

LENIN

On the Slogan
for a United States
of Europe

The Military Programme
of the Proletarian
Revolution



PROGRESS Publishers

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

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for a United States
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ON THE SLOGAN FOR A UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

In No. 40 of *Sotsial-Demokrat*¹ we reported that a conference of our Party's groups abroad² had decided to defer the question of the "United States of Europe" slogan pending a discussion, in the press, on the *economic* aspect of the matter.*

At our conference the debate on this question assumed a purely political character. Perhaps this was partly caused by the Central Committee's Manifesto having formulated this slogan as a forthright political one ("the immediate *political* slogan. . .", as it says there); not only did it advance the slogan of a republican United States of Europe but expressly emphasised that this slogan is meaningless and false "without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies".

It would be quite wrong to object to such a presentation of the question *within the limits* of a political appraisal of this slogan—e.g., to argue that it obscures or weakens, etc., the slogan of a socialist revolution. Political changes of a truly democratic nature, and especially political revolutions, can under no circumstances whatsoever either obscure or weaken the slogan of a socialist revolution. On the contrary, they always bring it closer, extend its basis, and draw new sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the semi-proletarian masses into the socialist struggle. On the other hand, political revolutions are inevitable in the

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 158.—Ed.

course of the socialist revolution, which should not be regarded as a single act, but as a period of turbulent political and economic upheavals, the most intense class struggle, civil war, revolutions, and counter-revolutions.

But while the slogan of a republican United States of Europe—if accompanied by the revolutionary overthrow of the three most reactionary monarchies in Europe, headed by the Russian—is quite invulnerable as a political slogan, there still remains the highly important question of its economic content and significance. From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the “advanced” and “civilised” colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary.

Capital has become international and monopolist. The world has been carved up by a handful of Great Powers, i.e., powers successful in the great plunder and oppression of nations. The four Great Powers of Europe—Britain, France, Russia and Germany, with an aggregate population of between 250,000,000 and 300,000,000, and an area of about 7,000,000 square kilometres—possess colonies with a population of *almost 500 million* (494,500,000) and an area of 64,600,000 square kilometres, i.e., almost half the surface of the globe (133,000,000 square kilometres, exclusive of Arctic and Antarctic regions). Add to this the three Asian states—China, Turkey and Persia, now being rent piecemeal by thugs that are waging a war of “liberation”, namely, Japan, Russia, Britain and France. Those three Asian states, which may be called semi-colonies (in reality they are now 90 per cent colonies), have a total population of 360,000,000 and an area of 14,500,000 square kilometres (almost one and a half times the area of all Europe).

Furthermore, Britain, France and Germany have invested capital abroad to the value of no less than 70,000 million rubles. The business of securing “legitimate” profits from this tidy sum—these exceed 3,000 million rubles annually—is carried out by the national committees of the

millionaires, known as governments, which are equipped with armies and navies and which provide the sons and brothers of the millionaires with jobs in the colonies and semi-colonies as viceroys, consuls, ambassadors, officials of all kinds, clergymen, and other leeches.

That is how the plunder of about a thousand million of the earth's population by a handful of Great Powers is organised in the epoch of the highest development of capitalism. No other organisation is possible under capitalism. Renounce colonies, “spheres of influence”, and the export of capital? To think that it is possible means coming down to the level of some snivelling parson who every Sunday preaches to the rich on the lofty principles of Christianity and advises them to give the poor, well, if not millions, at least several hundred rubles yearly.

A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement on the partition of colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis and no other principle of division are possible except force. A multi-millionaire cannot share the “national income” of a capitalist country with anyone otherwise than “in proportion to the capital invested” (with a bonus thrown in, so that the biggest capital may receive more than its share). Capitalism is private ownership of the means of production, and anarchy in production. To advocate a “just” division of income on such a basis is sheer Proudhonism, stupid philistinism. No division can be effected otherwise than in “proportion to strength”, and strength changes with the course of economic development. Following 1871, the rate of Germany's accession of strength was three or four times as rapid as that of Britain and France, and of Japan about ten times as rapid as Russia's. There is and there can be no other way of testing the real might of a capitalist state than by war. War does not contradict the fundamentals of private property—on the contrary, it is a direct and inevitable outcome of those fundamentals. Under capitalism the smooth economic growth of individual enterprises or individual states is impossible. Under capitalism, there are no other means of restoring the periodically disturbed

equilibrium than crises in industry and wars in politics.

Of course, *temporary* agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists . . . but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America, who have been badly done out of their share by the present partition of colonies, and the increase of whose might during the last fifty years has been immeasurably more rapid than that of backward and monarchist Europe, now turning senile. Compared with the United States of America, Europe as a whole denotes economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, i.e., under capitalism, a United States of Europe would signify an organisation of reaction to retard America's more rapid development. The times when the cause of democracy and socialism was associated only with Europe alone have gone for ever.

