt. On October 19 and 23, 1848 the Berlin Assembly resumed the debates on the Poznanian question which ended with a victory of the left wing by a one vote majority. The new demarcation line was considered as "unfair and completely arbitrary." The democrats proclaimed that the Prussian National Assembly was more democratic than the Frankfurt Assembly. It had acknowledged the democratic principle that the sovereignty of each nation should be respected. Apparently NRZ did not share the enthusiasm of the democrats. On October 22 and 26 NRZ briefly reported on the debates without any comment. After this crisis the interest in the Poznanian question subsided. In the meantime, the Vienna uprising in early October, 1848 had turned the attention of NRZ to the events in the Austrian Empire.

It is interesting that in NRZ's agitation for the destruction of the Austrian Empire, the Galician question did not play the same role as the Poznanian question in the fight against Prussia. Although NRZ repeatedly stated that the destruction of Austria was as necessary as the destruction of Prussia to free Germany from the Russian yoke, neither Austria nor the Frankfurt Assembly were attacked for not having decreed the liberation of Galicia. NRZ limited itself to reporting news about Galician

events, rarely accompanied by any comments. This was another indication that the Poznanian question was mainly a convenient propaganda means because it was a much more explosive question in Germany.

After the outbreak of the German revolutionary movement no uprising had occurred in Galicia. The Poles had merely addressed petitions to the Austrian Emperor for Polish autonomy in Galicia and to the Frankfurt Vor-Parlament for the immediate surrender of Galicia. Their conviction that the whole Galician province was Polish was contested by the Galician Ukranians (then called Ruthenians) who addressed separate petitions to Vienna for "Ruthenian" autonomy. 62

The fight between Poles and Galician Ukranians was continued at the first Pan-Slav Congress in Prague (June 1-12, 1848). The Poles tried to convince the Ukranian delegates from Galicia that in the future a restored Poland would avoid the mistakes of the old Polish Republic which had been a federation

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62 For information on the Galician question in 1848 cf. the treatise of Ivan Bryk, "Slavjanskyj Kongress v Prasi v 1848 i ukrainska sprava" ("The Slavic Congress of Prague in 1848 and the Ukranian Question"), CXXIX (1919), 141-217. This treatise is most useful because Bryk extensively quoted from documents which are no longer available.
only in name. It would become a true federation based on "general liberty." But the Ukrainian delegates remained hostile.

Ivan Borisikevich, a leader of the Ukrainian movement in Galicia, made a strong statement against the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772. He said that the Ukrainians, because of their memories of Polish oppression, did not wish to become members of a restored Poland. He agitated for the liberation of the two and one half million Galician Ukrainians from Polish rule and for their recognition as a separate nationality. The ultimate goal of the "Ruthenian movement," which had originated early in the nineteenth century as a cultural movement, was the reunion of the Galician with the Eastern Ukrainians (then called Little Russians) and the formation of a separate nation of "fifteen million" people free from Polish or Russian overlordship.

NRZ repeatedly covered news on the tensions between the Poles and the Galician Ukrainians due to the "Ruthenian" national movement. But in this connection NRZ never referred to the arguments used at the Prague Congress. NRZ strictly defended the Polish position. The "Ruthenians" were attacked for being anti-Polish, pro-Russian, and narrow nationalists who had no other

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63 Cf. the speech of Prince Lubomirski, the Polish delegate to the Prague Congress, June 1, 1848, Narodni Nowiny (National News [Galicia]), No. 52, 1848, quoted in Bryk, pp. 189-190.

64 Bryk, pp. 180, 190.
desire than to safeguard the "Ruthenian" nationality. The "Ruthenian" movement was ridiculed because priests and peasants who participated in it relied upon "religion and fanaticism" to attain their nationalist goal. In some instances NRZ printed information that the movement was exploited by the Austrian government as a convenient means to fight the more radical Poles, in others that the movement had been artificially created by the Austrian government for that same purpose.

Most other news about Galicia consisted of rumors or speculations about a Russian invasion of the province and its effect upon Silesia. However, NRZ did not undertake a propaganda campaign for the independence of Galicia. At the time of the Vienna insurrection early in October, when Polish hopes for the liberation of Galicia flared up again, NRZ did not agitate for the separation of Galicia from Austria. It merely reported the excitement which the Vienna insurrection had caused in Cracow. It also published a Polish Manifesto, issued in Vienna, which appealed to all the Poles to fight together with the Viennese insurgents for the liberty of Poland and all the oppressed peoples. Even when the war between Hungary and Austria had started in December, 1848, NRZ only speculated that a closer Hungarian-Polish collaboration might lead to a Polish insurrection in Galicia and to the defeat of the Austrians. During the early months of 1849 NRZ published news about a growing opposition to the oppressive
policies of the Austrian government in Galicia (Lwow and Cracow). In January, 1849 Austria declared a state of siege in Galicia; in February it threatened with an enforced recruitment; in March it imposed a new Constitution. But NRZ did not make a special issue of it. Even when early in May, 1849 NRZ expected a Russian invasion of Hungary, it did not agitate for a Polish uprising in Galicia.

It is significant that Engels, who extensively discussed the Poznanian question in NRZ, did not write a major article on Galicia. This proves the priority of the Poznanian question in the revolutionary strategy of NRZ. The Poznanian question was connected with Prussia, and Prussia was still considered as the barometer of the German Revolution. Consequently, all the problems of Prussia had to be fully exploited to further internal conflicts in that state.

The Slavic Question in the Austrian Empire

The development of the Poznanian question, which NRZ had followed with an intense interest, belonged to the larger problem of the future extension of the political borders of a united Germany. It was, therefore, part of the explosive question of German rule over alien peoples.

A majority in the Vor-Parlament and in the Frankfurt National Constituent Assembly supported the creation of
Grossdeutschland, including Austria and its Slavic dependencies. The grossdeutsche solution was also favored by a majority of the democrats. Only a minority, led by Arnold Ruge, genuinely adhered to the nationality principle. They demanded that the right to national self-determination should be granted to all the peoples under German rule and also to the Austro-Slavs. They considered the recognition of this right as the prerequisite for the creation of a European federation. The grossdeutsche question contributed to an even larger degree than the Poznanian question to dissension in the ranks of the democrats.

Marx and Engels had fought the democratic principle of national self-determination before the Revolution. They fought this principle even more strenuously in 1848-49, not only because they supported the surrender of Poznania to the Poles but because the creation of Grossdeutschland was at stake. Marx and Engels, who supported the grossdeutsche solution, opposed the wishes of the democratic minority for the liberation of the Austro-Slavs. A discussion of this controversy regarding the right to national self-determination in relation to the Austro-Slav question helps to throw light on Marx's and Engels's arbitrary handling of the question of national liberty. It reinforces the doubts as to the sincerity of their declarations in favor of Poznania, and it reveals a new objective of their pro-Polish agitation.

The defenders of the grossdeutsche solution in the Frankfurt Assembly were merely willing to guarantee the equality of all the non-Germans in a united Germany. On May 31, at the tenth session of the Frankfurt Assembly, a motion was introduced that Germany should not oppress any nationality. Thereupon, a resolution was passed which guaranteed equality of civil rights to all the non-Germans in a united Germany and "the use of their own language--as far as it extends territorially--in religion, education, literature, and the internal and judicial administration." This resolution did not satisfy all the democrats.

Early in June the democratic members of the Frankfurt Assembly led by Arnold Ruge published a Manifesto which demanded liberation of the individual as well as of nations, condemned the conquest and oppression of Germany's neighbors, and supported the creation of a European federation of "free and equal nations" to safeguard liberty and unity. The "Holy Alliance of the peoples" was to include not only a restored Poland but all the "democratic Slavs."

On June 7, at the thirteenth session of the Frankfurt Assembly, the democrat Ruge returned to these demands. He declared:

66 Stenographischer Bericht, I, 183.
67 Cf. Manifesto, in NRZ, June 6, 1848.
The territorial and nationality problems belong to the despotic times. All the peoples should be permitted to organize and fraternize as freely as possible.68

The Germans should grant independence to all the Slavs under German rule and collaborate with them on the basis of equality.

NRZ printed the declarations of the democrats on the nationality question—but without any comments. This indicated that the editors did not wish to identify themselves with the democratic viewpoint that each nation had a right to liberty and that all the Slavs should enjoy this right.

From the outset occasional statements in NRZ revealed that the editors were not opposed to the conquest of foreign nations provided that the conquering nation was more progressive. In June, when NRZ repeatedly condemned the Germans for the oppression of their neighbors, it also rejoiced that the German military campaign against the Danes for the incorporation of Schleswig-Holstein might soon end with a German victory and German rule over the Danes. According to NRZ this would be a blessing because the Danes were more counterrevolutionary than the Germans. The Danes were still immersed in their Nordic past which they glorified, and all the social classes were imbued with "an unshakable loyalty to the princes." The Germans were "frivolous, civilized Frenchmen" compared to these "upright barbarians."69

68.Stenographischer Bericht, I, 240.

69.NRZ, June 29, 1848.
Several months later NRZ declared that the Germans had at least made a revolution and had progressed. Therefore, the war against Denmark was justified. It was "the first revolutionary war" of the Germans. Under German rule Schleswig-Holstein would be drawn into the revolutionary movement and freed from a sterile union with the backward northern nations.

Germany takes Schleswig by the same right, by which the Frenchmen have taken Flanders, Lorraine, and Alsace—by the right of civilization over barbarism, of progress over backwardness.70

"The right of historical development," not treaties, counted in international relations.

Finally, in February, 1849 the editors pronounced a full-scale condemnation of the democratic principle that each nation had a basic right to liberty and self-determination. They declared that "justice and other moralistic principles" did not count in the relations between nations if progress was at stake. As an example they mentioned the conquest of California and Texas by the United States of America. This conquest was not a crime. It was in "the interest of civilization." The Americans, who were more progressive than the Mexicans, initiated a splendid development of the conquered territories which fully justified the violation of Mexican independence.71

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70 Ibid., September 10, 1848.

71 Ibid., February 15, 1849.
The editors of NRZ treated the question of national liberty in an arbitrary manner. To them national liberty was not a principle. But whether they made statements in favor of national liberty or against it, they always aimed at furthering the Revolution. They reverted to the Hegelian idea that the nation was the carrier of historical development, and that the historical right was on the side of the progressive nation. In their propaganda the progressive nation was revolutionary, and the backward nation reactionary.

This theory placed a limitation on the right to national liberty. It also lent itself to a very arbitrary application. It might be conveniently used either to support the liberation of a nation or to justify conquest and the overlordship of one nation over another in the name of progress or revolution. The editors of NRZ applied this theory to defend the restoration of Poland as well as to condemn the Slavic movement in the Austrian Empire. They took an extremist position and would neither grant autonomy to the Slavs nor the right to preserve their own cultural traditions. Marx and Engels supported the complete absorption of the Austro-Slavs through Germanization. Their position was even more radical than that of the liberals, not to speak of the democrats.

The Vor-Parlament had invited the Czechs (then called Bohemians) to send delegates to Frankfurt. But the Czechs
refused to do so. They became the most active supporters of the creation of an Austro-Slav state in which all the nationalities, Germans and Slavs, would enjoy equal rights. They initiated the preparations for the first Pan-Slav Congress at Prague. At this Congress the question of Austro-Slavism was discussed.

From the beginning the Polish radicals and conservatives opposed the political concept of Austro-Slavism. They supported the creation of Grossdeutschland in Frankfurt. They hoped that in return the provisional German government would grant Galicia independence. The realization of an Austro-Slav state would have precluded the fulfillment of Polish aspirations in Galicia. The Poles were convinced that Austro-Slavism was "a declaration of war against Poland" concocted by the Czechs to prevent the restoration of the historical Polish borders and to destroy Polish leadership among the Austro-Slavs. They agreed only reluctantly to participate in the Pan-Slav Congress.

The Czechs, in turn, displayed much animosity against the Poles. They ridiculed Polish claims to the historical borders of 1772 as outdated. Besides, they supported the demand of the

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73Cf. article of a Czech correspondent, published in Narodni Noviny (National News), reprinted in Dziennik Narodowy (People's Daily [Lwow]), No. 47, May 18, 1848, quoted in Bryk, p. 158.
Galician Ukrainians to be recognized as a separate nationality. The Galician Ukrainians, on the other hand, favored the Czech concept of an Austro-Slav state as a means to liberate themselves from Polish rule. The Czechs also opposed the Polish claim to Silesia. They considered Silesia as rightfully theirs. Territorial problems helped to undermine unity at the Prague Congress. When the Congress was dissolved because of the radical Prague uprising on June 12, 1848, no real progress had been made in the direction of Austro-Slavism.74

NRZ hardly commented on this Congress. The editors made no attempt to exploit Slavic agitation against German rule at the Prague Congress although in June their propaganda campaign against German oppression of the neighboring peoples was most intense. In some isolated statements the Austro-Slavs were ridiculed for their political ambitions. NRZ maintained that the Austro-Slavs wished to create a new European power between Russia and Germany through the organization of a "great Slavic state bordered by the Riesengebirge, the Carpathian Mountains, the Adriatic Sea, and the Balkans."75 But the Austro-Slavs would be too weak to realize this plan against the opposition of Russia, Hungary, and Germany.


75NRZ, June 9, 1848.
In NRZ's opinion the whole concept of Austro-Slavism was reactionary. The Austro-Slavs were accused of merely supporting the Austrian Monarchy in order to further their own narrow nationalist aims. The Czechs, in particular, were attacked. Although the Prague uprising was hailed as a revolutionary event, soon afterwards the Czechs were dubbed counter-revolutionaries whose fate it was to be exterminated by the Revolution. According to NRZ, Croatian support of the Austrian government's fight against the Hungarian independence movement was merely another proof that the Austro-Slavs preferred the Austrian yoke to liberty.

Actually it was not so much a question for NRZ whether the Austro-Slavs were revolutionary or reactionary, but rather how the creation of a strong Germany would be furthered. The policies of the Austro-Slavs, which aimed at safeguarding the integrity of Austria, were a hindrance to the grossdeutsche solution. Consequently, NRZ advised the radicals against any support of the Austro-Slavs. NRZ favored the Hungarian independence movement because the Hungarians were for the destruction of the Austrian Empire.

Repeatedly NRZ pointed out that the Hungarians were as worthy of collaboration with the Germans as the Poles. The Hungarians were revolutionary and pro-German. On August 11 NRZ referred to debates in the Hungarian House of Representatives
which disclosed that the Hungarians were anxious to support the German cause and to collaborate with revolutionary Germany.\(^{76}\) One of the deputies declared: "I consider Germany as the torch in the heart of Europe. Hungary will play the part of the torch-bearer." This was the role which NRZ ascribed to the Hungarians.

At the time of the Vienna uprising in October, 1848, when the Hungarians made an attempt to collaborate with the Viennese insurgents, and particularly after the outbreak of the Hungarian war against Austria, NRZ's enthusiasm for the Hungarian cause kept rising. Meanwhile, the immediate interest of NRZ in the Polish cause was pushed more and more into the background.

However, NRZ continued to praise the Poles for their support of the Viennese insurgents and the Hungarian war, and for their opposition to Austro-Slavism. On November 9 NRZ referred to a recent article against Austro-Slavism published in the Polish newspaper Lwow Gazeta Powszechna (General Gazette of Lwow). The article declared that the Poles had acquiesced in the idea of a federal Austro-Slav Monarchy in order to prepare the political independence of Galicia. The Poles withdrew their support of this idea when the Austrian government made no attempt to realize it. NRZ commented that the Poles, with the exception of a few "fanatics,"

were not interested in the survival of the Habsburg Empire. They did not join the imperial camp "with beating drums" like the Slavic deputies at the time of the Vienna uprising. NRZ hailed the Poles as the only revolutionaries among the Austro-Slavs.

Towards the end of 1848 NRZ began to report about the rising opposition among the Austro-Slavs to the Austrian government which had not kept its promise to grant equal rights to the Slavic nationalities. NRZ hoped that the growing unrest might develop into a new crisis and contribute to the fall of the Austrian Empire. This hope was also nursed by the Polish democrats.

On January 22 NRZ published a Manifesto of the Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society in Paris which was addressed to the Slavs and signed by the Polish democrats Ludwik Mierosławski, Stanisław Worcell, and Wojciech Darasz. In this Manifesto the dissatisfied Austro-Slavs were warned not to ally with the "Muscovites" against the Austrian government which had betrayed them. They were urged to collaborate with the Poles for the restoration of Poland. This would be the only means to destroy the Austrian rule over the Slavs and to create a free Slavic union.

NRZ published the Manifesto without comment. The editors no doubt disliked Polish support of the independence of the Austro-Slavs. But the Manifesto was useful. It supported
the opinion of the NRZ editors that the Austrian Empire was rapidly moving towards a new crisis because of the rising unrest of the Austro-Slavs which occurred at a time when Austria was faced with the Hungarian war.

However, NRZ did not agitate for a close collaboration of the Austro-Slavs with the Poles or Hungarians or even with the German revolutionaries to hasten this event. It merely continued to report about Slavic unrest which became very serious when a new Austrian constitution was imposed upon the Austro-Slavs in March, 1849. At that time NRZ called the Slavic opposition to the government "the third disorganizing element" which, along with the Hungarian and Italian wars, condemned Austria to an imminent end.

What the fate of the Austro-Slavs would be in case of the fall of the Austrian Monarchy, Engels had outlined in a series of articles published in February, 1849. In those early weeks of 1849, when NRZ rejoiced over the growing opposition of the Austro-Slavs to the Austrian government, Engels pronounced the most absolute condemnation of their aspirations to national liberty.

Engels used his articles to attack the policies of Arnold Ruge and, in particular, of Michael Bakunin, the political
opponents of Marx and Engels since 1844. As was mentioned earlier, a German democratic minority defended the liberation of the Austro-Slavs and German collaboration with them on the basis of equality. They considered the Slavic question as "the vital question of the Revolution." Bakunin maintained the same position.

After the outbreak of the German Revolution, Bakunin had continued his propaganda for the destruction of the Austrian Empire and the liberation of the Austro-Slavs as a major step towards the creation of a new Europe, along with the destruction of Tsarist Russia. As one of the two Russian participants in the Prague Congress, Bakunin became the most determined opponent of the political concept of Austro-Slavism. He also sided with the Poles in their fight for the integrity of Galicia and its eventual reunion with the liberated Poland although he fought the Polish claim to the eastern borders of 1772.

Marx and Engels, who disliked Bakunin, welcomed the repeated accusations that Bakunin was a Russian spy. Already in a letter of September 16, 1848 Engels had informed Marx that Bakunin was strongly under the suspicion of being a Russian spy. Cf. Bakunin, Confession, p. 62. In the summer of 1848 NRZ published such slander.

Cf. Manifesto of the democrats in the Frankfurt Assembly, NRZ, June 6, 1848.

Bakunin, Confession, p. 139.

The Polish historian Bolesław Limanowski insisted that Bakunin tried to dissuade the Galician Ukrainians from agitating for a partition of Galicia because this would support the desire of the Austrian government to weaken the Slavic cause.
In the autumn of 1848 Bakunin composed an Appeal to the Slavs at the invitation of the Berlin democrats. In this pamphlet he continued his agitation for the liberation of the Austro-Slavs. He defended the democratic principle of national self-determination and demanded that it should be applied to the Austro-Slavs. He railed against the old diplomacy which had drawn frontiers without considering the wishes of the people. Future borders ought to be determined "by the sovereign will of the nations on the basis of their national origin." But when Bakunin touched upon the Galician question, he did not defend the right of the non-Polish inhabitants to national self-determination. He merely expressed the opinion that the Polish landowners were "democratically inclined and inspired by the spirit of liberty."

Engels began his polemic against the Austro-Slavs with an attack against the conviction of Bakunin and the German and strengthen the Pan-Slav aims of the Tsar. Cf. Limanowski, Historya demokracyi polskiej, p. 200. The Ukrainian Ivan Bryk maintained that Bakunin supported the Ukrainian demands which weakened the Polish position. Cf. Bryk, op. cit., p. 206. Unfortunately, his sources are no longer available. There is no evidence that Bakunin stated that the Poles had a right to the Galician Ukraine. It is quite possible that he tried to keep both parties of the controversy in a friendly mood by supporting officially the Polish viewpoint and in private discussions with Borisikevich, with whom he was on good terms, the Ukrainian position.

81 Josef Pfitzner, Bakuninstudien (Prague: 1932), p. 102, quoted in Hepner, Bakounine et le panslavisme révolutionnaire, p. 267.
democrats that democratic governments would end national oppression by applying the democratic principle of national self-determination. Engels maintained that this contention was wholly unfounded. The subjugation of nations was not merely the work of "despotic congresses" as Bakunin had maintained. Even the democratic United States of America had not refrained from conquering Mexican territory, and that conquest was justified from the viewpoint of progress.

According to Engels such terms as humanity, liberty, equality, fraternity, and independence, which Bakunin had used in his _Appeal_, had no meaning at all.

They are more or less moralistic categories which are high-sounding but prove nothing in historical and political questions.82

Nations were on different levels of development. The conquest and assimilation of more backward neighbors was necessary to further progress.

Without force and without iron ruthlessness, nothing is accomplished in history; and if Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon had been capable of compassion . . . what would have become of history.83

According to Engels the whole principle of national self-determination was unrealistic. History taught that the higher

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82 _NRZ_, February 15, 1849.
83 Ibid.
developed nation had a right to rule the less developed one. Although the Austro-Slavs were not fully Germanized, the application of the nationality principle to them was not defendable.

Engels rejected Bakunin's claim, shared by Ruge, that the subjugation of the Austro-Slavs by the Germans was a crime. He adopted the popular argument, which he had earlier ridiculed that the Germans had fulfilled a civilizing mission among the Slavs. He declared that the Slavs had little inclination towards the trades. While the Slavs were predominantly involved in agricultural activities, the Germans contributed to the development of towns and a bourgeoisie which meant progress. Under German rule the Austro-Slavs were enabled to participate in a higher civilization.

Engels pointed out that history taught that small nationalities could only share in historical progress as members of large political units. The Pan-Slavs who demanded the liberation of the "half-Germanized Slavs" did not understand that this would be detrimental to them. The Pan-Slavs had no regard for the most material necessities." In the nineteenth century large territorial units and political centralization had become an even greater historical necessity than in the past when the great monarchies were organized "because of the formidable advance in industry, trade, and communications." The Austrian
Slavs lacked the geographic, political, and industrial pre-requisites for the creation of a modern state.

Besides, according to Engels the Czechs, Croations, and Slovenes would not achieve national independence because they had never developed into strong independent nations in the past.

Peoples . . . who from the moment when they reached the first crude stage of civilization came under a foreign domination, or who were only forced into the first stages of civilization under a foreign yoke have no vitality. They will never be able to attain any sort of independence.\(^\text{84}\)

Engels claimed that the Austro-Slavs did not even have a right to national independence because they were not historical nations. The Poles and Hungarians, instead, had a right to national independence because they had shown the ability to form independent states in the past. They were historical nations.

Engels used Hegel's differentiation between the historical and non-historical nations here. But Hegel would not have considered Poles and Hungarians as historical nations because they were not carriers of world historical progress towards liberty as were the Germanic peoples.

It may be assumed that Engels defended the right of the historical nation to national independence because his argument that German superiority justified German rule over the

\(^{84}\text{Ibid.}\)
Austro-Slavs caused him some difficulty regarding his support of Polish and Hungarian national liberation. Obviously Engels tried to extricate himself from this difficulty at the cost of arbitrariness.

Although Engels maintained that German initiative was superior to that of the Slavs, he was anxious to differentiate between the Austro-Slavs and the Poles. He declared that the Austro-Slavs were even more backward than the Poles. This was certainly an overstatement with regard to the Czechs.

With respect to the Hungarians, Engels's arbitrary treatment of the Austro-Slavs was even more obvious. When he defended the subjugation of the Slavs by the Hungarians in the past, he dropped the argument that this was in the interest of progress. Indeed, he could hardly have used this argument because he himself spoke of the Hungarians as a "barbarian people." He switched to the more convenient argument that force makes right.

If four million Hungarians were able to oppress eight million Slavs for eight centuries, this proves sufficiently who had more vitality and more energy, the many Slavs or the few Hungarians.85

Engels supported the continuation of Hungarian rule over the Slavs in a restored Hungary. It was more important to safeguard the interests of a historical nation, like Hungary,

85 Ibid.
than to liberate a few backward nationalities. If Slovenes and Croatians were liberated, Hungary and Germany would lose their outlet to the Adriatic Sea. The possession of this outlet was as much a "vital question for Germany and Hungary as for Poland the need to own the Baltic Sea coast from Danzig to Riga." He added:

When it is a question of the free development of all the resources of a great nation, then sentimental feelings for a few scattered Germans and Slavs will decide nothing. 86

Ultimately, Engels could always fall back on the argument that the Austro-Slavs were incurable counter-revolutionaries who invented the reactionary concept of Austro-Slavism to further their narrow nationalist aims. In his opinion the Austro-Slavs opposed the reunion of Galicia with Poland at the Prague Congress in order to secure a Slavic majority in the Austrian Empire. They had absolutely no interest in the restoration of a strong Poland capable of fulfilling a revolutionary role in Eastern Europe. Engels insinuated that Bakunin and the German democrats who advocated the liberation of the Austro-Slavs and collaboration with them were political fools. Anyone truly interested in furthering the Revolution was bound to collaborate merely with the Poles and Hungarians because they were revolutionary. Since

86 Ibid.
the French Revolutionary Wars, said Engels, the Poles had always sided with the revolutionary party against reaction. In 1848 the Poles and also the Hungarians collaborated with the revolutionary Germans against reactionary Austria. But the Austro-Slavs supported the fight of the Austrian government against the Italian, Hungarian, and Viennese insurrections.

As was pointed out earlier, the major concern of the editors of NRZ was the creation of a large German state under a centralized government. They were convinced that only such a state would further industrial progress and ultimately the communist revolution. Consequently, they acted in accordance with this conviction when they agitated in NRZ for the incorporation of the Austro-Slavs into a united Germany. The question discussed by Engels whether the Austro-Slavs were revolutionary, and whether they would be able to organize independent states was merely a convenient means to ridicule Bakunin and the German democrats. Besides, Engels exploited the Austro-Slavic question to launch a formidable attack against the concept of a union of all the Slavs which was ardently defended by Bakunin.

Pan-Slavism, a Danger to Germany

In the period before 1848 Bakunin had coupled his Pan-Slav agitation with the demand for Polish liberation. He
continued this line of revolutionary propaganda in 1848-49. At the outset of the German Revolution, Bakunin tried to go to Poznania to work for Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration in order to prevent the apparently imminent war against Russia. His plan was to turn the fight against Tsarism into an exclusively Slavic affair. 87 When the Berlin authorities prevented Bakunin from going to Poznania, he went to Silesia and then to Prague.

At the Prague Congress he agitated for the reunion of all the Slavs in "a great indivisible political body" based on the equality of all its members. 88 According to him the destruction of the Austrian and Prussian Monarchies was as necessary as the destruction of Tsarist Russia to liberate the Slavs and to unite them. He denounced Tsarist Russia as a state where "death, darkness, and the work of slaves" prevailed. 89 However, he warned against the exclusion of a revolutionary Russia from a future Slavic union. "Without Russia, Slavic unity is not complete . . . without it Slavic power does not exist." 90

In his speeches at the Congress, Bakunin told the Poles that a revolutionary Russia would end the oppression of the Poles.

87 Bakunin, Confession, p. 116.
88 Ibid., p. 139.
89 Ibid., p. 141.
90 Ibid., p. 152.
Russia has separated itself from the Slavic community by subjugating Poland and even more so by surrendering it to the Germans, the common and principle enemy of the Slavic race. Therefore, it can only reenter the Slavic brotherhood by the liberation of Poland.91

But a liberated Poland would not include the former eastern provinces. Bakunin maintained that the Poles had no right to these territories. White Russians and "Little Russians" had not been Polonized, but merely oppressed by the Poles. The "Little Russians," in particular, had been quite successful in preserving their own "language ... and culture," even under the Tsarist government.

Bakunin's immediate aim was to fight against the territorial partition of Russia. He claimed that a war against Russia was not necessary because Russia was on the brink of a revolution, and that the restoration of the eastern Polish borders of 1772 was absurd because the inhabitants of the former eastern Polish provinces would not welcome Polish rule.

In order to end the threat of a war against Russia, Bakunin desired that the Poles should not collaborate with the Europeans, rather they should side with the revolutionary Russians. In that case the territorial losses of Poland in the East would be compensated in the West. A revolutionary Russia

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91 Ibid., p. 136.
would help the Poles to restore the western Polish borders of 1772 and even support their aim to incorporate Silesia and East Prussia into Poland, that is, to partition Germany.92

Bakunin proved himself to be a staunch defender of the extremist demands of the Slavs for the partition of Eastern Germany in order to liberate all the Slavic minorities. In his Appeal to the Slavs he threatened:

 Truly, the Slav shall not forfeit anything . . . As long as the smallest part of our rights is disputed, as long as one single member is separated . . . from the whole body, we will fight . . . until the Slavs finally stand great, free, and independent in the world.93

In the Appeal Bakunin's anti-German feelings got out of hand. The demand for revolutionary collaboration of the Slavs with the Italians, Hungarians, and Germans and for the creation of a "federation of European republics" contradicted his radical Slavism.

It is surprising that the editors of NRZ never referred to Bakunin's agitation before February, 1849 although they must have been quite familiar with Bakunin's political concepts. Both

92 In May, 1848, when Bakunin frequented the German democratic club in Breslau, he supported Polish claims to Silesian territory. Cf. the German liberal review Die Grenzboten (Leipzig), 1848, III, p. 343, quoted in Bakunin, Confession, p. 326.

93 NRZ, February 16, 1849.
Marx and Engels met Bakunin in April, 1848, and Marx met him again in the summer of 1848. Apparently these meetings were rather stormy.\(^9_4\)

Initially the editors of NRZ limited themselves to occasional references to extremist Pan-Slav statements which endangered the territorial integrity of Germany. In July, 1848 NRZ turned the attention of the readers to statistical data on the Slavs published by a leading supporter of Austro-Slavism, the Czech P. J. Šafařík. The Czech leader stated that 2,180,000 Slavs (that is, 1,982,000 Poles and 82,000 Lusatians) lived in Prussia, and 60,000 Lusatians in Saxony.

On July 16, 1848 NRZ printed a Manifesto of the Slavs to the European peoples which had been composed by the Prague Congress early in June. The Manifesto protested against the partition of the Grand Duchy of Poznania and declared:

We expect the governments of Prussia and Saxony to refrain from the systematic denationalization of the Slavs in Silesia, Lusatia, East and West Prussia.

Such statements indicated that the Slavs would not be satisfied with their liberation from Austrian and Prussian rule, and that they also aimed at the partition of Germany. NRZ printed this information without comments.

\(^9_4\) Cf. the remark of Fritz Brubpacher, quoted in Bakunin, Confession, p. 116.
In those early months, when NRZ repeatedly expressed its disgust with German oppression of foreign peoples, the publication of the Slavic statements could have been interpreted by the readers as a support of Slavic aspirations. But in February, 1849 Engels came out with a sharp attack against Slavic claims to Eastern German territories. He declared that the territories east of the Elbe river had belonged to the Germanic people before their settlement by the Slavs. These territories were reconquered by the Germans after the partition of the Carolingian Empire when "geographic and strategical reasons" necessitated this reconquest. In the course of the following centuries the territories were completely Germanized.

The affair has been settled and cannot be reopened unless the Pan-Slavists rediscover the lost Sorbian, Wendish, and Abodrite languages and force them on the inhabitants of Leipzig, Berlin, and Stettin. Besides, it has never been questioned up to now that this conquest was in the interest of civilization.95

According to Engels all the Pan-Slavists were reactionaries because they were extreme nationalists.

Among all the Pan-Slavs nationality, that is, the fanciful, all-Slavic nationality comes before the revolution. The Pan-Slavs will join the revolution under the condition that they should be allowed to turn all the Slavic nationalities into independent Slavic states, without consideration for the most material necessities.96

95 NRZ, February 15, 1849.
96 Ibid., February 16, 1849.
Pan-Slavism was a kind of supernationalism. It would never agree with democracy.

Engels referred to the Pan-Slavic leanings of the Austro-Slavs. He maintained that the Austro-Slavs, who shunned collaboration with the revolutionary Germans and Hungarians, would not refrain from collaborating with the reactionary Russians in order to realize their nationalist aims. According to Engels Pan-Slavism only helped to strengthen reactionary Russia. It must be fought to save the Revolution. Whoever supported Pan-Slavism was either an "illusionist" or a "villain."

