

LENIN

On Anti-Imperialist Wars



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Anti-Imperialist
Wars

Collected writings on the subject from Lenin
with addition from Stalin and Enver Hodja

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Anti-Imperialist wars and dialectic connection to socialist revolutions

To a degree due to the **lack of sufficient theoretical knowledge**, yet largely **consciously created confusion** in the question of **anti-imperialist wars**, prevents some ML Revolutionaries to take the correct stand **against imperialist aggression**. Lack of sufficient knowledge commonly **results in** generalizing the assessments made for a specific case or condition to every case, to every condition as a slogan. Labeling ISIS and other proxies in Syria as "progressive", "freedom fighters against the "regime"!", "defining the war as an "Imperialist war" so the "defense of fatherland" does not apply" etc. are some of the current examples of this confusion - either consciously or not. All these bourgeois revisionist assessments and confusion derive from the laziness towards reading classics, the **preference of learning by rote** and **phrase making** rather than studying the subject and applying the dialectic of Marxism.

In reference to this type of laziness and phrase-making practice, Lenin said "**The itch is a painful disease**. And when people are seized by the itch of **revolutionary phrase-making** the mere sight of this disease causes intolerable suffering. **..Truths that are simple, clear, comprehensible, obvious and apparently indisputable** to all who belong to the working people are **distorted by those suffering from the above mentioned kind of itch**. Often **this distortion arises** from the best, the noblest and loftiest impulses, "merely" owing to a **failure to digest** well-known theoretical truths or a childishly crude, school-boyishly **slavish repetition of them irrelevantly** (people don't know "what's what"). But the itch **does not cease to be harmful** on that account" (P20)

Taking Lenin's assessment on the **stand against "imperialist wars"** has been **applied to all type of wars** without making any

assessment of **the type of war in question**. A stand without making a distinction between **just** and **unjust**, progressive and reactionary, **imperialist and anti-imperialist wars** inevitably lands an honest Marxist Leninist on the side of counter revolution.

The consciously created confusion by the bourgeois revisionists, counter revolutionary Trotskyites stems from, or directly related to their "**conclusion!**" that "**in the epoch of imperialism, there can be no more national wars**", so "**the anti-imperialist wars are a thing of the past**".

In reality, for Marxist Leninists, anti-imperialist wars are **not only inevitable** in our epoch and **vitaly important**, but a significant part of the **socialist revolution in particular and in general** - for the defeat of capitalism in a given country and in world scale.

"The **struggle against imperialism** in general," says Enver Hoxha, " and its tools **in every country** is one of the **fundamental questions of the strategy** of every communist party, and one of the decisive conditions for the triumph of any revolution, whether people's democratic, anti-imperialist or socialist. At the same time, its attitude to imperialism serves as a touchstone to evaluate the political and ideological position of every political force which operates either within the national framework of each country, or on an international scale. In other words, **the stand towards imperialism has always been a line of demarcation which divides the genuine patriotic and democratic revolutionary forces**, on the one hand, from the forces of reaction, counter-revolution and national betrayal, on the other hand." (P24)

That is why it is crucial to **understand the different type of wars**, their assessment, and taking the right stand in order **not to fall in the bourgeois revisionist trap**, not to side with the imperialists and become a mouthpiece for them. Comprehending **the importance of anti- imperialist wars** is

crucial, because the stand to these wars **defines the difference** between revolution and counter revolution, Marxism Leninism and bourgeois revisionism, communism and anti-communism. And because the **success of Anti-imperialist wars** could play important role in shortening the defeat of capitalism not only in any given country, but the defeat of capitalism in world scale.

We should start the study of the question from the most cited assessment of Lenin by which most of the confusion arises - and abused: "The Defeat of One's Own Government", "defense of the fatherland amounting to the defense of the right of one's own bourgeoisie".

Defense of Father Land - What is an imperialist war?

"the imperialist war, which is a predatory war conducted in the interests of the capitalists" (P41)

If not all, most who do not make any distinction between wars quote Lenin's following assessment to support their claim;

"From the point of view of the proletariat, **recognizing "defense of the fatherland" means justifying the present war**, admitting that it is legitimate. And since the war remains an **imperialist war**, irrespective of the country—mine or some other country—in which the enemy troops are stationed at the given moment, **recognizing defense of the fatherland means, in fact, supporting the imperialist, predatory bourgeoisie, and completely betraying socialism.**" (P49)

And /or;

"A proletarian cannot deal a class blow at his government or hold out (in fact) a hand to his brother, the proletarian of the **"foreign" country which is at war with "our side"**, without committing

"high treason", **without contributing to the defeat**, to the disintegration of his "own", imperialist "Great" Power. " (P66)

However, none of those who make this "quote", pay any attention to the key words in the paragraph, namely; "**the present war**", "**imperialist war**". Lenin, at these quotes, is speaking of the ML stand **against the imperialist, aggressive wars, not defensive wars.**

On his lecture "**The present war**" says Lenin, "**is an imperialist one**, and that is **its basic feature**. An imperialist war is quite a different matter. Socialists who fail to realise that the present war is imperialist, who **fail** to take a historical view of it, **will understand nothing about the war.**" (P73)

Again in Socialist Conference at Kienthal, he says; "**The present war**—precisely because **it is an imperialist war** insofar as both groups of **belligerent "great" powers ..**" (P80)

And again at 2nd Socialist Conference, he says: **The present war is an imperialist war**, i.e., a war born of contradictions on the basis of highly developed, monopoly capitalism" (P92)

It is **so obvious** and **apparently indisputable** fact that he was talking about imperialist wars - wars between imperialists.

He clarifies the question of "**defense of fatherland**" in his various critique and writings. "In the era of imperialism" , he says, "**defense of the fatherland** amounts to defense of the right of one's own bourgeoisie to oppress foreign peoples. **This, however, is true only in respect of all imperialist war**, i.e., in respect of a **war between imperialist powers or groups of powers**". And he continues; "The authors seem to present the question of "defense of the fatherland" **very differently from the way it is presented by our Party**. We renounce "defense of the fatherland" **in an imperialist war**. This is **said as clearly as it can be** in the Manifesto

of our Party's Central Committee and in the Berne resolutions.....The authors of the.. theses **seem to renounce defense of the fatherland in general, i.e., for a national war** as well, **believing, perhaps, that in the "era of imperialism" national wars are impossible.** " (P104)

He makes it clearer in his writing on Blancism;

"The proletarian standpoint in this matter consists of a **definite class characterization of war**, and of an **irreconcilable hostility to imperialist war**—that is, to a **war between groups of capitalist countries** (no matter whether monarchies or republics) for a division of capitalist spoils." (P115)

And concludes on his Reply to P. Kievsky

"Defense of the fatherland **is a lie in an imperialist war**, but **not** in a democratic and revolutionary war." (P201)

In his letter to Zinoviev Lenin says "**We are not at all against "defence of the fatherland" in general**, not against **"defensive wars"** in general. **You will never find that nonsense in a single resolution** (or in any of my articles). We are against defence of the fatherland and a defensive position **in the imperialist war** of 1914–16 and **in other imperialist wars**, typical of the imperialist epoch. But in the imperialist epoch **there may be also "just", "defensive", revolutionary wars** [namely (1) **national**, (2) **civil**, (3) **socialist** and suchlike.] " (P119)

Excluding bourgeois revisionist, for any Marxist Leninist, **these quotes should clarify without any doubt that Lenin was NOT generalizing the "defence of the fatherland" attitude towards wars, but speaking only of the attitude towards "imperialist wars"**

Anti-imperialist wars are a thing of the past? - Imperialist wars and anti-imperialist wars

For those who claim that "The era of national wars has passed," "it is a question of past", Lenin, On Marxism and Proudhanism states otherwise. " Marx and Engels", he says,"did not live to see the period of imperialism. **The system now is a handful of imperialist "Great" Powers, each oppressing other nations**"...the main thing today is **to stand against** the united, aligned front of the **imperialist powers**, the imperialist bourgeoisie and the social-imperialists, and for the utilization of **all national movements against imperialism** for the purposes of the **socialist revolution.**" (P122)

In his work, Imperialism and Revolution, Enver Hoxha takes the subject with its importance in socialist revolution.

"the linking and interlacing of the national-democratic, **anti-imperialist, national liberation revolution** with the socialist revolution, because, **by striking at imperialism and reaction**, which are common enemies of the proletariat and the peoples, these revolutions also pave the way for great social transformations, assist the victory of the socialist revolution. And vice-versa, **by striking at the imperialist bourgeoisie**, by destroying its economic and political positions, the socialist revolution creates favorable conditions for and **facilitates the triumph of liberation movements.**

Therefore, when we draw the conclusion that the revolution is a question put forward for solution, that **it is on the agenda**, we have in mind **not only the socialist revolution, but also the democratic anti-imperialist revolution.**" (P131)

Similarly, in his writing "Our Understanding of the New Era" Lenin says; " **We give a correct Marxist definition of the relation between the "era" and the "present war": Marxism requires a concrete assessment of each separate war.** " and continues;

At the beginning of the article the concept “era of imperialism” is **distorted** to make it **appear that the national movement has been consummated in general**, and not only in the advanced Western countries.” (P133)

On his critique of Junius’ pamphlet, Lenin takes up the issue extensively. Citing the quotes from the pamphlet, Lenin writes;

“The first of Junius’ erroneous postulates, the first is contained in the International group’s thesis No. 5:

*“In the epoch (era) of this unbridled imperialism, **there can be no more national wars**. National interests serve only as an instrument of deception, to deliver the masses of the toiling people into the service of their mortal enemy, imperialism....”*

This postulate is the end of thesis No. 5, the first part of which is devoted to the description of **the present war as an imperialist war**. The repudiation of national wars in general, may **either be an oversight** or a fortuitous over-emphasis of the **perfectly correct idea that the present war is an imperialist war and not a national war**. But as the opposite may be true, as various **Social-Democrats mistakenly repudiate all national wars because** the present war is **falsely represented to be a national war**, we are obliged to **deal with this mistake**.

“there can be no more national wars” is that the world has been divided up among a handful of “Great” imperialist powers, and, therefore, every war, even if it starts as a national war, is transformed into an imperialist war and affects the interests of one of the imperialist Powers or coalitions (p. 81 of Junius’ pamphlet)

The fallacy of this argument is obvious. Of course, the fundamental proposition of Marxian dialectics is that all boundaries in nature and society are conventional and mobile, that **there is not a single phenomenon which cannot under**

certain conditions be transformed into its opposite. A national war can be transformed into an imperialist war, and vice versa.

Only a sophist would deny that there is a difference between imperialist war and national war on the grounds that one can be transformed into the other.

National wars waged by colonial, and semi-colonial countries are **not only possible but inevitable in the epoch of imperialism.** Every war is a continuation of politics by other means. The **national liberation politics** of the colonies will inevitably be continued **by national wars of the colonies against imperialism.**

National wars must not be regarded as impossible in the epoch of imperialism even in Europe. The "epoch of imperialism" made the present war an imperialist war; it inevitably engenders (until the advent of socialism) new imperialist war; it transformed the policies of the present Great Powers into thoroughly imperialist policies. **But this "epoch" by no means precludes the possibility of national wars,** waged, for example, by small (let us assume, annexed or nationally oppressed) states **against the imperialist Powers,** any more than it precludes the possibility of big national movements in Eastern Europe" (P139)

In "Military programme of the **Proletarian Revolution**" **Lenin takes up the question again to clarify:**

""In Section 5 of the Internationale group these we read: "National wars are no longer possible in the era of this unbridled imperialism." **That is obviously wrong.**

Junius, 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 intervention of a rival imperialist

Great Power. Every national war is this turned into an imperialist war. **But that argument is wrong, too.**

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!

Thirdly, **the victory of socialism in one country does not** at one stroke eliminate all wars in general. On the contrary, **it presupposes wars.**

We must not allow ourselves to be led astray by words. The term **“defense 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 **“defense 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 “defense of the fatherland”** on the part of oppressed nations **in their wars against the imperialist Great Powers...**

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."" (P156)

As we, unquestionably, understand from Lenin, the claims that the "National wars are no longer possible in the era of imperialism," it is a question of past" etc. **is wrong** thus, anti-Marxist Leninist.

How do we differentiate the wars?

Defining the war Types -Distinction between Defensive and Aggressive Wars

When "the war becomes truly **forced upon us**, it becomes a **truly just war of defense**". (P160)

In his work, Socialism and War, Lenin points out the different approach and reasons for. He says;

Socialists have always **condemned war between nations** as barbarous and brutal. But **our attitude towards war is fundamentally different** from that of the **bourgeois pacifists** (supporters and advocates of peace) **and of the Anarchists**. We differ from the former in that we understand the inevitable connection between wars and the class struggle within the country; we understand that war cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished and Socialism is created; and we also differ in that we fully regard civil wars, i.e., wars waged by the oppressed class against the oppressing class, slaves against slave-owners, serfs against land-owners, and wage-workers against the bourgeoisie, **as legitimate, progressive and necessary**.

We **Marxists differ from both the pacifists and the Anarchists** in that we deem it **necessary** historically (from the standpoint of Marx's dialectical materialism) **to study each war separately**. In

history there have been numerous wars which, in spite of all the horrors, atrocities, distress and suffering that inevitably accompany all wars, **were progressive**, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy the exceptionally **harmful and reactionary institutions** (for example, autocracy or serfdom), **the most barbarous despotism in Europe (Turkish and Russian)**. Therefore, **it is necessary to examine the historically specific features of precisely the present war.** " (P166)

Lenin follows by saying that " a proletariat who tolerates the violence by its nation against other nations cannot be a socialist";

Imperialism is the epoch of the constantly increasing oppression of **the nations of the world by a handful of "great" powers** and, therefore, it is impossible to fight for the socialist international revolution **against imperialism** unless the right of nations to self-determination is recognized. "No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (Marx and Engels). A **proletariat that tolerates the slightest violence** by "its" nation **against other nations** cannot be a **socialist proletariat.** " (P166)

In his article "A caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism", Lenin clearly explains the difference between defensive, aggressive, just unjust, reactionary, progressive wars. He asks the question; "**How, then, can we disclose and define the "substance" of a war?** " And responds;

"War is the continuation of policy. Consequently, **we must examine the policy pursued prior to the war**, the policy that led to and brought about the war. **If it was an imperialist policy**, i.e., one designed to **safeguard the interests of finance capital** and rob and oppress colonies and foreign countries, then the war stemming from **that policy is imperialist.**

If it was a national liberation policy, i.e., one expressive of the mass movement against national oppression, then the war stemming from that policy is a war of national liberation.

The philistine does not realize that war is "the continuation of policy"

In short: **a war between imperialist Great Powers, or in alliance with the Great Powers, is an imperialist war.**

A war against imperialist nations is a genuine national war. .. "Defense of the fatherland" in a war waged by an oppressed nation against a foreign oppressor is not a deception. **Socialists are not opposed to "defense of the fatherland" in such a war. "**

To fall into **negation of wars really waged for liberating nations** is to present **the worst possible caricature of Marxism.**Rejection of "defense of the fatherland" in a democratic war, i.e., rejecting participation in such a war, is an absurdity that **has nothing in common with Marxism.**" (P167)

Lenin on Marxist Attitude towards War says; "**socialists have regarded wars 'for the defense of the fatherland', or 'defensive' wars, as legitimate, progressive and just**" only in the sense of "**overthrowing alien oppression**". It cites an example: Persia against Russia, "etc.", and says: "These would be just, and defensive wars, **irrespective of** who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states **victory over the oppressor**, slave-holding and predatory '**Great Powers.** " (P167)

Stalin, in his work, The Foundation of Leninism summarizes Lenin's approach;

" Leninism proceeds from the following theses:"

a) **The world is divided into two camps:** the camp of a handful of civilized nations, which possess finance capital and exploit the vast majority of the population of the globe; and the camp of the oppressed and **exploited peoples in the colonies and dependent countries**, which constitute that majority.

c) The revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples in the **dependent and colonial countries against imperialism is the only road that leads to their emancipation from oppression and exploitation.** " (P175)

Defining the wars as **imperialist wars** - wars between the imperialist great powers- and as **anti-imperialist wars** - wars against imperialist oppression, exploitation and aggression - at the same time defines the **revolutionary stand** and **counter-revolutionary stand** to any given war. Revisionists often try to **justify the aggressive imperialist war** and side with the imperialists, under the pretext that the "character of national movement" waging **anti-imperialist war is "reactionary"**.

Stalin explains ML attitude and gives clarifying example with the underlying principled reason:

"The **unquestionably revolutionary character of the vast majority of national movements** is as relative and peculiar as is the possible reactionary character of certain particular national movements. **The revolutionary character of a national movement** under the conditions of imperialist oppression **does not necessarily presuppose the existence of proletarian elements in the movement**, the existence of a revolutionary or a republican programme of the movement, **the existence of a democratic basis of the movement.** The struggle that the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of **Afghanistan is objectively a revolutionary struggle**, despite the monarchist views of the Emir

and his associates, **for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism.**" (P175)

Stalin goes further and says that a bourgeois national movement's **bourgeois struggle against imperialism is a progressive**, revolutionary struggle, while a struggle for "socialism" which is being waged on the side of imperialism is a reactionary struggle.

"For the same reasons, the struggle that the Egyptian merchants and **bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a revolutionary struggle**, despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois title of the leaders of the Egyptian national movement, **despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism;**

whereas **the struggle** that the British "**Labour**" government is **waging to preserve** Egypt's dependent position is for the same reasons **a reactionary struggle**, despite the proletarian origin and the proletarian title of the members of that government, **despite the fact that they are "for" socialism.**

There is no need to mention the national movement in other, larger, colonial and dependent countries, such as India and China, every step of which **along the road to liberation, even if it runs counter to the demands of formal democracy, is a steam-hammer blow at imperialism, i.e., is undoubtedly a revolutionary step.**" (P175)

Stalin explains the reason by quoting Lenin;

Lenin was right in saying that the **national movement** of the oppressed countries **should be appraised not from the point of view of formal democracy, but from the point of view of the actual results**, as shown by the general **balance sheet of the**

struggle against imperialism, that is to say, "not in isolation, but on a world scale." (P175)

"**An imperialist war**" says Lenin, "**does not cease to be imperialist** when charlatans or phrase-mongers or petty-bourgeois philistines put forward **sentimental "slogans"**"..The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; the **petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism**, for adaptation to it, **while submitting to it.**" (P49) As Marxists, "We are not pacifists. We are opposed to imperialist wars over the division of spoils among the capitalists, but **we have always considered it absurd** for the revolutionary proletariat **to disavow revolutionary wars that may prove necessary in the interests of socialism.**" (P187)

Explaining the importance of anti-imperialist struggles, "**The dialectics of history**" says Lenin, "are such that **small nations**, powerless as an independent factor **in the struggle against imperialism**, **play a part** as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, **which help the real anti-imperialist force**, the socialist proletariat, **to make its appearance on the scene...We would be very poor revolutionaries** if, in the proletariat's **great war of Liberation for socialism**, we did not know **how to utilize every popular movement against every single disaster imperialism brings in order to intensify and extend the crisis.**" (P195)

As Enver Hoxha puts it bluntly "**the stand towards imperialism has always been a line of demarcation which divides the genuine patriotic and democratic revolutionary forces**, on the one hand, from the forces of reaction, counter-revolution and national betrayal, on the other hand." (P24)

The **claims to justify and ratify the imperialist aggression** - "in the epoch of imperialism, there can be no more national wars",

so "the anti-imperialist wars are a thing of the past" and so the "defense of fatherland' is a bourgeois slogan" etc.- despite the prettified Marxist phrases used, are in fact bourgeois, counter revolutionary and **anticommunist claims**.

As we have seen from the quotes of Lenin's writings, anti-imperialist wars **are not only vitally important**, but a significant part of the **socialist revolution in particular and in general** - for the defeat of capitalism **in a given country**, and for the defeat of capitalism **in world scale**.

E. A

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Lenin

The Itch

February 22, 1918

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The itch is a painful disease. And when people are seized by the itch of revolutionary phrase-making the mere sight of this disease causes intolerable suffering.

Truths that are simple, clear, comprehensible, obvious and apparently indisputable to all who belong to the working people are distorted by those suffering from the above mentioned kind of itch. Often this distortion arises from the best, the noblest and loftiest impulses, “merely” owing to a failure to digest well-known theoretical truths or a childishly crude, school boyishly slavish repetition of them irrelevantly (people don’t know “what’s what”). But the itch does not cease to be harmful on that account.

What, for example, could be more conclusive and clear than the following truth: a government that gave Soviet power, land, workers’ control and peace to a people tortured by three years of predatory war would be invincible? Peace is the chief thing. If, after conscientious efforts to obtain a general and just peace, it turned out in actual fact that it was impossible to obtain this at the present time, every peasant would understand that one would have to adopt not a general peace, but a separate and unjust peace. Every peasant, even the most ignorant and illiterate, would understand this and appreciate a government that gave him even such a peace.

Bolsheviks must have been stricken by the vile itch of phrase-making to forget this and evoke the peasants’ most legitimate dissatisfaction with them when this itch has led to a new war being launched by predatory Germany against overtired Russia! The ludicrous and pitiful “theoretical” trivialities and sophistries

under which this itch is disguised I have pointed out in an article entitled "The Revolutionary Phrase" (Pravda, February 21). I would not be recalling this if the same itch had not cropped up today (what catching disease!) in a new place.

To explain how this has happened, I shall cite first of all little example, quite simply and clearly, without any "theory" -if the itch claims to be "theory" it is intolerable and without erudite words or anything that the masses cannot understand.

Let us suppose Kalyayev, in order to kill a tyrant and monster, acquires a revolver from an absolute villain, a scoundrel and robber, by promising him bread, money and vodka for the service rendered.

Can one condemn Kalyayev for his "deal with a robber" for the sake of obtaining a deadly weapon? Every sensible person will answer "no". If there is nowhere else for Kalyayev to get a revolver, and if his intention is really an honourable one (the killing of a tyrant, not killing for plunder), then he should not be reproached but commended for acquiring a revolver in this way.

But if a robber, in order to commit murder for the sake of plunder, acquires a revolver from another robber in return for money, vodka or bread, can one compare (not to speak of identifying) such a "deal with a robber" with the deal made by Kalyayev?

No, everyone who is not out of his mind or infected by the itch will agree that one cannot. Any peasant who saw an "intellectual" disavowing such an obvious truth by means of phrase-making would say: you, sir, ought not to be managing the state but should join the company of wordy buffoons or should simply put yourself in a steam bath and get rid of the itch.

If Kerensky, a representative of the ruling class of the bourgeoisie, i.e., the exploiters, makes a deal with the Anglo-French exploiters

to get arms and potatoes from them and at the same time conceals from the people the treaties which promise (if successful) to give one robber Armenia, Galicia and Constantinople, and another robber Baghdad, Syria and so forth, is it difficult to understand that this deal is a predatory, swindling, vile deal on the part of Kerensky and his friends?

No, this is not difficult to understand. Any peasant, even the most ignorant and illiterate, will understand it.

But if a representative of the exploited, oppressed class, after this class has overthrown the exploiters, and published and annulled all the secret and annexationist treaties, is subjected to a bandit attack by the imperialists of Germany, can he be condemned for making a "deal" with the Anglo-French robbers, for obtaining arms and potatoes from them in return for money or timber, etc.? Can one find such a deal dishonourable, disgraceful, dirty?

No, one cannot. Every sensible man will understand this and will ridicule as silly fools those who with a "lordly" and learned mien undertake to prove that "the masses will not understand" the difference between the robber war of the imperialist Kerensky (and his dishonourable deals with robbers for a division of jointly stolen spoils) and the Kalyayev deal of the Bolshevik Government with the Anglo-French robbers in order to get arms and potatoes to repel the German robber.

Every sensible man will say: to obtain weapons by purchase from a robber for the purpose of robbery is disgusting and villainous, but to buy weapons from the same robber for the purpose of a just war against an aggressor is something quite legitimate. Only mincing young ladies and affected youths who have "read books" and derived nothing but affectation from them can see something "dirty" in it. Apart from people of that category only those who have contracted the itch can fall into such an "error".

But will the German worker understand the difference between Kerensky's purchase of weapons from the Anglo-French robbers for the purpose of annexing Constantinople from the Turks, Galicia from the Austrians and Eastern Prussia from the Germans—and the Bolsheviks' purchase of weapons from the same robbers for the purpose of repelling Wilhelm when he has moved troops against socialist Russia which proposed an honourable and just peace to all, against Russia which has declared an end to the war?

It must be supposed that the German worker will "understand" this, firstly because he is intelligent and educated, and secondly because he is used to a neat and cultured life, and suffers neither from the Russian itch in general, nor from the itch of revolutionary phrase-making in particular.

Is there a difference between killing for the purpose of robbery and the killing of an aggressor?

Is there a difference between a war of two groups of plunderers for a division of spoils and a just war for liberation from the attack of a plunderer against a people that has overthrown the plunderers?

Does not the appraisal whether I act well or badly in acquiring weapons from a robber depend on the end and object of these weapons? On their use for a war that is base and dishonorable or for one that is just and honourable?

Ugh! The itch is a nasty disease. And hard is the occupation of a man who has to give a steam bath to those infected with it

P.S. The North Americans in their war of liberation against England at the end of the eighteenth century got help from Spain and France, who were her competitors and just as much colonial robbers as England. It is said that there were "Left Bolsheviks" to be found who contemplated writing a "learned work" on the "dirty deal" of these Americans

Enver Hodja

The Eurocommunists' "Independence" Is Dependence on Capital and the Bourgeoisie

From; EUROCOMMUNISM IS ANTI - COMMUNISM

The Eurocommunists' "Independence" Is Dependence on Capital and the Bourgeoisie

The struggle against imperialism in general, and its tools in every country is one of the fundamental questions of the strategy of every communist party, and one of the decisive conditions for the triumph of any revolution, whether people's democratic, anti-imperialist or socialist. At the same time, its attitude to imperialism serves as a touchstone to evaluate the political and ideological position of every political force which operates either within the national framework of each country, or on an international scale. In other words, the stand towards imperialism has always been a line of demarcation which divides the genuine patriotic and democratic revolutionary forces, on the one hand, from the forces of reaction, counter-revolution and national betrayal, on the other hand. What is the stand of the Eurocommunists on this vital question of such major importance of principle?

Commencing from the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, when Khrushchev came out with the line of conciliation and rapprochement with American imperialism, and put this forward as a general line for the whole communist movement, the revisionist parties of the Western countries abandoned any anti-imperialist position, on both the theoretical and practical planes. It seemed as if they were liberated from their shackles to rush into conciliation with the big imperialist, colonialist and neocolonialist bourgeoisie. The new strategy which Khrushchev presented to the communist movement was that which the leaders of the Western communist parties had long

desired, which they had begun to apply in practice, but which, you might say, had not yet received the seal of official approval.

Even before the 20th Congress of the CPSU, because of various vacillations and concessions, in France and Italy the struggle against NATO, against the revival and rearmament of German imperialism, against the interference of American capital and its military bases in Europe and so on, had begun to decline. If something was done at that time, it was only in the field of propaganda, without any action. On the Algerian question, the French Communist Party was in almost the same position as the bourgeois parties of the country. But its chauvinism and nationalism on this question, more and more softened its stand towards the big ally of the French bourgeoisie - American imperialism and its economic and political expansion. Since "French Algeria" had to be defended, "French Africa" had also to be defended, and a blind eye and a deaf ear turned to "British Asia" and "American America".

The Italian revisionists, who were trying in every way to convince the bourgeoisie of their sincerity and loyalty, tried to give the maximum proofs precisely in not opposing the foreign policy of the Christian Democrat government, which was a policy of unconditional alliance with American imperialism, total submission to NATO, the opening of doors to American big capital, and the transformation of the country into a big military base of the United States of America.

In regard to the Spanish revisionists, their sole preoccupation at that time was to achieve the legalization of the party and return to Spain. Thinking that the "democratization" of Spain could be done only through the pressure of the United States of America, which, according to them, was interested in removing the "obstacle" Franco, they did not even see the American policy of expansion and hegemony, let alone fight it.

"The national roads to socialism", which the revisionist parties of the countries of Western Europe adopted in the spirit of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, led to their submission, not only to the national bourgeoisie but also to the international bourgeoisie, first of all, to American imperialism. At the same time, it was natural that their abandonment of Marxism-Leninism, the revolution and socialism could not fail to be accompanied by their abandonment of the principles of proletarian internationalism, of aid to and support for the revolutionary and liberation movements.

Although the French, Italian and Spanish revisionist parties began gradually to keep a certain distance from the Soviet Union, to criticize Moscow over certain aspects of its internal and external policy, to disapprove of some of its actions in international relations, they never reached the point of describing and condemning the present-day Soviet Union as an imperialist country. True, they condemned its aggression in Czechoslovakia, for example, but on the other hand, they approved the Soviet intervention in Africa; true, they demanded the withdrawal of the Soviet fleet from the Mediterranean but were silent about the dispatch of Soviet weapons to all parts of the world. According to the Eurocommunists, the Soviet policy within the country is anti-democratic, but abroad in general it is socialist and anti-imperialist. This stand has led and leads the Eurocommunist parties to support the hegemonic and expansionist policy of the Soviet Union in general, despite some opposition.

In this way, just as the revisionist parties of Western Europe became defenders of the bourgeois order within their own countries, they became no less ardent fighters for the preservation of the imperialist system on an international scale. The Eurocommunists became champions of the bourgeois imperialist status quo on all fronts.

If the Eurocommunists still retain some disguise, try to appear as opponents, though feeble ones, of the bourgeoisie and the capitalist order on internal problems, in relations between the revolution and international capitalism on a world scale, between the oppressed peoples and imperialism, between socialism and capitalism, they are openly against any change.

Today, the revisionist parties of Italy, France, Spain and the other parties of the Eurocommunist trend have been transformed into pro-imperialist political forces which, in their line and activities, are indistinguishable from the bourgeois parties of those countries. Let us take their stand towards NATO and the European Common Market, which represent two of the basic political, economic and military factors on which the domination of the European big bourgeoisie and the hegemony of American imperialism in Europe are founded and realized.

From the time it was created to this day, NATO has changed neither its nature, its aims nor its objectives. The agreements remain those which were signed in 1949. Everyone knows the purpose for which the Atlantic Pact was created and why it is maintained. Even if people did not know them, the Pentagon and the staff in Brussels remind them of this day by day. NATO was and still is a political and military alliance of American and European big capital, first of all to preserve the capitalist system and institutions in Europe, to prevent the revolution from breaking out and to strangle it violently if it begins to advance. On the other hand, this counterrevolutionary organization is an armed guard of neo-colonialism and the spheres of influence of imperialist powers, and a weapon for their political and economic expansion. To hope to achieve the transformation of West European capitalist society and the construction of socialism while having NATO and the American bases in the country, is to daydream. The attempts of the Eurocommunists to stress only the anti-Soviet function of NATO

and to forget its mission of suppressing the revolution in Western Europe have the aim of deceiving the workers and preventing them from seeing the reality.

The Eurocommunists do not want to see the existence of a major national problem, the question of American domination in Western Europe and the need for liberation from it. From the end of the Second World War down to this day, American imperialism has bound this part of Europe with all kinds of political, economic, military, cultural and other chains. Without breaking these chains you cannot have socialism, or even that bourgeois democracy which the Eurocommunists praise to the skies. American capital has penetrated so deeply into Europe, is so closely combined with local capital that where one begins and the other finishes can no longer be distinguished. The European armies have been so completely integrated into NATO, in which the Americans dominate, that in practice they no longer exist as independent national forces. An ever greater integration is developing in the financial and monetary field, in technology, culture, etc.

It is true that between the European NATO member countries and the United States of America there are various contradictions. These are normal and inevitable between big capitalist groups and groupings, but it is a fact that on all the major world political and economic questions the NATO countries have always submitted to Washington. When it comes to choosing between class interests and national interests, the European big bourgeoisie, like the bourgeoisie of all other countries, always tends to sacrifice the latter. This is why the communists have always fought to defend the national interests, seeing them as closely linked with the cause of the revolution and socialism.

The Eurocommunists' denial of the existence of a national problem in their countries, concretely, the need to fight the American domination and dictate and to strengthen the national

independence and sovereignty, is further proof of their political and ideological degeneration and their betrayal of the cause of the revolution. Today, the Italian revisionists not only insist that Italy must stay in NATO, but have become even greater supporters of the Atlantic Treaty than the Christian Democrats and the other pro-American bourgeois parties. "Italy must stay in the Atlantic Alliance," say the Italian revisionists, "because of the need to preserve the balance of power on which the preservation of peace in Europe and the world depends." (The politics and the organization of the Italian communists, Rome 1979)

With this thesis, Berlinguer and company tell the workers: Don't oppose NATO, don't demand the withdrawal of the Americans from Naples and Caserta, don't condemn the stationing of atomic missiles near your homes, say nothing about the American aircraft which stand in the Italian airports ready to fly wherever the interests of the American imperialists are affected. Let the national interests of Italy be sacrificed for the sake of the hegemonic American policy, say the Italian revisionists; let Washington dictate who should govern Italy and how they should govern it, let Italy be consumed in an atomic holocaust, as long as the balance between the two superpowers is maintained.

The thesis about the balance between big powers as a factor or means for the preservation of peace is an old imperialist slogan with which the world, and Europe especially, are very well acquainted. It has always been used to justify the hegemonic policy of big imperialist powers and the right which they give themselves to interfere in the internal affairs of others and dominate them.

To accept the need for the existence and strengthening of imperialist blocs, allegedly as a means for the preservation of peace, as the revisionists do, also means to approve their policy. The imperialist military blocs exist not to preserve the peace and to defend the freedom, independence and sovereignty of their

member countries, as the Eurocommunist revisionists proclaim, but to rob them of these things, to preserve the domination and hegemony of the superpowers in those countries. It is known that one of the main aims of American imperialism when it created NATO was to defend the interests of United States' capital in Europe politically, but also with arms, and to put down any revolution which might break out there with fire and steel. These are the objectives of NATO which the Eurocommunist revisionists support.

The policy of blocs is an aggressive policy of the superpowers. It results from their hegemonic and expansionist strategy, from their ambitions to establish their complete and undivided rule over the whole world. The Eurocommunists do not see or do not want to see this predatory nature of imperialism, because, according to their "theories", big capital, which is its foundation, is being "democratized", is becoming "people's" capital, because the big bourgeoisie is being "integrated into socialism". In regard to their loyalty to NATO, the French revisionists are no different from their Italian counterparts, but in order to be in unison with the Giscardians or the Gaullists, they too speak about the special position which France should have in these organizations. For its part, Carrillo's party is striving with all the means it possesses to seize the banner of the struggle to get Spain into NATO. In this way Franco's unrealized dream will be achieved.

For the Eurocommunists, the European Common Market and United Europe, this great combine of capitalist monopolies and multinational companies for the exploitation of the peoples and the working masses of Europe and the peoples of the world, are a "reality" which must be accepted.. But to accept this "reality" means to accept the elimination of the sovereignty, the cultural and spiritual traditions of each individual country of Europe in favour of the interests of the big monopolies, to accept the elimination of

the individuality of the European peoples and their transformation into a mass oppressed by the multinational companies dominated by American big capital.

The Eurocommunists' slogans alleging that their participation in "the Parliament and other organs of the European Community will lead to their democratic transformation", to the creation of a "Europe of working people", are nothing but demagoguery and deception. The speeches of the Eurocommunists and the propaganda meetings of the Parliament of United Europe can no more transform Europe into a socialist society than the "democratic road" can transform the capitalist society of each country into such a society. Therefore, the stand of the Eurocommunists towards the European Common Market and United Europe is a stand of opportunists and scabs, which results from their line of class conciliation and submission to the bourgeoisie. It is intended to bemuse the working masses, to break their militant drive in defence of their own class interests and the interests of the whole nation.

Their reformist ideology, submission to the bourgeoisie and capitulation to the imperialist pressure have transformed the Eurocommunist parties into parties which are not only anti-revolutionary but also anti-national. Even amongst the ranks of the bourgeoisie it is rare to find people who call themselves politicians and who accept the concept of "limited sovereignty", as Carrillo does. " ... we are conscious that this independence will always be relative...", he writes. In the "democratic and socialist" Spain, which he proposes in his program, " ... investments of foreign capital and the functioning of multinationals will not be prohibited...". "However," he adds, "for a very long time to come we must pay a tribute to foreign capital in the form of surplus value ... but this will serve the development of those sectors which correspond to the

national interest." (S. carillo, "Eurocommunisme" et Etat, France 1977, pp.157-160)

With their stands in defence of the monopolies and the interests of imperialist powers, the Eurocommunists have, set themselves against the antiimperialist and democratic traditions of the French, Spanish and Italian workers. They have also set themselves against the patriotic traditions of the struggle which the workers and progressives of these countries have waged against NATO, the American bases in Europe and the interference and pressure of American imperialism. The Eurocommunists have abandoned these positions and gone over to the camp of reaction.

The idea of class conciliation and submission to foreign domination, which pervades the entire political and ideological line of the Eurocommunists, emerges clearly also in the stand which they take towards the anti-imperialist national liberation revolutionary movements. Not being for the revolution in their own countries, they are not for the revolution in other countries, either. They do not want the weakening of their imperialist and neo-colonialist bourgeoisie, therefore they can never see the revolution in the oppressed countries as a direct aid for the overthrow of the capitalist system. For them, the unified process of the revolution, the natural connection between its different currents, the indispensable reciprocal aid, do not exist.