A United States of the World (not of Europe alone) is the state form of the unification and freedom of nations which we associate with socialism—until the time when the complete victory of communism brings about the total disappearance of the state, including the democratic. As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, first, because it merges with socialism; second, because it may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of socialism in a single country is impossible, and it may also create misconceptions as to the relations of such a country to the others.

Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organising their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise *against* the rest of the world—the capitalist world—attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states.

The political form of a society wherein the proletariat is victorious in overthrowing the bourgeoisie will be a democratic republic, which will more and more concentrate the forces of the proletariat of a given nation or nations, in the struggle against states that have not yet gone over to socialism. The abolition of classes is impossible without a dictatorship of the oppressed class, of the proletariat. A free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states.

It is for these reasons and after repeated discussions at the Conference of R.S.D.L.P. groups abroad, and following that conference, that the Central Organ's editors have come to the conclusion that the slogan for a United States of Europe is an erroneous one.

Sotsial-Demokrat, No. 44,
August 23, 1915

Vol. 21,
pp. 339-43

THE MILITARY PROGRAMME OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION³

Among the Dutch, Scandinavian and Swiss revolutionary Social-Democrats who are combating the social-chauvinist lies about "defence of the fatherland" in the present imperialist war, there have been voices in favour of replacing the old Social-Democratic minimum-programme demand for a "militia", or "the armed nation", by a new demand: "disarmament". The *Jugend-Internationale*⁴ has inaugurated a discussion on this issue and published, in No. 3, an editorial supporting disarmament. There is also, we regret to note, a concession to the "disarmament" idea in R. Grimm's latest theses.⁵ Discussions have been started in the periodicals *Neues Leben*⁶ and *Vorbote*.⁷

Let us take a closer look at the position of the disarmament advocates.

I

Their principal argument is that the disarmament demand is the clearest, most decisive, most consistent expression of the struggle against all militarism and against all war.

But in this principal argument lies the disarmament advocates' principal error. Socialists cannot, without ceasing to be socialists, be opposed to all war.

Firstly, socialists have never been, nor can they ever be, opposed to revolutionary wars. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist "Great" Powers has become thoroughly reactionary, and the war *this* bourgeoisie is now waging we regard as a reactionary, slave-owners' and criminal war. But what about a war *against* this bourgeoisie? A war, for instance, waged by peoples oppressed by and dependent upon this bourgeoisie, or by colonial peoples, for liberation? In § 5 of the *Internationale* group⁸ theses we read: "National wars are no longer possible in the era of this unbridled imperialism." That is obviously wrong.

The history of the twentieth century, this century of "unbridled imperialism", is replete with colonial wars. But what we Europeans, the imperialist oppressors of the majority of the world's peoples, with our habitual, despicable European chauvinism, call "colonial wars" are often national wars, or national rebellions of these oppressed peoples. One of the main features of imperialism is that it accelerates capitalist development in the most backward countries, and thereby extends and intensifies the struggle against national oppression. That is a fact, and from it inevitably follows that imperialism must often give rise to national wars. *Junius*,⁹ who defends the above-quoted "theses" in her pamphlet, says that in the imperialist era every national war against an imperialist Great Power leads to the intervention of a rival imperialist Great Power. Every national war is thus turned into an imperialist war. But that argument is wrong too. This *can* happen, but does not always happen. Many colonial wars between 1900 and 1914 did not follow that course. And it would be simply ridiculous to declare, for instance, that after the present war, if it ends in the utter exhaustion of all the belligerents, "there can be no" national, progressive, revolutionary wars "of any kind", waged, say, by China in alliance with India, Persia, Siam, etc., against the Great Powers.

To deny all possibility of national wars under imperialism is wrong in theory, obviously mistaken historically, and tantamount to European chauvinism in practice: we

who belong to nations that oppress hundreds of millions in Europe, Africa, Asia, etc., are invited to tell the oppressed peoples that it is "impossible" for them to wage war against "our" nations!

Secondly, civil war is just as much a war as any other. He who accepts the class struggle cannot fail to accept civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions inevitable, continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. That has been confirmed by every great revolution. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, is to fall into extreme opportunism and renounce the socialist revolution.

Thirdly, the victory of socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes wars. The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in different countries. It cannot be otherwise under commodity production. From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in *all* countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois. This is bound to create not only friction, but a direct attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the socialist state's victorious proletariat. In such cases a war on our part would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie. Engels was perfectly right when, in his letter to Kautsky of September 12, 1882¹⁰, he clearly stated that it was possible for *already victorious* socialism to wage "defensive wars". What he had in mind was defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.

Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not merely of one country, will wars become impossible. And from a scientific point of view it would be utterly wrong—and utterly unrevolutionary—for us to evade or gloss over the most important thing: crushing the resistance of the

bourgeoisie—the most difficult task, and one demanding the greatest amount of fighting, in the *transition* to socialism. The "social" parsons and opportunists are always ready to build dreams of future peaceful socialism. But the very thing that distinguishes them from revolutionary Social-Democrats is that they refuse to think about and reflect on the fierce class struggle and class wars needed to achieve that beautiful future.

We must not allow ourselves to be led astray by words. The term "defence of the fatherland", for instance, is hateful to many because both avowed opportunists and Kautskyites use it to cover up and gloss over the bourgeois lie about the *present* predatory war. This is a fact. But it does not follow that we must no longer see through to the meaning of political slogans. To accept "defence of the fatherland" in the present war is no more nor less than to accept it as a "just" war, a war in the interests of the proletariat—no more nor less, we repeat, because invasions may occur in any war. It would be sheer folly to repudiate "defence of the fatherland" *on the part* of oppressed nations in their wars *against* the imperialist Great Powers, or on the part of a victorious proletariat in *its* war against some Galliffet¹¹ of a bourgeois state.

Theoretically, it would be absolutely wrong to forget that every war is but the continuation of policy by other means. The present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist policies of two groups of Great Powers, and these policies were engendered and fostered by the sum total of the relationships of the imperialist era. But this very era must also necessarily engender and foster policies of struggle against national oppression and of proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie and, consequently, also the possibility and inevitability, first, of revolutionary national rebellions and wars; second, of proletarian wars and rebellions *against* the bourgeoisie; and, third, of a combination of both kinds of revolutionary war, etc.

II

To this must be added the following general consideration.

An oppressed class which does not strive to learn to use arms, to acquire arms, only deserves to be treated like slaves. We cannot, unless we have become bourgeois pacifists or opportunists, forget that we are living in a class society from which there is no way out, nor can there be, save through the class struggle. In every class society, whether based on slavery, serfdom, or, as at present, on wage-labour, the oppressor class is always armed. Not only the modern standing army, but even the modern militia—and even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, Switzerland, for instance—represent the bourgeoisie armed *against* the proletariat. That is such an elementary truth that it is hardly necessary to dwell upon it. Suffice it to point to the use of troops against strikers in all capitalist countries.

A bourgeoisie armed against the proletariat is one of the biggest, fundamental and cardinal facts of modern capitalist society. And in face of this fact, revolutionary Social-Democrats are urged to “demand” “disarmament”! That is tantamount to complete abandonment of the class-struggle point of view, to renunciation of all thought of revolution. Our slogan must be: arming of the proletariat to defeat, expropriate and disarm the bourgeoisie. These are the only tactics possible for a revolutionary class, tactics that follow logically from, and are dictated by, the whole *objective development* of capitalist militarism. Only *after* the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie will it be able, without betraying its world-historic mission, to consign all armaments to the scrap-heap. And the proletariat will undoubtedly do this, but *only when this condition has been fulfilled, certainly not before*.

If the present war rouses among the reactionary Christian socialists, among the whimpering petty bourgeoisie,

only horror and fright, only aversion to all use of arms, to bloodshed, death, etc., then we must say: Capitalist society is and has always been *horror without end*. If this most reactionary of all wars is now preparing for that society an *end in horror*, we have no reason to fall into despair. But the disarmament “demand”, or more correctly, the dream of disarmament, is, objectively, nothing but an expression of despair at a time when, as everyone can see, the bourgeoisie itself is paving the way for the only legitimate and revolutionary war—civil war against the imperialist bourgeoisie.

A lifeless theory, some might say, but we would remind them of two world-historical facts: the role of the trusts and the employment of women in industry, on the one hand, and the Paris Commune of 1871 and the December 1905 uprising in Russia, on the other.

The bourgeoisie makes it its business to promote trusts, drive women and children into the factories, subject them to corruption and suffering, condemn them to extreme poverty. We do not “demand” such development, we do not “support” it. We fight it. But *how* do we fight? We explain that trusts and the employment of women in industry are progressive. We do not want a return to the handicraft system, pre-monopoly capitalism, domestic drudgery for women. Forward through the trusts, etc., and beyond them to socialism!

With the necessary changes that argument is applicable also to the present militarisation of the population. Today the imperialist bourgeoisie militarises the youth as well as the adults; tomorrow, it may begin militarising the women. Our attitude should be: All the better! Full speed ahead! For the faster we move, the nearer shall we be to the armed uprising against capitalism. How can Social-Democrats give way to fear of the militarisation of the youth, etc., if they have not forgotten the example of the Paris Commune? This is not a “lifeless theory” or a dream. It is a fact. And it would be a sorry state of affairs indeed if, all the economic and political facts notwithstanding, Social-Democrats began to doubt that the imperialist era

and imperialist wars must inevitably bring about a repetition of such facts.