Engels ridiculed the expectations of Ruge that the fraternization of the European nations and their union in a European federal republic would end the old political and social order in Europe. Such expectations were "sentimental phantasies." They had been disproved by the rise of nationalism in the Revolution and strong national hatreds, namely of the Austro-Slavs for the Germans and Hungarians. Ruge and his followers, said Engels, should give up their support of Bakunin's agitation for an indiscriminate revolutionary collaboration between the Europeans and the Slavs in general. Such a policy would only endanger the Revolution.

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Mommsen has pointed out that because of the Prague Congress the Frankfurt Assembly also overrated the ties of the Slavic movement in the Austrian Empire with Russia. Cf. Mommsen, op. cit., p. 117.
It is obvious that Engels, who insisted upon German collaboration with the Poles and the Hungarians, wished to keep the Slavs divided. The partition of the Slavic areas in the Austrian Empire between the Germans and Hungarians and, in particular, the partition of Russia through the restoration of Poland would destroy Pan-Slav aspirations which endangered the very integrity of German territorial possessions.

While Bakunin urged the Poles to collaborate with the Russians and against the Germans in order to gain East-Prussian and Silesian territories, Engels insisted that the Poles had no intention to join the Russians because they had immensely suffered from Russian oppression. "With the Poles the hatred of the Russians comes even before the hatred of the Germans, and most rightfully so." Hatred of the Russians, which was also "the first revolutionary passion among the Germans," cemented the German-Polish alliance against Russia. According to Engels there was absolutely no danger that the Poles would enter a Pan-Slav union directed by Russia against Germany. They were "free from all Pan-Slav desires."

Engels was right that the Poles were opposed to Russian leadership which Bakunin considered as the only guarantee of Slavic liberty. Engels, however, was wrong when he stated

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98 NRZ, February 15, 1849.
that democratic Panslavism had no adherents among the revolutionary Poles. According to the Polish historian Wilhelm Feldman "Slavic propaganda was strong in 1848, partly because of the disappointment with the Germans." 99

The Polish democrat Karol Libelt had submitted to the Prague Congress a project for a Slavic union. The only other project submitted to the Congress was composed by Bakunin. On the whole, both projects were concerned with organizational problems of the union. They proposed the election of a central representative body which should guarantee the enjoyment of equal rights by all the members of the Slavic union. 100 Territorial problems were not discussed.

The question of a Slavic union caused dissent among the Polish democrats which did not end with the Revolution of 1848. Polish democrats who emigrated to London from Paris in 1849 issued an official statement in which they condemned the support of the Slavic idea: "Slavism pushes us back into the epoch of barbarism when mankind was divided according to race, and when blood, not an idea, was the only link between man." 101 In 1850,

99 Feldman, Geschichte der politischen Ideen in Polen, p. 159.


101 Feldman, op. cit., p. 159.
when Libelt agitated for a federal structure of a restored Poland and against a unitary state, he returned to his support of a Slavic union. "The future of Slavism can only be a federation. The people have acquired a feeling for equality . . . [and for the right to] their own national development."102

Engels chose to ignore the existence of dissent among the Poles concerning the question of a Slavic union. He singled out the Austro-Slavs and the Russians for his attack upon Pan-Slavism. He played the Poles and the Hungarians against the Austro-Slavs and the Russians. His strategy aimed at defending the territorial integrity of a future great German state. It was fully supported by Marx. Poles and Hungarians were considered as useful factors in deterring the Russians and in barring the creation of a Slavic union.

Many years later Bakunin maintained that the anti-Slavic propaganda of Marx and Engels in 1848-49 was determined by German power political considerations. In 1870, when he defended himself from the accusation by the German socialists that he was a Pan-Slav, he commented on his convictions of 1848:

As a Slav, I desired the emancipation of the Slavic race from the German yoke. But as a German patriot

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Marx did not admit . . . the right of the Slavs to emancipate themselves from the German yoke.\textsuperscript{103}

Bakunin added that he agitated for the destruction of the Russian Empire and the Prussian and Austrian Monarchies in order to achieve the liberation of the Slavs. Marx and Engels, the German patriots, could not swallow the attack on German rule over the Slavs. The Germans were ridiculous.

\[\text{[They love]} \ldots \text{to identify, very naively, their nationality with humanity. In their opinion, to detest the German domination and to despise their civilization of voluntary slaves means to be the enemy of man's progress.}\textsuperscript{104}\]

Obviously, Bakunin's agitation for the liberation of the Slavs had the same power-political aspect as the anti-Slavic propaganda of Marx and Engels. If Russia would have been instrumental in the liberation of the Slavs, as Bakunin desired in 1848, then Russian influence would probably have replaced German influence in Central Eastern Europe, and Germany would have been weakened. Marx and Engels wished to prevent such a development. A revolutionary Germany should become a strong state in the center of Europe.

Everything that Marx and Engels wished for Germany—a large territory, political and economic centralization, and the increase of power resulting from it—would naturally have


destined Germany to hold a preponderant position in Europe. The desire of the liberal Friedrich List coincided with that of the communists Marx and Engels.

NRZ's propaganda for a radical German Revolution revealed that Marx's and Engels's interest in Poland was mainly determined by their concern with Germany. Their statements in support of Polish liberation were undermined, to say the least, by their defense of the annexionist policies of progressive or revolutionary nations. Their arbitrary handling of the national question admits the assumption that in case of a successful radical German Revolution, the two men could have switched with the greatest ease to a defense of German annexation of Polish territories because Germany represented progress.

Marx and Engels had no understanding for Ruge and like-minded democrats who shrank from power politics and the concentration of power. Power politics was a law of history. Concentration of power had furthered progress because it destroyed parochialism. Only the ultimate liberation of man by the proletarian revolution would make an end to power politics. Until then, power politics were necessary to safeguard that revolution. In the meantime, whatever revolutionary progress might be made, it was only a prelude to the final European-wide liberation of the oppressed classes.
The development of the European revolutionary movements of 1848 confirmed Marx and Engels in their conviction that this final liberation could only be achieved through the overthrow of the present social order in England by the English working classes. On January 1, 1849 Marx and Engels expressed this conviction in an NRZ editorial. They called England the real center of the counter-revolutionary forces. England transformed "whole nations into its proletariat" because it embraced "the whole world with its giant arms." The industrial and commercial development and the social conditions of all the other nations depended on England because it was the master of the world market. Whatever changes were realized in the social or economic sphere, they would not represent a real victory if they were limited to the nations of continental Europe. Revolutionary changes would always be threatened with extinction as long as the powerful English bourgeoisie was not destroyed by the English Chartists.

The article of January 1, 1849 defied the propaganda of the European radicals that Russia's fall and Polish restoration would be the decisive turning point in European affairs and would absolutely safeguard revolutionary progress in Europe. The editors of NRZ thought differently. The Poles, even the Hungarians, might be the handymen of the Revolution. The Russian
threat might be used as a means to increase revolutionary unrest. A victorious war against Russia might help save the German Revolution and Europe. But the significance of these events with regard to a European-wide proletarian revolution was relative. The fate of that revolution would be decided in England.
Critique of the European Left

In the years following the Revolution of 1848, the European Left continued to agitate for the overthrow of the old European political, social, and territorial order. Each European crisis in the fifties—the Crimean War of 1854-56 and the Italian War of 1859—intensified the hope of the European Left for a European revolution which would completely overthrow the Vienna treaties and restore Poland. Marx and Engels shared the general expectation for the imminent outbreak of a European conflagration. They did not, however, resume their energetic propaganda for the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772. In the post-revolution era they played no part in the conspiratorial activities. Instead, they became observers of the European scene.
The Revolution of 1848 had deepened the conflicts among the European Left. The split between the political and the economic Left became more articulate. As a result political alignments became more sharply outlined in the post-revolution era than in the previous years. This development affected Marx and Engels.

The two friends, who had gone to London late in 1849, remained isolated from the political exiles who flocked to this city from the continent. Marx and Engels did not participate in the founding of new international revolutionary organizations in 1850, such as the Mazzinian European Central Committee or the Universal Democratic and Socialist Republic which opposed the Mazzinian Committee. Nor did they resume close contacts with any member of the Polish left-wing democrats. Marx and Engels did not even continue their collaboration with the German Workers Educational League, and their relations with the Central Committee of the Communist League were also strained after September, 1850.1

1 In the period after 1848-49 Marx and Engels did not even own a newspaper with the exception of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung, politisch-oekonomische Revue, of which only 6 issues appeared in 1850. Apart from a few articles which appeared in Chartist newspapers—Notes to the People in 1851-52 and People's Paper in 1852-54 and 1856—Marx and Engels wrote mainly for the American and German democratic newspapers, The New York Tribune, particularly from 1852-54, and the Breslau Neue Oder Zeitung in 1855.
In February, 1951, when Engels had returned to Manchester to work again with the firm Erman & Engels, the two friends exchanged letters in which they congratulated one another that the political exiles rejected them. Marx was quite satisfied that they were no longer compelled to make concessions to these "donkeys." Engels agreed. It was good that they were rejected by these "narrow-minded dogs" whom for years they had treated as members of their party—which did not yet exist—although these "fools" did not even understand the most "elementary principles" of their cause. Engels consoled himself that the day would come when he and Marx would be able to dictate their "own conditions" to their opponents. Until then they had "peace," but, as Engels admitted, they also experienced "a certain loneliness."\(^2\)

In Marx's and Engels's opinion the political exiles, including the members of the Communist League, had not learned anything from the Revolution of 1848. In spite of their ideological differences the exiles still shared the foolish hope that the mere fraternization of nations would give birth to a new age in Europe. The Mazzinian revolutionary theories, which were based on this hope, became the chief target of Marx's and Engels's attacks.

\(^2\)MEGA, III/1, 148-49.
In the fifties Mazzini was the most prominent figure among the European democrats. He had not given up his conviction that the main objective of a European revolution ought to be the liberation of all the people under foreign rule and the defense of free Europe against the "encroachments of Russia." He condemned the socialists for their exclusive concentration on the social question. In Mazzini's opinion this question was not a major problem in a large part of Europe. In Italy, Poland, and even in Germany there did not exist a pronounced class antagonism because these countries had not yet experienced an abnormal development of large-scale industry. Mazzini admitted that it was necessary to liberate the proletariat from "the tyranny of capital." However, the social question was still a subordinate question and should be solved by the single nations following the political reorganization of Europe on a federal basis.³

The European Central Committee became the mouthpiece of Mazzinian propaganda. It was founded by Mazzini in the summer of 1850 with the collaboration of leading European democrats, such as the German Arnold Ruge, the Frenchman Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, and the Pole's Wojciech Darasz and Stanisław Worcell

The first Manifesto of the Committee proclaimed that all the people ought to enjoy "national sovereignty" which was the prerequisite of "an alliance" of all the emancipated nations on the basis of their equality. International fraternization would bring an end to wars and reactionary governments and initiate an era of European peace and liberty. The first step towards this goal would be the liberation of Poland and Italy and the unification of Germany.4

Marx and Engels ridiculed the desire of the Committee to reconcile all the parties in order to obtain their collaboration for the liberation of the oppressed nations. They stated that the conflicts between the parties were the result of different class interests. If the conflicts were suppressed, this would not liberate the people. It would only contribute to "the domination of the interests of one party--the bourgeois party." The class struggle was a reality. The democrats ought to know from their experiences in the Revolution of 1848 that not even a democratic victory would initiate a "golden age" without class struggle. The next revolution would again develop into a class war against the bourgeoisie regardless of the "fraternity phrases."5

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5Neue Rheinische Zeitung, politisch-oekonomische Revue, ed. by Karl Marx (London and Hamburg: 1850), with a Foreword by Karl Bittel (Berlin: Ruetten & Loening, 1955), pp. 175, 177, 332.
As in the past years, Marx and Engels insisted that only a revolution which aimed at fundamental changes in the economic structure would end social and national oppression. They criticized Mazzini and his collaborators—Worcell and the Hungarian revolutionary Louis Kossuth who came from predominantly agrarian countries—because they did not formulate a radical agrarian program. Without such a program the fight for national liberty would merely strengthen the old social order. Marx pointed out that this had been proved by the Galician events in 1846. When the Polish aristocracy fought for national independence, the Austrian government had been able to hold Galicia by granting some liberties to the oppressed peasants. Only a social revolution would put an end to foreign rule. Mazzini, in particular, was sharply attacked when he continued to treat the "economic reality" as something unimportant and to overrate the "political form of the state."^6

In their private correspondence Marx and Engels ridiculed the "sublime Mazzinian manifestoes" which agitated for the liberation of the oppressed nations. In their opinion the manifestoes contained nothing but empty phraseology. Marx and Engels despised the democrats who imitated the Mazzinian

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propaganda style. When Arnold Ruge, in a manifesto, spoke about the immortality of Poland, Engels called him one of those North German "whimpering democrats" who wished to convince the Germans that Poland was "immortal," but there was nothing immortal about a nation.7

Marx and Engels also spoke scornfully of the Hungarians and Poles who collaborated with Mazzini. They disliked Louis Kossuth whom they had praised as the leader of the Hungarian uprising in 1848. They used the contemptuous term "Polack" when they spoke of Darasz. Even Worcell, who enjoyed a general esteem in emigrant circles, did not escape their ridicule. Marx and Engels believed that at the time of the insurrection of 1830-31 Worcell had been an incompetent military leader. They claimed that he was incapable of sound political judgment and was a babbler like Ruge and Ledru-Rollin.8

7Engels's letter to Marx, January 25, 1851, in MEGA, III/1, 13.
8Engels's letter to Marx, August 22, 1852, and Marx's letter to Engels, December 2, 1853, in MEGA, III/1, 384, 515. Marx found the Polish exiles who collaborated with the Universal Democratic and Social Republic even more contemptible. This group proclaimed the end of "all nations and borders" and the establishment of a universal democratic republic. Marx felt that this kind of propaganda was even emptier than that of Mazzini. He derided the Polish delegates of the London Central Committee who, in search of supporters of the Polish cause, also signed the manifestoes of the socialist group. Marx's letter to Engels, December 2, 1850, in MEGA, III/1, 118.
Darasz—until his death in 1853—and Worcell were the prominent leaders of the London Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society. This new center of Polish democracy had been founded in 1850, an event which divided the leadership of the Polish democrats in the emigration. As the years passed by, the estrangement between the London and Paris centers became greater. Ludwik Mierosławski—the leader of the Polish democrats in France—was the only Pole whom Marx and Engels considered an important figure in the fifties because Engels believed him to be an expert on partisan warfare which would be useful in an insurrection. Otherwise, Marx and Engels had neither any liking for the Paris Central Committee which soon came under the influence of the Bonapartists, nor for the London Central Committee which collaborated closely with Mazzini and even with the Russian emigrant Alexander Herzen.

Herzen was a friend of Michael Bakunin who had been extradited to the Russian government by the German authorities in 1849. In 1852 Herzen had come to London. In the circles of the political exiles he was faced with the same superiority complex towards the Russians and the same anti-Russian propaganda which had exasperated him in Paris in the late forties. Since the Revolution of 1848 Herzen had become convinced that the Slavic world would give birth to the new age of socialism. He argued that the Slavic world had remained a stranger to Roman
law and feudalism which had furthered authoritarianism and
inequality. Herzen believed, as did Bakunin, that the Great
Russians were predestined to take the revolutionary initiative.⁹
A revolutionary Russia would become the center of a democratic
and socialist federation of all the Slavs, including the Poles,
because Russia was "the organized Slavic world," the Slavic
state par excellence.¹⁰ Herzen was confident that the Poles
would collaborate with the Russians in the overthrow of Tsarism.
Autocracy was to be replaced by an agrarian socialism, based on
the mir, the Russian village commune.

In view of Herzen's convictions it is not surprising
that he would not collaborate with the European Central Committee
which agitated for the restoration of Poland, that is, the
partition of Russia. Although Herzen knew Mazzini, he declined
the offer to join the Committee. He had also become acquainted
with Marx in the late forties, but the relations between the two
men remained very cool and were "limited to distant and transient


Herzen preferred to entertain close relations with the Polish Central Committee in London. He was particularly attracted to Stanisław Worcell who had socialist leanings.

Early in the 1850's the Central Committee had organized a printing plant in London for the purpose of issuing Polish propaganda material to be distributed in Poland. With Worcell's help Herzen established a Russian section at this plant in 1853 in order to print Russian propaganda literature which agents of the Central Committee were to smuggle into Russia.

Marx knew about the preparations for the collaboration between Herzen and the Central Committee. On June 14, 1853 he informed Engels about them without any further comment. Marx and Engels could hardly have been pleased with Herzen's publication of appeals to Russians and Poles for their revolutionary collaboration since the summer of 1853.

In 1853 Herzen, with the help of the Polish Central Committee in London, published his treatise, _Du développement des idées révolutionnaire en Russie_, in which he elaborated the political ideas he had formulated since the Revolution of 1848. 12

The Treatise was dedicated "To Our Friend Bakunin." In the

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12 This treatise was first published in Deutsche Monatsschrift fuer Politik, Wissenschaft, Kunst und Leben, Nos. 1, 3, 5, 1851.
foreword Herzen payed tribute to his Polish "friends" who had made the publication possible. This was "another proof of the fraternal alliance of revolutionary Poland with the Russian revolutionaries."

In his treatise Herzen advised the Western Europeans to abandon their illusion that Western Europe could be saved by the restoration of Poland. The Poles lacked the ability of the Russians to organize "a strong and independent state." They would be unable to withstand Russian aggressiveness which had destroyed them in the past. Only a social revolution of the Russian people would save Europe from certain destruction by Russia. Herzen insisted that the Great Russians were the true leaders of the Slavs. They were more genuine representatives of the anti-authoritarian Slavic character than the Poles who had become partially Westernized, that is, corrupted by their conversion to Catholicism. Herzen warned the Western Europeans that the people in the Russian Empire were as much against the territorial partition of Russia as the Tsarist government. The Ukrainians, in particular, were absolutely against a reunion with the Poles because they shared common traditions and a common historical origin, the Kiev state, with the Great Russians.

When Herzen addressed himself to the Poles, he warned them not to expect any support of their liberation from the Western Europeans. Most of the European states were subservient to the Tsar, particularly Germany which was actually governed by "the pro-consul of the Tsar . . . the King of Prussia."\(^{14}\) Herzen declared that the liberation of the Poles, as well as of the Russians, would only result from their revolutionary alliance which in turn would become the nucleus of the Slavic Union under Great Russian leadership.\(^{15}\)

Herzen was as aware of the power factor as Bakunin. He was fascinated with the territorial extension of the Russian Empire to the Pacific Ocean and the Russianizing of the peoples in Siberia. It was easy to foresee that if, through the initiative of the Great Russians, a Slavic union were created, Great Russia would unite under its rule all the territories from the Pacific to Southeastern Europe. Indeed, the Slavic union would be a formidable power bloc in which the Western and Southern Slavs would represent the defense line of Russia against Western Europe. Its realization would completely overthrow the balance of power in Europe and allow Russia to establish its supremacy in European affairs.\(^{16}\)

\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 8.

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 138.

\(^{16}\)The French historian Benoit-P. Hepner maintained that Herzen was free from the "veritable chauvinism" which Bakunin
It is amazing that the London Central Committee was willing to collaborate with Herzen although he expected the Poles to renounce the restoration of the eastern Polish borders of 1772 and to accept Great Russian leadership in Eastern Europe.

Marx knew about the publication of Herzen's treatise. In a letter to Engels of August 23, 1853, he stated that the book was well received in English circles.\(^1\) He made no further comment. Apparently he had not read the work. He merely expressed his general dissatisfaction with the miserable Russians, including Herzen. They were "donkeys" and veritable "intriguers" exhibited in the late forties. He stated: "If it is true that Bakunin was the first to profess a belief in revolutionary Pan-Slavism, with Russia as the center of the general conflagration, it would be most exaggerated to see Herzen's ideas of the 1850's in the same light... His [Herzen's] messianism does not turn into Pan-Slav expansionism." Hepner attacked Marx and, among modern writers, Alexander von Schelting, who wrote a work on Russland und Europa (Bern: A. Francke, 1948), for having identified the aims of Bakunin and Herzen. Benoit-P. Hepner, Bakounine et le panslavisme révolutionnaire, p. 233.

\(^1\)MEGA, III/1, 428. In this same letter Marx commented at length about Herzen's attempt to defend Bakunin from the renewed accusation of having acted as a Russian spy in the late forties. In a summer article in the English newspaper The Morning Advertiser, Herzen had insinuated that "Dr. Marx" was greatly responsible for the slander against Bakunin because he had cast suspicion on Bakunin in an article in \(\text{NEZ}\) in 1848. In that same newspaper Marx rejected Herzen's contention. Marx stated that he merely published the information he had received from a "Polish refugee," and that in spite of it he had continued to praise Bakunin for his participation in the radical revolutionary movement. Herzen, however, was not impressed by these statements. Cf. Vera Piroschkow, op. cit., p. 123. In his letter to Engels, Marx mentioned that the "Polish refugee" was actually the German Hermann Ewerbeck, his liaison man in Paris in 1848.
who used English and American newspapers, among them the London Advertiser and The New York Tribune, to influence public opinion in favor of Russia. He ridiculed Herzen's propaganda that the Russian people were democratic and had nothing in common with the official despotic Russia represented by the Tsar and the aristocratic bureaucrats who were of German stock. Marx commented that consequently

Germany must be fought in Russia, not Russia in Germany. Likewise, the Teutonic donkeys hold the Frenchmen responsible for the despotism of Frederic II as if backward slaves do not always need civilized slaves for their training.

As in 1848, Marx was exasperated that the Russian emigrants combined their anti-German propaganda with the claim that Russia, a backward nation, should play a leading revolutionary role.

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18 MEGA, III/1, 428. Regarding The New York Tribune, Marx apparently thought of Count Adam Gurowski, a Polish renegade, who collaborated with the American newspaper in the fifties. Since the thirties Gurowski had published a number of books on Russia and the Pan-Slav question. He was convinced that Russia would soon become a highly industrialized and wealthy country, and he urged the Poles to collaborate with Russia. A Polish-Russian customs union would enable the Poles to participate in the Russian industrial development and to find a "natural market" for their goods in the Russian Empire. In his articles for The New York Tribune Gurowski fought the European propaganda for the destruction of Russia and agitated for the dissolution of the Austrian Empire because it was a mere "anomaly." Cf. Gesammelte Schriften von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, 1852 bis 1862, ed. by N. Rjasanoff (2 vols.; 2d ed.; Stuttgart: J. H. W. Dietz Nachf., GmbH, 1920), I, XXXVI-XLI (Introduction).

19 Marx's letter to Engels, September 7, 1853, in MEGA, III/1, 501.
role in Europe. Marx's old opponent Arnold Ruge also resented Herzen's Germanophobia. He told Herzen in 1854:

I doubt that the Slavs would play the role of the friends of liberty should German power be destroyed. The system of government under which they have been educated has affected their reason and hardened their hearts.20

It is surprising that Marx and Engels did not attack the Polish Central Committee in London for its collaboration with Herzen. They preferred to criticize the Mazzinian revolutionary policies which were pursued by both the European Central Committee and the Polish Central Committee.

The revolutionary propaganda of the Polish democrats stressed the need for improvised uprisings in order to achieve national liberation. In 1851 the Polish Democrat, the organ of the London Central Committee, published an appeal to the Poles to stage another insurrection which might "succeed or fail."21 When Russia got involved in the war with Turkey in 1853, the Polish Democrat appealed to the Poles "to make the most of the Turkish War ... that is, to stage an insurrection."22


Marx and Engels were as opposed to the propaganda for improvised uprisings as to the emphasis on the fight for national liberation. Revolutions were not brought about by proclamations and by commands. Marx stated:

Since the terrible experiences of 1848 and 1849 there is more needed than paper decrees issued by distant leaders to call forth national uprisings.23

Moreover, Marx and Engels did not believe that the revolutionary forces in Europe, including the Polish ones, were strong enough to support new insurrections after the defeats of 1848-49.24 But they did not relinquish their own expectations for an imminent outbreak of a revolution.

In the fifties Marx still regarded England as the country where the "real revolution" would occur. At the outset of the fifties he believed that a new economic crisis would cause an uprising of the English workingmen followed by the overthrow of the whole social order in England.25 Marx interpreted the wave of strikes which spread to the great coal and iron centres in the second half of 1853 as a promising sign of approaching changes. He was enthusiastic about the workingmen parliament which was organized in Manchester at that time by the Chartist leader Ernest Jones, an acquaintance of Marx.

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23 Gesammelte Schriften, ed. by Rjasanoff, I, 100.
24 Engels's letter to Marx, May 23, 1851, in MEGA, III/1, 252.
25 Gesammelte Schriften, I, 118.
In Marx's and Engels's opinion collaboration with the Chartist was a true measure of revolutionary zeal. Only the collaboration of the European revolutionaries with the Chartist would further the overthrow of the old European order. However, the majority of the exiles would have nothing to do with the Chartist. Mazzini and his European Central Committee opposed them. Even the Polish Central Committee in London did not sympathize with the Chartist although they supported the liberation of Poland. 26

Marx repeatedly warned the European democrats against any collaboration with the English or French governments. The existing governments would never support truly revolutionary changes. Collaboration with them was a betrayal of the European revolution. When, early in the fifties, the unfounded rumor was spread that Mazzini, Kossuth, and also Lelewel, who still lived in Brussels, had taken up contacts with Napoleon III, Marx only too readily believed this. In a letter to Engels he remarked that the leaders of European democracy had a preference for Bonapartist conspiracies. 27 In a New York Tribune article he stated that the democratic leaders looked for questionable supporters of the revolutionary cause. 28

27 Marx's letter to Engels, August 30, 1852, in MEGA, III/1, 471.
When England and France declared war against Russia on March 28, 1854, Marx hoped that the Crimean War would cause an uprising of the English proletariat which would change the local war into a European war against the reactionary forces. He ridiculed the democratic exiles in England because they hoped that the war would lead to the destruction of Russia, and that the English and French governments would support the restoration of Poland. The Polish exiles were convinced that the English statesman Viscount Henry Palmerston was a "gallant protector" of the Poles, and that he wished to liberate Poland.

Marx and Engels did not share the expectations of the democratic exiles. They did not even acknowledge that Palmerston was determined to check Russian expansionism in Asia and in Southeastern Europe. Their interpretation of Palmerston's foreign policies was dictated by their conviction that the established governments were incapable of understanding their most vital interest—the destruction of Tsarist Russia. Thus, they maintained that the English government and Palmerston pursued a reactionary foreign policy which aimed at the preservation of the Russian Empire. Even before the outbreak of the Crimean War, at the time of the Turco-Russian conflict in the Balkans, Marx had presented this point of view in a series of sarcastic articles on "Palmerston and Russia" which were published in the People's Paper, a Chartist newspaper, between October and
December 1853. According to Marx, Palmerston's foreign policies in the past years proved that he merely assumed the role of a protector of the Poles. Palmerston was actually pro-Russian, that is, a reactionary. Marx maintained that Palmerston did not try to prevent the suppression of the Polish insurrection of 1830-31 by the Tsarist government. He did not support the proposal of other European powers to take a firm stand in favor of the Polish insurgents. Nor did he protest against the occupation of Cracow by the Austrians in 1846 although this hurt English commercial interests in Cracow.29 Marx said that Palmerston's policies revealed the reactionary role which England played in Europe. He insinuated that the Poles who believed in Palmerston's pro-Polish sympathies were duped by that man.

In Marx's opinion Palmerston's treatment of the Polish exiles also proved that he was not a sincere supporter of the Polish cause. Marx believed that the English Literary Society of the Friends of Poland, to which English aristocrats and followers of the conservative Polish leader Prince Adam Czartoryski belonged, was a "blind tool in Palmerston's hand." Palmerston annually received the delegations of the Society merely in order to maintain his "anti-Russian reputation." When in August, 1853, at the time of the Russian occupation of the Danube principalities,

a delegation of the conservative Czartoryski camp in Paris congratulated Palmerston on his interest in the Polish question, he assured the delegation of his sympathies for Poland. However, he declared that he did not receive the delegation "as a member of the Cabinet but ... only as a private person." According to Marx this confirmed that Palmerston evaded any deeper involvement in the Polish cause.

Marx was outraged that in spite of the obvious insincerity of Palmerston even the Polish Central Committee in London continued to have confidence in the English government. At the time of the Crimean War the Polish democrats organized a number of meetings in England in support of the Polish cause. Worcell, Kossuth, and Mazzini, who spoke at these meetings, not only appealed to the English people for their support of Polish liberation, but also to the English government. The democratic leaders maintained that the "war against Russia ... [was] a fight between liberty and despotism," and that it was a revolutionary war. Mazzini insisted that the restoration of Poland would be the first step towards a complete reorganization of Europe. In addition to the partition of Russia the

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31 Cf. Kossuth's speech made in Sheffield, June 5, 1854, in support of the Polish cause, in Gesammelte Schriften, II, 1.
reorganization would also include the partition of Turkey and the Austrian Empire. Mazzini hoped that the Crimean War would ultimately result in the destruction of the territorial arrangements of 1815 and the reorganization of Europe on the basis of the nationality principle.

Marx was most dissatisfied with the Polish meetings. He felt that the democratic leaders betrayed the revolutionary cause because they merely asked for the national liberation of the Poles. Moreover, Marx insisted that the appeals to the government for Polish liberation from Russian rule were illusory. The English government was not revolutionary. It would not use the Crimean War to overthrow the old territorial order. Contrary to the convictions of the democrats, the Crimean War was a conservative war. It served "the maintenance of the balance of power and of the Vienna treaties, that is, of those treaties which suppress the liberty and independence of nations."33

The only time Marx expressed a great enthusiasm for any of the Polish meetings was in the summer of 1855. On August 8, 1855 the conservative Czartoryski camp organized a meeting at St. Martin's Hall. In a special report for the

32Cf. also Marx's letter to Engels, February 13, 1855, in MEGA, III/1, 101-02.

33Gesammelte Schriften, II, 1.
Neue Oder Zeitung (Breslau), Marx stated that this meeting was instigated by the English government. Its aim was

the formation of a Polish legion, . . . the renewal of Palmerston's popularity, and the delivery of any possible Polish movement into his hands and those of Bonaparte.34

According to Marx the majority of the audience were Chartists, but Polish democrats were also present. They collaborated with the Chartists against the followers of Czartoryski. They supported the following anti-government declaration

That the destruction of this Polish nationality was mainly due to Palmerston's perfidious policy from 1830-46; that as long as Palmerston remains a servant of the Crown, any proposal for the restoration of Poland is nothing but a trap and a deceit.35

When Lord Harrington, the president of the meeting, refused to read the declaration, the radicals took over the meeting. They distributed leaflets which declared:

Poland condemns any alliance with the present European powers. It does not wish to be restored by any of the existing governments and to become a tool of diplomatic intrigues.36

Marx maintained that the meeting was a defeat for Palmerston and for the English bourgeoisie which he represented.

34 Ibid., pp. 340-41.
36 Ibid.
The Czartoryski camp was convinced that Moscow had caused the scandal through paid agents.37 This rumor was spread by the government circles. Marx ridiculed these rumors. "Any suspicion of a conspiracy" was invalidated by the fact that the relations between the Polish democratic emigrants in England and the Chartists were not at all friendly.

Alexander Herzen was as opposed as Marx to the propaganda activity of the Poles at the public meetings during the Crimean War. In his diaries he expressed his surprise over Worcell's political shortsightedness:

How could Worcell assume that England would encourage Poland to stage an insurrection, or that the France of Napoleon II would instigate a revolution there.38

When the Crimean War was in its second year, even Mazzini became disenchanted with the war because it had not developed into "a war of liberty against European despotism." He criticized the English and French governments because they did not vigorously support the liberation of the Poles and the Balkan Slavs which would lead to the dissolution of the Austrian

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37 The Polish historian Marcelli Handelsman declared that the meeting was intended as a "semi-official manifestation for a Poland allied with the England of Palmerston and the France of Bonaparte." It was regrettable that the meeting turned into a "manifestation against the government," which prevented the organization of a Polish legion. Marcelli Handelsman, Adam Czartoryski, III/2, 503.

Empire and the independence of Italy. In March, 1855 Mazzini remarked that England failed to perform the great task "to organize a living barrier of young associated nations around the Muscovite Empire." Neither Austria nor Turkey, the two decaying states, were "a valid defense against the young, growing, and compact Russian power."39

The endeavours of the Polish democrats to obtain effective support of their cause from the English people and the government remained unsuccessful. The Polish meetings, organized in many cities to further the Polish cause, were received with enthusiasm everywhere, but aside from the collection of money nothing else was accomplished. In vain, Worcell tried to win the favor of the government circles by excluding radical elements from the Polish meetings. As the war dragged on, the interest of the English public in the Polish cause cooled, and the members of Parliament refrained from any official involvement.

