

⌈ HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN RUSSIA — E. YAROSLAVSKY

786

Scanned / Transcribed by
The Socialist Truth In Cyprus
Web: <http://www.KibristaSosyalistGercek.net>
<http://www.kibristasosyalistgercek.net/intro.htm>
E-mail: info@KibristaSosyalistGercek.net



HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN RUSSIA

History
of Anarchism
in Russia

by

E. YAROSLAVSKY

AUTHOR OF "RELIGION IN THE U.S.S.R."

London

Lawrence and Wishart

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.
UNION LABOR THROUGHOUT



209

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
I. BEFORE THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY	11
II. THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION	34
III. THE WORLD WAR OF 1914-1918	47
IV. THE RUSSIAN ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS DURING THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION	49
V. "THE ANARCHIST GROUP FEDERATION." THE "NABAT" GROUP AND NESTOR MAKHNO. THE "ILLEGAL ANARCHISTS"	60
VI. PRESENT-DAY ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM	82
VII. THE CRITICISM OF ANARCHISM AND ANARCHO-SYNDICAL- ISM IN THE WORKS OF MARX, ENGELS, LENIN AND STALIN	102

INTRODUCTION

IN THE Union of Socialist Soviet Republics at the present time the anarchists no longer enjoy any influence over the masses. They are met with only as isolated individualists. The reason for this is the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. The old Russia, landlord and *petty-bourgeois* peasant Russia, which fostered anarchism and gave birth to the founders of anarchism, those repentant aristocrats—Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin and Leo Tolstoy—has passed away.

In place of this old tsarist Russia, a new state, a Soviet socialist state has been built during the last 20 years, the like of which history has never known. This state arose in the flames of civil war, as a result of the victorious socialist, proletarian revolution.

This revolution opened a new page in world history. In October, 1917, a big breach was made in the system of imperialist states. The young Soviet government of workers and peasants, guided by the Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, succeeded in vanquishing the forces of all the enemies who rose against it. It abolished the capitalist and landlord classes. In the U.S.S.R. there is not a single capitalist or landlord. The Soviet state routed the armies of the white-guards, the armies of the bourgeoisie, although they were commanded by the old tried tsarist generals and included nearly all the old officers. The Soviet state defeated the armed intervention and the economic blockade of the 14 capitalist states which joined in the struggle against it.

The Soviet state vanquished economic chaos and built up a splendid industry and agriculture equipped with the most up-to-date machinery. In place of the old, dilapidated, capitalist, landlord and small-proprietor system of economy, the Soviet state, in accordance with the plan drawn up by the Communist Party, has built up a new, powerful socialist system of economy, with a more developed technique and higher productivity of labor. It has raised the economic, political and cultural standard of life of the entire population. It has created a splendid Red Army, the only one of its kind, which stands guard over the banner of communism, over the life, labor and property of vast masses of the people on one-sixth of the globe. The Soviet state has secured the great amity of nations in the U.S.S.R., thanks to the correct national policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the vanguard of the Communist International.

This Party arose 40 years ago in the form of small secret workers' circles which were persecuted by the tsarist government. Its chief organizers were Lenin and Stalin, those brilliant theoreticians, strategists and leaders of the revolution. The workers and peasants of Russia achieved their splendid results primarily because from its very inception the mass revolutionary working class movement in Russia was headed by the Bolshevik Party. This Party organized the advanced workers, it organized the armed insurrection, it organized resistance to the whiteguards and foreign intervention, and it organized their defeat. The Bolshevik Party organized the new, Soviet, proletarian state; it organized the new system of economy. It ensured the great victories achieved by the working people.

But it succeeded in doing all this because it fought against all forms of opportunism in the working class movement, including anarchism. The anarchism of Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin was the theory of the Narodniks of the Land and Freedom society, who wanted to secure "land and freedom" under tsarism. During the 1905 Revolution anarchism in

Russia took the form of terrorist groups which organized plots against the lives of tsarist officials and raids on banks and government institutions. During this period some of its adherents began to go over to the anarcho-syndicalists. In their propaganda the Russian anarchists tried to create enmity between the revolutionary Socialist intellectuals and the working class.

After the Revolution of 1917 had triumphed, the anarchists in certain localities of Russia attempted to put their doctrine into practice, and thus came into sharp conflict with the whole course of the revolution. In the form of the so-called Workers' Opposition, anarcho-syndicalism attempted to establish itself in the working class movement, in the Communist Party, under the proletarian dictatorship.

At the most critical moment in the struggle of the proletariat against the united forces of the Russian and the international bourgeoisie, the anarchists engaged in dividing up the residences and property they had plundered from the rich, never realizing that in place of the old demolished system the proletariat must build its socialist system of economy.

In the south of the Ukraine, the anarchists—Makhno and his supporters—attempted to put into practice the ideal of anarchism. For the working people of the Ukraine and the whole of the Soviet Union the name of Makhno and his hordes is synonymous with the blackest crimes against the revolution, against the cause of the working class.

Thus the first proletarian revolution in the world tested not only the doctrine, program, strategy and tactics of the Communists, but also the doctrine, program, strategy and tactics of the anarchists. In their struggles the vast masses of the people throughout the world can benefit by the experience of the October Revolution. Of course, they must take into account the specific features of the struggle for emancipation in their own countries, but they would be making a great and irretrievable mistake if they simply disregarded this experience and failed to apply it. What could one say about people

who obstinately refused to take a known and tried road leading to the goal but must at all costs take a different road, which leads them to defeat?

The workers in those countries where they now have to choose between the doctrine of the anarchists and that of the Communists should know both these roads.

I.

BEFORE THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

Bakunin

MIKHAIL BAKUNIN undoubtedly played a prominent part in developing and elaborating the theory of anarchism and in leading the anarchist movement. He left a deep imprint on the movement of the Russian "revolutionary commoners" of the 1870's. Bakunin was the theoretical leader of a large section of the Land and Freedom (*Zemlya i Volya*) organization, and later his theories and ideas were followed in the anarchist movement not only in Russia, but in other countries as well. Before becoming an anarchist, he was prominent in the nationalist Pan-Slav movement. These facts are enough for this figure to compel attention in the revolutionary movement.

Bakunin was born in 1814 into a rich and noble family of Russian landowners, and was brought up on money gained by the most brutal exploitation of the peasant serfs. In an autobiographical fragment Bakunin himself wrote:

I was born on May 30, 1815,* on my father's estate of Premukhino, in the Novy-Torzhok county of Tver Province, between Moscow and St. Petersburg, on the banks of a little stream called the Osura. My father was of old and noble family. At the age of eight or nine, his uncle, who was Foreign Minister under Catherine II, appointed him attache of the Embassy to Florence; there his education was taken over by another relative, a minister. He was nearly thirty-five before he returned to Russia. Thus he spent all of his youth abroad and received his educa-

* 1814 is meant.—E. Y.

tion in foreign countries. . . . Between 1817 and 1825 he belonged to the secret Northern Society, which made the famous attempt at a military insurrection in St. Petersburg in December, 1825.*

After the insurrection was suppressed by Nicholas I, Bakunin's father turned his back on the revolution. Bakunin wrote: "He became a respectable property-owner like many of his neighbors, reconciling himself to the slavery of the hundreds on whose labor he lived."

Bakunin was one of six brothers and five sisters.

