

Nutzungshinweise:

Diese Druckansicht dient nur zu Arbeitszwecken. Zitieren Sie ggf. direkt die [digitale Edition](#).
Dieses Werk ist lizenziert unter einer Creative Commons Namensnennung - Nicht-kommerziell - Weitergabe unter gleichen Bedingungen 4.0 International Lizenz.

Zitiervorschlag:

Karl Marx an Paul Lafargue in Bordeaux. London, Samstag, 4. Februar 1871. In: Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe digital, hg. v. der Internationalen Marx-Engels-Stiftung, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin. URL <https://megadigital.bbaw.de/briefe/detail.xql?id=M1174791>

Karl Marx an Paul Lafargue in Bordeaux. London, Samstag, 4. Februar 1871

Lindenberg, Thomas (Bearbeitung)
Lura, Caroline (Bearbeitung)

Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW) Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe

Handschrift: Handschrift: RGASPI f. 1 op. 1 d. 6058

Handschriftenbeschreibung:

Soweit aus der Fotokopie zu ersehen ist, besteht der Brief aus einem Bogen und einem Blatt weißem Papier. Marx hat alle vier Seiten des Bogens vollständig beschrieben. Auf allen Seiten scheint der Text der Rückseite durch, was die Lesbarkeit etwas erschwert. Die erste Seite des Blattes hat er zu zwei Dritteln beschrieben, die zweite Seite ist leer. Schreibmaterial: schwarze Tinte.

Erstveröffentlichung: *Lettres et documents de Karl Marx* (1958). S. 179–182.

Absender: Karl Marx
Schreibort: London
Schreibdatum: 1871-02-04

Empfänger: Paul Lafargue
Empfangsort: Bordeaux

Schlagworte: Frankreich, Deutsch-Französischer Krieg 1870/71, Privates - Marx (Familie, Gesundheit, Finanzen), Fotografie, Preußen, Großbritannien – Politik, Wirtschaft, Geschichte, Russland, Internationale Beziehungen in Europa

| 4 Febr. 1871.

Dear Paul,

Il faut créer des nouveaux défenseurs à la France. You and **Laura**^a seem seriously and successfully engaged in that **patriotic**¹ business. The whole family was delighted to hear that our dear Laura has passed victoriously through the critical juncture^b and we hope the progress will prove no less favourable.

Embrace little **Schnappy**^d on my part and tell him that Old Nick feels highly elated at the two photogramms of his successor. In the “serious” copy the stern qualities of the little man protrude, while in his attitude as franc-fileur there is a charming expression of humor and espièglerie.

You know my low opinion of middleclass heroes. Still, **Jules Favre**^e et Co have contrived to surpass my worst anticipations. When **Trochu**^f had carried out his mysterious “plan”, that is to say, when that “sabre orthodoxe”, that “crétin militaire”^g had pushed the passive resistance of Paris to that point where there remained only the alternative of starvation or capitulation—Jules Favre and Co. might have followed the precedent of the Governor of Toul^h. When his power of resistance had altogether broken down, he did not capitulate. He simply informed

the Prussians of the real state of things, declared that he could not any longer go on with the defence, being deprived of provisions, and that they might now do as they liked. He made them no concession at all. He simply recognis(?)ed a fait | acc²ompli. Favre et Co., on the contrary, not only sign a formal capitulation. They have impudence to act on behalf of all France, although ~~xx~~ in complete ignorance of the state of affairs en-dehors de Paris, in regard to which they were strictly confined to the dishinterested information Bismarck^j condescended to vouchsave them. Moreover, having capitulated, having become Messieurs les prisonniers du roi de Prusse^k, they go further and declare that the Bordelais delegation has lost its power and must only act in union with “Messieurs les prisonniers du roi de Prusse”. Why, even Louis Bonaparte^l, after his capitulation and surrender at Sedan, declared to Bismarck he could enter into no negociations with him, because he had ceased to be a free agent, and because, by the very fact of his being a Prussian prisoner, he had ceased to hold any authority over France!

Thus even L. Bonaparte was less shameless than Favre et Co! The only condition which Favre could have accepted conditionally, that is to say under the reserve of his act being assented to by the Bordelais delegation, was the armistice. Yet to settle the terms of that armistice he must have left to the men who were not prisoners of le roi de Prusse^m. They would certainly not have³ allowed the Prussians to exclude from that armistice the Eastern theatre of war, and would not have allowed the Prussians to improve, on the plea of the armistice, the whole outlines of their military occupation, rounding it off in the way most profitable to themselves.

| Emboldened by the dastardly servilism of the Paris delegation who presume to participate in the government of France, after having become Messieurs les capitulars et les prisonniers du roi de Prusseⁿ, Bismarck^o considers himself and acts already⁴ as the de facto~~xxxxxx~~(?)⁵ supreme authority in France. He protests against Gambetta^p's decree relating to the general elections as interfering with their “liberty”. He dictates the terms on which the general assembly ought to be chosen. Why! Gambetta^q might reply by protesting against the conditions under which at this very moment the general elections for the Reichstag are carried on in Germany. He might insist that to render these elections free. Bismarck ought above all things to abolish or at least to suspend the state of siege maintained through great part of Prussia. To give you one instance of the liberty of election in Germany. At Frankfurt (on the Maine Mein) a workman's candidate^r (not residing in Frankfort^t) is proposed and opens his electoral campaign in that town. What do the Prussian authorities resort to? To the expulsion of that candidate from Frankfort by the police force!