The Paris Treaty of March, 1856 which ended the Crimean War greatly disappointed the European democratic exiles. The Polish democratic emigration in England and on the continent lost its confidence in Western European willingness to support Polish restoration. After the Paris Congress the Polish Democrat

39Giuseppe Mazzini, Scritti Editi ed Inediti, IX, 93-94.
declared that "in the future, Poland cannot expect any support from any of the European governments." In the following years the opposition of the Polish left-wing democrats to the old democratic program which had been formulated by the Polish Democratic Society in the Manifesto of 1836 was increasing. Franciszek Zawadzki in Paris and Zenon Świętosławski in London renewed the propaganda for an agrarian socialism which had been the ideal of the Polish emigrant group Lud Polski in England in the thirties. Simultaneously, the desire for a closer revolutionary collaboration with the Russian radicals was voiced. But Marx and Engels did not comment on this development.

The Question of German Security

Marx's and Engels's opposition to the European Left was not only determined by the revolutionary policies and tactics of the Left, but also by their concern with German security and with border questions. As in 1848-49, in the post-revolution era, Marx and Engels repeatedly defended the need for safeguarding German territorial interests.

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40 Limanowski, Worcell, p. 397.

41 Bobińska, op. cit., pp. 179-80. Bobinska maintained that Marx and Engels were in favor of a collaboration between the radical Poles and Russians. But she did not quote any statements of Marx and Engels which would support her contention. Cf. Ibid., p. 165.
At the outset of the fifties the French government under President Louis Napoleon took increasingly severe measures against French radicalism, a policy which prepared Napoleon's coup d'état of December 2, 1851. Early in 1851 the political exiles in London were in a state of great excitement. They expected the imminent outbreak of a French uprising against the government of Louis Napoleon. They speculated that this uprising would call forth an anti-French alliance of the reactionary powers as in 1792 and ultimately result in a general European revolutionary movement.

Marx and Engels shared the general expectations of a French uprising. However, Engels, who prided himself on being an expert of military affairs, was convinced that the French uprising would end in failure because the French radicals were not strong enough to withstand an enemy attack. This thought greatly relieved Engels because he feared that a successful French revolution would lead to an encirclement of Germany and endanger German territorial integrity. In Engels's opinion the Italian and Polish revolutionaries would support the French desire to annex the German territories west of the Rhine in order to obtain French assistance in the destruction of Austria. Engels was convinced that a revolutionary Poland would be as much interested in the "dismemberment" of Germany as a revolutionary France and Italy. As a result he abandoned his earlier support of a German-Polish alliance.
In his letter to Marx of May 23, 1851 Engels declared that under the present circumstances it was necessary to look for new allies. He proposed an alliance of revolutionary Germany with revolutionary Russia. "Aside from Hungary, Germany would only have one possible ally, Russia, provided that Russia would bring about a peasant revolution." Engels's arguments in defense of a German-Russian alliance were surprisingly similar to those of the German democrat Wilhelm Jordan whom Engels had ridiculed in 1848.

Engels maintained that a German-Polish alliance offered no advantages to a revolutionary Germany. In case of a military engagement with Russia the Poles would be no match for the Russians because their military power was too weak. At the most they could raise an army of about 20,000 to 30,000 men. Engels bluntly stated that such a weak nation had "no right to have a word" in international affairs. The Poles were finished as a nation. The "immortality" of Poland was a mere fiction.

According to Engels the Poles might serve best as an "instrument" in the overthrow of the old Russian order through an agrarian revolution. When this task was accomplished, "Poland would have absolutely no other reason to exist." However,

\[42\text{ MEGA, III/1, 206.}\]

\[43\text{ Ibid., p. 207, Cf. also Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Correspondence, 1846-1895, A Selection with Commentary and Notes, trans. and ed. by Dona Torr (London: M. Lawrence, Ltd., 1954), p. 38.}\]
Engels doubted whether the Poles would be able to accomplish this task. He stated that even their past history was a failure because the Polish aristocracy had always been so "stupid" and "quarrelsome" and preferred to live the life of the "idle cavalier."

In Engels's opinion the Russian aristocracy was much more active. The aristocracy had furthered modern progress by engaging in business. Engels was rather convinced that "due to the national character and to the greater development of the bourgeois element in Russia" an agrarian revolution would first break out in that country. There, it would also have a much greater significance due to the territorial expanse of Russia.

Engels insisted that the Poles would not be suitable military or revolutionary allies of the Germans. Besides, they would only enter the alliance with the Germans under the condition of territorial concessions to them. This would endanger German territorial integrity which must be defended by all means. Engels told Marx how satisfied he was that in 1848 they had not incurred "any positive obligations towards the Poles, except for the unavoidable one, the restoration of Poland with suitable borders," but on condition that the Poles would carry through an agrarian revolution.44

44MEGA, III/1, 206.
Disregarding his statements of 1848-49, Engels now maintained that the Polish demand for the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772 was not justified. He pointed out that most of the people living in the former Polish territories were totally indifferent to a reunion with the Poles. The restoration of Poland could only mean the restoration of ethnographic Poland. The western borderlands of the old Polish Republic had been subjected to a long process of Germanization with the result that "one third of the proper Polish section . . . was Germanized." Simultaneously, the non-Polish people in the former eastern territories of the Polish Republic—including the German and Jewish minorities—had become Russianized. Engels claimed that the Poles had been unable to solve the nationality problem because they lacked the ability to organize a centralized state which would have supported the Polonization of the foreign elements. Russia, on the other hand, had solved the nationality problem because the Russians were able to centralize power and to exercise it. A proof of this Russian ability was the Russianization of the foreign peoples in the area of the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea, and in Central Asia. Engels suggested that Russian history revealed a certain greatness which Polish history lacked. Russianization, like Germanization, meant progress because it destroyed particularism.
The concern for the eastern German border drove Engels into expressing an insane desire for the complete destruction of the Poles. He advised the Germans to take away from the Poles what...they can, to occupy their fortresses, especially Poznania,...to send them into the fire, devour their country, and put them off with the prospect of getting Riga and Odessa. 45

Communist interpreters have been concerned with Engels's violent anti-Polish statements. N. Rjasanoff attributed them to the policies of the Polish émigré democrats who, "in the fight between democrats and communists, sided with the democrats." 46 According to Rjasanoff, Engels reacted with an outburst of anti-Polish feelings due to his impulsive nature. But it was a passing mood of no consequence. Rjasanoff's judgment may be questioned. There is as much reason to interpret Engels's pro-Polish agitation in 1848-49 as a passing mood. Engels's basic attitude in 1851 agreed with the opinion he had expressed in 1845 that after the Napoleonic Wars the Germans should have annexed as much Polish territory as possible, and that the failure of the Germans to do so was regrettable. Besides, since the Revolution of 1848 neither Marx nor Engels had returned

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to a defense of the surrender of Poznania and West Prussia to the Poles, nor did they do so after 1851.

As was pointed out previously, Engels and Marx were in favor of the large centralized state as an instrument of economic progress and revolutionary action. Consequently, from the beginning Polish inability to create a strong state represented an immense deficiency in the eyes of Marx and Engels even though they expressed a genuine enthusiasm for the bold readiness of the Poles to fight in all kinds of revolutionary movements. On the other hand, since Marx and Engels considered empire building as a sign of national vitality, they must have felt a certain attraction for the Russian Empire in spite of their violent anti-Russian propaganda. This is confirmed by their admiration for the bold policies of Peter the Great. Moreover, the sudden denial of the Polish right to a free national existence was not extraordinary because national independence was neither a principle for Engels nor Marx. Any nation might become a pawn in the game of revolutionary strategy. Thus, in 1848 the Czechs had been sentenced to national death by NRZ because they hindered revolutionary progress and the creation of Grossdeutschland.

Engels had discussed the need for German-Russian collaboration in a private letter to Marx. No public statements were made in support of such a policy. But Engels continued his critique of Polish claims to the western borders of 1772 in an article, "Poles, Czechs and Germans," published on March 5, 1852 in The New York Tribune. In keeping with his letter of May, 1851, though in a less violent manner, he agitated against any diminishment of German territorial possessions. He stated that their preservation had been a major aim of the German "progressive party" in 1848-49. According to Engels the propaganda of this party for the restoration of Poland had been prompted by the necessity to invigorate the weakening revolutionary initiative in Germany. Only a war with Russia could have achieved this aim.

Considering that even a partial national restoration of Poland would inevitably lead to such a war, . . . the progressive party in Germany supported the Poles who demanded the Polish borders of 1772.48 But Engels declared that the "progressive party" had never thought of giving up the Grand Duchy of Poznania and West Prussia because these provinces had undergone a process of Germanization. He frankly admitted that the propaganda for the surrender of these provinces to the Poles in 1848-49 had been nothing but a farce.

According to Engels German superiority over the Poles entitled the Germans to hold Poznania and West Prussia. The Germans had promoted the urban development. They ushered Poznania and West Prussia into the modern age. Besides, it was too late to undo the Germanization process in these provinces. Engels maintained that already in 1772, at the time of the First Polish Partition, the Polish-German border had become "obsolete . . . as the demarcation line between the Polish and German nationalities" because the Germans had settled east of that border.49 After 1772 the old border had become even more outdated because of the rapid progress of Germanization. As a result, the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772 would have had disastrous consequences. Nobody could have wished it in 1848. Engels asked whether it would have been reasonable to surrender whole tracts of land chiefly inhabited by Germans [and] large entirely German towns . . . to a nation which had not yet given any proof of an ability to progress beyond the state of feudalism based on serfdom.50

Engels applied to the Poles the same argument which he had used in 1849 to fight the Czech demand for independence—namely, that the more progressive nation has a right to dominate the less progressive one.

49 Ibid., pp. 60-61.

50 Ibid., p. 61.
Engels argued that in case of a common German-Polish war against Russia in 1848 a victory over the Russians would have enabled the Germans to turn the interest of the Poles eastward.

If the Poles had received large territories in the East, they would have become more tractable and reasonable in the West. After all, Rige and Mitau would have been as important to them as Danzig and Elbing.\(^5\)

Certainly Engels's interpretation of the foreign policies of the "progressive party" in 1848-49 was not merely another expression of his dissatisfaction with the Poles. In later years neither Marx nor Engels ever again made any public statements in support of Polish aspirations to the western Polish borders of 1772.

In his New York Tribune article of March 5, 1852 Engels connected the Poznanian question with the Austro-Slav question. He repeated the old argument that the Czechs had profited from German rule. It made no sense to liberate them. He also addressed a warning to the Pan-Slavs who desired to partition Eastern Germany. He insisted that for several centuries "all the inhabitants" of Eastern Germany were Germans, with the exception of "a hundred thousand souls," who did not count, the Kassubians in Pomerania and the Wends or Sorbians in Lusatia.

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 61.
Several days later, on March 15, 1852, Engels published an article on "Pan-Slavism" in The New York Tribune. He used this article to discredit the claims of the Poles that a restored Poland would become the bulwark of Europe against Russia. In the customary fashion Engels maintained that the Pan-Slavs intended "to subject the civilized West to the barbarian East and the towns to the primitive agriculture of the Slavic serfs." He warned that this aim could be achieved if Russia became the actual leader of the Slavic world. The Russians were the "only energetic" Slavs and their expansionist drive was tremendous. If they were able to conquer the Balkans and Constantinople with the help of their Pan-Slav supporters, all of Europe would soon become "the domain of the Slavic race," especially of the Russians. Although Engels declared that the Poles, with the exception of the nobility, had never been "seriously entangled in these Pan-Slav traps," he suggested that they were no match for the energetic Russians.

Some of the arguments which Engels used in his discussions on Russia in 1851-52 were reminiscent of those which Herzen, though for different purposes, had employed in his treatise, Du développement des idées révolutionnaire en Russie. Herzen

\[52\text{Ibid., p. 64.}\]
maintained that the Russians were the most energetic Slavs. Since the Middle Ages, and more so since the time of Peter the Great, they had distinguished themselves as great state builders. As a result, nineteenth century Tsarist Russia had become an immense Empire which extended from the Pacific Ocean to Central Eastern Europe. Herzen admitted that this immense Empire was a threat to Western Europe. He stated: "Germany exists in name only." His conclusion was that if the Germans were unable to withstand Russian control, a restored Poland could certainly not become a barrier against the tremendous expansionist drive of Russia because in the past it had been unable to defend itself against Russian aggressiveness.

Early in the 1850's Engels also claimed that the Poles would be unable to defend Europe from the Russian danger. He insisted that the Germans together with the Hungarians were called to become a barrier against Russia because they were "more energetic." Germans and Hungarians had already diminished the Slavic danger because they had been able to subjugate the Czechs and the Croatians.

Although in the fifties Marx and Engels continued to warn Europe against the danger of Russian expansionism, they did

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53 Alexandre Herzen, op. cit., p. XXI.
not resume their propaganda for a German war against Tsarist Russia, not even at the time of the Crimean War. Since 1850 Marx and Engels had become interested in the Eastern Question. They expected that Russia would soon try to conquer Constantinople, "the key to its house." They speculated that a Russo-Turkish conflict would develop into a European war and eventually cause the outbreak of a European revolution. However, Engels was no longer convinced that the revolutionary continental armies would be able to destroy the power of the immense Russian Empire. In 1850 he referred to Napoleon's disastrous Russian campaign in 1812. Engels maintained that in a future war the destruction of Russian power would depend upon the military collaboration between England and Sweden and the conquest of Odessa and Petersburg. "Without Petersburg and Odessa, Russia is a giant with cut-off hands," said Engels in 1850.54 No mention was made of the Poles as a decisive factor in the struggle against Tsarist Russia.

Early in 1853, when the tension between Russia and Turkey was rising, Engels appealed to England and France to imitate the "splendid" disregard of Napoleon I for any kind of status quo and to overthrow the weak Turkish rule in the

54 Neue Rheinische Zeitung, 2d issue, February, 1850.
Balkans. This would remove the danger of Russian aggression, and it would also result in a "European war" and lead to revolutionary changes. It was in the interest of the people to support the overthrow of the status quo. Change was the law of history. It furthered progress.

Engels speculated that the liberation of the Balkan Slavs would strengthen the anti-Russian bourgeoisie. He said that the Serbs had a right to overthrow the Turkish rule because they were more progressive than the Turks. They would emerge

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55 Cf. Engels's article, "Turkey," The New York Tribune, April 7, 1853, in Karl Marx, The Eastern Question, ed. by Eleanor Marx Aveling and Eduard Aveling (London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., 1897), p. 2. Cf. also Gesammelte Schriften, I, 145. Regarding the articles on the Eastern Question, they were the result of Marx's and Engels's close collaboration. Some were written by Engels, others by Marx, and some by both, but all were signed by Marx. Cf. Maximilian Rubel, Bibliographie des oeuvres de Karl Marx avec en appendice un répertoire des oeuvres de Friedrich Engels (Paris: Librairie Marcel Rivière et Cie, 1955), p. 106.

56 Engels stated: "Who, through historical studies, has learned to admire the eternal change of human history, . . . who has followed the iron course of history whose wheels relentlessly roll over the ruins of great states and crush whole generations without mercy, who, therefore, is able to understand that . . . no revolutionary proclamation can be as revolutionary as the simple naked facts of the history of mankind, . . . such a man will certainly not shy away from asking himself this historical question [the Eastern Question] only because its correct solution would result in a European war." Friedrich Engels, "What should be done with European Turkey?" The New York Tribune, April 21, 1853, in Gesammelte Schriften, I, 167.

57 When the Ukrainian socialist V. Levinskyj discussed Marx's and Engels's attitude towards the Czechs and the Serbs, he was annoyed by their arbitrary approach to the question of national liberty. While Marx and Engels condemned the Czechs to national death, they favored the liberation of the Serbs.
as the new leaders in the Balkans. In order to maintain their position they would be forced to turn to the West and to adopt Western political and educational ideas. The construction of a railroad would increase trade relations with Western Europe, and this would also counteract the Russian influence.

In 1853 Engels supported the modernization of the Balkan era as a means to withdraw it from Russian influence, that is, a Balkan policy which in the forties had been advocated by Friedrich List, the defender of Grossdeutschland. Unlike List, Engels did not ascribe this task to the Germans in particular, and he did not specifically state that the Balkans ought to become a German sphere of influence. But it must be kept in mind that Marx and Engels, as List had done, wished for the creation of Grossdeutschland. List had pointed out that a strong German state which would also command the collaboration of the Hungarians would be predestined to obtain a predominant position in the Balkans. It may be assumed that this was also taken into consideration by Marx and Engels.

Levinskyj commented that Engels wavered between Hegel's theory that only historical nations have a right to exist and a revolutionary theory that also non-historical nations have this right if they are revolutionary. Levinskyj declared that only the latter theory was worthy of a socialist. Cf. V. Levinskyj, Socialistychnyj International i Ponevoleni Narody ("The Socialist International and the Oppressed Nations") (Kiev and Vienna: n.p., 1920), p. 35.
Indeed, in the mid-fifties Marx and Engels defended List's basic foreign political concept that Grossdeutschland in collaboration with Hungary and the modernized Balkan area would become a true barrier against Russian expansionism, not Poland. They regarded any increase of Russian influence in the Balkans as an imminent danger to Austria and ultimately Germany.

The Balkan crisis flared up when in June, 1853 the Russians invaded the Turkish vassal states of Moldavia and Walachia and the Turks reacted with a declaration of war. In the following months Marx's and Engels's agitation for a war of the Western European powers, England and France, against Russia became more urgent. In his articles of August, 1853, Marx warned that Russia desired to conquer Constantinople. Should Russia be able to achieve this traditional aim, its "supremacy in Europe" would be strengthened. The conquest of Constantinople would become the instrument for further Russian aggression--the conquest of the whole Balkan area, as well as of Hungary and Bohemia, and the destruction of Austrian power which acted as a barrier against Russia. According to Marx the Western powers did not understand the significance of Constantinople for the preservation of European liberty. "Only the revolution"
resulting from the Balkan conflict would save Europe from "the
demoniac influence of the Rome of the East." 58

While Marx and Engels agitated for Western European
intervention in the Balkan crisis, Herzen became increasingly
concerned about it. On February 20, 1854, shortly before the
outbreak of the Crimean War, he addressed an open letter to the
radical English newspaper, the English Republic, in which he
advised the Europeans not to prevent the Tsar from conquering
Constantinople. It was Russia's mission to restore Slavic unity,
and only Constantinople could become the center of the rising
Slavic world. Herzen warned that a European war against Russia
would probably meet with the same fate as Napoleon's invasion of
Russia. Besides, it would certainly accelerate the downfall of
Tsarism and the advent of the socialist revolution. This would
increase Russia's influence among the Slavs. Then the Russians
might be able to destroy the German, Turkish, and Hungarian
rule over the Slavs and to organize a Slavic union "from the Volga
to the Elbe river, and from the Adriatic Sea to the Archipelago."
Herzen indicated that a war against Russia might call into
existence that formidable Slavic power bloc under Russian

58 "The Eastern Question," The New York Tribune, August 5,
1853 and "Traditional Policy of Russia," Ibid., August 12, 1853,
in The Eastern Question, pp. 74, 79. Cf. also Gesammelte
Schriften, I, 196, 201.
leadership which the Europeans feared. It would certainly not result in a restoration of Poland and Polish leadership in Eastern Europe.

While Herzen attacked Western European infatuation with the Poles, he continued to stress the need for Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration. On March 25, 1854, three days before the outbreak of the Crimean War, he published an appeal to the Russian soldiers stationed in Poland. The soldiers should take advantage of the Tsar's difficulties in the Balkan War and stage an insurrection against the Tsarist government as the Decembrists had done. They should collaborate with the Poles who waited for a suitable moment "to revolt in defense of their rights."

On March 28, 1854 England and France declared war against Russia. The professed aim was "to restrict Russia to its natural borders." Austria and Prussia were invited to join the alliance, but they preferred to remain neutral. The lack of a united European front precluded a vigorous attack upon Russia at the outset of the war and diminished the possibility of a reopening of the Polish question. England and France continued to make great efforts to draw Prussia and Austria into the war.

They promised Prussia the acquisition of more Polish territories. Rumors were spread about Polish unrest in Poznania and Silesia. Pamphlets insisted that if Austria, and particularly Prussia, should remain neutral at the instigation of Russia, they would almost certainly risk an "internal rebellion and the loss of their territorial possessions in Italy and on the Rhine."\(^6\!

As in 1848, there was a war party in the Prussian government. This group felt that Prussia should enter the Anglo-French alliance in order to eliminate the Russian opposition to German unification.\(^6\!

The anti-war party did not share the hope of the interventionists that a European war against Russia would liberate Germany from Russian influence. In the end the anti-war party prevailed.

One of its most prominent members was Otto von Bismarck, the Prussian envoy to the German Federal Diet in Frankfurt. Bismarck feared that Prussian and Austrian participation in the war might divide Germany and endanger a common German policy. The small German states might believe that Prussia and Austria intended to use the war against Russia as a means to deprive them


of their independence. In order to save themselves, they might support a Franco-Russian rapprochement directed against Prussia and Austria. This would endanger the chances of a future German unification. 62

According to Bismarck the preservation of the status quo in Central Eastern Europe was in the best interest of Prussia and Germany. He was against the acquisition of more Polish territories. Prussia could not be interested in increasing the number of its Polish Catholic subjects. 63 Bismarck was also against the restoration of Poland. Neither Prussia nor Germany would profit from it. The German support of Polish restoration would expose Germany to Russian revenge and increase the English and French influence in Europe which was a greater danger to Germany than Russia. Bismarck insisted that it was in the interest of the German powers to preserve Russia's territorial integrity as a counterweight against England and France. 64

At the time of the Crimean War, Marx's and Engels's opinion on the course of action which Germany, particularly Prussia, should pursue was surprisingly similar to Bismarck's

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63 Bismarck's letter to Karl von Manteuffel, February 2, 1854, in Bismarck, op. cit., I, 422.

64 Ibid., pp. 454-55.
basic position. Although Marx and Engels continued to agitate for a vigorous war against Russia, they nevertheless supported German neutrality, though for different reasons.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Crimean War, Engels had expressed the opinion that, at the outset of the war against Russia, Prussia and Austria would not collaborate with England and France. Nor would the German powers join Russia if through the conquest of the northern and southern Russian ports England and France would weaken Russia and liberate Germany from Russian control. In that case Prussia and Austria might like to enter the anti-Russian coalition "to profit from Russia's difficulties." However, should a military failure of the West permit a strengthening of the reactionary powers, this would bring about a revolution from "Manchester to Rome [and] from Paris to Warsaw and Budapest." However, Marx's and Engels's propaganda tactics at the time of the Crimean War do not indicate that they seriously desired the outbreak of a revolution at that moment.

As was pointed out earlier, Marx and Engels were convinced that all the European radicals shared the common desire for the partition of Germany. After the outbreak of the

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Crimean War the two friends were faced with the propaganda of the European Left that the war should be turned into an instrument for the liberation of the oppressed peoples. The radicals demanded not only the restoration of Poland, but also the destruction of Austria. The anti-Austrian propaganda was supported by Herzen. Marx and Engels remained aloof from the agitation for the liberation of the oppressed peoples. They did not agitate for the restoration of Poland in their articles for the New York Tribune, nor for the participation of the German powers, Austria and Prussia, in the Crimean War. Nor did they return to a support of the liberation of the Balkan Slavs. When it became obvious that Prussia would not enter the war, they did not denounce Prussian neutrality as a reactionary policy as in 1848. Instead, they maintained a conciliatory attitude. Obviously they did not desire the extension of the war.

In his New York Tribune article on "Prussian Policy" of May 19, 1854, Engels defended Prussian neutrality against its condemnation by English and French newspapers. According to Engels, Prussia would be foolish to enter the crusade of the Western powers against Russia, especially because the outcome of the war was not yet certain. Prussia was in need of Russian protection from "the unsated appetite" of every Frenchman for the Rhenish provinces. Besides, Engels did not think that the Western powers could offer any real advantages to Prussia for its
participation in the Crimean War. Prussia was certainly not interested in the acquisition of new Polish territories.

It can hardly manage that part of the Polish territory and people it already owns. Besides, the Prussians hate and despise the Poles, and the general feeling is adverse to any new acquisitions in that quarter. 66

Moreover, Engels insisted that Prussia needed peace to remain prosperous. He even permitted himself to praise Prussia—a rare occasion.

The Kingdom is not rich by nature but by industry, activity, and thriftiness. These beneficent results of peace, and peace alone, may and must be destroyed by an untimely war. 67

Any alliance, either with Austria and France or with Russia, would threaten the economic welfare of Prussia.

In the summer months of 1854 it became evident that the Russians were unable to deal with the inefficiently prepared campaign of the allied troops. In August, 1854 the Austrians forced the Russians by mere diplomatic pressure to withdraw from Moldavia and Valachia. The development of the Crimean War supported Bismarck's viewpoint that there was no need to check Russian power by joining the Anglo-French alliance, that Russia was not strong enough to become a danger to the Germans, and that even

66 Marx, The Eastern Question, p. 357.
67 Ibid., p. 358.
an isolated Prussia would be able to defend itself from a Russian attack. 68

When the military weakness of Russia and the poor conduct of the war by the Western European allies was revealed, Engels suddenly contradicted his earlier prognosis that the capture of the Russian seaports would bring about the defeat of Russia. He declared that the loss of the Russian ports and their hinterland would not weaken the immense Empire because its power rested on the massive armies of the interior.

Russia may lose the Crimea, the Caucasus, Finland, and St. Petersburg, and all such appendages, but as long as its body with Moscow for its heart and fortified Poland for its sword-arm is untouched, it need not give in an inch. 69

Now, Engels preferred to consider the Polish Kingdom as "Russia's center of gravity." He said that already Napoleon had recognized its importance by the construction of a system of fortifications which was "stronger than any other in the world." According to Engels the Russians remained unconquerable and a danger to Europe as long as they were able to "concentrate more than 300,000 men" in this excellent strategic position. At the very moment, when it had become manifest that France and England alone

68 Bismarck, Die gesammelten Werke, I, 474.

would be unable to overthrow the status quo in Central Eastern Europe, Engels turned the attention of the readers to Poland, but only to its strategic importance. He threatened that soon Russia would attack Europe and a "real war on a large scale" would ensue, finally leading to the revolutionary wars of the European peoples against the despots. This, however, was an empty threat.

Early in 1855 Russia was still unable to repel the siege of Sevastopol by the allied troops. Nevertheless, Engels, in his articles on "Pan-Slavism," continued to warn Europe against an imminent attack of the united Slavs under Russian leadership. Engels's agitation against Pan-Slavism was mostly a repetition of earlier statements. As in 1848, Engels maintained that all

70 According to Rjasanoff, Engels wrote about 14 to 15 articles on "Pan-Slavism" for the New York Tribune, but almost none of them was published. This was apparently due to the influence of the Polish Count Anton Gurowski who, as mentioned earlier, collaborated with the Tribune and was a supporter of Pan-Slavism under Russian leadership. Cf. also the comments on Gurowski and the fate of Engels's articles by Paul Blackstock in A Collection of Articles, Speeches, Letters and News Dispatches, ed. by Paul W. Blackstock and Bert F. Hoselitz (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1952), p. 249. Two of Engels's articles on "Pan-Slavism" were published in the Neue Oder Zeitung on April 21 and 24, 1855.

71 Engels's himself did not think much of these articles. In a letter to Marx of February 7, 1855 he commented: "Enclosed Pan-Slavism, number 2, where the lack of quality is at least to some extent made up by the quantity of the work. With number 3 I finally enter into medias res." Der Briefwechsel zwischen Friedrich Engels und Karl Marx, 1844-1882, ed. by August Bebel and Eduard Bernstein (4 vols.; Stuttgart: J. H. W. Dietz Nachf., GmbH, 1919), II, 87.
the Pan-Slavs, whether reactionary or democratic, were imperialists. Their political program was to conquer Europe under Russian leadership. First of all, the Pan-Slavs aimed at the conquest of the Balkans and half of Germany. After having advanced into the very heart of Europe, they would attempt to dominate all of Europe. Consequently, Europe was faced with the alternative of either being subjugated by the backward Slavs or of destroying Russia, the center of their aggressive power. Engels stated that Pan-Slavism was initiated by the Austro-Slavs. Russia used Pan-Slavism to further its own aim, the creation of a "great Slavic Empire from the Elbe river to China and from the Adriatic Sea to the Arctic Ocean." 72 Engels fought Pan-Slavism as a German and as a communist. He insisted that Pan-Slavism threatened the territorial integrity of Germany and the achievement of a European radical revolution.

Although Engels repeated that the Poles were hostile to the Russians and were "most definitely opposed to Pan-Slavism," he maintained that only Austria constituted a strong bulwark of Europe against the Pan-Slav threat. Austria's function was to prevent the unification of the Slavs. It was in the greatest interest of Europe to preserve the territorial integrity of the

72 *Neue Oder Zeitung*, April 24, 1855, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, 231.
Austrian Empire. The Slavs should remain subjected not only to Austrian and Hungarian rule but also to Turkish rule which likewise was the result of a long historical process. While Engels had agitated for the liberation of the Balkan Slavs before the Crimean War, he now supported the English and French policy which favored the status quo in the Balkans. Engels was obviously satisfied that the Crimean War had remained a local war.

In 1855 Engels continued to refrain from any declarations in support of Polish restoration. Indirectly he even agitated against it. For the first time he maintained that the Galician Ukrainians were different from the Poles. He mentioned that about three million Poles lived in Galicia, and that the number of Ukrainians living in Galicia and northeastern Hungary was about the same. In Engels's opinion the Western Ukrainians were a branch of the Russian people. Similarly to the Galician Poles they had been separated from "the main body of their nation" by the historical development. Consequently, it was inevitable that the Galician Poles and the Western Ukrainians gravitated towards their "natural" centers--Russian Poland and Russia respectively. Their desire for reunification with their fatherlands would become "ever more urgent as civilization and the need for national historical activity" spread among them. According to Engels

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Ibid., p. 229.
the national consciousness of the Poles and Ukrainians would grow with the dissolution of the agricultural society and the rise of the bourgeoisie.

Engels had come fairly close to the viewpoint upon which he had expounded in his letter to Marx of May 23, 1851 that Polish restoration was to be limited to ethnographic Poland which might serve as a buffer state between Germany and Russia but would be too weak to play an influential role in European politics. At the very moment, when Engels warned the Europeans of Russian expansionism, he backed the claim of the Great Russians that they had a historical right to all the lands which had been part of the medieval Kiev state Rus, including Red Rus, the eastern part of Galicia. In 1893, shortly before his death, Engels still supported the Great Russian viewpoint when he declared that only the annexation of the Polish Kingdom by the Tsars was a violation of Polish national rights.74

Marx's and Engels's hostility to the nationality principle, which had deepened in the fight against the political exiles, resulted in the support of the status quo at the time of the Crimean War. The two friends resumed the policy which Engels had outlined in his NEZ articles of February, 1849 and

74Friedrich Engels, "Die auswaertige Politik des russischen Zarentums," Die Neue Zeit, VIII (January-September, 1890), 150.
which aimed at keeping the Slavs divided in the interest of Germany. They supported the preservation of the Austrian and Turkish Empires. However, they did not agitate for the partition of Russia and the restoration of Poland as in 1848-49. They defended a position which was absolutely opposed to the revolutionary program of the European Left—who aimed at the restoration of Poland and the destruction of Austria as a prerequisite for the reorganization of Europe.

Three years after the Crimean War, at the time of the Italian War of 1859, Marx and Engels again took an isolated stand on the question of European reorganization. The Italian War released another wave of agitation for the complete overthrow of the European territorial order. As earlier, Marx and Engels remained aloof from this kind of propaganda. With the exception of the members of the European Left, Napoleon III was the most determined defender of the nationality principle. Marx and Engels interpreted his support of the Italian fight against Austria as a convenient means to achieve his ultimate goal, the conquest of the Rhenish provinces. Therefore, they favored the status quo in the Austrian Empire. They desired that the

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75 Engels defended this viewpoint in his pamphlet Po und Rhein (Berlin: 1859) which appeared anonymously. It was again published by Eduard Bernstein (Stuttgart: 1915) together with Savoyen, Nizza und der Rhein, also published anonymously by Engels in Berlin in 1860.
socialists in Germany spread propaganda for a war of the German governments against Napoleon III "for the sake of Germany's existence." They speculated that a war against France would also involve Germany in a war with Russia allowing the "most energetic party" in Germany—meaning the socialists—to seize power.