At first—Bakunin relates—our upbringing was very liberal, but after the tragic denouement of the December conspiracy (1825), my father, scared by this defeat, changed his system. From that time on he did his best to make us loyal subjects of the tsar, and with this end in view I was sent to an artillery school at the age of fourteen.**

Thus Bakunin's childhood and youth were spent in an atmosphere which suited him for the position of an aristocrat. The military environment in which he was brought up was intellectually stifled by the regime of Nicholas I. Before he left the country in 1840, Bakunin, far from sympathizing with revolutionary or opposition sentiments, even condemned the Decembrists. Recalling these years, Bakunin wrote in 1870 in a pamphlet, *Science and the Urgent Cause of Revolution*:

After the time of the Decembrists, the heroic liberalism of the educated nobility degenerated into pedantic liberalism, into doctrinairism. . . . All revolutionary ideas, all attempts at fearless protest, came to be regarded from the height of metaphysical self-satisfaction as childish boasts. I know what I am talking about, for in the thirties, under the influence of Hegelianism, I too was guilty of this sin.

* From the biographical sketch of Bakunin by the anarchist Nettlau.
** *Ibid.*

Abroad Bakunin plunged into political life and associated with people of radical and democratic views. This may be seen from the very first article he wrote, printed in Germany in October, 1842, under the pseudonym of Jules Elizard. In this article he wrote:

All nations and classes are filled with foreboding; even in Russia, that infinite snow-covered empire, which we know so little and which perhaps will have so great a future—even in Russia the heavy storm clouds are gathering. The atmosphere is stifling, it is heavy with storm.

As is generally known, Bakunin took an active part in the revolutionary movement of 1848-49 in France (Paris), in Germany and in Austria. But it would be wrong to assume that Bakunin was a revolutionary from his youth. All Bakunin's biographers, including anarchist, point out that until 1866, when he was in his fifty-second year, Bakunin was a revolutionary democrat greatly infected with Pan-Slav nationalism.

Although as far back as 1842 Bakunin gave utterance to the idea which became the motto of the anarchists—"the passion to destroy is at the same time a passion to create"—in 1852 he was rather tolerant towards his landlord brother, Nikolai Bakunin, who subjected his serfs to corporal punishment. He only advised him, when doing so, to punish them "in such a way as to convince them that the punishment is just."

It will be of interest to compare this period in the life of Bakunin with the same period in the life of Karl Marx, the founder of the Communist movement. In 1847 Marx, together with Engels, drew up the *Communist Manifesto*, that first and most remarkable program of the revolutionary proletariat, which Bakunin later also admired, even to the extent of translating it into Russian. It was published in Russian by his disciple, Sergei Nechayev. As a fighting slogan for the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels took the motto of the French workers: "Workers of the world, unite!" It is enough to com-

pare this constructive, organizing, rallying, fighting slogan with Bakunin's bald appeal for destruction in order to appreciate the enormous significance that the appeal of the *Communist Manifesto* had for the whole working class movement.

Bakunin was subjected to the most brutal persecution on the part of the tsarist government. He was arrested by the Prussian authorities in connection with the Dresden uprising, and imprisoned in a fortress. Later he was extradited to Russia and on the order of Nicholas I was confined to the fortress of Peter and Paul, which few left alive. Buried alive in this fortress, Bakunin wrote his "confession" as a repentant sinner, begging the tsar for pardon. Of course, this "confession" was deliberately written in repentant terms with a view to obtaining release from the fortress, and Bakunin hoped to be able to atone for this action by his later revolutionary conduct. But genuine revolutionaries in Russia regarded it as the depth of infamy to plead with the tsar for pardon even when sentenced to death.

The writer of these lines spent 12 years in prison and in penal servitude in the depths of Siberia, and knows that those who addressed repentant confessions and petitions for pardon to the tsar were held traitors by the Russian revolutionaries and were boycotted by them. If the Russian revolutionaries of the 1870's and of later years had known of Bakunin's confession, many of them would have repudiated him. But Bakunin's adherents and he himself took great pains to conceal this fact. Bakunin's confession to Tsar Nicholas was published only after the proletariat, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, came into power and opened the archives of the tsarist government. It is useless for Bakunin's biographer, the anarchist Nettlau, to shower contempt on those who censure this confession of Bakunin's. It is useless for Nettlau to attempt to explain away this petition by saying that Bakunin was writing to the tsar as his jailer, that there was no one else to whom he could write. This explanation is not true. The anarchists must acknowledge that Bakunin in this case

did not display the endurance of a genuine revolutionary. The Russian revolutionaries did not write such petitions to their jailers as Bakunin wrote to the tsar when he had already learned from Count Orlov that he was not threatened with sentence of death.

Bakunin wrote to the tsar:

Grant me two greatest favors, Your Majesty, and I shall bless Providence for having rescued me from the Germans in order to place me in the fatherly hands of Your Imperial Majesty. Having forfeited the right to call myself a loyal subject of Your Majesty, I can only sign myself sincerely: repentant sinner, Mikhail Bakunin.

Such was Bakunin's letter to the tsar begging for two favors: to be spared solitary confinement and to be allowed visits from his relatives.

Every worker is entitled to censure such behavior on the part of Bakunin, who claimed to be a flawless revolutionary. It is worth while comparing this behavior with that of another Russian revolutionary, N. G. Chernyshevsky. For over twenty years he was confined in a fortress and put to penal servitude in Siberia, but he did not sink so low as to plead for pardon from his mortal enemy, the tsar, although his position was much worse than that of Bakunin, and although he had no rich and prominent relatives to intercede for him as was the case with Bakunin.

Bakunin was a nationalist during and after the 1848 revolution. To this must be added another very unpleasant fact, which was true even after Bakunin had become an anarchist—he had a touch of the anti-Semite about him. While Marx was urging the revolutionary movement of the workers of the world to unite into a single revolutionary league, Bakunin played with the idea of a union of Slavs irrespective of class. In the very midst of the revolutionary events in Europe in 1848 he wrote a pamphlet entitled, "The Appeal to the Slavs, by the Russian Patriot Mikhail Bakunin, Member of the

Pan-Slav Congress at Prague." That was why Marx and Engels engaged in such heated controversy with Bakunin at that time—they realized the danger of substituting for the international class slogans of the struggle the liberal-bourgeois nationalist slogans advocated by Bakunin.

Let us see what Nettlau says in this connection. Nettlau points out that beginning with April, 1848,

... narrow-minded Pan-Slav nationalism carried the day with him. He personally thought that he was acting in the right way. He wanted to be active among his own people. He had to sow hatred and discord, wars and new military autocracies which would organize and centralize the forces of the various nations for mutual conflict. ... He forgot the West, discovered, as he said, his "Slavonic heart," and came out in April—not for the liberation of Europe and all humanity, but for the liberation of a certain group of nationalities. Three months later, as he himself relates, he was ready to throw himself into the arms of Nicholas I.

Nettlau relates that already at that time (and not later, when he was in the tsar's power in the fortress), Bakunin thought of petitioning the tsar for pardon:

It was at this time (between June and July, 1848), that he conceived the plan of writing to Nicholas I to plead for pardon, to ask him to raise the standard of Pan-Slavism, to be the "savior," the "father" and tsar of all the Slavs. ("To be their savior and father, and, proclaiming yourself Tsar of all the Slavs, at last to plant the standard of Pan-Slavism in Eastern Europe to the terror of the Germans and all other oppressors of the Slav people.")

On February 19, 1857, Bakunin was exiled to Siberia. In June, 1861, he escaped on an American ship to America, and later traveled to Europe. At this time he was still a nationalist. In a letter to Hertzen, dated August 1, 1863, he wrote:

I took an active part in the Pan-Slav movement, and even now I still think that a Slavonic federation is the only thing possible for us, for it alone can in a new and perfectly free form satisfy the feeling of grandeur which undoubtedly lives in our people, a feeling which has mistakenly taken or will take the treacherous road of empire.