Sometimes they say the odd propaganda word in favour of anti-imperialist movements, just for the sake of appearances. But this is only empty phraseology with no concrete content and, above all, not accompanied with political action. Their "support" is, at most, a slightly leftist pose, a way of appearing progressive and democratic.

Taken as a whole, in their stand towards the revolutionary liberation movements the Eurocommunists have embraced the

ideology of non-alignment, which is extremely convenient for them in order to justify the subjugation of peoples to the domination of imperialist powers and to proclaim neo-colonialism as a way for the former colonial countries to emerge from poverty and develop. In the theses for their recent congress, the Italian revisionists wrote, "the struggle for the construction of a new international system and order in the economic field is a moment of more and more fundamental importance in the struggle for peace, for international co-operation and the policy of peaceful coexistence." (The politics and the organization of the Italian communists, Rome 1979)

They are consistent in their opportunist line. They think that the exploiting character of the international economic relations of the capitalist system can be changed with some reforms, in the same way as they seek to reform the capitalist order within the country. Carrillo also talks about a new world economic order, or how the Eurocommunists envisage it. Indeed, he puts the matter more clearly: "In any case we must proceed from an objective reality; although imperialism is no longer a unified world system, a world market always exists, regulated by the objective laws of the exchange of commodities, laws which, in the final analysis, are capitalist." (S. Carrillo, "Eurocomunisme" et Etat, France 1977, p.159)

According to Carrillo, these objective capitalist "laws" cannot alter or be replaced even in the conditions of socialism. In order to "support" this thesis he quotes the example of the capitalist character of relations between revisionist countries in the economic field. In other words, according to Carrillo, it turns out that it is in vain for the peoples to rise in struggle against national and neo-colonialist oppression, against unequivalent exchanges between the developed capitalist countries and the undeveloped countries, which are expressed especially in the savage plunder of

the raw materials of the latter. This is the international order which Carrillo wants to retain and to which Berlinguer wants to do some retouching, so that it looks shiny and new.

A line which is opposed to the genuine national interests of the country, a line which defends imperialist hegemony and expansion, which praises neo-colonialism and sanctifies foreign capitalist exploitation is doomed to failure. The objective laws of the development of history cannot alter. The new world order for which the proletariat and the peoples are fighting is not the imperialist order which the Eurocommunists advertise, but the socialist order to which the future belongs.

In recent years, the stand of the Italian, French and Spanish revisionist parties towards the Soviet Union and their relations with it have become a major object of discussion and interpretation by the whole international bourgeoisie. The attempt of the Eurocommunists to describe themselves "independent" of Moscow, "original" and even "opponents" of the Soviet Union appears to be made allegedly to deceive the bourgeoisie of their countries, but in reality it is made to deceive the proletariat of their own countries and the international proletariat. It is by no means impossible that this could be a manoeuvre on the part of the Soviet revisionists to create the impression of the existence of allegedly profound differences and contradictions of "principle" between them and the communist parties of Western Europe, especially with the Italian and French parties, with the aim of facilitating the participation of these parties in the bourgeois governments of the respective countries. If this could be achieved, this would be in the interests of Soviet social-imperialism, in the interests of its world domination, because it weakens its rivals while increasing its influence and hegemony in different countries. The Khrushchevite revisionists need this also to support their anti-Marxist thesis that "state power can be taken in a peaceful way", and thus "prove"

what they failed to prove in Chile. Indeed, at the 25th Congress of the CPSU, Brezhnev said that the Chilean experience does not rule out the theory of taking power in parliamentary ways.

On the other hand, Eurocommunism is a kind of idea that suits the European big capitalist bourgeoisie which is encouraging and fanning up the contradictions between the Eurocommunists and Soviet social-imperialists in every way, because it is interested in weakening the revisionist ideological power and influence of the Soviet Union. It tries to present the Italian, Spanish, French and other revisionisms as an ideological bloc which is being created in Europe in opposition to the Soviet revisionist bloc. And since they are talking about an anti-Soviet ideological grouping, it is self-evident that the reactionary bourgeoisie of the industrialized countries of Europe has this Eurocommunism under its influence.

However, the Kremlin would not like Eurocommunism to break away completely from its influence. Therefore, the propaganda being spread in the West about Eurocommunism as an "independent" ideological current annoys Moscow.

This annoyance also stems from the fact that in this way the split, which has long existed between the revisionist parties of Western Europe and the revisionist party of the Soviet Union and its satellites in Eastern Europe, is made public.

These parties have never had, do not have and never will have unity. However, it pleases the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to maintain a superficial appearance of unity amongst the revisionist parties not only of Europe, but of the whole world. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union tries to maintain its ideological hegemony over all the other revisionist parties of the world in disguised ways. It is eager to sign joint declarations and communiqués with them, in order to give the appearance of the

existence of unity and the respect which these parties have for the Soviet leadership.

There have been splits and disagreements between the Italian Communist Party and the French Communist Party and the Khrushchevite revisionists since the time of Togliatti and Thorez, and these disagreements and differences have steadily increased and extended. However, they did not reach then such a degree of acuteness as they have reached today. Now the worsening of relations has come out openly. "Pravda" attacked Carrillo and condemned Eurocommunism. Carrillo replied just as sharply to Moscow. He dotted the i's of the revisionist ideological and political orientation of his party and broke off the connections of dependence on the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Following "Pravda"'s criticism and Carrillo's reply, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia came out as an ardent defender of the Communist Party of Spain. The Yugoslav revisionists openly took Carrillo's side, because they have always been for the split, for the breaking away of revisionist parties from Moscow, and they have always struggled to bring this about.

In regard to the French and Italian revisionist parties they are somewhat more cautious in this polemic. Sometimes they raise it, sometimes they lower it and at other times they extinguish it altogether. This is explained not by any particular "moderation", but apparently by the existence of certain material and other links, which they want to preserve because they bring them profits. Precisely for the preservation of these threads linked with rubles, which have long existed between them and the Soviets, they want the tempers to be cooled a little so that the polemic with the Khrushchevites does not assume uncontrollable proportions. The visits of Berlinguer, Pajetta, etc., to Moscow were made for this purpose. The Italian revisionist leaders declared that they were going to Moscow to explain to the Soviet leaders that there should

not be a bitter polemic and that Moscow did not have the right to meddle or interfere in the line of the communist party of another country, because each of them had the right to define its own strategy and line on the basis of the situation in the country, and allegedly also bearing in mind the experience of the world communist movement. Moscow is ready to put its signature to these theses, but in return demands recognition of its "socialism" and, above all, approval of the main direction of its foreign policy. When Marchais applauds the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and acclaims the expansionist policy of the Kremlin as the highest expression of "international solidarity", Brezhnev cannot fail to reward him by approving the "democratic road" so dear to the French revisionists, which is completely in accord with the theses of the Khrushchevites' 20th Congress.

Although they have an identical strategy today, the Italian, French and Spanish revisionist parties differ a little in their tactics, because of the specific features of the bourgeoisie in these three countries. The French bourgeoisie is strong - a bourgeoisie with long experience. It also has great political and ideological power, not to speak of its economic strength and the military and police power which it has at its disposal. The Italian bourgeoisie, however, is not so strong as the French one. Although it has power in its hands, it has many weak points. This has made it possible for the Italian revisionist party to enter into negotiations and to establish collaboration in many forms, indeed even in parliamentary forms, with other parties, not to mention their collaboration through the trade-unions with the Italian capitalist bourgeoisie, and first of all with its Christian Democratic Party.

This is why Berlinguer's party will try to move closer to the bourgeoisie, but at the same time try and play a policy "de bascule" between Moscow and the bourgeoisie of its country, the more so

when the Italian bourgeoisie also has its own interests in regard to the Soviet Union.

We must not forget the large investments which the Italian bourgeoisie has made there.

The French bourgeoisie also, which knows what the revisionist Soviet Union is, does not proceed blindly in its policy, as the Chinese revisionists would like and advocate when they demand that France should take a hard line in its relations with the Soviet Union. Of course, the relations between these two countries are not all sweetness and honey, but neither are they as tense as the Chinese would like. Meanwhile, the French Communist Party, too, in its policy of agreement with the socialists, has in mind that it must not put itself in open and clear-cut opposition to Moscow, but should maintain a certain status quo with it at a time when it is moving towards lining up and unity with the French bourgeoisie.

With the Spanish bourgeoisie the situation is different. After Franco, the Suarez party, which is in power in collaboration with the other parties, is the representative of a bourgeoisie which has its own traditions, but which are mostly the traditions of the fascist dictatorship. It is a bourgeoisie which has experienced many disturbances, which have not allowed it to create that stability which the French bourgeoisie has created, and to a lesser extent, the Italian bourgeoisie. Now it is in the process of revival. Carrillo, with his revisionist ideology, has been included in this process, in the process of consolidation and strengthening of a capitalist regime which is closely linked with American imperialism and which is making efforts to join NATO, United Europe, etc. All these factors restrict the field of manoeuvre for both the bourgeoisie and the Spanish revisionist party, whose game with Moscow is lacking in amplitude.

The Communist Party of China too, likes Eurocommunism, both as an ideology and as a practical activity. It agrees with the name and with the content of the line of these three parties. China, as a state, and the party which defines the line and strategy of this state, proceed according to the world contingencies which alter every hour and minute. In the grouping called Eurocommunism the Communist Party of China sees an ideological opponent of the Soviet Union which it considers the number one enemy.

Therefore, just as it supports without the slightest hesitation, and assists without the slightest reserve every force (with the exception of genuine Marxist-Leninists and revolutionaries), which appears to be against the Soviet Union, China supports and approves Eurocommunism, too. The Communist Party of China long ago established relations with Carrillo, as it is doing now with Berlinguer, too. It took a step by sending the Chinese ambassador in Rome to attend the recent congress of the Italian Communist Party as the official representative of the Communist Party of China. Recently it welcomed Berlinguer to Beijing. There is no doubt that it will establish relations with the French revisionist party, too. These links will be gradually increased and strengthened. This cannot fail to happen in as much as they have identical strategies and similar tactics. The delay in establishing close links comes from China, which hesitates to go too far in the direction of the Eurocommunist parties in order to avoid angering the top circles of the bourgeoisie ruling those countries, especially the parties of the right, to which it gives priority and considers its closest allies.

The genuine Marxist-Leninist parties of Europe and of all continents are not misled by the tactics and manoeuvres of the Soviet revisionists who allegedly have entered into polemics and opposition with the so-called Eurocommunism. They do not think that they can find a breach here. In principle, there is no breach

among the revisionists. They are tactically split in order to better achieve their strategy, which has the aim of the global domination of modern revisionism over the world proletariat. Therefore, the Marxist-Leninist parties expose and fight Soviet modern revisionism, Yugoslav, Chinese and Eurocommunist revisionism equally. They do not and must not have any illusions on this question.

Lenin

Draft Resolution on the Present Political Situation

Written: Written not later than September 3 (16), 1917

Collected Works, Volume 25, pages 315-322.

The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., on the basis of the resolution on the political situation adopted by the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks), and applying that resolution to the present situation, at its plenary meeting states:

1. In the two months from July 3 to September 3, due to the unparalleled speed of the revolution, the course of the class struggle and the development of political events have carried the whole country as far forward as it would have been impossible for the country to advance over many years in peace-time, without revolution and war.
2. It becomes more and more apparent that the events of July 3-5 were the turning-point of the whole revolution. Without a correct estimate of these events, it is impossible to correctly estimate either the proletariat's tasks, or the speed of development of revolutionary events, which is beyond our control.
3. The slander against the Bolsheviks, which the bourgeoisie spread with tremendous zeal and which they put about very widely among the people with the aid of the millions invested in capitalist papers and publishing houses, is being exposed more and more rapidly and widely. First it was the workers in the capital and in the large cities, and then the peasants, who realised more and more that the slander against the Bolsheviks is one of the main weapons used by the landowners and capitalists in the struggle against the defenders of the interests of the workers and poor peasants, i.e., against the Bolsheviks.

4. An outright attempt was made to camouflage the Kornilov revolt, i.e., a revolt of generals and officers behind whom stand the landowners and the capitalists headed by the Cadet Party (the "people's freedom" party), by bringing up again the old slander against the Bolsheviks. It was this that helped finally to open the eyes of the broadest sections of the people to the true meaning of the bourgeois slander against the Bolshevik workers' party, the party of the true defenders of the poor.

5. Had our Party refused to support the July 3–4 mass movement, which burst out spontaneously despite our attempts to prevent it, we should have actually and completely betrayed the proletariat, since the people were moved to action by their well-founded and just anger at the protraction of the imperialist war, which is a predatory war conducted in the interests of the capitalists, and at the inaction of the government and the Soviets in regard to the bourgeoisie, who are intensifying and aggravating economic disruption and famine.

6. In spite of all the efforts of the bourgeoisie and the government, in spite of the arrest of hundreds of Bolsheviks, the seizure of their papers and documents, the search of their editorial offices, etc.—in spite of all this nobody has succeeded, and nobody will ever succeed, in proving the slander that our Party's aim in the July 3-4 movement was anything other than a "peaceful and organised" demonstration with the slogan of transfer of all state power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

7. It would have been wrong if the Bolsheviks had aimed to seize power on July 3-4, since neither the majority of the people nor even the majority of the workers at that time had yet actually experienced the counter-revolutionary policies of generals in the army, of the landowners in the countryside, and of the capitalists in the town. These policies were only revealed to the masses after July 5 and stemmed from a compromise between the Socialist-

Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie, on the other. None of our Party organisations, either central or local, advocated, either in writing or by word of mouth, the slogan of seizing power on July 3-4; none of them even discussed this question.

8. The real mistake of our Party on July 3-4, as events now reveal, was merely that the Party considered the general situation in the country less revolutionary than it proved to be, that the Party still considered a peaceful development of political changes possible through an alteration in the Soviets' policies, whereas in reality the Mensheviks and S.R.s had become so much entangled and bound by compromising with the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie had become so counter-revolutionary, that peaceful development was no longer possible. This erroneous view, however, which was sustained only by the hope that events would not develop too fast, our Party could not have got over other than by participating in the popular movement of July 3-4 with the slogan "All power to the Soviets" and with the aim of making the movement peaceful and organised.

9. The historic significance of the Kornilov revolt is that with extraordinary force, it opened the people's eyes to a fact which the S.R.s and Mensheviks had concealed and still are concealing under conciliatory phrases. The fact is that the landowners and the bourgeoisie, headed by the Cadet Party, and the generals and officers who are on their side, have organised themselves; they are ready to commit, or are committing, the most outrageous crimes, such as surrendering Riga (followed by Petrograd) to the Germans, laying the war front open, putting the Bolshevik regiments under fire, starting a mutiny, leading troops against the capital with the "Savage Division" at their head, etc. The purpose of all this is to seize power completely and put it in the hands of the bourgeoisie,

to consolidate the power of the landowners in the countryside, and to drench the country in the blood of workers and peasants.

The Kornilov revolt has proved for Russia what has been proved throughout history for all countries, namely, that the bourgeoisie will betray their country and commit any crime to retain both their power over the people and their profits.

10. The workers and peasants of Russia have no other alternative than the most determined struggle against, and victory over, the landowners and the bourgeoisie, over the Cadet Party and the generals and officers sympathising with it. Only the urban working class can lead the people, i.e., all working people, into such a struggle and to such a victory, provided all state power passes into its hands and provided it is supported by the peasant poor.

11. Events in the Russian revolution, particularly since May 6, and even more so since July 3, have been developing with such incredible, storm- or hurricane-like velocity, that it can by no means be the task of the Party to speed them up. All efforts, in fact, must be directed towards keeping up with events and doing on time our work of explaining to the workers, and to the working people in general, as much as we can, the changes in the situation and in the course of the class struggle. This is still the main task of our Party; we must explain to the people that the situation is extremely critical, that every action may end in an explosion, and that therefore a premature uprising may cause the greatest harm. At the same time, the critical situation is inevitably leading the working class—perhaps with catastrophic speed—to a situation in which, due to a change in events beyond its control, it will find itself compelled to wage a determined battle with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and to gain power.

12. The Kornilov revolt fully revealed that the entire army hates the General Staff. This had to be admitted even by those Mensheviks and S.R.s who through months of effort had proved their hatred for the Bolsheviks and their defence of the policy of agreement between the workers and peasants, on the one hand, and the landowners and the bourgeoisie, on the other. The hatred of the army for the General Staff will not die down but will become stronger now that Kerensky's government has confined itself to substituting Alexeyev for Kornilov, leaving Klembovsky and other Kornilov generals, and has done absolutely nothing substantial to democratise the armed forces and remove the counter-revolutionary commanders. Soviets, which tolerate and support this weak, wavering, unprincipled policy of Kerensky and missed another opportunity to take all power peacefully when the Kornilov revolt was being liquidated, become guilty not only of conciliation but even of criminal conciliation.

The army, which hates the General Staff and does not want to fight a war it now knows to be a war of conquest, is inevitably doomed to new catastrophes.

13. Only the working class, when it has gained power, will be able to pursue a peace policy, not merely in words, like the Mensheviks and S.R.s, who in practice support the bourgeoisie and their secret treaties, but in deeds. Specifically, the working class will immediately offer all peoples open, precise, clear and just peace terms. This will be done irrespective of the military situation, even if Kornilov's generals follow up the surrender of Riga by that of Petrograd. The working class can do this in the name of the entire people, since the overwhelming majority of Russia's workers and peasants oppose the present war of annexation and support a peace on just terms, without annexations and indemnities.

The S.R.s and Mensheviks are deceiving themselves and the people when they spend months talking about this peace. The working

class, on gaining power, will offer this peace to all without losing a single day.

The capitalists of all countries have so much difficulty in stemming the workers' revolution against war—a revolution which is growing everywhere—that if the Russian revolution were to pass from impotent and pitiful yearning for peace to a forthright peace offer coupled with the publication and annulment of secret treaties, etc., there are ninety-nine chances in a hundred that peace would quickly follow, that the capitalists would be unable to stand in the way of peace.

If, however, the highly improbable were to happen and the capitalists were to reject the peace terms of the Russian workers' government, against the will of their peoples, a revolution in Europe would come a hundred times nearer, and our workers' and peasants' army would elect for itself not hated but respected commanders and military leaders. The army would see the justice of the war once peace had been offered, the secret treaties torn up, the alliance with the landowners and the bourgeoisie severed, and all land given to the peasants. Only then would the war become a just war for Russia, only this war would the workers and peasants fight of their own free will, without being bludgeoned into fighting; and this war would bring even nearer the inevitable workers' revolution in the advanced countries.

14. Only the working class, when it has gained power, will be able to guarantee the immediate transfer of all landed estates to the peasants without compensation. This must not be put off. The Constituent Assembly will legalise the transfer, but it is not the peasants' fault that the Constituent Assembly is being delayed. The peasants daily become more convinced that it is impossible to get the land by agreement with the landowners and the capitalists. The land can only be obtained through a very close, brotherly alliance of the poor peasants and the workers.

Chernov's resignation from the government after he had for months tried to uphold the interests of the peasants through concessions, big and small, to the Cadet landowners, and after all these attempts had failed, revealed with particular clarity the hopelessness of the policy of conciliation. The peasants see, know and feel that since July 5 the landowners have become arrogant in the villages and that it is necessary to curb them and render them harmless..

15. Only the working class, when it has gained power, will be able to put an end to economic disruption and the impending famine. Since May 6 the government has kept on promising control, but it has done and could do nothing because the capitalists and landowners obstructed all work. Unemployment is growing, famine is approaching, currency is losing value. Peshekhonov's resignation after the fixed prices have doubled will aggravate the crisis, and it again shows the utter feebleness and impotence of the government. Only workers' control over production and distribution can save the situation. Only a workers' government will curb the capitalists, will bring heroic support from all working people for the efforts of state power, and will establish order and a fair exchange of grain for manufactured goods.

16. The confidence of the peasant poor in the urban working class, temporarily undermined by the slander of the bourgeoisie and by hopes put in the policy of conciliation, has been returning, particularly after the arrests in the countryside and the various kinds of persecution of working people after July 5 and then the Kornilov revolt opened the people's eyes. One of the signs that the people are losing faith in conciliation with the capitalists is that among the S.R.s and Mensheviks, the two main parties responsible for introducing this policy of conciliation and bringing it to a culmination, there have been growing, especially since July 5, a discontent within these parties and a struggle against conciliation.

This opposition at the last Socialist-Revolutionary "Council" and at the Menshevik congress involved about two-fifths (40 per cent) of the members.

17. The whole course of events, all economic and political conditions, everything that is happening in the armed forces, are increasingly paving the way for the successful winning of power by the working class, which will bring peace, bread and freedom and will hasten the victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries.

Lenin

THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE RENEGADE
KAUTSKY

November 1918.

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WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

Kautsky is absolutely convinced that he is an internationalist and calls himself one. The Scheidemanns he calls "government Socialists." In defending the Mensheviks (he does not openly express his solidarity with them, but he faithfully expresses their views), Kautsky has shown with perfect clarity what kind of "internationalism" he subscribes to. And since Kautsky is not alone but is the representative of a trend which inevitably grew up in the atmosphere of the Second International (Longuet in France, Turati in Italy, Nobs and Grimm, Graber and Naine in Switzerland, Ramsay MacDonald in England, etc.), it will be instructive to dwell on Kautsky's "internationalism."

After emphasizing that the Mensheviks also attended the Zimmerwald Conference (a diploma, certainly but . . . a tainted one), Kautsky sets forth the views of the Mensheviks, with whom he agrees, in the following manner:

". . . The Mensheviks wanted a general peace. They wanted all the belligerents to adopt the formula: No annexations and no indemnities. Until this had been achieved, the Russian army, according to this view, was to stand ready for battle. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, demanded an immediate peace at any price; they were prepared, if need be, to make a separate peace; they tried to force it by increasing the state of disorganization of the army, which was already bad enough." (P. 27.) In Kautsky's opinion the Bolsheviks should not have taken power, and should have contented themselves with a Constituent Assembly.

Thus, the internationalism of Kautsky and the Mensheviks amounted to this: to demand reforms from the imperialist bourgeois government, but to continue to support it, and to continue to support the war that this government was waging until all the belligerents had accepted the formula: no annexations and no indemnities. This view was repeatedly expressed by Turati, and by the Kautskyites (Haase and others), and by Longuet and Co., who declared that they stood for "defence of the fatherland."

Theoretically, this shows a complete inability to dissociate oneself from the social-chauvinists and complete confusion on the question of the defence of the fatherland. Politically, it means substituting petty-bourgeois nationalism for internationalism, deserting to the reformists' camp and renouncing revolution.

From the point of view of the proletariat, recognizing "defence of the fatherland" means justifying the present war, admitting that it is legitimate. And since the war remains an imperialist war (both under a monarchy and under a republic), irrespective of the territory -- mine or the enemy's -- in which the enemy troops are stationed at the given moment, recognizing defence of the fatherland means, in fact, supporting the imperialist, predatory bourgeoisie, and completely betraying Socialism. In Russia, even under Kerensky, under the bourgeois-democratic republic, the war continued to be an imperialist war, for it was being waged by the bourgeoisie as a ruling class (and war is the "continuation of politics"); and a particularly striking expression of the imperialist character of the war was the secret treaties for the partitioning of the world and the plunder of other countries which had been concluded by the tsar at the time with the capitalists of England and France.

The Mensheviks deceived the people in a most despicable manner by calling this war a defensive or revolutionary war. And by approving the policy of the Mensheviks, Kautsky is approving the

deception practised on the people, is approving the part played by the petty bourgeoisie in helping capital to trick the workers and to harness them to the chariot of the imperialists. Kautsky is pursuing a characteristically petty-bourgeois, philistine policy by pretending (and trying to make the masses believe the absurd idea) that putting forward a slogan alters the position. The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion; the bourgeois democrats have always advanced and still advance all sorts of "slogans" in order to deceive the people. The point is to test their sincerity, to compare their words with their deeds, not to be satisfied with idealistic or charlatan phrases, but to get down to class reality. An imperialist war does not cease to be an imperialist war when charlatans or phrasemongers or petty-bourgeois philistines put forward sentimental "slogans," but only when the class which is conducting the imperialist war, and is bound to it by millions of economic threads (and even ropes), is really overthrown and is replaced at the helm of state by the really revolutionary class, the proletariat. There is no other way of getting out of an imperialist war, as also out of an imperialist predatory peace.

By approving the foreign policy of the Mensheviks, and by declaring it to be internationalist and Zimmerwaldian, Kautsky, first, reveals the utter rottenness of the opportunist Zimmerwald majority (it was not without reason that we, the Left Zimmerwaldians, at once dissociated ourselves from such a majority!), and, secondly -- and this is the chief thing -- passes from the position of the proletariat to the position of the petty bourgeoisie, from the revolutionary position to the reformist position.

The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism, for adaptation to it, while

submitting to it. When Kautsky was still a Marxist, for example, in 1909, when he wrote his Road to Power, it was the idea that war would inevitably lead to revolution that he advocated, and he spoke of the approach of an era of revolutions. The Basle Manifesto of 1912 plainly and definitely speaks of a proletarian revolution in connection with that very imperialist war between the German and the British groups which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when revolutions did begin in connection with the war, Kautsky, instead of explaining that they were inevitable, instead of pondering over and thinking out the revolutionary tactics and the means and methods of preparing for revolution, began to describe the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as internationalism. Is not this apostasy?

Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for having insisted on maintaining the fighting efficiency of the army, and he blames the Bolsheviks for having added to "disorganization of the army," which was already disorganized enough as it was. This means praising reformism and submission to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and blaming and renouncing revolution. For under Kerensky the maintenance of the fighting efficiency of the army meant its maintenance under bourgeois (albeit republican) command. Everybody knows, and the progress of events has strikingly confirmed it, that this republican army preserved the Kornilov spirit, because its officers were Kornilovites. The bourgeois officers could not help being Kornilovites; they could not help gravitating towards imperialism and towards the forcible suppression of the proletariat. All that the Menshevik tactics amounted to in practice was to leave all the foundations of the imperialist war and all the foundations of the bourgeois dictatorship intact, to patch up details and to daub over a few trifles ("reforms").

On the other hand, not a single great revolution has ever taken place, or ever can take place, without the "disorganization" of the

army. For the army is the most ossified instrument for supporting the old regime, the most hardened bulwark of bourgeois discipline, buttressing up the rule of capital, and preserving and fostering among the working people the servile spirit of submission and subjection to capital. Counter-revolution has never tolerated, and never could tolerate, armed workers side by side with the army. In France, Engels wrote, the workers emerged armed from every revolution: "therefore, the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois, who were at the helm of the state." The armed workers were the embryo of a new army, the organized nucleus of a new social order. The first commandment of the bourgeoisie was to crush this nucleus and prevent it from growing. The first commandment of every victorious revolution, as Marx and Engels repeatedly emphasized, was to smash the old army, dissolve it and replace it by a new one. A new social class, when rising to power, never could, and cannot now, attain power and consolidate it except by completely disintegrating the old army ("Disorganization!" the reactionary or just cowardly philistines howl on this score), except by passing through a most difficult and painful period without any army (the Great French Revolution also passed through such a painful period), and by gradually building up, in the midst of hard civil war, a new army, a new discipline, a new military organization of the new class. Formerly, Kautsky the historian understood this. Kautsky the renegade has forgotten it.

What right has Kautsky to call the Scheidemanns "government Socialists" if he approves of the tactics of the Mensheviks in the Russian revolution? In supporting Kerensky and joining his Ministry, the Mensheviks were also government Socialists. Kautsky cannot get away from this conclusion if he as much as attempts to put the question as to which is the ruling class that is waging the imperialist war. But Kautsky avoids raising the

question of the ruling class, a question that is imperative for a Marxist, for the mere raising of it would expose the renegade.

The Kautskyites in Germany, the Longuetites in France, and the Turatis and Co. in Italy argue in this way: Socialism presupposes the equality and freedom of nations, their self-determination, hence, when our country is attacked, or when enemy troops invade our territory, it is the right and duty of the Socialists to defend their country. But theoretically such an argument is either a sheer mockery of Socialism or a fraudulent subterfuge while from the point of view of practical politics, it coincides with that of the quite ignorant country yokel who has even no conception of the social, class character of the war, and of the tasks of a revolutionary party during a reactionary war.

Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But Socialism is opposed to violence against men in general. Apart from Christian-Anarchists and Tolstoyans, however, no one has yet drawn the conclusion from this that Socialism is opposed to revolutionary violence. Hence, to talk about "violence" in general, without examining the conditions which distinguish reactionary from revolutionary violence, means being a philistine who renounces revolution, or else it means simply deceiving oneself and others by sophistry.

The same holds true of violence against nations. Every war is violence against nations, but that does not prevent Socialists from being in favour of a revolutionary war. The class character of the war -- that is the fundamental question which confronts a Socialist (if he is not a renegade). The imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two groups of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the division of the world, for the division of the booty, and for the plunder and strangulation of small and weak nations. This was the appraisal of war given in the Basle Manifesto in 1912, and it has been confirmed

by the facts. Whoever departs from this view of war is not a Socialist.

If a German under Wilhelm or a Frenchman under Clemenceau says, "It is my right and duty as a Socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy," he argues not like a Socialist, not like an internationalist, not like a revolutionary proletarian, but like a petty-bourgeois nationalist. Because this argument leaves out of account the revolutionary class struggle of the workers against capital, it leaves out of account the appraisal of the war as a whole from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat, that is, it leaves out of account internationalism, and all that remains is a miserable and narrow minded nationalism. My country is being wronged, that is all I care about -- that is what this argument amounts to, and that is where its petty-bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness lies. It is the same as if in regard to individual violence, violence against an individual, one were to argue that Socialism is opposed to violence and therefore I would rather be a traitor than go to prison.

The Frenchman, German or Italian who says: "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded," betrays Socialism and internationalism, because such a man sees only his own "country," he puts "his own" . . . "bourgeoisie " above everything else and does not give a thought to the international connections which make the war an imperialist war and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder.

All philistines and all stupid and ignorant yokels argue in the same way as the renegade Kautskyites, Longuetites, Turatis and Co.: "The enemy has invaded my country, I don't care about anything else."* * The social-chauvinists (the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Gomperses and Co.) absolutely refuse to talk about the "International" during the war. They regard the enemies of

"their" respective bourgeoisies as "traitors" to . . . Socialism. They support the policy of conquest pursued by their respective bourgeoisies. The social-pacifists (i.e., Socialists in words and petty-bourgeois pacifists in practice) express all sorts of "internationalist" sentiments, protest against annexations, etc., but in practice they continue to support their respective imperialist bourgeoisies. The difference between the two types is unimportant, it is like the difference between two capitalists -- one with bitter, and the other with sweet, words on his lips.

The Socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, argues differently. He says: "The character of the war (whether it is reactionary or revolutionary) does not depend on who the attacker was, or in whose country the 'enemy' is stationed; it depends on what class is waging the war, and of what politics this war is a continuation. If the war is a reactionary, imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world groups of the imperialist, rapacious, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes a participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the world proletarian revolution as the only escape from the horrors of a world war. I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for that is the argument of a wretched, stupid, petty-bourgeois nationalist who does not realize that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of my share in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, of the revolutionary worker, of the genuine Socialist. That is the ABC that Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten." And his apostasy becomes still more obvious when he passes from approving the tactics of the petty-bourgeois

nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuetites in France, the Turatis in Italy, and Haases and Co. in Germany), to criticizing the Bolshevik tactics. Here is his criticism:

"The Bolshevik revolution was based on the assumption that it would become the starting point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would prompt the proletarians of all Europe to rise.

"On this assumption it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russian separate peace would take, what hardships and territorial losses (literally: mutilation or maiming, Verstümmelungen) it would cause the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self-determination of nations it would give. At that time it was also immaterial whether Russia was able to defend herself or not. According to this view, the European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian revolution and would bring complete and genuine self-determination to all the peoples inhabiting the former Russian territory.

"A revolution in Europe, which would establish and consolidate Socialism there, would also become the means of removing the obstacles that would arise in Russia in the way of the introduction of the socialist system of production owing to the economic backwardness of the country.

"All this was very logical and very sound -- only if the main assumption were granted, viz., that the Russian revolution would infallibly let loose a European revolution. But what if that did not happen?

"So far the assumption has not been justified. And the proletarians of Europe are now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, for who is to be held responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (P. 28.)

And Kautsky then goes on to explain at great length that Marx, Engels and Bebel were more than once mistaken about the advent of revolutions they had anticipated, but that they never based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution at a "definite date" (p. 29), whereas, he says, the Bolsheviks "staked everything on one card, on a general European revolution."

We have deliberately quoted this long passage in order to demonstrate to our readers with what "agility" Kautsky counterfeits Marxism by palming off his banal and reactionary philistine view in its stead.

First, to ascribe to an opponent an obviously stupid idea and then to refute it is a trick that is practised by none too clever people. If the Bolsheviks had based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution in other countries by a definite date that would have been an undeniable stupidity. But the Bolshevik Party has never been guilty of such stupidity. In my letter to the American workers (August 20, 1918), I expressly disown this foolish idea by saying that we count on an American revolution, but not by any definite date. I dwelt at length upon the very same idea more than once in my controversy with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the "Left Communists" (January-March 1918). Kautsky has committed a slight . . . just a very slight forgery, on which he in fact based his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confused tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution in the more or less near future, but not at a definite date, with tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution at a definite date. A slight, just a very slight forgery!

The last-named tactics are foolish. The first-named are obligatory for a Marxist, for every revolutionary proletarian and internationalist; -- obligatory, because they alone take into account in a proper Marxian way the objective situation brought about by

the war in all European countries, and they alone conform to the international tasks of the proletariat.

By substituting the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but did not, for the important question of the foundations of revolutionary tactics in general, Kautsky adroitly abjures all revolutionary tactics!

A renegade in politics, he is unable even to present the question of the objective prerequisites of revolutionary tactics theoretically.

And this brings us to the second point.

Secondly, it is obligatory for a Marxist to count on a European revolution if a revolutionary situation exists. It is the ABC of Marxism that the tactics of the socialist proletariat cannot be the same both when there is a revolutionary situation and when there is no revolutionary situation.

If Kautsky had put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist, he would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him. Long before the war, all Marxists, all Socialists, were agreed that a European war would create a revolutionary situation. Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, clearly and definitely recognized this -- in 1902 (in his *Social Revolution*) and in 1909 (in his *Road to Power*). It was also admitted in the name of the entire Second International in the Basle Manifesto; it is not without reason that the social-chauvinists and Kautskyites (the "Centrists," i.e., those who waver between the revolutionaries and the opportunists) of all countries shun like the plague the declarations of the Basle Manifesto on this score!

Hence, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not an infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but the general opinion of all Marxists. When Kautsky tries to escape from this indisputable truth with the help of such phrases as that the Bolsheviks "always

believed in the omnipotence of violence and will," he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to cover up his flight, a shameful flight, from putting the question of a revolutionary situation.

To proceed. Has a revolutionary situation actually come or not? Kautsky proved unable to put this question either. The economic facts provide an answer: the famine and ruin created everywhere by the war imply a revolutionary situation. The political facts also provide an answer: ever since 1915 a splitting process is clearly to be observed in all countries within the old and decayed socialist parties, a process of departure of the masses of the proletariat from the social-chauvinist leaders to the Left, to revolutionary ideas and sentiments, to revolutionary leaders.

Only a person who dreads revolution and betrays it could have failed to see these facts on August 5, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet. And now, at the end of October 1918, the revolution is growing in a number of European countries, and growing under everybody's eyes and very rapidly at that. Kautsky the "revolutionary," who still wants to be regarded as a Marxist, has proved to be a shortsighted philistine, who, like those philistines of 1847 whom Marx ridiculed, failed to see the approaching revolution!!

And now we come to the third point.

Thirdly, what should be the specific features of revolutionary tactics when there is a revolutionary situation in Europe? Having become a renegade, Kautsky feared to put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist. Kautsky argues like a typical philistine petty bourgeois, or like an ignorant peasant: has a "general European revolution" begun or not? If it has, then he too is prepared to become a revolutionary! But then, let us observe, every blackguard (like the scoundrels who now sometimes attach

themselves to the victorious Bolsheviks) would proclaim himself a revolutionary!

If it has not, then Kautsky will turn his back on revolution! Kautsky does not display a shadow of an understanding of the truth that a revolutionary Marxist differs from the ordinary philistine and petty bourgeois by his ability to preach to the uneducated masses that the maturing revolution is necessary, to prove that it is inevitable, to explain its benefits to the people, and to prepare the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses for it.

Kautsky ascribed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity, namely, that they had staked everything on one card, on a European revolution breaking out at a definite date. This absurdity has turned against Kautsky himself, because the logical conclusion of his argument precisely is that the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5, 1918! That is the date Kautsky mentions as the time he wrote his pamphlet. And when, a few weeks after this August 5, it became clear that revolution was coming in a number of European countries, the whole apostasy of Kautsky, his whole falsification of Marxism, and his utter inability to reason or even to present questions in a revolutionary manner, became revealed in all their charm!

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation levelled at unknown persons.