To the dismay of Marx and Engels their compatriot and political partner Ferdinand Lassalle supported the war of the Italians against Austria in Germany. In his pamphlet Der italienische Krieg he declared that the war was "of the greatest advantage to the German nation." If the Italians were liberated with the help of Napoleon III, this would also enable the Hungarians to get rid of Austrian rule. A partitioned Austria would no longer be an obstacle to German unity. "On the day when... Austria is destroyed... on that day Germany is constituted."
The Italian War caused a controversy between Marx and Engels and Ferdinand Lassalle over the proper foreign policy of "the revolutionary party" in Germany. In his letters written to Marx and Engels from Germany in 1859-60, Lassalle criticized the two men for their support of a war against France and Russia by the established German governments. If the war were victorious, it would only strengthen the counter-revolutionary forces. Lassalle felt that Marx's and Engels's reasoning lacked "logic" because of their exaggerated Russophobia. Moreover, the defense of the territorial integrity of the Austrian Empire by the German socialists would alienate the European revolutionary forces.

By adopting this wrong position must we not become enemies of Frenchmen, Italians, Hungarians, and Poles? Until now we have always preached the solidarity of the people, and all the revolutions have failed because this solidarity has not been realized. Shall we ourselves raise our weapons against it? 80

In Lassalle's opinion the popularity of the nationality principle should rather be exploited to further the revolutionary aim of the German socialists—the unification of Germany. He could not understand why Marx and Engels disregarded this possibility.

Actually Lassalle was as much opposed to the nationality principle as Marx and Engels. He did declare that "democracy

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cannot suppress the nationality principle without committing suicide."\textsuperscript{81} However, he interpreted the nationality principle merely as the right of the people to cultural autonomy. Only the great Kultur-Nationen (civilized nations) had a right to national independence. The right of the Racen (nationalities) consisted in being assimilated and developed by the great nations. In a private letter to his friend Carl Rodbertus-Jagetzow of May 2, 1863 he frankly stated: "I am not an adherent of the nationality principle."\textsuperscript{82} In 1859 it was "not the principle [but] the policy most suitable for a revolutionary development" which caused the controversy between Marx and Engels and Lassalle.\textsuperscript{83} Otherwise, both parties involved in the controversy agreed that the aim of the German socialists must be the creation of a large centralized German state, "Grossdeutschland moins les dynasties."\textsuperscript{84}

When in 1859 Marx and Engels exchanged letters with Lassalle on the territorial extension of a revolutionary Germany, the three men agreed that neither the Austro-Slavs nor the Poles

\textsuperscript{81}Lassalle, Gesammelte Reden und Schriften, I, 70.

\textsuperscript{82}Briefe von Ferdinand Lassalle an Carl Rodbertus-Jagetzow, ed. with a Foreword by Adolf Wagner (Berlin: Puttkammer und Muehlbrecht, 1878), p. 54.

\textsuperscript{83}Lassalle's letter to Marx, mid-June, 1859, in Aus dem literarischen Nachlass, IV, 192.

\textsuperscript{84}Briefe von Ferdinand Lassalle, p. 54.
under Prussian rule were to be liberated. In a letter to Marx and Engels of May 27, 1859 Lassalle commented on a letter by Engels which unfortunately is not available. He remarked: "I fully agree with him [Engels] that Prussian Poland is Germanized and must be retained." But Lassalle made one reservation:

As to his remarks on Hungary, I do not agree with him because they permit a double interpretation, as if Hungary should remain under German domination. I consider this neither possible nor necessary and useful, but it is certainly important and rather good that they [the Hungarians] are dependent on us by their opposition to primitive Slavism.\(^5\)

Four years later Lassalle argued that the German socialist party, "the natural candidate for the German revolution," would establish Germany as a powerful state in Europe. That party was also destined to solve the Turkish question.\(^6\) It is evident that in this case Hungary would have truly become an appendage of Germany, and that a strong German position in Central Europe would have eliminated any considerations of Polish territorial claims.

In 1859 Marx and Engels opposed Lassalle's desire to exploit the nationality principle in the interest of their revolutionary aim for the same reason they supported the status quo.

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\(^5\)Aus dem literarischen Nachlass, IV, 183.

86 Briefe von Ferdinand Lassalle, p. 56.
at the time of the Crimean War. Marx and Engels were still apprehensive that any support of the nationality principle, whether by the Western European revolutionaries or by the Pan-Slavs, would endanger German territorial integrity and prevent the creation of a revolutionary Grossdeutschland. In 1859 their concern for German security was increased because they suspected that Napoleon III and Tsar Alexander II were plotting to weaken Germany. Marx and Engels were outraged when in 1859, at the time of the European crisis, a German democrat, Karl Vogt, supported the application of the nationality principle to Central Eastern Europe.

In his treatise Studien zur gegenwärtigen Lage Europas, Vogt maintained that the Austro-Italian conflict offered a chance for territorial changes in Central Eastern Europe. He urged the Germans to follow the example of Napoleon III and Alexander II who supported the liberation of all the oppressed peoples. The Germans should liberate the Slavs under German rule. This would contribute to the unification of Germany. Vogt also promoted Polish-Russian collaboration and the creation of a Pan-Slav union under Russian leadership because this would permanently safeguard the liberty of the Slavs.

In 1860 Marx published the pamphlet Herr Vogt which was mainly an elaboration of Engels's articles against Pan-Slavism
of February, 1849 and spring, 1855. In this pamphlet Marx sharply attacked the German democrat as an agent of the Tuileries. He maintained that the realization of Vogt's political concepts would not liberate the Slavs, including the Poles, but merely help to extend the Russian sphere of influence in Europe. This would ultimately result in the destruction of Germany's independent national existence. Germany would be reduced to a buffer state. According to Marx this was the desire of Napoleon III and Alexander II.

Marx insisted that it was in the greatest interest of Germany to prevent a Polish-Russian union in order to protect the eastern German border from being further weakened. He explained that the border was already too weak from a strategic viewpoint. In order to support his opinion, he referred to the Prussian field marshal Count August von Gneisenau who had also considered the border as intolerable from a strategic viewpoint. Marx repeated Engels's argument that the western border of the Polish Kingdom was driven like "a wedge" between Austria and Prussia. The border provided Russia with an excellent strategic advantage in case of war which was increased through the construction of a number of fortresses near Warsaw after the Polish insurrection of 1830-31. According to Marx these fortresses permitted "the complete strategic domination of the Vistula territory." Their construction revealed the Russian
intention to use the Polish Kingdom as a "base for an attack" against Prussia and Austria. Marx concluded that the fortresses threatened "Germany more than all the French fortifications."\footnote{Karl Marx, Herr Vogt (London: A. Petchu u. Co., 1860), pp. 78-79.}

According to Marx a Polish-Russian union would increase the danger of a Russian invasion of Germany. But the situation would become intolerable should the Germans follow Vogt's advice and surrender Poznania and West Prussia to the Poles. These territories would ultimately be absorbed by Russia. Then East Prussia, which Vogt had called the only "truly German province," would become "a Russian enclave," ready to be swallowed by Russia.\footnote{Ibid., p. 79.}

Marx also warned the Poles against a union with Russia. It would not mean their liberation but the end of Poland--"\textit{Finis Poloniae}." The annexation of Galicia, which had been a Russian aim since Alexander I, would be a major step towards the complete subjugation of Poland. According to Marx, Napoleon III was willing to sacrifice Poland to the Russians. Marx suspected Napoleon of having invited Russia to annex Galicia in order to win Russian support for his aim to annex German territories.

In the opinion of Marx the liberation of the Austro-Slavs would endanger Germany even more than Polish-Russian collaboration.
because Bohemia and Moravia (present-day Czechoslovakia) would certainly pass under Russian rule. A Russian Bohemia, located "in the middle of Germany" would be "a wedge" driven between Northern and Southern Germany and Austria. In case of a war against Russia, German military power would be completely paralyzed, and the Russians could easily overrun Southern Germany from Bohemia and occupy it. Henceforth, military cooperation between Northern and Southern Germany and German Austria would only be possible "under Russian leadership." Marx concluded that, contrary to the expectations of Vogt, the surrender of the Slavic possessions would not bring about the unification of Germany but the destruction of a thousand years of German history, the subjugation of Germany to Russian rule, and ultimately the partition of Germany itself.

According to Marx the Pan-Slavs would not be satisfied with the surrender of Bohemia and Moravia. In addition, they would demand that a "natural border" be drawn between the Germans and Slavs in Eastern Germany. They would not be deterred by the impossibility of drawing a just border in that area which was proved by the language map of the Slavophile Czech P. J. Šafařík. Marx said the map showed that territories where German was spoken, such as Silesia, the whole lower Vistula region, and

89 Ibid., p. 81.
most of East and West Prussia, were wedges driven into the
Slavic world. He remarked that the Pan-Slavs would not consider
the existence of the German territories a problem. They would
simply declare that these territories had once been Slavic
and incorporate them into the Pan-Slav union.

Marx maintained that according to Pan-Slav plans the
new German-Slavic border was to extend from the Baltic Sea coast
near Stolp to the Netze river, then west to Lieberose and Luebbecke—
incorporating also Lusatia—from there south to the passage of
the Elbe river through the Bohemian Mountains and west along
the Bohemian border. Ultimately the Pan-Slavs would even
incorporate German Austria as an undesirable wedge between the
Western and Southern Slavs. They used the nationality principle
merely to hide their expansionist dream. The application of
that principle, said Marx, would cripple Germany forever.

We Germans do not lose anything more by such an
operation than East and West Prussia, Silesia, parts
of Brandenburg and Saxony, all of Bohemia and Moravia,
and the remainder of Austria, except for Tyrol (which
is partially lost to the Italian nationality principle)—
and our national existence into the bargain. \(^90\)

With this pamphlet Marx disqualified the German democrats,
who defended the nationality principle, as the leaders of a
revolutionary Germany. He insinuated that they had no

\(^{90}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 82.$
understanding of the factor of power politics. The support of the nationality principle would bring about neither German unification nor a peaceful coexistence between Germans and Slavs. It would merely promote Germany's disappearance as a power in Central Europe.

When the Marxist N. Rjasanoff commented on Marx's pamphlet in 1916, he stated:

This so-called strategic proof for the need of the restoration of Poland was not present in the polemics of NRZ.91

Rjasanoff failed to see that the main aim of the pamphlet was to defend the territorial integrity of Germany, not to agitate for the restoration of Poland. Although Marx referred to the need for the liberation of "the Polish nationality," he did not promote the creation of a large and strong Poland as a European bulwark against Russia. Germany would defend itself from Russian encroachments if the borders were preserved.

Early in the sixties the popularity of the nationality principle reached a climax. The demand of the European Left for the overthrow of all the territorial arrangements of the Vienna treaties became more emphatic. After April 8, 1861, when Russian soldiers were ordered to shoot at the Poles who

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demonstrated in the streets of Warsaw against the Tsarist government, European attention was focused on the Polish question. Numerous pamphlets, many of them written by Poles and Frenchmen, demanded the restoration of Poland. However, Marx and Engels continued to remain aloof from such agitation, even in 1863 when the Poles in the Kingdom rose in revolt against the Tsarist government. At that time the two friends merely intended to utilize for propaganda purposes the past failures of European diplomacy to fight Russian expansionism.

European Foreign Policies and the Partition of Poland

Since the mid-fifties Marx had become increasingly interested in the diplomatic history of Europe from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. His studies of the past were determined by his desire to understand why Russia rose to an influential position in nineteenth century Europe. Several months after the end of the Crimean War, Marx published a series of articles on "The Revelation of the Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century" in which he discussed Russia's relations with the West. In the following years he made a more thorough study of

92 Marx's study, The Revelation of the Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century, was actually composed as an introduction to a comprehensive work which he had planned to write but never did. In 1856-57 the study was first published in a series of articles in the Free Press, the organ of the followers of the English Russophile David Urquhart, with whom Marx collaborated briefly. The study was again published under the title Secret Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century, ed. by Eleanor Marx Aveling (London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., 1890). Then it was
the political history of the Polish Republic. During this period he made excerpts which he apparently utilized for the composition of two groups of manuscripts on the history of the European states and Poland since the seventeenth century. These manuscripts, which were written early in the 1860's, remained unpublished until 1961 when the German historian Werner Conze edited them.

Among the literature which Marx used for his studies on the relations between the Western European states and Poland and Russia, there was not a work which went beyond the usual historiography and treated social or economic questions. Likewise, Marx's discussions of the European political history from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century did not touch upon such questions. They were not related to the socio-economic


94 This is shown by the list of books which according to Werner Conze, Marx most certainly used for the composition of the manuscripts. Karl Marx, op. cit., p. 55.
theory of history on which Marx had mainly been working since the mid-fifties. They were charged with his emotions, his antipathies, and hatreds. Overstatements occurred frequently.

The articles on "The Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century" marked a break with the earlier occasional interpretation of the responsibility of the European powers for the Russian territorial expansion through the partition of Poland. In the forties Marx and Engels had stressed the responsibility of Austria and particularly of Prussia for Russia's westward advance. In 1845 Engels criticized the short-sightedness of German foreign policies at the Vienna Congress. Instead of permitting Russia to annex "the best part of Poland," the two great German states Prussia and Austria should have annexed as much of the Polish territories as possible, but they were unable to make use of power politics. Engels consoled himself with the thought that soon a complete reorganization of European society would make an end to "such imbecilities."95 The statement of 1845 revealed a greater concern with the westward advance of Russia and its consequences for Germany than with the fate of Poland.

At the time of the Revolution of 1848-49 Marx and Engels, as editors of NRZ, maintained that the Germans should have evaded any involvement in the partition of Poland which strengthened

Russia and weakened Germany. Simultaneously, Engels, in his articles against Prussian reaction, ridiculed the lack of initiative and bold action in Prussian foreign policies since the seventeenth century. He ridiculed the adulation of the Hohenzollern by the conservatives. The Hohenzollern were a "family of corporals" who achieved Prussia's aggrandizement by contemptible methods—"through breeches of faith, perfidies, and legacy hunting." They acquired the western Polish territories through treasonous policies—by allying with the enemies of Poland, first with Sweden in the seventeenth century and then with Russia and Austria in the following. Finally, by participating together with Austria in the Third Polish Partition of 1793, the Hohenzollern helped Russia to destroy Poland completely.

In the year 1793 three crowned thieves divided the Polish booty among themselves according to the same right by which three street robbers divide among themselves the purse of a defenseless traveller.96

As was pointed out earlier, Marx and Engels had little consideration for the question of morality in international relations. Their outbursts of moral indignation over Prussia's annexation of Polish territories were not too convincing. Much more convincing was their contempt for the lack of bold action in Prussian foreign policies. What they meant by bold foreign policies was defined years later in Marx's letter to Engels of December 2, 1856.

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96 NRZ, May 10, 1849.
In this letter Marx once again ridiculed Prussian history. He stated: "World history has never produced anything more lousy." After having explained that the Prussian rulers developed neither a great nation like the French nor a great dynasty like the Austrians, Marx added that they had also been unable to make true conquests.

It [Prussia] has not conquered one single powerful Slavic nation. During five hundred years it did not even succeed to seize Pomerania which was finally acquired through an exchange. On the whole, the Margraviate of Brandenburg as it was taken over by the Hohenzollern—has never made any conquest with the exception of Silesia. Since it was their only conquest, this seems to be the reason why Frederic II is called the unique.  

Prussia's foreign policies were characterized by "oscillating perfidy . . . [and] snatching at some morsels which Russia throws before Prussia during the partitions contrived by Russia." Prussia had become chained to Russia by her lack of a daring foreign policy.

When Marx wrote this letter, the English Urquhartist newspaper Free Press had started to publish his articles on "The Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century." They were presented to the English public at a moment when the excitement over the Crimean War, which had ended in March, 1856, had not yet cooled off.

In these articles Marx maintained that in the past not only Prussia and Austria but also England and France had fallen

\[97\] MEGA, III/2, 158.
under Russia's spell. This new line of argumentation had already found expression in Marx's articles on Palmerston's pro-Russian policy late in 1853. Marx now developed a theory of the collective crime committed by the European powers against Poland. The Europeans shared a common responsibility for the increase of Russian power in Europe which especially endangered Central Europe. This contention reduced the responsibility of the Germans. Marx was now inclined to regard German participation in the partition of Poland as an act of necessary self-defense from which all of Europe profited.

In his presentation of the relations between Russia and Western Europe in the past, Marx was very concerned with the power factor in international politics. According to him the development of the European state system since the late seventeenth century proved that the Western Europeans were wholly incompetent in foreign politics. The Western Europeans failed to understand the crucial role of power in international relations. Therefore, they were unable to cope with the rise of Russia. Their unawareness of their vital interests permitted Russia to advance steadily westward.

According to Marx the Russian success was not only due to the short-sighted foreign policies of the Western Europeans but also to the superiority of Russian diplomacy. Marx ridiculed the methods of Russian diplomacy, but he was quite
fascinated that it had achieved the uninterrupted extension of Russian territorial possessions.

Marx explained that the Great Russians became crafty diplomats through the example set by Ivan I. When Ivan I tried to get rid of the Mongol rule, he did not act boldly like a hero, but after the manner of slaves he used all kinds of "diplomatic tricks and subterfuges." Since Ivan I the pattern of Muscovite foreign policies was to win advantages by the deceitful exploitation of an enemy power, to weaken thereby this power, and to ruin it finally because it had allowed itself to be used as a tool.98

According to Marx, Peter the Great added a new aspect to Russian foreign policies. This Tsar created a bold synthesis which united the method of the imperceptible penetration of the Mongol slave with the world conquering tendencies of the Mongol ruler and remained the motivating force of modern Russian diplomacy.99

As did Herzen, Marx regarded Peter the Great as a most capable ruler because the Tsar knew what he wanted and how to achieve it. Peter's dream was to change Muscovy from "a half-Asiatic inland country into a strong maritime power." His dream set in motion a series of conquests by which Russia reached the Baltic Sea and

98Rjasanoff, "Vorherrschaft Russlands in Europa," p. 22.
99Ibid., p. 23.
the Black Sea and finally swallowed most of Poland with the result that Russia became a decisive factor in European politics.

Marx praised Peter's "immense achievement" of having transferred the capital of Moscow to St. Petersburg— to the very border of his state. This testified to the Tsar's "amazing boldness" and revealed his intention to obtain influence in the Baltic Sea area. According to Marx, Peter the Great achieved this aim in the Northern War of 1700-21 because he had no equal in the pursuit of a purposeful policy. Marx condemned the European powers for not reacting to the appearance of Russia in the Baltic Sea area. England, in particular, should have had the greatest interest in keeping the Russians out of that area. Instead, England did not try to support Sweden's fight against Russia. It became "the tool of Peter and his successors and helped to realize their plans." When Sweden succumbed to the Northern Alliance, the Poles participated in the partition of Sweden. They supported Russian aims and signed their "own death sentence." The Poles had their share of responsibility for the destruction of their country because they also became Russia's tool.

Marx said that the Swedish partition was of greater historical significance than the Polish partition. The Swedish partition marked a turning point in European history. It introduced
the modern era of international politics . . . For the first time in Europe the breach of all treaties as the basis of a new treaty was not only realized but also proclaimed [as a principle].

The partition of Poland was merely the logical result of this "first great deed of modern diplomacy." Marx declared that since the 1720's, when Russian troops were stationed in Poland, Russia was practically the master of Poland. Russia initiated the partition of Poland, and it was Russia which mostly profited from the partition.

Marx condemned the general European compliance with the aggressive foreign policy of Russia in Europe. Even at the Vienna Congress the European statesmen did not change their policy towards Russia. The Vienna treaties were the result of the common European foolishness. They permitted the Tsar to gain "a position without competitors in Europe," mainly through the partition of Poland, and to threaten Europe "with the renewal of a universal monarchy" should Constantinople be conquered.

According to Marx most Europeans were not aware of the historical fact that within a century Russia had achieved "monstrous dimensions." It had undermined the European balance of power principle and had become a "real power" which must be reckoned with. Yet, many Europeans still assumed that Russia was weak because it was backward. In history, Marx said, Russia offered

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100 Ibid., p. 46.
the only example of an immense empire whose real power, even after world-renowned achievements, was often still regarded as a mere illusion, not as an accomplished fact.

In 1909 N. Rjasanoff criticized Marx for his concentration on Russian foreign policy and his neglect of the economic history of Russia. Thereby, Marx gave the impression that Russian history had remained static. But Russia had undergone the same changes in the social structure as the Western European countries, only at a later date. Rjasanoff was right that the preoccupation with Russian foreign policies became a real obsession with Marx and Engels's in the 1850's. Yet, scattered remarks on Russia's internal development prove that since 1848 Marx and Engels were aware of the symptoms of internal changes in Russia. However, with regard to their revolutionary calculations, which concentrated upon Western Europe, these changes were rather insignificant because Russia was still predominantly an agricultural country. Thus, for Marx and Engels, Russia primarily remained the expansionist power par excellence whose advance endangered revolutionary progress as well as Germany. Above all, the articles of 1856-57 were intended to prove that the balance of power principle had become obsolete because of Russia's rise as a European power, that the policies of the European cabinets were too inefficient to stop a further Russian advance, and that a new revolutionary foreign policy was needed to save Europe.
Marx retained his basic approach to the development of the European state system in his two groups of unfinished manuscripts—Polen, Preussen und Russland and Polen und Frankreich—which he wrote at the time of the great excitement over the Polish uprising in 1863 and 1864 respectively. The manuscripts were also composed in the traditional manner and relied on diplomatic and military events to explain the historical development in Europe. Once again Marx's main objective was to reveal the short-sighted foreign policies of the European states. This time he treated in detail the events which led to the destruction of the Polish state in order to prove his point. He paid particular attention to the impact which the weakening of Poland had on Germany.

The manuscript on Polen, Preussen und Russland was mainly an elaboration of Marx's earlier attacks against Prussia's servile attachment to Russia. Marx repeated that the Hohenzollern rulers did not achieve the extension of their dynastic power, which was their immediate aim, by bold action but by devious political machinations which injured "the general and permanent interests of Germany." Since the seventeenth century the Hohenzollern had pursued two objectives: (1) to deprive Sweden of its Pomeranian possessions and to annex Polish West Prussia.

101 The title Polen und Frankreich was given to the second group of unfinished manuscripts by Werner Conze, the editor of the manuscripts.

102 Karl Marx, Die polnische Frage, p. 91.
which separated East Prussia from Brandenburg; and, (2) to consolidate their power against the German Empire. However, the extension of their dynastic power could only be achieved by leaning upon a foreign power, and this power was ultimately Russia because France in the long run had no interest in supporting the rise of another German power along with Austria. When Russia entered the European political scene, it pursued the same aims as the Hohenzollern, the partition of Sweden and Poland and the weakening of the Empire, and this became the basis for the collaboration between Russia and Prussia.

Marx condemned Prussia's collaboration with Peter the Great in the Northern War. This contributed to the fall of Sweden. The destruction of Sweden increased Prussian power.

But it [Prussia] rose as a satellite of the Russian power and the Russian accomplice in the plundering of a neighbor who had become defenseless. 103

After the Swedish partition, said Marx, it became Prussia's calling to make "Russian policy" and to be Russia's "sentry" in Germany against the Habsburgs. Marx ridiculed the German historians, among them Heinrich von Sybel, who glorified Frederick II as a great ruler. According to Marx, Frederick the Great had been as submissive to Russia as the rest of the Hohenzollern. Frederick would have been truly great if he had tried to destroy the Austrian hegemony, "but to reorganize the Empire and to place

103 Karl Marx, op. cit., p. 99.
himself at the head of it, such ambition was far from him."\textsuperscript{104} A strong Empire under a central leadership would have freed the Germans from Russian overlordship. Marx contended that Frederick, "at the head of Germany, would have destroyed Russia," but at the head of Prussia he became its slave.\textsuperscript{105}

Marx criticized Frederick for not having made the slightest attempt to get rid of Russian influence by supporting the growing Polish opposition against Russian interference in Polish affairs which originated in 1709 when a Polish-Russian alliance was concluded. Frederick preferred to help increase Russian domination in Poland. In 1764 he agreed with Catherine the Great to guarantee the old Polish constitution with its \textit{liberum veto}. This perpetuated Polish anarchy and the defenselessness of Poland against Russian intervention in Polish affairs. "Only a Russian could contrive such a pact, and only a Prussian sign it."\textsuperscript{106} Finally, Frederick even complied with Catherine's desire to annex Polish territories and proposed the partition of Poland.

According to Marx in the First Partition of Poland Frederick was "only the instrument which Russia, with cunning calculation, ordered to take the initiative."\textsuperscript{107} Marx said that

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\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid., p. 101.
\item \textsuperscript{105} Ibid., p. 120.
\item \textsuperscript{106} Ibid., p. 107.
\item \textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p. 112.
\end{enumerate}
Frederick needed Russia to round off his eastern territorial possessions. However, Frederick should at least have understood that Catherine was too weak to swallow all of Poland which was her ultimate aim. She agreed to a partition of Poland because she needed Frederick's support against the Poles. Consequently, Frederick should have dictated his conditions, but he did not dare to demand Danzig and Thorn and allowed Russia to profit mostly from the partition. Austria, which participated in the partition against its desire, acted more independently. It took Lwow in spite of Russian opposition. Besides, the imperial government understood much better than the Hohenzollern rulers that the further annexation of Polish territories by Russia would be a permanent threat to Germany.

Marx said that Frederick, through his collaboration with Russia against Poland, betrayed both Germany and Europe. In 1779 Frederick committed an even greater political crime. He invited Russia to become a guarantor of the German constitution at the Peace Treaty of Teschen which ended the conflict between the Hohenzollern and the Habsburgs over the Austrian attempt to incorporate Bavaria. This gave Russia the right to interfere in German affairs. Yet, only in 1806, when the partition of Poland was completed, and when Germany was weakened by Napoleon, could Russia exploit this right—namely, by helping France, the other guarantor of the German status quo, to destroy the German constitution and to partition the German Empire.
Marx pointed out that the Russian influence in Germany was confirmed by the Vienna treaties. As Engels had done, Marx condemned the German governments because they did not profit from their victory over Napoleon. He believed that Prussia, in order to obtain Russian support for its territorial expansion within Germany, had even been willing to relinquish its claim to Poznania and West Prussia. This would have left Berlin defenseless. Marx said that the English foreign secretary Viscount Robert Castlereagh had been against the surrender of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw to Russia because this would have imperiled the security of Prussia and Austria and Europe. Nevertheless, the Prussians permitted the Russian Tsar to annex almost the whole Grand Duchy of Warsaw under the title of the King of Poland. "With the right instinct they forced the Russian hegemony upon Europe."\textsuperscript{108}

Prussia, said Marx, did not profit from the support of Russian aims. Russian restrictions upon the commercial relations between the Polish Kingdom and East and West Prussia after 1815 revealed Russia's intention to finally destroy Prussia. Marx repeated that Prussia's collaboration with Russia had been necessary to defend Prussian interests, but it weakened Germany and made the political existence of Prussia dependent upon Russia's grace.

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p. 140.
In the manuscript on Polen und Frankreich Marx mitigated his harsh critique of Prussian foreign policies and concentrated his attacks on France. Marx claimed that France greatly contributed to the rise of Russia by failing to support either the Swedes or the Poles against Russia. According to Marx the French had never had a serious interest in the fate of Poland because their foremost desire was to keep Germany divided and weak. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Poland was still strong and the Russian Empire did not yet exist, the main aim of France was to weaken the German Empire through alliances with Poland, Sweden, or Turkey. The anti-German policy was continued when Poland had declined. This contributed to the rise of Russian power and to Prussia's eastward expansion at the expense of Poland.

While Marx in his earlier statements had presented Frederick the Great as a man without a political vision, he now maintained that at the time of the Seven Years' War Frederick II had wished to organize a "formidable coalition" against Russia which would have been a means to liberate Poland from the Russian yoke. But the French betrayed European interests and concluded an alliance with Russia. This enabled the Russians to use Poland as a military base for an invasion of Prussia. According to Marx the results of the French pro-Russian policy were:
Russia established its supremacy in Germany . . . Prussia became its slave . . . Catherine became the most powerful sovereign in Europe and . . . the First Partition of Poland took place.\footnote{109}

Marx claimed that the French were ultimately responsible for the First Partition of Poland, but the Poles themselves shared the responsibility. They permitted Russia to use Poland as a military base against Prussia. Prussia reacted by participating in the Polish partition. Marx was convinced that the French would not have acted differently if during the Seven Years' War the Belgians had allowed Prussia to use their country as a military base against France. The French would certainly have tried "to incorporate Belgium or to destroy its independence."\footnote{110}

Marx insisted that neither the French revolutionaries in the 1790's nor Napoleon made any serious efforts to liberate the Poles. The French betrayal of Polish national interests reached a climax in 1810 when Napoleon agreed with Alexander I that the name of Poland be forever stricken from the European map. After 1815 the betrayal of the Poles was continued. The French government under Louis Philippe, did not support the Polish insurrection against Russia and did not protest when Nicholas I violated the Vienna treaties and changed the Kingdom of Poland into a Russian province.

\footnote{109}{Ibid., p. 170.}
\footnote{110}{Ibid., p. 172.}
Werner Conze made the following remark on Marx's manuscripts of 1863-64: "Marx does not impress us as a historian of high standing with these one-sided and partial compilations." It is true that the manuscripts are charged with overstatements and contradictions, but as a propaganda piece they are most effective. Marx did not approach his subject as a historian but as a political man who desired to use his knowledge in the fight against Tsarist Russia and the contemporary conditions in Germany.

Whatever Marx said about European policies towards Poland, he suggested that the development of the European state system would have been different if the German Empire had developed into a strong state in the center of Europe. In this connection his reference to the Prussian annexation of East and West Prussia is revealing. Marx stated that these two provinces had once belonged to the Teutonic Knights but were lost to Poland in the fifteenth century. If East and West Prussia would have been reconquered by a war of the German Empire against Poland instead of through Prussia's betrayal, this would not have been resented by the Poles, nor would it have excluded German-Polish collaboration against the common enemy, Russia. It can hardly be expected that the Poles would have approved of Marx's argument.

111 Ibid., p. 38 (Introduction).
112 Ibid., p. 120.
Since the 1850's Marx and Engels had shown a great interest in European power politics. They were convinced that the European state system of the nineteenth century, in which Russia played an influential role, originated from the foolish foreign policies of the European states in the past two centuries which had permitted Russia to annex the greater part of the Polish territories. But Marx and Engels did not think that the foreign policies of European democracy—in case of its victory—and the restoration of Poland would save Europe or Germany from the Russian and Pan-Slav threat. They were worried about the popularity of the nationality principle which in the 1850's had received an unexpected support from an anti-revolutionary source, the French government under Napoleon III. They believed that the realization of the nationality principle would increase Russian aggressiveness which would endanger Germany and the radical revolution. Only "the revolutionary party," meaning the communists, would save Germany and Europe because it would conduct a vigorous foreign policy. When the First International Workingmen's Association was founded in 1864, Marx, with the assistance of Engels and his supporters in Germany, tried to force an aggressive anti-Russian policy upon the members of that organization.
CHAPTER V

THE POLISH INSURRECTION OF 1863

The Attempt at Polish-Russian Revolutionary Collaboration

The Polish insurrection of 1863 was the prelude to the founding of the First International Workingmen's Association. It marked the end of the period of Polish uprisings in the mid-nineteenth century. As in the years preceding the Polish uprising, Marx and Engels avoided public statements in support of the restoration of Poland. However, their old opponents Herzen and Bakunin became actively engaged in the support of the Polish cause.

The dialogue between Herzen and the Polish left-wing democrats, which had begun after Herzen's arrival in London in 1852, reached a wider audience after the publication of Herzen's newspaper Kolokol (The Bell [London] ) in 1857. This newspaper became the center of attraction to the dissatisfied elements in the Russian Empire and also to the Poles under Russian rule.
The articles on Herzen's activity in London and on his political concepts, which appeared in the Polish democratic newspaper \textit{Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich} (Survey of Polish Affairs [Cracow]) after 1857, reveal that Herzen probably had as many enthusiastic supporters as opponents among the Poles. Ultimately the dialogue between Herzen and the Poles centered around the problem of the restoration of the Polish eastern borders of 1772. Whenever this problem was touched upon tensions arose.