A short time before, on May 28, 1863, in a speech he made at a banquet in Sweden, he said:

What then is our position, the position of those who are fighting against the St. Petersburg government? We are conservatives, we are opposed to bloodshed. ... We who are called revolutionaries are not republicans at any price. If Emperor Alexander II desired honestly to head the political and social regeneration of Russia, if he desired to restore liberty to Poland and to those parts of the country which do not want to belong to the empire, if instead of the land of Peter, Catherine and Nicholas, which was founded on violence, he were to found a free, democratic, popular Russia, with local government for the provinces, and if, to crown this, he were to raise the standard of a Slavonic federation—then, instead of fighting him, we would be his most loyal and devoted servants.

Bakunin said this a year before Marx and Engels founded the International Workingmen's Association—the First International. Whereas Marx and Engels had for nearly two decades been engaged in organization, propaganda and political work to unite the proletariat into an independent class force, Bakunin pursued nationalist strivings and expressed readiness to become the servant and loyal subject of the tsar if the latter were to raise the standard of a Slavonic federation.

Thus it is not surprising that in the confession he wrote in the fortress of Peter and Paul, Bakunin addressed the tsar as follows:

If at that time Your Majesty had chosen to raise the Slavonic standard, they—and not only they, but all those who speak the Slavonic tongue, on Austrian and Prussian

territory—would without terms, without negotiations, trusting themselves implicitly to your will, joyfully, with fanatical enthusiasm, have sheltered under the broad wings of the Russian eagle and hurled themselves proudly not only on the loathed Germans, but on all Western Europe.

We are quoting these passages from Bakunin's confession not in order to degrade his memory, but in order to show that this was not merely a pretended confession, that when Bakunin was no longer in prison, when he was again at liberty abroad, he still expressed the same ideas.

One other point must be added to what we have already said about Bakunin's political views during this period. In 1862 he wrote a pamphlet, *The Popular Cause—Romanov, Pugachev or Pestel?** Bakunin at that time was convinced that a peasant rebellion throughout Russia was inevitable, and declared that it was desirable for the tsar himself to stand at the head of this popular movement. How confused Bakunin's views on the revolution were at that time may be seen from what he wrote in this pamphlet about popular self-government; "Whether with the tsar or without him is a matter of indifference; that is as the people wish; but there must be no officials in Russia." Self-government headed by the tsar but without officials! Can anyone imagine a more muddled and confused theory? Bakunin clung for a very long time to the absurd idea that the tsar could be the liberator of the people. At the age of 47 he wrote:

Our attitude towards Romanov is clear. We are neither his enemies nor his friends, we are the friends of the cause of the Russian, Slavonic people. If the tsar leads this cause, we will stand for him, but when he opposes it we shall be his enemies.

* The meaning of this heading was as follows: Who is to be preferred as the leader of the revolution—Nicholas Romanov, the tsar, Pugachev, the leader of a peasant rebellion, or Pestel, the chief of the Decembrist military conspiracy?

Bakunin wrote this in 1862, when Russia was still in the midst of peasant rebellions provoked by the vile deception practised on the people by Alexander II, who by his manifesto of February 19, 1861, robbed the peasants for the benefit of the landowners.* While Chernyshevsky, Dobrolubov and other advanced revolutionaries of the time called for a popular peasant revolution, Bakunin misled the Russian revolutionaries by the very assumption that the tsar could lead the movement of the people for their liberation. But we shall see that somewhat later his followers in Russia—the members of the *Zemlya i Volya* Party—attempted to create a peasant organization and call forth a movement in the name of the tsar, who, they alleged, stood for the peasants and against the landlords.

We repeat, while Marx was already a fully mature political leader of the Communist working class movement, and had established the Communist League in 1847 and begun to organize the First International in 1864, Bakunin still advocated his nationalist Pan-Slav plans and ideas, which he finally abandoned only after Alexander II suppressed the revolutionary uprising in Poland.

Later Bakunin regarded himself as an internationalist, and, in fact, set up an international anarchist organization. In the First International (International Workingmen's Association) he called for the destruction of all states and the fraternal union of all nations. But at the same time, even when he was already an anarchist, he preached the union of all Slavs (without class distinction) and called for a struggle of all the Slav nations, not against the German bourgeoisie, but against the German nation, glossing over the existence of a Slav bourgeoisie, which was no whit better than the German bourgeoisie, and forgetting the fact that the German workers were brothers just like the workers of Italy, Spain, France and every

* The much-heralded "emancipation" of the Russian serfs in 1861, while providing factory owners and landlords with cheap labor, left the peasants on the land as much to the mercy of the landlords as they had been before.

other country. In his principal work on anarchism, *The State and Anarchy*, Bakunin not only defended totally unscientific, nationalist, chauvinist views, but defended them as the leading ideas for anarchists. In this work he contrasted the Germans to the Slavs. "The Germans," he wrote, "seek life and liberty within the state, while for the Slavs the state spells destruction." This work was written in 1873, two years after the Paris Commune, and in it Bakunin still preached the creation of a Pan-Slav federation.

Bakunin's works contain absolutely open attacks on the Jews; and he attacked, not the Jewish bourgeoisie, but the Jews in general, all Jews. He regarded all Jews as parasites and exploiters and treated them with unconcealed contempt. When Bakunin within the First International was fighting Utin, the organizer of the Russian section of the International in Geneva and a supporter of Marx, he wrote about him in his "Report on the Alliance" as follows:

Utin—need it be said?—is a Jew by birth, and, what is worse, a Russian Jew. His features, temperament, character, manners, his nervous nature, are simultaneously insolent and cowardly, vain and huckstering.

In speaking of Utin, Bakunin often refers to him as "that little Jew." We are not defending Utin as a revolutionary, for later he became a renegade and petitioned the tsar for pardon. But why did Bakunin regard a Russian Jew as being "worse" than any other? The reason was that the tsarist government in Russia, while showing tolerance towards the rich Jews, and sometimes even encouraging them and granting them privileges and honors, had created a special ghetto—the Pale of Settlement—for the poorer Jews, forbade them to engage in agriculture and to work in government employ, kept them out of the big factories, and deprived the masses of the Jewish people of all rights. For centuries it had imbued Russia with contempt for this nationality. And Bakunin, the former aristocrat, landlord and officer in the tsarist army, had

imbibed this contempt for the Jews, this Great-Russian, Slavonic chauvinism and anti-Semitism with his mother's milk. When Bakunin found himself in Europe, where anti-Semitism was fostered among the petty bourgeoisie by their competition with the Jewish petty bourgeoisie—shopkeepers, artisans, etc.—Bakunin assimilated these feelings the more easily because all his education in tsarist Russia had provided a fertile soil for them.

That was why in his controversies with Marx and Lassalle, in which he denied that their views on the revolution were different simply because he did not understand the essential difference between them, Bakunin used to attribute their doctrines either to their German sentiments or to their Jewish descent. "I am convinced," he wrote, "that the Rothschilds value Marx's services, and that Marx instinctively feels attracted towards and entertains profound respect for the Rothschilds." August Bebel, the well-known leader of the German working class, used to call anti-Semitism "the socialism of fools." But Bakunin's anti-Semitism was more deep-seated. Its roots went down into that aristocratic, landowning, exploiting environment from which he had come, and with whose sentiments he never succeeded in breaking completely.

Is it to be wondered at then that at the end of the 1870's certain Narodnik followers of Bakunin approved of the Jewish pogroms in the south of Russia and issued a leaflet in which they argued that Jewish pogroms were the expression of popular protest against the exploiters? Is it to be wondered at that Makhno and his followers, who called themselves anarchists, permitted and even themselves organized Jewish pogroms?

