

problems of the Socialist revolution, which were brought up in a theoretical way in the discussion of reformism (Kautsky's pamphlet on the "Social Revolution," published in the year 1903), were present in the consciousness of the masses of the people.

### In Search of the Way to Power

An anxious search began for the exit out of the blind alley into which capitalistic evolution had blundered. The first question before the toiling masses was, "*Where are we going?*" The question was answered by developments as clearly and precisely as one could wish. In France the attempt to better the condition of the workers through co-operation with the bourgeoisie turned out a complete failure. Millerand's entrance into the bourgeois government was of no advantage to the working class and led to the compromising of the Social Democracy in the eyes of the masses of workers. The result of the elections 1907 showed the workers that the bourgeois parties would unite into a solid wall against them as soon as it became a question of Imperialism, that is, a question of the extension of capitalist power over weaker peoples, and of the armed competitive struggle between the capitalist states. The facts of the economic crisis of the year 1900 spoke so plainly, that so well known a Reformist as Max Schippel could not end his investigation of the course of the economic crisis in any other way than by the assertion of the intensification of the class struggle in the entire world. Karl Kautsky summed up the entire development in the year 1908 in his work "The Road to Power," in which he proved that the whole capitalist world was moving in the direction of a frightful Socialistic world crisis, that we were on the eve of the Socialist Revolution. This conviction, which became more and more rooted in the minds of the foremost ranks of the workers, faced them with this second question: What means will the workers use to defend themselves when the new situation arises, and what means will they use when they launch the attack on the fortresses of Capital? Already in 1905 the German and Austrian proletariat had worked its way through to the idea of the mass strike. Regardless of the complete ossification of the intellectual life of the leaders of the party, whose quiet, petty-bourgeois lives reflected the mood of the working class very faintly, the workers had recognized in the mass strike a means of defense against the attacks on the fundamental rights of the working class (the German Social Democracy in Jena, 1905), or even a means of attack by the proletariat against particularly obstinate opponents (the Austrian Social

Democracy). The mass strike as general strike was exalted by the French syndicalists as a means of winning complete liberty. The working class, which, up to this time, had battled only politically in parliaments, began to reflect on their rôle in the process of production, on the words of Freiligrath: "Every wheel shall stop, at the will of your mighty arm."

For years the leaders of the left wing of the workers discussed the conditions that would make practicable the use of the general strike. Should the leaders of the workers' organizations decide upon the strike if parliamentary action should fail, if the enemy through his reckless policy should drive the masses to despair—should it be a pistol, then, held in readiness to back up the parliamentary struggle, or should it be the actual mode of the struggle itself, emerging spontaneously out of the increasingly acute class conflicts, prepared not in the conference chambers of the leaders but preparing every hour in the shops and in the factory prisons—not only through the growing agitation, the *stimulated action* of the proletariat. These were the questions to which the left wing of the international labor movement devoted itself most intensively during the years preceding the World War. And right at this point it appeared that even in this simple question the Socialist ranks, the ranks that fought under the banner of Marx, were divided, the one section under the leadership of Karl Kautsky outwardly embracing the approaching Socialist revolution, it is true, yet anxiously avoiding the intensifying of the class struggle, although the internal and external situation of the proletariat positively demanded it.

In this struggle to find the way to power the question came up here and there, "*Wherein shall the power of the victorious workers express itself?*" But nowhere was the question given a positive hearing, and for very simple reasons. First upon the order of business of history came the question of the mobilization of the battalions of workers, the question of their general objective, and not of the halting-places to be passed through on the way. In order to prove the necessity of the general strike, the radical Socialists pointed to the collapse of parliamentarism. They showed how it was more and more becoming a stronghold of the capitalistic highwaymen; they criticised very sharply the *Talmi*-republicanism and the *Talmi*-democracy of the republican countries, and frequently the question arose, "How shall capitalistic democracy and its parliamentary agencies be converted into agencies of power of the victorious proletariat?" When Anton Pannekoek, the clearest head of West European Socialism, answered the question by saying, that one must destroy the demo-