In November, 1958 \textit{Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich} published an enthusiastic article on Alexander Herzen and the independent Russian printing-office in London. The article stated: "Herzen's work and that of the Polish democrats is the same . . . Herzen is a friend of the Poles."\footnote{Aleksandr Ivanovich Herzen, \textit{Sobranie Sochinenii}, XIV, 468.} This statement caused Herzen misgivings. He did not wish his aims to be identified with Polish aspirations. He felt that the Poles generally lacked a serious interest in the solution of the peasant question. Besides, he resented the continuation of their anti-Russian propaganda and the demand for the restoration of the eastern borders of 1772.

Herzen clarified his position in a series of articles on "Rossiia i Polshcha" (\textit{Russia and Poland}). They were written shortly before and after the Italian War which rekindled the hopes of the Polish emigrants for the restoration of Poland with the
The articles were mostly a repetition of the arguments Herzen had used in his treatise on Russian revolutionary ideas in 1851. He still insisted that only a revolutionary Russia would liberate the Poles. He warned the Poles against the "despotic" government of Napoleon III. Although Napoleon supported the nationality principle, the French government would not help the Poles restore Poland. Herzen claimed that the nationality principle was merely used by the reactionary governments as a means to prevent the unification of the European peoples which was the prerequisite of their free development. He repeated that the Poles had a right to "a political existence independent of Russia," but their claim to the former eastern provinces of the Polish Republic—White Russia and the Ukraine—was not justified. This time, though, he stressed that also the Great Russians did not have a right to the possession of these provinces.

According to Herzen the claim to a foreign territory could neither be defended by "long lasting possession" nor by "the former rule" over it; that is, by the historical-right principle. Since all the states had originated from conquests, the basic question was not "how the parts [of a state] had been joined but whether an independent life was assured to them."

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2 The articles appeared in Kolokol, January 1 and 15, March 1, 1859; March 15, April 1, 1860.
Neither the Poles nor the Great Russians had guaranteed liberty to the conquered people. Only if the right to self-determination were granted by a revolutionary Russia, the oppressed people would enjoy an independent life.\textsuperscript{3}

Herzen claimed that the White Russians, who spoke a language which was "closer to Russian than Polish," would "naturally wish to be Russians," while the Galician Ukrainians, who were Uniates, would feel a stronger attachment to the [Catholic] Poles." He was sure that the Eastern Ukrainians (then called Little Russians) would demand recognition as a separate nationality. Herzen hoped that the liberated people, including the Poles, would be willing to unite with the Great Russians in a socialist federal republic if their equality were guaranteed. He remarked that he did not desire "the dissolution of the Slavic world but its free federation."\textsuperscript{4}

When Herzen made these statements, Mikola Kostomarov and Pantelejmon Kulish, the leaders of the Ukrainian movement in the Eastern Ukraine, agitated in St. Petersburg for the recognition of the Ukrainian people as a separate nationality and for the unification of all the territories inhabited by Ukrainians from the Carpathian mountains and Eastern Galicia to

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., pp. 21, 35.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., p. 35.
the left bank of the Dnieper. Simultaneously, they supported political and cultural collaboration with the Great Russians and fought Polish claims to the Ukraine.

On January 15, 1860 Kolokol published an anonymously written letter by Kostomarov sent from St. Petersburg. This letter supported Herzen's assumption that the Ukrainian radicals were more willing to collaborate with the Great Russians than with the Poles. Kostomarов stated that the Ukrainians aimed at the creation of "a separate political entity comprising all the lands where the Ukrainian language . . . was spoken," free from Polish or Russian overlordship. He expressed the hope that Alexander II would grant judicial equality and cultural autonomy to the Ukrainians. This would prepare a peaceful coexistence with the Great Russians and eventually the realization of a Slavic union.

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5Mikola Kostomarov (1817-85) and Pantelejmon Kulish (1819-97) had founded the secret Cyril and Methodius Society in 1846 which fought Polish and Russian claims to the Ukraine and demanded the recognition of Ukrainian independence and the creation of a Slavic federation of which Kiev should become the center. In 1847 the leading members of the Society were exiled from the Ukraine. Kulish was permitted to settle in St. Petersburg in 1850 and Kostomarов in 1859.


7Early in the 1860's Kostomarов published a number of articles in Osnova (Foundation [St. Petersburg]), the organ of the Ukrainophiles, in which he emphasized that the Ukrainians were superior to Russians and Poles because they were true defenders of the democratic principles—the right to individual liberty and the
Herzen's opposition to the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772 called forth a strong reaction among the Poles. The democrats, among them Ludwik Mierosławski, who favored the creation of a centralized Polish state were particularly outraged by Herzen's support of the Ukrainian claim to national self-determination. In Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich, articles had repeatedly appeared which condemned the Ukrainian movement. In December, 1859 and January, 1860 the newspaper attacked Herzen for advocating the restoration of a small Polish state which would be confined to the Vistula basin. Herzen was accused of desiring a Slavic union "under Russian hegemony" in order to strengthen Russia's position in Europe. The newspaper concluded that even the progressive Russians were enemies of Poland.

In his articles of spring, 1860 Herzen evaded any further discussion on the controversial Polish territorial question. Instead, he emphasized the need for peasant liberation through a social revolution and for the creation of a "federation of free Slavic countries" destined to become the pioneer of the reorganization of Europe on the basis of federalism and socialism.


Cf. Lozynskyj, Revolucyjnyj ruch, pp. 16-17.

Herzen, Sobranie Sochinenii, XIV, 41, 469.

Ibid., p. 44.
In the following months Herzen repeatedly expressed his doubts as to the realization of a Polish-Russian reconciliation. At times, he was under the impression that the Poles would prefer to perish with the old Western world rather than save themselves through the revolutionary collaboration with the Russians. He admitted that Russian history was cruel; but without cruelty the Russian rulers would not have forged Russian unity which was a positive achievement.\(^\text{11}\) Herzen defended the same position as did Marx, Engels, and Lassalle that the use of force had furthered progress in history and was therefore justified. Consequently, Herzen's repeated declarations that the social revolution would abolish despotism and the rule of one nation over the other were not too convincing. Force might still be used in order to realize that unified world of which Herzen dreamt, and in which all the national and social distinctions would disappear.

The Polish radicals continued to pay attention to Herzen's statements. They wavered between support of Herzen and opposition to him. In June, 1860 \textit{Przeglad Rzeczy Polskich} emphasized the solidarity between the Poles and Herzen although it admitted to differences between them. But in October, 1861 the newspaper rejected the idea of a federation with "Moscow . . . We want the Poland of 1772. That is our ultimatum."\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{11}\)Ibid., p. 52.

\(^{12}\)Ibid., p. 470.
Late in 1861 Bakunin had arrived in London. He had escaped from Siberia where he had continued to agitate among the Polish exiles for Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration against the Tsarist government and against Austria and Prussia. In London he continued this propaganda. He was partially responsible for Herzen's consent in 1862 to a close revolutionary collaboration with the Polish radicals.

In his manifesto Narodnoe Delo ("Goals of the People") Bakunin supported the destruction of the centralized Russian Empire, but he did not favor the restoration of the Polish borders of 1772. For the first time he emphasized that the Russian Empire was a multi-national state, and that the right to national self-determination should be granted to all the nationalities in that Empire—Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Finns, Latvians, and the people from the Caucasus. As a result, the Polish question appeared as only one question of national liberation from Russian rule among many others. Bakunin hoped, as did Herzen, that if a revolutionary Russia were reorganized on the basis of voluntary federation, then all the nationalities, including the Poles, would prefer to enter into a union with the Great Russians rather than to create independent states.

13Bakunin's letter to Herzen, December 8, 1860, sent from Irkutsk (Siberia), in Correspondance de Michel Bakounine, ed. by Mykhaylo Drahomanov, p. 122. Cf. also Arnold Ruge's Briefwechsel und Tagebuecher aus den Jahren 1825-1880, Tf, 222-23.

Obviously Bakunin and Herzen considered decentralization and "self-government in the village, the district, the province, and the whole state" as the most effective means to preserve the unity of the vast territory extending from the Pacific Ocean to the western borders of the Polish Kingdom. It was paradoxical that Herzen and Bakunin agitated for the creation of a Slavic federation. Actually the federal union which they promoted would not be based on mere racial affinity because the Finns, the people from the Baltic provinces and from the Caucasus, and the Siberian tribes would also belong to it.

Notwithstanding the imperialist implication of the federal concept of Herzen and Bakunin and their opposition to the restoration of the eastern borders of 1772, the Polish left-wing democrats signed a pact for Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration with the Kolokol group in the summer of 1862. The conclusion of this pact had been promoted by the events in Warsaw in the previous year. On April 8, 1861 Russian soldiers shot at Poles who demonstrated against the government in the streets of Warsaw. This killed Herzen's enthusiasm for Alexander II whom he had only recently praised for the emancipation of the serfs in the Russian Empire (March 3, 1861). It renewed Herzen's sympathy for the oppressed Poles and weakened his suspicion of them. The Warsaw shootings increased Polish unrest in the Kingdom. Preparations were made for an insurrection. Early in 1862 the
insurrectional committee in Warsaw invited Jaroslaw Dąbrowski to become a member as the representative of the military circles. Dąbrowski was an officer in the Russian army and had come under the influence of the Russian Nikolai Chernyshevsky (1828-89) who advocated an agrarian socialism. Dąbrowski's membership meant the strengthening of the left-wing Polish democrats. He believed firmly in the necessity of a social revolution as a basic prerequisite for a successful Polish insurrection. Moreover, he hoped that an uprising in the Kingdom would be the signal for the outbreak of the agrarian revolution in Russia. Dąbrowski favored Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration against the Tsarist government. It was mostly due to his influence that in 1862 the National Central Committee in Warsaw communicated with Herzen in London as well as with the Russian revolutionary organization Zemlya i Volya (Land and Liberty) in St. Petersburg, which was under Chernyshevsky's influence, and with officers of the Russian army stationed in the Polish Kingdom. When Dąbrowski was arrested late in the summer of 1862, his successor became Zygmunt Padlewski who had also been influenced by Chernyshevsky, shared Dąbrowski's convictions, and continued his policies.

When the rumor of an impending Polish uprising spread in Western European radical circles, only a tiny minority, foremost the French socialist Pierre Proudhon—who lived as a political exile in Belgium—objected to the preparations for it. Proudhon was convinced that the insurrection would have no other aim
than the restoration of the historical Polish borders of 1772 because it would be led by the szlachta.

In the forties Proudhon had become acquainted with Marx and also with Herzen. While Proudhon and Marx soon became political enemies, Proudhon continued to have closer relations with Herzen. In the mid-fifties, the question of Polish liberation began to undermine their relations. By that time Proudhon had become strongly opposed to the nationality principle, "that humbug of a revolutionary theory." When he knew about Herzen's collaboration with the Polish Central Committee in London, he tried to dissuade Herzen from supporting Polish aspirations because they had nothing to do with democracy.

The Italian War turned Proudhon definitely against the nationality principle, whether supported by Napoleon III or the European radicals. He feared that the Italian War was merely the prelude of ever more terrible wars in the name of the nationality principle. He was convinced that the crusades for the liberation of the peoples under foreign rule would merely diminish liberty. Such wars would undoubtedly result in the reduction of

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the number of independent nations and in the partition of Europe among two or three great powers. They would also impede the European socio-economic development and the final liberation of the oppressed classes.\(^1\)

In view of such dangers Proudhon composed his book *La Guerre et la Paix* which he terminated in October, 1860. In this work he appealed to the European radicals to help defend the territorial status quo in Europe instead of agitating for its overthrow. In Proudhon's opinion the peace which had been promoted by the Vienna treaties had permitted Europe to enter a new era. The rapid progress in the economic sector and the increasing identity of laws and morals had already furthered the assimilation of the European nations. The preservation of peace would finally lead to the dissolution of the European states, the end of wars, and the liberation of the oppressed nations.

According to Proudhon it would be criminal to interrupt this promising development by plunging Europe into a war for the resurrection of nationalities which had perished because they had been unable to compete with stronger and more progressive nations. Proudhon said that throughout history *le droit de la force* (the law of force) had governed the creation and survival of states.

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\(^1\)Proudhon's letter to Gouvernet, May 3, 1860, in Proudhon, *Correspondance*, X, 47.
and the conquest and assimilation of foreign nationalities. The use of force, which implied superiority, had furthered "the progress of civilization" which would have stopped had the nationality principle been recognized in the past. 18

On the basis of such considerations Proudhon became the most violent opponent of the restoration of Poland. He held that the partition of Poland was not a crime. Poland had "perished through its own dissolution" due to its unruly aristocracy and its absurd constitution. 19 Russia had vanquished the Poles because Russia was a stronger and better organized state. It would be foolish to plunge Europe into a war for the liberation of the Poles because Russia was in the process of changes from which the Poles would profit. Proudhon advised the Polish people to wait for their liberation until the day when all the European oppressive states would be overthrown through the process of economic evolution and the assimilation of the European peoples.

The emancipation of the serfs in the Russian Empire on March 3, 1861 strengthened Proudhon's opposition to a war for the restoration of Poland. He celebrated this event as the dawn of the social revolution in Russia. Progress was on the side of


19 Ibid., p. 506.
Russia, not Poland. Proudhon remained unperturbed by the Warsaw massacres of April 8, 1861. He was annoyed when Herzen became emotional over the shooting of the Polish demonstrators in Warsaw. In a letter of April 21 Proudhon advised Herzen not to support the national aspirations of the Polish aristocracy. Rather, Herzen should help to prepare the Polish people for a more radical revolution which will bring about the disappearance of the great states and all the national distinctions.

Proudhon complained that the European radicals, by defending the nationality principle, furthered the reactionary policies of Napoleon III who tried to "divert the social revolution" by supporting the liberation of people under foreign rule.

In spite of Proudhon's entreaties Herzen continued to support the liberation of the Poles in the Polish Kingdom. On September 20, 1862 he published in Kolokol a statement by the revolutionary Central National Committee in Warsaw on the aims of a Polish insurrection. The statement was intended to fight the

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20 Proudhon, Correspondance, X, 339.
21 Ibid., XI, 23-4.
22 Proudhon's opposition to the restoration of Poland called forth a violent reaction among the French democrats who maintained that Proudhon was a reactionary and a Russian agent. But Proudhon stuck to his convictions. He wrote a "Polish biography" in order to inform his compatriots about their "stupid democracy" and the reality of French foreign policies. Cf. Proudhon's letter to Rolland, November 1, 1861, in Proudhon, Lettres au citoyen Rolland, ed. by Jacques Bompard (Paris: Grasset, 1946), pp. 220-22. The "Polish biography" was not published. The manuscript remained in the possession of Proudhon's family.
rumor circulated in Russian, French, and German newspapers that the Polish szlachta prepared an insurrection which merely aimed at the restoration of the historical borders of the old Polish Republic. The Committee declared: "The main aim of a Polish uprising is the recognition of the peasant's right to self-government." In a revolutionary Poland the peasants would become owners of the land in return for a monetary compensation to the former landowners paid by the government. Political equality would be granted to all social classes. The new Polish state would be composed of "a nation of free and equal citizens." The Committee also referred to the territorial question. It demanded the restoration of a Polish state which would include Lithuania and White Russia and the Ukraine—"free from the hegemony" of the Polish nation. The right of the Lithuanians, White Russians, and Ukrainians to national self-determination was acknowledged. The Committee was convinced that these nationalities would collaborate with the Poles in a people's insurrection and enter into a "voluntary union" with the Poles.23

Compared to the Manifesto of the Polish Democratic Society of 1836, the revolutionary program of 1862 contained one new concession, the recognition of the right to national self-determination of the non-Polish nationalities who had been under Polish rule. However, the Polish democrats who acknowledged that

23 Cf. Limanowski, Historya demokracji polskiej, p. 323.
Poland could no longer be restored as a centralized state ruled by the Poles were a minority, and their influence in the Warsaw Committee was fleeting.

The insurrectional program of the Committee revealed that the Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration rested on weak foundations. Although Polish and Russian radicals aimed at the overthrow of the Tsarist government and at political and social changes, the territorial question divided them. Both parties were willing to acknowledge the right to national self-determination of the Ukrainians, White Russians, and Lithuanians. But the Great Russians hoped that these nationalities would collaborate with Great Russia, while the Poles assumed that they would prefer to collaborate with Poland. From such contrary views tensions were bound to develop.²⁴ Herzen tried to forestall them by emphasizing in Kolokol that the common aim which united Polish and Russian radicals was the liberation of the peasants and the recognition of the right of each nationality to national self-determination.

The rapprochement between the Warsaw Committee and Herzen was strongly opposed by the Paris Central Committee under

²⁴ The Polish democrat Bolesław Limanowski pointed out that the territorial question was an obstacle to a successful Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration. Limanowski, op. cit., p. 323. The East German Marxist Felix Gentzen in his previously quoted work, Grosspolen im Januaraufstand, omitted any reference to the nationality problem in the former Polish Republic. Consequently, he underrated the obstacles in the way of Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration at the time of the Polish uprising of 1863.
Mierosławski. In his organ Bacznosć he maintained that the Warsaw Committee had sold Lithuania and Rus to the "Muscovites." He supported the restoration of Poland as a centralized nation state. He would not acknowledge the existence of a nationality problem in the old Polish Republic, and he insisted that the success of the Polish insurrection depended upon the proper solution of the peasant question.25

Ruch, the organ of the Warsaw Committee, sharply criticized Mierosławski's agitation for a centralized Polish state. The Committee maintained that the people of Rus had been alienated from the Poles because the Polish Government had not fulfilled the stipulations of the treaty of Hadziach (1658) which granted equal rights to the people of Rus. White Russians and Ukrainians would only collaborate with the Poles if liberty were granted to them.

Territories and people are not held together by centralization and by force . . . but by liberty and individual rights for which our forefathers have given a solemn example in the Lublin Union and in the treaty of Hadziach . . . We desire a union based on equality, not on the oppressive domination of the Poles over fraternal peoples.26

On the first day of the Polish insurrection (January 22, 1863), the Provisional National Government issued a Manifesto

25Bacznosć, June 1, 1862, quoted in Limanowski, op. cit., p. 320.

which promised liberty and equality to all the people who lived within the borders of the old Polish Republic. The peasants were to receive the land which they had worked, and those rural workers who would fight in the ranks of the national army were to receive land from the national domain.\textsuperscript{27}

In the beginning the insurrection was supported by the Russian organization Zemlya i Volya. Revolutionary Russian officers, stationed in the Polish Kingdom, took part in the insurrection and tried to keep the Russian soldiers from fighting against the Polish insurgents.\textsuperscript{28} Meanwhile, Mierosławski continued to oppose the collaboration with the Russian radicals and the right to national self-determination of the Lithuanians, White Russians, and Ukrainians. He had hoped to assume dictatorial powers and to lead the insurrection. But he gained no influence over it. Instead, after February 8, 1863 the conservatives (Whites) steadily increased their influence in the Provisional Government, until they controlled it in the summer of 1863. Their insurrectional propaganda concentrated on the demand for the borders of 1772. Because of the victory of the


\textsuperscript{28}Jozef Kowalski, \textit{Die russische revolutionäre Demokratie und der polnische Aufstand} (Berlin: Ruetten & Loening, 1934), pp. 113 ff.
conservatives the Russian revolutionary circles definitely lost interest in the Polish cause.

The Polish democrats (Reds) had been unable to assert themselves against the conservatives because they were divided between a left and right wing pursuing different aims. The defeat of the Polish insurrection which ended in April, 1864, has been attributed to this lack of unity. There has been a tendency to understate the apathy of the peasants. However, from the beginning the insurrection was not actively supported by the peasants of Galicia, Lithuania, and the Ukraine. The peasants did not believe in the promises of the revolutionary manifestoes. They feared that in case of a successful Polish insurrection, they might again lose the rights they had been granted in the Austrian and Russian Empires in previous years. The Ukrainian peasants in the Eastern Ukraine actually fought the Polish landowners who in turn appealed to the Russian authorities for help and received it. Herzen's and Bakunin's assumption that popular feeling in the former Polish provinces did not favor the restoration of Poland was confirmed by the development of the insurrection. But their hope that the Polish insurrection would stir the Russians into action was not fulfilled.

29 Ibid., p. 115, Cf. also Gentzen, op. cit., p. 142.
30 Correspondance de Bakounine, p. 65.
31 Ibid., p. 68.
Soon after the insurrection had started, Bakunin and Herzen recognized the futility of their hopes. In February, 1863 Bakunin observed that the insurrection had strengthened Polish as well as Russian nationalist feelings. Some time later, when he accompanied a Polish liberation expedition from Kiel (Northern Germany) to Haelsingborg (Sweden), the majority of the Poles resented his presence because he was a "moskal" (Muscovite). After his arrival in Stockholm the Polish leaders opposed his intention to participate actively in the insurrection in the Polish Kingdom or in Lithuania.

In spite of the Russophobia of the Poles, Bakunin remained convinced that the cause of Polish independence was "inseparable" from the emancipation of Russia. In a letter to Herzen of August 1, 1863 Bakunin insisted that it was necessary to support the Polish insurrection in order to weaken Russian imperialism. "I will rejoice over the destruction of the Empire from whatever side it may come." However, as the weeks passed by, Herzen increasingly resented the alliance with the Poles. He claimed that from the beginning he had known that the alliance was doomed to perish.

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33 Correspondance de Bakounine, p. 165.
34 Ibid., p. 166.
because it had been a matter of convenience for the Poles, not of deep conviction. He reproached Bakunin for having drawn him into this affair against his better judgment. This had resulted in compromising himself and his newspaper Kolokol in Russian progressive circles. 36

In spite of Herzen's critique Bakunin remained convinced that they should continue to support the alliance and assume full responsibility for its outcome. Above all, they should fight Mierosławski's propaganda against the "abstract and destructive tendencies of Kolokol and its impractical aims." Bakunin held that the revolutionary program of Kolokol was far superior to that of Mierosławski because Kolokol supported the principle of self-government and of free federation. 37 Yet, towards the end of 1863 Bakunin had also given up hope for the success of the Polish insurrection and Polish-Russian collaboration. By November he was on his way to Italy.

Shortly before the Polish insurrection ended, the Tsarist government had issued a decree on March 2, 1864, which promulgated agrarian reforms in the Polish Kingdom. The peasants were liberated from all feudal obligations. All the land worked by the peasants, including the land which the aristocratic

36 Ibid., Cf. also p. 191.
37 Ibid., p. 134.
landowners had appropriated to themselves since 1846, became peasant property without compensation. Even the landless received land so that the entire peasant property in the Kingdom rose 30%. The landowners were deprived of their judicial and police power. Through these agrarian reforms the government sought to weaken the aristocracy and the Roman Catholic Church. However, the aristocratic landowners retained their immense estates and thereby a large measure of their influence. Thus, the agrarian reforms which had been the object of many Polish manifestoes were carried through by the Tsarist government, not by a Polish insurrectional force.

Herzen welcomed the agrarian reforms. He became convinced that changes could only be brought about by collaborating with the established government. This exasperated Bakunin. To him it was utopian to believe that Alexander II would realize socialism. During a visit to London, when Bakunin met Marx for the last time on November 3, 1864, he attributed the failure of the insurrection to the refusal of the Polish aristocrats to proclaim "peasant socialism." He told Marx that from now on "he would take part only in the socialist movement."38

The Polish question remained a controversial issue between Bakunin and Herzen in the years following the ruthless

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38 Carr, Michael Bakunin, p. 322.
suppression of the Polish insurrection by the Russian government. The progressive Great Russian circles who had supported Kolokol in previous years had now turned against Herzen. They called him a traitor because he had collaborated with the Poles who aimed at the partition of the Russian Empire. They accused him of being responsible for the insurrection. Herzen tried to defend himself. He insisted that he had been against the insurrection, and that he had pleaded with the Poles not to disturb the liberal trend in Russia by a premature act. When Herzen was unable to regain his former influence in Great Russia, he became very bitter. He continued to blame Bakunin for his involvement in the Polish affair. Bakunin ridiculed Herzen's attempts to win back the confidence of the former Great Russian supporters. He kept his conviction that the Polish uprising against the despotic Tsarist government was justified. He accused Herzen of being as super-nationalistic as the Great Russians who condemned the insurrection in the name of "the integrity of the Empire." Thus, the Polish question caused an ever deepening estrangement between Bakunin and Herzen until Herzen's death in 1870.\(^\text{39}\)

\(^{39}\text{Cf. Correspondance de Bakoumine, pp. 219-20, 226, 257.}\)
Marx's and Engels's Comments on the Polish Insurrection

Unlike Herzen and Bakunin, Marx and Engels had not established a close contact with the Polish radicals before the insurrection, and during the insurrection they refrained from public statements in favor of Polish liberation. They preferred to exchange their views on the development of the insurrection in their letters.

When the Polish insurrection broke out, Marx and Engels hoped that it might lead to a European revolution. Marx greeted the insurrection as the beginning of a new "era of revolution in Europe," but the ebullient enthusiasm of 1848 had vanished.

In a letter to Engels of February 13, 1863 Marx stated:

The comfortable illusions and almost childish enthusiasm with which we greeted the revolutionary era before February, 1848 went to the devil ... Today we know what part stupidity plays in revolutions, and how the latter are exploited by scoundrels.40

Marx and Engels followed with great interest the policies of the European governments towards the Polish insurgents, particularly of the Prussian government, then under the premiership of Otto von Bismarck since 1862. On February 8, 1863 the Prussian government concluded a military convention with Russia which was directed against the Polish insurrection. Bismarck was

40 MEGA, III/3, 126.
determined to prevent the encirclement of Prussia and Germany through a Franco-Russian alliance. As the Prussian ambassador to St. Petersburg (1859-62) Bismarck had become concerned with the pro-Polish policies of Alexander II. After his accession to the throne (1855) Alexander II had appointed the Polish Margrave Alexander Wielopolski, who was a Germanophobe, as the head of the entire civil administration in the Polish Kingdom. Bismarck feared that the pro-Polish policy of the Russian government might lead to a Franco-Russian understanding which was favored by Prince Alexander Gorchakov, the Russian foreign minister. The Polish insurrection of 1863 offered Bismarck the chance to prevent such a development as well as a European conflict which might have resulted from it.

In 1863 Bismarck was as much against a restoration of Poland as he had been at the time of the Crimean War. He had remained convinced that the restoration of Poland would not agree with the vital interests of Prussia. In his statements on the Polish question of 1863 he maintained that a restored Poland was more dangerous to Prussia than the Russian Empire. An

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independent Poland would become "a French encampment on the Vistula." Prussia would be faced with the threat of a Franco-
Polish encirclement. Bismarck warned the British and French diplomats that Prussia would not tolerate an independent Poland. When the Polish insurrection was debated in the Prussian House of Representatives, Bismarck declared on February 18, 1863:

I admit that Russia does not make Prussian policy; it has not been called to do so... But I ask whether an independent Poland which claims the territory of Danzig would make Prussian policy.

Apart from such considerations, Bismarck favored the suppression of the Polish insurrection by the Russians because he feared that the insurrection might develop into a European revolution against the established governments.

Marx and Engels condemned Bismarck's policy which supported the maintenance of the status quo in the Polish Kingdom. They were exasperated that Bismarck was against the Polish insurrection although it was directed against Russian rule. In their eyes this proved that Bismarck was the handyman of Russia. He continued the traditional Hohenzollern policy which had subjected Germany to Russian hegemony in order to preserve the integrity of the Prussian state. The Russo-Prussian military convention confirmed that Prussia remained an obstacle to the unification of Germany.
The Prussian liberals supported Bismarck's anti-Polish policies. On February 27, 1863 Baron Georg von Vincke stated in the House of Representatives that only a partitioned Poland guaranteed the existence of the Prussian state. On March 24, 1863 Marx commented in a letter to Engels:

Indeed, Vincke and Bismarck have correctly interpreted the Prussian political principle according to which the Prussian state... cannot exist without present-day Russia nor at the side of an independent Poland. The whole Prussian history leads to this conclusion... Since Poland is necessary for Germany, but cannot coexist with a Prussian state, this state has to be eliminated. The Polish question is only a new proof that it is impossible to assert German interests as long as the Hohenzollern state exists. Down with the Russian hegemony in Germany.43

Marx and Engels hoped that German-Polish collaboration would soon replace the Prusso-Russian one. This would also eliminate the danger of a Polish-French or Polish-Russian collaboration which Marx and Engels feared as much as Bismarck.

From the outset of the Polish insurrection both the conservative Czartoryski camp in Paris, which worked closely together with the French government, and the democratic Mierosławski camp had expected French intervention on behalf of the Polish insurgents.44 In their letters Marx and Engels sharply

43 MEGA, III/3, 132.

44 Since the fifties Mierosławski had urged the French to collaborate with the Poles for the restoration of Poland. In 1856 he warned the French that Germany was too weak to protect France from the Russian danger. Only a restored Poland would guarantee peace to France. Louis Mierosławski, De la nationalité polonaise dans l'équilibre européen (Paris: I. Chamerot, 1856), p. 56.
criticized the policies of the Polish democrats. As did the Polish conservatives, the democrats supported Napoleon III in the hope that he would help liberate the Poles. According to Marx and Engels this policy actually contributed to weaken the Polish insurrection. They were convinced that Napoleon had smuggled followers of Prince Adam Czartoryski into the revolutionary government in Warsaw in order to overthrow it, and that Palmerston supported the intentions of Napoleon.45

Marx and Engels believed that the willingness of the Poles to collaborate with Napoleon III endangered Germany more directly than did the Polish insurrection. They feared that Napoleon might use the Polish insurrection to strengthen his position in France through a war against Germany. In a letter to Engels of February 21, 1863 Marx wrote:

What I fear most in the Polish affair is that the Sau-Bonaparte (pig-Bonaparte) will find a pretext to advance to the Rhine and thus be enabled to piss on the dreadful situation.46

Many months later, on January 3, 1864, Engels still complained to Marx about the "Plon-Plonism" (a term used by Marx and Engels to describe the enthusiasm for Napoleon III) of the Poles and the Hungarians. He remarked that these people could only be cured from their Francophile attitude if a revolution broke out in

46 MEGA, III/3, 131.
Berlin and Vienna, and if the German revolutionary governments made "sufficient concessions" to Poland and Hungary. However, Engels considered it to be more likely that the Polish insurrection would bring about the restoration of the Holy Alliance for the preservation of the partition of Poland. This would correspond to the highest expectations of Napoleon.

Could he [Napoleon] desire more than the restoration of the Holy Alliance and a war both for the Rhine and Poland supported by England, Italy, and all the small European states?47

Such a development would endanger Germany. Although Marx and Engels did not approve of Bismarck's policies, they shared his apprehension that the crisis of 1863 might lead to an encirclement of Germany.

Marx and Engels were much less worried about Kolokol's propaganda for Polish-Russian revolutionary collaboration. They wondered whether Herzen and Bakunin would actually support the liberation of the Polish Kingdom from Russian rule. Soon after the outbreak of the Polish insurrection Marx asked Engels, who understood Russian, "to watch Kolokol." He added: "Herzen and Co. have now the opportunity to prove their revolutionary honesty, at least as far as it is compatible with their Slavic predilections."48 A few days later Engels reported about the

47 Ibid., p. 163.
violent controversy which had erupted between Bakunin and Mierosławski regarding the territorial extension of a restored Poland. He told Marx that he had subscribed to Kolokol in order to hear more about it. Marx and Engels must have relished this controversy which revealed that the Polish-Russian collaboration, which they had opposed for years, was built on unsafe grounds. They must also have welcomed the Russophobia of Mierosławski. The Polish Colonel Teofil Łapiński, whom Bakunin found unbearable because of his violent anti-Russian feelings, was quite acceptable to Marx. Łapiński hated the Russians not only because they oppressed the Poles but because in his opinion they were not Slavs. He objected to Polish-Russian collaboration and supported the restoration of Poland under the rule of the Poles. In a letter of September 12, 1863 to Engels, Marx commented approvingly: "Instead of the struggle of nationalities the latter [Łapinski] only acknowledges the struggles of races."49

Two years later, in 1865, when Marx read the book by the Frenchman Élias Regnault La question européenne faussement nommées "la question polonaise," published in 1863, he understood that Łapiński had been influenced by the Pole Franciszek Duchinski. Since the 1850's this Polish nationalist used a racial theory in support of the restoration of Poland. He maintained

49Ibid., p. 155.
that the "Muscovites" (Great Russians) belonged to the Turanian or Mongolian race as did the Turks, Jews, and Chinese, while the Slavs were Indoeuropeans like the Latin and Germanic people, that is, members of the Aryan race. According to Duchiński the Aryans were creative, attached to the soil, and had formulated the concept of private property. The Turanian race, instead, was servile, preferred the nomadic life, uniformity, and business activities. It was an inferior race.