Bakunin belonged to the group of "repentant aristocrats" who believed that they must atone for the sins of their exploiting fathers. He devoted himself to the cause of the revolution. But such repentant aristocrats very often retained their aristocratic attitude to many phenomena of social life. We have already seen that Bakunin could not get rid of the na-

tionalism of his class—anti-Semitism and Great-Russian chauvinism. On the other hand, these “repentant aristocrats” often idealized what they had despised before. Becoming anarchists, they regarded every highway robber as a mature revolutionary. Bakunin and his adherents regarded the religious sects in Russia, which had nothing in common with either Communism or anarchism, as a revolutionary force. As we shall see later, the facts of reality proved a bitter, cruel disappointment for the supporters of Bakunin.

Beginning with the second half of the 1860's, Bakunin became an anarchist. He took part in organizing the First International. But at the same time he set up an organization of his own within the First International for the purpose of fighting Marx. Bakunin proclaimed his struggle against Marx to be a struggle against dictatorship, a struggle against centralization. It is well known, however, that Bakunin, while officially opposing centralization, established an organization based on the strictest centralism. Before he formed the Alliance, Bakunin organized the International Brotherhood Society, the rules of which contained the following clause on discipline, formulated by Bakunin himself:

Within the Council it is the right and even the duty of every brother to advocate his own views; but once the majority in the Council or the Directorate has by its supreme authority adopted a decision conflicting with his opinion, he has no right by any means whatsoever to influence public opinion against this supreme decision.

The powers with which Bakunin invested this anarchist directorate may be seen from the following statement he made on the rights of members of the International Brotherhood Society.

He has no right to accept any post, whether judicial, church, government, military or civil, nor to join any secret society without the formal consent of the directorate of the International Council.

Thus, while opposing the centralized form of organization of the International Workingmen's Association, Bakunin introduced this form in his own organization and demanded dictatorial powers for its leading body. In 1870 Bakunin wrote to Richard, one of his closest adherents:

There will no longer be public order or the public interest. What must take their place if revolutionary anarchy is not to lead to reaction? The collective action of an invisible organization spread throughout the country. If we do not establish such an organization we shall never emerge from our state of impotence.

While fighting against the hegemony of the Marxists in the First International, Bakunin wanted to establish the hegemony and dictatorship of the anarchists. In one of his letters to Richard, dated April, 1870, Bakunin wrote:

The revolutionary politicians, who advocate dictatorship, want passions to calm down after the first victories, they want order, the confidence of the masses, subordination to the authorities which will be set up in the course of the revolution. Thus a new state is proclaimed. We, on the contrary, shall foster, support, free the passions, call forth anarchy, invisibly guiding the popular storm, not by means of tangible, visible power, but by the collective dictatorship of our allies. . . . That is the only dictatorship I accept. But in order that it may be effective, it must exist, and for this purpose it must be prepared for and organized beforehand. . . . For it will not come into being of itself, out of discussion, out of difference of opinion, arguments about principles or popular assemblies. There is only one power, one dictatorship, the organization of which is possible and beneficial—the collective, invisible dictatorship of allies in the name of our common principle.

Thus within the First International Bakunin established a secret alliance which carried out his anarchist theory within the revolutionary movement. The disagreements between Ba-

kunin and Marx were based on their totally different understanding of the aim and objects of the proletarian revolution and the forms and methods of struggle. The passionate struggle Marx and Engels waged against Bakunin was prompted primarily by the fact that Marx and Engels saw how greatly the working class movement would be endangered if it adopted the ideas and principles of anarchism. When Engels wrote his critical review of the activities of the anarchists during the Spanish revolution of 1873, entitled "The Bakuninists at Work," he had already had the opportunity to judge the results of anarchist doctrine not from Bakunin's writings, but from the actual experience of the movement. The deplorable results of the anarchist "abstention from politics" were already plain.

Nechayev

Before passing on to the Narodnik movement in Russia, which adhered to Bakunin's views, we will deal with Sergey Nechayev, a prominent figure in the revolutionary movement, a man of great will-power, of iron endurance and undoubted organizational ability, and the first advocate of Bakunin's anarchist views in Russia.

Why deal with Nechayev?

Nechayev carried on his activities in the late sixties and the early seventies, when the First International had already been established and the profound difference between the views of Marx and Bakunin had taken definite shape. Nechayev acted on behalf of Bakunin.

We shall not dwell on the struggle over Nechayev that took place between Marx and Bakunin. Abroad Nechayev behaved in such an adventurist manner that not only did Marx suspect him of being a provocateur, but Bakunin himself repudiated his plans (for example, Nechayev proposed that the anarchists raid banks and similar institutions in Switzerland).

In Russia, Nechayev established an organization called the Popular Retribution. This organization was centralistic from

top to bottom. All authority was vested in its Central Committee and unquestioning discipline was enforced. It was the most authoritarian organization ever established by revolutionaries. And yet Bakunin, as every anarchist knows, was an enemy of authority. The anarchists still call themselves libertarians, as distinct from the Communist parties. The Communist parties are based on the principle of democratic centralism, *i.e.*, the election of all the leading bodies from the bottom up and the subordination of all members of a lower Party organization (circle, group or nucleus) to the decisions of the superior elected Party organization. The anarchists have always disagreed with this feature of Communist organization. One of the questions on which Bakunin waged a bitter struggle against Marx in the First International was that of how the working class was to be organized.

How, then, could Sergey Nechayev, a disciple of Bakunin, establish a strictly centralized organization and provide it with rules which were utterly in conflict with the official pronounced anarchist views of Bakunin on organization? For decades Bakunin and all his supporters, including his private secretary, Armand Rosse (Mikhail Sazhin), concealed the fact that Nechayev's "catechism" was written by Bakunin himself. After the October Revolution Sazhin related that this "catechism," written in Bakunin's own hand, had been found among Nechayev's papers after the latter's arrest and had been burnt by Sazhin himself. This fact proves that to serve their ends, Bakunin and his supporters were prepared to create organizations so authoritarian and centralized as to crush the will and opinions of their individual members. Such was Nechayev's Popular Retribution, which was broken up by the tsarist government before it had time to achieve anything of importance. The attempts of certain historians to represent Nechayev as a "pretender" whom Bakunin never empowered to act on his behalf are futile. When searching the apartment of a student named Uspensky, who belonged to Nechayev's organization, the tsarist secret police found a cer-

tificate signed by Bakunin and given to Nechayev by Bakunin, which read as follows:

The bearer is a trusted representative of the Russian section of the International Revolutionary Alliance. Mikhail Bakunin.

It would be wrong, of course, to identify Nechayev with Bakunin. Nechayev has views of his own with which Bakunin did not agree. For example, in Bakunin's opinion the main revolutionary force in Russia were the peasantry and the *lumpen*-proletariat. Nechayev, however, regarded the working class as the main revolutionary force. In a pamphlet, *The Problem of Revolution*, Bakunin wrote:

In Russia the highway robber is the genuine and sole revolutionary—a revolutionary without fine phrases, without learned rhetoric, a revolutionary irreconcilable, indefatigable and indomitable, a popular and social revolutionary, non-political and independent of any estate.

Nechayev, however, after having lived abroad, and especially after the Paris Commune, became convinced that:

In the West there are new fresh people to whom the future belongs. They are the workers, divided neither by state frontiers nor by difference of tribe. They are the people who will understand us, for our cause, the cause of the people, is their cause too.

Nechayev was a consistent internationalist. His good points conflicted with the views of Bakunin.* But he copied Bakunin's mistaken anarchist views, which prevented him and his young contemporaries from evolving a correct view of the revolution and drove them into narrow conspiratorial activities.

* Incidentally, in 1870 Nechayev published Bakunin's Russian translation of the *Communist Manifesto*.