A certain bourgeois observer of the Paris Commune writing to an English newspaper in May 1871, said: "If the French nation consisted entirely of women, what a terrible nation it would be!" Women and teen-age children fought in the Paris Commune side by side with the men. It will be no different in the coming battles for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Proletarian women will not look on passively as poorly armed or unarmed workers are shot down by the well-armed forces of the bourgeoisie. They will take to arms, as they did in 1871, and from the cowed nations of today—or more correctly, from the present-day labour movement, disorganised more by the opportunists than by the governments—there will undoubtedly arise, sooner or later, but with absolute certainty, an international league of the "terrible nations" of the revolutionary proletariat.

The whole of social life is now being militarised. Imperialism is a fierce struggle of the Great Powers for the division and redivision of the world. It is therefore bound to lead to further militarisation in all countries, even in neutral and small ones. How will proletarian women oppose this? Only by cursing all war and everything military, only by demanding disarmament? The women of an oppressed and really revolutionary class will never accept that shameful role. They will say to their sons: "You will soon be grown up. You will be given a gun. Take it and learn the military art properly. The proletarians need this knowledge not to shoot your brothers, the workers of other countries, as is being done in the present war, and as the traitors to socialism are telling you to do. They need it to fight the bourgeoisie of their own country, to put an end to exploitation, poverty and war, and not by pious wishes, but by defeating and disarming the bourgeoisie."

If we are to shun such propaganda, precisely such propaganda, in connection with the present war, then we had better stop using fine words about international revolu-

tionary Social-Democracy, the socialist revolution and war against war.

III

The disarmament advocates object to the "armed nation" clause in the programme also because it more easily leads, they allege, to concessions to opportunism. The cardinal point, namely, the relation of disarmament to the class struggle and to the social revolution, we have examined above. We shall now examine the relation between the disarmament demand and opportunism. One of the chief reasons why it is unacceptable is precisely that, together with the illusions it creates, it inevitably weakens and devitalises our struggle against opportunism.

Undoubtedly, this struggle is the main, immediate question now confronting the International. Struggle against imperialism that is not closely linked with the struggle against opportunism is either an empty phrase or a fraud. One of the main defects of Zimmerwald and Kienthal¹²—one of the main reasons why these embryos of the Third International may possibly end in a fiasco—is that the question of fighting opportunism was not even raised openly, let alone solved in the sense of proclaiming the need to break with the opportunists. Opportunism has triumphed—temporarily—in the European labour movement. Its two main shades are apparent in all the big countries: first, the avowed, cynical, and therefore less dangerous social-imperialism of Messrs. Plekhanov, Scheidemann, Legien, Albert Thomas and Sembat, Vandervelde, Hyndman, Henderson, et al.; second, the concealed, Kautskyite opportunism: Kautsky-Haase and the Social-Democratic Labour Group¹³ in Germany; Longuet, Pressmane, Mayéras, et al., in France; Ramsay MacDonald and the other leaders of the Independent Labour Party¹⁴ in England; Martov, Chkheidze, et al., in Russia; Treves and the other so-called Left reformists in Italy.

Avowed opportunism is openly and directly opposed to revolution and to incipient revolutionary movements and outbursts. It is in direct alliance with the governments, varied as the forms of this alliance may be—from accepting ministerial posts to participation in the war industries committees (in Russia).¹⁵ The masked opportunists, the Kautskyites, are much more harmful and dangerous to the labour movement, because they hide their advocacy of alliance with the former under a cloak of plausible, pseudo-“Marxist” catchwords and pacifist slogans. The fight against both these forms of prevailing opportunism must be conducted in *all* fields of proletarian politics: parliament, the trade unions, strikes, the armed forces, etc. The main distinguishing feature of *both* these forms of prevailing opportunism is that the concrete question of the *connection between the present war and revolution, and the other concrete questions of revolution*, are hushed up, concealed, or treated with an eye to police prohibitions. And this despite the fact that before the war the connection between *this* impending war and the proletarian revolution was emphasised innumerable times, both unofficially, and officially in the Basle Manifesto.¹⁶ The main defect of the disarmament demand is its evasion of all the concrete questions of revolution. Or do the advocates of disarmament stand for an altogether new kind of revolution, unarmed revolution?

To proceed. We are by no means opposed to the fight for reforms. And we do not wish to ignore the sad possibility—if the worst comes to the worst—of mankind going through a second imperialist war, if revolution does not come out of the present war, in spite of the numerous outbursts of mass unrest and mass discontent and in spite of our efforts. We favour a programme of reforms directed *also* against the opportunists. They would be only too glad if we left the struggle for reforms entirely to them and sought escape from sad reality in a nebulous “disarmament” fantasy. “Disarmament” means simply running away from unpleasant reality, not fighting it.

