

Rosa Luxemburg's and Karl Liebknecht's focus in the fight against war, 1911-1913

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'We must affirm,' – Rosa Luxemburg stated at the ISB meeting in Brussels on 28 October 1912 – 'firstly, that the present war is the particular case of a general tendency of capitalist development; secondly, that *mass action* is necessary; thirdly, that the proletariat must *step up* its activity; fourthly, that the international proletariat in all countries has a duty to respond to a war with decisive action. We must perceive that we find ourselves in a new historical era and express it in the boldness of our resolutions.' Above all, she said, the focus must be on uncovering the causes of rivalries between the European states and their alliances, on the fight against the arms race, and on preventing a world war. She polemicised against the illusion that one could penetrate the mysteries of diplomacy and overcome imperialist contradictions with a 'United States of Europe'. The most important thing, she argued, was to educate people and mobilise them for mass resistance. In this fight, Karl Liebknecht, too, warned against an arms build-up, against nationalism, chauvinism, and the major European powers' desire to meddle. The main focus of his work was his investigative campaign against Krupp and other arms manufacturers with international connections. In the course of this campaign he made exemplary use of all available parliamentary and extra-parliamentary means, as well as agreements with English and French antimilitarists.