Land and Freedom

During the 1870's a fairly strong organization called Land and Freedom came into being in Russia. This organization served to unite all the revolutionary forces of Russia at that time and included people with the most varied views, generally known as Narodniks, or populists. The majority of its members were Bakuninist anarchists, who were of the opinion that the people were ready for revolution, that there was no need to teach them anything, that it was only necessary to rouse them to rebellion. The organization also included the adherents of Peter Lavrov, who advocated the idea that history is not made by the popular masses, but by "critically thinking individuals," who can turn the people in any direction they choose. Finally, it included the supporters of Peter Tkachev, a Blanquist, who advocated the seizure of political power by means of a revolutionary conspiracy.

But the views which predominated in the Land and Freedom organization were the anarchist views of Bakunin. For this reason we shall dwell in some detail on the activities of this organization.

It would be wrong to assume that Bakunin created this organization. The Narodnik movement had been preceded and formed by the activities of the Enlighteners—Hertzen, Belinsky, Dobrolubov and Chernyshevsky. Chernyshevsky in particular left a deep impress on the minds of the progressive section of Russian society. He was of the opinion that the awful conditions of the Russian people could be abolished only by a peasant revolution, by an armed rising against the tsar and the landlords. It was this road that he called upon young revolutionaries to follow. In a letter to Hertzen, Chernyshevsky wrote: "Our position is terrible, unbearable. Only the axe can save us, and nothing but the axe can help." But Chernyshevsky and his followers were not anarchists. In a leaflet entitled "Young Russia," written by a revolutionary named Zaichnevsky (who was under Chernyshevsky's influ-

ence), and distributed in Russia, the slogan of a socialist and democratic *republic* is put forth.

Soon, soon the day will come—the leaflet said—when we shall unfurl the great banner of the future, the red banner, and loudly crying “Long live the Russian Socialist and Democratic Republic” shall march on the Winter Palace to destroy those who inhabit it.

But neither Zaichnevsky's circle nor Chernyshevsky were equal to this task. . . . It was not until 55 years later that the working class, following the banner of the Bolshevik, Communist Party, could accomplish this great, historic task.

Unfortunately, when Chernyshevsky was arrested and confined in a fortress the members of the Land and Freedom were carried away by anarchist views on revolution, and this caused great injury to the movement. This was a result of the backwardness of the movement, a result of the weakness of the proletariat in Russia at that time.

We already know that Bakunin mistakenly thought that the peasants were *born* rebels and communists. His supporters followed his idea of “not teaching the people, but rousing them to rebellion.” For instance, they thought that the peasants and Cossacks who had risen in rebellion under the peasant leader Stenka Rasin were nearer to communism than the leaders of the utopian Socialists—Fourier, Saint-Simon, Cabet and others. We have seen that Bakunin regarded highway robbers and bandits as the most consistent revolutionaries. He maintained that the peasant community, notwithstanding all its defects, must serve as the unit of the anarcho-communist system: “Rebellion—Stenka Rasin, Pugachev, the religious sectarians—such is the sphere from which alone we can expect the moralization and salvation of the Russian people.”

Bakunin maintained that the peasants were revolutionaries, even when they marched “calling upon the name of the tsar.” He held that in their rebellion the peasants must destroy every

form of state, for he was convinced that the peasant community was absolutely opposed to every form of state. All that had to be done was to organize this peasant rebellion throughout the country, for which purpose it was necessary “to go among the people.”

Actually, however, the Russian peasants of the seventies, far from being born communists or socialists, did not even dream of communism. They wanted land, they were small proprietors who hated the landlords and believed in the tsar. In their attempts to rouse a nationwide rebellion and in their propaganda for socialism, the Narodniks, as a rule, met with no sympathy in the rural districts. Certain propagandists complained that their Bakuninist propaganda among the peasants “went in at one ear and came out at the other.” M. Popov, a prominent figure in this movement, relates:

The hope that our propaganda would rouse the rural population to active struggle, or, at least, would inspire the peasants with confidence that such a struggle would be fruitful, was not realized. The peasant would listen to the revolutionary just as he listened to the parson preaching about the Kingdom of Heaven, and after listening to the sermon and leaving the church he went on living just as he had done before.

Vera Figner, a member of the Executive Committee of the People's Will (*Narodnaya Volya*) party, who spent over 20 years in solitary confinement in the Schluesselburg fortress, writes in her memoirs*:

I spent ten months in the Petrovsky county, and my comrades a somewhat longer time in the Volsky county, and not a single person joined us in all that time. Our revolutionary isolation was enough to drive one to despair.

Plekhanov, at that time a supporter of Bakunin, wrote:

* Vera Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, New York, 1927.—Ed.

The peasants listened willingly and attentively to what the propagandists had to say about the land hunger, the brutality of the landlords, the greed of the priests and the grasping avidity of the merchants, but the majority of them remained deaf to the advocacy of socialism. The socialist ideals not only failed to attract them, but absolutely failed to penetrate their minds, for the ideals prompted by their production relations largely bore the character of bourgeois individualism.

Another Bakunist, Aptekman, says the same thing. He recalls how a peasant to whom he had been speaking about the need for rising and seizing the large estates exclaimed: "Won't it be fine when we divide the land! Why, then I'll hire two men and live like a lord!"

Of course, the tsarist government was not idle, and in 1874 alone over a thousand revolutionaries were arrested.

What did this attempt to "go among the people" show? It showed that Bakunin's idea that the peasants were the main revolutionary element in Russia, born socialists and rebels, was groundless; that Bakunin's theory that the peasants were opposed to every form of state was wrong. The strenuous efforts of the revolutionaries were wasted without benefitting the revolution. Bakunin's theories not only failed to direct the Narodniks along the right road, but actually diverted them from the more correct road which Chernyshevsky had previously called upon them to follow. Besides, Bakunin preached that a struggle for political liberty was superfluous, for such a struggle would only distract attention from the socialist ("social") revolution. He thought that Russia would go straight towards the socialist revolution, without going through the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; that every form of state would be at once destroyed and anarchist society ushered in. This doctrine misled those who took part in the movement and was undoubtedly harmful.

Unfortunately, this doctrine still survives among the anarchists in Spain, France and certain other countries, where their

failure to understand the line of development of the revolution and the nature of the revolutionary process leads to very grave errors which can be rectified only with difficulty.

When the Bakunist Narodniks became convinced that their anarcho-communist propaganda was meeting with no response among the peasantry, a section of them recalled Bakunin's statement that the peasants could be roused to rebellion in the name of the tsar, as had once been done by the rebel peasant leader Emelyan Pugachev.

A group of Bakunist rebels, including Stefanovich, Bukhanovsky and Deutsch (subsequently a prominent Menshevik Social-Democrat) therefore made their way to Chigirinsky county, in the Ukraine, where the land hunger among the poor peasants was particularly severe. The peasants were agitated and resolved to send a petitioner to the tsar to ask for land. Some of the peasants were arrested. Disguised as a peasant, under the name of Dmitry Naida, Stefanovich undertook to take the petition to the tsar. Stefanovich explained his actions as follows:

All my observations had confirmed the idea that the organization I had planned would be certain of adoption only on a basis of some authority, which in this case could only be the name of Tsar Alexander II.

Stefanovich pretended to set out on a journey to St. Petersburg to present the petition to the tsar, and on his return showed the peasants a forged manifesto alleged to have been signed by the tsar, calling upon the peasants to organize a secret society under the name of the Secret Squad in order to combat the landowners, the officials and the priests, who, so the document said, prevented the tsar from carrying out his desire of giving all the land to the peasants. The manifesto promised that in the event of victory:

All the land with its forests and meadows shall become your free property, like water, the sunlight and every other gift of God to man; the nobility you detest, which

knows no sympathy for you, will be abolished, and freedom and happiness will reign in the land of Russia.

To this forged manifesto Stefanovich added the rules for the Secret Squad peasant society, which were also supposed to have been approved by the tsar. In order to convince the peasants that it was all genuine, Stefanovich arranged the ceremony of taking the oath on the Bible. An ikon was placed on a table between lighted candles, a cross was formed of two knives, and at this "altar" the peasants solemnly took the oath. This secret society was soon discovered by the tsarist secret police; its members were arrested and exiled to Siberia.