On the basis of this racial theory Duchiński claimed that the eastern Polish borders of 1772 along the Dvina and the Dnieper rivers marked the natural borders of the European and Slavic world and the beginning of Asia. A restored Poland would become the easternmost outpost of Europe against the barbaric world. Duchiński rejected the right to national self-determination of the White Russians, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians. He claimed that these nationalities had been Polonized. Therefore, Polish rule over them was justified.50

Marx welcomed Duchiński's racial theory as an excellent means to fight the Russians and Polish-Russian collaboration. He wished "that Duchiński was right, and that his theory would

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50 Elias Regnault, an opponent of Proudhon, used Duchiński's racial theory in defense of his view that the Great Russians should be excluded from a future reorganization of Europe. In 1864 Duchiński agitated for the restoration of Poland as an outpost against the Asiatic world in his book Peuples aryas et turans, agriculteurs et nomades (Paris: F. Klincksieck, 1864).
prevail among the Slavs." This would certainly "cause a dreadful end to Pan-Slavism."\textsuperscript{51}

Although Marx and Engels were not in favor of Polish-Russian collaboration, yet, at the outset of the Polish insurrection they hoped that the latter would develop into an uprising of the peasants in the whole Russian Empire. During the second months of the insurrection Marx and Engels began to have misgivings as to its outcome because a vigorous peasant movement did not materialize in the Polish Kingdom. However, Engels still clung to the hope that the insurrection in the Kingdom might be strengthened by a peasant uprising in Lithuania.\textsuperscript{52} But, early in June, Marx and Engels became convinced that the insurrection lacked vitality because neither in the Polish Kingdom nor in Lithuania nor in the Ukraine was it supported by the peasants. Marx was surprised that even the Great Russian peasants had remained apathetic.\textsuperscript{53} But until the disastrous end of the Polish insurrection Marx and Engels continued to hope that it might still be saved by a European revolutionary movement which this time might start in Berlin, rather than in Paris.

\textsuperscript{51}MEGA, III/3, 276.

\textsuperscript{52}Engel's letter to Marx, April 8, 1863, MEGA, III/3, p. 135.

\textsuperscript{53}Marx's letter to Engels, June 10, 1863, MEGA, III/3, pp. 143-44.
It seems that initially Marx and Engels intended to conduct an active propaganda for the liberation of the Poles. In a letter to Engels of February 20, 1863 Marx proposed to support the Polish insurrection with a proclamation and a pamphlet on the Polish situation. Engels was enthusiastic about this idea. He suggested that the pamphlet should be entitled Deutschland und Polen. Politisch-militärische Betrachtungen bei Gelegenheit des polnischen Aufstandes von 1863. The pamphlet was to cover the following problems: Russia's military position in relation to Western and Southeastern Europe before and after the three partitions of Poland, as well as after 1814; the position of Russia and Germany after a restoration of Poland, including some statements on "Prussian Poland, linguistic borders, and statistical data on its population." From these scanty remarks it may be derived that Engels proposed the same kind of propaganda which Marx had employed in his pamphlet Herr Vogt. Therein, Marx had emphasized the Russian military threat to Europe and Germany through the destruction of Poland, but he did not support the surrender of Prussian Poland to the Poles.

As mentioned earlier, in the course of 1863 Marx composed a group of manuscripts on Polen, Preussen und Russland, which remained unfinished and unpublished at the time. In these

\[\text{MEGA, III/3, 130-31.}\]
manuscripts he concentrated on the condemnation of Prussia's collaboration with Russia as an immense obstacle to any political or social changes in Germany and Poland. The restoration of Poland would push Russia out of Europe, reduce it to the "level of an Asiatic power," and depose it from its "candidature to world power." Deprived of its Russian support, the Prussian state would be ruined. It would become a mere German province in a united Germany. Then, Germany would be liberated from the "Tartar yoke of the Muscovites" which had been consolidated through the Polish partition of 1795.

As in his pamphlet against Karl Vogt, Marx warned that the complete incorporation of the Polish Kingdom into Russia would permit the Tsarist government to unite all the Slavs under its rule and deprive Germany of the Polish barrier against the "Slavic deluge." Marx declared: "For Germany all the foreign political questions are included in one single problem: the restoration of Poland." This would be the major aim of revolutionary Germany. Marx refrained from making any definite statements on the territorial extension of a restored Poland. However, he expressed his concern for the safety of the eastern German border as he had done previously. This indicated that

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55 Marx, Die Polnische Frage, p. 93.
56 Ibid.
revolutionary Germany would not promote the surrender of the Grand Duchy of Poznan and West Prussia to the Poles. From a Russian outpost against Germany, Poland was merely to be changed into a German outpost against Russia.

The question arises why did Marx not try to finish his manuscripts for publication. Obviously, Marx and Engels were hesitant about getting involved in the Polish affair when the insurrection did not promise to develop into a European revolutionary movement in which Germany participated. When in the spring of 1863 the German Workingmen's Association issued a proclamation in support of a collection for the Polish insurrection, Marx's name was not mentioned although the proclamation betrayed his authorship. The proclamation stated that the restoration of Poland, which was necessary for Germany, depended upon the support of the working classes because the bourgeoisie collaborated with Russia. The German workers were urged to hold mass meetings and agitate for the liberation of the Poles.

While Marx and Engels avoided public statements in support of the Polish insurrection, although they hoped that it would cause a European conflagration, Proudhon became actively involved in the agitation against the Polish fight for liberty. When the Polish insurrection broke out, he was convinced that this was a foolish undertaking. In 1864 he published a pamphlet,
Si les traités de 1815 ont cessé d'existence, in which he condemned the Polish insurgents for their attempt to overthrow the stipulations of the Vienna treaties.

There is something . . . exorbitant in this sacrifice of the interests of a whole continent to the satisfaction of one nationality which has been abolished for more than a century.  

Proudhon repeated that European progress could only be safeguarded through the maintenance of the status quo. He appealed to the Polish insurgents to lay down their arms, and he urged the European radicals not to support the Polish insurrection and to prevent a European war.

Proudhon insisted that the szlachta would not bring about any changes in Poland. They had no political sense. They had not even taken advantage of the constitution granted to the Polish Kingdom by Alexander I in 1815 in order to promulgate the necessary agrarian reforms. Thereby, the szlachta might have promoted the modernization of the Russian Empire. Instead, the aristocracy permitted Russia to take the initiative in the liberation of the peasants. Proudhon said that this deprived the Polish aristocrats of their traditional argument that the Tsarist government had prevented them from freeing the peasants.

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58 Ibid., p. 90.
Proudhon also repeated his warnings against the "monstrous" wholesale condemnation of the Russian people. He argued that the Russians were actually superior to the Poles because of their political qualifications. It was criminal to present the restoration of Poland as the salvation of Europe from Muscovite barbarism. Proudhon regarded the racial theory of Franciszek Duchiński, which denied the Russians the right to belong to the civilized world, as one of the vilest examples of anti-Russian propaganda. In Proudhon's opinion Duchiński's contention that the natural borders of the Polish nationality extended to the Dvina and Dnieper was absurd. "The Lithuanians are not Poles, and the inhabitants of East Prussia and of the Grand Duchy of Posen, partly German or Germanized, cannot become Polish again." 59

According to Proudhon the essence of the Polish question was the desire of the Poles to replace the Russian hegemony in Eastern Europe with their own. However, this would hinder the development of the Polish people and European revolutionary progress because a restored Poland would become the supporter of the reactionary forces to an even greater degree than Russia. Europe would best be protected by Russian progress in civilization and the liberation of the peasants.

59 Ibid., p. 96.
Proudhon's condemnation of the Polish insurrection called forth a strong reaction in France. The critique of Proudhon was summed up by the Frenchman Constant Portelette in 1864. He accused Proudhon of being deaf to human suffering. The Poles had a right to fight for their liberty, even if this endangered the peace of Europe. At times, it was necessary to sacrifice peace in order "to save liberty." It was immoral to sacrifice the Poles to some uncertain higher goal—disarmament and universal peace:

Yes, war is terrible; but if we have to do our duty, we have to defend the oppressed people, and we should not speak of the monstrosities of war. 60

Marx and Engels did not refer to Proudhon's anti-Polish propaganda in their correspondence. Yet, it is hardly possible that they remained unaware of the controversy between Proudhon and the French republicans. Not only were there differences in the political outlook of the two friends and that of Proudhon, but also striking similarities. While Marx and Engels believed that the victory of socialism depended upon a European conflagration, Proudhon supported the status quo in Europe because he was convinced that socialism would be the result of a peaceful evolution. Therefore, he was opposed to a war against Russia. This would not further progress. After all, the approach

of both Marx and Engels and Proudhon to the Eastern European problem was dictated by their interest in the victory of socialism. This hindered a realistic approach to the Russian problem and consequently to the Polish problem. Certainly Proudhon's approach to Russia was more superficial than that of Marx and Engels. Russia's foreign political aspirations, which were strongly criticized by Marx and Engels, apparently did not concern him. He did not perceive, as Marx did, the bitter irony that the Russian government, while it favored the liberation of the Slavs under foreign rule, simultaneously oppressed the national minorities in the Russian Empire. 61

In spite of their different views on the Polish insurrection Marx and Engels and Proudhon shared the same approach to the nationality principle. Both parties were convinced that the higher developed nation had the right to absorb the less advanced people. In their opinion the emphasis on national liberation distracted from the real problem of the age—the reorganization of the socio-economic order. The victory of socialism would ultimately solve the problem of national oppression. 62 Yet, Marx and Engels continued to favor the Polish


62 Such similarities were overlooked by the socialist V. Levynskyj. He maintained that while Marx and Engels wished for the assimilation of the non-historic nations, Proudhon desired their independent development. He referred to Proudhon's theory
opposition to Russian rule as a means to weaken Tsarist Russia and to bring about the European revolution. Proudhon, on the other hand, rejected the exploitation of national aspirations for the purpose of furthering the reorganization of the European socio-economic order convinced that wars would only prevent it. Proudhon died early in 1865. But his ideas exercised a strong influence on the formulation of a foreign policy in the First International Workingmen's Association.

of federalism which Proudhon had elaborated on in his book, Du principe fédéral et de la nécessité de reconstituer le parti de la révolution (1863). According to Levinskyj the theory of federalism guaranteed not only to each individual but also to each collective unit, consequently to a nation, "full material and spiritual development." After the destruction of the capitalist system it would be possible to realize the federalist system by concluding bilateral contracts which would preserve the liberty, sovereignty, and initiative of each partner. V. Levinskyj, Socialistychnyj International, pp. 35 ff.
CHAPTER VI

THE QUESTION OF A FOREIGN POLICY
IN THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

Marx's Fight for an Aggressive Foreign Policy

The end of the ill-fated Polish insurrection marked the definite termination of the period when the European Left unanimously agitated for the restoration of Poland. After 1864 Proudhon's opinion that sympathy for the Polish people must not be combined with an agitation for the immediate restoration of Poland was widely adopted in French and Belgian socialist circles. This had an impact upon the First International Workingmen's Association which was founded on September 28, 1864 in London to promote the collaboration of the European workers against the established governments. The Polish question stood at the cradle of the First International. This national question developed into one of the most controversial issues in the
International and contributed to an increase of the internal tensions in the organization which led to its early dissolution in 1872.  

The initiative for the founding of an international socialist organization came from the leaders of the English trade unions, among them George Odger and William Cremer. When the English government would not grant military aid to the Polish insurgents, the English labor leaders organized mass meetings in favor of the Polish cause. Late in 1863 they proposed to the Parisian workers to address a common petition to the English and French governments for the recognition of Poland as a belligerent power in its fight against Russia. They also suggested a permanent collaboration between the European workers. The fraternization of the people was necessary "to check the existing abuse of power . . . and to discuss the great questions on which the peace of the nations depends."  

The Polish insurrection was over before any definite action in its support had been taken. But the insurrection

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had contributed to the birth of the First International Workingmen's Association at the historical meeting at St. Martin's Hall in London on September 28, 1864. The meeting was mostly attended by Western Europeans. The Poles were the only representatives of the Slavs. Marx was also present, but did not speak. He and his friend George Eccarius were elected as German representatives to the Central Provisional Committee (replaced in 1866 by the General Council as the head of the new association) in which Marx soon gained great influence. In the following years Marx attempted to extend his control over the different sections of the International against the opposition of the followers of Proudhon and after 1868 against that of Bakunin.

The Inaugural Address which Marx composed at the invitation of the sub-committee (appointed by the Central Committee to draw up a programme and statutes) in the autumn of 1864 was moderate. It was a clever combination of his own views with insignificant concessions to his opponents. The Address appealed to the workers to fight for their liberation through

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2. The German workingmen's movement was not represented in the International in the first years of its existence. Lassalle who in 1863 had founded the first German workingmen's party Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein had been killed in a duel on August 31, 1864, shortly before the meeting at St. Martin's Hall. His successor in the presidency became J. B. von Schweitzer, but under him the Arbeiterverein did not join the International. It was not until 1868, when the German Social Democratic Party was founded, that the Germans entered the International.
"the conquest of political power" in each country and to formulate a common foreign policy which would counteract the exploitation of national prejudices by the governments. The Address maintained that the workers would deal with a reactionary country like Russia more efficiently than the European ruling classes who with idiotic indifference . . . have witnessed . . . heroic Poland being assassinated by Russia [and] the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power, whose head is at St. Petersburg and whose hands are in every cabinet of Europe.

It was the duty of the workers to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

When Marx composed the Provisional Rules of the International, he had to insert into the Preamble another reference to "truth, justice, and morality" as the basis of personal and international relations at the request of the subcommittee. In a letter to Engels of November 4, 1864 Marx remarked that he had put these words in such a manner "that they cannot do any harm." He was determined to keep the nationality

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5 Ibid., p. 289.

6 MEGA, III/3, 198.
Marx wished to give an anti-Russian slant to the foreign policy of the International. All of socialist-minded Western Europe was to be aligned against Russia. The anti-Russian slant of the Address was not mitigated by a declaration for a collaboration with the progressive Russians. Even in 1864, when an agrarian socialist movement existed in Russia, Marx would not officially acknowledge any changes in the Russian Empire and remained reluctant to differentiate between the government and the people.

As in 1848, Marx considered the war against Russia a "part of the general fight for the emancipation of the working classes." He insisted that the liberation of Poland should be included in the program of the International. Due to his instigation the following resolution was adopted by the Central Committee on November 25, 1864.

(1) That the Polish war of independence was conducted in the general interest of the people of Europe, and that by its defeat the cause of civilization and human progress suffered a severe shock. (2) That Poland has an unimpeachable claim upon the leading

Ibid.
nations of Europe that they contribute in every possible way towards the restoration of its national sovereignty.  

Marx used the Polish question not only to strengthen the anti-Russian front in the International but also to diminish the French influence. Many of the English intellectuals who favored the International, among them Prof. Edward Beesley, who had presided over the meeting at St. Martin's Hall, had great sympathies for France, its revolutionary tradition, its foreign policy, and even for Napoleon III. When Peter Fox, Beesley's friend, wrote a Polish address at the invitation of the sub-committee, he stated that French foreign policy had traditionally favored the Polish cause. Marx suspected Fox of having tried "to present the Anglo-French alliance, under a democratic form, as the nucleus of the International." In a letter of December 10, 1864 he informed Engels that in the sub-committee he had strongly criticized Fox's exaggerations of French pro-Polish foreign policies. In order to undermine Fox's pro-French position, Marx had "listed the irrefutable historical facts regarding the continuous betrayal of the Poles by the French from the time of Louis XV until Bonaparte III." Marx's objections to the address

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9 MEGA, III/3, 214.

10 Ibid.
by Fox were accepted by the sub-committee, and Fox was invited to change the address.

The controversy with Fox induced Marx to write the earlier mentioned pamphlet on *Polen und Frankreich* which remained unpublished at the time. In this pamphlet Marx maintained that France had never seriously supported the liberation of Poland because it needed the support of Russia in order to keep Germany disunited. He said that no changes of the traditional French policy could be expected from Napoleon III who was "on the throne by Russian permission," and who desired to partition Germany. "With the approval of the Tsar, Louis Bonaparte would, if necessary, incorporate the Rhine province into France, dismember Germany in the interest of Poland, and compensate the Tsar with the incorporation of Prussian Poland into Russia."\(^{11}\) According to Marx the foreign policy of Louis Napoleon III was the climax of French anti-European policies, that is, pro-Russian, anti-German, and anti-Polish policies. The Poles could not expect any help from France against Russia. Only revolutionary Germany would guarantee the liberation of Poland.

The first clash between the members of the International over the question of Polish restoration occurred at the London

\(^{11}\) Marx, *Die polnische Frage*, p. 195.
Conference late in September, 1865. The preliminary program for the first general congress of the International, to be held in 1866, had been elaborated by the sub-committee in the preceding months. It was amended and approved by the Central Committee on July 25, 1865. Point 9 of the program, for which Marx was largely responsible, read:

The Muscovite invasion of Europe and the re-establishment of an independent and integral Poland.

When the program was submitted to the delegates at the London Conference, a heated debate developed over point 9 during the session of September 27, 1865.

Originally it had been planned to hold the first general congress of the International in Brussels in the summer of 1865. Against the opposition of the Parisians and the Swiss, Marx was able "to transform the public congress, to be held in Brussels, into a preliminary private conference in London." Cf. Marx's letter to Engels of July 31, 1865, in Der Briefwechsel zwischen Friedrich Engels und Karl Marx, 1844 bis 1883, ed. by August Bebel and Eduard Bernstein (4 vols.; Stuttgart: J. H. W. Dietz Nachf., GmbH, 1919), I, 213. The London conference was attended by a limited number of delegates from England, France, Belgium, and Switzerland, by two German delegates of the German Workers Educational League in London, by Marx and Hermann Jung as corresponding secretaries for Germany and Switzerland respectively, and by George Eccarius as vice-president of the Central Committee.


In order to reconstruct the controversy regarding point 9, the following three reports which vary in tone and completeness were used: "Extract from the Minutes of the London Conference" (session of September 27, 1865) and "Extract from the Report on the London Conference," published in the English radical newspaper, The Workman's Advocate (London), on September 30, 1865, in Documents of the International, I, 246-47, (Cf. also Archives
Point 9 aimed at an aggressive anti-Russian policy, that is, the restoration of Poland through the destruction of the Russian Empire. Although the delegates agreed that the Polish people should be free, they did not unanimously support a war against Russia for the liberation of Poland. In general those delegates who supported point 9, mostly Englishmen and Germans, held that Russia must be destroyed because it was the most dangerous threat to European progress. The opponents of point 9, foremost among them the French and the Belgian delegates, felt that it was unjust to single out Russian despotism as the main danger to European progress because the Western European governments were no less despotic. It was argued that if the Poles had to be freed from Russian oppression, then the Irish who suffered under English rule should also be liberated.

Several propositions were submitted regarding the definite formulation of point 9. The fourth proposition by the Pole Konstantin Bobczyński was thus worded: 15

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15 In the mid-fifties Konstantin Bobczyński was a leading member of the London Centralization. He participated in the Polish insurrection of 1863, was nominated a member of the Central Committee, September 19, 1865, corresponding secretary for Poland, May 8, 1866, and was re-elected a member of the General Council at the Geneva Congress in September, 1866.
That it is imperative to annihilate the invading influence of Russia in Europe by applying to Poland the right of every people to dispose of itself, and re-establishing that country on a social and democratic basis.⁶

The Frenchman Victor Le Lubez proposed, "that only the latter part of the proposition be retained, that is— that peoples have a right to dispose of themselves." ¹⁷ Then the demand for Polish liberty would be of universal significance. Although the English delegate John Weston supported the amendment proposed by Le Lubez, he opposed the introduction of political questions into the program of the International. This would only cause dissent.

The Belgian César De Paepe, a prominent participant of the London Conference, was among the most outspoken opponents of point 9. He demanded that the Polish question should not be put on the agenda. The restoration of Poland would not be in the interest of progress. It would only serve the Polish magnates, the gentry, and the clergy, not the people. De Paepe rejected the unilateral condemnation of Russia as a danger to European liberty. The Russians were not worse than other people and could not be held responsible for the destruction of Poland.

¹⁶Documents of the International, I, 246. In The Workman's Advocate of September 30, 1865 the resolution was worded somewhat differently: "... and to re-establish that country upon its native democratic basis," in Archives Bakounine, II, 228.

¹⁷Documents of the International, I, 246.
If it were necessary to destroy the influence of the Russian government in Europe, then it was equally necessary to check the influence of the other European governments. De Paepe asked: "Is the influence of the Prussian, Austrian, English, and French governments less baneful than that of Russia? I say no." Besides, it would be unjust to mention only the Poles because so many people suffered under foreign rule.

When Bobczyński replied to the objections raised against the introduction of the Polish question into the program of the International, he insisted that the restoration of a democratic Poland was the "key to European freedom." Bobczyński warned against separating the political from the social questions. "Political reforms must precede social advancement." The Chairman George Odger, who supported Bobczyński's viewpoint, insisted that the International originated from the concern for Poland. The International would stand or fall with the Polish cause. The Englishman James Carter also opposed the separation of the political from the social questions. The liberation of the Poles was necessary to prevent the spread of despotism.

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18 Ibid.

19 Archives Bakounine, II, 229.
When the Chairman put Bobczyński's proposition to the vote, it was adopted by an overwhelming majority. When the Frenchman Pierre Vésinier demanded that the names of other oppressed nationalities be included in the resolution, the Chairman declared that this was against the rules since the question had been resolved. 20

In the official reports on the controversy over point 9 at the London Conference the name of Marx did not appear. Vésinier, who was one of the more impressive figures at the conference, was only briefly mentioned. Yet, he was an outspoken opponent of Marx. This can be derived from Vésinier's report on the London Conference. Vésinier was dissatisfied with the London program because it lacked a "rational plan." His critique centered on point 9 which called for the fight against Russia and the restoration of Poland. Vésinier said that Marx, who suffered from a Russophobe monomania, was its main inspirator. Marx had not been satisfied with introducing the Russo-Polish question into the Inaugural Address. He had also entered it into the program of the

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20 Pierre Vésinier (1824-1902) was exiled from France after the coup d'état of Louis Napoleon of December 2, 1851. On September 19, 1865 he was elected a member of the General Council. He wrote a number of works against Napoleon III and Bonapartism. In 1870 he became a member of the Paris Commune. After the fall of the Commune he went back to England and was active in the French branch of the International. He was strongly opposed to the General Council which tried to centralize the administration of the International.
International. This was "completely inopportune and contrary to the aim pursued by the Association and to the principle of right and justice," Vésinier condemned the delegates who had supported point 9.

According to Vésinier Marx's victory was due to two factors: (1) the pro-Polish sympathies of the influential Parisian delegation; and, (2) the presence of a great number of Poles at the conference. Vésinier claimed that the Parisians were naturally predisposed to adopt Marx's position. In 1864 they had addressed a petition to Napoleon III for his intervention in favor of Polish liberation. Evidently they were willing to support the restoration of a reactionary Poland. As to the


22 Obviously Vésinier was mistaken in his judgment of the Parisian delegation represented by Henri-Louis Tolain, Charles Limousin, Louis-Eugene Varlin, and E.-E. Fribourg. In his book on the First International, Fribourg stated that the Parisians were strongly opposed to the introduction of point 9 in a socialist congress because it was a political question. According to him the Parisian position was supported by François Dupleix, the delegate of the French section of Geneva. But among the members of the Central Committee only De Paepe was against point 9, while Karl Marx, Peter Fox, and Le Lubez were for it. Fribourg maintained that even Vésinier fought the omission of the Polish question and attacked the opponents of point 9 as agents of the French Emperor Napoleon III who was believed to be a Russophile. Doubtless Fribourg was mistaken in this. Cf. E.-E. Fribourg, L'Association International des Travailleurs (Paris: Armand Le Chevalier, Editeur, 1871), pp. 44-45. The report of César De Paepe corroborates Vésinier's. According to him Vésinier demanded that if the Polish Republic were to be restored, the former Venetian, Roman, French, and Mexican republics should also be restored. De Paepe remarked that Vésinier, Tolain, and Fribourg were seriously interested in the debates on point 9. Cf. Archives Bakounine, II, p. 230.
Poles, Vésinier held that they acted as a pressure group. In their speeches the Poles addressed themselves to the emotions of the delegates and created a climate of opinion favorable to their wishes for Polish restoration. They insisted upon an indiscriminate condemnation of Russia and did not distinguish between the Russian people and their government. Vésinier mentioned that some delegates went so far as to demand that "Russia should be driven back into Asia."

According to Vésinier, Marx did not participate in the heated debates. Since he was "completely incapable of speaking in public . . . he merely supported the well-defended proposition with a gesture and his influence." Vésinier maintained that Marx achieved his goal because, instead of logical reasoning, emotions prevailed in the debates on point 9. Even the opponents were touched by the efforts of the Polish exiles to keep the Polish question on the agenda, and they hesitated to contradict the Poles. They feared that they might be considered as supporters of Russian despotism. Vésinier remarked that when De Paepe, in spite of his sympathy for the oppressed Polish people, dared to condemn point 9, he practically asked the audience to forgive him and not to consider him as a "Russian agent."

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23 Archives Bakounine, II, 233.
Evidently Vésinier was very attracted to De Paepe's arguments because he shared the basic assumption of the Belgian delegate that Russia had already entered a period of progress. Accordingly, he reported more extensively on De Paepe's speech. De Paepe did not believe that the restoration of Poland would guarantee liberty to the peasants. The Polish nobles were still too powerful, and they were only interested in the territorial restoration of Poland and in the preservation of their privileges. Therefore, the peasants could only expect their final liberation from Russia which had already improved their lot.

Vésinier's report on his own speech reveals that he was as embarrassed as De Paepe when he opposed the adoption of point 9. As did the Belgian delegate, Vésinier upheld the right of the Polish people to liberty, but he opposed the restoration of Poland because the people would not profit from it. A restored Poland would become a reactionary state dominated by the nobles. Vésinier also defended the right of the Russian people to liberty. It was unjust to treat the Russians as outcasts. They were neither responsible for the crimes committed by their despotic rulers, nor were they as backward as was generally maintained. The peasants and also the members of the Russian intelligentsia, among them the exiles Herzen and Bakunin, hoped for a socialist revolution. According to Vésinier even the
Russian government was not altogether unaware of the needs of the modern age. It had introduced peasant reforms and planned to connect Europe with India, and China through the construction of railroads. Therefore, it would be a grave mistake to place "a great nation, a whole human race, under the ban of Europe."

Vésinier insinuated that Russia was not a threat to Europe because its main interest lay in Asia where it played "a great civilizing and emancipating role."

Vésinier insisted that the extremely one-sided anti-Russian foreign policy of the International, as proposed in point 9, was even less justified when considering that dictatorship, centralization, and militarism were not restricted to the Russian Empire. The audience reacted violently when Vésinier declared that Napoleon III was worse than Alexander II. While the Russian Tsar had at least liberated 50,000,000 serfs, Napoleon III had helped to destroy the Roman and Mexican republics. He had enslaved the French nation and conspired with Bismarck for the establishment of the supremacy of the great military nations. Vésinier suggested that Marx should be more immediately concerned with "the Prussian ambition and the Bismarckian influence" in Europe than with the "Muscovite" danger. He concluded that the formulation of a foreign policy of the International was only justifiable if it included "the liberation of all the oppressed nationalities" because it was
the primary task of the International to further the fraternization and solidarity of all the people.

A few months after the London Conference Vésinier attacked the introduction of point 9 in the preliminary program of the International in the Belgian newspaper Echo de Verviers on December 16 and 18, 1865. He ascribed the adoption of point 9 to the "regrettable influence" of Marx, the Parisians, and the Poles. Their one-sided view of the European situation resulted in the condemnation of Russia at a moment when, through the emancipation of the Russian and Polish serfs, this country had proved to be more progressive than the Polish nobles and priests.

In the opinion of Vésinier the adoption of point 9 endangered the very foundations of the International. Vésinier maintained that many Poles wished to join the organization so that they might use it to further their own nationalist aims: "Thus, because of the mistake of the Central Committee, the Association . . . has been turned from its real aim—the liberation of labor." Vésinier charged the Central Committee with having degenerated into a "committee of nationalities under the influence of Bonapartism." The International could only be saved by the election of new delegates to the Geneva Congress and the nomination of a General Council which could be composed

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24 Archives Bakounine, II, 429.
of workers from each nation who alone would have a real interest in the liberation of labor.

Vésinier's article appeared at a time when the controversy over point 9 continued in Paris. The reaction of the Paris office of the International was as negative as Vésinier's. When the Parisians published a brochure, Le congrès ouvriers, in 1866, the paragraph on Russia and Poland was omitted. But when the French historian and politician Henri Martin reported on the London Conference in the Paris newspaper Le Siècle on October 14, 1865, he gave a full statement of the program for the Geneva Congress to be held in 1866 and defended point 9. According to Martin the demand for the restoration of Poland on a social-democratic basis had already been stated in the revolutionary decrees of the Polish insurgents in 1863. Point 9 was "the reply of true socialism and social progress, in concordance with justice and liberty, to the communist despotism of Muscovy." Martin's position was criticized by the French Proudhonist August Vermorel in the Paris newspaper La Presse on October 17, 1865. Vermorel declared that the Poles had as much a right to national self-determination as did all the other people under

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25 The report was reprinted in the London newspaper The Workman's Advocate, November 18, 1865, quoted in Archives Bakounine, 11, 427.

26 Documents of the First International, 1, 141.
foreign rule. However, true socialism would not be furthered if
the International supported a war against Russia. This would
only divert the workers from their immediate aim: "to accomplish
the task of economic emancipation which needs peace and liberty
as an essential condition." 27

Marx, who closely followed the reaction to the London
Conference, referred to the Paris controversy in a letter to
Engels of November 20, 1865. He was highly satisfied that the
liberal and republican newspapers had reported on the London
Conference, and that point 9, in particular, had received their
approval. This had helped to publicize the International and to
drown the opposition. Marx did not hide his feeling of triumph.
He commented in his letter to Engels:

Our Parisians are somewhat flabbergasted that the
greatest sensation is caused by the paragraph on
Russia and Poland which they rejected. 28

Marx's satisfaction with the warm reception of point 9
by the non-socialist commentators was certainly surprising. It
suggests that Marx, who preferred to weaken his opponents by
indirect maneuvers, agitated for an active support of Polish
liberation in order to fight his strongest ideological opponents
in the International--the Proudhonists who were mainly French.
The Proudhonists could be expected to disagree with a belligerent

27 Archives Bakounine, II, 428.
28 MEGA, III/3, 280.
policy of the International, and since the Polish question had not yet lost its appeal, this might lead to their isolation.

The assumption that Marx aimed at the isolation of the Proudhonists is born out by the later development. The London Conference had accentuated his hostility towards the Proudhonists. Marx became convinced that they suffered from a superiority complex believing themselves to be the real representatives of the International, but actually they were traitors. In a letter to Engels of January 5, 1866 Marx remarked that at the Conference the Polish question was "the true nerve of the polemic." Those who attacked point 9 were imbued with the "Muscovitism of Proudhon and Herzen." Marx concluded that the Russians found in the "Proudhonized part of Jeune France their newest allies." He branded his ideological opponents as supporters of Russian imperialism. Russophobia was to be the badge of the true member of the International.

Marx had conceived a particular dislike for Vésinier whom he regarded as a leading member of the "Proudhonist gang" which had infiltrated the Belgian and London French sections of the International. Marx was enraged that Vésinier had interpreted the defense of Polish restoration under point 9 as a defense of the nationality principle. He had as little interest as Vésinier

29Ibid., p. 302.
in turning the International into a defender of the nationality principle. In a letter to Engels of January 15, 1866 Marx called Vésinier a "jackass." The Frenchman had not understood that "our declaration for Poland" was not influenced by the Bonapartist nationality principle or Polish ascendancy in the International but by the opposition to Russia. 30

A month later Marx composed an official answer to Vésinier's article for the Central Committee which appeared in L'Echo de Verviers on February 20, 1866 and was signed by Georg Jung. Vésinier was ridiculed for having assumed that the introduction of the Russo-Polish question, that is, a political question, in the provisional program of the International was an innovation due to certain "regrettable influences"—meaning the Poles and Bonapartism. Marx declared that the Inaugural Address was certainly above suspicion of having resulted from a conspiracy. However, the Address had also voiced the demand for the destruction of the "Muscovite influence in Europe." Point 9 merely repeated this demand. 31

As the Geneva Congress drew nearer, Marx apparently became quite concerned with the opposition to point 9. At his request Engels wrote a series of articles entitled, "What have

30 Ibid., p. 303.
31 Documents of the First International, I, 325.
the Working Classes to do with Poland," which were published in
the English newspaper Commonwealth on March 24, 31 and May 5,
1866. In these articles Engels defended the introduction of
point 9 in the program of the International against the opposition
of the Proudhonists. He declared that since the forties the
working classes had pursued a pro-Polish policy which aimed at
"intervention [and] a war against Russia as long as Russia
meddles with Poland." According to Engels the International
continued the traditional pro-Polish and anti-Russian policy of
the "progressive and thinking" workers.

