

Bourgeois history, its art and its literature tell us at every turn that the development of the social system is the work of great minds. Small wonder, then, that they seek to place the responsibility for the rising spirit of unrest that is urging on the working class upon the heads of its leaders, that the elimination of these leaders therefore will put an end to matters. In their eyes the capitalist class alone is ordained to assume leadership, they cannot understand that a new class is rising to power and that its power lies in the economic necessity of this class for the continuation of organized society, just as the capitalist grew up out of the middle class under feudalism because new methods of production demanded its existence. Nor can they grasp that the power of this new class lies not in its individuals but in its solidarity, that for this reason all capitalist attacks directed against individuals are futile.

Look at the revolutions in Europe; look at the increasing number and bitterness of strikes in America. Eliminate the leaders, and yet the masses will act in the same way. Give them misleaders, of the type of Gompers, and they will eventually pass over the heads of such leaders in response to the urge of their class interests.

The international situation is driving the working-class to international solidarity, to united action. Economic conditions are forcing it to adopt the revolutionary methods of the class struggle. It is aligning itself gradually with the form of organization that will respond with the most effective resistance against the opposing forces. The work of the leaders is simply the formulation and expression of these desires in concrete form. And to this extent alone can they help or retard the movement of the working-class. No prison-bars can stop the onward march of the iron battalions toward their goal. No false leaders can lead them astray, once they have realized the power that is theirs. The old theories of the leaders of the human race are shattered. The twilight of the leaders has come. The new world belongs to the working-class, the only possessor of the life of the future.

## The Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution

By N. LENIN

From among the revolutionary social-democrats in Holland, Scandinavia, and Switzerland who fought against the lie of the social chauvinists about "defense" in this imperialistic war, voices are heard favoring the substitution of "disarmament" for the old term "militia" or "citizen-army" of the Erfurt-program. It is our intention to scrutinize the argument upheld by the supporters of disarmament.

Their basic argument is that the demand for disarmament is the clearest, most determined, and effective expression of the struggle against all militarism and every war. But in just this argument lies the fundamental error of the supporters of disarmament. Socialists cannot be opposed to every war without ceasing to be Socialists.

In the first place, Socialists never were, and never can be opposed to revolutionary wars. The bourgeoisie of the big imperialistic powers has become reactionary through and through, and we consider the present war, waged by this same bourgeoisie, to be a reactionary, enslaving, and criminal war.

But now, what about a war against this bourgeoisie? For instance, a war on the part of those peoples oppressed by and dependent upon this bourgeoisie, or a war for independence on the part of their colonies? In the program of the group "Internationale," we read: "In this era of reckless imperialism national wars can no longer occur." Obviously, this is not true. The history of the twentieth century, a century of "reckless imperialism," abounds in colonial wars. But what we Europeans (who are the imperialistic oppressors of the majority of the peoples of the world), with that base chauvinism so characteristic of us, call "colonial wars" are often national wars or national rebellions on the part of the oppressed peoples.

It is one of the most fundamental characteristics of imperialism to hasten the development of capitalism in the backward countries and thus spread and intensify the struggle against national suppression. Junius, in the defense of the previously mentioned "program," maintains in his pamphlet that in the imperialistic epoch every national war against one of the im-