Why did the Bakuninists need this masquerade, which was harmful to the revolution and most unworthy of revolutionaries? Because their whole doctrine of anarchism was fallacious. Because all their anarchist ideas about the peasantry and the revolution were groundless and worthless.

Thus the Bakuninist doctrine retarded the development of the revolution in Russia. It gave the revolution not a single idea of value. It was therefore impossible to build up a victorious working-class organization in Russia without combating all the Narodniks, and particularly the Bakuninist variety of Narodism.

It may be asked: but did not the Bakuninists in Russia conduct any propaganda among the workers? They did. They established connections with the workers and set up workers' propaganda circles. Prince Peter Kropotkin, a prominent anarchist, was one such propagandist. Another was Chaikovsky, the same who in 1918, during the proletarian revolution in Russia, headed the whiteguard interventionist government in North Russia in company with General Miller. Of course, if these propagandist leaders had not themselves been on a false track, their work among the workers would have been useful, for by this time the first volume of Marx's *Capital*, the *Communist Manifesto* and other of Marx's works had already been translated into Russian. But the Bakuninists who

carried on propaganda among the workers had no clear ideas themselves about the aims and objects of the revolution and about the methods of struggle. Kropotkin was instructed to draw up a "catechism" for the use of study circles. To the question: "Should we study the ideal future society?" he gave as the answer: "The main thing is to destroy the state; when this is achieved the people themselves will determine the principles on which the new society is to be based."

Of course, not all the workers who attended these circles blindly followed the Bakuninists. Among the workers of the seventies and the eighties there were some who had views of their own and organizational talent—progressive workers who realized the tremendous role that fell to the proletariat as the vanguard class. These people—Victor Obnorsky, Stepan Khalturin, Peter Moiseyenko, Peter Alexeyev, Semyon Agapov, and others—showed that they were head and shoulders above their teachers (the Kropotkins, Bakunins and Chaikovskys) in understanding the aims and objects of the struggle.

That is why we think that the ideas of Bakunin, Kropotkin and the rest were wrong and harmful to the development of the revolution; they hindered the formation of that larger group of class conscious workers who later, when the work of organization was undertaken by the Marxists, founded and formed that victorious, powerful organization—the Bolshevik Party—under whose leadership tsarism was overthrown, the capitalist, landlord and kulak classes destroyed and socialist society built up in the U.S.S.R.

II.

THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

(1905-07)

The Rise of Revolutionary Marxism

IN 1884 the first Russian Marxist group, known as the Emancipation of Labor, was founded in Switzerland by Plekhanov, Axelrod, Deutsch and Zasulich. It should be noted that all the organizers of this group had for several years been prominent in the Narodnik movement, and had belonged to the Bakuninist rebel wing. The formation of this group was preceded by a split in the Land and Freedom organization, which broke up into the People's Will and the Black Redistribution (*Cherny Peredel*) groups in 1879. The founders of the latter group afterwards formed the Emancipation of Labor, carrying with them their old anarchist views on the revolution and the state. The Black Redistribution group did not have much influence on the revolutionary movement in Russia. In a letter to Sorge, written on November 5, 1886, Marx ridiculed the Black Redistribution as a Bakuninist semi-anarchist group.

These gentlemen—Marx wrote—are opposed to all *political* revolutionary action. According to their plan Russia is to leap straight into the anarchist-communist-atheist millennium. In the meantime they are preparing for this leap by the most tedious doctrinairism. The so-called principles of their doctrine have been taken from the late Bakunin.

After they became Social-Democrats, these people aban-

THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

doned and criticized the Narodnik anarchist views. But it is with good cause that Marxists call anarchism the twin brother of compromising reformism. From their Bakuninist anarchism Plekhanov, Axelrod and their supporters in the Emancipation of Labor group soon went over to Menshevism and became the leaders of the Menshevik movement.

With Lenin's organization of the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class in St. Petersburg towards the end of the nineties, the movement of revolutionary Marxism began to develop, the *Bolshevik* trend began to take shape. At the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, in 1903, this trend assumed definite organizational shape as a party. In 1905 the Bolsheviks held a separate Party Congress, and in 1912 the Party finally rid itself of the Mensheviks and organized its own Central Committee.

After the proletarian revolution of 1917 the Bolshevik Party adopted the name of Communist Party. But from the outset this Party was the embryo of the future Third, Communist International, for which Marx and Engels had fought. The St. Petersburg League of Struggle was already the embryo of the new party, a fighting party, capable of overthrowing not only tsarism, but also the power of the landlords and capitalists in Russia; and this was its greatest and most difficult task, considering that under tsarism the proletariat constituted an insignificant minority of the population of Russia. It was only in alliance with the peasantry, and only under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, that the working class could accomplish this gigantic historic task.

As far back as 1894, during his controversy with the Narodniks, Lenin had written in his book, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight Against the Social-Democrats*, that as a result of the propaganda of Marxism carried on among the workers by the Marxists and as a result of their organizational work in establishing an independent working class party:

HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN RUSSIA

The Russian *workers* will rise at the head of all the democratic elements, overthrow absolutism and lead the *Russian proletariat* (side by side with the proletariat of all countries) *along the straight road of open political struggle towards the victorious communist revolution.**

Now the whole world can see that Lenin was absolutely right, that in 1894, more than two decades before the October Socialist Revolution of 1917, he correctly and precisely marked out the line of development of the revolution. The revolution in Russia did not follow the prescription of the anarchists—Bakunin, Kropotkin, Reclus, Puget, Malatesta and the rest—but the road foreseen by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Is not this the best possible proof that the theory and practice of the Communists are correct, that they correctly judge the development of the struggle, the strength and importance of the various classes in society, the enemies and allies of the proletariat, indicate the proper methods of struggle and properly employ them?

In the period when the forces of the first Russian revolution were taking shape and rising in the struggle, the anarchists in Russia did not perform a single revolutionary act of any importance. But they undoubtedly caused the revolutionary movement considerable harm by their struggle against the Marxists, and particularly by their advocacy of individual terrorism and anarchy.

In 1905-06, the activities of the Russian anarchists were confined almost exclusively to the South of Russia—Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, Elisavetgrad—and partly the Caucasus and Poland (Lodz, Byelostok, Warsaw). Those who are familiar with the history of the revolution in Russia know that the anarchist movement of 1905-07 did not give Russia a single outstanding revolutionary leader, did not provide a single idea of value to the revolution; this anarchist movement can-

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 455. International Publishers, New York.—Ed.

THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

not name a single fact of positive and decisive significance in its development.

Revolutionary methods of struggle, such as the mass strike or the armed uprising, were widely employed in Russia, not under the influence and leadership of the anarchists, but by the Bolshevik Party. In the Moscow insurrection of December, 1905—the most important event in Russia prior to the 1917 revolution—there was not a single anarchist fighting squad, whereas the Bolsheviks and even a section of the Menshevik workers fought on the barricades.

The favorite methods of struggle chosen by the anarchists in 1906-07 were individual terror and expropriation; but these methods showed the weakness, and not the strength of the anarchist movement. They degenerated into sheer banditry, which had nothing in common with the aims of the revolution.

We do not mean to suggest that there were not among the Russian anarchists people who in their own way were devoted to the cause of the revolution, for some of the workers also supported anarchism. But let us see what a competent witness like Kropotkin has to say on this point:

Our revolution has brought forth many heroes, people with personal courage; but it has not brought forth people with courage of thought, capable of carrying revolutionary ideas among the seething masses, of rallying them and inspiring them to perform great revolutionary deeds that would cause a revolution in the organization of life, in the economic distribution of forces, in all the ideas of the poor and exploited masses.