You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see those "unknown persons" against whom this accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of naïveté and pretends not to understand who levelled the accusation, and its meaning. In reality, however, Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being levelled by the German "Lefts," by the Spartacists, by Liebknecht and his friends. This accusation

expresses a clear appreciation of the fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian (and international) revolution when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia, and Estonia. This accusation is levelled primarily and above all, not against the masses, who are always downtrodden, but against those leaders who, like the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, failed in their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda, revolutionary work among the masses to overcome their inertness, who in fact worked against the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow deep down among the masses of the oppressed class. The Scheidemanns bluntly, crudely, cynically, and in most cases for selfish motives betrayed the proletariat and deserted to the bourgeoisie. The Kautskyites and the Longuetites did the same thing, only hesitatingly and haltingly, and casting cowardly side-glances at those who were stronger at the moment. In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to extinguish the revolutionary spirit, instead of fostering and fanning it.

The fact that Kautsky does not even understand the enormous theoretical importance, and the even greater agitational and propaganda importance, of the "accusation" that the proletarians of Europe have betrayed the Russian revolution will remain a veritable historical monument to the philistine stupidity of the "average" leader of German official Social-Democracy! Kautsky does not understand that, owing to the censorship prevailing in the German "Empire," this "accusation" is perhaps the only form in which the German Socialists who have not betrayed Socialism -- Liebknecht and his friends -- can express their appeal to the German workers to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such "leaders," to free themselves from their stultifying and debasing propaganda, to rise in revolt in spite of them, without them, and march over their heads towards revolution!

Kautsky does not understand this. And how could he understand the tactics of the Bolsheviki? Can a man who renounces revolution in general be expected to weigh and appraise the conditions of the development of revolution in one of the most "difficult" cases?

The Bolsheviki's tactics were correct; they were the only internationalist tactics, because they were based, not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a philistine "lack of faith" in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect one's "own" fatherland (the fatherland of one's own bourgeoisie), while not "caring a hang" about all the rest, but on a correct (and, before the war and before the apostasy of the social-chauvinists and social-pacifists, a universally admitted) estimation of the revolutionary situation in Europe. These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries. These tactics have been justified by their enormous success, for Bolshevism (not by any means because of the merits of the Russian Bolsheviki, but because of the most profound sympathy of the masses everywhere for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become world Bolshevism, has produced an idea, a theory, a program and tactics, which differ concretely and in practice from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. Bolshevism has given a coup de grâce to the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, Renaudels and Longuets, Hendersons and MacDonalds, who henceforth will be treading on each other's heels, dreaming about "unity" and trying to revive a corpse. Bolshevism has created the ideological and tactical foundations of a Third International, of a really proletarian and Communist International, which will take into consideration both the gains of the epoch of peace and the experience of the epoch of revolutions, which has begun.

Bolshevism has popularized throughout the world the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into all the languages of the world, and has shown by the example of the Soviet power that the workers and poor peasants, even of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organization, have been able for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the whole world) to maintain the power of the toilers, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to start the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical achievement of Socialism.

Bolshevism has actually helped to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any party in any other country has so far succeeded in doing. While the workers of the whole world are realizing more and more clearly every day that the tactics of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys have not delivered them from the imperialist war and from wage-slavery to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that these tactics cannot serve as a model for all countries, the masses of the proletarians of all countries are realizing more and more clearly every day that Bolshevism has indicated the right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism can serve as a model of tactics for all.

Not only the general European, but the world proletarian revolution is maturing before the eyes of all, and it has been assisted, accelerated and supported by the victory of the proletariat in Russia. All this is not enough for the complete victory of Socialism, you say? Of course it is not enough. One country alone cannot do more. But this one country, thanks to the Soviet power, has done so much that even if the Soviet power in Russia were to

be crushed by world imperialism tomorrow, as a result, let us say, of an agreement between German and Anglo-French imperialism -- even granted that very worst possibility -- it would still be found that Bolshevik tactics have brought enormous benefit to Socialism and have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution.

Lenin

The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War

Collected Works, Volume 21

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 43, July 26, 1915

During a reactionary war a revolutionary class cannot but desire the defeat of its government.

This is axiomatic, and disputed only by conscious partisans or helpless satellites of the social-chauvinists. Among the former, for instance, is Semkovsky of the Organising Committee (No. 2 of its *Izvestia*), and among the latter, Trotsky and Bukvoyed, and Kautsky in Germany. To desire Russia's defeat, Trotsky writes, is "an uncalled-for and absolutely unjustifiable concession to the political methodology of social-patriotism, which would replace the revolutionary struggle against the war and the conditions causing it, with an orientation—highly arbitrary in the present conditions—towards the lesser evil" (*Nashe Slovo* No. 105).

This is an instance of high-flown phraseology with which Trotsky always justifies opportunism. A "revolutionary struggle against the war" is merely an empty and meaning less exclamation, something at which the heroes of the Second International excel, unless it means revolutionary action against one's own government even in wartime. One has only to do some thinking in order to understand this. Wartime revolutionary action against one's own government indubitably means, not only desiring its defeat, but really facilitating such a defeat. ("Discerning reader": note that this does not mean "blowing up bridges", organizing unsuccessful strikes in the war industries, and in general helping the government defeat the revolutionaries.)

The phrase-banding Trotsky has completely lost his bearings on a simple issue. It seems to him that to desire Russia's defeat means desiring the victory of Germany. (Bukvoyed and Semkovsky give more direct expression to the "thought", or rather want of thought, which they share with Trotsky.) But Trotsky regards this as the "methodology of social-patriotism"! To help people that are unable to think for themselves, the Berne resolution (Sotsial Demokrat No. 40) made it clear, that in all imperialist countries the proletariat must now desire the defeat of its own government. Bukvoyed and Trotsky preferred to avoid this truth, while Semkovsky (an opportunist who is more useful to the working class than all the others, thanks to his naively frank reiteration of bourgeois wisdom) blurted out the following: "This is nonsense, because either Germany or Russia can win" (Izvestia No. 2).

Take the example of the Paris Commune. France was defeated by Germany but the workers were defeated by Bismarck and Thiers! Had Bukvoyed and Trotsky done a little thinking, they would have realized that they have adopted the viewpoint on the war held by governments and the bourgeoisie, i.e., that they cringe to the "political methodology of social-patriotism", to use Trotsky's pretentious language.

A revolution in wartime means civil war; the conversion of a war between governments into a civil war is, on the one hand, facilitated by military reverses ("defeats") of governments; on the other hand, one cannot actually strive for such a conversion without thereby facilitating defeat.

The reason why the chauvinists (including the Organizing Committee and the Chkheidze group) repudiate the defeat "slogan" is that this slogan alone implies a consistent call for revolutionary action against one's own government in wartime. Without such action, millions of ultra-revolutionary phrases such

as a war against "the war and the conditions, etc." are not worth a brass farthing.

Anyone who would in all earnest refute the "slogan" of defeat for one's own government in the imperialist war should prove one of three things:

(1) that the war of 1914-15 is not reactionary, or

(2) that a revolution stemming from that war is impossible, or

(3) that co-ordination and mutual aid are possible between revolutionary movements in all the belligerent countries. The third point is particularly important to Russia, a most backward country, where an immediate socialist revolution is impossible. That is why the Russian Social-Democrats had to be the first to advance the "theory and practice" of the defeat "slogan". The tsarist government was perfectly right in asserting that the agitation conducted by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma—the sole instance in the International, not only of parliamentary opposition but of genuine revolutionary anti-government agitation among the masses—that this agitation has weakened Russia's "military might" and is likely to lead to its defeat. This is a fact to which it is foolish to close one's eyes.

The opponents of the defeat slogan are simply afraid of themselves when they refuse to recognize the very obvious fact of the inseparable link between revolutionary agitation against the government and helping bring about its defeat.

Are co-ordination and mutual aid possible between the Russian movement, which is revolutionary in the bourgeois-democratic sense, and the socialist movement in the West? No socialist who has publicly spoken on the matter during the last decade has doubted this, the movement among the Austrian proletariat after October 17, 1905, actually proving it possible.

Ask any Social-Democrat who calls himself an internationalist whether or not he approves of an understanding between the Social-Democrats of the various belligerent countries on joint revolutionary action against all belligerent governments. Many of them will reply that it is impossible, as Kautsky has done (*Die Neue Zeit*, October 2, 1914), thereby fully proving his social-chauvinism. This, on the one hand, is a deliberate and vicious lie, which clashes with the generally known facts and the Basle Manifesto. On the other hand, if it were true, the opportunists would be quite right in many respects!

Many will voice their approval of such an understanding. To this we shall say: if this approval is not hypocritical, it is ridiculous to think that, in wartime and for the conduct of a war, some "formal" understanding is necessary, such as the election of representatives, the arrangement of a meeting, the signing of an agreement, and the choice of the day and hour! Only the Semkovskys are capable of thinking so. An understanding on revolutionary action even in a single country, to say nothing of a number of countries, can be achieved only by the force of the example of serious revolutionary action, by launching such action and developing it. However, such action cannot be launched without desiring the defeat of the government, and without contributing to such a defeat. The conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war cannot be "made", any more than a revolution can be "made". It develops out of a number of diverse phenomena, aspects, features, characteristics and consequences of the imperialist war. That development is impossible without a series of military reverses and defeats of governments that receive blows from their own oppressed classes.

To repudiate the defeat slogan means allowing one's revolutionary ardor to degenerate into an empty phrase, or sheer hypocrisy.

What is the substitute proposed for the defeat slogan? It is that of "neither victory nor defeat" (Semkovsky in *Izvestia* No. 2; also the entire Organizing Committee in No. 1). This, however, is nothing but a paraphrase of the "defense of the fatherland" slogan. It means shifting the issue to the level of a war between governments (who, according to the content of this slogan, are to keep to their old stand, "retain their positions"), and not to the level of the struggle of the oppressed classes against their governments! It means justifying the chauvinism of all the imperialist nations, whose bourgeoisie are always ready to say—and do say to the people—that they are "only" fighting "against defeat". "The significance of our August 4 vote was that we are not for war but against defeat," David, a leader of the opportunists, writes in his book. The Organizing Committee, together with Bukvoyed and Trotsky, stand on fully the same ground as David when they defend the "neither-victory nor-defeat" slogan.

On closer examination, this slogan will be found to mean a "class truce", the renunciation of the class struggle by the oppressed classes in all belligerent countries, since the class struggle is impossible without dealing blows at one's "own" bourgeoisie, one's "own" government, whereas dealing a blow at one's own government in wartime is (for Bukvoyed's information) high treason, means contributing to the defeat of one's own country. Those who accept the "neither victory-nor-defeat" slogan can only be hypocritically in favor of the class struggle, of "disrupting the class truce"; in practice, such people are renouncing an independent proletarian policy because they subordinate the proletariat of all belligerent countries to the absolutely bourgeois task of safeguarding the imperialist governments against defeat. The only policy of actual, not verbal disruption of the "class truce", of acceptance of the class struggle, is for the proletariat to take advantage of the difficulties experienced by its government and its bourgeoisie in order to overthrow them. This, however, cannot be

achieved or striven for, without desiring the defeat of one's own government and without contributing to that defeat.

When, before the war, the Italian Social-Democrats raised the question of a mass strike, the bourgeoisie replied, no doubt correctly from their own point of view, that this would be high treason, and that Social-Democrats would be dealt with as traitors. That is true, just as it is true that fraternization in the trenches is high treason. Those who write against "high treason", as Bukvoyed does, or against the "disintegration of Russia", as Semkovsky does, are adopting the bourgeois, not the proletarian point of view. A proletarian cannot deal a class blow at his government or hold out (in fact) a hand to his brother, the proletarian of the "foreign" country which is at war with "our side", without committing "high treason", without contributing to the defeat, to the disintegration of his "own", imperialist "Great" Power.

Whoever is in favor of the slogan of "neither victory nor defeat" is consciously or unconsciously a chauvinist; at best he is a conciliatory petty bourgeois but in any case he is an -enemy to proletarian policy, a partisan of the existing governments, of the present-day ruling classes.

Let us look at the question from yet another angle. The war cannot but evoke among the masses the most turbulent sentiments, which upset the usual sluggish state of mass mentality. Revolutionary tactics are impossible if they are not adjusted to these new turbulent sentiments.

What are the main currents of these turbulent sentiments? They are:

(1) Horror and despair. Hence, a growth of religious feeling. Again the churches are crowded, the reactionaries joyfully declare.

"Wherever there is suffering there is religion," says the arch-reactionary Barr s. He is right, too.

(2) Hatred of the "enemy", a sentiment that is carefully fostered by the bourgeoisie (not so much by the priests), arid is of economic and political value only to the bourgeoisie.

(3) Hatred of one's own government and one's own bourgeoisie—the sentiment of all class-conscious workers who understand, on the one hand, that war is a "continuation of the politics" of imperialism, which they counter by a "continuation" of their hatred of their class enemy, and, on the other hand, that "a war against war" is a banal phrase unless it means a revolution against their own government. Hatred of one's own government and one's own bourgeoisie cannot be aroused unless their defeat is desired; one cannot be a sincere opponent of a civil (i.e., class) truce without arousing hatred of one's own government and bourgeoisie!

Those who stand for the "neither-victory-nor-defeat" slogan are in fact on the side of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists, for they do not believe in the possibility of international revolutionary action by the working class against their own governments, and do not wish to help develop such action, which, though undoubtedly difficult, is the only task worthy of a proletarian, the only socialist task. It is the proletariat in the most backward of the belligerent. Great Powers which, through the medium of their party, have had to adopt—especially in view of the shameful treachery of the German and French Social-Democrats— revolutionary tactics that are quite unfeasible unless they "contribute to the defeat" of their own government, but which alone lead to a European revolution, to the permanent peace of socialism, to the liberation of humanity from the horrors, misery, savagery and brutality now prevailing.

Lenin

LECTURE ON "THE PROLETARIAT AND THE WAR".
OCTOBER 1 (14), 1914

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Collected Works, Volume 36, pages 297-302.

The speaker divided his lecture into two parts: clarifying the nature of the present war, and the attitude of socialists to the war.

For a Marxist clarifying the nature of the war is a necessary preliminary for deciding the question of his attitude to it. But for such a clarification it is essential, first and foremost, to establish the objective conditions and concrete circumstances of the war in question. It is necessary to consider the war in the historical environment in which it is taking place, only then can one determine one's attitude to it. Otherwise, the resulting interpretation will be not materialist but eclectic.

Depending on the historical circumstances, the relationship of classes, etc., the attitude to war must be different at different times. It is absurd once and for all to renounce participation in war in principle. On the other hand, it is also absurd to divide wars into defensive and aggressive. In 1848, Marx hated Russia, because at that time democracy in Germany could not win out and develop, or unite the country into a single national whole, so long as the reactionary hand of backward Russia hung heavy over her.

In order to clarify one's attitude to the present war, one must understand how it differs from previous wars, and what its peculiar features are.

Has the bourgeoisie given such an explanation? No. Far from having given one, it will not manage to give one in any circumstances. Judging by what is going on among the socialists,

one might think that they, too, have no idea of the distinctive features of the present war.

Yet, the socialists have given an excellent explanation of it, and have predicted it. More than that, there is not a single speech by a socialist deputy, not a single article by a socialist publicist, that does not contain that explanation. It is so simple that people somehow do not take notice of it, and yet it provides the key to the correct attitude to the present war.

The present war is an imperialist one, and that is its basic feature.

In order to clarify this, it is necessary to examine the nature of previous wars, and that of the imperialist war.

Lenin dwelt in considerable detail on the characteristics of wars at the end of the 18th and during the whole of the 19th centuries. They were all national wars, which accompanied and promoted the creation of national states.

These wars marked the destruction of feudalism and were an expression of the struggle of the new, bourgeois society against feudal society. The national state was a necessary phase in the development of capitalism. The struggle for the self-determination of a nation, for its independence, for freedom to use its language, for popular representation, served this end—the creation of national states, that ground necessary at a certain stage of capitalism for the development of the productive forces.

Such was the character of wars from the time of the great French Revolution up to and including the Italian and Prussian wars.

This task of the national wars was performed either by democracy itself or with the help of Bismarck, quite independently of the will and the consciousness of those who took part in them. The triumph of present-day civilisation, the full flowering of capitalism, the drawing of the whole people and of all nations into capitalism—

that was the outcome of national wars, the wars at the beginning of capitalism.

An imperialist war is quite a different matter. On this point, there was no disagreement among the socialists of all countries and all trends. At all congresses, in discussing resolutions on the attitude to a possible war, everyone was always agreed that this war would be an imperialist one. All European countries have already reached an equal stage in the development of capitalism, all of them have already yielded everything that capitalism can yield. Capitalism has already attained its highest form, and is no longer exporting commodities, but capital. It is beginning to find its national framework too small for it, and now the struggle is on for the last free scraps of the earth. If national wars in the 18th and 19th centuries marked the beginning of capitalism, imperialist wars point to its end.

The whole end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were filled with imperialist policy.

Imperialism is what impresses a quite specific stamp on the present war, distinguishing it from all its predecessors.

Only by examining this war in its distinctive historical environment, as a Marxist must do, can we clarify our attitude to it. Otherwise we shall be operating with old conceptions and arguments, applied to a different, an old situation. Among such obsolete conceptions are the fatherland idea and the division, mentioned earlier, of wars into defensive and aggressive.

Of course, even now there are blotches of the old colour in the living picture of reality. Thus, of all the warring countries, the Serbs alone are still fighting for national existence. In India and China, too, class-conscious proletarians could not take any other path but the national one, because their countries have not yet been formed into national states. If China had to carry on an offensive war for

this purpose, we could only sympathise with her, because objectively it would be a progressive war. In exactly the same way, Marx in 1848 could call for an offensive war against Russia.

And so the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th are characterised by imperialist policy.

Imperialism is that state of capitalism when, having done all that it could, it turns towards decline. It is a special epoch, not in the minds of socialists, but in actual relationships. A struggle is on for a division of the remaining portions. It is the last historical task of capitalism. We cannot say how long this epoch will last. There may well be several such wars, but there must be a clear understanding that these are quite different wars from those waged earlier, and that, accordingly, the tasks facing socialists have changed.

To tackle these new tasks the proletarian party may need organisations of a very different type.

Kautsky, in his pamphlet *Weg zur Macht*, pointed out, in making a careful and detailed examination of economic phenomena and drawing very cautious conclusions from them, that we were entering a phase quite unlike the old peaceful and gradual development.

It is hard to say just now what the new form of organisation, corresponding to this phase, should be. But it is clear that in view of the new tasks, the proletariat will have to create new organisations or modify the old. All the more absurd is the fear of disarray in one's organisation, so vividly manifest among the German Social-Democrats; all the more absurd is this legalism at all costs. We know that the St. Petersburg Committee has issued an illegal leaflet against the war. The same has been done by the Caucasian and certain other organisations in Russia. There is no doubt that this could also be done abroad, without any rupture of ties.

Legality, of course, is a most valuable thing, and Engels had good reason to say: "Messrs, bourgeois, you will have to be the first to break your legality!" What is now going on might teach the German Social-Democrats a lesson, because a government which has always boasted of its legality is not put out by now having violated it all along the line. In this respect, the brutal order of the Berlin Commandant, which he forced *Vorwärts* to run on its front page, may prove useful. But *Vorwärts* itself, once it renounced the class struggle on pain of being closed down, and promised not to refer to it until the end of the war, has committed suicide. It is dead, as the Paris *Golos*, now the best socialist paper in Europe, has rightly said. The more frequently and the more violently I differed with Martov before, the more definitely I must say now that that writer is now doing precisely what a Social-Democrat should do. He is criticising his own government, he is unmasking his own bourgeoisie, he is accusing his own Ministers. Meanwhile, those socialists who have disarmed in relation to their own government, and devote themselves to exposing and shaming the Ministers and ruling classes of another country, play the part of bourgeois writers. Südekum himself is objectively playing the part of agent of the German Government, as others play it in relation to the French and Russian allies.

Socialists who fail to realise that the present war is imperialist, who fail to take a historical view of it, will understand nothing about the war. They are capable of taking a childishly naïve view of it, in this sense, that at night one seized the other by the throat, and the neighbours have to save the victim of attack, or in cowardly fashion to shut themselves away from the fight "behind locked doors" (in Plekhanov's words).

We shall not allow ourselves to be deceived, and let the bourgeois advisers explain the war as simply as that: people were living at peace, then one attacked, and the other is defending himself.

Comrade Lenin read an extract from an article by Luzzatti, carried by an Italian newspaper. In that article, the Italian politician rejoices that the great victor in the war turned out to be ... the fatherland, the idea of fatherland, and repeats that we should remember the words of Cicero who said that "civil war is the greatest evil".

This is what the bourgeoisie have managed to achieve, this is what excites and delights them most, this is what they have spent vast sums and efforts on. They are trying to convince us that it is the same old, conventional, national war.

No, indeed. The era of national wars is past. This is an imperialist war, and the task of socialists is to turn the "national" war into a civil war.

We all expected this imperialist war, and prepared for it. And if this is so, it is not at all important who attacked first; all were preparing for the war, and the attacker was the one who thought it most advantageous to do so at the particular moment.

Comrade Lenin then went on to define the conception of "fatherland" from the socialist point of view.

This conception was clearly and precisely defined by the Communist Manifesto, in the brilliant pages whose truth has been fully tested and justified by experience. Lenin read an extract from the Communist Manifesto, where the conception of fatherland is regarded as a historical category, which corresponds to the development of society at a definite stage and which later becomes unnecessary. The proletariat cannot love what it has not got. The proletariat has no country.

What are the tasks of the socialists in the present war?

Comrade Lenin read the Stuttgart resolution, later confirmed and supplemented at Copenhagen and Basle. This resolution clearly

states the socialists' methods of combating the trends leading to war and their duties in respect of a war that has broken out. These duties are defined by the examples of the Russian revolution and the Paris Commune. The Stuttgart resolution was carefully worded, in consideration of all kinds of criminal laws, but it indicated the task clearly. The Paris Commune is civil war. The form, the time and the place are a different matter, but the direction of our work is clearly defined.

From this angle, Comrade Lenin then examined the actual stand taken by socialists in the various countries. Apart from the Serbs, the Russians have done their duty, as the Italian Avanti! notes, and Keir Hardie is doing it by exposing the policy of Edward Grey.

Once the war is on, it is impossible to escape it. One must go and do one's duty as a socialist. In a war, people think and ponder probably even more than "at home". One must go out and organise the proletariat there for the final aim, because it is Utopian to imagine that the proletariat will tread a peaceful path to it. It is impossible to go over from capitalism to socialism without breaking up the national framework, just as it was impossible to pass from feudalism to capitalism without national ideas.

Lenin

The Second International Socialist Conference at Kienthal

APRIL 11–17 (24–30), 1916

Collected Works, Volume 41, pages 369-380.1.

1

INITIAL VARIANT OF THE R.S.D.L.P. CENTRAL COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

Proposal from the R.S.D.L.P. C.C. to the Second Socialist
Conference Called by the I.S.C. (Berne)

(Theses on Points 5, 6, 7a and 7b and 8 of the Agenda)

In announcing the convocation of the Second International
Socialist Conference, the I.S.C. published the following key points
of the agenda:

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5. "struggle to end the war"

6. "problems of peace"

7a. parliamentary "action"

7b. mass [ditto]

8. International Socialist Bureau.

[7a. 7b.:]

}} "agitation and propaganda" }}

The I.S.C. has invited the organisations to discuss these questions
and to send in their proposals. Here is the reply of our Party C.C.
to the invitation:

1. Just as all war is but a continuation by violent means of the politics which the belligerent states and their ruling classes had been conducting for many years, sometimes for decades, before the outbreak of the war, so the peace that ends any war can be nothing but a consideration and a record of the actual changes brought about in the relations of forces as a result of the given war.

2. It is therefore the greatest absurdity and stupidity, from the standpoint of theory, and from the standpoint of socialist doctrine, and the greatest fraud on the working class in practice, to engage in talk about assessing the present war on the strength of "simple" concepts of defence and attack and about assessing the future peace on the strength of "simple" pious wishes for a stable, democratic, honourable, etc., peace.

3. This war is an imperialist war, i.e., a war resulting from contradictions on the basis of a highly developed monopoly capitalism which is ripe for transition to socialism. This war is being fought for world hegemony, i.e., for fresh oppression of the weak nations, for another division of the world, for a division of the colonies, spheres of influence, etc. — a division under which the old plundering powers, Britain, France and Russia, would give up a share of their booty to Germany, a young and stronger plundering power.

4. That is why, unless the proletarian revolution overthrows the present governments and the present ruling classes of the belligerent "great" powers, there is a b s o l u t e l y no chance of a n y peace o t h e r than a more or less short-term armistice between the imperialist powers, a peace accompanied by a growth of reaction within the states, a growth of national oppression and enslavement of the weak nations, a growth of inflammable material preparatory for new wars, etc. For the fact is that from the objective content of the politics which has been bred by the entire epoch of imperialism and which the bourgeoisie of all the

belligerent “great” powers had conducted before this war and is conducting during it, inevitably flows a peace resting on a new and even worse oppression of nations, etc.

5. To arouse in the masses of people ideas or hopes of the possibility of a stable or democratic, etc., peace between the present governments and the present ruling classes (i.e., the bourgeoisie allied with the landowners), as most of the official socialist parties are doing, is not only shamelessly to cheat the people but to lull them and distract them from the revolutionary struggle, which is already starting in the form of the strike and demonstration movement.

6. It is precisely this kind of cheating the people and distracting the proletariat from the revolutionary struggle that characterises the “peace programme” which is now being “unanimously” put forward both by the official spokesman of the Second International Huysmans at the Congress of the Sozialdemokratische Arbeiter Partei of Holland at Arnhem, and by Kautsky, the most influential theorist of the Second International and the most influential advocate of the social-patriots and social-chauvinists in all countries. Their programme consists in hypocritical lip service to some democratic pious wishes: repudiation of annexations and indemnities, self-determination of nations, democratisation of foreign policy, arbitration courts to settle conflicts between states, disarmament, a United States of Europe, etc.

7. The best evidence that this “peace programme” is downright hypocrisy is, on the one hand, the lip service paid to it by a number of bourgeois pacifists and demagogic ministers of the belligerent countries, and, on the other, its duplication by notorious (notorisch) chauvinists at the conferences of “socialists” of one group of belligerent powers in London (February 1915) and of the other in Vienna (April 1915). It is the “socialists” who have entered the bourgeois ministries carrying on the plunderous war, who

have voted for the war credits, who have helped the war by participating in various organisations and institutions, etc., it is they who are actually conducting the policy of safeguarding the old and new annexations, colonial oppression, etc., that have proclaimed to the world their "peace programme", consisting in a repudiation of annexations, etc.

8. Kautsky, the leading authority of the Second International, declared to the whole world on May 21, 1915 (Neue Zeit) that this accord and "unanimity" of "socialists" in London^{2} and in Vienna over the principle of "independence" or self-determination of nations is proof of the "unanimity" and "viability" of the Second International in the "peace programme". This defence and sanction of the most crying and most brazen hypocrisy and deception of the workers is not in any sense a coincidence, but a systematic policy which is being conducted in a number of countries by men who pretend to be internationalists but are actually making the imperialist war more attractive by applying to it the idea of "defence of one's country" and consolidating the domination of the working-class movement by the social-chauvinists, who have betrayed socialism, by preaching "unity" with them. This policy, which is the most harmful and dangerous one for the working class, is being conducted by Kautsky, Haase and others in Germany, Longuet, Pressemane and others in France, most of the leaders in Britain, Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze & Co. in Russia, Trèves and others in Italy (see the threat of the Central Organ of the Italian Party, *Avanti!*, on March 5, 1916, to expose Trèves and other reformist-possibilists as to "who resorted to every means to prevent the Party Executive and Oddino Morgan from taking action to secure unity at Zimmerwald and to create a new International"). This world-wide policy, which is of the utmost danger to the working class, could be called a Kautskian policy, after its most authoritative spokesman.

9. Socialists cannot refuse to fight for reform. They must vote everywhere, including the parliaments, by the way, for all, even the slightest, improvements in the condition of the masses, such as increased relief for the inhabitants of the devastated areas, lessening of national oppression, etc. But on the basis of the present war and the peace flowing from it, this kind of reformist activity to improve the condition of the masses is apparently possible only on a miniature scale. It would be a crying deception of the masses to suggest to them, whether directly or indirectly, the idea that the questions raised by the present war could have a reformist solution. For this war has created a revolutionary situation in Europe, bringing to the fore the most fundamental problems of imperialism, which will inevitably have an imperialist solution, except where the present governments and ruling classes of Europe are overthrown through revolution. That is why the principal and fundamental task of socialists in the struggle for stable and democratic peace must be: first, to explain to the masses the need for revolutionary mass struggle, to spread the idea of it systematically, and to set up the necessary organisations; second, to expose the hypocrisy and falsehood both of the bourgeois pacifist and of the socialist, notably Kautskian, talk about peace and the “unanimity” of the Second International on the “peace programme”. Such talk is doubly hypocritical on the part of “socialists” who follow the bourgeoisie in denying the possibility of transforming the present imperialist war into a civil war for socialism, and who oppose any revolutionary work in that direction.

10. The central point of the currently prevalent hypocrisy concerning the “peace programme” is the allegedly unanimous recognition of the struggle against old and new annexations. But those who talk of annexations and the struggle against them either cannot or will not for the most part give thought to what annexation is. Clearly, annexation will not be the right word for

every appropriation of "foreign" territory, for, generally speaking, socialists favour the abolition of frontiers between nations, their getting closer together and integration, and the formation of larger states. Clearly, not every disturbance of the status quo can be described as annexation, for this would be extremely reactionary and a mockery of the fundamental concepts of the science of history. Clearly, annexation does not apply to every kind of integration by force of arms, for socialists cannot repudiate violence in the interests of the majority of the population and in the interests of human progress. Annexation can and must clearly apply only to the appropriation of a territory against the will of the population of that territory. In other words, the concept of annexation is inseparably bound up with the concept of self-determination of nations.

11. The present war—precisely because it is an imperialist war insofar as both groups of belligerent "great" powers are concerned—inevitably had to and did give rise to the phenomenon of the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists "fighting" violently against "annexations" w h e n e v e r this is done by an enemy state. S\udekum and his Austro-German friends and defenders, including Haase and Kautsky, are silent about Germany's annexations in respect of Alsace-Lorraine, Denmark, Poland, etc., but very frequently "struggle against the annexations" carried out by Russia in respect of Finland, Poland, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, etc., by Britain in respect of India, etc. On the other hand, the British, French, Italian and Russian S\udekums, viz., Hyndman, Guesde, Vandervelde, Renaudel, Trèves, Plekhanov, Axelrod, Chkheidze & Co., are silent about Britain's annexations in respect of India, France's in respect of Nice or Morocco, Italy's in respect of Tripoli or Albania, Russia's in respect of Poland, the Ukraine etc., but then for the most part "struggle against the annexations" carried out by Germany.

This kind of “struggle against annexations” on the part of the social-chauvinists and the Kautskians is clearly downright hypocritical, and the bourgeoisie is promoting their struggle both directly, by allocating millions upon millions for chauvinist propaganda, and indirectly, by giving the social-chauvinists and the Kautskians a monopoly on legality.

The French “socialists”, who justify war over Alsace Lorraine, and the German “socialists”, who fail to demand freedom for Alsace-Lorraine to secede from Germany, are clearly both annexationists, no matter how much they swear to the contrary. The Russian “socialists”, who talk or write against the “disintegration of Russia” or now, directly or indirectly, justify the war over who is to enslave Poland, in the name of the “peace without annexations” slogan, are clearly annexationists as well, etc., etc.

12. If the “struggle against annexations” is not to become an empty phrase or a revolting hypocrisy, socialists must: first, explain to the masses that it is necessary to wage revolutionary struggle for the proletariat’s winning of political power and for a socialist revolution which stems from all the conditions of the imperialist epoch and the present imperialist war and which alone can fully secure the self-determination of nations everywhere, i.e., liberate the oppressed nations, bring the nations closer together and effect their fusion not on the basis of violence, but on the basis of equality and accord between the proletariat and the working people of all nations; s e c o n d, they must immediately start the most extensive propaganda and agitation against the veiled chauvinism and annexationism of the official socialist parties, especially of those of the “great” powers. Socialists must explain to the masses that a socialist and an internationalist only in name but a chauvinist and an annexationist in fact is the English socialist who fails at once to struggle for freedom to secede for Ireland, India, etc.—the French socialist who fails to struggle for the freedom of the French

colonies, against the war to annex Alsace and Lorraine, etc.—the German socialist who fails to struggle for freedom to secede for Alsace Lorraine, the Danes, the Poles, the Belgians, the Serbs, etc.—the Russian socialist who fails to struggle for freedom to secede for the Ukraine, Finland, etc., against the war over Poland—the Italian socialist who fails to struggle for freedom to secede for Tripoli, Albania, etc.—the Dutch socialist who fails to struggle for freedom to secede and independence for the Dutch East Indies—the Polish socialist who fails to struggle for the full freedom and equality of the Jews and the Ukrainians oppressed by the Poles, etc.

13. From the Zimmerwald Manifesto and the I.S.C. circular of February 10, 1916 (Bulletin No. 3) inevitably flows the proposition that all “war against war” and “struggle for peace” is hypocrisy unless it is indissolubly bound up with immediate revolutionary mass struggle, and with its propaganda and preparation. But this conclusion must be stated straightforwardly and explicitly. We must, first, explain to the masses where the development of revolutionary mass struggle in the conditions of a European war can and must (must) lead. It leads inevitably to the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war for socialism. A hint of this is given in all the speeches saying that the workers should die for their own cause rather than an alien one. But hints are not enough. The great, even if perhaps not very near, goal must be clearly set before the masses. They must know where to go and why. Second, if we call on the masses to fight against their governments, “regardless of the military position of the given country”, we thereby not only repudiate the admissibility of “defending the country”, as a principle, in the present war, but admit the desirability of defeat for every bourgeois government in order to transform its defeat into revolution. That, too, must be squarely put: revolutionary mass struggle cannot become an international one unless its conscious representatives unite openly for the purpose of defeating and overthrowing all bourgeois governments. Third—

and this is the most important thing—it is impossible to conduct any revolutionary mass struggle without setting up everywhere, not only at the top, but also among the masses, an illegal organisation for its propaganda and preparation, and discussion of its course and conditions. Since there have been street demonstrations in Germany, since there have been a number of letters from the front-lines in France urging against subscription to the war loan, since there have been mass strikes in Britain, to say nothing of Russia, then, to promote this struggle, to help consolidate it on an international scale, it is absolutely necessary to shed light on every step along that road in a free, i.e., illegal, press, to verify the successes, to weigh their conditions; to strengthen and develop the struggle. Without an illegal organisation and an illegal press, recognition of “mass action” will remain (as it has remained in Switzerland) an empty phrase.

14. On the question of the socialists’ parliamentary action, it must be borne in mind that the Zimmerwald resolution not only expresses sympathy for the five Social-Democratic deputies of the Duma, who belong to our Party, and who have been sentenced to exile in Siberia, but also expresses its solidarity with their tactics. It is impossible to recognise the revolutionary struggle of the masses while being content with exclusively legal, exclusively reformist activity of socialists in parliament; this can only arouse legitimate dissatisfaction among the workers and cause them to desert Social-Democracy for anti-parliamentary anarchism or syndicalism. It must be stated clearly and publicly that Social-Democratic members of parliament must use their position not only to make speeches in parliament, but also to render all possible aid outside parliament to the underground organisation and the revolutionary struggle of the workers. and that the masses themselves, through their illegal organisation, must supervise the activity of their leaders.

15. The question of calling the International Socialist Bureau, placed on the agenda of the Second International Socialist Conference, which is being convened, inevitably raises a more fundamental question of principle, as to whether the old parties and the Second International can be united. The more extensive the mass sympathy for the Zimmerwald association, the more incomprehensible to the masses, the more harmful for the development of their struggle become the inconsistency and timidity of the stand which essentially identifies the old parties and the Second International with the bourgeois policy in the working-class movement (see the Zimmerwald Manifesto and the I.S.C. circular of February 10, 1916), while fearing a split with them and promising to dissolve the I.S.C. as soon as the old International Socialist Bureau meets.

Such a promise was never voted on and was not discussed even at Zimmerwald.

The six months since Zimmerwald have made it even clearer that a split is inevitable, that the work which the Zimmerwald Manifesto recommends cannot be conducted in unity with the old parties, and that fear of a split is a brake on every step along that way. In Germany it is not only the I.S.D. group that has condemned the fear of a split and has openly come out against the hypocrisy of the apostles of unity, but also Otto Rühle, a member of the Reichstagsfraktion and Karl Liebknecht's closest friend, who has openly come out for a split. Nor was Vorwärts capable of putting forward against Rühle a single serious or honest argument. In France, member of the Socialist Party Bourderon spoke against a split, but in fact motioned a resolution at the Congress, which "désapprouve (disavows) the C.A.P (Comité Administratif Permanent=the party C.C.) and the G.P." (Groupe Parlementaire=the parliamentary group). Adoption of such a resolution would clearly signify an immediate and unconditional

split in the party. In Britain even T. Russel Williams, writing in the moderate Labour Leader, repeatedly and openly admitted the inevitability of a split, and received support from a number of party members. In America, where the Socialist Party is formally united, some of its members have come out for militarism and war (so-called preparedness), and others, including Eugene Debs, a former presidential candidate from the Socialist Party, openly preach civil war for socialism in connection with the coming war.