The Proudhonists who objected to point 9 were branded
as Russophiles who opposed the wishes of the majority in the
International. According to Engels they pursued the same
reactionary policy as the Tories in England who hailed Russia
as the most progressive nation on earth which should not be
excluded from civilized Europe.

As Marx had done in his manuscripts of 1863 and 1864,
Engels minimized the German responsibility for the partition
of Poland. The main culprit was Russia, while Prussia and
Austria, who were Russian vassals, had been forced to comply
with the wishes of their Russian overlord to destroy Poland.

Engels objected to the demands for a distinction between the Russian government and the people which had been voiced by the opponents of point 9. As long as a class conscious industrial proletariat did not exist in Russia, the Russian people were as responsible as their government for the oppression of the Poles. The case was different in Germany where the class fight had started. The German workers were not responsible for the anti-Polish policy of Prussia. One of their main aims was German unification which could only be achieved through Germany's liberation from Russian vassalage. Therefore, the German workers had a "greater interest" in Polish liberation than the workers of other countries.

The essence of Engels's arguments was that the German workers were the most ardent promoters of an anti-Russian foreign policy and, therefore, the foremost defenders of European liberty. Should the German workers fight Russia to protect their own interests, they would also protect all of Europe. German and European interests coincided. The important political role of a revolutionary Germany in Europe was stressed even more when Engels insinuated that there was no absolute reliance on Polish hostility towards Russia. The Poles might suddenly submit to Russian rule hoping that this might bring about a partial restoration of Poland "with the Russian Tsar as king." Engels's
line of argumentation imperceptibly led to a defense of German leadership in the International and in Europe because the German workers represented the true revolutionary spirit, not the Frenchmen.

Engels was particularly anxious to refute the contention of the opponents of point 9 that the support of Polish liberation meant the adoption of the nationality principle by the International. As he had done in the past, he defended the territorial integrity of the "historical nations" who originated from the assimilation of different nationalities in a long historical process. He said that it would be absurd to destroy the historical nations in order to liberate nationalities which would be unable to remain independent. The Poles, however, were not a nationality. They were a "large and well defined" historical nation as were the French, Italians, Hungarians, or the English. They had the same vitality to lead an independent national life. This justified the Polish demand for the restoration of Poland and the support of that demand by the International.

Although Engels defended the creation of large political units through the annexation of foreign nationalities, he did not apply the same criterion to the Russian Empire. According to him Russia did not belong to the European historical nations because it had been unable to integrate the conquered people.
Therefore, the partition of Russia was justified. Russia had become the "retainer of an immense amount of stolen property which would have to be disgorged on the day of reckoning." 33

This time Engels maintained that the nationality principle was "a Russian invention concocted to destroy Poland." The Russians had used it to incite the Ukrainians and White Russians against the Polish government and to swallow most of Poland. The Russian propaganda for a Pan-Slav union was merely "the application of the nationality principle" to the Slavs under German, Hungarian, and Turkish rule. The aim was the destruction of the Austrian Empire and the conquest of the Balkans and Constantinople. This proved, said Engels, that Russia would never give up its rule over Poland without a fight.

When Engels defended the restoration of Poland, he adopted the position of the Polish left-wing democrats. He stressed the point that the restoration of Poland meant "the restoration of a state composed of at least four different nationalities"—the Poles, the non-Slavic Lithuanians, the White Russians, speaking a language

between Polish and Russian but nearer the latter ... [and] the Little Russians ... whose language, according to the best authorities, is now considered

33 Ibid., p. 215.
as being completely distinct from the Great Russian, or commonly called, Russian language. 34

No longer did Engels endorse the popular argument that the nationalities of the former eastern Polish provinces had been Polonized, nor did he revert to his opinion of the fifties that they had been Russianized. He admitted that the Poles as well as the Russians had failed to assimilate the foreign nationalities. Yet, he insisted that the former eastern Polish territories belonged to Poland by historical right because they were under Polish rule long before a Russian Empire existed.

Engels's defense of Polish claims ended with the conclusion that Poland must be restored because it had formerly existed. This was contrary to the basic convictions of Engels shared by Marx. In the past years Engels had repeatedly declared that a nation had a right to dominate foreign people if it were either more progressive or more revolutionary. Apparently in the mid-sixties he did not believe that the Poles were either a revolutionary or a civilizing force among the Slavs. He insisted that the destruction of the Polish Republic was due to its backwardness. Simultaneously, he made no attempt to prove that a Polish revival was at hand although the Polish-Russian customs union of 1856 had already effected economic changes in the Polish Kingdom. Since Engels had often denied that backward

34 Ibid., p. 217.
nations had a right to an independent national existence, the logical conclusion would be that in his opinion the backward Poles had forfeited this right. Thus, Engels's agitation for Polish restoration acquired a futile character. However, it helped to fight ideological opponents in the International.

Besides, Engels's polemic against the nationality principle gave him the opportunity to indirectly defend German rule over the Slavs. If non-Polish provinces were to be restored to Poland on the basis of the historical right principle, the Western Slavs, including the Poles in Poznania, were not justified in demanding their liberation from German rule.

The effort Engels had made to marshal support for point 9 was not too successful as can be seen from the proceedings of the first Congress of the International which was held half a year later in Geneva in September, 1866. Marx and Engels were not present. But Marx had composed a memorandum for the Central Committee in which the reasons for the formulation of point 9 were stated. He insisted that as long as Russia remained the center of European reaction, the aristocracy as well as the bourgeoisie would always find protection from the European labor movement. The victory of the working class depended upon the destruction of "the sinister Asiatic power" Russia through the restoration of Poland. Marx said that it was the special "duty" of the German workers to take the initiative
in the liberation of Poland. The destruction of the Holy Alliance would further revolutionary progress in all of Europe. As did Engels, Marx ascribed a leading role to the German workers in the revolutionary scheme.\textsuperscript{35}

Marx’s arguments did not gain much support at the Geneva Congress. The French delegation became the center of opposition to point 9 which read:

That it is imperatively necessary to annihilate the influence of Russia in Europe by applying to Poland the right of every people to dispose of itself and to re-establish that country upon its native democratic basis.\textsuperscript{36}

The French delegates wished that the following version be adopted:

That it is necessary to annihilate the Russian influence in Europe in order to apply the right of the peoples to dispose of themselves and to reconstruct Poland on a democratic and social basis.\textsuperscript{37}

In their memorandum the French delegates stated:

As defenders of liberty we declare that we are against any kind of despotism, that we definitely condemn and reject the organization and social tendencies of Russian despotism, inevitably leading to a communism which kills the mind, but that we as delegates to an economic congress do not believe in being authorized to make any statements concerning the political restoration of Poland.\textsuperscript{38}

During the debates on point 9 E.-E. Fribourg, in the name of the French delegation, made a motion that the Congress should not

\textsuperscript{35}Cf. Documents of the First International, I, 350.

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 314.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p. 350.

\textsuperscript{38}Fribourg, op. cit., p. 59.
vote on this question. Fribourg said:

One should desire and also demand the emancipation of the people in Russia and in Poland, and condemn the traditional policy which incites one nation against the other. 39

The Congress, however, should limit itself to a declaration that it abhors despotism under any form and in any country, but would not interfere with the very complex question of the nationalities.

The rejection of point 9 by the French delegation was supported by the delegates from French Switzerland. François Dupleix claimed that the Polish question only concerned the Germans and should be omitted. 41 But the English delegates, particularly Odger and Carter, supported the resolution on Poland, and so did

39 Archives Bakounine, II, 238.

40 Johann Philipp Becker, "Der Kongress der Internationalen Arbeiter association in Genf," Der Vorbote, Politische und sozial-oekonomische Zeitschrift (Geneva), November, 1866, No. 2; central organ of the German-speaking section of the International, ed. by Johann Philipp Becker (1866-67); (facsimile ed.; Berlin: Dietz Verlag, GmbH, 1963), p. 165. Becker’s report offers the most complete information on the Geneva Congress. It was published in Der Vorbote, September, October, November, and December, 1866, No. 9-12, and January, February, and March, 1867, No. 1-3. The General Council released two very brief and incomplete reports on the Geneva Congress which were published in the Courrier International (London), March 9, 16, 23, 30 and April 6, 13, 20, 27, 1867 and in The International Courier, (London) March 20, 27 and April 3, 10, 17, 24, 1867.

41 François Dupleix, member of the French section in Geneva, editor of the Journal de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs (Geneva) and of Égalité (Geneva).
the Germans—Eccarius from the Central Committee and Johann Becker, the delegate of the German section in Switzerland.

Although Becker was in favor of point 9, he did not share the radical Russophobia of Marx and Engels. He distinguished between the Russian government and the people. He claimed that point 9 did not imply a declaration of war against the Russian people. The International, he said, aimed at the destruction of all despotic governments and at the emancipation of all the oppressed people. In Becker's opinion the liberation of the Poles would accelerate that of the Russian people. Until then Russia continued to be a real threat to European culture and progress because of its backward political, economic, and social structure and its aggressiveness. The annexation of the Polish provinces had augmented the military power of Russia because these territories were more densely populated and more developed and provided the Russian army with a military elite.

According to the unofficial report by Card, a delegate of the French section in Geneva, Becker admitted that the Polish question might be called a German question because the Germans had an immediate interest in the liberation of Poland.42 However, Becker added that the Polish question did not only concern

Germany but all of Europe. The restoration of Poland would destroy the "aggressive potentiality" of Russia and the danger of the creation of a Slavic world empire under Russian rule. It would accelerate the "internal evolution" in Russia and contribute to the emancipation of the people from the oppressive Tsarist rule. Becker insisted that the abolition of standing armies, on which the delegates to the Geneva Congress had voted, would not be possible without the restoration of Poland as a barrier against the Russian Empire. Therefore, Polish liberation was "the concern of the workers and of all mankind." 43

In spite of such arguments the majority of the delegates favored the French viewpoint. When unanimity could not be achieved, Becker proposed to add the following declaration to the minutes:

Since it is the task of the International Working Men's Association to emancipate the working-classes of all the countries and to fight any kind of despotism in order to realize the equality of all men and nations, the elimination of the imperialist influence of Russia and the restoration of a social democratic Poland are an integral part of its aspirations. 44

According to Becker's report this declaration was supported by the German delegates, including those of German


44 Archives Bakounine, II, 239.
Switzerland, and by the delegates from the Jura region, and it was unanimously adopted together with the motion of the French delegation. But Becker did not mention that the opposing parties agreed to further amendments which bridged the difference and made some kind of general consent possible. The French amendment to the original motion read:

The Congress is convinced that through the development and the consolidation of the International Working Men's Association all despotism will disappear, and the restoration of a democratic Poland will be realized.\footnote{Fribourg, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 67.}

The Becker amendment was similar to that of the French.

The Congress is convinced that through the strengthening and expansion of the International Working Men's Association, the destruction of the despotic influence of Russia in Europe and the restoration of a social democratic Poland will be realized.\footnote{Archives Bakounine, \textit{II}, 387.}

The two amendments were simply added to the minutes of the meeting after it had been decided that no vote would be taken on this political question.\footnote{The amendments were not published in the official reports on the resolutions of the Geneva and Brussels Congress. In the report on the Geneva Congress which appeared in \textit{Le Courrier International} the French amendment was attributed to Becker, while his amendment was altogether omitted. Cf. "Extract from the Report on the Geneva Congress," published in \textit{Le Courrier International}, in \textit{Archives Bakounine}, \textit{II}, 237.} Both represented a compromise. They approved of the restoration of Poland but omitted the aggressive tone of the original point 9 as proposed by Marx. The
defeat of Russian despotism and the liberation of the Poles were not expected from a war against Russia. Changes in Eastern Europe would be the result of the victorious advance of the International Working Men's Association, that is, of general internal changes in the European countries. The formulation of the amendments fundamentally agreed with the basic concepts of Proudhon who was convinced that the liberation of the people under foreign rule would be accomplished through an evolutionary process.

After the Geneva Congress the French delegates published a memorandum in Brussels entitled: *Congrès de Genève. Mémoire des Délégués Français* (1866). They expressed their sympathy for the independence of Poland and their hope for the liberation of the peasants and workers after the complete overthrow of the old political and socio-economic order. However, they criticized the English and German delegates for their attempt to combine the support of the Poles with a condemnation of all things Russian. If this policy of identifying the government and the people were applied to the other European countries, then the Germans, in particular, would certainly not fare well.  

The Brussels section of the International, led by De Paepe, supported the French position in a report on the

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48 Fribourg, op. cit., p. 78.
Geneva Congress. It was declared that the French delegates were right to reject the traditional policy of inciting one nation against the other. Besides, the restoration of Poland would not guarantee the liberation of the peasants. It would only mean the restoration of the aristocracy and of Catholicism.49

Marx did not respond to the French and Belgian statements. He had lost the battle for an aggressive anti-Russian foreign policy of the International. The controversy over this question had proved that the majority of the socialists did not share his Russophobia. As long as the International remained in existence, Marx did not try to reopen the question of the restoration of Poland. However, when Bakunin entered the International in 1868, Marx was alarmed. He still considered Bakunin as a Russian nationalist and a Pan-Slav, and he feared that Bakunin might impose his ideas on the International. In order to prevent such a development, Marx fought him indirectly as he had done in the past. This only strengthened Bakunin's opposition to the Slavic policies of Marx and Engels. In the last two years of the International he analyzed Marx's views on the state and foreign policies in order to reveal the inherent dangers of Marx's views regarding a peaceful coexistence of the European people.

Bakunin's Fight against Marx

After the Polish insurrection of 1863 Bakunin's views on the revolutionary reorganization of Europe had undergone a definite change. This was due to his observations at the time of the insurrection. Bakunin was appalled that the Polish insurgents merely wished to replace one oppressive centralized state with another, and that the progressive Russians were willing to put up with their despotic government in order to preserve the territorial integrity of the Russian Empire. Bakunin became convinced that the centralized state was the greatest obstacle to the liberation of the people in Europe, and that the destruction of that state was necessary for a revolutionary reorganization of Europe.

In 1864, in the same year when the International was founded, Bakunin tried to organize the International Brotherhood, or International Alliance of Socialist Revolutionaries, in Italy. In the revolutionary program which Bakunin composed for the Brotherhood he omitted any reference to his earlier revolutionary postulates—the creation of a Slavic union under Great Russian leadership and the revolutionary mission of the Slavs in Europe. Now he emphasized the need for

the complete destruction of all enforced unions . . . and the radical dissolution of the centralized paternalistic and authoritarian state.50

50 Archives Bakounine, II, 29.
A nation was to be formed through the voluntary federation of individuals, communes, and provinces. All the administrative units were to enjoy autonomy. In order to prevent anarchy, the national government should have the right to demand that the constitution and particular legislation of a province which desired to belong to the federation and to enjoy national protection, ought to conform to the national constitution and legislation on essential points.\(^5\)

At the first Congress of the League of Peace and Liberty, held in Geneva from September 9-12, 1867, Bakunin had the opportunity to propagandize the ideas which he had elaborated since 1864. The Congress was organized by prominent European free masons, among them Bakunin who was a member of the Central Committee of the League. The aim of the Congress was to discuss the creation of the United States of Europe.

On September 10, 1867 Bakunin delivered a speech in which he demanded the destruction of the centralized European states, including the Russian Empire, and the unification of Europe. In his opinion Europe could only be saved through federalism and socialism. The federal principle, not the nationality principle, would guarantee each nationality the right to "self-determination."

Several weeks later, on October 26, 1867, Bakunin submitted his brochure, Fédéralisme, socialisme et anti-theologisme, which summarized his convictions, to the Central

\(^{51}\)Ibid., p. 27.
Committee of the League. He declared that the centralized European states originated from conquests and became permanently chained to their expansionist drive, resulting in militarism and despotism. The reorganization of Europe depended upon the destruction of the centralized states. It should be based on the "interests, needs, and natural inclinations of the people" and on "a voluntary federation" of individuals and administrative units--communes, provinces, and nations. All the demands for natural, political, strategical, or commercial borders and, likewise, the historical-right principle should be abandoned. No nationality should be forced to remain a member of a state, even if it had voluntarily joined that state. Bakunin stated: "The right to a voluntary reunion as well as to a voluntary secession is the first and most important of all the political rights." 52

Although Bakunin defended the "natural right" of each nationality to self-determination, he condemned the nationality principle because it was used by Poles, Italians, and Hungarians to disguise their real aim--the creation of a strong centralized state. According to Bakunin any increase in the number of centralized states in Europe would heighten the threat of war. Consequently, it was wrong to assume that the restoration of

Poland would guarantee peace in Europe. Only the destruction of all the despotic states, including France and Prussia, would establish peace in Europe.

Bakunin's formulation of a European policy for the League was influenced by the continuation of the one-sided anti-Russian agitation in Western Europe. He was familiar with Marx's anti-Russian propaganda in the International. The Geneva Congress of the League was attended by members of the International, and at the opening session the Inaugural Address, in which Marx had expressed his hostility towards Russia, was read.

Moreover, on the second day of the Congress (September 10, 1867), Borkheim, a friend of Marx, delivered part of an anti-Russian speech which he had prepared for this occasion. He claimed that the Russian masses were kept "in a state of half-bestiality" for the sole purpose of subjugating all of Europe. The danger of Russian aggression had been increased through the liberation of the serfs (1861) which facilitated the recruitment

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52 Some weeks before the Geneva Congress of the League, on August 27, 1867, Borkheim had sent a letter to Marx with information on his intended anti-Russian speech. He said that he would present the Russian question as "the main question in Europe" and would urge the Europeans to conclude an alliance for the prevention of an invasion of Europe by the backward Russians. He asked Marx and Engels for their comments on his intended speech. There is no trace of an answer to his request. Cf. Archives Marx-Engels, Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (Amsterdam), quoted in Archives Bakounine, II, 249-51.
of soldiers. Only the restoration of Poland would guarantee peace in Europe because it would allow for the unification of Germany.

As long as Poland is not restored, Prussia will never become German, and as long as Prussia is not German, war between Germany and France will be a normal occurrence . . . constantly fomented by Russia. 54

In consideration of the Russian danger, Borkheim held that it was a mere mockery that "certain Russian publicists"—meaning Bakunin and Herzen—had tried to spread pro-Russian propaganda in Western Europe. According to these Russians "the beautiful young and innocent Russia" was the classic country of socialist institutions; the realization of "the Russo-Slavic paradise" had only been impeded by German immigrants and the Tartars. But, said Borkheim, only a few people in Western Europe, among them the late Proudhon, expected from Russia "the salvation of the world."

Borkheim urged the European nations to unite against Russia. They should collaborate with the North Americans in order to stop Russian expansionism and "to force the Russians to be concerned with themselves and to work honestly . . . This would be a blessing for Russia." 55 Borkheim concluded that the principle question in Europe was "the Russian question."

54 Archives Bakounine, II, 247.
55 Ibid., p. 248.
Bakunin was quite annoyed by Borkheim's speech. He regarded Borkheim as a "strange man, a kind of maniac detesting all of Russia and the Russians." He assumed that Borkheim's speech, if not written by Marx, had certainly been inspired by him.

Bakunin's friend Karl Vogt, whom Marx detested, insinuated in the Swiss newspaper *Neue Zuericher Zeitung* late in September, 1867 that Marx was the anonymous author of Borkheim's speech. Marx was furious about this identification. He disliked the speech and was upset that Borkheim wished to publish it in several languages. In a letter to Engels of October 4, 1867 Marx remarked that the publication of the speech would reveal how stupid it was.

With the exception of some catchwords which I have breathed into him, it [Borkheim's speech] is nothing but an insipid babbling and more often a mere stupidity.56

It is difficult to understand why Marx reacted so violently against Borkheim's speech. He could hardly have objected to Borkheim's violent anti-Russian declarations. Apparently it was Borkheim's propagation of an un-Marxian idea that peace in Europe could be achieved merely through the collaboration of the Western nations which irritated Marx. In any case, Marx refrained from public statements against Borkheim

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56 MEGA, III/3, 428.
because Borkheim was "his personal friend" and "a valuable man" in the party.

Marx did not object when in February, 1868 Borkheim continued his polemic against the Russian political emigrants in Western Europe—meaning mainly Herzen and Bakunin—in the radical German newspaper *Demokratisches Wochenblatt*. Borkheim declared that if the Russian emigrants were truly democrats and socialists and enemies of the Russian government, they should join the Western European radicals and fight against Russian expansionism. They should condemn the subjugation of Poland, Finland, and the Baltic provinces and the Russian aim to annex Turkey.\(^{57}\)

It was not until the second Congress of the League of Peace and Liberty, held in Bern from September 22-26, 1868, that Bakunin replied to Borkheim’s insinuation that the Russian exiles were not true enemies of the oppressive Russian government. The occasion was the speech which the Pole Valerien Mroczkowski delivered at the fourth session of the Congress (September 25, 1868).\(^{58}\) When Mroczkowski agitated for the liberation of the Poles from Tsarist rule, he declared:

\(^{57}\)"Russische politische Fluechtlinge in Westeuropa," Demokratisches Wochenblatt, Organ der deutschen Volkspartei, February 1, 8, 1868, quoted in Archives Bakounine, 11, 389.

\(^{58}\)Valerien Mroczkowski was a Polish social democrat. He was a member of the Central Committee of the League and of Bakunin’s organization, the International Brotherhood or International Alliance of Socialist Revolutionaries.
We desire neither the restoration of the old state nor the restoration of the historical right of Poland, but we wish to assert our national right . . . to be independent. 59

Mroczkowski did not wish to discuss the future borders of a "people's Poland." He merely indicated that they would depend upon the outcome of a war against Russia. However, since he insisted that the Poles would respect "the rights" of the nationalities who had once been under Polish rule, he certainly assumed that these nationalities would become members of a restored Poland.

Bakunin, who was dissatisfied with Mroczkowski's speech, improvised an answer which developed into an attack against the territorial claims of the Poles and their German supporters, among them Borkheim and Marx. 60 According to Bakunin the problem of the

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60 Bakunin's speech was printed in Bulletin Sténographique du IIe Congrès de la Paix et de la Liberté. Stenographisches Bulletin des zweiten Friedens-und Freiheitskongresses (Bern: 1868), pp. 214-235 and in Discours prononcés au Congrès de la Paix et de la Liberté à Berne, 1868, par M. Mroczkowski et Bakounine (Geneva: Impr. Czerniecki, 1869). Mroczkowski's speech was reprinted in Kolokol, December 1, 1868. In that same issue Bakunin's speech was also referred to. It was deplored that only fragments of this "magnificent" speech could be reproduced. However, it may be doubted that Herzen would have been interested in printing the complete speech of Bakunin which agitated for the destruction of the territorial integrity of the Russian Empire.
reorganization of Eastern and Central Eastern Europe could only be solved if the principle of centralization, which prevented the liberation of the people, was rejected by Russians, Poles, and Germans alike. Thereby, he implicitly rejected the exclusive condemnation of Russia. Simultaneously, he repeated his demand for the destruction of the Russian Empire. He insisted that his agitation against the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Russian Empire should have convinced the German socialists of his opposition to the subjugation of the people by the centralized Russian government.61

Bakunin reiterated the argument which he had used in his manifestoes of 1862 that the Russian Empire was a multi-national state under the rule of Great Russia which tried to enforce unity. He pointed out that recently the Russian government had initiated a campaign for the systematic suppression of the Ukrainian language, a policy which was simultaneously applied to the Polish language. This revealed the determination of the Tsarist government to bring about the completion of the centralized state and should be a warning to all the Pan-Slavs outside the Russian Empire.

Bakunin insisted that the problem of the liberty of the nationalities would not be solved by the restoration of Poland.

61 Archives Bakounine, II, 69.
He pointed out that the Polish Republic had also not granted autonomy to the nationalities. Particularly the Ukrainians had suffered as much under the oppressive rule of the Poles as under that of the Great Russians. They wished to be united and free from Great Russian and Polish rule.

As to the Baltic provinces, Bakunin admitted that they were presently owned by Russia "by the right of conquest, that is, by a flagrant injustice." However, neither the Poles nor the Germans who had previously owned these provinces had a right to them. Bakunin attacked the German socialists because they did not condemn the oppression of the Lithuanian peasants by the German nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the Lutheran clergy although the German minority supported the Tsar's oppressive policies.

Bakunin had arrayed his arguments in order to prove that the solution of the Polish question would be quite simple if only the Ukrainians, White Russians, and Lithuanians—formerly ruled by Poland and now by Russia—were granted the right to national self-determination. Bakunin argued that after their liberation it would be most probable and most desirable that Little Russia [Eastern Ukraine] should first form a national federation with them [the Galician Ukrainians and White Russians] which was independent of Great Russia and Poland.

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62 Archives Bakounine, II, 68.
The Lithuanians might like to join the union. It was not improbable that at a later date this new federal state might enter into a voluntary union with either Poland or Great Russia provided that the equality of the member states were guaranteed.

In conclusion, Bakunin was anxious to convince the assembly (1) that the restoration of the Polish state, even under a republican democratic government, was not desired by the Ukrainians, White Russians, and Lithuanians who had experienced Polish rule; and, (2) that Russian power politics would come to an end if the oppressed nationalities were granted the right to national self-determination and to the creation of independent states. The question is whether the reorganization of Eastern Europe, as envisioned by Bakunin, would really have made an end to the Great Russian hegemony.

Evidently, Bakunin expected that the new buffer state between Poland and Great Russia would lean towards a union with Great Russia. He emphasized that there would be no obstacle to a union with the thirty-five million Great Russians once centralization in Great Russia was destroyed. Consequently, a weak Poland would be faced with a formidable union in which the leadership of Great Russia, based on its larger population and the Asiatic dependencies, would be safeguarded. The Poles would still be burdened with the question of national security. This seems to indicate that Bakunin's plan for the temporary
creation of a buffer state was devised to isolate the Poles. Apparently he still considered Polish aspirations, which were supported by the progressive Western Europeans, as the greatest danger to the Great Russians.

Bakunin was especially concerned with the agitation of the German socialists for the restoration of Poland. He warned the Poles that the German socialists had no real interest in Polish liberty. The German socialists, who condemned the oppression of the Poles by Russia, did not oppose German rule over the Poles. They did not agitate for the partition of the Prussian state although its expansionist aspirations endangered the European peace as much as Russia. This proved, said Bakunin, that the German socialists were not enemies of the centralized state which stood for "violence, oppression, exploitation, and injustice." He implied that their policies were not different from those of Tsarist Russia.

Bakunin repeated his demand that the centralized state should be abolished and that Europe should be reorganized on the basis of a voluntary federation of individuals, administrative units, and nationalities. Only this would guarantee peace and liberty to the Europeans.

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63 Archives Bakounine, II, 70.
64 Ibid.
When the members of the League did not support Bakunin's extremist federalism, he withdrew from the organization in September, 1868, two months after he had become a member of the International. Meanwhile, he had organized a workers' association, the International Social Democratic Alliance. In mid-September the Central Office of the Alliance petitioned the General Council of the International for admission as a separate branch. When this petition was rejected, the Central Office dissolved the Alliance in February, 1869, and its sections were then admitted into the International. Bakunin joined the Committee of the Geneva section of the International of which Philip Becker was a leading member.

Bakunin's entrance into the International deepened the old hostility between him and Marx. Ultimately this contributed to the dissolution of the First International. A brief encounter in London in November, 1864 between the two men, which Marx had solicited, had not improved their relations. While Bakunin became increasingly concerned with Marx's anti-Russian agitation in the International, Marx, on the other hand, could not have been expected to welcome Bakunin's concept of absolute decentralization nor his insinuation that the German socialists were less revolutionary than the Slavs.

From the beginning, when Bakunin entered the International, Marx and Engels regarded him as a dangerous opponent and rival who
must be eliminated. They suspected Bakunin of plotting to overthrow the constitution of the International with Becker's help and wishing to become "the dictator of the working-class movement." In his letter to Marx of July 30, 1869 Engels suggested to undo the influence of the "fat Bakunin" by asking the question: "Can a Pan-Slav be a member of the International Workingmen's Association?" Engels added: "He should not think that he can play the role of the cosmopolitan communist with the workers and the fanatically nationalist Pan-Slav with the Russians.

Several weeks later, at the fourth Congress of the International, held from September 5-6, 1869 in Basel, Wilhelm Liebknecht, a friend of Marx, spread the old slander that Bakunin was an agent of the Russian government. After the Basel Congress Borkheim continued the defamation of Bakunin, and Moses Hess, another acquaintance of Marx, published an article against Bakunin in the Paris newspaper Réveil on October 2, 1869.

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66 MEGA, III/4, 215.

67 Wilhelm Liebknecht, 1826-1900, German socialist. From 1849-61 he lived in London, where he collaborated with Marx. After his return to Germany he became a member of Ferdinand Lassalle's Arbeiterverein. When Lassalle had died, Liebknecht became the chief collaborator of Marx and helped to spread the influence of the International in Germany.
Bakunin was convinced that Marx was responsible for the agitation against him. Yet, when he wrote a lengthy defense for Réveil, he abstained from attacking Marx and merely denounced "the German Jews" Borkheim and Hess. Herzen, who disliked the reference to "the German Jews," prevented Bakunin from publishing his article and wrote a moderate statement for Réveil.

Marx did not participate in the controversy. In the meantime, a new situation developed in Geneva which offered an opportunity to weaken Bakunin's position in the International. Late in the summer of 1869 Bakunin, together with his friend Nikolaj Ivanovich Joukovski, had founded a Russian newspaper, Narodnoe Delo, in Geneva. They edited only the first issue of September 1, 1869. Bakunin soon left Geneva, and the following issues were edited by two Russian exiles N. Utin and A. Trusov. Utin, an ambitious young man, did not shrink from intrigues against Bakunin in order to become the leader of a Russian section of the International which had originally been Bakunin's aim, nor did Utin hesitate to utilize a part of the program Bakunin had earlier composed when he planned to organize a Russian section. The passage concerning the Slavic question was copied almost word for word from Bakunin's text. 68

Utin repeated Bakunin's accusation that Pan-Slavism impeded the progress of the international socialist propaganda among the Slavic working classes of the Austrian and Turkish Empires who were still inclined to look to the Russian Tsar for their liberation. He also repeated Bakunin's condemnation of the "policy of conquest" and of the oppression of Poland by the Tsarist government. All the Slavs were invited to organize local unions and to join the International. Only this organization guaranteed the complete social and political liberation of the Slavs because it would grant absolute freedom of association to each individual, nation, and nationality.

On March 8, 1870 Utin appealed to Becker and on March 11, 1870 to Jung, the corresponding secretary for Switzerland, to support his petition for the admission of a Russian section into the International. On March 12, 1870 Utin also addressed an appeal to Marx in which he stated that he was an opponent of Bakunin and intended to fight him.

Twelve days later, on March 24, Marx, in the name of the General Council, informed the Russian section in Geneva that it had been admitted into the International, and that he was willing to represent it in the General Council. In reference to the program of the Russian section which denounced the Russian "imperial yoke" as an obstacle to the political and social liberation of Poles and Russians, Marx stated:
You might have added that the brutal seizure of Poland by Russia resulted in the formation of military regimes in Europe, including Germany. Therefore, the Russian socialists who wish to break the chains of Poland have assigned themselves an immense task: to abolish militarism which is absolutely necessary as a prerequisite for the general liberation of the European proletariat.

It was paradoxical that Marx did not object to the propaganda for an extremist federalism in the Russian program which Utin had adopted from Bakunin. Apparently Marx ignored this propaganda because it came from Utin, as yet an insignificant young man who might become a tool in the fight against Bakunin. In his official letter Marx did not abstain from indirectly attacking Bakunin. He admitted that Russia had begun to "participate in the socialist movement of the nineteenth century." He mentioned the socialist Nikolai Chernyshevsky as one of the foremost revolutionary Russians, and he added that the socialists in Russia had helped to unmask "the Russian optimism propagated by the so-called revolutionaries on the continent."

