

consistent in their falsification of Communism, the revisionists, declared that Socialism could not come in Europe until capital had subjugated the entire world: on that fact they based—as is well known—the necessity of having the working class support the colonial policy. The whole argument of the pseudo-socialist parties of Russia, which rallied to the support of the bourgeoisie during the Revolution, and since the Workers' Revolution have fought in the ranks of the counter-revolutionists—the Mensheviki—consists of this fact: Socialism in Russia is impossible because the proletariat does not constitute a majority of the Russian nation. This argument won much approbation in Europe from those who had made out of Marxism a mechanical arithmetical problem. But to show the absurdity of this attitude to the question, it will suffice to point out that in Germany, the European state most highly developed economically, men as scientifically important as Heinrich Cunow, are of the opinion that the maintenance of such an attitude to the question is not so much due to the few more per cent more or less of proletarians in relation to non-proletarians, but rather to a *completely nebulous conception of the transition from capitalism to Socialism*. The hypothesis of a conception such as Cunow gives on the question of the stage of ripeness of capitalism, gives rise to the idea that capitalism will in fact do the work of socialization itself, and that Socialism will simply be invited to a table already set. When Cunow explains that Germany is not yet ripe for Socialism, he supports this theory by referring to the fact that the capitalist state must first take over all industry before the proletariat could receive it by seizing the reins of the government. But why should not the proletariat be in a position to take the cartelized and trustified industries directly out of the hands of the capitalized trusts and industries? Of course, if the proletariat is going to seize power only when, as Bernard Shaw says, a brainless, apelike, degenerate, capitalist master by pressing on a button can set in motion millions of men who have become slaves, it will have a very easy task to chase away the brainless monkey-master from the keys of the central apparatus and dash in his brains. But this simplification of its task the proletariat would have to pay for with all those sufferings which a policy of watchful waiting would impose upon them, watching how capitalism strides mechanically over the bodies of millions. To the honor of mankind be it said that the idea of a mechanical transition from Capitalism to Socialism is contradicted by all hitherto existing historical conceptions, as also does every

sensible theory of the possibility of capitalist evolution. The earlier forms of economic life did not collapse only after they had prepared the way for an entirely new order, but as soon as they became an oppressive hindrance to the new order.

The transition from capitalism to Socialism begins when capitalist society causes so much suffering to the people that they are ready to break with the even tenor of life and rise up against the domination of capital, when the masses can no longer endure the conditions created by a capitalist society. *When capitalist development in a country has reached a point where the most important branches of industry, those of credit and transportation, are controlled by a concentrated, capitalistic group, then the proletariat which has rebelled not only can but must try to take over industry into its own hands, into the hands of the victorious proletariat, a proletariat organized into the governing power.* The proletariat will model the economic life of the country to a greater or lesser extent for its own benefit, according to the degree of capitalist penetration of the economic life of that country, or it will perhaps have temporarily to restrict itself to the socialization of the already concentrated branches of the administration, while it gradually may take over the others, for instance, the administration of land (thanks to its lack of dependence on the socialized centers of industry, thanks to its independence of the city), and socialize them. This is the state of things in Russia. In Russia the proletariat is certainly a minority of the population, but the Russian iron industry, the coal mines, and the naphtha production, the railroads, the telegraphs are concentrated in a few hands, they are directed by a small number of banks, and they dictate the economic laws of the entire agrarian population.

The unbearable situation, which capitalism created in the world war, brought the masses of the people into the struggle against the Czaristic capitalistic state. With the help of the peasants, who bled to death for capitalism during three years, the workers succeeded in gaining the power in the government. What should they do with this power? The advocates of the mechanical idea that Socialism is possible only after nine-tenths of the people have become proletarians, tried to make it clear to the people that it was impossible to establish Socialism. Back to capitalism, that was the solution of the Mensheviki. But the workers could not return to capitalism without throwing the country into the greatest misery. Should the capitalists return to power, they would impose the expenses of the war upon the workers, forcing them to work twelve hours