Actually, there is already a split throughout the world, and ignoring this fact would merely harm the Zimmerwaldists, making them ridiculous in the eyes of the masses, who are very well aware that every step of their work in the Zimmerwald spirit means a continuation and deepening of the split.

We must have the courage openly to recognise the inevitable and the actual, to abandon any harmful illusions about the possibility of unity with the "defenders of their Country" in the present war, and to help the masses escape the influence of the leaders who "are misleading them" (see the I.S.C. circular of February 10, 1916) or are hatching a "plot" (Pakt) against socialism through an "amnesty".

That is our proposal on the item of the agenda concerning the convocation of the International Socialist Bureau at The Hague.

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Reformist phrases are the main means of deceiving the people at a time when the objective situation has placed on the agenda of history the greatest world crisis, which, regardless of the will of the various parties, can either be deferred and postponed until the next imperialist war or resolved through socialist revolution. It is neither chance nor the ill will of the several governments or the capitalists of some country but the entire development of bourgeois relations that has led to imperialism and the present

imperialist war. Similarly, it is neither chance nor the result of any demagoguery or agitation but the objective conditions of the crisis brought about by the war and the sharpening of class contradictions that now generate strikes, demonstrations and other similar manifestations of mass revolutionary struggle in a number of belligerent countries.

Objectively, the question can only be put like this: are we to help this, still weak but intrinsically powerful and deep-going discontent and movement of the masses which may develop into a socialist revolution, or are we to conduct a policy of helping the bourgeois governments (Durchhaltspolitik, politique jusquauboutiste{5})? The real meaning of the sweet talk about democratic peace consists exclusively in help to the governments through the hypocritical stunning and fooling of the masses.

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This war has brought to the fore the basic problems of imperialism, i.e., of the very existence of capitalist society, and it would be quackery to suggest to the people, directly or indirectly, that these problems can have a reformist solution. It is a question of a redivision of the world corresponding to the new balance of power between the capitalist states, which in the last few decades have been developing not only very fast, but also—and this is especially important—very unevenly. On the basis of capitalist social relations, this new redivision of the world is impossible other wise than through wars and violence. The objective state of things rules out any reformist solution for the ripe contradictions, it rules out any other way out except a series of imperialist wars or a socialist revolution of the proletariat, the conditions for whose success have already been created precisely by this epoch of imperialism. Real political activity in the given circumstances is possible only as this alternative: either to help your “own” national bourgeoisie plunder other countries or to help the beginning....

Lenin

INITIAL VARIANT OF R.S.D.L.P. C.C. PROPOSALS TO THE SECOND SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

PROPOSALS BY THE C.C. OF THE R.S.D.L.P. TO THE SECOND SOCIALIST CONFERENCE CALLED BY THE I.S.C. (BERNE)

March 1916

Collected Works, Volume 36, pages 377-387.

THESES ON ITEMS 5, 6, 7a, 7b AND 8 OF THE AGENDA

In announcing the convocation of the Second International Socialist Conference, the I.S.C. published the following major items of the agenda:

5. "The struggle to end the war"

6. "Problems of peace"

7a. Parliamentary "action" } } "agitation and propaganda " } } }

7b. Mass "

8. International Socialist Bureau.

The I.S.C. has invited organisations to discuss these questions and send in their propositions. Here is the response of our Party's C.C. to the invitation:

1. In the same way as any war is only the continuation by means of force of the policy which the belligerent powers and the ruling classes in them carried on for long years or decades before the war, so peace ending any war can be nothing but an account and a record of the actual changes in strength achieved as a result of that war.

2. Hence, any talk of assessing a given war on the strength of the “simple” concepts of defence and attack, and of assessing the coming peace on the strength of “simple” high-minded wishes for a stable, democratic, honourable, etc., peace, is most absurd and thick-witted, from the standpoint of theory, from the standpoint of socialist doctrine, and is the greatest deception of the working class in practice.

3. The present war is an imperialist war, i.e., a war born of contradictions on the basis of highly developed, monopoly capitalism, which is ripe for transition to socialism. This war is being waged for world hegemony, i.e., for fresh oppression of the weak nations, for another division of the world, the division of colonies, spheres of influence, etc.—a division in which the old robber powers, Britain, France and Russia, would give up a share of their booty to Germany, a younger and stronger robber power.

4. Consequently, unless a revolution of the proletariat overthrows the present governments and present ruling classes of the belligerent “Great” Powers, there is absolutely no possibility of any other kind of peace, except a more or less brief armistice between the imperialist powers, a peace accompanied by a strengthening of reactionary forces within the states, an intensification of the national oppression and greater enslavement of the weak nations, a growth in the inflammable material preparing the way for new wars, etc., etc. For from the objective content of the policy engendered by the whole epoch of imperialism, the policy carried on by the bourgeoisie of all the warring “Great” Powers both before this war and during it, inevitably flows a peace based on a fresh and worse oppression of nations, etc.

5. To spread among the masses of the people ideas or hopes of the possibility of a stable or democratic, etc., peace between the present governments and the present ruling classes (i.e., the bourgeoisie in alliance with the landowners), as most of the official socialist

parties are doing, is not only shamelessly to deceive the people, but also to blunt their vigilance and to distract them from the revolutionary struggle, which is already in effect beginning as a movement of strikes and demonstrations.

6. That is just the kind of deception of the people and distraction of the proletariat from the revolutionary struggle that is inherent in the "peace programme" now being "unanimously" put forward both by Huysmans, the Second International's official representative at the congress of the Sozialdemokratische Arbeiter Partei of Holland in Arnhem, and by Kautsky, the most influential theoretician of the Second International and the most influential defender of the social-patriots and social-chauvinists of all countries. Their programme is nothing but verbal and hypocritical recognition of a few democratic pious hopes: rejection of annexations and indemnities, self-determination of nations, democratisation of foreign policy, courts of arbitration to examine disputes between states, disarmament, United States of Europe, etc., etc.

7. The most obvious confirmation of the fact that this "peace programme" is sheer hypocrisy is, on the one hand, its verbal acceptance by a number of bourgeois pacifists and ministerial demagogues of the warring countries, and on the other, its repetition by notorious (notorisch) chauvinists at the conferences of the "socialists", first of one group of warring powers in London (February 1915) and then of the other in Vienna (April 1915). It is the "socialists" who join bourgeois governments engaged in the predatory war, who voted the war credits and assisted the war by taking part in various organisations and institutions, etc., who in practice pursue a policy of defending old and new annexations, colonial oppression, etc., that now proclaim before the whole world their "peace programme", consisting of rejection of annexations and so forth.

8. The highest authority in the Second International, Kautsky, proclaimed to the whole world on May 21, 1915 (*Neue Zeit*) that the agreement and "unanimity" of "socialists" in London and in Vienna, on the principle of the "independence" or self-determination of nations, proves the Second International's "unanimity" on, and "viability" in, its "peace programme". This defence and sanction of the most crying and most brazen hypocrisy and deception of the workers is by no means an accident, but a systematic policy pursued in a number of countries by men who pretend to be "internationalists", but actually whitewash the imperialist war by applying to it the idea of "defence of the fatherland", and strengthen the domination of the labour movement by social-chauvinists, who have betrayed socialism, by preaching "unity" with them. This policy, which is most harmful and dangerous for the working class, is being carried on by Kautsky, Haase and others in Germany, Longuet, Pressemane and others in France, most of the leaders in Britain, Axelrod, Martov and Chkheidze and Co. in Russia, Trèves and others in Italy (see the threat of *Avanti!*, the Central Organ of the Italian Party, issued on March 5, 1916, to expose Trèves and other "reformist-possibilists" as having "set in motion every possible means to obstruct the action of the party leadership and Oddino Morgari towards the Zimmerwald organisation and the new International itself"). This world-wide policy, which is most dangerous for the working class, may be called a Kautskian policy, after its most authoritative representative.

9. Socialists cannot renounce the struggle for reforms. They must vote, incidentally in parliaments as well, for any, even minor, improvements in the condition of the masses, such as higher aids to the inhabitants of devastated areas, relaxation of national oppression, etc. But on the basis of the present war and the peace which follows from it, such reformist activity for the improvement of the people's condition is obviously possible only in miniature

proportions. It would be a crying deception of the masses to suggest to them, directly or indirectly, that a reformist solution of the problems raised by the present war is possible. For this war has brought about a revolutionary situation in Europe by making an issue of the most fundamental problems of imperialism, which must needs be solved the imperialist way unless the present governments and ruling classes of Europe happen to be overthrown the revolutionary way. Therefore, the main \and basic task in the struggle for a stable and democratic peace on the part of socialists should be: first, explanation to the masses of the need of revolutionary mass struggle, systematic propaganda of such struggle and the creation of an appropriate organisation; second, exposure of the lies and hypocrisy both of bourgeois-pacifist and socialist, particularly Kautskian, talk about peace and the “unanimity” of the Second International on the “peace programme”. Such phrases are doubly hypocritical when coming from “socialists” who echo the bourgeoisie in denying any possibility of transforming the present imperialist war into a civil war for socialism, and who oppose any revolutionary activity in this direction.

10. The central point of the prevailing hypocrisy about a “peace programme” is the allegedly unanimous acceptance of struggle against old and new annexations. But those who talk about annexations and the struggle against them are unable, or for the most part unwilling, to think about the meaning of annexation. It is clear that not every attachment of “foreign” territory can be called annexation, since socialists, generally speaking, are in favour of eliminating frontiers between nations, the coming together and integration of nations, and the formation of larger states. It is clear that not every infringement of the status quo can be considered annexation: this would be a most reactionary attitude, and a mockery of the fundamental conceptions of historical science. It is clear that not every attachment by force, that

is, war, can be considered annexation, since socialists cannot object to force if it is applied in the interests of the mass of the population and the interests of mankind's progress. It is clear that only the attachment of territory against the will of its population can and must be deemed annexation. In other words, the concept of annexation is organically bound up with the concept of self-determination of nations.

11. It is precisely on the basis of the present war, because of the fact that it is imperialist on the part of both groups of warring "Great" Powers, that there was bound to develop, and actually did develop, the phenomenon of the bourgeoisie and social-chauvinists intensively "fighting" against "annexations", if they have been carried out, or are being carried out, by an enemy state. Südekum and his Austro-German friends and defenders, including Haase and Kautsky, are silent about the annexations carried out by Germany in respect of Alsace-Lorraine, Denmark, Poland, etc., but very often "fight against annexations" carried out by Russia in respect of Finland, Poland, Ukraine, the Caucasus, etc., by Britain in respect of India, and so forth. On the other side, the British, French, Italian and Russian Südekums, i.e., Hyndman, Guesde, Vandervelde, Renaudel, Trèves, Plekhanov, Axelrod, Chkheidze and Co., are silent about Britain's annexations in respect of India, France's in respect of Nice or Morocco, Italy's in respect of Tripoli or Albania, Russia's in respect of Poland, Ukraine, etc., but then largely "fight against annexations" carried out by Germany.

It is clear that such "struggle against annexations" on the part of the social-chauvinists and Kautskyites is hypocritical through and through, and the bourgeoisie is assisting such struggle directly, by allocating millions upon millions for chauvinist propaganda, and indirectly, by granting a monopoly of legality only to the social-chauvinists and the Kautskyites.

It is clear that both the French "socialists" who justify a war for Alsace-Lorraine, and the German "socialists" who refuse to demand freedom for Alsace-Lorraine to secede from Germany, are equally annexationists, for all their swearing to the contrary. It is clear that Russian "socialists" who speak or write against the "break-up of Russia", or, behind the "peace without annexations" slogan, justify, directly or indirectly, the present war over who is to enslave Poland, are just as much annexationists, and so on and so forth.

12. If socialists are not to transform "the struggle against annexations" into an empty phrase or into revolting hypocrisy, they should, first, explain to the masses the need for revolutionary struggle for the conquest of political power by the proletariat and a socialist revolution which springs from all the conditions of the imperialist epoch and the present imperialist war, and which alone can firmly and everywhere ensure the self-determination of nations, i.e., liberate oppressed nations and effect the coming together and integration of nations, not on the basis of force but on the basis of the equal rights and consent of the proletariat and working people of all nations; secondly, immediately mount the widest propaganda and agitation against the veiled chauvinism and annexationism of the official socialist parties, especially in the "Great" Powers. Socialists should explain to the masses that the English socialist who does not struggle now for freedom of secession for Ireland, India, etc., is a socialist and internationalist only in words, and a chauvinist and annexationist in practice. The same applies to the French socialist who does not fight for the freedom of the French colonies, against the war to annex Alsace-Lorraine, etc.; the German socialist who does not fight for freedom of secession for Alsace-Lorraine, the Danes, the Poles, the Belgians, the Serbs and others; the Russian socialist who does not fight for freedom of secession for the Ukraine, Finland, etc., and against war over Poland; the Italian socialist who does not fight for freedom of

secession for Tripoli, Albania, etc.; the Dutch socialist who does not fight for freedom of secession and independence for the Dutch East Indies; the Polish socialist who does not fight for full freedom and equality for the Jews and the Ukrainians oppressed by the Poles, and so on.

13. It inevitably follows from the Zimmerwald manifesto and the I.S.C. circular of Feb. 10, 1916 (Bulletin No. 3) that all "war on war" and "struggle for peace" are hypocrisy unless they are indissolubly bound up with immediate revolutionary mass struggle, and with its propaganda and preparation. But this conclusion must be set forth straightforwardly and definitely. There is need, first, to explain to the masses what the development of the revolutionary mass struggle in the conditions of a European war can and must (muss) lead to. It leads inevitably to the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war for socialism. This is hinted at by all the speeches about it being better for the workers to die for their own cause, rather than for someone else's. But a hint is insufficient. The masses should have clearly put before them the great, even though maybe not very immediate, aim. They should know what direction to take and why. Second, if we call on the masses to fight their governments "regardless of the military position of a given country", we thereby not only reject in principle the admissibility of "defence of the fatherland" in the present war, but recognise the desirability of defeat of any bourgeois government, in order to transform the defeat into a revolution. And this must be said straightforwardly: revolutionary mass struggle cannot become international unless its class-conscious representatives openly unite for the purpose of defeating and overthrowing all bourgeois governments. Third—and this is most important—it is impossible to carry on a revolutionary mass struggle without creating everywhere, not only at the top but also in the midst of the masses, an illegal organisation for its propaganda, preparation and discussion of its course and conditions. If there have been street

demonstrations in Germany, if there have been many letters from the front calling on the people not to subscribe to the war loan in France, if there have been mass strikes in Britain, to say nothing of Russia, then in order to aid this struggle, to unify it on an international scale, it is unquestionably necessary to report every step along this road in a free, i.e., illegal, press, analysing the successes, assessing their conditions, and building up and developing the struggle. Without an illegal organisation and an illegal press the acceptance of "mass action" will remain an empty phrase (as is the case in Switzerland).

14. On the question of the socialists' parliamentary struggle (Aktion), it should be borne in mind that the Zimmerwald resolution not only expresses its sympathy with the five Social-Democratic deputies of the Duma, who belong to our Party, and who have been sentenced to exile in Siberia, but also proclaims its solidarity with their tactics. It is impossible to recognise the revolutionary struggle of the masses and put up with the purely legal, purely reformist activity of socialists in parliaments; this leads only to legitimate dissatisfaction among the workers, and their leaving the S.D. ranks for anti-parliamentary anarchism or syndicalism. It is essential to say clearly and publicly that Social-Democrats in parliaments must use their position not only to make parliamentary speeches, but also to give all-round extra-parliamentary assistance to the illegal organisation and revolutionary struggle of the workers, and that the masses themselves must, through their illegal organisation, check up on such activity by their leaders.

15. The question of convening the International Socialist Bureau, included in the agenda of the coming Second International Socialist Conference, unavoidably raises the more fundamental question of principle, namely, whether the unity of the old parties and of the Second International is possible. The wider the sympathy among

the masses for the Zimmerwald organisation, the less understandable for the masses and the more harmful for the development of their struggle is the inconsistency and timidity of the attitude which in essence identifies the old parties and the Second International with bourgeois policy in the working-class movement (see the Zimmerwald manifesto and I.S.C. circular of Feb. 10, 1916), while fearing a split with them, and promising to dissolve the I.S.C. directly the old International Socialist Bureau reassembles.

This promise was not voted upon, and was not even discussed at Zimmerwald.

During the six months since Zimmerwald, it has become even clearer that a split is inevitable, that the work recommended by the Zimmerwald manifesto cannot be carried on in unity with the old parties, and that the fear of a split hampers every step on that way. In Germany it is not only the Internationale Sozialisten Deutschlands group that has condemned the fear of a split, and has openly come out against the hypocrisy of those who preach unity; Otto Rühle, a member of the Reichstagsfraktion and a close associate of Karl Liebknecht, has openly declared for a split. And Vorwärts has failed to find a single serious or honest argument against Rühle. In France, Bourderon, a member of the Socialist Party, is against a split in words, but has actually tabled in the Congress a resolution which directly "désapprouve [disapproves] of the C.A.P. [Comité Administratif Permanent=Party Executive] and the G.P." (Groupe Parlementaire=parliamentary group). The adoption of such a resolution would clearly mean an immediate and unquestionable split in the party. In Britain, T. Russel Williams, even writing in the moderate Labour Leader, has openly and repeatedly declared the inevitability of a split, and has met with support from some members of his party. In America, with formal unity in the Socialist Party, some of its members declare for

militarism and war (so-called preparedness), and others, among them Eugene Debs, the one-time Socialist candidate for the Presidency, openly preach civil war for socialism in connection with the looming war.

There is already an actual split throughout the world, and closing their eyes to this only tends to harm the Zimmerwaldists, making them ridiculous in the eyes of the masses, who know perfectly well that each step in their work in the spirit of Zimmerwald means a continuation and widening of the split.

It takes courage openly to recognise what is inevitable and what has taken place, to abandon the harmful illusions about unity being possible with the "defenders of the fatherland" in the present war, to help the masses to be rid of the influence of those leaders who are "misleading them" (see the I.S.C. circular of Feb. 10, 1916) or paving the way for a plot (Pakt) against socialism via an "amnesty".

That is our proposal on the item of the agenda for the calling of the International Socialist Bureau at The Hague.

*

Reformist talk is the main means for deceiving the people at a time when the objective situation has placed on the agenda of history the greatest world crisis, which, regardless of the will of the several parties, can be either evaded or put off until the next imperialist war, or resolved through a socialist revolution. It is neither an accident nor the ill will of the several governments or capitalists of some country but the whole evolution of bourgeois relations that has led to imperialism and the present imperialist war. Nor is it an accident or the result of some demagogy or agitation but the objective conditions of the wartime crisis and the aggravation of class contradictions that are now giving rise to the strikes,

demonstrations and similar other manifestations of mass revolutionary struggle in a number of belligerent countries.

Objectively the question appears in this way—and in no other: either to help this still weak but internally powerful and deep ferment and movement of the masses, which is potentially capable of developing into a socialist revolution; or to conduct a policy of assisting the bourgeois governments (Durchhaltspolitik, politique jusquauboutiste). The real meaning of the sugary talk about a democratic peace is nothing but assistance to the governments through the hypocritical dulling and duping of the masses.

*

This war has raised the fundamental questions of imperialism, that is, the questions of the very existence of capitalist society, and it would be quackery to suggest to the people—directly or indirectly—that any reformist solution of these problems is possible. What is involved here is a fresh division of the world in accordance with the new balance of forces between the capitalist states, which over the last few decades have been developing not only at exceptional speed but—and this is especially important—extremely unevenly. On the basis of capitalist social relations this redivision of the world is inconceivable except through force and war. The objective state of things rules out any reformist solution for the mature contradictions; it rules out any other way out except a series of imperialist wars or a socialist revolution of the proletariat, for whose success the imperialist epoch itself has already created the conditions. Real political activity in these conditions is possible only as one of two things: assistance to “one’s own” national bourgeoisie in plundering other countries, or assistance to the incipient....

Lenin

From; The Discussion On Self-Determination Summed Up

July 1916

Collected Works, Volume 22, pages 320-360.

3. What Is Annexation?

We raised this question in a most definite manner in our theses (Section 7). The Polish comrades did not reply to it: they evaded it, insisting (1) that they are against annexations and explaining (2) why they are against them. It is true that these are very important questions. But they are questions of another kind. If we want our principles to be theoretically sound at all, if we want them to be clearly and precisely formulated, we cannot evade the question of what an annexation is, since this concept is used in our political propaganda and agitation. The evasion of the question in a discussion between colleagues cannot be interpreted as anything but desertion of one's position.

Why have we raised this question? We explained this when we raised it. It is because "a protest against annexations is nothing but recognition of the right to Self-determination". The concept of annexation usually includes: (1) the concept of force (joining by means of force); (2) the concept of oppression by another nation (the joining of "alien" regions, etc.), and, sometimes (3) the concept of violation of the status quo. We pointed this out in the theses and this did not meet with any criticism.

Can Social-Democrats be against the use of force in general, it may be asked? Obviously not. This means that we are against annexations not because they constitute force, but for some other reason. Nor can the Social-Democrats be for the status quo. However you may twist and turn, annexation is violation of the

self-determination of a nation, it is the establishment of state frontiers contrary to the will of the population.

To be against annexations means to be in favor of the right to self-determination. To be “against the forcible retention of any nation within the frontiers of a given state” (we deliberately employed this slightly changed formulation of the same idea in Section 4 of our theses, and the Polish comrades answered us with complete clarity at the beginning of their S. I, 4, that they “are against the forcible retention of oppressed nations within the frontiers of the annexing state”)—is the same as being in favour of the self-determination of nations.

We do not want to haggle over words. If there is a party that says in its programme (or in a resolution binding on all the form does not matter) that it is against annexations, against the forcible retention of oppressed nations within the frontiers of its state, we declare our complete agreement in principle with that party. It would be absurd to insist on the word “self-determination”. And if there are people in our Party who want to change words in this spirit, who want to amend Clause 9 of our Party Programme, we should consider our differences with such comrades to be anything but a matter of principle!

The only thing that matter is political clarity and theoretical soundness of our slogans.

In verbal discussions on this question—the importance of which nobody will deny, especially now, in view of the war—we have met the following argument (we have not come across it in the press): a protest against a known evil does not necessarily mean recognition of a positive concept that precludes the evil. This is obviously an unfounded argument and, apparently, as such has not been reproduced in the press. If a socialist party declares that it is “against the forcible retention of an oppressed nation within

the frontiers of the annexing state", it is thereby committed to renounce retention by force when it comes to power.

We do not for one moment doubt that if Hindenburg were to accomplish the semi-conquest of Russia tomorrow and this semi-conquest were to be expressed by the appearance of a now Polish state (in connection with the desire of Britain and France to weaken tsarism somewhat), something that is quite "practicable" from the standpoint of the economic laws of capitalism and imperialism, and if, the day after tomorrow, the socialist revolution were to be victorious in Petrograd, Berlin and Warsaw, the Polish socialist government, like the Russian and German socialist governments, would renounce the "forcible retention" of, say, the Ukrainians, "within the frontiers of the Polish state". If there were members of the *Gazeta Robotnicza* Editorial Board in that government they would no doubt sacrifice their "theses", thereby disproving the "theory" that "the right of self-determination is not applicable to a socialist society". If we thought otherwise we should not put a comradely discussion with the Polish Social-Democrats on the agenda but would rather conduct a ruthless struggle against them as chauvinists.

Suppose I were to go out into the streets of any European city and make a public "protest", which I then published in the press, against my not being permitted to purchase a man as a slave. There is no doubt that people would have the right to regard me as a slave-owner, a champion of the principle, or system, if you like of slavery. No one would be fooled by the fact that my sympathies with slavery were expressed in the negative form of a protest and not in a positive form ("I am for slavery"). A political "protest" is quite the equivalent of a political programme; this is so obvious that one feels rather awkward at having to explain it. In any case, we are firmly convinced that on the part of the Zimmerwald Left, at any rate — we do not speak of the Zimmerwald group as a whole

since it contains Martov and other Kautskyites—we shall not meet with any “protest” if we say that in the Third International there will be no place for people capable of separating a political protest from a political programme, of counterpoising the one to the other, etc.

Not wishing to haggle over words, we take the liberty of expressing the sincere hope that the Polish Social-Democrats will try soon to formulate, officially, their proposal to delete Clause 9 from our Party Programme (which is also theirs) and also from the Programme of the International (the resolution of the 1896 London Congress), as well as their own definition of the relevant political concepts of “old and new annexations” and of “the forcible retention of an oppressed nation within the frontiers of the annexing state”.

Let us now turn to the next question.

4. For or Against Annexations?

In S. 3 of Part One of their theses the Polish comrades declare very definitely that they are against any kind of annexation. Unfortunately, in S. 4 of the same part we find an assertion that must be considered annexationist. It opens with the following ... how can it be put more delicately?... the following strange phrase:

“The starting-point of Social-Democracy’s struggle against annexations, against the forcible retention of oppressed nations within the frontiers of the annexing state is renunciation of any defence of the fatherland [*the authors’ italics*], which, in the era of imperialism, is defence of the rights Of one’s own bourgeoisie to oppress and plunder foreign peoples....”

What’s this? How is it put?

“The starting-point of the struggle against annexations is renunciation of any defence of the fatherland....” But ally national

war and any national revolt can be called "defence of the fatherland" and, until now, has been generally recognised as such! We are against annotations, but... we mean by this that we are against the annexed waging a war for their liberation from those who have annexed them, that we are against the annexed revolting to liberate themselves from those who have annexed them! Isn't that an annexationist declaration?

The authors of the theses motivate their... strange assertion by saying that "in the era of imperialism" defence of the fatherland amounts to defence of the right of one's own bourgeoisie to oppress foreign peoples. This, however, is true only in respect of all imperialist war, i.e., in respect of a war between imperialist powers or groups of powers, when both belligerents not only oppress "foreign peoples" but are fighting a war to decide who shall have a greater share in oppressing foreign peoples!

The authors seem to present the question of "defence of the fatherland" very differently from the way it is presented by our Party. We renounce "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war. This is said as clearly as it can be in the Manifesto of our Party's Central Committee and in the Berne resolutions reprinted in the pamphlet *Socialism and War*, which has been published both in German and French. We stressed this twice in our theses (footnotes to Sections 4 and 6). The authors of the Polish theses seem to renounce defence of the fatherland in general, i.e., for a national war as well, believing, perhaps, that in the "era of imperialism" national wars are impossible. We say "perhaps" because the Polish comrades have not expressed this view in their theses.

Such a view is clearly expressed in the theses of the German internationale group and in the Junius pamphlet which is dealt with in a special article. In addition to what is said there, let us note that the national revolt of an annexed region or country against the

annexing country may be called precisely a revolt and not a war (we have heard this objection made and, therefore, cite it here, although we do not think this terminological dispute a serious one). in any case, hardly anybody would risk denying that annexed Belgium, Serbia, Galicia and Armenia would call their "revolt" against those who annexed them "defence of the fatherland" and would do so in all justice. It looks as if the Polish comrades are against this type of revolt on the grounds that there is also a bourgeoisie in these annexed countries which also oppresses foreign peoples or, more exactly, could oppress them, since the question is one of the "right to oppress". Consequently, the given war or revolt is not assessed on the strength of its real social content (the struggle of an oppressed nation for its liberation from the oppressor nation) but the possible exercise of the "right to oppress" by a bourgeoisie which is at present itself oppressed. If Belgium, let us say, is annexed by Germany in 1917, and in 1918 revolts to secure her liberation, the Polish comrades will be against her revolt on the grounds that the Belgian bourgeoisie possess "the right to oppress foreign peoples"!

There is nothing Marxist or even revolutionary in this argument. If we do not want to betray socialism we must support every revolt against our chief enemy, the bourgeoisie of the big states, provided it is not the revolt of a reactionary class. By refusing to support the revolt of annexed regions we become, objectively, annexationists. It is precisely in the "era of imperialism", which is the era of nascent social revolution, that the proletariat will today give especially vigorous support to any revolt of the annexed regions so that tomorrow, or simultaneously, it may attack the bourgeoisie of the "great" power that is weakened by the revolt.

The Polish comrades, however, go further in their annexationism. They are not only against any revolt by the annexed regions; they

are against any restoration of their independence, even a peaceful one! Listen to this:

“Social-Democracy, rejecting all responsibility for the consequences of the policy of oppression pursued by imperialism, and conducting the sharpest struggle against them, does not by any means favour the erection of new frontier posts in Europe or the re-erection of those swept away by imperialism” (the authors’ italics).

Today “imperialism has swept away the frontier posts” between Germany and Belgium and between Russia and Galicia. International Social-Democracy, if you please, ought to be against their re-erection in general, whatever the means. In 1905, “in the era of imperialism”, when Norway’s autonomous Diet proclaimed her secession from Sweden, and Sweden’s war against Norway, as preached by the Swedish reactionaries, did not take place, what with the resistance of the Swedish workers and tile international imperialist situation—Social-Democracy ought to have been against Norway’s secession, since it undoubtedly meant “the erection of now frontier posts in Europe”!!

This is downright annexationism. There is no need to refute it because it refutes itself. No socialist party would risk taking this stand: “We oppose annexations in general but we sanction annexations for Europe or tolerate them once they have been made”

We need deal only with the theoretical sources of the error that has led our Polish comrades to such a patent... “impossibility”. We shall say further on why there is no reason to make exceptions for “Europe”. The following two phrases from the theses will explain the other sources of the error:

“Wherever the wheel of imperialism has rolled over and crushed an already formed capitalist state, the political and economic

concentration of the capitalist world, paving the way for socialism, takes place in the brutal form of imperialist oppression....”

This justification of annexations is not Marxism but Struveism. Russian Social-Democrats who remember the 1890s in Russia have a good knowledge of this manner of distorting Marxism, which is common to Struve, Cunow, Legien and Co. In another of the theses (II, 3) of the Polish comrades we read the following, specifically about the German Struveists, the so-called “social-imperialists”:

(The slogan of self-determination) “provides the social-imperialists with an opportunity, by demonstrating the illusory nature of that slogan, to represent our struggle against national oppression as historically unfounded sentimentality, thereby undermining the faith of the proletariat in the scientific validity of the Social-Democratic programme....”

This means that the authors consider the position of the German Struveists “scientific”! Our congratulations.

One “trifle”, however, brings down this amazing argument which threatens to show that the Lensches, Cunows and Parvuses are right in comparison to us: it is that the Lensches are consistent people in their own way and in issue No. 8-9 of the chauvinist German Glocke--we deliberately quoted it in our theses—Lensch demonstrates simultaneously both the “scientific invalidity” of the self-determination slogan (the Polish Social-Democrats apparently believe that this argument of Lensch’s is irrefutable, as can be seen from their arguments in the theses we have quoted) and the “scientific invalidity” of the slogan against annexations!!

For Lensch had an excellent understanding of that simple truth which we pointed out to those Polish colleagues who showed no desire to reply to our statement: there is no difference “either political or economic”, or even logical, between the “recognition” of self-determination and the “protest” against annexations. If the

Polish comrades regard the arguments of the Lensches against self-determination to be irrefutable, there is one fact that has to be accepted: the Lensches also use all these arguments to oppose the struggle against annexations.

The theoretical error that underlies all the arguments of our Polish colleagues has led them to the point of becoming inconsistent annexationists.

5. Why Are Social-Democrats Against Annexations?

In our view the answer is obvious: because annexation violates the self-determination of nations, or, in other words, is a form of national oppression.

In the view of the Polish Social-Democrats there have to be special explanations of why we are against annexations, and it is these (I, 3 in the theses) that inevitably enmesh the authors in a further series of contradictions.

They produce two reasons to “justify” our opposition to annexations (the “scientifically valid” arguments of the Lensches notwithstanding):

First: “To the assertion that annexations in Europe are essential for the military security of a victorious imperialist state, the Social-Democrats counterpose the fact that annexations only serve to sharpen antagonisms, thereby increasing the danger of war....”

This is an inadequate reply to the Lensches because their chief argument is not that annexations are a military necessity but that they are economically progressive and under imperialism mean concentration. Where is the logic if the Polish Social-Democrats in the same breath recognise the progressive nature of such a concentration, refusing to re-erect frontier posts in Europe that have been swept away by imperialism, and protest against annexations?

Furthermore, the danger of what wars is increased by annexations? Not imperialist wars, because they have other causes: the chief antagonisms in the present imperialist war are undoubtedly those between Germany and Britain, and between Germany and Russia. These antagonisms have nothing to do with annexations. It is the danger of national wars and national revolts that is increased. But how can one declare national wars to be impossible in "the era of imperialism", on the one hand, and then speak of the "danger" of national wars, on the other? This is not logical.

The second argument: Annexations "create a gulf between the proletariat of the ruling nation and that of the oppressed nation... the proletariat of the oppressed nation would unite with its bourgeoisie and regard the proletariat of the ruling nation as its enemy. Instead of the proletariat waging an international class struggle against the international bourgeoisie it would be split and ideologically corrupted..."

I fully agree with these arguments. But is it logical to put forward simultaneously two arguments on the same question which cancel each other out. In S. 3 of the first part of the theses we find the above arguments that regard annexations as causing a split in the proletariat, and next to it, in S. 4, we are told that we must oppose the annulment of annexations already effected in Europe and favour "the education of tire working masses of the oppressed and the oppressor nations in a spirit of solidarity in struggle". If the annulment of annexations is reactionary "sentimentality", annexations must not be said to create a "gulf" between sections of the "proletariat" and cause a "split", but should, on the contrary, be regarded as a condition for the bringing together of the proletariat of different nations.

We say: In order that we may have the strength to accomplish the socialist revolution and overthrow the bourgeoisie, the workers must unite more closely and this close union is promoted by the

struggle for self-determination, i.e., the struggle against annexations. We are consistent. But the Polish comrades who say that European annexations are “non-annullable” and national wars, “impossible”, defeat themselves by contending “against” annexations with the use of arguments about national wars! These arguments are to the effect that annexations hamper the drawing together and fusion of workers of different nations!

In other words, the Polish Social-Democrats, in order to contend against annexations, have to draw for arguments on the theoretical stock they themselves reject in principle.

The question of colonies makes this even more obvious.

Lenin

Blancism

Collected Works, Volume 24, pages 34-37.

Louis Blanc, the French socialist, won unenviable notoriety during the revolution of 1848 by changing his stand from that of the class struggle to that of petty-bourgeois illusions, illusions adorned with would-be “socialist” phraseology, but in reality tending to strengthen the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. Louis Blanc looked to the bourgeoisie for assistance, hoped, and inspired hopes in others, that the bourgeoisie could help the workers in the matter of “labour organisation” —this vague term purporting to express “socialist” tendencies.

Blancism has now gained the upper hand in Right-wing “Social-Democracy”, in the Organising Committee party in Russia. Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, and many others, who are now leaders of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies and were also leaders of the recent All-Russia Conference of Soviets, have taken the same stand as Louis Blanc.

On all major issues of present-day political life these leaders, who occupy approximately the position of the international Centrist trend represented by Kautsky, Longuet, Turati, and many others, have embraced the petty-bourgeois views of Louis Blanc. Take, for instance, the question of war.

The proletarian standpoint in this matter consists of a definite class characterisation of war, and of an irreconcilable hostility to imperialist war—that is, to a war between groups of capitalist countries (no matter whether monarchies or republics) for a division of capitalist spoils.

The petty-bourgeois viewpoint differs from the bourgeois one (outright justification of the war, outright “defence of the

fatherland", i.e., defence of the interests of one's own capitalists, defence of their "right" to annexations) in that the petty bourgeois "renounces" annexations, "condemns" imperialism, "demands" from the bourgeoisie that it cease to be imperialistic while keeping within the framework of world-imperialist relations and the capitalist system of economy. Confining himself to this mild, innocuous, wishy-washy declamation, the petty bourgeois, in practice, trail helplessly behind the bourgeoisie, "sympathising" in some things with the proletariat in words, remaining dependent on the bourgeoisie in deeds, unable or unwilling to understand the path leading to the overthrow of the capitalist yoke, the only path that can rid the world of imperialism.

To "demand" of the bourgeois governments that they make a "solemn declaration" in the spirit of renouncing annexations is the height of audacity on the part of the petty bourgeois, and an example of anti-imperialist "Zimmerwaldist" consistency. It is not difficult to see that this is Blancism of the worst type. For one thing, no bourgeois politician with any experience will ever have difficulty in mouthing any number of glib, "brilliant", high-sounding phrases against annexations "in general", as meaningless as they are non-committal. But when it comes to deeds, one can always do a conjuring trick after the manner of Rech, which had the deplorable courage to declare that Kurland (now annexed by the imperialist predators of bourgeois Germany) was not annexed by Russia!

This is trickery of the most disgusting kind, the most shameless deception of the workers by the bourgeoisie, for anybody the least familiar with politics must know that Kurland had always been annexed to Russia.

We openly and directly challenge Rech: (1) to present to the people such a political definition of the concept "annexation" as would apply equally to all annexations in the world, German, British, and

Russian, past and present, to all without exception; (2) to state clearly and definitely what, in its opinion, is meant by renunciation of annexations, not in word, but in deed. To give such a political definition of the concept "renunciation of annexations in deed" as would apply not only to the Germans, but also to the English and all other nations who have ever practised annexations.

