To Human
Beings in all lands!

I, who am falsely called "German" instead of just simply "man", I call out to the icy regions of the North, I call out to Africa and to America, to Asia and to Europe.

To all regions that have cars to hear I call out but two words and these are

Man and Love

And even as the Australian weeps when he encounters pain, and laughs and makes merry when joy and happiness are granted him, even so dost thou weep, my brother Eskimo, and so, O African and O Chinese, weepest thou too and so weep I.

And as we all, all human beings, equally feel joy and pain, let us fight unitedly against the common monstrous enemy, War.

We shall unite in protesting against, in weeping over the accursed mass murders for which we all bear equal guilt. But let us also raise our eyes cheerfully to the red dawn of freedom and peace.

To the Fatherland of all Fatherlands, to the Fatherland of human beings which stands above all!

In many books have many words been written for and against this most diabolical, this meanest and lowest of all crimes of the State.

The bourgeois poet in his strength glorified this War in verse and the proletarian writer wrote in glowing wrath against this mass murder.

But all the treasury of words of all men of all lands suffices not, in the present and in the future, to paint correctly this butchery of human beings.

Here, however, in the present book, — partly by accident, partly intentionally — a picture of War, objectively true and faithful to nature, has been photographically recorded for all time.
The pictures in this book from page 53 to the end, show records obtained by the inexorable, incorruptible photographic lens, of the trenches and the mass graves, of "military lies", of the "field of honour", and of other "idylls" of the "Great Epoch".

And not one single man of any country whatsoever can arise and bear witness against these photographs, that they are untrue and that they do not correspond to realities.

And no one comes and says:
"O how frightful that such pictures should be shown!"

But he says rather: "At last, at last the mask has been torn away from this "field of honour", from this lie of an "heroic death", and from all the other beautiful phrases, from all this international swindle the mask has at last, yea, at last, been torn away!!"

This book is dedicated to all war profiteers and parasites, to all war provokers, and is consecrated also to the "kings", generals, presidents and ministers of all lands.

To the priests, however, who blessed the weapons in the name of God, this book is dedicated as a War bible!

Show these pictures to all men who still can think!

He who then still believes in this mass butchery, let him be locked up in a mad-house, let us avoid him as we do the plague!

It may then be that the nationalists and war-provokers, the kings and the generals, may wish to carry on war among themselves, on their own account and at their own risk, and that they force no man to join them against his will!

Such a war would indeed be welcomed by every pacifist and every proletarian!

Then all the war enthusiasts would at last of their own free will exterminate one another,

and then we should have peace, eternal peace on this earth!

But unfortunately these heroes are not to be had for such a "war of liberation" (liberation from the war promoters and profiteers).

They lack the courage, these war-thinkers and warleaders, to go themselves into the battle, and themselves to die a sweet "heroic death".

That is why they invented such beautiful phrases as "Fatherland" and "Field of Honour" and spoke of "defence" and uttered other lies.

And he who did not permit himself to be enthused to death by military music and by lying legends of the "enemy" of "the invaded".

him they forced against his will into the murderer's uniform, him they ordered to murder and to rob for the interests of the money-bags.

I know of one practical way of preventing war for all time to come.

Many, many years ago the doctor, it is said, was fully responsible with his own life and property for the life of his patients.

If the patient died at the hands of his doctor, the latter died too.

Such was the law.

And so let there be also a law for kings, presidents, generals and, last but not least, newspaper writers:

"Whoever forces men into war or provokes them to mass murders, shall be responsible with all his property and possessions and with his own life for the safety and the sufferings of the soldiers.

The king who rallies people to his standard shall himself bear the standard.

And if a soldier should be reduced to beggary, the king shall go out begging with him.

If huts are burnt down in wars, so also shall palaces and castles be set in flames.
And always, for each human life that is sacrificed at the front, shall one king or one minister rest in peace on the "field of honour" for the Fatherland.
And ten newspaper writers that agitate for war, shall be detained as hostages for the life of each single warrior!"

Such a law, however, will never come into being, and no "disarmament" or "peace" conference will give heed to my proposal.
Therefore let us, who are fighters, join in the war against war,
let us examine the causes and the nature of war, so that, armed with the weapon of knowledge and the sharp sword of the mind, we may emerge victorious from the fight.

The Cause of War

Long ago, Plato who was born 427 years before the Nazarene, Plato, that wise man, said: —
"All wars arise for the possession of wealth".

That is as true a word as ever was spoken.
For to the present day in all wars the object is to protect or to seize money and property and power;
and there will always be wars so long as Capital rules and oppresses the people.

When international capital finds itself threatened by mutual competition,
and when the furnace-barons and factory owners begin to have differences among themselves,
then they rattle their sabres and spurs and they call out:
"The Country is in danger!" (They mean by "country" always the money-bags!)

And wonderfully enough
the working slaves of all lands abandon their plough and their anvil,
they hasten to arms,
and protect the life and property of their masters with their own blood and life.