I hope that the Prussians will insist on their modest demand of 400 millions of £. sterl. war contribution by France! This will mayrouse even the French middleclass ~~who will(?)~~ whose manœuvres⁶, together with the intrigues of the local⁷ administration (which Gambetta^u has allowed to a great part to rest in the hands of Bonapartists, Orleanists etc) are the true ~~xxx~~(?)⁸ key to the till now⁹ reverses of the present¹⁰ war. Even the middleclass may at last become aware that they will lose more by giving in than by fighting!

| At the same time, if France holds still out for same time, the Foreign relations will become much more favourable to her cause.

In England the Gladstone^v ministry is seriously endangered. It may have¹¹ soon be kicked out. The public opinion here is now again warlike to the highest degree. This change has been worked by Prussia's demands, mainly by her asking Pondichery(?) and the 20 first-rate French men-of-war. John Bull^w sees in this a menace against England and a Russian intrigue (and these demands have indeed been suggested to Prussia by the St. Petersburg cabinet).

In Russia itself a great change seems imminent. Since the assumption of the Imperial title by the king of Prussia^x, the anti-German party, the so-called Muscovite party, led by the prince successor^y, has again got the upperhand. It is very probable that the present emperor^z will either have to accept its dictates and a consequent change of his foreign policy, or that he will share the fate of his predecessors and by some means or other released of his “mortal body”. If such a convulsion in Russia takes place, Prussia, whose frontiers on the Russian and Austrian ~~be~~(?)¹²

sides, are quite denuded of troops, quite exposed and defenceless, will prove unable to keep up her present forces in France. She will at once lower her tone and become quite traitable.

Hence, if France holds out, if she improves the armistice to repair her forces, if she understands at last that in order to carry on a revolutionary war, revolutionary measures and revolutionary energy are wanted, she may still be saved.

Bismarck^{aa} knows perfectly that he is in a fix. He hopes to get out of it by “bullying”. He confides in the cooperation of all reactionary elements of France.

Yours
Old Nick.

P. S. The master who now employs **Dupont**^{ab}, has received a letter from a house at Bordeaux which wants an agent at Manchester. Behind the back of his master—a most infamous and brutal parvenu—Dupont would like to ascertain whether he could get that agency. He therefore requests you to obtain ~~the~~(?)¹³ information about this point. The address of the house in question is: **Labadie et Co.**^{ac} (Vins et esprits) Rue des terres de Bordes. Bordeaux.

What is **Prudhomme**^{ad} doing? Has his health improved?

Erläuterungen

- a) Lafargue, Laura (1845-1911)
- b) Geburt von **Marc-Laurent Lafargue**^c, der am 31. Januar 1871 geboren wurde (siehe Registre des actes de naissance de Bordeaux, section 1, 1871).
- c) Lafargue, Marc-Laurent (1871-1871)
- d) Lafargue, Charles Étienne (31.12.1868-1872)
- e) Favre, Jules (1809-1880)
- f) Trochu, Louis Jules (1815-1896)
- g) Siehe Marx an L. Kugelmann, 4.2.1871.
- h) **Auguste Eugène Huck**ⁱ.
- i) Huck, Auguste Eugène (1816-1890)
- j) Bismarck-Schönhausen, Otto von (1815-1898)
- k) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)
- l) Napoléon III (1808-1873)
- m) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)
- n) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)
- o) Bismarck-Schönhausen, Otto von (1815-1898)
- p) Gambetta, Léon (1838-1882)
- q) Gambetta, Léon (1838-1882)
- r) **Joseph Schneider**^s.
- s) Schneider, Joseph (-)
- t) Wie bei der vorhergehenden und nachstehenden Schreibweise der Stadt Frankfurt am Main scheint nach der Handschrift die Schreibung so, wie hier wiedergegeben.
- u) Gambetta, Léon (1838-1882)
- v) Gladstone, William Ewart (1809-1898)
- w) John Bull
- x) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)

- y)** Aleksandr III (1845-1894)
- z)** Aleksandr II (1818-1881)
- aa)** Bismarck-Schönhausen, Otto von (1815-1898)
- ab)** Dupont, Eugène (1831-1881)
- ac)** Labadie et Co.
- ad)** Prudhomme (ca. 1843-)

Kritischer Apparat

- 1)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 2)** innerhalb der Zeile eingetragen
- 3)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 4)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 5)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 6)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 7)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 8)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 9)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 10)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 11)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 12)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 13)** Tilgung durch Streichung