We maintain that Rech will either decline to accept our challenge or it will be exposed by us before the whole nation. And it is precisely because of this question of Kurland touched upon by Rech that our dispute is not a theoretical one but a practical one of the greatest urgency and vital interest.

Second, let us assume, if only for a moment, that the bourgeois ministers are the ideal of honesty, that the Ouchkovs, Lvovs, Milyukovs and Co. sincerely believe in the possibility of renouncing annexations, while preserving capitalism, and that they really want to renounce them.

Let us, for a moment, assume even this, let us make this Blancist assumption.

One is entitled to ask: Can a grown-up person be content with what people think of themselves, without comparing it with what they do? Is it possible for a Marxist not to distinguish good wishes and declarations from objective realities?

No. It is not.

Annexations are maintained by the bonds of finance capital, banking capital, imperialist capital. Herein is the modern, the economic, foundation of annexations. From this angle, annexations are politically guaranteed profits on thousands of millions of capital "invested" in thousands upon thousands of enterprises in the annexed countries.

It is impossible, even given the wish to do so, to renounce annexations without taking decisive steps towards throwing off the yoke of capitalism.

Does that mean, as Yedinstvo, Rabochezya Gazeta, and the other “Louis Blancs” of our petty bourgeoisie are ready to conclude and actually do conclude, that we must not take any decisive steps towards overthrowing capitalism, that we must accept at least a modicum of annexations?

No. Decisive steps must be taken towards the overthrow of capitalism. They must be taken ably and gradually, relying only on the class-consciousness and organised activity of the overwhelming majority of the workers and poor peasants. But taken they must be. The Soviets of Workers’ Deputies have already started to take them in a number of places in Russia.

The order of the day now is a decisive and irrevocable parting of the ways with the Louis Blancs—the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis, Steklovs, the party of the O.C., the Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., etc. The masses must be made to see that Blancism is ruining and will utterly ruin the further success of the revolution, even the success of freedom, unless the masses realise how harmful these petty-bourgeois illusions are and join the class-conscious workers in their cautious, gradual, well-considered, yet firm and direct steps towards socialism.

Outside of socialism there is no deliverance of humanity from wars, from hunger, from the destruction of still more millions and millions of human beings.

Lenin

To: G. Y. ZINOVIEV

August 1916

Collected Works, Moscow, Volume 35, pages 228-229.

Bukharin's article is beyond question unsuitable. There is not any shadow of a "theory of the imperialist state". There is a summary of data about the growth of state capitalism, and nothing else. To fill an illegal journal with this most legal material would be absurd. It must be rejected (with supreme politeness, promising every assistance in getting it published legally).

But perhaps we had better wait for Yuri's article, and not write to Bukharin for the time being.

We should wait, too, with the letter to Bukharin about their "faction", otherwise he will think that we have rejected it out of "factionalism".

To pose the question of the "epoch" and the "present war", as though they were "extremes", is just what is meant by falling into eclecticism. Just as though our aim were to strike the "happy mean" between "extremes"!!!

The problem is to give a correct definition of the relationship of the epoch to the present war. This has been done both in the resolutions and in my articles:

|||

"the present imperialist war is not an exception, but a typical phenomenon in the imperialist epoch." [[The typical is not the unique.]]

||

One cannot understand the present war without understanding the epoch.

When people say Ibis about the epoch, this is not just a phrase. It is correct. And your quotations from my old articles say only that. They are correct.

But when people draw from this the conclusion, as they have begun to do, that “in the epoch of imperialism there cannot be national wars”, that is nonsense. It is an obvious error—historical and political and logical (for an epoch is a sum of varied phenomena, in which in addition to the typical there is always something else).

And you repeat this error, when you write in your remarks:

|||

“Small countries cannot in the present epoch defend their fatherland.”

[=the vulgarisers]

Untrue!! This is just the error of Junius, Radek, the “disarmers” and the Japanese!!

One should say: “Small countries, too, cannot in imperialist wars, which are most typical of the current imperialist epoch, defend their fatherland.”

That is quite different.

In this difference lies the whole essence of the case against the vulgarisers. And it’s just the essence which you haven’t noticed.

Grimm repeats the error of the vulgarisers, and you indulge him by providing a wrong formulation. On the contrary, it is just now that we must (both in talks and in articles) refute the vulgarisers for Grimm’s benefit.

We are not at all against “defence of the fatherland” in general, not against “defensive wars” in general. You will never find that nonsense in a single resolution (or in any of my articles).

NB |||

We are against defence of the fatherland and a defensive position in the imperialist war of 1914–16 and in other imperialist wars, typical of the imperialist epoch. But in the imperialist epoch there may be also “just”, “defensive”, revolutionary wars [[namely (1) national, (2) civil, (3) socialist and suchlike.]]

Lenin

The Discussion On Self-Determination Summed Up

July 1916

7. Marxism or Proudhonism?

By way of an exception, our Polish comrades parry our reference to Marx's attitude towards the separation of Ireland directly and not indirectly. What is their objection? References to Marx's position from 1848 to 1871, they say, are "not of the slightest value". The argument advanced in support of this unusually irate and peremptory assertion is that "at one and the same time" Marx opposed the strivings for independence of the "Czechs, South Slavs, etc."^(105)^^

The argument is so very irate because it is so very unsound. According to the Polish Marxists, Marx was simply a muddlehead who "in one breath" said contradictory things! This is altogether untrue, and it is certainly not Marxism. It is precisely the demand for "concrete" analysis, which our Polish comrades insist on, but do not themselves apply, that makes it necessary for us to investigate whether Marx's different attitudes towards different concrete "national" movements did not spring from one and the same socialist outlook.

Marx is known to have favoured Polish independence in the interests of European democracy in its struggle against the power and influence—or, it might be said, against the omnipotence and predominating reactionary influence—of tsarism. That this attitude was correct with most clearly and practically demonstrated in 1849, when the Russian serf army crushed the national liberation and revolutionary-democratic rebellion in Hungary. From that time until Marx's death, and even later, until 1890, when there was a danger that tsarism, allied with France,

would wage a reactionary war against a non-imperialist and nationally independent Germany, Engels stood first and foremost for a struggle against tsarism. It was for this reason, and exclusively for this reason, that Marx and Engels were opposed to the national movement of the Czechs and South Slavs. A simple reference to what Marx and Engels wrote in 1848 and 1841) will prove to anyone who is interested in Marxism in real earnest and not merely for the purpose of brushing Marxism aside, that Marx and Engels at that time drew a clear and definite distinction between “whole reactionary nations” serving as “Russian outposts” in Europe, and “revolutionary nations” namely, the Germans, Poles and Magyars. This is a fact. And it was indicated at the time with incontrovertible truth: in 1848 revolutionary nations fought for liberty, whose principal enemy was tsarism, whereas the Czechs, etc., were in fact reactionary nations, and outposts of tsarism.

What is the lesson to be drawn from this concrete example which must be analysed concretely if there is any desire to be true to Marxism? Only this: (1) that the interests of the liberation of a number of big and very big nations in Europe rate higher than the interests of the movement for liberation of small nations; (2) that the demand for democracy must not be considered in isolation but on a European—today we should say a world—scale.

That is all there is to it. There is no hint of any repudiation of that elementary socialist principle which the Poles forget but to which Marx was always faithful—that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations. If the concrete situation which confronted Marx when tsarism dominated international politics were to repeat itself, for instance, in the form of a few nations starting a socialist revolution (as a bourgeois-democratic revolution was started in Europe in 1848), and other nations serving as the chief bulwarks of bourgeois reaction—then we too would have to be in favour of a

revolutionary war against the latter, in favour of “crushing” them, in favour of destroying all their outposts, no matter what small-nation movements arose in them. Consequently, instead of rejecting any examples of Marx’s tactics—this would mean professing Marxism while abandoning it in practice—we must analyse them concretely and draw invaluable lessons for the future. The several demands of democracy, including self-determination, are not an absolute, but only a small part of the general-democratic (now: general-socialist) world movement. In individual concrete casts, the part may contradict the whole; if so, it must be rejected. It is possible that the republican movement in one country may be merely an instrument of the clerical or financial-monarchist intrigues of other countries; if so, we must not support this particular, concrete movement, but it would be ridiculous to delete the demand for a republic from the programme of international Social-Democracy on these grounds.

In what way has the concrete situation changed between the periods of 1848–71 and 1898–1916 (I take the most important landmarks of imperialism as a period: from the Spanish-American imperialist war to the European imperialist war)? Tsarism has manifestly and indisputably ceased to be the chief mainstay of reaction, first, because it is supported by international finance capital, particularly French, and, secondly, because of 1905. At that time the system of big national states—the democracies of Europe—was bringing democracy and socialism to the world in spite of tsarism. Marx and Engels did not live to see the period of imperialism. The system now is a handful of imperialist “Great” Powers (five or six in number), each oppressing other nations: and this oppression is a source for artificially retarding the collapse of capitalism, and artificially supporting opportunism and social-chauvinism in the imperialist nations which dominate the world. At that time, West-European democracy, liberating the big nations, was opposed to tsarism, which used certain small-nation

movements for reactionary ends. Today, the socialist proletariat, split into chauvinists, "social-imperialists", on the one hand, and revolutionaries, on the other, is confronted by an alliance of tsarist imperialism and advanced capitalist, European, imperialism, which is based on their common oppression of a number of nations.

Such are the concrete changes that have taken place in the situation, and it is just these that; the Polish Social-Democrats ignore, in spite of their promise to be concrete! Hence the concrete change in the application of the same socialist principles: formerly the main thing was to fight "against tsarism" (and against certain small-nation movements that it was using for undemocratic ends), and for the greater revolutionary peoples of the West; the main thing today is to stand against the united, aligned front of the imperialist powers, the imperialist bourgeoisie and the social-imperialists, and for the utilisation of all national movements against imperialism for the purposes of the socialist revolution. The more purely proletarian the struggle against the general imperialist front now is, the more vital, obviously, is the internationalist principle: "No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations".

In the name of their doctrinaire concept of social revolution, the Proudhonists ignored the international role of Poland and brushed aside the national movements. Equally doctrinaire is the attitude of the Polish Social-Democrats, who break up the international front of struggle against the social-imperialists, and (objectively) help the latter by their vacillations on the question of annexations. For it is precisely the international front of proletarian struggle that has changed in relation to the concrete position of the small nations: at that time (1848–71) the small nations were important as the potential allies either of "Western democracy" and the revolutionary nations, or of tsarism; now (1898–1914) that is no

longer so; today they are important as one of the nutritive media of the parasitism and, consequently, the social-imperialism of the “dominant nations”. The important thing is not whether one-fiftieth or one-hundredth of the small nations are liberated before the socialist revolution, but the fact that in the epoch of imperialism, owing to objective causes, the proletariat has been split into two international camps, one of which has been corrupted by the crumbs that fall from the table of the dominant-nation bourgeoisie—obtained, among other things, from the double or triple exploitation of small nations—while the other cannot liberate itself without liberating the small nations. without educating the masses in an anti-chauvinist, i.e., anti-annexationist, i.e., “self-determinationist”, spirit.

This, the most important aspect of the question, is ignored by our Polish comrades, who do not view things from the key position in the epoch of imperialism, the standpoint of the division of the international proletariat into two camps.

Here are some other concrete examples of their Proudhonism: (1) their attitude to the Irish rebellion of 1916, of which later: (2) the declaration in the theses (11, 3, end of S. 3) that the slogan of socialist revolution “must not be overshadowed by anything”. The idea that the slogan of socialist revolution can be “overshadowed” by linking it up with a consistently revolutionary position on all questions, including the national question, is certainly profoundly anti-Marxist.

The Polish Social-Democrats consider our programme “national-reformist”. Compare these two practical proposals: (1) for autonomy (Polish theses, III, 4), and (2) for freedom to secede. It is in this, and in this alone, that our programmes differ! And is it not clear that it is precisely the first programme that is reformist and not the second? A reformist change is one which leaves intact the foundations of the power of the ruling class and is merely a

concession leaving its power unimpaired. A revolutionary change undermines the foundations of power. A reformist national programme does not abolish all the privileges of the ruling nation; it does not establish complete equality; it does not abolish national oppression in all its forms. An "autonomous" nation does not enjoy rights equal to those of the "ruling" nation; our Polish comrades could not have failed to notice this had they not (like our old Economists) obstinately avoided making an analysis of political concepts and categories. Until 1905 autonomous Norway, as a part of Sweden, enjoyed the widest autonomy, but she was not Sweden's equal. Only by her free secession was her equality manifested in practice and proved (and let us add in parenthesis that: it was this free secession that created the basis for a more intimate and more democratic association, founded on equality of rights). As long as Norway was merely autonomous, the Swedish aristocracy had one additional privilege; and secession did not "mitigate" this privilege (the essence of reformism lies in mitigating an evil and not in destroying it), but eliminated it altogether (the principal criterion of the revolutionary character of a programme).

Incidentally, autonomy, as a reform, differs in principle from freedom to Recede, as a revolutionary measure. This is unquestionable. But as everyone knows, in practice a reform is often merely a step towards revolution. It is autonomy that enables a nation forcibly retained within the boundaries of a given state to crystallise into a nation, to gather, assess and organise its forces, and to select the most opportune moment for a declaration ... in the "Norwegian" spirit: We, the autonomous diet of such-and-such a nation, or of such-and-such a territory, declare that the Emperor of all the Russias has ceased to be King of Poland, etc. The usual "objection" to this is that such questions are decided by wars and not by declarations. True: in the vast majority of cases they are decided by wars (just as questions of the form of government of

big states are decided, in the vast majority of cases, only by wars and revolutions). However, it would do no harm to reflect whether such an "objection" to the political programme of a revolutionary party is logical. Are we opposed to wars and revolutions for what is just and beneficial to the proletariat, for democracy and socialism?

"But we cannot be in favour of a war between great nations, in favour of the slaughter of twenty million people for the sake of the problematical liberation of a small nation with a population of perhaps ten or twenty millions!" Of course not! And it does not mean that we throw complete national equality out of our Programme; it means that the democratic interests of one country must be subordinated to the democratic interests of several and all countries. Let us assume that between two great monarchies there is a little monarchy whose kinglet is "hound" by blood and other ties to the monarchs of both neighbouring countries. Let us further assume that the declaration of a republic in the little country and the expulsion of its monarch would in practice lead to a war between the two neighbouring big countries for the restoration of that or another monarch in the little country. There is no doubt that all international Social-Democracy, as well as the really internationalist section of Social-Democracy in the little country, would be against substituting a republic for the monarchy in this case. The substitution of a republic for a monarchy is not an absolute, but one of the democratic demands, subordinate to the interests of democracy (and still more, of course, to those of the socialist proletariat) as a whole. A case like this would in all probability not give rise to the slightest disagreement among Social-Democrats in any country. But if any Social-Democrat were to propose on these grounds that the demand for a republic be deleted altogether from the programme of international Social-Democracy, he would certainly be regarded as quite mad. He

would be told that after all one must not forget the elementary logical difference between the general and the particular.

This example brings us, from a somewhat different angle, to the question of the internationalist education of the working class. Can such education—on the necessity and urgent importance of which differences of opinion among the Zimmerwald Left are inconceivable—be concretely identical in great, oppressor nations and in small, oppressed nations, in annexing nations and in annexed nations?

Obviously not. The way to the common goal—complete equality, the closest association and the eventual amalgamation of all nations—obviously runs along different routes in each concrete case, as, let us say, the way to a point in the centre of this page runs left from one edge and right, from the opposite edge. If a Social-Democrat from a great, oppressing, annexing nation, while advocating the amalgamation of nations in general, were for one moment to forget that “his” Nicholas II, “his” Wilhelm, George, Poincaré, etc., also stand for amalgamation with small nations (by means of annexations)—Nicholas II for “amalgamation” with Galicia, Wilhelm II for “amalgamation” with Belgium, etc.—such a Social-Democrat would be a ridiculous doctrinaire in theory and an abettor of imperialism in practice.

In the internationalist education of the workers of the oppressor countries, emphasis must necessarily be laid on their advocating freedom for the oppressed countries to secede and their fighting for it. Without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every Social-Democrat of an oppressor nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as a scoundrel and an imperialist. This is an absolute demand, even where the chance of secession being possible and “practicable” before the introduction of socialism is only one in a thousand.

t is our duty to teach the workers to be "indifferent" to national distinctions. There is no doubt about that. But it must not be the indifference of the annexationists. A member of an oppressor nation must be "indifferent" to whether small nations belong to his state or to a neighboring state, or to themselves, according to where their sympathies lie: without such "indifference" he is not a Social-Democrat. To be an internationalist Social-Democrat one must not think only of one's own nation, but place above it the interests of all nations, their common liberty and equality. Everyone accepts this in "theory" but displays an annexationist indifference in practice. There is the root of the evil.

On the other hand, a Social-Democrat from a small nation must emphasise in his agitation the second word of our general formula: "voluntary integration" of nations. He may, without failing in his duties as an internationalist, be in favour of both the political independence of his nation and its integration with the neighboring state of X, Y, Z, etc. But in all cases he must fight against small-nation narrow-mindedness, seclusion and isolation, consider the whole and the general, subordinate the particular to the general interest.

People who have not gone into the question thoroughly think that it is "contradictory" for the Social-Democrats of oppressor nations to insist on the "freedom to secede", while Social-Democrats of oppressed nations insist on the "freedom to integrate". However, a little reflection will show that there is not, and cannot be, any other road to internationalism and the amalgamation of nations, any other road from the given situation to this goal.

Enver Hoxha

Imperialism and the Revolution

From; **The Peoples' Liberation Struggle - a Component Part of the World Revolution**

When we speak of the revolution we do not mean only the socialist revolution. In the present epoch of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism, the peoples' liberation struggle, the national-democratic, anti-imperialist revolutions, the national liberation movements, also, are component parts of a single revolutionary process, the world proletarian revolution, as Lenin and Stalin explained.

"Leninism," says Stalin, "has proved... that the national problem can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution, and that the road to victory of the revolution in the West lies through the revolutionary alliance with the liberation movement of the colonies and dependent countries against imperialism. The national problem is a part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution, a part of the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat". Stalin

This connection has become even clearer and more natural today, when, with the collapse of the old colonial system, most of the peoples have taken a big step forward towards independence by creating their own national states, and when, following this step, they are aspiring to go further. They want the liquidation of the neo-colonialist system, of any imperialist dependence and any exploitation by foreign capital. They want their complete sovereignty and economic and political independence. It has now been proved that such aspirations can be realized, such objectives can be attained only through the elimination of any foreign domination by and dependence on foreigners and the liquidation

of oppression and exploitation by local bourgeois and big land-owner rulers.

Hence, the linking and interlacing of the national-democratic, anti-imperialist, national liberation revolution with the socialist revolution, because, by striking at imperialism and reaction, which are common enemies of the proletariat and the peoples, these revolutions also pave the way for great social transformations, assist the victory of the socialist revolution. And vice-versa, by striking at the imperialist bourgeoisie, by destroying its economic and political positions, the socialist revolution creates favourable conditions for and facilitates the triumph of liberation movements.

This is how the Party of Labour of Albania sees the question of the revolution. It sees it from Marxist-Leninist positions, and that is why it gives all-out support and backing to the just struggles of the freedom-loving peoples against US imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism and the other imperialist powers, against neo-colonialism, because these struggles assist the common cause of the destruction of imperialism, the capitalist system and the triumph of socialism in each country and on a world scale.

Lenin

A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism

August-October 1916

Collected Works, Volume 23, pages 28-76.

“Our Understanding of the New Era”

The heading is Kievsky’s. He constantly speaks of a “new era”, but here, too, unfortunately his arguments are erroneous.

Our Party resolutions speak of the present war as stemming from the general conditions of the imperialist era. We give a correct Marxist definition of the relation between the “era” and the “present war”: Marxism requires a concrete assessment of each separate war. To understand why an imperialist war, i.e., a war thoroughly reactionary and anti-democratic in its political implications, could, and inevitably did, break out between the Great Powers, many of whom stood at the head of the struggle for democracy in 1789–1871—to understand this we must understand the general conditions of the imperialist era, i.e., the transformation of capitalism in the advanced countries into imperialism.

Kievsky has flagrantly distorted the relation between the “era” and the “present war”. In his reasoning, to consider the matter concretely means to examine the “era”. That is precisely where he is wrong.

The era 1789–1871 was of special significance for Europe. That is irrefutable. We cannot understand a single national liberation war, and such wars were especially typical of that period, unless we understand the general conditions of the period. Does that mean that all wars of that period were national liberation wars? Certainly not. To hold that view is to reduce the whole thing to an absurdity and apply a ridiculous stereotype in place of a concrete analysis of

each separate war. There were also colonial wars in 1789–1871, and wars between reactionary empires that oppressed many nations.

Advanced European (and American) capitalism has entered a new era of imperialism. Does it follow from that that only imperialist wars are now possible? Any such contention would be absurd. It would reveal inability to distinguish a given concrete phenomenon from the sum total of variegated phenomena possible in a given era. An era is called an era precisely because it encompasses the sum total of variegated phenomena and wars, typical and untypical, big and small, some peculiar to advanced countries, others to backward countries. To brush aside these concrete questions by resorting to general phrases about the “era”, as Kievsky does, is to abuse the very concept “era”. And to prove that, we shall cite one example out of many. But first it should be noted that one group of Lefts, namely, the German Internationale group, has advanced this manifestly erroneous proposition in §5 of its theses, published in No. 3 of the Bulletin of the Berne Executive Committee (February 29, 1916): “National wars are no longer possible in the era of this unbridled imperialism.” We analysed that statement in *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*. Here we need merely note that though everyone who has followed the internationalist movement is long acquainted with this theoretical proposition (we opposed it way back in the spring of 1916 at the extended meeting of the Berne Executive Committee), not a single group has repeated or accepted it. And there is not a single word in the spirit of this or any similar proposition in Kievsky’s article, written in August 1916.

That should be noted, and for the following reason: if this or a similar theoretical proposition were advanced, then we could speak of theoretical divergencies. But since no such proposition has been advanced, we are constrained to say: what we have is not a different interpretation of the concept “era”, not a theoretical

divergency, but merely a carelessly uttered phrase, merely abuse of the word "era".

Here is an example. Kievsky starts his article by asking: "Is not this (self-determination) the same as the right to receive free of charge 10,000 acres of land on Mars? The question can be answered only in the most concrete manner, only in context with the nature of the present era. The right of nations to self-determination is one thing in the era of the formation of national states, as the best form of developing the productive forces at their then existing level, but it is quite another thing now that this form, the national state, fetters the development of the productive forces. A vast distance separates the era of the establishment of capitalism and the national state from the era of the collapse of the national state and the eve of the collapse of capitalism itself. To discuss things in 'general', out of context with time and space, does not befit a Marxist."

There you have a sample of caricaturing the concept "imperialist era". And its caricature must be fought precisely because it is a new and important concept! What do we mean when we say that national states have become fetters, etc.? We have in mind the advanced capitalist countries, above all Germany, France, England, whose participation in the present war has been the chief factor in making it an imperialist war. In these countries, which hitherto have been in the van of mankind, particularly in 1789–1871, the process of forming national states has been consummated. In these countries the national movement is a thing of an irrevocable past, and it would be an absurd reactionary utopia to try to revive it. The national movement of the French, English, Germans has long been completed in these countries history's next step is a different one: liberated nations have become transformed into oppressor nations, into nations of imperialist

rapine, nations that are going through the “eve of the collapse of capitalism”.

But what of other nations?

Kievsky repeats, like a rule learned by rote, that Marxists should approach things “concretely”, but he does not apply that rule. In our theses, on the other hand, we deliberately gave an example of a concrete approach, and Kievsky did not wish to point out our mistake, if he found one.

Our theses (§6) state that to be concrete not less than three different types of countries must be distinguished when dealing with self-determination. (It was clearly impossible to discuss each separate country in general theses.) First type: the advanced countries of Western Europe (and America), where the national movement is a thing of the past. Second type: Eastern Europe, where it is a thing of the present. Third type: semi-colonies and colonies, where it is largely a thing of the future.

Is this correct or not? This is what Kievsky should have levelled his criticism at. But he does not see the essence of the theoretical problems! He fails to see that unless he refutes the above-mentioned proposition (in §6) of our theses—and it cannot be refuted because it is correct—his disquisitions about the “era” resemble a man brandishing his sword but striking no blows.

“In contrast to V. Ilyin’s opinion,” he writes at the end of his article, “we assume that for the majority [!] of Western [!] countries the national problem has not been settled....”

And so, the national movements of the French, Spaniards, English, Dutch, Germans and Italians were not consummated in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and earlier? At the beginning of the article the concept “era of imperialism” is distorted to make it appear that the national movement has been

consummated in general, and not only in the advanced Western countries. At the end of the same article the "national problem" is declared "not settled" in precisely the Western countries!! Is that not a muddle?

In the Western countries the national movement is a thing of the distant past. In England, France, Germany, etc., the "fatherland" is a dead letter, it has played its historical role, i.e., the national movement cannot yield here anything progressive, anything that will elevate new masses to a new economic and political life. History's next step here is not transition from feudalism or from patriarchal savagery to national progress, to a cultured and politically free fatherland, but transition from a "fatherland" that has outlived its day, that is capitalistically overripe, to socialism.

The position is different in Eastern Europe. As far as the Ukrainians and Byelorussians, for instance, are concerned, only a Martian dreamer could deny that the national movement has not yet been consummated there, that the awakening of the masses to the full use of their mother tongue and literature (and this is an absolute condition and concomitant of the full development of capitalism, of the full penetration of exchange to the very last peasant family) is still going on there. The "fatherland" is historically not yet quite a dead letter there. There the "defence of the fatherland" can still be defence of democracy, of one's native language, of political liberty against oppressor nations, against medievalism, whereas the English, French, Germans and Italians lie when they speak of defending their fatherland in the present war, because actually what they are defending is not their native language, not their right to national development, but their rights as slaveholders, their colonies, the foreign "spheres of influence" of their finance capital, etc.

In the semi-colonies and colonies the national movement is, historically, still younger than in Eastern Europe.

What do the words “advanced countries” and imperialist era refer to? In what lies the “special” position of Russia (heading of §e in the second chapter of Kievsky’s article), and not only Russia? Where, is the national liberation movement a false phrase and where is it a living and progressive reality? Kievsky reveals no understanding on any of these points.

Lenin

THE JUNIUS PAMPHLET

July 1916

Collected Works, Vol. 22, pp. 305-19.

At last there has appeared in Germany, illegally, without any adaptation to the despicable Junker censorship, a Social-Democratic pamphlet dealing with questions of the war! The author, who evidently belongs to the "Left-radical" wing of the Party, takes the name of Junius (which in Latin means junior) and gives his pamphlet the title: *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*. Appended are the "Theses on the Tasks of International Social-Democracy", which have already been submitted to the Berne I.S.C. (International Socialist Committee) and published in No. 3 of its Bulletin; the theses were drafted by the Internationale group, which in the spring of 1915 published one issue of a magazine under that title (with articles by Zetkin, Mehring, R. Luxemburg, Thalheimer, Duncker, Ströbel and others), and which in the winter of 1915-16 convened a conference of Social-Democrats from all parts of Germany where these theses were adopted.

The pamphlet, the author says in the introduction dated January 2, 1916, was written in April 1915, and published "without any alteration". "Outside circumstances" had prevented its earlier publication. The pamphlet is devoted not so much to the "crisis of Social-Democracy" as to an analysis of the war, to refuting the legend of it being a war for national liberation, to proving that it is an imperialist war on the part of Germany as well as on the part of the other Great Powers, and to a revolutionary criticism of the behaviour of the official party. Written, in a very lively style, Junius's pamphlet has undoubtedly played and will continue to play an important role in the struggle against the ex-Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which has deserted to the

bourgeoisie and the Junkers, and we extend our hearty greetings to the author.

To the Russian reader who is familiar with the Social-Democratic literature in Russian published abroad in 1914-16, the Junius pamphlet does not offer anything new in principle. In reading this pamphlet and comparing the arguments of this German revolutionary Marxist with what has been stated, for example, in the Manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party (September-November 1914), in the Berne resolutions (March 1915) and in the numerous commentaries on them, it only becomes clear that Junius's arguments are very incomplete and that he makes two mistakes. Before proceeding with a criticism of Junius's faults and errors we must strongly emphasise that this is done for the sake of self-criticism, which is so necessary to Marxists, and of submitting to an all-round test the views which must serve as the ideological basis of the Third International. On the whole, the Junius pamphlet is a splendid Marxist work, and its defects are, in all probability, to a certain extent accidental.

The chief defect in Junius's pamphlet, and what marks a definite step backward compared with the legal (although immediately suppressed) magazine, *Internationale*, is its silence regarding the connection between social-chauvinism (the author uses neither this nor the less precise term social-patriotism) and opportunism. The author rightly speaks of the "capitulation" and collapse of the German Social Democratic Party and of the "treachery" of its official leaders", but he goes no further. The *Internationale*, however, did criticise the "Centre", i.e., Kautskyism, and quite properly poured ridicule on it for its spinelessness, its prostitution of Marxism and its servility to the opportunists. This same magazine began to expose the true role of the opportunists by revealing, for example, the very important fact that on August 4, 1914, the opportunists came out with an ultimatum, a ready-made

decision to vote for war credits in any case. Neither the Junius pamphlet nor the theses say anything about opportunism or about Kautskyism! This is wrong from the standpoint of theory, for it is impossible to account for the "betrayal" without linking it up with opportunism as a trend with a long history behind it, the history of the whole Second International. It is a mistake from the practical political standpoint, for it is impossible either to understand the "crisis of Social-Democracy", or overcome it, without clarifying the meaning and the role of two trends -- the openly opportunist trend (Legien, David, etc.) and the tacitly opportunist trend (Kautsky and Co.). This is a step backward compared with the historic article by Otto Ruhle in *Vorwärts* of January 12, 1916, in which he directly and openly pointed out that a split in the Social-Democratic Party of Germany was inevitable (the editors of *Vorwärts* replied by repeating honeyed and hypocritical Kautskyite phrases, for they were unable to advance a single material argument to disprove the assertion that there were already two parties in existence, and that these two parties could not be reconciled). It is astonishingly inconsistent, because the Internationale's thesis No. 12 directly states that it is necessary to create a "new" International, owing to the "treachery" of the "official representatives of the socialist parties of the leading countries" and their "adoption of the principles of bourgeois imperialist policies". It is clearly quite absurd to suggest that the old Social-Democratic Party of Germany, or the party which tolerates Legien, David and Co., would participate in a "new" International.

We do not know why the Internationale group took this step backward. A very great defect in revolutionary Marxism in Germany as a whole is its lack of a compact illegal organisation that would systematically pursue its own line and educate the masses in the spirit of the new tasks; such an organisation would also have to take a definite stand on opportunism and Kautskyism. This is all the more necessary now, since the German revolutionary

Social-Democrats have been deprived of their last two daily papers; the one in Bremen (Bremer Bürger-Zeitung), and the one in Brunswick (Volksfreund), both of which have gone over to the Kautskyites. The International Socialists of Germany (I.S.D.) group alone clearly and definitely remains at its post.

Some members of the Internationale group have evidently once again slid down into the morass of unprincipled Kautskyism. Ströbel, for instance, went so far as to drop a curtsey in Die Neue Zeit to Bernstein and Kautsky! And only the other day, on July 15, 1916, he had an article in the papers entitled "Pacifism and Social-Democracy", in which he defends the most vulgar type of Kautskyite pacifism. As for Junius, he strongly opposes Kautsky's fantastic schemes like "disarmament", "abolition of secret diplomacy", etc. There may be two trends within the Internationale group: a revolutionary trend and a trend inclining to Kautskyism.

The first of Junius's erroneous propositions is embodied in the fifth thesis of the Internationale group. "National wars are no longer possible in the epoch (era) of this unbridled imperialism. National interests serve only as an instrument of deception, in order to place the working masses at the service of their mortal enemy, imperialism." The beginning of the fifth thesis, which concludes with the above statement, discusses the nature of the present war as an imperialist war. It may be that this negation of national wars generally is either an oversight, or an accidental overstatement in emphasising the perfectly correct idea that the present war is an imperialist war, not a national war. This is a mistake that must be examined, for various Social-Democrats, in view of the false assertions that the present war is a national war, have likewise mistakenly denied the possibility of any national war.

Junius is perfectly right in emphasising the decisive influence of the "imperialist atmosphere" of the present war, in maintaining that behind Serbia stands Russia, "behind Serbian nationalism

stands Russian imperialism", and that the participation of, say, Holland in the war would likewise be imperialist, for, first, Holland would be defending her colonies and, second, would be allied with one of the imperialist coalitions. That is irrefutable in respect to the present war. And when Junius stresses what for him is most important, namely, the struggle against the "phantom of national war", "which at present holds sway over Social Democratic policies" (p. 81), then it must be admitted that his views are both correct and fully to the point.

The only mistake, however, would be to exaggerate this truth, to depart from the Marxist requirement of concreteness, to apply the appraisal of this war to all wars possible under imperialism, to ignore the national movements against imperialism. The sole argument in defence of the thesis, "national wars are no longer possible", is that the world has been divided among a small group of "great" imperialist powers and for that reason any war, even if it starts as a national war, is transformed into an imperialist war involving the interest of one of the imperialist powers or coalitions (Junius, p. 81).

The fallacy of this argument is obvious. That all dividing lines, both in nature and society, are conventional and dynamic, and that every phenomenon might, under certain conditions, be transformed into its opposite, is, of course, a basic proposition of Marxist dialectics. A national war might be transformed into an imperialist war and vice versa. Here is an example: the wars of the Great French Revolution began as national wars and indeed were such. They were revolutionary wars -- the defence of the great revolution against a coalition of counter-revolutionary monarchies. But when Napoleon founded the French Empire and subjugated a number of big, viable and long-established national European states, these national wars of the French became

imperialist wars and in turn led to wars of national liberation against Napoleonic imperialism.

Only a sophist can disregard the difference between an imperialist and a national war on the grounds that one might develop into the other. Not infrequently have dialectics served -- and the history of Greek philosophy is an example -- as a bridge to sophistry. But we remain dialecticians and we combat sophistry not by denying the possibility of all transformations in general, but by analysing the given phenomenon in its concrete setting and development.

Transformation of the present imperialist war of 1914-16 into a national war is highly improbable, for the class that represents progressive development is the proletariat which is objectively striving to transform it into a civil war against the bourgeoisie. Also this: there is no very considerable difference between the forces of the two coalitions, and international finance capital has created a reactionary bourgeoisie everywhere. But such a transformation should not be proclaimed impossible : if the European proletariat remains impotent, say, for twenty years; if the present war ends in victories like Napoleon's and in the subjugation of a number of viable national states; if the transition to socialism of non-European imperialism (primarily Japanese and American) is also held up for twenty years by a war between these two countries, for example, then a great national war in Europe would be possible. It would hurl Europe back several decades. That is improbable. But not impossible, for it is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong to regard the course of world history as smooth and always in a forward direction, without occasional gigantic leaps back.

Further. National wars waged by colonies and semi-colonies in the imperialist era are not only probable but inevitable. About 1,000 million people, or over half of the world's population, live in the colonies and semi-colonies (China, Turkey, Persia). The national

liberation movements there are either already very strong, or are growing and maturing. Every war is the continuation of politics by other means. The continuation of national liberation politics in the colonies will inevitably take the form of national wars against imperialism. Such wars might lead to an imperialist war of the present "great" imperialist powers, but on the other hand they might not. It will depend on many factors.

Example: Britain and France fought the Seven Years' War for the possession of colonies. In other words, they waged an imperialist war (which is possible on the basis of slavery and primitive capitalism as well as on the basis of modern highly developed capitalism). France suffered defeat and lost some of her colonies. Several years later there began the national liberation war of the North American States against Britain alone. France and Spain, then in possession of some parts of the present United States, concluded a friendship treaty with the States in rebellion against Britain. This they did out of hostility to Britain, i.e., in their own imperialist interests. French troops fought the British on the side of the American forces. What we have here is a national liberation war in which imperialist rivalry is an auxiliary element, one that has no serious importance. This is the very opposite to what we see in the war of 1914-16 (the national element in the Austro-Serbian War is of no serious importance compared with the all determining element of imperialist rivalry). It would be absurd, therefore, to apply the concept imperialism indiscriminately and conclude that national wars are "impossible". A national liberation war, waged, for example, by an alliance of Persia, India and China against one or more of the imperialist powers, is both possible and probable, for it would follow from the national liberation movements in these countries. The transformation of such a war into an imperialist war between the present-day imperialist powers would depend upon very many concrete factors, the emergence of which it would be ridiculous to guarantee.

Third, even in Europe national wars in the imperialist epoch cannot be regarded as impossible. The "epoch of imperialism" made the present war an imperialist one and it inevitably engenders new imperialist wars (until the triumph of socialism). This "epoch" has made the policies of the present great powers thoroughly imperialist, but it by no means precludes national wars on the part of, say, small (annexed or nationally-oppressed) countries against the imperialist powers, just as it does not preclude large-scale national movements in Eastern Europe. Junius takes a very sober view of Austria, for example, giving due consideration not only to "economic" factors, but to the peculiar political factors. He notes "Austria's intrinsic lack of cohesion" and recognises that the "Hapsburg monarchy is not the political organisation of a bourgeois state, but only a loose syndicate of several cliques of social parasites", and that "the liquidation of Austria-Hungary is, from the historical standpoint, only the continuation of the disintegration of Turkey and, at the same time, a requirement of the historical process of development". Much the same applies to some of the Balkan countries and Russia. And if the "great" powers are altogether exhausted in the present war, or if the revolution in Russia triumphs, national wars and even victorious national wars, are quite possible. Practical intervention by the imperialist powers is not always feasible. That is one point. Another is that the superficial view that the war of a small state against a giant is hopeless should be countered by the observation that even a hopeless war is a war just the same. Besides, certain factors operating within the "giant" countries -- the outbreak of revolution, for example -- can turn a "hopeless" war into a very "hopeful" one.