What did I say? "That this is strange?" No, it is quite natural — a natural monstrosity!
For it is not the state power and force alone that compels all "subjects" to protect the throne and the money-bags, and to die for them.
Capital has not only economic power in its hands, it has, equal measure and with equal power, subjected the proletariat also intellectually.

This fact is easily overlooked and there still remains, therefore, so much bourgeois ideology in the proletariat!

I, therefore, always say to my brothers, the proletarians, I say to the class-war fighters: —
"Free yourselves from bourgeois prejudices!
Fight against capitalism within yourselves!
In your thoughts and in your actions there still lurks unspeakably much of the philistine and the soldier,
and almost in every one there is hidden a drilled subaltern, who wishes only to dominate and command, even if it be over his own comrades and over his wife and children in his family!"

But I also say to those bourgeois pacifists, who seek to fight against war by mere hand caresses and tea-cakes and piously up-turned eyes: —
"Fight against Capitalism — and you fight against every war!
The battle-field in the factories and the mines,
the hero's death in the infirmaries, the mass graves in the barracks,
in short, the war, the apparently eternal war, of the exploited against the exploiters!

Do — you
not — realise — all — this?
The war against war signifies:

The war of the victimised against the profiteers!
The war of the deceived against the deceivers!
The war of the oppressed against the oppressors!
The war of the tortured against the torturers!
The war of the hungry against the well-fed!

The Prevention of War

It is true that capital is the cause of every war.

But the guilt of war rests on our shoulders.

It is we proletarians that make the conduct of war possible, it is for us likewise to prevent wars!

Refuse to serve!

Bring up your children so that they may later refuse to render military and war service!

How very many lightly overlook the fact that in one's own home in the family, war is being spontaneously prepared!

And here lies the beginning of all evils, here lies the beginning also of war!

The mother that sings soldiers' songs to the baby on her lap, prepares for war, yes, she prepares for war!

The father that makes gifts of toy soldiers to his child mobilises the child for the war idea!

The toy soldier is the Judas that you yourself bring into the home, is the betrayal of human life! Remember always this one thing: —

The little helmet made of paper will one day be a steel helmet on the head of a murderer!

And if the child has once practised with his air-gun, how natural it is that he should in later years shoot with a rifle!

The little sabre carved of wood will some day become the battle-sword that pierces the body of a human being!

Ye parents that do not wish that your sons should murder the dear sons of other parents, you should remember that the child whom you present

with a helmet and sabre and gun, plays his tender soul to death out of his young body.

Those children, however, who are educated in love and solidarity, and are brought up to respect unconditionally the inviolable sanctity of human life, these children will most certainly be unfit for arms and war-service.

We, opponents of military service must finally destroy the halo and the humbug, and tear down the gaudy tinsel of the soldiery, and we must speak out what then still remains to be said:

a professional murderer paid by the state,
who is trained in murderschools (called barracks) privileged by the state,
in the carrying out of the most gruesome of crimes, the murder of human beings!

That is what the children should be told!

Then indeed will the young girl, destined by nature to reproduce and protect life, be disgusted to flirt with the soldiers — her natural enemies — "the pimps of death".

And the boy will later refuse to wear the uniform because he knows: It is a murderer's cloak!

It is with such clearness and precision that you must think and also act,
if you wish to nip the evil in the bud!
And should war nevertheless break out, then proceed consistently and unhesitatingly to

THE WAR AGAINST WAR!

Let the general strike be the first weapon!
The men will refuse service!
True heroism lies not in murder,
but in the refusal to commit murder.
Rather fill all prisons and workhouses and all the mad-houses of all lands, than murder and die in the service of Capital!

The last and most dreadful war has not yet broken out which cast gas and poison and flames on human beings and animals and houses.
It lies in our hands, in our power, to prevent, to hinder, this most dreadful tragedy.

Let the great, inspiring example of consistent conscientious objectors be our model.

They suffered death for their consistent “No!” rather than themselves become murderers!

I WILL NOT!

Stronger than all violence, than the sabre and the rifle, is our spirit, is our will!

Repeat these three words: “I will not!”

Give content to these words and all wars in future will be impossible.

What then will all Capital of the whole world, what will all the kings and presidents do, when the entire people in all lands arise with the cry:

WE WILL NOT!

AND YOU WOMEN!

If your husbands should be too weak, then carry out the work yourselves!!

Prove that the bond of love with the husband is stronger than an army order!

Do not let your men go to the front!

Do not decorate their rifles with flowers!

Cling to the necks of your husbands!

Do not let them go even when the order to depart calls!

Tear up all the rails, throw yourselves before the locomotives!

WOMEN! REALISE THIS

IF YOUR HUSBANDS SHOULD BE TOO WEAK!

Mothers of all lands unite!

ERNST FRIEDRICH

End of July, 1924

Menschen aller Länder!


Allüberall, wo Ohren sind zu hören, ruf ich zwei Worte nur, und dies sind:

Mensch und Liebe.

