

decision found expression first in opportunistic parliamentary practice, in the policy of the parliamentary labor leaders, who hoped by flirting with the bourgeoisie, by limiting their demands, by giving up revolutionary propaganda, to be able gradually to better the condition of the workers. Then this tendency found its theoretical expression in the *doctrine of reformism* (revisionism), as coined by Bernstein in Germany, Sarante and Jaurès in France, Treves and Turati in Italy.

To reduce the doctrines of reformism to a formula, they consisted in the attempt to prove that the evolution of capitalism *does not render the differences between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie more acute but tends to soften them* and that therefore *not revolution but the co-operation of the proletariat with the sensible strata of the bourgeoisie is the true path to the liberation of the proletariat*. Reformism denied the *practical possibility of the Socialist revolution* and set up in its stead *evolution through social reform*. It was a *counter-revolutionary doctrine*, attempting to represent the revolution of the workers as an infant disease of the labor movement, in order to yoke the workers to the cart of the bourgeoisie. This tendency of reformism is most glaringly reflected in a series of articles by Bernstein's disciple, Eduard David, on the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, published in the year 1903 in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, the chief organ of international reformism. Not revolution but parliamentary action, the organization of unions and brotherhoods, this was the course which reformism preached to the working class.

The Collapse of Reformist Illusions

But the same evolution which, according to the conviction of the reformists, was to do away with the necessity of a revolution, soon showed the workers the utter absurdity of the reformist illusions. The Junkers defended themselves against the growing competition of the young agrarian nations by raising the price of food by means of agrarian tariffs. The development of capitalism led to the forming of trusts and cartels, big capitalist organizations, which pushed aside and conquered not only the crafts but also the middle bourgeoisie. For the protection of the cartels they demanded for industry also a high tariff. They united with the Junkers to rob and plunder the people; at the same time the growing trustification of industry meant an enormous extension of power for the capitalists—against the unions. The same unions which could without much trouble force the small textile baron to yield to their demands, were powerless against the iron and coal kings, who commanded more than ten thousands of workmen. If the

worker in a textile factory was dissatisfied with his wages, he could find work in some other factory. The trustified coal and iron barons did not recognize the unions, they held fast together against each demand of their workers and understood how to guard themselves against the workers by means of black-lists. The aggravation of the friction between proletariat and bourgeoisie, in the factory as well as in the consumers' market, was still further intensified by the imperialist policy, which threatened to turn the struggle of the trustified industries in the world, the struggle of wares and of capital into a war. The growing burden of taxation, caused by the growth of militarism and navalism, the growing danger of war which became ever more intense, conflicts with the unions, led the possessing classes to adopt a sharper policy against the working class. *Because exploitation grew, oppressive measures had to be intensified also*. The growing political reaction had the effect on the working class of a *storm signal* and showed them in all countries that not revolutionary Communism, but, on the contrary, the so-called "*real*" *Reformism was a Utopia*, not, to be sure, one that would give wings to the soul, that would stimulate the energies of the workers, that would make the journey of humanity seem shorter in the visions it presents, so that the sluggish ones might be encouraged to hasten their steps, but on the contrary one that would lame their stride, transforming them into creeping beasts.

Since the great strike in the Ruhr district, since the great fights of the electric workers of Berlin, and the violent agitation of the French workers for the attainment of the eight-hour day, the great faith of the workers in the peaceful evolution to Socialism has disappeared. They saw now how the forces of capitalism had been uniting against the proletariat in economic life as well as in political life, they saw how the bourgeois parties were solidifying more and more into a reactionary mass, they saw how the entire bourgeois society was moving toward the abyss of war, they saw how parliaments were becoming constantly less able to cope with the development, if for no other reason, then because they were themselves being forced in all countries to resign their powers in favor of secret cabinets in which bureaucracy in combination with the sharks of Capital settled the most vital affairs of the people.

The fires of the Russian Revolution of the year 1905 showed the masses of Europe what latent power can be summoned by the working class when it arises and when it is disposed to throw its personality into the fight for the cause. Since the year 1905 the problem of *the struggle for power, i. e., the*