

## **Jean Jaurès' *L'armée nouvelle* as a vision for society and for the prevention of war**

Rudolf Jaun

Jean Jaurès, leader of the French socialist movement, was one of the most prominent figures to attend the Basel Congress 'Against War' and one of the first political victims of the outbreak of World War I. Jaurès was assassinated on 31 July 1914 because he was considered capable of dissuading France from going to war.

The increasing threat to European peace in the period after 1900 motivated Jaurès to devise a socio-political blueprint for a 'nation in arms' – in the form of a 'new army' based on the Swiss model. His vision for the introduction of strong defensive militia armies without the capability for aggression was aimed at securing lasting peace. Germany and the rest of Europe's nations were to follow the French example.

*L'armée nouvelle* is a classic of both French labour history and French military history, and has been reissued several times since it was first published in 1910, most recently in 1995.

The text's appeal lies in the fact that it was published as part of the collection *L'organisation socialiste de la France* and represents both a vision for society and a vision for the prevention of war.