In such a programme we would say something like this: “To accept the defence of the fatherland slogan in the 1914-16 imperialist war is to corrupt the labour movement with the aid of a bourgeois lie.” Such a concrete reply to a concrete question would be more correct theoretically, much more useful to the proletariat and more unbearable to the opportunists, than the disarmament demand and repudiation of “all and any” defence of the fatherland. And we could add: “The bourgeoisie of all the imperialist Great Powers—England, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, Japan, the United States—has become so reactionary and so intent on world domination, that *any* war waged by *the bourgeoisie of those* countries is bound to be reactionary. The proletariat must not only oppose all such wars, but must also wish for the defeat of its ‘own’ government in such wars and utilise its defeat for revolutionary insurrection, if an insurrection to prevent the war proves unsuccessful.”

On the question of a militia, we should say: We are not in favour of a bourgeois militia; we are in favour only of a proletarian militia. Therefore, “not a penny, not a man”, not only for a standing army, but even for a bourgeois militia, even in countries like the United States, or Switzerland, Norway, etc. The more so that in the freest republican countries (e.g., Switzerland) we see that the militia is being increasingly Prussianised, particularly in 1907 and 1911, and prostituted by being used against strikers. We can demand popular election of officers, abolition of all military law, equal rights for foreign and native-born workers (a point particularly important for those imperialist states which, like Switzerland, are more and more blatantly exploiting larger numbers of foreign workers, while denying them all rights). Further, we can demand the right of every hundred, say, inhabitants of a given country to form voluntary military-training associations, with free election of instructors paid by the state, etc. Only under these conditions could the proletariat acquire military training for *itself* and not for its slave-owners; and the need for such training is imperatively dictated by the

interests of the proletariat. The Russian revolution showed that every success of the revolutionary movement, even a partial success like the seizure of a certain city, a certain factory town, or winning over a certain section of the army, inevitably *compels* the victorious proletariat to carry out just such a programme.

Lastly, it stands to reason that opportunism can never be defeated by mere programmes; it can only be defeated by deeds. The greatest, and fatal, error of the bankrupt Second International was that its words did not correspond to its deeds, that it cultivated the habit of hypocritical and unscrupulous revolutionary phrase-mongering (note the present attitude of Kautsky and Co. towards the Basle Manifesto). Disarmament as a social idea, i.e., an idea that springs from, and can affect, a certain social environment, and is not the invention of some crackpot, springs, evidently, from the peculiar "tranquil" conditions prevailing, by way of exception, in certain small states, which have for a fairly long time stood aside from the world's path of war and bloodshed, and hope to remain that way. To be convinced of this, we have only to consider the arguments advanced, for instance, by the Norwegian advocates of disarmament. "We are a small country," they say. "Our army is small; there is nothing we can do against the Great Powers [and, consequently, nothing we can do to resist forcible involvement in an imperialist *alliance* with one or the other Great-Power group]. . . . We want to be left in peace in our backwoods and continue our backwoods politics, demand disarmament, compulsory arbitration, permanent neutrality, etc." ("permanent" after the Belgian fashion, no doubt?).

The petty striving of petty states to hold aloof, the petty-bourgeois desire to keep as far away as possible from the great battles of world history, to take advantage of one's relatively monopolistic position in order to remain in hidebound passivity—this is the *objective* social environment which may ensure the disarmament idea a certain degree of success and a certain degree of popularity in some of the small states. That striving is, of course, reac-

tionary and is based entirely on illusions, for, in one way or another, imperialism draws the small states into the vortex of world economy and world politics.

In Switzerland, for instance, the imperialist environment objectively prescribes *two* courses to the labour movement: the opportunists, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, are seeking to turn the country into a republican-democratic monopolistic federation that would thrive on profits from imperialist bourgeois tourists, and to make this "tranquil" monopolistic position as profitable and as tranquil as possible.

The genuine Swiss Social-Democrats are striving to use Switzerland's relative freedom and her "international" position to help the victory of the close alliance of the revolutionary elements in the European workers' parties. Switzerland, thank God, does not have "a separate language of her own", but uses three world languages, the three languages spoken in the adjacent belligerent countries.

If twenty thousand Swiss party members were to pay a weekly levy of two centimes as a sort of "extra war tax", we would have twenty thousand francs per annum, a sum more than sufficient periodically to publish in three languages and distribute among the workers and soldiers of the belligerent countries—in spite of the bans imposed by the general staffs—all the truthful evidence about the incipient revolt of the workers, their fraternising in the trenches, their hope that the weapons will be used for revolutionary struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie of their "own" countries, etc.

That is not new. It is being done by the best papers, like *La Sentinelle*, *Volksrecht* and the *Berner Tagwacht*¹⁷, although, unfortunately, on an inadequate scale. Only through such activity can the splendid decision of the Aarau Party Congress¹⁸ become something more than merely a splendid decision.

The question that interests us now is: Does the disarmament demand correspond to this revolutionary trend among the Swiss Social-Democrats? It obviously does not.

Objectively, disarmament is an extremely national, a specifically national programme of small states. It is certainly not the international programme of international revolutionary Social-Democracy.

