"Karl Marx, *[On the Question of Abstentionism]*." *Workers Unite!: The International 150 Years Later*. Ed. Marcello Musto. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. 280. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781501302367.0091>>.

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Karl Marx, *[On the Question of Abstentionism]*¹⁰¹

He [Marx] explained the history of abstention from politics and said that one should not get worked up over this question. The men who propagated this doctrine were well-meaning utopians, but those who want to take such a road today are not. They reject politics until after a violent struggle, and thereby drive the people into a formal, bourgeois opposition, which we must battle against at the same time we fight against the governments. [...]

Marx shares Vaillant's opinion. We must reply with a challenge to all the governments, also in Switzerland, that are subjecting the International to persecutions. Reaction exists on the whole Continent; it is general and permanent – even in the United States and England – in one form or another.

We must announce to the governments: We know you are the armed power which is directed against the proletarians; we will move against you in peaceful way where it is possible, and with arms if it should become necessary.

¹⁰¹ This text is taken from the synopsis of a speech given by Karl Marx (see note 1) at a session of 21 September, of the London Conference of 1871. The full version is in PI, II: 195–6.