Let us bear in mind this opinion of a prominent anarchist leader. But at the same time let us recall that the Bolshevik movement has produced such giant thinkers as Lenin and Stalin, who rallied and inspired the masses to rise in armed insurrection, and trained these masses to make the greatest revolution known in history.

But the anarchist movement hindered the working class in this struggle.

Let us examine the facts.

Makhayev

First of all we must say a few words about the Makhayev trend, which caused an enormous amount of harm to the working class movement in Russia.

A. Makhayev (Volsky), a Social-Democrat of the reformist type, while in exile in Siberia came to the conclusion that "behind the capitalists a new exploiting and master class is growing up, namely, the intellectuals, the commanding intellectuals who also invented socialism in order to transform the working class into a tool for their own ends." To prove this "theory" he wrote a book, *The Intellectual Worker*. Makhayev soon found adherents among the exiled anarchists, Taratuta and others. In a leaflet issued in 1902, the Makhayevites argued that the intellectuals represented "a superior race whose mission it was to rule." In the same leaflet they tried to prove that the revolutionary party in Russia was fighting against tsarism only in order, when political liberty had been gained, to get into power and exploit the working class. Concerning the Jewish Labor League, known as the *Bund*, the Makhayevites wrote that the Jews were fighting against tsarism in order to be permitted to enter government service. Is it surprising that the gendarmes in Irkutsk freely permitted these counter-revolutionary productions of the Makhayevite anarchists to be distributed among the population? The ideas they preached played into the hands of the gendarmes, into the hands of tsarism. The Makhayevites succeeded in establishing the Invincible (*Neprimirimy*) group in Odessa and the Struggle (*Borba*) group in Byelostok. Novomirsky, one of the Russian anarchist leaders, characterized the Makhayevite program as follows:

It can be reduced to three points: (1) the working class

needs no ideals; (2) what it needs is an economic, revolutionary terrorist struggle against capital; and (3) the intellectuals are an exploiting class hostile to the proletariat.

Novomirsky also expressed the following opinion about the Makhayevites:

The Makhayevites could not become the vanguard of the mass movement, for practically their whole program was a negative one. The very causes that proved fatal for "Economism" and brought about the collapse of "Zubatovism" inflicted a mortal blow on Makhayevism. A political struggle was a historical necessity, and by their repudiation of politics the Makhayevites put themselves outside of history.

For the benefit of readers who are not sufficiently acquainted with the revolution in Russia we will explain that the Russian "Economism" of the nineties tried to persuade the workers to reject the political struggle, to leave that to the liberal bourgeoisie. "Zubatovism" was the attempt of the tsarist police to direct the working class movement into the legal channel of economic demands, and thus, by diverting the proletariat from the political struggle, to make it innocuous. The anarchism of the Makhayevites was something between "Economism" and "Zubatovism." For example, Makhayev tried to convince the workers that they could reach a standard of wages equal to the profits of the capitalists.

Makhayevism was not widespread among the working class. It is a characteristic fact that its leaders were not workers. For instance, Nikolai Striga (Vladimir Lapidus), the leader of the Makhayevites in Odessa, came of a bourgeois family. The purpose of Makhayevism was to create distrust between the masses of the workers and the socialist intellectuals, thus playing into the hands of the tsarist gendarmes who were pursuing the same end by different means, although at the end of 1904 the Makhayevites in Odessa styled themselves anarchist-communists.

During the 1905 revolution the Russian anarchists split up into several trends, but they had one thing in common, namely, the repudiation of the state and of the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution. The Russian anarchists took their ideas from Bakunin, Kropotkin, Proudhon, Malatesta and Reclus. They tried to prove that the revolution in Russia must lead to the destruction of every kind of state, that it must lead to anarchy. In their opinion, skipping all transitional stages, including the dictatorship of the proletariat, the revolution would immediately establish in place of the tsarist landlord and capitalist state complete communist-anarchist society, a society based on the rule: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

One of these "anarchist-communist" trends was named after their publication. *No Authority* (*Beznachaliye*). An article dealing with the program of the group, published in No. 1 of this publication, state that the anarchists must inscribe on their black banner the slogan: "Ruthless, bloody popular retribution." It demanded the "recognition of burglary and all other open attacks on stores and houses committed by the oppressed classes."

Another group of Russian anarchists were called the Black Banner (*Chernoye Znamya*) group. Their publication, the *Rebel* (*Buntar*) stated in its first editorial, addressing the unemployed: "Organize and arm! Attack the stores and seize necessities in an organized manner. Let *that* be your demand for bread!"

Of course, it was easier to attack some small shopkeeper, or to rob a private apartment, than to carry on an organized class struggle against the landlord and capitalist classes as a whole; it was easier to attack an individual official of the tsarist government than to attack the entire tsarist autocracy, than to organize the masses to overthrow tsarism. But such activity is not revolutionary—far from it. These anarchists

called themselves communists. But their communism was "consuming" communism. They deceived the masses when they said that it was possible to provide everything "to each according to his needs" on the morrow of the revolution, and that the class struggle would also cease immediately after the revolution.

It should be noted that these anarchists did not carry on their activities among the more organized, class-conscious workers, but among the children of ruined petty bourgeois, among the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, among the *lumpen*-proletariat, and sometimes among real criminals, for bandits were quite suitable as far as burglaries and attacks on houses and stores were concerned. No principles were necessary for this purpose. But if we recall that Bakunin himself regarded highway robbers as the finest revolutionaries, we shall realize why the Russian anarchists formulated their objectives in this way.

The following was related by the anarchist Novomirsky, publisher of the magazine *New World* (*Novy Mir*), regarding the Odessa anarchist-communist group at the end of 1905. When in his report Novomirsky had set forth the anarchist views on the revolution, Gershevik, the leader of the Odessa anarchist-communist group, took the floor and declared that the anarchist-communists did not agree with Novomirsky.

The anarchist-communists absolutely differ with him: we say to the workers, "Murder, rob, kill! We do not want any societies, we do not want any organizations: rob, murder, kill!"

Judge for yourselves what enormous harm such a doctrine caused in those places where it was not opposed by that of the genuinely revolutionary party of Bolshevik Marxists, who under exceedingly difficult conditions built up their party step by step, teaching the proletariat to fight its class enemies in the most effective way.

The No Authority and the Black Banner were not the

only anarchist trends in Russia during the revolution. A participant in the anarchist movement gives the following description of this variety of "shades" of anarchism:

Bombs of "unmotivated" terror—and Tolstoy's "thou shalt not kill"; revolution—and passive resistance; the refusal of the members of the No Authority to go to work in order not to be exploited—and strikes; the No Authority justification of robberies perpetrated against capitalists—and the social expropriation of the exploiters, these were incompatible forms of direct action, this was the distance between a beast and an angel. . . .

The only thing this anarchist forgot was that revolution is made not by beasts and not by angels, but by working people.

We shall not deal in detail with all the trends of anarchism. Tolstoyanism, as an anarchist trend, is in a separate category, since it is the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, and repudiates all political struggle. We have seen what the theories and the practical slogans of the active anarchist groups were like.

Nor was there much difference between the above-mentioned groups and the Bread and Freedom (*Khleb i Volya*) group organized by Kropotkin, Orgeyan, Cherkezov, Corn and other anarchists in London with supporters in Russia. This group also preached the direct transition to the "anarchist millennium," it also denied that it was necessary for the working class to establish an independent party and to take part in the political struggle. Thus, all the anarchists detached a section of the workers from the united front of the working class and the peasantry, weakened the forces of the revolution and thereby played into the hands of the counter-revolution.

