

reader. Socialists cannot be opposed to all wars, and yet remain Socialists. Nor must we permit ourselves to be blinded by the imperialistic character of the present war. Typical for the imperialistic epoch are just such wars between the "great" powers, but it is by no means impossible to have democratic wars and uprisings, for instance, such as are waged by oppressed peoples, against those oppressing them, to attain freedom from oppression. Inevitable are the civil wars of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, for Socialism. Wars are possible between a successful Socialism in one country, against other, bourgeois, or reactionary countries.

Disarmament is a socialistic ideal. In socialist society there will be no wars, which means, that disarmament will have been realized. But he is not a Socialist, who expects the realization of Socialism *without* the social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Dictatorship is a government power, depending directly on force, and, in the twentieth century, force means, not fists and clubs, but armies. To insert "disarmament" into our program is equivalent to saying: we are opposed to the use of arms. But such a statement would contain not a grain of Marxism, any more than would the equivalent statement: we are opposed to the use of force!

It should be noted, that the international discussion on the present question has been conducted, chiefly, if not exclusively, in German. In German there are two words, the difference between which it is very difficult to render in Russian.* One means simply "disarmament," and is employed, for instance, by Kautsky and his followers, to indicate a reduction of armaments. The other properly means "lack of armament" and is used chiefly by the Left Wingers in the sense of an abolition of militarism, of any militaristic (warlike) system whatever. We shall speak in this article of the *second* meaning, which is a demand frequently made in certain *revolutionary* social-democratic circles.

The Kautskian preaching of "disarmament," which is ad-

* Lenine has in mind, probably, the German words "Abrüstung" (disarmament) and "Entwaffnung" (lack of armament), respectively.

dressed chiefly to the present governments of the imperialistic great powers, is a vulgar piece of opportunism, of bourgeois pacifism, actually calculated—in spite of the good intentions of the gentle Kautskians—to divert the workers from the class struggle. For such a propaganda is calculated to inspire the workers with the thought that the present bourgeois governments of the imperialistic powers are *not* bound by thousands of threads of financial capital and tens or hundreds of corresponding (i. e., predatory, greedy, preparatory to imperialistic aggression) *secret treaties* between themselves.

II.

A suppressed class which has no desire to learn the use of arms, and to bear arms, deserves nothing else than to be treated as slaves. We cannot, unless we wish to transform ourselves into mere bourgeois pacifists, forget that we are living in a society based on classes, and that there is no escape from such a society except by the class struggle and the overthrow of the power of the ruling class.

In every class society, whether it be based on slavery, serfdom, or, as at the present moment, on wage labor—the class of the oppressors is an armed class. Not only the standing army of the present day, but also the present-day popular militia—even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, as in Switzerland—means an armament of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. This is such an elementary truth that it is hardly necessary to dwell on it. It is sufficient to point out the use of troops (including that of the republican-democratic militia) against strikers, a phenomenon common to all capitalist countries without exception. In fact, the arming of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat is one of the most striking, fundamental, significant facts of present-day capitalist society.

How can you, in the face of this fact, ask the revolutionary social-democracy to set up the "demand" of "disarmament?" To ask this is to renounce completely the standpoint of the class struggle, to give up the very thought of revolution. Our watch-