Written in German in September 1916

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Signed: *N. Lenin*

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pp. 77-87

NOTES

¹ *Sotsial-Demokrat* (Social-Democrat)—Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P., published illegally from February 1908 to January 1917. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to put out the first issue in Russia the publication of the newspaper was transferred abroad: Nos. 2-32 (February 1909-December 1913) came out in Paris and Nos. 33-58 (November 1914-January 1917) in Geneva; in all 58 issues appeared. *Sotsial-Demokrat* carried more than 80 articles and notes by Lenin, who, in December 1911, became its editor. p. 7

² *The Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. groups abroad* was held on February 14-19 (February 28-March 4), 1915, in Berne. The conference was called on Lenin's initiative and had the importance of a general Party conference, since it was impossible to convene a Party congress or an all-Russia conference of the R.S.D.L.P. during the war.

The Conference was attended by the representatives from the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. and its Central Organ (*Sotsial-Demokrat*), from the Social-Democratic organisation of women, the R.S.D.L.P. groups in Paris, Zurich, Berne, Lausanne, Geneva and London and also from the Baugy group. Lenin represented the Central Committee and the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P., directed the proceedings of the conference, and was the reporter on the main item on the agenda, "The War and the Tasks of the Party".

The resolutions adopted by the Berne Conference on Lenin's report formulated the tasks and the tactics to be pursued by the Bolshevik Party during the imperialist war. p. 7

³ *The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution* was written in German and meant for publication in the Swiss, Swedish and Norwegian Left Social-Democratic press. However, it was

not published at the time. Soon Lenin somewhat re-edited it for publication in Russian. The article "The 'Disarmament' Slogan" appeared in *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata* No. 2, December 1916.

The original German text appeared in *Jugend-Internationale*, organ of the International League of Socialist Youth Organisations, Nos. 9 and 10, September and October 1917, under the heading "Das Militärprogramm der proletarischen Revolution".

p. 12

⁴ *Jugend-Internationale*—organ of the International League of Socialist Youth Organisations which was associated with the Zimmerwald Left. It was published from September 1915 to May 1918 in Zurich. Its editor was W. Müzenberg. p. 12

⁵ Reference is to Robert Grimm's theses on the war question, published in the *Grütliener* Nos. 162 and 164, July 14 and 17, 1916.

With the growing danger of Switzerland being drawn into the war, a discussion on the war issue arose in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party. In April 1916, the Executive instructed R. Grimm, G. Müller, H. Naine, P. Pflüger and several other prominent Party leaders to state their views in the press, and their articles were published in the *Berner Tagwacht*, *Volksrecht* and *Grütliener*. p. 12

⁶ *Neues Leben (New Life)*—a monthly journal of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party, published in Berne from January 1915 to December 1917. Spoke for the Right Zimmerwaldists and early in 1917 took up a social-chauvinist position. p. 12

⁷ *Vorbote (Herald)*—a theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left; published in German in Berne. Two issues appeared: No. 1 in January, and No. 2 in April 1916. Two articles by Lenin appeared in its columns: "Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International" and "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (Theses)". p. 12

⁸ The "Internationale" group—a revolutionary organisation of Left German Social-Democrats, founded in the early days of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, Julian Marchlewski and Leon Jogiches (Tyszka). The All-German Conference of Left Social-Democrats, which was held in Berlin on January 1, 1916, officially inaugurated the "Internationale" group and adopted as its platform the "Basic Principles" ("Leitsätze"), drawn up by Rosa Luxemburg in co-operation with Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring and Clara Zetkin. From 1916 the group came to be known as the Spartacus group.

The Spartacists conducted revolutionary propaganda among the masses, organised anti-war demonstrations, directed strikes, exposed the imperialist nature of the world war and the treachery of the opportunist Social-Democratic leaders. The Sparta-

cists, however, made serious mistakes on a number of theoretical and political questions: they denied the possibility of wars for national liberation in the imperialist era; took an inconsistent stand on the question of turning the imperialist war into a civil war; underestimated the role of the proletarian party as the vanguard of the working class; were afraid of a decisive break with the opportunists.

In April 1917 the Spartacists joined the centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, retaining their organisational independence in it. Following the November 1918 Revolution in Germany, the Spartacists broke away from the "Independents" and formed the Spartacus League. On December 14, 1918 they published their programme and at the Inaugural Congress, which was held on December 30, 1918-January 1, 1919, they founded the Communist Party of Germany. p. 13

⁹ *Junius*—the pseudonym of Rosa Luxemburg. p. 13

¹⁰ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 351. p. 14

¹¹ *Gallifet*—a French general, hangman of the Paris Commune of 1871. p. 15

¹² Reference is to the international socialist conferences at Zimmerwald and Kienthal.