We have dwelt in detail on the erroneous proposition that "national wars are no longer possible" not only because it is patently erroneous from the theoretical point of view -- it would certainly be very lamentable if the "Left" were to reveal a light-

hearted attitude to Marxist theory at a time when the establishment of the Third International is possible only on the basis of unvulgarised Marxism. But the mistake is very harmful also from the standpoint of practical politics, for it gives rise to the absurd propaganda of "disarmament", since it is alleged that there can be no wars except reactionary wars. It also gives rise to the even more ludicrous and downright reactionary attitude of indifference to national movements. And such an attitude becomes chauvinism when members of the "great" European nations, that is, the nations which oppress the mass of small and colonial peoples, declare with a pseudo-scientific air: "national wars are no longer possible"! National wars against the imperialist powers are not only possible and probable; they are inevitable, progressive and revolutionary though of course, to be successful, they require either the concerted effort of huge numbers of people in the oppressed countries (hundreds of millions in our example of India and China), or a particularly favourable conjuncture of international conditions (e.g., the fact that the imperialist powers cannot interfere, being paralysed by exhaustion, by war, by their antagonism, etc.), or the simultaneous uprising of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in one of the big powers (this latter eventuality holds first place as the most desirable and favourable for the victory of the proletariat).

It would be unfair, however, to accuse Junius of indifference to national movements. At any rate, he remarks that among the sins of the Social-Democratic parliamentary group was its silence on the death sentence passed on a native leader in the Cameroons on charges of "treason" (evidently he attempted to organise an uprising against the war). Elsewhere Junius especially emphasises (for the benefit of the Legiens, Lensches and the other scoundrels who are still listed as "Social-Democrats") that colonial peoples must be regarded as nations along with all the others. Junius clearly and explicitly states: "Socialism recognised the right of

every nation to independence and freedom, to independent mastery of its destinies"; "international socialism recognises the right of free, independent and equal nations, but it is only socialism that can create such nations, and only it can realise the right of nations to self-determination. And this socialist slogan," Junius justly remarks, "serves, like all other socialist slogans, not to justify the existing order of things, but to indicate the way forward, and to stimulate the proletariat in its active revolutionary policy of transformation" (pp. 77-78). It would be a grave mistake indeed to believe that all the German Left Social-Democrats have succumbed to the narrow-mindedness and caricature of Marxism now espoused by certain Dutch and Polish Social-Democrats who deny the right of nations to self-determination even under socialism. But the specific, Dutch-Polish, roots of this mistake we shall discuss elsewhere.

Another fallacious argument is advanced by Junius on the question of defence of the fatherland. This is a cardinal political question during an imperialist war. Junius has strengthened us in our conviction that our Party has indicated the only correct approach to this question; the proletariat is opposed to defence of the fatherland in this imperialist war because of its predatory, slave-owning, reactionary character, because it is possible and necessary to oppose to it (and to strive to convert it into) civil war for socialism. Junius, however, while brilliantly exposing the imperialist character of the present war as distinct from a national war, makes the very strange mistake of trying to drag a national programme into the present, non-national, war. It sounds almost incredible, but there it is.

The official Social-Democrats, both of the Legien and of the Kautsky stripe, in their servility to the bourgeoisie (who have been making the most noise about foreign "invasion" in order to deceive the mass of the people as to the imperialist character of the war),

have been particularly assiduous in repeating this "invasion" argument. Kautsky, who now assures naïve and credulous people (incidentally, through Spectator, a member of the Russian Organising Committee) that he joined the opposition at the end of 1914, continues to use this "argument"! To refute it, Junius quotes extremely instructive examples from history, which prove that "invasion and class struggle are not contradictory in bourgeois history, as official legend has it, but that one is the means and the expression of the other". For example, the Bourbons in France invoked foreign invaders against the Jacobins; the bourgeoisie in 1871 invoked foreign invaders against the Commune. In his Civil War in France, Marx wrote:

"The highest heroic effort of which old society is still capable is national war; and this is now proved to be a mere governmental humbug, intended to defer the struggle of classes, and to be thrown aside as soon as that class struggle bursts out into civil war."

"The classical example for all times," says Junius, referring to 1793, "is the Great French Revolution." From all this, he draws the following conclusion: "The century of experience thus proves that it is not a state of siege, but relentless class struggle, which rouses the self-respect, the heroism and the moral strength of the mass of the people, and serves as the country's best protection and defence against the external enemy."

Junius's practical conclusion is this: "Yes, it is the duty of the Social-Democrats to defend their country during a great historical crisis. But the grave guilt that rests upon the Social-Democratic Reichstag group consists in their having given the lie to their own solemn declaration, made on August 4, 1914, 'In the hour of danger we will not leave our fatherland unprotected'. They did leave the fatherland unprotected in the hour of its greatest peril. For their first duty to the fatherland in that hour was to show the fatherland what was really behind the present imperialist war; to sweep away

the web of patriotic and diplomatic lies covering up this encroachment on the fatherland; to proclaim loudly and clearly that both victory and defeat in the present war are equally fatal for the German people; to resist to the last the throttling of the fatherland due to the state of siege; to proclaim the necessity of immediately arming the people and of allowing the people to decide the question of war and peace; resolutely to demand a permanent session of the people's representatives for the whole duration of the war in order to guarantee vigilant control over the government by the people's representatives, and control over the people's representatives by the people; to demand the immediate abolition of all restrictions on political rights, for only a free people can successfully defend its country; and finally, to oppose the imperialist war programme, which is to preserve Austria and Turkey, i.e., perpetuate reaction in Europe and in Germany, with the old, truly national programme of the patriots and democrats of 1848, the programme of Marx, Engels and Lassalle -- the slogan of a united, Great German Republic. This is the banner that should have been unfurled before the country, which would have been a truly national banner of liberation, which would have been in accord with the best traditions of Germany and with the international class policy of the proletariat. . . . Hence, the grave dilemma -- the interests of the fatherland or the international solidarity of the proletariat -- the tragic conflict which prompted our parliamentarians to side, 'with a heavy heart', with the imperialist war, is purely imaginary, it is a bourgeois nationalist fiction. On the contrary, there is complete harmony between the interests of the country and the class interests of the proletarian International, both in time of war and in time of peace; both war and peace demand the most energetic development of the class struggle, the most determined fight for the Social-Democratic programme."

This is how Junius argues. The fallacy of his argument is strikingly evident, and since the tacit and avowed lackeys of tsarism, Plekhanov and Chkhenkeli, and perhaps even Martov and Chkheidze, may gloatingly seize upon Junius's words, not for the purpose of establishing theoretical truth, but for the purpose of wriggling, covering up their tracks and throwing dust into the eyes of the workers, we must in greater detail elucidate the theoretical source of Junius's error.

He suggests that the imperialist war should be "opposed" with a national programme. He urges the advanced class to turn its face to the past and not to the future! In France, in Germany, and in the whole of Europe it was a bourgeois democratic revolution that, objectively, was on the order of the day in 1793 and 1848. Corresponding to this objective historical situation was the "truly national", i.e., the national bourgeois programme of the then existing democracy; in 1793 this programme was carried out by the most revolutionary elements of the bourgeoisie and the plebeians, and in 1848 it was proclaimed by Marx in the name of the whole of progressive democracy. Objectively, the feudal and dynastic wars were then opposed by revolutionary democratic wars, by wars for national liberation. This was the content of the historical tasks of that epoch.

At the present time, the objective situation in the biggest advanced states of Europe is different. Progress, if we leave out for the moment the possibility of temporary steps backward, can be made only in the direction of socialist society, only in the direction of the socialist revolution. From the standpoint of progress, from the standpoint of the progressive class, the imperialist bourgeois war, the war of highly developed capitalism, can, objectively, be opposed only with a war against the bourgeoisie, i.e., primarily civil war for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; for unless such a war is waged, serious progress is impossible; this

may be followed -- only under certain special conditions -- by a war to defend the socialist state against bourgeois states. That is why the Bolsheviks (fortunately, very few, and quickly handed over by us to the Prizyv group) who were ready to adopt the point of view of conditional defence, i.e., defence of the fatherland on condition that there was a victorious revolution and the victory of a republic in Russia, were true to the letter of Bolshevism, but betrayed its spirit; for being drawn into the imperialist war of the leading European powers, Russia would also be waging an imperialist war, even under a republican form of government!

In saying that the class struggle is the best means of defence against invasion, Junius applies Marxist dialectics only halfway, taking one step on the right road and immediately deviating from it. Marxist dialectics call for a concrete analysis of each specific historical situation. It is true that class struggle is the best means of defence against invasion both when the bourgeoisie is overthrowing feudalism, and when the proletariat is overthrowing the bourgeoisie. Precisely because it is true with regard to every form of class oppression, it is too general, and therefore, inadequate in the present specific case. Civil war against the bourgeoisie is also a form of class struggle, and only this form of class struggle would have saved Europe (the whole of Europe, not only one country) from the peril of invasion. The "Great German Republic", had it existed in 1914-16, would also have waged an imperialist war.

Junius came very close to the correct solution of the problem and to the correct slogan: civil war against the bourgeoisie for socialism; but, as if afraid to speak the whole truth, he turned back, to the fantasy of a "national war" in 1914, 1915 and 1916. If we examine the question not from the theoretical angle but from the purely practical one, Junius's error remains just as evident. The whole of bourgeois society, all classes in Germany, including the

peasantry, were in favour of war (in all probability the same was the case in Russia -- at least a majority of the well-to-do and middle peasantry and a very considerable portion of the poor peasants were evidently under the spell of bourgeois imperialism). The bourgeoisie was armed to the teeth. Under such circumstances to "proclaim" the programme of a republic, a permanent parliament, election of officers by the people (the "armed nation"), etc., would have meant, in practice, "proclaiming " a revolution (with the wrong revolutionary programme!).

In the same breath Junius quite rightly says that a revolution cannot be "made". Revolution was on the order of the day in the 1914-16 period, it was hidden in the depths of the war, was emerging out of the war. This should have been "proclaimed " in the name of the revolutionary class, and its programme should have been fearlessly and fully announced, socialism is impossible in time of war without civil war against the arch-reactionary, criminal bourgeoisie, which condemns the people to untold disaster. Systematic, consistent, practical measures should have been planned, which could be carried out no matter at what pace the revolutionary crisis might develop, and which would be in line with the maturing revolution. These measures are indicated in our Party's resolution: (1) voting against war credits;(2) violation of the "class truce"; (3) creation of an illegal organisation; (4) fraternisation among the soldiers, (5) support for all the revolutionary actions of the masses. The success of all these steps inevitably leads to civil war.

The promulgation of a great historical programme was undoubtedly of tremendous significance; not the old national German programme, which became obsolete in 1914, 1915 and 1916, but the proletarian internationalist and socialist programme. "You, the bourgeoisie, are fighting for plunder; we, the workers of all the belligerent countries declare war upon you for, socialism" -

- that's the sort of speech that should have been delivered in the parliaments on August 4, 1914, by socialists who had not betrayed the proletariat, as the Legiens, Davids, Kautskys, Plekhanovs, Guesdes, Sembats, etc., had done.

Evidently Junius's error is due to two kinds of mistakes in reasoning. There is no doubt that Junius is decidedly opposed to the imperialist war and is decidedly in favour of revolutionary tactics; and all the gloating of the Plekhanovs over Junius's "defencism" cannot wipe out this fact. Possible and probable calumnies of this kind must be answered promptly and bluntly.

But, first, Junius has not completely rid himself of the "environment" of the German Social-Democrats, even the Leftists, who are afraid of a split, who are afraid to follow revolutionary slogans to their logical conclusions.[**]

** We find the same error in Junius's arguments about which is better, victory or defeat? His conclusion is that both are equally bad (ruin, growth of armaments, etc.). This is the point of view not of the revolutionary proletariat, but of the pacifist petty bourgeoisie. If one speaks about the "revolutionary intervention" of the proletariat -- of this both Junius and the theses of the International group speak, although unfortunately in terms that are too general -- one must raise the question from another point of view, namely: (1) Is [cont. onto p. 319. -- DJR] "revolutionary intervention" possible without the risk of defeat? (2) Is it possible to scourge the bourgeoisie and the government of one's own country without taking that risk? (3) Have we not always asserted, and does not the historical experience of reactionary wars prove, that defeats help the cause of the revolutionary class?

This is a false fear, and the Left Social-Democrats of Germany must and will rid themselves of it. They are sure to do so in the course of their struggle against the social-chauvinists. The fact is that they

are fighting against their own social-chauvinists resolutely, firmly and sincerely, and this is the tremendous, the fundamental difference in principle between them and the Martovs and Chkheidzes, who, with one hand (à la Skobelev) unfurl a banner bearing the greeting, "To the Liebknechts of All Countries", and with the other hand tenderly embrace Chkhenkeli and Potresov!

Secondly, Junius apparently wanted to achieve something in the nature of the Menshevik "theory of stages", of sad memory; he wanted to begin to carry out the revolutionary programme from the end that is "more suitable", "more popular" and more acceptable to the petty bourgeoisie. It is something like a plan "to outwit history", to outwit the philistines. He seems to say, surely, nobody would oppose a better way of defending the real fatherland; and the real fatherland is the Great German Republic, and the best defence is a militia, a permanent parliament, etc. Once it was accepted, that programme would automatically lead to the next stage -- to the socialist revolution.

Probably, it was reasoning of this kind that consciously or semi-consciously determined Junius's tactics. Needless to say, such reasoning is fallacious. Junius's pamphlet conjures up in our mind the picture of a lone man who has no comrades in an illegal organisation accustomed to thinking out revolutionary slogans to their conclusion and systematically educating the masses in their spirit. But this shortcoming -- it would be a grave error to forget this -- is not Junius's personal failing, but the result of the weakness of all the German Leftists, who have become entangled in the vile net of Kautskyite hypocrisy, pedantry and "friendliness" for the opportunists. Junius's adherents have managed, in spite of their isolation, to begin the publication of illegal leaflets and to start the war against Kautskyism. They will succeed in going further along the right road.

Lenin

From; The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution

September 1916

Collected Works, Volume 23, pp. 77-87.

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 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. Discussion have been started in the periodicals *Neue Leben* and *Vorbote*.

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

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 Section 5 of the Internationale group these we read: "National wars are no longer possible in the era of this unbridled imperialism." That is obviously wrong.

The history of the 20th 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, 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 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, progress, revolutionary wars "of any kind", wages, 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 wars 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, 1882, he clearly stated that it was possible for already victorious socialism to wage "defensive wars". What he had in mind was defense 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 in 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 things: 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 “defense 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 “defense 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 “defense 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 Galliffet 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.

Lenin

The Tasks of the Revolution

October 1917

Collected Works, Volume 26, 1972, pp. 59-68

Russia is a country of the petty bourgeoisie, by far the greater part of the population belonging to this class. Its vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are inevitable, and only when it joins the proletariat is the victory of the revolution, of the cause of peace, freedom, and land for the working people assured easily, peacefully, quickly, and smoothly.

The course of our revolution shows us these vacillations in practice. Let us then not harbour any illusions about the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties; let us stick firmly to the path of our proletarian class. The poverty of the poor peasants, the horrors of the war, the horrors of hunger—all these are showing the masses more and more clearly the correctness of the proletarian path, the need to support the proletarian revolution.

The "peaceful" hopes of the petty bourgeoisie that there might be a "coalition" with the bourgeoisie and agreements with them, that it will be possible to wait "calmly" for the "speedy" convocation of the Constituent Assembly, etc., have been mercilessly, cruelly, implacably destroyed by the course of the revolution. The Kornilov revolt was the last cruel lesson, a lesson on a grand scale, supplementing thousands upon thousands of small lessons in which workers and peasants were deceived by local capitalists and landowners, in which soldiers were deceived by the officers etc., etc.

Discontent, indignation and wrath are growing in the army, among the peasantry and among the workers. The "coalition" of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the

bourgeoisie, promising everything and fulfilling nothing, is irritating the masses, is opening their eyes, is pushing them towards insurrection.

There is a growing Left opposition among the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Spiridonova and others) and among the Mensheviks (Martov and others), and has already reached forty per cent of the Council and Congress of those parties. And down below, among the proletariat and the peasantry, particularly the poorest sections, the majority of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks belong to the Lefts.

The Kornilov revolt is instructive and has proved a good lesson.

It is impossible to know whether the Soviets will be able to go farther than the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and thus ensure a peaceful development of the revolution, or whether they will continue to mark time, thus making a proletarian uprising inevitable.

We cannot know this.

Our business is to help get everything possible done to make sure the "last" chance for a peaceful development of the revolution, to help by the presentation of our programme, by making clear its national character, its absolute accord with the interests and demands of a vast majority of the population.

The following lines are an essay in the presentation of such a programme.

Let us take it more to those down below, to the masses, to the office employees, to the workers, to the peasants, not only to our supporters, but particularly to those who follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, to the non-party elements, to the ignorant. Let us lift them up so that they can pass an independent judgment, make their own decisions, send their own delegations to the Conference,

to the Soviets, to the government and our work will not have been in vain, no matter what the outcome of the Conference. This will then prove useful for the Conference, for the elections to the Constituent Assembly, and for all other political activity in general.

Experience teaches us that the Bolsheviki programme and tactics are correct. So little time passed, so much happened from April 20 to the Kornilov revolt.

The experience of the masses, the experience of oppressed classes taught them very, very much in that time; the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have completely cut adrift from the masses. This will most certainly be revealed in the discussion of our concrete programme insofar as we are able to bring it to the notice of the masses.

Agreements With the Capitalists are Disastrous

1. To leave in power the representatives of the bourgeoisie, even a small number of them, to leave in power such notorious Kornilovites as Generals Alexeyev, Klembovsky, Bagration, Gagarin, and others, or such as have proved their complete powerlessness in face of the bourgeoisie, and their ability of acting Bonaparte-fashion like Kerensky, is, on the one hand, merely opening the door wide to famine and the inevitable economic catastrophe which the capitalists are purposely accelerating and intensifying; on the other hand, it will lead to a military catastrophe, since the army hates the General Staff and cannot enthusiastically participate in the imperialist war. Besides, there is no doubt that Kornilovite generals and officers remaining in power will deliberately open the front to the Germans, as they have done in Galicia and Riga. This can be prevented only by the formation of a new government on a new basis, as expounded below. To continue any kind of agreements with the bourgeoisie after all that we have gone through since April 20 would be, on the part of the

Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not only an error but a direct betrayal of the people and of the revolution.

2. All power in the country must pass exclusively to the representatives of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies on the basis of a definite programme and under the condition of the government being fully responsible to the Soviets. New elections to the Soviets must be held immediately, both to record the experience of the people during the recent weeks of the revolution, which have been particularly eventful, and to eliminate crying injustices (lack of proportional representation, unequal elections, etc.) which in some cases still remain.

All power locally, wherever there are not yet any democratically elected institutions, and also in the army, must be taken over exclusively by the local Soviets and by commissars and other institutions elected by them, but only those that have been properly elected.

Workers and revolutionary troops, i.e., those who have in practice shown their ability to suppress the Kornilovites, must everywhere be armed, and this must be done with the full support of the state.

Peace to the Peoples

3. The Soviet Government must straight away offer to all the belligerent peoples (i.e., simultaneously both to their governments and to the worker and peasant masses) to conclude an immediate general peace on democratic terms, and also to conclude an immediate armistice (even if only for three months).

The main condition for a democratic peace is the renunciation of annexations (seizures)—not in the incorrect sense that all powers get back what they have lost, but in the only correct sense that every nationality without any exception, both in Europe and in the colonies, shall obtain its freedom and the possibility to decide for

itself whether it is to form a separate state or whether it is to enter into the composition of some other state.

In offering the peace terms, the Soviet Government must itself immediately take steps towards their fulfillment, i.e., it must publish and repudiate the secret treaties by which we have been bound up to the present time, those which were concluded by the tsar and which give Russian capitalists the promise of the pillaging of Turkey, Austria, etc. Then we must immediately satisfy the demands of the Ukrainians and the Finns, ensure them, as well as all other non-Russian nationalities in Russia, full freedom, including freedom of secession, applying the same to all Armenia, undertaking to evacuate that country as well as the Turkish lands occupied by us, etc.

Such peace terms will not meet with the approval of the capitalists, but they will meet with such tremendous sympathy on the part of all the peoples and will cause such a great world-wide outburst of enthusiasm and of general indignation against the continuation of the predatory war that it is extremely probable that we shall at once obtain a truce and a consent to open peace negotiations. For the workers' revolution against the war is irresistibly growing everywhere, and it can be spurred on, not by phrases about peace (with which the workers and peasants have been deceived by all the imperialist governments including our own Kerensky government), but by a break with the capitalists and by the offer of peace.

If the least probable thing happens, i.e., if not a single belligerent state accepts even a truce, then as far as we are concerned the war becomes truly forced upon us, it becomes a truly just war of defence. If this is understood by the proletariat and the poor peasantry Russia will become many times stronger even in the military sense, especially after a complete break with the capitalists who are robbing the people; furthermore, under such conditions it

would, as far as we are concerned, be a war in league with the oppressed classes of all countries, a war in league with the oppressed peoples of the whole world, not in word, but indeed.

The people must be particularly cautioned against the capitalists' assertion which sometimes influences the petty bourgeoisie and others who are frightened, namely, that the British and other capitalists are capable of doing serious damage to the Russian revolution if we break the present predatory alliance with them. Such an assertion is false through and through, for "Allied financial aid" enriches the bankers and "supports" the Russian workers and peasants in exactly the same way as a rope supports a man who has been hanged. There is plenty of bread, coal, oil and iron in Russia; for these products to be properly distributed it is only necessary for us to rid ourselves of the landowners and capitalists who are robbing the people. As to the possibility of the Russian people being threatened with war by their present Allies, it is obviously absurd to assume that the French and Italians could unite their armies with those of the Germans and move them against Russia who offers a just peace. As to Britain, America, and Japan, even if they were to declare war against Russia (which for them is extremely difficult, both because of the extreme unpopularity of such a war among the masses and because of the divergence of material interests of the capitalists of those countries over the partitioning of Asia, especially over the plunder of China), they could not cause Russia one-hundredth part of the damage and misery which the war with Germany, Austria, and Turkey is causing her.

Lenin

Socialism and War

The Attitude of Socialists Towards Wars

Socialists have always condemned war between nations as barbarous and brutal. But our attitude towards war is fundamentally different from that of the bourgeois pacifists (supporters and advocates of peace) and of the Anarchists. We differ from the former in that we understand the inevitable connection between wars and the class struggle within the country; we understand that war cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished and Socialism is created; and we also differ in that we fully regard civil wars, i.e., wars waged by the oppressed class against the oppressing class, slaves against slave-owners, serfs against land-owners, and wage-workers against the bourgeoisie, as legitimate, progressive and necessary. We Marxists differ from both the pacifists and the Anarchists in that we deem it necessary historically (from the standpoint of Marx's dialectical materialism) to study each war separately. In history there have been numerous wars which, in spite of all the horrors, atrocities, distress and suffering that inevitably accompany all wars, were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy the exceptionally harmful and reactionary institutions (for example, autocracy or serfdom), the most barbarous despotisms in Europe (Turkish and Russian).

Imperialism is the epoch of the constantly increasing oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of "great" powers and, therefore, it is impossible to fight for the socialist international revolution against imperialism unless the right of nations to self-determination is recognized. "No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (Marx and Engels). A proletariat that tolerates the slightest violence by "its" nation against other nations cannot be a socialist proletariat.

Lenin

A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism

Collected Works, Volume 23, pages 28-76.

The Marxist Attitude Towards War and “Defence of the Fatherland”

Kievsky is convinced, and wants to convince his reader, that he “disagrees” only with §9 of our Party Programme dealing with national self-determination. He is very angry and tries to refute the charge that on the question of democracy he is departing from the fundamentals of Marxism in general, that he has “betrayed” (the angry quotation marks are Kievsky’s) Marxism on basic issues. But the point is that the moment our author begins to discuss his allegedly partial disagreement on an individual issue, the moment he adduces his arguments, considerations, etc., he immediately reveals that he is deviating from Marxism all along the line. Take §b (Section 2) of his article. “This demand [i. e., national self-determination] directly [!] leads to social-patriotism,” our author proclaims, explaining that the “treasonous” slogan of fatherland defence follows “quite [!] logically [!] from the right of nations to self-determination”.... In his opinion, self-determination implies “sanctioning the treason of the French and Belgian social-patriots, who are defending this independence [the national independence of France and Belgium] with arms in hand! They are doing what the supporters of ‘self-determination’ only advocate....” “Defence of the fatherland belongs to the arsenal of our worst enemies...” “We categorically refuse to understand how one can simultaneously be against defence of the fatherland and for self-determination, against the fatherland and for it.”

That's Kievsky. He obviously has not understood our resolutions against the fatherland defence slogan in the present war. It is therefore necessary again to explain the meaning of what is so clearly set out in our resolutions.

The resolution our Party adopted at its Berne Conference in March 1915, "On the Defence of the Fatherland Slogan", begins with the words: "The present war is, in substance"....

That the resolution deals with the present war could not have been put more plainly. The words "in substance" indicate that we must distinguish between the apparent and the real, between appearance and substance, between the word and the deed. The purpose of all talk about defence of the fatherland in this war is mendaciously to present as national the imperialist war of 1914–16, waged for the division of colonies, the plunder of foreign lands, etc. And to obviate even the slightest possibility of distorting our views, we added to the resolution a special paragraph on "genuinely national wars", which "took place especially (especially does not mean exclusively!) between 1789 and 1871".

The resolution explains that the "basis" of these "genuinely" national wars was a "long process of mass national movements, of a struggle against absolutism and feudalism, the overthrow of national oppression"....

Clear, it would seem. The present imperialist war stems from the general conditions of the imperialist era and is not accidental, not an exception, not a deviation from the general and typical. Talk of defence of the fatherland is therefore a deception of the people, for this war is not a national war. In a genuinely national war the words "defence of the fatherland" are not a deception and we are not opposed to it. Such (genuinely national) wars took place "especially" in 1789–1871, and our resolution, while not denying by a single word that they are possible now too, explains how we

should distinguish a genuinely national from an imperialist war covered by deceptive national slogans. Specifically, in order to distinguish the two we must examine whether the "basis" of the war is a "long process of mass national movements", the "overthrow of national oppression". The resolution on "pacifism" expressly states: "Social-Democrats cannot overlook the positive significance of revolutionary wars, i.e., not imperialist wars, but such as were conducted, for instance [note: "for instance"], between 1789 and 1871 with the aim of doing away with national oppression...." Could our 1915 Party resolution speak of the national wars waged from 1789 to 1871 and say that we do not deny the positive significance of such wars if they were not considered possible today too? Certainly not.

A commentary, or popular explanation, of our Party resolutions is given in the Lenin and Zinoviev pamphlet *Socialism and War*. It plainly states, on page 5, that "socialists have regarded wars 'for the defence of the fatherland', or 'defensive' wars, as legitimate, progressive and just" only in the sense of "overthrowing alien oppression". It cites an example: Persia against Russia, "etc.", and says: "These would be just, and defensive wars, irrespective of who would lie the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

The pamphlet appeared in August 1915 and there are German and French translations. Kievsky is fully aware of its contents. And never, on no occasion, has he or anyone else challenged the resolution on the defence of the fatherland slogan, or the resolution on pacifism, or their interpretation in the pamphlet. Never, not once! We are therefore entitled to ask: are we slandering Kievsky when we say that he has absolutely failed to understand Marxism if, beginning with March 1915, he has not challenged our Party's views on the war, whereas now, in August 1916, in an

article on self-determination, i.e., on a supposedly partial issue, he reveals an amazing lack of understanding of a general issue?

Kievsky says that the fatherland defence slogan is “treasonous”. We can confidently assure him that every slogan is and always will be “treasonous” for those who mechanically repeat it without understanding its meaning, without giving it proper thought, for those who merely memorise the words without analysing their implications.

What, generally speaking, is “defence of the fatherland”? Is it a scientific concept relating to economics, politics, etc.? No. It is a much bandied about current expression, sometimes simply a philistine phrase, intended to justify the war. Nothing more. Absolutely nothing! The term “treasonous” can apply only in the sense that the philistine is capable of justifying any war by pleading “we are defending our fatherland”, whereas Marxism, which does not degrade itself by stooping to the philistine’s level, requires an historical analysis of each war in order to determine whether or not that particular war can be considered progressive, whether it serves the interests of democracy and the proletariat and, in that sense, is legitimate, just, etc.

The defence of the fatherland slogan is all too often unconscious philistine justification of war and reveals inability to analyse the meaning and implications of a particular war and see it in historical perspective.

Marxism makes that analysis and says: if the “substance” of a war is, for example, the overthrow of alien oppression (which was especially typical of Europe in 1789–1871), then such a war is progressive as far as the oppressed state or nation is concerned. If, however, the “substance” of a war is redivision of colonies, division of booty, plunder of foreign lands (and such is the war of

1914–16), then all talk of defending the fatherland is “sheer deception of the people”.

How, then, can we disclose and define the “substance” of a war? War is the continuation of policy. Consequently, we must examine the policy pursued prior to the war, the policy that led to and brought about the war. If it was an imperialist policy, i.e., one designed to safeguard the interests of finance capital and rob and oppress colonies and foreign countries, then the war stemming from that policy is imperialist. If it was a national liberation policy, i.e., one expressive of the mass movement against national oppression, then the war stemming from that policy is a war of national liberation.

The philistine does not realise that war is “the continuation of policy”, and consequently limits himself to the formula that “the enemy has attacked us”, “the enemy has invaded my country”, without stopping to think what issues are at stake in the war, which classes are waging it, and with what political objects. Kievsky stoops right down to the level of such a philistine when he declares that Belgium has been occupied by the Germans, and hence, from the point of view of self-determination, the “Belgian social-patriots are right”, or: the Germans have occupied part of France, hence, “Guesde can be satisfied”, for “what is involved is territory populated by his nation” (and not by an alien nation).

For the philistine the important thing is where the armies stand, who is winning at the moment. For the Marxist the important thing is what issues are at stake in this war, during which first one, then the other army may be on top.

What is the present war being fought over? The answer is given in our resolution (based on the policy the belligerent powers pursued for decades prior to the war). England, France and Russia are fighting to keep the colonies they have seized, to be able to rob

Turkey, etc. Germany is fighting to take over these colonies and to be able herself to rob Turkey, etc. Let us suppose even that the Germans take Paris or St. Petersburg. Would that change the nature of the present war? Not at all. The Germans' purpose—and more important, the policy that would bring it to realisation if they were to win—is to seize the colonies, establish domination over Turkey, annex areas populated by other nations, for instance, Poland, etc. It is definitely not to bring the French or the Russians under foreign domination. The real essence of the present war is not national but imperialist. In other words, it is not being fought to enable one side to overthrow national oppression, which the other side is trying to maintain. It is a war between two groups of oppressors, between two freebooters over the division of their booty, over who shall rob Turkey and the colonies.

In short: a war between imperialist Great Powers (i.e., powers that oppress a whole number of nations and enmesh them in dependence on finance capital, etc.), or in alliance with the Great Powers, is an imperialist war. Such is the war of 1914–16. And in this war “defence of the fatherland” is a deception, an attempt to justify the war.

A war against imperialist, i.e., oppressing, powers by oppressed (for example, colonial) nations is a genuine national war. It is possible today too. “Defence of the fatherland” in a war waged by an oppressed nation against a foreign oppressor is not a deception. Socialists are not opposed to “defence of the fatherland” in such a war.

National self-determination is the same as the struggle for complete national liberation, for complete independence, against annexation, and socialists cannot—without ceasing to be socialists—reject such a struggle in whatever form, right down to an uprising or war.

Kievsky thinks he is arguing against Plekhanov: it was Plekhanov who pointed to the link between self-determination and defence of the fatherland! Kievsky believed Plekhanov that the link was really of the kind Plekhanov made it out to be. And having believed him, Kievsky took fright and decided that he must reject self-determination so as not to fall into Plekhanov's conclusions.... There is great trust in Plekhanov, and great fright, but there is no trace of thought about the substance of Plekhanov's mistake!

The social-chauvinists plead self-determination in order to present this war as a national war. There is only one correct way of combating them: we must show that the war is being fought not to liberate nations, but to determine which of the great robbers will oppress more nations. To fall into negation of wars really waged for liberating nations is to present the worst possible caricature of Marxism. Plekhanov and the French social-chauvinists harp on the republic in France in order to justify its "defence" against the German monarchy. If we were to follow Kievsky's line of reasoning, we would have to oppose either the republic or a war really fought to preserve the republic!! The German social-chauvinists point to universal suffrage and compulsory primary education in their country to justify its "defence" against tsarism. If we were to follow Kievsky's line of reasoning, we would have to oppose either universal suffrage and compulsory primary education or a war really fought to safeguard political freedom against attempts to abolish it!

Up to the 1914–16 war Karl Kautsky was a Marxist, and many of his major writings and statements will always remain models of Marxism. On August 26, 1910, he wrote in *Die Neue Zeit*, in reference to the imminent war:

“In a war between Germany and England the issue is not democracy, but world domination, i.e., exploitation of the world. That is not an issue on which Social-Democrats can side with the exploiters of their nation” (Neue Zeit, 28. Jahrg., Bd. 2, S. 776).

There you have an excellent Marxist formulation, one that fully coincides with our own and fully exposes the present-day Kautsky, who has turned from Marxism to defence of social-chauvinism. It is a formulation (we shall have occasion to revert to it in other articles) that clearly brings out the principles underlying the Marxist attitude towards war. War is the continuation of policy. Hence, once there is a struggle for democracy, a war for democracy is possible. National self-determination is but one of the democratic demands and does not, in principle, differ from other democratic demands. “World domination” is, to put it briefly, the substance of imperialist policy, of which imperialist war is the continuation. Rejection of “defence of the father land” in a democratic war, i.e., rejecting participation in such a war, is an absurdity that has nothing in common with Marxism. To embellish imperialist war by applying to it the concept of “defence of the fatherland”, i.e., by presenting it as a democratic war, is to deceive the workers and side with the reactionary bourgeoisie.

Stalin

The Foundations of Leninism

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Works Volume 6, pages 71-196.

From this theme I take two main questions:

- a) the presentation of the question;
- b) the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolution.

1) The presentation of the question. During the last two decades the national question has undergone a number of very important changes. The national question in the period of the Second International and the national question in the period of Leninism are far from being the same thing. They differ profoundly from each other, not only in their scope, but also in their intrinsic character.

Formerly, the national question was usually confined to a narrow circle of questions, concerning, primarily, "civilised" nationalities. The Irish, the Hungarians, the Poles, the Finns, the Serbs, and several other European nationalities—that was the circle of unequal peoples in whose destinies the leaders of the Second International were interested. The scores and hundreds of millions of Asiatic and African peoples who are suffering national oppression in its most savage and cruel form usually remained outside of their field of vision. They hesitated to put white and black, "civilised" and "uncivilised" on the same plane. Two or three meaningless, lukewarm resolutions, which carefully evaded the question of liberating the colonies—that was all the leaders of the Second International could boast of. Now we can say that this duplicity and half-heartedness in dealing with the national question has

been brought to an end. Leninism laid bare this crying incongruity, broke down the wall between whites and blacks, between European and Asiatics, between the "civilised" and "uncivilised" slaves of imperialism, and thus linked the national question with the question of the colonies. The national question was thereby transformed from a particular and internal state problem into a general and international problem, into a world problem of emancipating the oppressed peoples in the dependent countries and colonies from the yoke of imperialism.

Formerly, the principle of self-determination of nations was usually misinterpreted, and not infrequently it was narrowed down to the idea of the right of nations to autonomy. Certain leaders of the Second International even went so far as to turn the right to self-determination into the right to cultural autonomy, i.e., the right of oppressed nations to have their own cultural institutions, leaving all political power in the hands of the ruling nation. As a consequence, the idea of self-determination stood in danger of being transformed from an instrument for combating annexations into an instrument for justifying them. Now we can say that this confusion has been cleared up. Leninism broadened the conception of self-determinism, interpreting it as the right of the oppressed peoples of the dependent countries and colonies to complete secession, as the right of nations to independent existence as states. This precluded the possibility of justifying annexations by interpreting the right to self-determinism as the right to autonomy. Thus, the principle of self-determinism itself was transformed from an instrument for deceiving the masses, which it undoubtedly was in the hands of the social-chauvinists during the imperialist war, into an instrument for exposing all imperialist aspirations and chauvinist machinations, into an instrument for the political education of the masses in the spirit of internationalism.