Und so, wie der Australier weint, wenn ihm ein Schmerz begegnet, und lacht und jubelt, wenn ihm Freude, Glück beschieden, so eben weinst auch du, mein Bruder Eskimo, so Afrikaner und Chinese weinst auch du, und du und du und ich.

So wie wir alle, alle Menschen Schmerz und Freude gleich empfinden, so lass uns gemeinsam kämpfen gegen den gemeinsamen grauenhaften Feind, den Krieg.

So wollen wir gemeinsam klagen, weinen über das verfluchte Massenmorden, an dem wir alle gleichen Teil der Schuld. So aber auch laßt freudig uns den Blick erheben ins Morgenrot des Friedens und der Freiheit.

In aller Vaterländer Vaterland, ins Vaterland der Menschen, und dieses über alles!

In vielen Büchern sind viel Worte für und gegen dieses teuflische, gemeinste aller Staatsverbrechen aufgeschrieben.

Des bürgerlichen Dichters Kraft verherrlichte in Versen diesen „Krieg“, und der Prolet-Schriftsteller schrieb auflodernd gegen dieses Massenmorden.

Doch aller Wortschatz, aller Menschen, aller Länder, reicht in aller Gegenwart und Zukunft lange nicht, um dieses Menschengeschlechter richtig auszumalen.

Hier aber ist das nüchtern-wahre, das gemein-naturgetreue Bild des Krieges — teils durch Zufall, teils durch Absicht — photographisch festgehalten.
Concluding remarks

If, in the present book, photographs have been published which expose more particularly the cruelties of German militarism, or, to speak more correctly, the cruelties of militarism on the German side (for, in reality, militarism, just like capitalism, is an international crime), I do not by any means wish to be understood as saying: “See! Only the German soldiery is capable of such bestialities”. On the contrary, it is just such facts as the destruction of cemeteries by French troops (how cruel not even to allow the dead to rest in peace! . . .) that prove that the beast in soldier’s uniform, if it has once tasted blood, can hardly be controlled any longer.

For more than four years all the nations that took part in the War have committed murder by fire and steel, by poison and gas. They have all battered, bayoneted, shot, poisoned and burnt one another. Who, indeed, can rise and accuse the German or the French, the English or the Italian soldiery of having perpetrated greater brutalities than the others? The German ran his bayonet into the entrails of the Frenchman with the same enthusiasm as was shown by the Frenchman in cutting up the bodies of the Germans. The Italian smashed in the head of an Austrian with the same blood-thirstiness as the Austrian did the Italian. And the English and the Americans torpedoed German ships just as unscrupulously as the German Marine sank enemy vessels.

If, nevertheless, only German atrocities are principally exposed here, the reason is to be found in the fact that for me, as a person accidentally born in Germany, only photographs of Germans were naturally available. In order to remove this defect for a new edition of this work which is being planned, I hereby issue an

Appeal

to human beings in all lands

to place more pictures at my disposal. I request comrades and sympathisers to send me by registered post war photographs, war reports, army orders, speeches, &c., in order that the material that has been collected for years may be made as complete as possible and that the

International Anti-War Museum

founded by me, may be further extended. All placards, pictures, songs, poems, books, toy soldiers, war souvenirs, statuettes, coffee cups with war slogans painted on them, handkerchiefs on which war pictures are printed, and in short all things that in any way are connected with war and militarism, are urgently needed for our Museum. The photographs and other objects sent in will, if desired, be returned after a copy has been made for the Museum. All journals and magazines sympathising with us are requested to reproduce the present appeal.

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(International House.)

My hearty thanks are due to

Comrade Arthur Wolf of the Association of Proletarian Free Thinkers in Leipzig, as also to our sympathiser Rottcher, of the publishing house “Friede durch Recht” in Wiesbaden, for the large number of photographs supplied. Other pictures have been taken from the “Freie Welt” (organ of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany), which has unfortunately stopped publication. Thanks are also due to the many sympathisers who have placed pictures at my disposal but whom I unfortunately cannot here mention by name. Heartfelt thanks are likewise due to the translators, – Comrade Heider and Comrade V. Chattopadhyaya for the French and English translations respectively and Comrade Muller-Lehning for the Dutch preface.

Thanks also to my Torturers!

In conclusion I must also express my gratitude to the German Public Prosecutors, who did indeed succeed in confiscating (stealing) some clichés during the printing of this book, but who, on the other hand, by repeatedly having me arrested for shorter or longer periods, have largely contributed towards the completeness of this book, for, in the solitude of my cell, newer and better ideas continually developed in my mind. These State Prosecutors have therefore, though unintentionally, advanced our work in no small degree.

In Preparations:

Civil War

and the

International Preparations for the next War

by Ernst Friedrich.

For this work also we require photographs, pictures, statuettes, etc., from all countries. We also desire letters from prisoners, army orders, and documents emanating from rulers and governments. More particularly are needed pictures of strikes, street fights and material concerning new weapons and methods of murder.