The First, Zimmerwald Conference met on September 5-8, 1915, and was attended by 38 socialist delegates from 11 European countries—Germany, France, Italy, Russia, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Sweden, Norway, Holland and Switzerland. Lenin led the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee delegation.

The Conference adopted the manifesto "To the European Proletariat", which was prepared by a commission and in which, at the insistence of Lenin and the Left Social-Democrats, several basic propositions of revolutionary Marxism were included.

At this Conference the Zimmerwald Left group was formed, which came out resolutely against the Centrist majority. But only the representatives of the Bolshevik Party advocated a fully consistent policy.

The Second International Conference was held between April 24 and 30, 1916, in Kienthal (a village in Switzerland) and was attended by 43 socialist delegates from 10 countries: Russia, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Poland, Norway, Austria, Serbia, Portugal.

The Conference adopted the manifesto "To the Peoples Suffering Ruination and Death" and resolutions criticising pacifism and the International Socialist Bureau. Lenin regarded the Conference decisions as a further step in uniting the internationalist forces against the imperialist war.

The Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences helped to unite

the Left elements in the West-European Social-Democratic movement on the principles of Marxism-Leninism. These elements subsequently became active fighters for the creation of Communist Parties in their countries and for founding the Third, Communist International. p. 19

¹³ *The Social-Democratic Labour Group* (Arbeitsgemeinschaft)—an organisation of German Centrists, founded in March 1916 by Reichstag members who had broken with the Social-Democratic Reichstag group. The group became the backbone of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, founded in April 1917. The new party sought to justify avowed social-chauvinists and advocated preservation of unity with them. p. 19

¹⁴ *The Independent Labour Party of Great Britain*—a reformist organisation founded by the leaders of the "new trade unions" in 1893, when there was a revival of strikes and a growing movement for the independence of the British working class from the bourgeois parties. The Independent Labour Party united the "new trade unions", a number of the old trade unions, and also intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie, who were under the influence of the Fabians. The party was led by Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. From the first days of its existence it pursued a bourgeois reformist policy and concentrated on the parliamentary struggle and parliamentary pacts with the Liberals. Characterising the I.L.P. Lenin wrote that it "is actually an opportunist party that has always been dependent on the bourgeoisie" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, Moscow, 1965, p. 494).

At the beginning of the First World War the Independent Labour Party issued a manifesto against the war; the conference of the I.L.P., which met on April 5-6, 1915, at Norville, adopted a number of pacifist resolutions but soon the Party took a social-chauvinist stand. p. 19

¹⁵ *The war industries committees* were established in Russia in May 1915 by the big imperialist bourgeoisie to help the tsarist government in the prosecution of the war. In an attempt to bring the workers under their influence, foster defencist sentiments, and create the impression that in Russia a "class peace" between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat had been achieved, the capitalists decided to organise "workers' groups" in these committees. The Bolsheviks called for the boycott of the war industries committees, which was successfully carried out with the support of the majority of the workers. p. 20

¹⁶ *The Basle Manifesto* on the war issue was adopted at the Extraordinary International Socialist Congress held in Basle, Switzerland, on November 24-25, 1912.

The Manifesto disclosed the predatory aims of the war the imperialists were preparing and urged the workers everywhere

resolutely to combat the war danger, "to pit against the might of capitalist imperialism the international solidarity of the working class" and in the event of imperialist war breaking out, to take advantage of the economic and political crisis to hasten the socialist revolution.

Kautsky, Vandervelde and the other Second International leaders voted for the Manifesto, but as soon as the world war broke out, they went back on it, as on other anti-war decisions of international socialist congresses, and sided with their imperialist governments. p. 20

¹⁷ *La Sentinelle*—organ of the Social-Democratic organisation of Neuchâtel Canton (Switzerland), published at La Chaux-de-Fonds from 1890. Followed an internationalist policy during the First World War (1914-18) and in its November 13, 1914, issue (No. 265) carried an abridged version of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee Manifesto, "The War and Russian Social-Democracy".

Volksrecht (People's Right)—a daily paper, organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland, founded in Zurich in 1898. During the First World War, the paper lent its columns to articles written by members of the Zimmerwald Left. It also published Lenin's articles "Twelve Brief Theses on H. Greulich's Defence of Fatherland Defence", "Tasks of the R.S.D.L.P. in the Russian Revolution", "Tricks of the Republican Chauvinists", and others. At present *Volksrecht's* policy on principal home and international issues is practically identical with that of the bourgeois press.