Formerly, the question of the oppressed nations was usually regarded as purely a juridical question. Solemn proclamations about "national equality of rights," innumerable declarations about the "equality of nations"-that was the stock-in-trade of the parties of the Second International, which glossed over the fact that "equality of nations" under imperialism, where one group of nations (a minority) lives by exploiting another group of nations, is sheer mockery of the oppressed nations. Now we can say that this bourgeois-juridical point of view on the national question has been exposed. Leninism brought the national question down from the lofty heights of high-sounding declarations to solid ground, and declared that pronouncements about the "equality of nations" not backed by the direct support of the proletarian parties for the liberation struggle of the oppressed nations are meaningless and false. In this way the question of the oppressed nations become one of supporting the oppressed nations, of rendering real and continuous assistance to them in their struggle against imperialism for real equality of nations, for their independent existence as states.

Formerly, the national question was regarded from a reformist point of view, as an independent question having no connection with the general question of the power of capital, of the overthrow of imperialism, of the proletarian revolution. It was tacitly assumed that the victory of the proletariat in Europe was possible without a direct, alliance with the liberation movement in the colonies, that the national-colonial question could be solved on the quiet, "of its own accord," off the highway of the proletarian revolution, without a revolutionary struggle against imperialism. Now we can say that anti-revolutionary point of view has been exposed. Leninism has proved, and the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia has confirmed, that the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution, and that the road to victory of the

revolution in the West lies through the revolutionary alliance with the liberation movement of the colonies and dependent countries against imperialism. The national question is a part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The question is as follows: Are the revolutionary potentialities latent in the revolutionary liberation movement of the oppressed countries already exhausted, or not; and if not, is there any hope, any basis, for utilising these potentialities for the proletarian revolution, for transforming the dependent and colonial countries from a reserve of the imperialist bourgeoisie into a reserve of the revolutionary proletariat, into an ally of the latter?

Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, i.e., it recognises the existence of revolutionary capacities in the national liberation movement of the oppressed countries, and the possibility of using these for overthrowing the common enemy, for overthrowing imperialism. The mechanics of the development of imperialism, the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia wholly confirm the conclusions of Leninism on this score.

Hence the necessity for the proletariat of the "dominant" nations to support-resolutely and actively to support-the national liberation movement of the oppressed and dependent peoples.

This does not mean, of course, that the proletariat must support every national movement, everywhere and always, in every individual concrete case. It means that support must be given to such national movements as tend to weaken, to overthrow imperialism, and not to strengthen and preserve it. Cases occur when the national movements in certain oppressed countries came into conflict with the interests of the development of the proletarian movement. In such cases support is, of course, entirely out of the question. The question of the rights of nations is not an

isolated, self-sufficient question; it is a part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution, subordinate to the whole, and must be considered from the point of view of the whole. In the forties of the last century Marx supported the national movement of the Poles and Hungarians and was opposed to the national movement of the Czechs and the South Slavs. Why? Because the Czechs and the South Slavs were then "reactionary peoples," "Russian outposts" in Europe, outposts of absolutism; whereas the Poles and the Hungarians were "revolutionary peoples," fighting against absolutism. Because support of the national movement of the Czechs and the South Slavs was at that time equivalent to indirect support for tsarism, the most dangerous enemy of the revolutionary movement in Europe.

"The various demands of democracy," writes Lenin, "including self-determination, are not an absolute, but a small part of the general democratic (now: general socialist) world movement. In individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole, if so, it must be rejected" (see Vol. XIX, pp.257-58).

This is the position in regard to the question of particular national movements, of the possible reactionary character of these movements-if, of course, they are appraised not from the formal point of view, not from the point of view of abstract rights, but concretely, from the point of view of the interests of the revolutionary movement.

The same must be said of the revolutionary character of national movements in general. The unquestionably revolutionary character of the vast majority of national movements is as relative and peculiar as is the possible revolutionary character of certain particular national movements. The revolutionary character of a national movement under the conditions of imperialist oppression does not necessarily presuppose the existence of proletarian elements in the movement, the existence of a revolutionary or a

republican programme of the movement, the existence of a democratic basis of the movement. The struggle that the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of Afghanistan is objectively a revolutionary struggle, despite the monarchist views of the Emir and his associates, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism; whereas the struggle waged by such "desperate" democrats and "Socialists," "revolutionaries" and republicans as, for example, Kerensky and Tsereteli, Renaudel and Scheidemann, Chernov and Dan, Henderson and Clynes, during the imperialist war was a reactionary struggle, for its results was the embellishment, the strengthening, the victory, of imperialism. For the same reasons, the struggle that the Egyptians merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a revolutionary struggle, despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois title of the leaders of Egyptian national movement, despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism; whereas the struggle that the British "Labour" Government is waging to preserve Egypt's dependent position is for the same reason a reactionary struggle, despite the proletarian origin and the proletarian title of the members of the government, despite the fact that they are "for" socialism. There is no need to mention the national movement in other, larger, colonial and dependent countries, such as India and China, every step of which along the road to liberation, even if it runs counter to the demands of formal democracy, is a steam-hammer blow at imperialism, i.e., is undoubtedly a revolutionary step.

Lenin was right in saying that the national movement of the oppressed countries should be appraised not from the point of view of formal democracy, but from the point of view of the actual results, as shown by the general balance sheet of the struggle against imperialism, that is to say, "not in isolation, but on a world scale" (see Vol. XIX, p. 257).

2) The liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolution. In solving the national question Leninism proceeds from the following theses:

a) the world is divided into two camps: the camp of a handful of civilised nations, which possess finance capital and exploit the vast majority of the population of the globe; and the camp of the oppressed and exploited peoples in the colonies and dependent countries, which constitute the majority;

b) the colonies and the dependent countries, oppressed and exploited by finance capital, constitute a vast reserve and a very important source of strength for imperialism;

c) the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples in the dependent and colonial countries against imperialism is the only road that leads to their emancipation from oppression and exploitation;

d) the most important colonial and dependent countries have already taken the path of the national liberation movement, which cannot but lead to the crisis of world capitalism;

e) the interests of the proletarian movement in the developed countries and of the national liberation movement in the colonies call for the union of these two forms of the revolutionary movement into a common front against the common enemy, against imperialism;

f) the victory of the working class in the developed countries and the liberation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism are impossible without the formation and the consolidation of a common revolutionary front;

g) the formation of a common revolutionary front is impossible unless the proletariat of the oppressor nations renders direct and determined support to the liberation movement of the oppressed

peoples against the imperialism of its "own country," for "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (Engels);

h) this support implies the upholding defence and implementation of the slogan of the right of nations to secession, to independent existence as states;

i) unless this slogan is implemented, the union and collaboration of nations within a single world economic system, which is the material basis for the victory of world socialism, cannot be brought about;

j) this union can only be voluntary, arising on the basis of mutual confidence and fraternal relations among peoples.

Hence the two sides, the two tendencies in the national question: the tendency towards political emancipation from the shackles of imperialism and towards the formation of an independent national state—a tendency which arose as a consequence of imperialist oppression and colonial exploitation; and the tendency towards closer economic relations among nations, which arose as a result of the formation of the world market and a world economic system.

"Developing capitalism," says Lenin, "knows two historical tendencies in the national question. First: the awakening of national life and national movements, struggle against all national oppression, creation of national states. Second: development and acceleration of all kinds of intercourse between nations, breakdown of national barriers, creation of the international unity of capital, of economic life in general, of politics, science, etc.

"Both tendencies are a world-wide law of capitalism. The first predominates at the beginning of its development, the second characterises mature capitalism that is moving towards its transformation into socialist society" (see Vol. XVII, pp. 139-40).

For imperialism these two tendencies represent irreconcilable contradictions; because imperialism cannot exist without exploiting colonies and forcibly retaining them within the framework of the "integral whole"; because imperialism can bring nations together only by means of annexations and colonial conquest, without which imperialism is, generally speaking, inconceivable.

For communism, on the contrary, these tendencies are but two sides of a single cause—the cause of the emancipation of the oppressed people from the yoke of imperialism; because communism knows that the union of peoples in a single world economic system is possible only in the basis of mutual confidence and voluntary agreement, and that road to the formation of a voluntary union of peoples lies through the separation of the colonies from the "integral" imperialist "whole," through the transformation of the colonies into independent states.

Hence the necessity for a stubborn, continuous and determined struggle against the dominant-nation chauvinism of the "Socialist" of the ruling nations (Britain, France, America, Italy, Japan, etc.), who do not want to fight their imperialist governments, who do not want to support the struggle of the oppressed peoples in "their" colonies for emancipation from oppression, for secession.

Without such a struggle the education of the working class of the ruling nations in the spirit of true internationalism, in the spirit of closer relations with the toiling masses of the dependent countries and colonies, in the spirit of real preparation for the proletarian revolution, is inconceivable. The revolution would not have been victorious in Russia and Kolchak and Denikin would not have been crushed, had not the Russian proletariat enjoyed the sympathy and support of the oppressed peoples of the former Russian Empire. But to win the sympathy and support of these

peoples it had first of all to break the fetters of Russian imperialism and free these people from the yoke of national oppression.

Without this it would have been impossible to consolidate Soviet power, to implant real internationalism and to create that remarkable organisation for the collaboration of peoples which is called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and which is the living prototype of the future union of peoples in a single world economic system.

Hence the necessity of fighting against the national isolationism, narrowness and aloofness of the Socialist in the oppressed countries, who do not want to rise above their national parochialism and who do not understand the connection between the liberation movement in their own countries and the proletarian movement in the ruling countries.

Without such a struggle it is inconceivable that the proletariat of the oppressed nations can maintain an independent policy and its class solidarity with the proletariat of the ruling countries in the fight for the overthrow of the common enemy, in the fight for the overthrow of imperialism.

Without such a struggle, internationalism would be impossible.

Such is the way in which the toiling masses of the dominant and of the oppressed nations must be educated in the spirit of revolutionary internationalism.

Here is what Lenin says about this twofold task of communism in educating the workers in the spirit of internationalism:

"Can such education...be concretely identical in great, oppressing nations and in small, oppressed nations, in annexing nations and in annexed nations?"

"Obviously not. The way to the one goal-to complete equality, to the closest relations and the subsequent amalgamation of all nations-obviously proceeds here by different routes in each concrete case; in the same way, let us say, as the route to a point in the middle of a given page lies towards the left from one edge and towards the right from the opposite edge. If a Social-Democrat belonging to a great, oppressing, annexing nation, while advocating the amalgamation of nations in general, were to forget even for one moment that 'his' Nicholas II, 'his' Wilhelm, George, Poincare, etc., also stands for amalgamation with small nations (by means of annexations)-Nicholas II being for 'amalgamation' with Galicia, Wilhelm II for 'amalgamation' with Belgium, etc.-such a Social-Democrat would be a ridiculous doctrinaire in theory and an abettor of imperialism in practice.

"The weight of emphasis in the internationalist education of the workers in the oppressing countries must necessarily consist in their advocating and upholding freedom of secession for oppressed countries. Without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every Social-Democrat of an oppressing nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as an imperialist and a scoundrel. This is an absolute demand, even if the chance of secession being possible and 'feasible' before the introduction of socialism be one in a thousand....

"On the other hand, a Social-Democrat belonging to a small nation must emphasise in his agitation the second word of our general formula: 'voluntary union' of nations. He may, without violating his duties as an internationalist, be in favour of either the political independence of his nation or its inclusion in a neighboring state X,Y,Z, etc. But in all cases he must fight against small-nation narrow-mindedness, isolationism and aloofness, he must fight for the recognition of the whole and the general, for the subordination of the interests of the particular to the interests of the general.

"People who have not gone thoroughly into the question think there is a 'contradiction' in Social-Democrats of oppressing nations insisting on 'freedom of secession,' while Social-Democrats of oppressed nations insist on 'freedom of union.' However, a little reflection will show that there is not, and cannot be, any other road leading from the given situation to internationalism and the amalgamation of nations, any other road to this goal" (see Vol. XIX, pp. 261-62).

Lenin

Farewell Letter to the Swiss Workers

March 26 (April 8), 1917

Collected Works, Volume 23, pages 367-374.

Comrades, Swiss workers,

Leaving Switzerland for Russia, to continue revolutionary-internationalist activity in our country, we, members of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party united under the Central Committee (as distinct from another party bearing the same name, but united under the Organising Committee), wish to convey to you our fraternal greetings and expression of our profound comradely gratitude for your comradely treatment of the political émigrés.

If the avowed social-patriots and opportunists, the Swiss Grütlians who, like the social-patriots of all countries, have deserted the camp of the proletariat for the camp of the bourgeoisie; if these people have openly called upon you to fight the harmful influence of foreigners upon the Swiss labour movement; if the disguised social-patriots and opportunists who constitute a majority among the leaders of the Swiss Socialist Party have been pursuing similar tactics under cover, we consider it our duty to state that on the part of the revolutionary, internationalist socialist workers of Switzerland we have met with warm sympathy, and have greatly benefited from comradely relations with them.

We have always been particularly careful in dealing with questions, acquaintance with which requires prolonged participation in the Swiss movement. But those of us—and there were hardly more than 10 or 15—who have been members of the Swiss Socialist Party have considered it our duty steadfastly to maintain our point of view, the point of view of the Zimmerwald

Left, on general and fundamental question is of the international socialist movement. We considered it our duty determinedly to fight not only social-patriotism, but also the so-called "Centrist" trend to which belong R. Grimm, F. Schneider, Jacques Schmid and others in Switzerland, Kautsky, Haase, and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft in Germany, Longuet, Pressemane and others in France, Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and others in England, Turati, Treves and their friends in Italy, and the above-mentioned party headed by the Organising Committee (Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Skobelev and others) in Russia.

We have worked hand in hand with the revolutionary Social-Democrats of Switzerland grouped, in particular, around the magazine Freie Jugend. They formulated and circulated (in the German and French languages) the proposals for a referendum in favour of a party congress in April 1917 to discuss the party's attitude on the war. At the Zurich cantonal congress in Töss they tabled a resolution on behalf of the youth and the "Lefts" on the war issue, and in March 1917 issued and circulated in certain localities of French Switzerland a leaflet, in the German and French languages, entitled "Our Peace Terms", etc.

To these comrades, whose views we share, and with whom we worked hand in hand, we convey our fraternal greetings.

We have never had the slightest doubt that the imperialist government of England will under no circumstances permit the Russian internationalists, who are implacable opponents of the imperialist government of Guchkov-Milyukov and Co. and of Russia continuing the imperialist war, to return to Russia.

In this connection, we must briefly explain our understanding of the tasks of the Russian revolution. We believe this all the more necessary because through the Swiss workers we can and must address ourselves to the German, French and Italian workers, who

speak the same languages as the population of Switzerland, a country that still enjoys the benefits of peace and, relatively, the largest measure of political freedom.

We abide unconditionally by our declaration, which appeared in the Central Organ of our Party, *Sotsial-Demokrat* (No. 47, October 13, 1915), published in Geneva. In it we stated that, should the revolution prove victorious in Russia, and should a republican government come to power, a government intent on continuing the imperialist war, a war in alliance with the imperialist bourgeoisie of England and France, a war for the seizure of Constantinople, Armenia, Galicia, etc.,—we would most resolutely oppose such a government and would be against the “defence of the fatherland” in such a war.

A contingency approaching the above has now arisen. The new government of Russia, which has negotiated with the brother of Nicholas II for restoration of the monarchy, and in which the most important and influential posts are held by the monarchists Lvov and Guchkov, this government is trying to deceive the Russian workers with the slogan, “the Germans must overthrow Wilhelm” (correct! but why not add: the English, the Italians, etc., must overthrow their kings, and the Russians their monarchists, Lvov and Guchkov??). By issuing this slogan, but refusing to publish the imperialist, predatory treaties concluded by the tsar with France, England, etc., and confirmed by the government of Guchkov-Milyukov-Kerensky, this government is trying to represent its imperialist war with Germany as a war of “defence” (i.e., as a just war, legitimate even from the standpoint of the proletariat). It is trying to represent a war for the defence of the rapacious, imperialist, predatory aims of capital—Russian, English, etc., as “defence” of the Russian republic (which does not yet exist, and which the Lvovs and the Guchkovs have not even promised!).

If there is any truth in the latest press reports about a rapprochement between the avowed Russian social-patriots (such as Plekhanov, Zasulich, Potresov, etc.) and the "Centre party", the party of the "Organising Committee", the party of Chkheidze, Skobelev, etc., based on the common slogan: "Until the Germans overthrow Wilhelm, our war remains a defensive war,"—if this is true, then we shall redouble our energy in combating the party of Chkheidze, Skobelev, etc., which we have always fought for its opportunist, vacillating, unstable political behaviour.

Our slogan is: No support for the Guchkov-Milyukov government! He who says that such support is necessary to prevent restoration of the monarchy is deceiving the people. On the contrary, the Guchkov government has already conducted negotiations for restoration of the monarchy in Russia. Only the arming and organisation of the proletariat can prevent Guchkov and Co. from restoring the monarchy in Russia. Only the revolutionary proletariat of Russia and the whole of Europe, remaining loyal to internationalism, is capable of ridding humanity of the horrors of the imperialist war.

We do not close our eyes to the tremendous difficulties facing the revolutionary—internationalist vanguard of the Russian proletariat. The most abrupt and swift changes are possible in times such as the present. In No. 47 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* we gave a clear and direct answer to the question that naturally arises; What would our Party do, if the revolution immediately placed it in power? Our answer was: (1) We would forthwith offer peace to all the warring nations; (2) we would announce our peace terms—immediate liberation of all the colonies and all the oppressed and non-sovereign peoples; (3) we would immediately begin and carry out the liberation of all the peoples oppressed by the Great Russians; (4) we do not deceive ourselves for one moment, we know that these terms would be unacceptable not only to the

monarchist, but also to the republican bourgeoisie of Germany, and not only to Germany, but also to the capitalist governments of England and France.

We would be forced to wage a revolutionary war against the German—and not only the German—bourgeoisie. And we would wage this war. We are not pacifists. We are opposed to imperialist wars over the division of spoils among the capitalists, but we have always considered it absurd for the revolutionary proletariat to disavow revolutionary wars that may prove necessary in the interests of socialism.

The task we outlined in No. 47 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* is a gigantic one. It can be accomplished only by a long series of great class battles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. However, it was not our impatience, nor our wishes, but the objective conditions created by the imperialist war that brought the whole of humanity to an impasse, that placed it in a dilemma: either allow the destruction of more millions of lives and utterly ruin European civilisation, or hand over power in all the civilised countries to the revolutionary proletariat, carry through the socialist revolution.

To the Russian proletariat has fallen the great honour of beginning the series of revolutions which the imperialist war has made an objective inevitability. But the idea that the Russian proletariat is the chosen revolutionary proletariat among the workers of the world is absolutely alien to us. We know perfectly well that the proletariat of Russia is less organised, less prepared and less class-conscious than the proletariat, of other countries. It is not its special qualities, but rather the special conjuncture of historical circumstances that for a certain, perhaps very short, time has made the proletariat of Russia the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world.

Russia is a peasant country, one of the most backward of European countries. Socialism cannot triumph there directly and immediately. But the peasant character of the country, the vast reserve of land in the hands of the nobility, may, to judge from the experience of 1905, give tremendous sweep to the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia and may make our revolution the prologue to the world socialist revolution, a step toward it.

Our Party was formed and developed in the struggle for these ideas, which have been fully confirmed by the experience of 1905 and the spring of 1917, in the uncompromising struggle against all the other parties; and we shall continue to fight for these ideas.

In Russia, socialism cannot triumph directly and immediately. But the peasant mass can bring the inevitable and matured agrarian upheaval to the point of confiscating all the immense holdings of the nobility. This has always been our slogan and it has now again been advanced in St. Petersburg by the Central Committee of our Party and by Pravda, our Party's newspaper. The proletariat will fight for this slogan, without closing its eyes to the inevitability of cruel class conflicts between the agricultural labourers and the poorest peasants closely allied with them, on the one hand, and the rich peasants, whose position has been strengthened by Stolypin's agrarian "reform" (1907-14), on the other. The fact should not be overlooked that the 104 peasant deputies in the First (1906) and Second (1907) Dumas introduced a revolutionary agrarian bill demanding the nationalisation of all lands and their distribution by local committees elected on the basis of complete democracy.

Such a revolution would not, in itself, be socialism. But it would give a great impetus to the world labour movement. It would immensely strengthen the position of the socialist proletariat in Russia and its influence on the agricultural labourers and the poorest peasants. It would enable the city proletariat to develop, on the strength of this influence, such revolutionary organisations

as the Soviets of Workers' Deputies to replace the old instruments of oppression employed by bourgeois states, the army, the police, the bureaucracy; to carry out—under pressure of the unbearably burdensome imperialist war and its consequences—a series of revolutionary measures to control the production and distribution of goods.

Single-handed, the Russian proletariat cannot bring the socialist revolution to a victorious conclusion. But it can give the Russian revolution a mighty sweep that would create the most favourable conditions for a socialist revolution, and would, in a sense, start it. It can facilitate the rise of a situation in which its chief, its most trustworthy and most reliable collaborator, the European and American socialist proletariat, could join the decisive battles.

Let the sceptics despair because of the temporary triumph within the European socialist movement of such disgusting lackeys of the imperialist bourgeoisie as the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co. in Germany; Sembat, Guesde, Renaudel and Co. in France; the Fabians and the Labourites in England. We are firmly convinced that this filthy froth on the surface of the world labour movement will be soon swept away by the waves of revolution.

In Germany there is already a seething unrest of the proletarian masses, who contributed so much to humanity and socialism by their persistent, unyielding, sustained organisational work during the long decades of European "calm", from 1871 to 1914. The future of German socialism is represented not by the traitors, the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co., nor by the vacillating and spineless politicians, Haase, Kautsky and their ilk, who have been enfeebled by the routine of the period of "peace".

The future belongs to the trend that has given us Karl Liebknecht, created the Spartacus group, has carried on its propaganda in the Bremen Arbeiterpolitik.

The objective circumstances of the imperialist war make it certain that the revolution will not be limited to the first stage of the Russian revolution, that the revolution will not be limited to Russia.

The German proletariat is the most trustworthy, the most reliable ally of the Russian and the world proletarian revolution.

When, in November 1914, our Party put forward the slogan: "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war" of the oppressed against the oppressors for the attainment of socialism, the social-patriots met this slogan with hatred and malicious ridicule, and the Social-Democratic "Centre", with incredulous, sceptical, meek and expectant silence. David, the German social-chauvinist and social-imperialist, called it "insane", while Mr. Plekhanov, the representative of Russian (and Anglo-French) social-chauvinism, of socialism in words, imperialism in deeds, called it a "farcical dream" (Mittelding zwischen Traum und Komödie) The representatives of the Centre confined themselves to silence or to cheap little jokes about this "straight line drawn in empty space".

Now, after March 1917, only the blind can fail to see that it is a correct slogan. Transformation of the imperialist war into civil war is becoming a fact.

Long live the proletarian revolution that is beginning in Europe!

On behalf of the departing comrades, members of the R.S.D.L.P. (united under the Central Committee), who approved this letter at a meeting held April 8 (new style), 1917.

N. Lenin

Lenin

The Discussion On Self-Determination Summed Up

July 1916

Collected Works, Volume 22, pages 320-360.

The Irish Rebellion of 1916

Our theses were written before the outbreak of this rebellion, which must be the touchstone of our theoretical views.

The views of the opponents of self-determination lead to the conclusion that the vitality of small nations oppressed by imperialism has already been sapped, that they cannot play any role against imperialism, that support of their purely national aspirations will lead to nothing, etc. The imperialist war of 1914-16 has provided facts which refute such conclusions.

The war proved to be an epoch of crisis for the West-European nations, and for imperialism as a whole. Every crisis discards the conventionalities, tears away the outer wrappings, sweeps away the obsolete and reveals the underlying springs and forces. What has it revealed from the standpoint of the movement of oppressed nations! In the colonies there have been a number of attempts at rebellion, which the oppressor nations, naturally did all they could to hide by means of a military censorship. Nevertheless, it is known that in Singapore the British brutally suppressed a mutiny among their Indian troops; that there were attempts at rebellion in French Annam (see Nashe Slovo) and in the German Cameroons (see the Junius pamphlet); that in Europe, on the one hand, there was a rebellion in Ireland, which the "freedom-loving" English, who did not dare to extend conscription to Ireland, suppressed by executions, and, on the other, the Austrian Government passed the death sentence on the deputies of the Czech Diet "for treason", and shot whole Czech regiments for the same "crime".

This list is, of course, far from complete. Nevertheless, it proves that, owing to the crisis of imperialism, the flames of national revolt have flared up both in the colonies and in Europe, and that national sympathies and antipathies have manifested themselves in spite of the Draconian threats and measures of repression. All this before the crisis of imperialism hit its peak; the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie was yet to be undermined (this may be brought about by a war of "attrition" but has not yet happened) and the proletarian movements in the imperialist countries were still very feeble. What will happen when the war has caused complete exhaustion, or when, in one state at least, the power of the bourgeoisie has been shaken under the blows of proletarian struggle, as that of tsarism in 1905?

On May 9, 1916, there appeared in *Berner Tagwacht* the organ of the Zimmerwald group, including some of the Leftists, an article on the Irish rebellion entitled "Their Song Is Over" and signed with the initials K. R. It described the Irish rebellion as being nothing more nor less than a "putsch", for, as the author argued, "the Irish question was an agrarian one", the peasants had been pacified by reforms, and the nationalist movement remained only a "purely urban, petty-bourgeois movement, which, notwithstanding the sensation it caused, had not much social backing".

It is not surprising that this monstrously doctrinaire and pedantic assessment coincided with that of a Russian national-liberal Cadet, Mr. A. Kulisher (*Rech* No. 102, April 15, 1916), who also labeled the rebellion "the Dublin putsch".

It is to be hoped that, in accordance with the adage, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", many comrades, who were not aware of the morass they were sinking into by repudiating "self-determination" and by treating the national movements of small

nations with disdain, will have their eyes opened by the “accidental” coincidence of opinion held by a Social-Democrat and a representative of the imperialist bourgeoisie!!

The term “putsch”, in its scientific sense, may be employed only when the attempt at insurrection has revealed nothing but a circle of conspirators or stupid maniacs, and has aroused no sympathy among the masses. The centuries-old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interest, manifested itself, in particular, in a mass Irish National Congress in America (Vorwärts, March 20, 1916) which called for Irish independence; it also manifested itself in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petty bourgeoisie and a section of the workers after a long period of mass agitation, demonstrations, suppression of newspapers, etc. Whoever calls such a rebellion a “putsch” is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of envisaging a social revolution as a living phenomenon.

To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc.-to imagine all this is to repudiate social revolution. So, one army lines up in one place and says, “We are for socialism”, and another, somewhere else and says, “We are for imperialism”, and that will be a social revolution! Only those who hold such a ridiculously pedantic view could vilify the Irish rebellion by calling it a “putsch”.

Whoever expects a “pure” social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It consisted of a series of battles in which all the discontented classes, groups and elements of the population participated. Among these there were masses imbued with the crudest prejudices, with the vaguest and most fantastic aims of struggle; there were small groups which accepted Japanese money, there were speculators and adventurers, etc. But objectively, the mass movement was breaking the yoke of tsarism and paving the way for democracy; for this reason the class-conscious workers led it.

The socialist revolution in Europe cannot be anything other than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry oppressed and discontented elements. Inevitably, sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will participate in it—without such participation, mass struggle is impossible, without it no revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But objectively they will attack capital, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a variegated and discordant, motley and outwardly fragmented, mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, capture power, seize the banks, expropriate the trusts which all hate (though for difficult reasons!), and introduce other dictatorial measures which in their totality will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will by no means immediately “purge” itself of petty-bourgeois slag.

Social-Democracy, we read in the Polish theses (I, 4), “must utilise the struggle of the young colonial bourgeoisie against European imperialism in order to sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe”. (Authors’ italics.)

Is it not clear that it is least of all permissible to contrast Europe to the colonies in this respect? The struggle of the oppressed nations in Europe, a struggle capable of going all the way to insurrection and street fighting, capable of breaking down the iron discipline of the army and martial law, will “sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe” to an infinitely greater degree than a much more developed rebellion in a remote colony. A blow delivered against the power of the English imperialist bourgeoisie by a rebellion in Ireland is a hundred times more significant politically than a blow of equal force delivered in Asia or in Africa.

The French chauvinist press recently reported the publication in Belgium of the eightieth issue of an illegal journal, *Free Belgium*. Of course, the chauvinist press of France very often lies, but this piece of news seems to be true. Whereas chauvinist and Kautskyite German Social-Democracy has failed to establish a free press for itself during the two years of war, and has meekly borne the yoke of military censorship (only the Left Radical elements, to their credit be it said, have published pamphlets and manifestos, in spite of the censorship)—an oppressed civilised nation has reacted to a military oppression unparalleled in ferocity by establishing an organ of revolutionary protest! The dialectics of history are such that small nations, powerless as an independent factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a part as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the real anti-imperialist force, the socialist proletariat, to make its appearance on the scene.

The general staffs in the current war are doing their utmost to utilise any national and revolutionary movement in the enemy camp: the Germans utilise the Irish rebellion, the French—the Czech movement, etc. They are acting quite correctly from their own point of view. A serious war would not be treated seriously if advantage were not taken of the enemy’s slightest weakness and if every opportunity that presented itself were not seized upon, the

more, so since it is impossible to know beforehand at what moment, where, and with what force some powder magazine will "explode". We would be very poor revolutionaries if, in the proletariat's great war of Liberation for socialism, we did not know how to utilise every popular movement against every single disaster imperialism brings in order to intensify and extend the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to repeat in a thousand keys the declaration that we are "opposed" to all national oppression and, on the other, to describe the heroic revolt of the most mobile and enlightened section of certain classes in an oppressed nation against its oppressors as a "putsch", we should be sinking to the same level of stupidity as the Kautskyites.

It is the misfortune of the Irish that they rose prematurely, before the European revolt of the proletariat had had time to mature. Capitalism is not so harmoniously built that the various sources of rebellion can immediately merge of their own accord, without reverses and defeats. On the other hand, the very fact that revolts do break out at different times, in different places, and are of different kinds, guarantees wide scope and depth to the general movement; but it is only in premature, individual, sporadic and therefore unsuccessful, revolutionary movements that the masses gain experience, acquire knowledge, gather strength, and get to know their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and in this way prepare for the general onslaught, just as certain strikes, demonstrations, local and national, mutinies in the army, outbreaks among the peasantry, etc., prepared the way for the general onslaught in 1905.

Lenin

Reply to P. Kievsky (Y. Pyatakov)

August-September 1916

Collected Works, Volume 23, pages 22-27.

Like every crisis in the life of individuals or in the history of nations, war oppresses and breaks some, steels and enlightens others.

The truth of that is making itself felt in Social-Democratic thinking on the war and in connection with the war. It is one thing to give serious thought to the causes and significance of an imperialist war that grows out of highly developed capitalism, Social-Democratic tactics in connection with such a war, the causes of the crisis within the Social-Democratic movement, and so on. But it is quite another to allow the war to oppress your thinking, to stop thinking and analysing under the weight of the terrible impressions and tormenting consequences or features of the war.

One such form of oppression or repression of human thinking caused by the war is the contemptuous attitude of imperialist Economism towards democracy. P. Kievsky does not notice that running like a red thread through all his arguments is this war-inspired oppression, this fear, this refusal to analyse. What point is there in discussing defence of the fatherland when we are in the midst of such a terrible holocaust? What point is there in discussing nations' rights when outright strangulation is everywhere the rule? Self-determination and "independence" of nations—but look what they have done to "independent" Greece! What is the use of talking and thinking of "rights", when rights are everywhere being trampled upon in the interests of the militarists! What sense is there in talking and thinking of a republic, when there is absolutely no difference whatsoever between the most democratic republics

and the most reactionary monarchies, when the war has obliterated every trace of difference!

Kievsky is very angry when told that he has given way to fear, to the extent of rejecting democracy in general. He is angry and objects: I am not against democracy, only against one democratic demand, which I consider "bad". But though Kievsky is offended, and though he "assures" us (and himself as well, perhaps) that he is not at all "against" democracy, his arguments—or, more correctly, the endless errors in his arguments—prove the very opposite.

Defence of the fatherland is a lie in an imperialist war, but not in a democratic and revolutionary war. All talk of "rights" seems absurd during a war, because every war replaces rights by direct and outright violence. But that should not lead us to forget that history has known in the past (and very likely will know, must know, in the future) wars (democratic and revolutionary wars) which, while replacing every kind of "right", every kind of democracy, by violence during the war, nevertheless, in their social content and implications, served the cause of democracy, and consequently socialism. The example of Greece, it would seem, "refutes" all national self-determination. But if you stop to think, analyse and weigh matters, and do not allow yourself to be deafened by the sound of words or frightened and oppressed by the nightmarish impressions of the war, then this example is no more serious or convincing than ridiculing the republican system because the "democratic" republics, the most democratic—not only France, but also the United States, Portugal and Switzerland—have already introduced or are introducing, in the course of this war, exactly the same kind of militarist arbitrariness that exists in Russia.

That imperialist war obliterates the difference between republic and monarchy is a fact. But to therefore reject the republic, or even

be contemptuous towards it, is to allow oneself to be frightened by the war, and one's thinking to be oppressed by its horrors. That is the mentality of many supporters of the "disarmament" slogan (Roland-Hoist, the younger element in Switzerland, the Scandinavian "Lefts" and others). What, they imply, is the use of discussing revolutionary utilisation of the army or a militia when there is no difference in this war between a republican militia and a monarchist standing army, and when militarism is everywhere doing its horrible work?

That is all one trend of thought, one and the same theoretical and practical political error Kievsky unwittingly makes at every step. He thinks he is arguing only against self-determination, he wants to argue only against self-determination, [sic] but the result—against his will and conscience, and that is the curious thing!—is that he has adduced not a single argument which could not be just as well applied to democracy in general!

The real source of all his curious logical errors and confusion—and this applies to not only self-determination, but also to defence of the fatherland, divorce, "rights" in general—lies in the oppression of his thinking by the war, which makes him completely distort the Marxist position on democracy.

Imperialism is highly developed capitalism; imperialism is progressive; imperialism is the negation of democracy—"hence", democracy is "unattainable" under capitalism. Imperialist war is a flagrant violation of all democracy, whether in backward monarchies or progressive republics—"hence", there is no point in talking of "rights" (i. e., democracy!). The "only" thing that can be "opposed" to imperialist war is socialism; socialism alone is "the way out"; "hence", to advance democratic slogans in our minimum programme, i.e., under capitalism, is a deception or an illusion, befuddlement or postponement, etc., of the slogan of socialist revolution.

Though Kievsky does not realise it, that is the real source of all his mishaps. That is his basic logical error which, precisely because it is basic and is not realised by the author, “explodes” at every step like a punctured bicycle tire. It “bursts out” now on the question of defending the fatherland, now on the question of divorce, now in the phrase about “rights”, in this remarkable phrase (remarkable for its utter contempt for “rights” and its utter failure to understand the issue): we shall discuss not rights, but the destruction of age-old slavery!

To say that is to show a lack of understanding of the relationship between capitalism and democracy, between socialism and democracy.

V.I. Lenin. 1917.

Capitalism in general, and imperialism in particular, turn democracy into an illusion—though at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations in the masses, creates democratic institutions, aggravates the antagonism between imperialism’s denial of democracy and the mass striving for democracy. Capitalism and imperialism can be overthrown only by economic revolution. They cannot be overthrown by democratic transformations, even the most “ideal”. But a proletariat not schooled in the struggle for democracy is incapable of performing an economic revolution. Capitalism cannot be vanquished without taking over the banks, without repealing private ownership of the means of production. These revolutionary measures, however, cannot be implemented without organising the entire people for democratic administration of the means of production captured from the bourgeoisie, without enlisting the entire mass of the working people, the proletarians, semi-proletarians and small peasants, for the democratic organisation of their ranks, their forces, their participation in state affairs. Imperialist war may be said to be a triple negation of democracy (a. every war replaces

“rights” by violence; b. imperialism as such is the negation of democracy; c. imperialist war fully equates the republic with the monarchy), but the awakening and growth of socialist revolt against imperialism are indissolubly linked with the growth of democratic resistance and unrest. Socialism leads to the withering away of every state, consequently also of every democracy, but socialism can be implemented only through the dictatorship of the proletariat, which combines violence against the bourgeoisie, i.e., the minority of the population, with full development of democracy, i.e., the genuinely equal and genuinely universal participation of the entire mass of the population in all state affairs and in all the complex problems of abolishing capitalism.

It is in these “contradictions” that Kievsky, having for gotten the Marxist teaching on democracy, got himself confused. Figuratively speaking, the war has so oppressed his thinking that he uses the agitational slogan “break out of imperialism” to replace all thinking, just as the cry “get out of the colonies” is used to replace analysis of what, properly speaking, is the meaning—economically and politically—of the civilised nations “getting out of the colonies”.

The Marxist solution of the problem of democracy is for the proletariat to utilise all democratic institutions and aspirations in its class struggle against the bourgeoisie in order to prepare for its overthrow and assure its own victory. Such utilisation is no easy task. To the Economists, Tolstoyans, etc., it often seems an unpardonable concession to “bourgeois” and opportunist views, just as to Kievsky defence of national self-determination “in the epoch of finance capital” seems an unpardonable concession to bourgeois views. Marxism teaches us that to “fight opportunism” by renouncing utilisation of the democratic institutions created and distorted by the bourgeoisie of the given, capitalist, society is to completely surrender to opportunism!