Evidently Marx felt quite uneasy about his collaboration with the Russian section. In a letter to Engels of March 24, 1870 he said that he found himself in an

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69 Archives Bakounine, II, 259. Marx's letter to the Russian section in Geneva was printed in Narodnoe Delo (Geneva), April 15, 1870. He also wrote a confidential letter to the Russian section which has not been rediscovered. Cf. Archives Bakounine, II, 432.
odd position . . . as the representative of young Russia. Man never knows which paths he may cross and to which strange fellowship he must subject himself. 70

Marx informed Engels that in his letter to the Russian section he had strongly advised the Russians "to work for Poland, that is, to rid Europe of the Russian neighborhood," and that he had refrained from any particular reference to Bakunin.

Yet, in his ill-famed Confidential Communication of March 28, 1870, which Marx addressed to the Central Committee of the German Social Democratic Working Men's Party in Braunschweig (Germany), he did not impose the same restraint upon himself. 71 In this document Bakunin was portrayed as a conspirator against the General Council, as a backward "Muscovite," and as a man who lacked personal integrity. He was accused of collaborating with a pseudo-socialist Pan-Slav party in Russia in order to receive their financial support. Marx advised the German socialists to shun Bakunin and to collaborate with the "honest" members of the Russian section of the International whose main political aim was "the fight against Pan-Slavism," and who would soon unmask Bakunin's intrigues.

70 MEGA, III/4, 296.

71 The German-Austrian socialist Karl Kautsky published this document for the first time in Die Neue Zeit, XX (1902), 472-80.
Philipp Becker, the leader of the German section in Geneva, welcomed the admission of the Russian section into the International as the most significant event in the fight against the despotic Russian Empire and its influence in Europe. In a letter of April 10, 1870 to the Russian section, Becker expressed the hope that the section would help to destroy the Pan-Slav propaganda, which the Tsarist government used to realize its expansionist goals, and to bring about the fraternal alliance between the Slavic and Western European workers. In case of a Western European revolution the Russian section would have the task to organize an insurrection in the Russian Empire in order to prevent any counter-revolutionary moves of the Tsarist government.72

When Bakunin knew about the admission of the Russian section into the International, he wrote to his friend Joukovski that Utin had acted "after the manner of Marx." Yet, Bakunin also welcomed the admission as an important event. The presence of the Russians in the International would help to weaken the reactionary forces in Western Europe which supported Russian despotism. Bakunin informed Joukovski that he agreed with the basic convictions of Marx that (1) reaction in Germany could not be destroyed unless Russian despotism was also destroyed; and,

72 Archives Bakounine, II, 260.
(2) Pan-Slavism was nothing but a "latent despotism" propagated by Russia with the intention to subject the Western and Balkan Slavs to Russian rule:

It must be acknowledged that our Slavic brothers promote the Tsarist propaganda by their exclusive nationalism, just as the Prussians assist it in Silesia and our Poles in Little-Russian Galicia.73

Bakunin added that the Russian socialists ought to fight this evil.

Although he approved of Marx's opinion concerning Russian Pan-Slavism, he remained dissatisfied that Marx did not apply the same severe critique to Germany or Pan-Germanism. On April 15, 1870, when Narodnoe Delo published the official letters of Marx and Becker addressed to the Russian section, the newspaper also printed a critique by Bakunin of Marx's views on Russia and Germany. Within the next two years Bakunin's opposition to Marx's political views reached a climax.

Bakunin had observed with growing apprehension the rise of Prussian influence in Germany since 1866. He had never had a predilection for the Germans and Germany, but after 1870 there occurred a truly volcanic eruption of a burning hatred and contempt for Germany. The defeat of France in the Franco-German War of September, 1870 and the subsequent unification of Germany

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under Prussian leadership on January 18, 1871 convinced Bakunin that a strong Germany diminished the possibility of the liberation of the Slavs under German rule. In the early seventies Bakunin wrote a number of lengthy treatises in which he continued his agitation for a voluntary federation of individuals, administrative units, and nations as the only means to guarantee peace in Europe and to solve the problem of German-Slavic relations. His treatises developed into a formidable attack upon Marx's political concepts, his policies in the International, and upon the German Social Democratic Working Men's Party founded in 1869 under the leadership of William Liebknecht and August Bebel who were followers of Marx.

When discussing the position of a united Germany in Europe, Bakunin maintained that Germany was an expansionist power

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In 1871 he published L'empire knouto-germanique et la révolution sociale in Geneva. In the same year he discussed the German-Slavic question in an appendix to a pamphlet against Giuseppe Mazzini, L'Internationale et Mazzini. The appendix remained unpublished, but the pamphlet was published as part one of La théologie politique de Mazzini et l'Internationale by the Commission de Propagande Socialiste in 1871. Between February 15 and March 11, 1872 Bakunin composed a long letter to the members of the federation of the Jura sections of the International on German-Slavic relations. In March, 1872 Bakunin composed another manuscript, which remained unpublished, L'Allemagne et le communisme d'état. In 1872 after the Hague Congress of the International, he composed his last lengthy manuscript of this period, Écrit contre Marx, which also was not published at the time. Bakunin considered this manuscript as the continuation of L'empire knouto-germanique.
par excellence. The recent German policy of conquest towards France disproved the contention of Marx and his supporters that the despotic Russian government was the greatest threat to European liberty. Germany was far more dangerous. Only Germany had the sufficient material power to threaten the independence of the European nations, including Russia, through an aggressive war. Bakunin claimed that Germany, strengthened by its political unification, would certainly embark upon an expansionist policy on a large scale. According to him Bismarck aimed at the completion of his "gigantic [political] projects" through the creation of a Pan-Germanic state which would have no equal in Europe. But Bakunin's assumption was not born out by Bismarck's political career.

According to Bakunin the German character revealed a basic brutality which predestined the Germans to create a very powerful state. The Germans, said Bakunin, had always been an aggressive people because they had never experienced true liberty. The cult of the state, introduced by Protestantism, prepared the Germans to submit willingly to the despotism of the governments. It was in Germany where, since the seventeenth century, militarism and the cult of authority had developed, and it was Germany which

75 Michael Bakunin, Das Knutogermanische Kaiserreich und die soziale Revolution in Gesammelte Werke (3 vols.; Berlin: Verlag "Der Syndikalist," 1921-24), 1, p. 70.
became the "permanent school of the despotism of the European states," not Russia. Even in the nineteenth century the Germans had not abandoned the cult of the state. Germany was not united through a revolution of the people but by the despotic Prussian state, the "epitome" of aggressiveness. In Bakunin's opinion the Germans were "a people enslaved by their own choice and presently the greatest threat to the liberty of the world."76

Bakunin claimed that the collaboration of the Jews with the German state increased the danger of German aggression. He believed that the Jews held a powerful position in Western European economic and cultural life, particularly in Germany. The Jews were the natural allies of the German bourgeoisie with whom they shared the cult of the centralized state and the lust for power. According to Bakunin the Jews used their influence in Germany in order to prevent the liberation of the Slavs from German rule. Desiring to extend their economic power, they supported the German Drang nach Osten, Pan-Germanism, and the complete Germanization of the Slavs as they had done in 1848.

Bakunin was convinced that an aggressive German policy would result in a terrible clash between Germany and Russia. But Germany, not Russia, as Marx and his followers maintained, would

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76 Écrit contre Marx, in Archives Bakounine, II, 207, 218.
be responsible for it. Any attempt to create a centralized Pan-Germanic state and to completely Germanize the Slavs under German rule would help the Russian government to rally the Slavs under the Pan-Slav banner. The Western Slavs would collaborate with Russia not because they were pro-Russian but because they assumed that Russia's backwardness would save them from the complete destruction of their national identity. However, in the eyes of Bakunin a victory of Germany or Russia would be equally disastrous, leading to the despotic hegemony of either the one or the other state in Europe. European progress would be ended by German militarism or Russian barbarism. Europe could only be saved from such a disaster through the liberation of all the Slavs, including the Russians, and the creation of a "great federal republic."

According to Bakunin a victory of the German socialists would not solve the problem of German-Slav relations. Therefore, it would not end the danger of a clash between Germany and Russia. Bakunin maintained that the German socialists were supporters of territorial expansionism because they were influenced by Marx who was a "partisan of the state," that is, of the policy of conquest.

On the basis of his observations of Marx's policies in the International, Bakunin had come to the conclusion that Marx was a German nationalist who tried to introduce principles into the organization which were foreign to its true spirit. According
to Bakunin the majority of the socialists fought for the solidarity of all the European people and for the "economic emancipation of the workers." Marx, instead, in his Inaugural Address, had combined the demand for the conquest of political power by the workers with an explicit Russophobia and an implicit Slavophobia. Although Marx condemned Russian expansionism, he did not demand the abolition of the centralized state which alone would end territorial expansionism. This proved, said Bakunin, that Marx was a supporter of the centralized state and of the policy of conquest but wished to reserve the right of conquest to "the nations representing modern civilization," foremost to Germany.77 Marx's policy was typically German and would be disastrous for Europe should the German socialists ever stage a successful revolution in Germany.

Bakunin's concern with German foreign policies under a socialist government was reflected in his repeated attempts to analyze the impact of Marx's and Engels's ideology upon the organization of a future socialist state. The two friends had always refrained from definite statements on this problem. They spoke about the socialist revolution in which the workers would achieve their liberation through the seizure of political power and the creation of a people's state, and they predicted the

77"Aux compagnons de la fédération jurassienne," in Archives Bakounine, II, 57.
withering of that state leaving a big gap between the two phases. Bakunin accused Marx and Engels that the core of their ideology was not a yearning for liberty but for the conquest of power.

According to Bakunin, Marx and Engels were strongly influenced by the traditional German cult of the state. This was shown by their interpretation of history. They maintained that the rise of the absolutist state, that is, of the centralized state, had definitely marked a progressive phase in the development towards the ultimate liberation of the people because it helped to further the social revolution by promoting the economic growth of society and the rise of new classes. In Bakunin's opinion the absolutist state had not benefited humanity. Its only aim was to preserve and increase its power which resulted in a greater enslavement of the people.

What was true of the centralized monarchical state, would also be true of the people's state because the very nature of the state was an obstacle to liberty. Contrary to the contention of Marx and Engels it would not bring about the emancipation of the workers. Marx's political program, said Bakunin, was

a framework for strongly centralized and very authoritarian economic and political institutions, without a doubt sanctioned like all the despotic

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78 Ecrit contre Marx, in Archives Bakounine, II, 203.
institutions of modern society by universal suffrage, but nevertheless subjected to a very strong government, to use the expression of Engels, the alter ego of Marx. 79

In a people's state the common man would be enslaved to an even greater degree than in the monarchy because the government would be extremely complicated and centralized. The government would not restrict itself to the political rule over the masses and the administration of justice. It would also control the production and distribution of wealth, the cultivation of the land, the establishment and development of factories, the organization and management of commerce, and finally, the use of capital for production, the state being the only banker. 80

The people's state would be under the rule of "the man of science, the most aristocratic, the most despotic, the most arrogant, and the most contemptuous of all regimes." He added:

There will be a new class, a new hierarchy of real and fictitious scholars, and the world will be divided into a dominant minority and an immense ignorant majority in the name of science. And then look out, you mass of ignorants. 81

Bakunin quoted Engels as having said that the new government would need a strong army to keep these millions of illiterates, who would wish to destroy progress, subjugated. The people's state, said Bakunin, would not only continue to exploit the masses but also the expansionist foreign policy. Decades before a communist

79 Ibid., p. 184.
80 Ibid., p. 204.
81 Ibid.
state was established in Europe, Bakunin predicted the essential nature of that state—its super-centralization and oppressiveness—which was described by the Yugoslav communist Milovan Djilas in his work *The New Class* published in 1956.

Bakunin implied that Marx and Engels were fully aware of the consequences of their political program. They devised it not to bring about the emancipation of the European workers but to establish the "German hegemony in Europe." Bakunin accused Marx and Engels of applying the Darwinian law of the "struggle for survival" to the races. This was contrary to the socialist principle of the solidarity of all the European workers. According to Bakunin, Marx and Engels believed that only the Germanic race was capable of progressing, and that it was "the legitimate representative of humanity." Consequently, they wished for the creation of a large German state which would not only include the Slavs, presently under German rule, but also all the territories inhabited by the people of Germanic descent—"Holland, a great part of Belgium, three quarters of Switzerland, and all of Scandinavia." The two friends were convinced that the greatness of the German state was the supreme condition of the emancipation of the whole world, and that "the national and political victory of Germany . . . [was] a victory for humanity."
On the basis of his analysis of Marx's political program, Bakunin arrived at the conclusion that there was a great affinity between the authoritarian aristocrat and monarchist Bismarck and the authoritarian social democrat and republican Marx. Although the two men believed in different forms of government, they shared the same "cult of the state," the love for power, and the desire to found a "great unitary and Pan-Germanic state." Bakunin stated: "Both men are eminently nationalistic, and they meet in this political nationalism without wishing or searching for it."^{84}

According to Bakunin the only difference between the two men was that Bismarck, "the greatest statesman in contemporary Europe," had a better understanding of European politics than Marx. Bismarck carefully avoided any conflict with Russia because he needed it as an ally against France, and he supported the anti-Polish policy of the Tsarist government and Russian expansionism in Asia in order to prevent any further increase of Russian influence in Europe, but Marx and his followers condemned Bismarck's realistic approach to foreign political questions. They preferred to provoke Alexander II by agitating for the partition of the Russian Empire.

^{84}"Aux compagnons de la fédération jurassienne," in Archives Bakounine, II, 30.
Bakunin's writings from 1870 to 1872 promoted a veritable encirclement of Germany. Bakunin reversed Marx's propaganda. Instead of Russia, Germany was ousted from the family of progressive European nations. Bakunin was convinced that all the Germans from the ruling classes down to the workers were in favor of authoritarianism and expansionism, and that no progress in liberty could be expected from Germany even if socialism were victorious. 85

When Bakunin discussed the party program of the German Social Democratic Working Men's Party, issued in 1869, he pointed out that its foremost demand was the creation of a "free people's state." This proved that like Marx the German socialists were not interested in the liberation of the people. State and freedom were two contradictory terms. The state meant power, and this power would always be used by a small minority to dominate and

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85 The question of liberty and of a foreign policy in the German Social Democratic Party, led by Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel, was discussed by the German social democrat Susanne Miller in her book Das Problem der Freiheit im Sozialismus. Freiheit, Staat und Revolution in der Programmatik der Sozialdemokratie von Lassalle bis zum Revisionismusstreit (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlaganstalt, 1964), pp. 124-133. Miller's analysis disproves Bakunin's assumption that the political convictions of Marx and the German socialists were absolutely identical. Thus, for example, while Marx and Engels approved of German unification under Prussian leadership in the belief that this would further the German revolution, Liebknecht remained its violent opponent because Prussia was the enemy of liberty.
exploit the masses. According to Bakunin the program had two defects:

As an essentially political program it subordinates the social to the political question and again places the workers under the rule of the bourgeoisie, and as an essentially patriotic program it destroys international solidarity and threatens to Germanize the Slavs.86

Bakunin concluded that the German socialists were nationalists and Pan-Germanists. They were not different from Marx who tried to impose his political program upon the International in order to further the German hegemony in Europe.

After the unification of Germany Bakunin watched with growing concern the policies of the German socialists in the Austrian Empire. Previously he had been inclined to believe that the Austro-German socialists were willing to reject German nationalism and to join the Austro-Slav workers in the common fight for liberty and equality. In the spring of 1869 Bakunin had expressed his enthusiasm about a Manifesto, issued by the Austro-German socialists in May, which demanded the destruction of the nationality principle and the creation of a united socialist organization in the Austrian Empire to assure an effective revolutionary collaboration of all the workers—Germans and Slavs—against the established government.87

86"Appendice Slavo-Allemand," in Archives Bakounine, I/1, 278.
87Oeuvres de Bakunin, V, 70.
In September, 1871 Bakunin's vision of a peaceful coexistence between the Slavs and Germans in Austria in a socialist setting faded. On September 26, 1871, at a socialist meeting in Vienna, the following resolution was passed:

That democracy which does not acknowledge historical rights, only the rights of man, . . . condemns all the attempts to restore ancient states which belong to the history of the past. 88

According to Bakunin this resolution meant the abandonment of the earlier generous policy of the Austro-German socialists towards the Slavs. He ascribed this to the influence of the German socialists who attended the meeting, among them Wilhelm Liebknecht, the editor of the Volksstaat (the organ of the German Social Democratic Party). Bakunin was convinced that the Germans had come to Vienna to agitate for the creation of "a great so-called democratic Pan-Germanic state," and that the Austro-German socialists were willing to support that aim. Bakunin insisted that he was as opposed as the German socialists to the nationality principle. Yet, he would not hesitate to support it as long as the Austro-Slavs were threatened by Pan-Germanism. 89

On the basis of his conviction that Marx and his supporters favored the centralized state and Pan-Germanism, Bakunin concluded that their support of the liberation of Poland

88 La Liberté (Brussels), October 5, 1871, in Archives Bakounine, I/1, 343.
89 L'Allemagne et le communisme d'État, in Archives Bakounine, II, 113.
was not sincere: First of all, Marx and Engels were not consistent when they condemned the partition of Poland as a crime because they considered the development of the absolutist and expansionist state as a phenomenon which had furthered historical progress.\(^{90}\) Besides, Marx and Engels were "ardent patriots" which precluded their condemnation of the traditional German aim to conquer the whole area between the Oder, Niemen, Dvina, and the Baltic Sea. Bakunin asked what possible interest could Marx and Engels have in a country like Poland which was still predominantly agricultural, not yet ready for their ideology. Because of their bourgeois leanings Marx and Engels had an "instinctive horror of the peasants" and relied upon the workers in the towns, "organized and even ruled by bourgeois social democrats," to stage a successful revolution.

According to Bakunin the agitation of Marx and Engels and of the socialists in Germany for the liberation of Poland was only a means to cover their real aim--the complete absorption

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\(^{90}\) Bakunin maintained that Proudhon's attitude towards Poland was more consistent than that of Marx and Engels. Proudhon was an opponent of the centralized state. Therefore, he was against the restoration of Poland. He was convinced that a restored Poland would again be ruled by the privileged aristocracy and would merely increase the number of centralized states which enslave the people. Unfortunately, said Bakunin, Proudhon did not remain consistent when he dared to describe the policies of the Tsarist government as representing triumphant social democracy. Cf. Écrit contre Marx, in Archives Bakounine, II, 199.
of Poland. This would remove the barrier which for centuries had prevented the "civilizing invasion" of Eastern Europe by the Germans. Once in power, the German socialists would not surrender any part of the former Polish provinces. In support of this statement Bakunin referred to the declaration of a Prussian socialist leader, Dr. Jacoby, that the Germans could no longer undo "the political consequences" of the Polish partition although it had been a crime.

Bakunin remarked that the German socialists were as insincere as the liberal Russian patriots in their support of the liberation of Poland. Each party was only concerned with weakening the other side. The Germans would like to restore the former eastern provinces to the Poles, while the Russians would prefer a Poland extending from the Vistula far into Germany. Actually neither the Russians nor the Germans would ever seriously try to restore Poland, not even partially, because this involved too many risks.

If Russia granted independence to the Polish Kingdom, the revolutionary unrest in the former eastern Polish provinces would flare up again and endanger the unity of the Russian Empire. On the other hand, Germany would face an even more critical situation should a socialist government support the reconquest of the former eastern Polish provinces from Russia and the extension of Polish power to the Black Sea. There was no
certainty whether a strong Polish state would become Germany's ally. It was rather to be expected that the Poles would try to seize the Baltic Sea coast from the Germans. They might also attempt to become the leaders of Pan-Slavism and to unite all the Slavs in the fight against German domination. Moreover, the restoration of Poland with German help might have even more dangerous consequences for Germany. It might cause a Russian revolution which, being "essentially socialist and anarchist," might help to destroy the new oppressive Polish state and arouse the Slavs under German rule to fight for their liberation from the "Pan-Germanic prison."

Bakunin concluded that there was still another alternative. The German socialists, when speaking of the restoration of Poland, might mean the creation of "a kind of branch establishment of German domination under a Polish name," that is, of a German satellite. In any case, as long as the centralized state was not destroyed, the Polish people would not enjoy liberty. Under the present circumstances only two possibilities were open to them—to become either Germanized or Russianized. If the modern trend towards the elimination of independent states was not checked in time, it would lead to "the formation of immense military dictatorships, . . . the last
logical phase of the historical principle of the state." This would be the end of liberty.

Bakunin's analysis of the nationality problem in Central Eastern Europe struck at the core of this question. Since the mid-sixties Bakunin had become convinced that the liberation of the Slavs in Central Eastern Europe would not solve the problem of liberty. He said that it would be impossible to draw just ethnographic borders either between the Germans and the Western Slavs in Bohemia and Moravia or between the Poles and the Germans in Poznania, West and East Prussia because Germans and Slavs were intermingled. Consequently, said Bakunin, the liberty of the people would not be safeguarded by restoring the former western Polish provinces to the Poles or by carving new Slavic states out of the Austrian Empire, a statement which has been verified by the reorganization of Central Eastern Europe after the Second World War. Bakunin argued that while in a German state the Slavs were dominated and oppressed, in a Polish or Czech state the Germans would be "dominated, sacrificed, and nationalized." The centralized state would always mean the triumph of one national group. The liberation of the people in the areas with a mixed population could only be guaranteed by granting full autonomy and the right to voluntary federation to the communes.

91 "Aux compagnons de la fédération jurassienne," in Archives Bakounine, II, 42.
The polemic against Marx, which Bakunin carried on in his treatises early in the 1870's, was the accompaniment to the controversy between Marx and Bakunin in the International. The struggle between them had been briefly interrupted by the Franco-German War, but it flared up again in 1871. Early in 1871 Utin, who wished to see Bakunin excluded from the International, declared that the Geneva section of Bakunin's Social Democratic Alliance, had never been formally admitted into the International by the General Council. This was not true. When it took the General Council three months before confirming the credentials of the Alliance, Bakunin suspected that Marx was behind Utin's move.

At the London Conference of September, 1871, which was held instead of the General Congress planned for this year, and which was only attended by 23 delegates, among them Utin, Marx and Engels continued the fight against Bakunin and his supporters. A resolution was passed which forbade sections of the International to call themselves by sectarian names . . . or to form separate bodies under the name of sections of propaganda, etc., pretending to accomplish special missions distinct from the common purpose of the Association. 92

This resolution was particularly directed against the Geneva section of the Alliance which just before the London Conference...

had adopted the name: Section for Propaganda and Social Revolutionary Action.

After the London Conference Bakunin initiated a formidable fight against "the authoritarian" Marx and his "Pan-Germanic agency," the General Council. He was supported by the Jura Federation—composed of the sections in northwestern Switzerland—which he controlled. Late in 1871 the Federation drew up the so-called Sonvillier Circular in which the Bakouninists maintained that the General Council must be deprived of the dictatorial powers it had usurped and turned into "a simple office for correspondence and statistics."93

In his letter to the Jura Federation, which Bakunin composed in February and March, 1872, he repeated the demand of his supporters that the General Council must be reorganized because it had become an autocratic institution. Bakunin maintained that Marx had packed the London Conference with his followers in order to finally impose his "communisme d'état" (dictatorial communism), which disregarded liberty, upon the International. Through the adoption of Marx's political concept the International was transformed into an "immense and monstrous state" under the dictatorship of the General Council, "that is, of Marx." Bakunin warned that this was merely the preparation

93 Ibid., pp. 232-41.
for the realization of Marx's ultimate plan to turn the International into "an instrument of the greatness and future power of Germany." He concluded that in case of a victory of Marx's followers in Germany, this country would doubtless become the center of the International which would threaten the liberty of Europe, particularly of the Slavs.

In his letter to the Jura Federation Bakunin once again glorified the Slavs. He informed his supporters that they should not fear the reactionary expansionist Pan-Slavism of the Russian government because the antipathies among the Slavs, their different traditions, social structures, and languages represented a definite obstacle in the realization of a Slavic union. Besides, the Slavic people would never desire to create a powerful centralized state. The Russian Empire had not been organized by the Slavic people but against them. Bakunin assured his friends that the recent rise of a modern Slavic movement among the young Austrian and Balkan Slavs would prevent the realization of Russian Pan-Slav aims because the young Slavs aimed at the abolition of the state. Bakunin invited all the Western European socialists who were truly interested in the liberation of the workers and their fraternization to collaborate with the Slavic people, not with the German socialists whose political concepts were reactionary. He claimed that only the Slavic people were truly revolutionary, while the German workers lacked their
burning love for liberty. Bakunin still expected the salvation of Europe from the Slavs.

At the time when Bakunin stated these arguments, he had definitely become convinced that the question of German-Slavic relations was the central question in the International, and that the future of this organization depended upon the satisfactory solution of this question. He maintained that as long as Marx held a dominant position in the General Council, the International could not work for the peaceful coexistence of the nations, including the Germans and the Slavs. Marx did not represent the true spirit of the International. His support of authoritarianism and of the domination of the progressive nations over less civilized ones was in flagrant opposition to the federalist and anti-state socialism to which the majority in the International adhered according to Bakunin.

While Bakunin agitated for the removal of Marx from the General Council, Marx was busy preparing the expulsion of Bakunin from the International.94 When, after an interval of three years, another General Congress of the International met in The Hague on September 2, 1872, the final phase of the long drawn out controversy between Marx and Bakunin, which had centered on the Slavic question, was reached. Bakunin had been unable to

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94Braunthal, op. cit., p. 191.
travel to The Hague. But Marx and Engels were present at this momentous meeting. It was the first and last time that they attended a General Congress of the International.

The majority of the delegates to the Hague Congress were supporters of Marx's policies. Against the opposition of the Bakuninists the decentralization of the International was rejected and the importance of political action by the workers was reaffirmed. In spite of this victory, Marx knew that he was in a precarious position because of the rising influence of Bakunin's teachings, particularly in Italy and Spain. Moreover, not only the Jura Federation had expressed a strong opposition to the General Council; the opposition had spread to Belgium, Holland, and even to England. In order to destroy the influence of the Bakuninists, Engels, in the name of Marx and other delegates, proposed to transfer the General Council to New York. His proposal was carried by a narrow majority. This meant the end of the International.

Marx's final action was to bring about Bakunin's expulsion from the International. At his instigation Bakunin was charged with having attempted to organize a secret society in order to disrupt the International through the propagation of principles which did not agree with those of the International. When this did not convince the delegates, Bakunin was accused
of having been involved in a fraud. This was not true. However, the accusation finally led to his expulsion.95

After the Congress in The Hague Bakunin composed his last long treatise Écrit contre Marx. He accused Marx of having packed the Congress with his own men in order to defeat the growing opposition in the International. Bakunin insisted that his own agitation for the destruction of political power and of the state, that is, of "power constituted by the bourgeoisie," was in perfect agreement with the basic policies of the International. The real enemies of the International were Marx and Engels. They would not understand that the workers, whom Marx called the "Lumpenproletariat," were not interested in the conquest of political power but in the question of economic equality. At the Congress in The Hague, said Bakunin, Marx fought for the reaffirmation of his political program and succeeded, but his insistence upon the political question had endangered the existence of the International. In the opinion of Bakunin this proved that Marx was only interested in increasing his own power and had no regard for the wishes of the workers. The Congress in The Hague was

the battle and surrender of Sedan and the triumphant invasion [of the International] not by Bismarckian but Marxian Pan-Germanism, imposing the political

95Ibid., p. 194.
program of the German authoritarian communists or social democrats and the dictatorship of their leader upon the proletariat of all the other countries in America and Europe.96

Bakunin had fought an arduous fight against Marx's political program. He believed that the program would not bring about the peaceful coexistence between the Germans and the Slavs, and would not help to solve the central problem of the Slavic question—the liberation of the Polish and Russian people. He was convinced that Marx's ideology was devised in order to increase German power and to turn Germany into the center of a socialist Europe to the detriment of all the Slavs, including the Poles. Marx's fight against Bakunin had been as arduous because Marx, in turn, held that Bakunin's ideas endangered the European revolution and Germany in particular. No compromise between the two parties was possible.

The death of the International marked the end of the long drawn out controversy over the Polish question in radical circles. In the following years Marx (d. in 1883) and Engels (d. in 1895) rarely turned their attention to Poland in spite of the socio-economic changes in that country. The Polish question had definitely lost its attraction as a major problem in the reorganization of Europe. The interest in the Polish

96 Écrit contre Marx, in Archives Bakounine, II, 180.
question briefly flared up again in the Second International in the mid-1890's, when Marx and Engels and their old opponent Bakunin were no longer alive. This was the beginning of the search for the true meaning of Marx and Engels's views on the Polish question.
CONCLUSION

In the mid-nineteenth century the Polish question was considered by the European Left as a part of the question of the reorganization of Europe leading to the destruction of the monarchical and aristocratic structure of the European states and the liberation of the people. This was also the conviction of Marx and Engels. However, from the beginning they took an isolated stand on the question of the liberation of the oppressed people due to their ideology and their interest in a strong Germany. This had an impact upon their attitude towards the Polish question.

Although Marx and Engels paid lip service to the need for the solidarity of the European people, their ideology emphasized the concept of leadership. Under the influence of Hegel they differentiated between the historic and the non-historic nations, between the progressive and backward nations, and stressed the right of the former to dominate the latter. The concept of leadership was extended to the revolutionary fight. According to Marx and Engels the industrial proletariat, predestined to
effect the final liberation of man, had the task to lead the rural proletariat in the communist revolution, while the revolutionary nation had the right to dominate the reactionary one. Marx and Engels were convinced that the communist revolution would be initiated in the progressive West and then engulf the backward East. In the 1840's and 1850's they ascribed the leadership of the revolution to England and after the 1850's to Germany.

From Marx's and Engels's viewpoint the Poles belonged to backward Eastern Europe. They would not play a decisive role in the communist revolution. Their final liberation would depend upon the events in Western Europe. Consequently, the agitation of the Poles for the creation of a peasant democracy had only a relative significance in the eyes of Marx and Engels. At the utmost a peasant democracy might help to prepare the communist revolution. Marx's and Engels's interest in a Polish peasant democracy was shortlived. After the Revolution of 1848 it was dropped, partly because Marx and Engels became definitely convinced that the peasants were a reactionary force, and partly because they gave up hope for internal changes in Poland. In the following years they did not show any interest in the economic development of Poland which foreshadowed social changes.

On the whole the Polish question interested Marx and Engels mainly as a foreign political question which could
conveniently be exploited to ridicule political opponents, to agitate against the reactionary powers Prussia, Austria, and Russia and against the foreign policy of the Western European states towards Russia, and, above all, to fight Pan-Slavism. As a result, the German question emerged as a major factor in the discussions on the question of Polish liberation.

Marx and Engels were convinced that in the past not only the foreign policy of Prussia but also that of the Western European powers towards Poland had contributed to the rise of Russia and thereby to the weakening of Germany. They wished for the strengthening of Germany through the creation of Grossdeutschland which would include the Austro-Slavs. They feared that the Austro-Slavs might be attracted to Russia, and that Russia might create a Pan-Slav union which would weaken Germany to an even greater degree. In order to save Germany from a Slavic encirclement, Marx and Engels insisted upon the necessity for Polish liberation, and the collaboration of the Poles with the Germans. Simultaneously, they condemned the agitation of the Austro-Slavs for their liberation from German rule. Marx and Engels were quite aware of the inconsistency in their approach to the question of national liberation and were anxious to explain that the Poles had a right to national liberty because they were a historical nation. Yet, this inconsistency permitted the
speculation, which was exploited by Bakunin, that at any moment Marx and Engels might reverse their support of Polish liberation.

Certainly, Marx's and Engels's ultimate intentions regarding the territorial extension of Poland could only have been revealed if during their lifetime a German revolution had occurred followed by the establishment of a communist government. But there is ample evidence that as defenders of a strong German state they would not have ceded to the Poles the Grand Duchy of Poznania and West Prussia. The rest is open to speculation. Under certain political circumstances they might have helped the Poles to restore the historical eastern borders of 1772, or they might have come to an agreement with the Russians to form a Polish buffer state between Germany and Russia, two possible solutions which Engels had envisioned early in the 1850's.

Apart from the question of the territorial extension of Poland it is very probable that a communist Germany would have pursued the same policy towards a Polish state as did the Soviet Union which turned Poland into a satellite after the Second World War. As Bakunin pointed out, the political concepts of Marx and Engels did not contain any safeguards against the increase of the power of the state and its expansionist policies which would be detrimental to the liberty of the individual and of small nations.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Gertrud U. Romaniuk has been read and approved by members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form. The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

May 29, 1970
Date

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