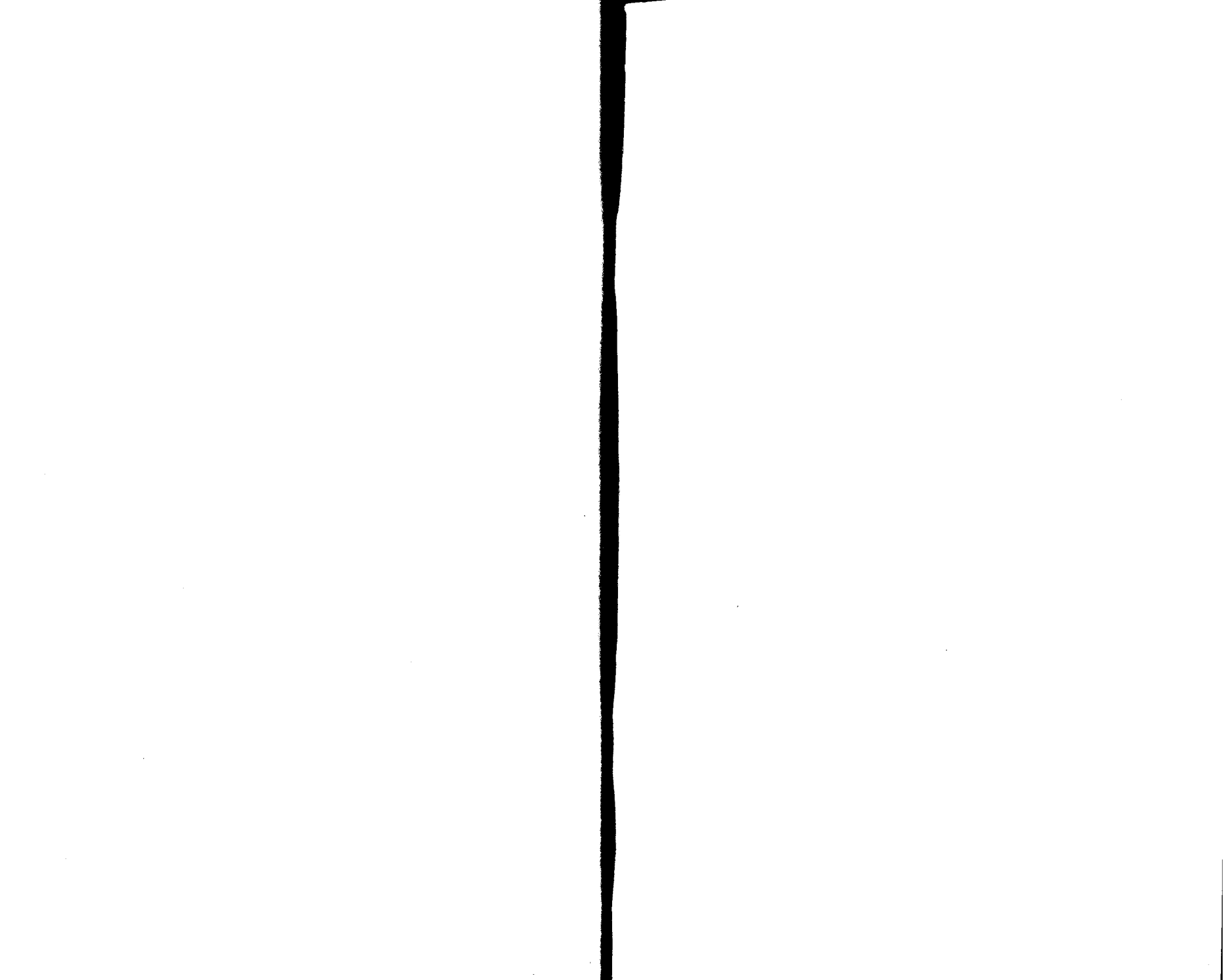
Berner Tagwacht (Berne Guardian)—organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland, founded in 1893 in Berne. Published articles by K. Liebknecht, F. Mehring and other Left Social-Democrats in the early days of the First World War. In 1917 the paper came out in open support of the social-chauvinists. At present the paper's policy on principal home and international issues coincides with that of the bourgeois press. p. 23

¹⁸ *The Aarau Congress of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party* met on November 20-21, 1915. The central issue was the Party's attitude towards the Zimmerwald internationalist group, and the struggle developed between three following trends: (1) anti-Zimmerwaldists (H. Greulich, P. Pflüger and others), (2) supporters of the Zimmerwald Right (R. Grimm, P. Graber and others), and (3) supporters of the Zimmerwald Left (F. Platten, E. Nobs and others). R. Grimm tabled a resolution urging the Swiss Social-Democratic Party to affiliate with Zimmerwald and endorse the political programme of the Zimmerwald Right. The Left forces, in an amendment moved by the Lausanne branch, called for mass revolutionary struggle against the war, declaring that only a victorious proletarian revolution could put an end to imperialist war. The amendment was carried by a majority vote (258 to 141). p. 23

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В. И. ЛЕНИН

**О ЛОЗУНГЕ СОЕДИНЕННЫХ ШТАТОВ ЕВРОПЫ
ВОЕННАЯ ПРОГРАММА ПРОЛЕТАРСКОЙ РЕВОЛЮЦИИ**

На английском языке