The slogan of civil war for socialism indicates the quickest way out of the imperialist war and links our struggle against the war with our struggle against opportunism. It is the only slogan that correctly takes into account both war-time peculiarities—the war is dragging out and threatening to grow into a whole “epoch” of war—and the general character of our activities as distinct from opportunism with its pacifism, legalism and adaptation to one’s “own” bourgeoisie. In addition, civil war against the bourgeoisie is a democratically organised and democratically conducted war of the propertyless mass against the propertied minority. But civil war, like every other, must inevitably replace rights by violence. However, violence in the name of the interests and rights of the majority is of a different nature: it tramples on the “rights” of the exploiters, the bourgeoisie, it is unachievable without democratic organisation of the army and the “rear”. Civil war forcibly expropriates, immediately and first of all, the banks, factories, railways, the big estates, etc. But in order to expropriate all this, we shall have to introduce election of all officials and officers by the people, completely merge the army conducting the war against the bourgeoisie with the mass of the population, completely democratise administration of the food supply, the production and distribution of food, etc. The object of civil war is to seize the banks, factories, etc., destroy all possibility of resistance by the bourgeoisie, destroy its armed forces. But that aim cannot be achieved either in its purely military, or economic, or political aspects, unless we, during the war, simultaneously introduce and extend democracy among our armed forces and in our “rear”. We tell the masses now (and they instinctively feel that we are right): “They are deceiving you in making you fight for imperialist capitalism in a war disguised by the great slogans of democracy. You must, you shall wage a genuinely democratic war against the bourgeoisie for the achievement of genuine democracy and socialism.” The present war unites and “merges” nations into

coalitions by means of violence and financial dependence. In our civil war against the bourgeoisie, we shall unite and merge the nations not by the force of the ruble, not by the force of the truncheon, not by violence, but by voluntary agreement and solidarity of the working people against the exploiters. For the bourgeoisie the proclamation of equal rights for all nations has become a deception. For us it will be the truth that will facilitate and accelerate the winning over of all nations. Without effectively organised democratic relations between nations—and, consequently, without freedom of secession—civil war of the workers and working people generally of all nations against the bourgeoisie is impossible.

Through utilisation of bourgeois democracy to socialist and consistently democratic organisation of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and against opportunism. There is no other path. There is no other way out. Marxism, just as life itself, knows no other way out. We must direct free secession and free merging of nations along that path, not fight shy of them, not fear that this will “defile” the “purity” of our economic aims.

Stalin

Concerning the Situation in Japan –

For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy !

Bucharest. Organ of the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties

NO. 1 (61), FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 1950

After the failure of the predatory plans of the American imperialists in China and Korea, the State Department and U. S. militarists focused their main attention on Japan as the principal base for military ventures against the Soviet Union and the democratic movement in the countries of Asia.

Above all, they try, by means of various groundless pretexts, to delay the signing of a peace treaty with Japan, and, in this way, to legalise a long term stay of the American army there.

With the help of their army and Japanese reaction, the American invaders seek to suppress the democratic movement, to smash the Communist Party and trade unions and to become the real masters of Japan. Even now Japan's entire political and economic life is directed by the American militarists. Japanese economy is completely subordinated to the U. S. monopolies and is placed at the service of the aggressive plans of American imperialism. The Americans, carrying out widespread construction work on air and naval bases on Japanese territory, expanding the munitions industry, and re-arming the Japanese militarists, are turning the country into a base for military ventures.

In an interview with a correspondent of the London "Daily Mail" on March 2nd 1949, McArthur declared outright that the U. S. had long since regarded Japan at a new springboard and were engaged in considerable work in this respect.

On Okinawa, he went on, "I have laid out 25 airfields, capable of ensuring 3,500 flights daily by our heaviest bombers... The Pacific is now an Anglo-Saxon lake."

In this way the political and economic situation of Japan is completely determined by the aggressive policy of the United States and by the actions of the American occupation authorities arising therefrom.

Pursuing a policy of reviving Japanese imperialism and militarization of the country, the American authorities in Japan, with the help of Japanese reaction, are waging a ceaseless onslaught against the interests of the working people, destroying democratic organisations and practicing on a wide scale the policy of sending spies and provocateurs into the trade unions and organisations of the Communist Party.

Having seized the main Japanese monopolies, the American capitalists control some 85 per cent of Japan's economy. Nor are the Japanese capitalists lagging behind. Nearly 40 per cent of the 1949 budget appropriations were allocated to subsidize the big monopolies. Taxes paid by this group of Japanese capitalists account for a mere 3.6 per cent of the revenue, while taxes paid by the population account for 73 per cent of the revenue. In this way the working people of Japan are doubly exploited. And despite the demagogy with which the American imperialists try to screen themselves, the colonizing and militarist nature of their actions in Japan is obvious.

The American journal "Pacific News-Week" frankly declared that the main object of the new plan of the United States is to turn Japan into a military-industrial anti-Soviet bastion. The Japanese newspaper "Mainitsi Simbun" likewise expressed its satisfaction that "Japan is now in the front line of the struggle against Communism".

Despite the fact that American policy in Japan flagrantly contradicts the Potsdam decisions concerning the democratization and demilitarization of Japan and is a policy of an all-out offensive against the economic and political rights of the Japanese people, the Japanese Government gives full support to the American colonizing plans. Hence, the reviving of militarist Japan and the suppression of the democratic movement has long been the common aim and basis of the bloc of Japanese reactionaries with American imperialists.

Apart from the common aims, each of the partners of the bloc is trying to realize his own plans. Japanese reaction is utilizing United States' interest in Japan as an ally to bolster its political influence in the country, while the American imperialists are using the Japanese reactionaries as a tool with the help of which it will be easier to smash the democratic organisations and establish complete political and economic domination in Japan, to turn the country into a base for military ventures and the Japanese people into cannon fodder.

In these conditions it is imperative for the working people of Japan to have a clear programme of action.

The organisations of the Communist Party, the trade unions and all democratic forces in the country should rally the working people, daily expose the colonizing plans of the foreign imperialists in Japan and the treacherous, anti-people's role of Japanese reaction. They should wage a resolute struggle for the independence of Japan, for the establishment of a democratic and peace-loving Japan, for the immediate conclusion of a just peace treaty, for the speedy withdrawal of American troops from Japan and to ensure lasting peace between the peoples.

The leaders of the working people and people's patriots of Japan should realize that Japan can arise and become a great,

independent power only if she renounces imperialism and imperialist alliances, if she takes the path of democracy and Socialism, if she follows the line of peaceful development and the strengthening of peace between peoples. Either Japan takes this path—which will be her salvation—or she does not, and then she will be forced to become a miserable tool in the hands of world imperialism, deprived of freedom and independence and doomed to stagnation.

But, as the facts show, the statements of certain leaders of the Communist Party of Japan are not directed towards the successful carrying out of these important tasks. They do not understand this programme and give wrong orientation to the working people of Japan in the complex situation that has arisen in the country.

Thus, for instance, Nosaka (Okano), one of the leading figures in the Communist Party of Japan, analyzing Japan's external and internal political situation, endeavored to prove that all the necessary conditions are at hand in post-war Japan for effecting the peaceful transition to Socialism, even under conditions of the occupation regime, and further alleged that this "is the naturalization of Marxism-Leninism on Japanese soil". (Nosaka, Report to Second Conference of the Communist Party of Japan, January 1947).

As for the occupation army, this army, in the opinion of Nosaka, far from hindering the aims of the Japanese Communist Party will, on the contrary, in pursuing its mission, facilitate the democratization of Japan.

"The stay of Allied troops is aimed at disarming Japan and, at the same time, at liberating the people from a totalitarian policy, at making Japan a democratic country. In occupying Japan, the Allied troops have no intention of turning our country into a colony."

According to Nosaka, the Communist Party of Japan can, even under conditions of the occupation regime, lead the working class to power:

“The possibility has arisen”, Nosaka declared, “that proletarian parties, by winning a majority in Parliament, might be able to form their own government and take political power into their hands by destroying the bureaucratic apparatus and its forces. In other words, the possibility has arisen of winning power by parliamentary, democratic methods”.

In June 1949, Nosaka again emphatically claimed in his report to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan, that the establishment of a people’s democratic government under conditions of an occupation regime is without question, quite possible.

“The occupation troops will be withdrawn the moment such a government is established”.

Thus, Nosaka went so far as to utter the bourgeois platitude that, even with American occupation troops in the country, it is possible for Japan peacefully to go over direct to Socialism. Nosaka had expressed such views earlier. For instance, in the draft manifesto of the Communist Party prepared by him, and later in an article printed in the bourgeois newspaper “Mainitsi Simbun” in May 1946, Nosaka claimed:

“With the support of the majority of the people and relying on the efforts of the people themselves, the Party intends, by peaceful, democratic means, to develop the social system into a more perfected system compared with capitalism, namely, into a Socialist system”.

Nosaka’s viewpoint, that the American occupation troops in Japan are, allegedly, playing a progressive role, that they are

helping in the “peaceful revolution” along the path of Japan’s development towards Socialism, **misleads the Japanese people and helps the foreign imperialists** to turn Japan into a colonial appendage of foreign imperialism, into a new centre of war in the East.

Nosaka’s attempt to invent a “new” theory, the “naturalization” of Marxism-Leninism in Japanese conditions, as he puts it, the theory to the effect that after World War Two the conditions were created in Japan, and this under the undivided domination of foreign imperialist authorities, for the peaceful development of Japan into a Socialist country—all this **“naturalization” of Marxism-Leninism is nothing more than a Japanese variation of the anti-Marxist and anti-Socialist “theory”** of the peaceful growing over of reaction to democracy, of imperialism into Socialism, a “theory” which was exposed long ago and which is alien to the working class.

Nosaka’s **“theory”** is the theory of **embellishing the imperialist occupation of Japan**, the theory of **boosting American imperialism** and consequently, a theory of **deception of the popular masses in Japan**.

As we see, **Nosaka’s “theory” has nothing whatever in common with Marxism-Leninism**. Actually, Nosaka’s theory” is an anti-democratic, anti Socialist theory. It serves only the imperialist occupiers in Japan and the enemies of the independence of Japan. Consequently, the **Nosaka “theory” is, simultaneously, an anti-patriotic, anti-Japanese theory**.

Observer

(Stalin)*

("On January 6, in No. 1 (61) for 1950, a review written by Stalin appeared on the situation in Japan."

From "Alexey ROMANOV, THE CENTURY PAGES OF THE COLD WAR"

Alexey ROMANOV, a member of the collegium from the CPSU (B.) and the secretary of the editorial board "For Lasting Peace, for Popular Democracy!")

Source:

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NO. 1 (61), FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 1950

Stalin

Record of the Discussions of J.V. Stalin with the Representatives of the C.C. of the Communist Party of India Comrades, Rao, Dange, Ghosh and Punnaiah

9th February 1951

Comrade Stalin: Your questions have been received. I will reply to them and then express some of my own understanding.

Perhaps it might seem strange that we are having these discussions in the evening. During the day we are busy. We are working. We are free from work at 6 o'clock in the evening.

Possibly it might appear unusual that we go into the discussions at considerable length, but regretfully, otherwise we may not be able to fulfill our mission. Our CC charged us to meet you personally in order to render help to your party by giving advice. We are little acquainted with your party and your people. We are looking at this mission with great seriousness.

As soon as we took upon ourselves to give our advice, we took upon ourselves the moral responsibility for your party, we cannot give you lightly thought out advice. We wish to acquaint ourselves with the materials, together with you, and then give advice.

You may think it to be odd that we have put a few series of questions to you and it almost looks like an interrogation. Our situation is such that we cannot do otherwise. The documents do not give a full picture and so we resort to this method. It is a very unhappy way of doing things but it cannot be helped. Circumstances compel us. Let us proceed to the essence of the matter.

You ask: What is your appraisal of the impending Indian revolution?

We, Russians, look at this revolution as mainly agrarian. It signifies – the liquidation of feudal property, the division of the land amongst the peasantry and it becoming their personal property. It means the liquidation of feudal private property in the name of the affirmation of the private property of the peasantry. As we see this none of this is socialist. We do not consider that India stands before the socialist revolution. This is that Chinese path which is spoken of everywhere, i.e. the agrarian, anti-feudal revolution without any confiscation or nationalisation of the property of the national bourgeoisie. This is the bourgeois-democratic revolution or the first stage of the people's democratic revolution. The people's democratic revolution that began in the eastern countries of Europe, even before it did in China, has two stages. The first stage – agrarian revolution or agrarian reform, as you desire. The countries of people's democracy in Europe went through this stage in the very first year after the war. China stands now at this first stage. India is approaching this stage. The second stage of the people's democratic revolution as shown in Eastern Europe is characterised by the agrarian revolution passing over to the expropriation of the national bourgeoisie. This is already the beginning of the socialist revolution. In all of the people's democratic countries of Europe the plants, factories, banks are nationalised and handed over to the state. China is still far from this second stage. This stage is also far off in India or India is far from this stage.

Here you speak of the editorial of the newspaper of the Cominform concerning the Chinese path of development of the revolution. This editorial was a challenge to the articles and speeches of Ranadive which considered that India stood on the road to socialist revolution. We, Russian communists, considered that this is a very dangerous thesis and decided to come forward against this and point out that India is on the Chinese road, i.e. the first stage of the people's democratic revolution. For you this has the attached

importance of building your revolutionary front for a revolt of the entire peasantry and the kulaks against the feudal lords, for an uprising of all of the peasantry so that the feudal lords feel themselves isolated. A revolt of the public is necessary as of all the progressive stratum of the national bourgeoisie against English imperialism, in order to isolate the bloc of the English imperialists with the national bourgeoisie. Amongst you the view is prevalent that all of the imperialists need to be expelled in one blow, all, the English and the Americans. It is impossible to build such a front. The sharp blade of the all-national front is necessarily directed against English imperialism. Let the other imperialists, including the Americans, think that you are not concerned about them. This is necessary so your actions do not unite all of the imperialists against yourselves, and for that you must sow discord among them. Now, if the American imperialists themselves want to get into a fight, the united national front of India will need to plunge into action against them.

Ghosh: I am unclear why only against British imperialism when at present the entire world is in struggle against American imperialism which is considered to be the head of the anti-democratic camp?

Comrade Stalin: It is very simple; the united national front is against England, for the national independence from England, and not from America. It is your national specificity. India was semi-liberated from whom? From England, and not from America, India is in the concord of nations not with America but with England. The officers and the specialists in your army are not Americans but Englishmen. These are historical facts and it is impossible to abstract from them. I wish to say that the party must not load itself with all of the tasks, the tasks of the struggle with imperialism throughout the world. It is necessary to take up one task: to free oneself from English imperialism. It is the national task of India.

We must also consider the feudal classes. Of course, the kulaks are enemies. But it would be unwise to struggle against the kulaks as well as with the feudal lords. It would be unreasonable to take on to oneself two burdens – the struggle against the kulaks and the struggle against feudalism. It is necessary to build the front in such a manner that it is the enemy and not you who are isolated. It is, so to say, a tactic to facilitate the struggle of the Communist Party. Not one person, if he is wise, will take on himself all of the burdens. It is necessary to take on oneself one task – the liquidation of feudalism, and the survivals of the empire of England. In order to isolate the feudal lords, to liquidate the feudal lords, and bring down English imperialism, do not brush against the other imperialist powers for the time being. If you proceed on your way like this – it will lighten matters. Now, if the Americans poke their noses in, it will then be necessary to carry out the struggle against them, but the people would know that not you but they had attacked. Certainly, the time to take on the Americans and the kulaks will come. But it will be later, each will have their turn.

Ghosh: I am now clear.

Dange: Would this not hinder the carrying out of propaganda and agitational work against the American imperialists and the struggle against them?

Comrade Stalin: Of course not. They are enemies of the people and it is necessary to struggle against them.

Dange: I put this question so that no one interprets this as opportunism in the task of struggle against American imperialism.

Comrade Stalin: The enemy needs to be isolated in a wise manner. You are raising the revolution not against the Americans but against the English imperialists. If the Americans interfere, then it is another matter.

Rao: Among the kulaks there is a small part which is engaged in feudal exploitation: they let land on lease and they are usurers. They usually stand on the side of the landlords.

Comrade Stalin: This is not significant. In comparison to the major general task of the liquidation of the feudal lords, it is a particular task. In your propaganda you need to speak against the feudal lords but not against the prosperous peasantry. You must not yourselves push the kulak into a union with the feudal lords. It is not necessary to create an ally for the feudal lords. The kulaks have a large influence in the village, the peasantry considers that the kulak makes his way in life thanks to his own ability etc. It is not necessary to give the kulaks the possibility of splitting from the peasants. Do your feudal lords belong to the nobility?

Rao: Yes.

Comrade Stalin: The peasants do not love the nobility. Here it is necessary to grasp this in order that the feudal lords are not given the possibility of having an ally among the peasants.

Punnaiah: Amongst us there exists confusion on the question of the national bourgeoisie. What is to be properly understood under the national bourgeoisie?

Comrade Stalin: Imperialism is the politics of the seizure of another's country. Does your national bourgeoisie really think of capturing other countries? Meanwhile British imperialism seized India. The national bourgeoisie – the middle, large are your national exploiters. It is necessary to say that you are not against their continuance, but against the foreign enemy, against the English imperialists. Among the national bourgeoisie are to be found many elements which find themselves aligned with you. The top national bourgeoisie – it is already in alliance with imperialism, but it is only a part and besides it is not big. The bourgeoisie is basically interested in supporting you in the struggle

for the full independence of India. It is interested in feudalism being liquidated. The bourgeoisie needs a market, a good market, if the peasantry acquire land there will be an internal market, there would be people who would have the capacity of making purchases. It is necessary to elucidate all this in the press. It will be advantageous for you so that the national bourgeoisie does not move over to the side of the English. You have to order matters in such a way that the English imperialists do not acquire new allies in India. In China by no means are steps being undertaken to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Only Japanese property was nationalised in China, even the American enterprises are not nationalised, they are functioning. If your revolution is of the Chinese type you must not for the present undertake those steps which will push your bourgeoisie to the side of the English imperialists. Here is your Chinese path. In China the national bourgeoisie did not go over and now they have come forward against the American imperialists and they help the Chinese people's government. This signifies that they may consider the American imperialists are isolated in China. Concerning the division of India that is a piece of fraud organised by the English. If you are drafting a programme of action then you must say in there that you need a military and economic union between Pakistan, India and Ceylon. These three states, which are artificially separated from one another, will come closer. This will culminate in these states uniting themselves. This idea of drawing together must be put forward and the people will support you. The elite in Pakistan and Ceylon would be against it but the people have doubts about them. This artificial division is clear particularly in Bengal. The province of Bengal will fall away from Pakistan at the first opportunity.

Dange: The understanding of the national bourgeoisie is constantly brought up in the following spirit amongst us: the middle

bourgeoisie is called the national bourgeoisie. In India the big bourgeoisie has passed over to the side of the English imperialists.

Comrade Stalin: Do you have in India banks which are purely English?

Dange: Yes, in India there are English banks as well as joint ones. In our programme there is a demand for the nationalisation of the big bourgeoisie, that is bureaucratic capital.

Comrade Stalin: It is not bureaucratic capital but industrial trading capital. Bureaucratic capital in China made a fortune by means of the state. It is capital related to the state and very little connected to industry. Through privileged contracts with the Americans the family of Sun and others received money. The concerns of the big industrialists and traders in China: they have remained intact. I do not advise you to expropriate the large capitalists, even if they are in alliance with American and English banking capital. It would be better to say quietly that whoever goes over to the side of the enemies would lose their property. Indubitably, if your revolution heats up, then a part of such big capitalists will run away. Then declare them to be traitors and expropriate their property, but I will not suggest expropriating the big bourgeoisie just for its alliance with English capital. If there is a demand for the expropriation of the big bourgeoisie in your programme, then it is necessary to cross it out. You will need to draw up a new programme or platform of action. It will pay you to neutralise the big bourgeoisie and to tear off from it nine-tenths of the entire national bourgeoisie. It is not necessary for you to artificially create new enemies for yourself. You already have many of them: the turn of your big bourgeoisie will come and then, certainly, you will have to confront them. The problems of the revolution are decided in stages. The stages need not be mixed up. It is necessary to decide upon the stages and to beat the enemies separately – today one, tomorrow another, and when you grow stronger, you may be able to beat them all, but for

the present you are still weak. Your people copy our revolution. But these are different stages. The experience of the other fraternal parties needs to be critically taken into account and this adapted to the specific conditions of India. You will be criticised from the left but you need not worry. Bukharin and Trotsky criticised Lenin from the left, but they became a laughing stock. Ranadive criticised Mao Zedong from the left, but Mao Zedong was correct - he acted in correspondence with the conditions of his own country. Follow your own line and do not pay attention to the ultra-leftist cries.

Now on the second question, about the Chinese path.

I have already spoken on the Chinese road in the political and social spheres. It would be an agrarian revolution. Concerning the armed struggle it needs to be said that the Chinese did not speak of the armed struggle, they spoke of the armed revolution. They regarded it as partisan war with liberated regions and with an army of liberation. This means that it is necessary to speak of the armed revolution and partisan war and not of armed struggle. The expression 'armed struggle' was first mentioned in the Cominform newspapers. The armed struggle signifies more than a partisan war, it means the combination of partisan war of the peasantry and the general strikes and uprisings of the workers. In its scale a partisan war is narrower than an armed struggle. How did the armed revolution in China begin?

In 1926-27 the Chinese comrades broke with the Guomintangists. They distinguished themselves in a separate camp having prepared an army of 40-50 thousand persons against the Guomindang. This army was the basis of the partisan war. They hid themselves in the forests and mountains far from the towns and the railways. Of course, wherever the CC of the Chinese Communist Party was there, together with them, the basic cadres were to be found. The Chinese liberation army could not settle down in the towns and it was easy to encircle it. In order not to be

encircled and destroyed they left the towns and railways far behind and founded a series of free partisan regions. They were encircled, then they would break out of it, leave behind old liberated regions and create new ones and endeavoured not to do battle. The further they continued, the more the Chinese communists were alienated from the workers and the towns. Mao Zedong did not wish, of course, to break relations with the workers, but the path of partisan war led him to that, and he lost contact with the towns. It was a grievous necessity. At last they were established in Yan'an where they defended themselves for a long period. They called the peasants to themselves, instructed them how to conduct agrarian revolution, expanded their army and transformed it into a serious force. But all the while they did not evade that minus which characterised partisan warfare.

What is a liberated partisan region? It is entirely an island in the state, there is no rear in this region, it may be encircled, blockaded; it has no rear on which it can lean. That is what happened. Yan'an was encircled and the Chinese left that place with large casualties. This would have continued for a long time if the Chinese communists had not decided to cross over to Manchuria. Moving into Manchuria they rapidly improved their own position, they found a rear in the form of a friendly state. It was not now an island, it was something like a peninsula which rested on the USSR at one end. After this Chiang Kai-shek lost the possibility of encircling the Chinese partisans. And only after this, as the Chinese rested, they had the possibility of going over to the offensive from the north to the south. Such is the history. What follows from this? The partisan war of the peasants is a serious matter and a big acquisition for the revolution. In this area the Chinese made new contributions in revolutionary practice, particularly for the backward countries. And, of course, each Communist in a country where the peasants are 80-90% of the population is obliged to carry this method in the arsenal of their struggles. This is indisputable.

But also from this experience of the Chinese comrades it follows that partisan warfare with liberated regions has its own big minuses. These minuses are that the partisan regions are islands which are always open to blockade. It is possible to break out of this ring victoriously only by creating a stable rear, link up with and rest on a friendly neighbouring state and turn this state into one's own stable rear. The Chinese took the sensible step of moving over into Manchuria. If they had not done this I do not know how matters would have ended. In partisan war one has insufficient strength to achieve victory. Partisan war leads without fail to victory if it rests on a friendly neighbouring state. It is highly characteristic that till the Chinese comrades reached Manchuria they did not wish to attack, fearing encirclement, and only after this transition they began to plan to advance and scored successes against the troops of Chiang Kai-shek. We need to take into consideration these minuses of partisan war. It is said in India that partisan war is altogether sufficient to obtain the victory of the revolution. This is incorrect. In China there were more favourable conditions than in India. They had a people's liberation army ready in China. You have no ready army. China does not have such a dense railway network as India which was more comfortable for the partisans. The possibility of successful partisan war is lesser for you than in China. In industrial relations India is more developed than China. This is good from the point of progress, but bad from the point of view of partisan war. However many detachments and liberated regions are created all these will only be islets. You do not have such a neighbouring friendly state on whose back you can depend as had the Chinese partisans with the USSR.

Afghanistan, Iran and Tibet, places the Chinese communists are still unable to reach.... There is no such rear as the USSR. Burma? Pakistan? All of these are land frontiers, which leaves – the sea. Therefore it is necessary to find a way out.

Do you need partisan war? Indubitably you do.

Will you have liberated regions and a national liberation army?

You will have such regions, and possibly you will have such an army. But this is insufficient for victory. You need to combine partisan war with the revolutionary actions of the workers. Without this, partisan war alone might not have success. If the Indian comrades can seriously organise general strikes of the railway workers that will paralyse the life of the country and the government it could prove to be an enormous help for the partisan war. Take the peasant.... if you say to him – this is your partisan war and you have to do it all, then the peasant will ask – why is this burdensome struggle to lie on me alone, what are the workers going to do? He will not agree to take on himself the whole weight of the revolution, he is intelligent enough, he has the consciousness to know that all evil comes from the towns – taxes etc. He would want an ally in the towns.

If you say to him that he would carry the weight of the struggle together with the workers, he would understand and accept it. Such was the case with us in Russia. You need to carry out work not only amongst the peasantry, not only to create partisan detachments, but also to carry out serious intensive work amongst the working class, strive for their trust and win over their majority, you need to have armed detachments amongst the workers, prepare strikes of the workers, of the railwaymen and to have workers' detachments in the towns.

When these two streams link up – victory may be considered to be secure. You know that in 1905 in Russia the tsar yielded to the people, gave the Duma and a range of other freedoms. The Tsar was forced to retreat.

What evoked such terror in the tsar? The strikes of the railway workers! The capital was cut off from the country, the railway

workers only let into Petersburg the workers' delegations and did not permit entry to goods or anything else.

The significance of the railway workers' strikes was very great in the revolution and this helped the partisan detachments.

Then – work amongst the garrisons, amongst the soldiers. In 1917 we had carried out propaganda amongst the soldiers to the extent that all the garrison stood on our side.

What brought over the soldiers? The question of land. It was such a weapon which even the Cossacks, who were the praetorian guards of the tsar, could not withstand. To carry out correct politics, one might sow a revolutionary mood and evoke differences within the reactionary circles.

The Chinese path was good for China. But it is not sufficient for India where it is necessary to combine the proletarian struggle in the cities with the struggles of the peasants. Some think that the Chinese comrades are against such a combination. This is incorrect. Would Mao Zedong have been discontented if the workers of Shanghai had gone on strike when his army left for Nanking, or if the workers had struck work in the armaments factories? Of course not. But this did not take place as Mao Zedong's relations with the towns were severed. Of course, Mao Zedong would have been happy if the railwaymen had struck work and Chiang Kai-shek was deprived of the possibility of receiving projectiles. But there was an absence of relations with the workers – it was a grievous necessity, but it was not an ideal. It would be ideal if you strive for that which could not be done by the Chinese – to unite the peasant war with the struggle of the working class.

Dange: We almost turned the theory of partisan warfare into one which did not require the participation of the working class.

Comrade Stalin: If Mao Zedong knew this he would curse you. (Laughter) Let us go on to the next question. May the government of Nehru be considered a puppet of English imperialism such as the Kuomintang government of Chiang Kai-shek was a puppet of American imperialism and as currently the French government of Plevin is a puppet of the American imperialists?

According to my understanding, Chiang Kai-shek could not be considered a puppet when he was based in China. He became a puppet when he crossed over to Formosa. I cannot consider the government of Nehru as a puppet. All of his roots are in the population. This is not like the government of Bao Dai.... Bao Dai is actually a puppet. Hence it follows that in India it is impossible that partisan war can be considered the main form of struggle, maybe it is necessary to say the highest form of struggle? There are different forms of struggle leading to the highest form. For the peasants: boycott of the landowners, agricultural workers' strikes, withdrawal of labour by the tenant-farmers, individual skirmishes with the landlords, seizure of the lands of the landowners and then partisan war as the highest form of struggle. For the working class: local strikes, branch strikes, political strikes, the general political strike as the doorway to an uprising, and then the armed uprising as the highest form of struggle. It is therefore impossible to say that partisan war is the main form of struggle in the country. It is also untrue to assert that civil war in the country is in full swing. In Telangana land was seized but it proves little. This is still the beginning of the opening of the struggle but it is not the main form of the struggle from which India is still distant. The peasant needs to learn to struggle on the small questions – lowering lease rents, lowering the share of the harvest which is paid to the landlord etc. It is necessary to train the cadres on such small questions and not speak at once of armed struggle. If you begin a broad armed struggle, then serious difficulties will arise at your end as your party is weak.

It is necessary that the party becomes strong and orientate the mass struggle in the needed direction and sometimes even restrain the masses. How did we begin in 1917?

We had many sympathisers in the army, in the fleet, we had the Moscow and Leningrad Soviets. However we restrained the insurrectionary movement of the workers. They presented the demand of driving out the Provisional Government. But this did not enter into our plans then for the Leningrad garrison was not in our hands. In July the workers of the main Putilov factory where 40-50,000 people worked, began demonstrations in which the sailors and soldiers joined in. They demanded the overthrow of the Provisional Government and they came with these demands to the CC building. We held them back as we knew that all the preparations had not been made for the serious uprising we planned. The objective factor for the uprising existed – when the masses strove forward, but the subjective factor of the uprising did not – the party was still not ready.

The question of the uprising was put into place in one month, in September. We decided to organise the uprising, but it was an arch-secret. We did not publish anything about this. When Kamenev and Zinoviev, members of the Politbureau, spoken out in print against the uprising, considering it adventurist, Lenin declared them traitors and said that they had handed over our plans to the enemy. Therefore never shout about the uprising, otherwise the element of the unexpected in the uprising is lost.

Here Comrade Rao says – come before the people and ask them about the armed uprising... This is never done, never cry out about your plans, they will arrest all of you. Let us suppose the peasant says: Yes we need an uprising. But this still does not mean that we should follow the people, and drag oneself along the tail of the people. Leadership signifies that one has to carry one's own people. The people sometimes say that they are ready for an

uprising, taking as their point of departure the facts and events of their own region, but not from the point of view of the entire country in conformity with the overall achievability of the uprising. This question must be decided by the CC. If this is clear then we can go over to the next question.

Indian Comrades: Yes, it is clear.

Comrade Stalin: You ask, may the party organisation carry out the death sentence on a member of the party upon whose devotion doubts have arisen. One cannot. Lenin always taught that the highest form of punishment which the CC may carry out – is expulsion from the party, but when the party comes to power and some party member breaks the laws of the revolution, then the government conducts the prosecution as its responsibility. From some of your documents one can see that comrades frequent incline to the side of individual terror in relation to the enemy. If you ask us, the Russian comrades, about this, then we must say to you that amongst us the party is always trained in the spirit of negating individual terror. If our own people struggle against a landlord and he is killed in a skirmish we would not consider that to be individual terror in so far as the masses participated in the skirmish. If the party itself organises terrorist detachments in order to kill a landlord and this is done without the participation of the masses, then we always come out against this as we are against individual terror. Such active operations of individual terror when the masses are in a condition of passivity murders the spirit of the self-activity of the mass, trains the masses in the spirit of passiveness, and, moreover, the people judge matters in the following way – we cannot engage in activity, it is the heroes who will work on our behalf. Thus, there is a hero and on the other side is the crowd which is not participating in the struggle. From the point of view of the training and organisation of the activity of the masses such a view is very dangerous. In Russia there was such a

party – the SRs – which had special detachments to terrorise the main ministers. We always came out against this party. This party lost any credit among the masses. We are against the theory of the hero and the crowd.

You ask also, how does one at the present time put the question of the nationalisation of land in India?

At the given stage you do not need to advance this demand, never, on the one side, put forward the demand for the division of the landlords' land and simultaneously say that the land must be given to the state. In the countries of people's democracy the nationalisation of land was nowhere proclaimed, more so in China. How did they deal with this in the people's democratic countries? There they forbid the buying and selling of land. This is the method of approach to nationalisation. Only the state may acquire land. The accumulation of land in the hands of individual persons has to cease. It would be disadvantageous now for you to advance the demand for nationalisation.

Some of your comrades consider that civil war has started in India. It is early yet to speak about this. The conditions for civil war grow but they still have not grown.

What is to be done by you now?

It would be good if you had something like a programme, or let us say, a platform of action. Of course you will have discord. There was also discord amongst us, but we decided that: whatever was resolved by the majority would become law. Even those comrades who did not agree with the majority decision, honestly carried out these decisions so that the party acted with a single will. All of you desire discussion. This may be permissible for you in times of peace but a revolutionary situation is growing at your end and you must not permit yourself this luxury. That is why you have in your party so few people, your unending discussions have disoriented

the masses. The Bolsheviks in the period 1903-12 carried out open discussions so far as it was possible under the conditions of tsarism with the objective of driving out the Mensheviks as we then had the line of splitting with them. But you do not have such a situation where the party contains enemies. After that, as we hurled out the Mensheviks in 1912 and created our party, free of Mensheviks, the party became homogeneous. There were differences—then we would gather in narrow circles, discuss the problem and, as decided by the majority, we all worked. After the Bolsheviks came to power Trotsky thrust discussion on the party which we did not wish to embark upon. Trotsky provocatively stated that the party did not wish to have a discussion as though the party wanted to fight against the truth. We began the discussion and defeated Trotsky. But this was a discussion against which the entire party stood. If the party is more or less homogeneous and has ideological unity, then such a party is not in need of a discussion. The discussion needs to be carried out in narrow circles, and not in print. There, what is decided by the majority, that is the law.

Ghosh: Comrade Stalin is correct. Open discussion is no longer admissible for us.

Comrade Stalin: In our party there are 5,600,000 members of the party and 800,000 candidate members. What is the significance of candidate membership? Earlier instead of admitting members into the party we verified those wishing to join it. Some were kept waiting for four years, five years, we verified, we trained them. Many wished to join the party, but they had to be, first, verified and, second it was necessary to train them. Elementary socialist education is necessary and after that, admission. In our practice the institution of candidacy has justified itself. Around the party we have a large layer of sympathisers. But we must not overcrowd the party with new members, we must not overly enlarge the party.

The main thing is that the admitted person has a deep quality, and not the quantity of the party members.

You also ask me – under which conditions might one undertake partisan war. In the advanced capitalist countries partisan war may not have great significance, here the partisans are quickly seized. An especially great significance attaches to partisan war in medium-developed and backward countries. For example, it is very difficult to initiate partisan war in the United States of America or in Germany. Here essentially there are many large towns, a developed railway network, industrial regions, and the partisans in these conditions are at once caught. It is necessary, in order that the mass of the people themselves consider that they are heroes, and the heroes consider themselves as the executors of their own will, that separate acts, directed against the enemy, leads to passivity of the mass but to heightened activity. In every way it is necessary to support what has originated in Telengana. It is the first sprouts of civil war. But one does not need to rely on partisan war alone. It, of course, renders assistance but itself it is in need of help.

It is necessary to have bigger work amongst the people, amongst the workers, in the army, amongst the intelligentsia, the peasantry. If you brought armed detachments into being amongst the workers, they might at the right opportunity in situation of general confusion seize government institutions. In Leningrad we had the workers' guards, we trained them, and the workers proved to be of great service to us at the time of the uprising, they seized the Winter Palace. Our peasantry had big assistance from the side of the working class. In general, out of all the classes of society the peasants have great trust in the working class. It is necessary to unite these two forms of struggle – the struggle of the workers and peasants, the peasant uprising and the march of the workers.

You remember the events in Indonesia. The leadership of the communist party was good in Indonesia, but they were provoked into a premature uprising. They were good, legendary, courageous people, but they got provoked and perished.

It would be good for you if you have a platform or a programme of activity. Put as the focal point of this platform or programme the agrarian revolution.

You ask me also about the character of the foreign policy of Nehru. It is one of playing off and manoeuvring and it is intended to show that he is against the American policies. In its deeds the Nehru government plays off England and America.

Comrades Rao, Dange, Ghosh and Punnaiah: thanked comrade Stalin for the discussion and declared that on the basis of the instructions of comrade Stalin they will reconsider all of their activity and would act in correspondence with these instructions.

Comrade Stalin: I have given you no instructions, this is advice, it is not obligatory for you, you may or may not adopt it.

The conversation continued for more than three hours.

Taken down by V. Grigor'yan 10.II.51.

(Signed) V. Grigor'yan

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Translated from the Russian by Vijay Singh

“The struggle against imperialism in general, and its tools in every country is one of the fundamental questions of the strategy of every communist party, and one of the decisive conditions for the triumph of any revolution, whether people’s democratic, anti-imperialist or socialist... the stand towards imperialism has always been a line of demarcation which divides the genuine patriotic and democratic revolutionary forces, on the one hand, from the forces of reaction, counter-revolution and national betrayal, on the other hand.”