We have already said that the principal methods of struggle recommended by the anarchists were economic terror, expropriation, and what was known as "unmotivated terror," which was intended to terrorize the bourgeoisie.

The anarchists, themselves, in a statement addressed "to

the Anarchist Comrades" gave the following withering description of their theory:

The elements of Utopian idealism, fragments of 18th century thought, are mixed up with modern "progressive" theories, and in places all this is pierced by the rays of the class theory. (*Chernoye Znamya*, 1905, No. 1.)

And the anarchists put forward this miserable and pernicious jumble as the most advanced doctrine of the proletariat!

But the tactics of individual and economic terror practiced by the anarchist groups and by individual anarchists served to rouse among a section of the workers the false hope that the anarchist "heroes" were fighting their battle, that they would be freed from exploitation as a result of the anarchist terrorist acts. These tactics relaxed the activities of the masses of the workers, they subdued their mass militant spirit. As a typical example of this we may quote from a letter addressed to the Odessa anarchist-communist group by the women working in the Odessa Municipal Laundry and published in the anarchist magazine, *Stormy Petrel (Burevestnik)*, Geneva, 1907, No. 7. As a means of ridding themselves of exploitation, these women turned for help to the anarchists, since they regarded them as "comrades who exercise more influence over the bastards who suck the blood of poor working people." . . . They requested the anarchist leaders "not to leave us unprotected, if only by scaring the parasites who drink our blood. . . . Send a special letter threatening these parasites." Could such faith in the action of anarchist threats make people fit for the mass revolutionary movement?

In the summer of 1906 the author of this pamphlet was working in the industrial center of Ekaterinoslav (now Dniepropetrovsk), where there was a fairly large group of anarchist-communists. The anarchists killed the director of the engineering works in that town, although they took no part in the strike that was then in progress. This terrorist act,

like most of its kind, produced only negative results. Some time later the workers were compelled to resume work under worse conditions than before the strike.

Especially harmful were the acts of "unmotivated terror," intended to frighten the bourgeoisie in general. Here is a description of the consequences of such an act given by the prominent anarchist, Novomirsky:

On December 17 (1905), a group of the Black Banner leaders organized a terroristic act which undermined the influence of the anarchist-communists in Odessa for a long time after. This was the notorious attack on Lieberman's Cafe. The group wanted to commit a model act of "unmotivated terror." But they could not have chosen a more unfortunate object to popularize this theory. Lieberman's Cafe was a second-rate place patronized not by wealthy people, but by people of all classes, including minor office employees and needy intellectuals. Moreover, the act itself was very clumsily performed: the bomb was thrown in the street, and of course produced nothing but noise and confusion. The workers were puzzled and asked what this throwing of bombs in an ordinary cafe could mean. Nobody wanted to believe that this was the work of revolutionaries. I myself was among the crowd that gathered after the explosion and heard the workers say: "Have revolutionaries nothing better to do now than throwing bombs at restaurants? Has the tsarist government been overthrown and the power of the bourgeoisie destroyed? The bomb must have been thrown by the Black Hundreds* to discredit the revolutionaries."

The mass of the workers were far above anarchist methods of struggle and had outgrown the anarchist theory. They understood the object and methods of the struggle better than the anarchists did. But in some places the backward section of the workers, misled by the anarchists, adopted this system

* Members of the monarchist counter-revolutionary League of Russian People.

of petty terrorist acts and robberies. The expropriation of the owners started by the anarchists during a shoemakers' strike in Warsaw in 1907 resulted simply in the more adroit shoemakers grabbing the shoes from the workshops for themselves, and not in any real "expropriation of the expropriators."

The result was that the term anarchist began to serve as a screen for various criminal gangs, such as the notorious Black Raven gang in Odessa.

The Russian anarchist Arshinov, well-known among the Spanish, Italian and French anarcho-syndicalists, who played a prominent part under Makhno, wrote as follows in summing up this movement in Russia during the period of the first revolution:

Some genuine anarchists had remained at liberty and were resisting this turbid wave of expropriation. A special article against it was printed at the end of 1906 in the *Buntar*, the principal organ of the Russian anarchist-communists, which at first had advocated the tactics of expropriation in theory, but then began to sound the alarm. . . . This turbid wave rose higher and higher, overwhelming the genuine anarchists. As a consequence, ordinary workers came to identify anarchism with plain banditry. Moreover, even the genuine anarchists, especially the younger ones, could not break through the vicious circle of partial expropriation. They were powerless to adopt any road other than that of expropriation and terror, for the anarchist leaders themselves knew no other road. By 1908-09 anarchism in Russia had ceased to exist as a movement. It had been partly destroyed by the tsarist government, but it collapsed mainly owing to its false theory and fundamentally false tactics.

Such were the results of the anarchist movement during the period of the first Russian revolution.

The tsarist government persecuted the Bolsheviks no less than it persecuted the anarchists. Large numbers of Bolshe-

viks were killed and executed during the revolution. Thousands were sent to penal servitude, imprisoned or exiled. But, unlike the anarchists, the Bolsheviks had succeeded in taking root so deeply among the working class that no persecution could destroy the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement. Even during the blackest reaction the Bolsheviks kept the banner of revolution flying and continued their preparations for a new armed uprising, which in February-March, 1917, overthrew the tsarist monarchy and paved the way for the Socialist October Revolution.

III.

THE WORLD WAR OF 1914-18

THE activities of the various working class organizations during the imperialist world war of 1914-18 showed very clearly which of these organizations was consistently revolutionary in its attitude to the predatory imperialist war. How many high-sounding resolutions the congresses of the Second International and the congresses of the anarchists had adopted on the duty of internationalists in the event of war! Moreover, it should be borne in mind that, before the war, the anarchists, in frequently accusing the Marxists of moderation and opportunism, had failed to see that although the Second International contained a large number of opportunists, the consistently revolutionary, proletarian Bolshevik Party was also affiliated to it.

When the war broke out the time arrived to take a revolutionary stand against the war started by the imperialists of Germany, Russia, France, England, Japan and other countries for the redivision of the world. The bourgeoisie of every country naturally strove to prove that its country was being attacked and that it was defending civilization against the barbarism and militarism of other countries. The bourgeoisie in every country wanted to bring about a class truce for the duration of the war and did its utmost to win the labor leaders to its side. In nearly every country the leaders of the Socialist Parties—Guesde, Vaillant, Plekhanov, Scheidemann, Kautsky, Noske and others—went over to the side of "their own" bourgeoisie.

What did the anarchists do? Did they call a general strike?

Did they call upon the masses of workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors to rise in arms against the instigators of the war? No, almost without exception the leaders of the anarchists acted in the same way as the Socialist compromisers, renegades and traitors to the working class.

Prince Kropotkin took up the same stand as the Menshevik Plekhanov. Jean Grave, Cornelissen, Gustave Herve—all those who before the war loudly called for class struggle, for revolution, for the immediate introduction of communism—began to preach a class truce, and, in the words of the anarchist Ge, became “social-trenchists.” Reviewing the behavior of the labor leaders, Lenin wrote with bitterness and indignation:

The foremost anarchists of the world have disgraced themselves in this war no less than the opportunists by adopting social-chauvinism (in the spirit of Plekhanov and Kautsky).*

The only organization that remained loyal to the working class was the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the Bolshevik Party. On the outbreak of the war Lenin immediately began to mobilize those who fought together with him in all countries, those who would not agree to the class truce with the bourgeoisie. He found supporters in many countries, including such prominent proletarian revolutionaries as Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in Germany.

The Bolshevik Party carried on revolutionary work among the workers, the peasants, the soldiers and sailors in Russia, although the tsarist government, supported by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, had arrested the Bolshevik deputies to the State Duma and exiled them to Siberia.

Did the anarchists in any country at this critical moment raise the standard of the revolution as the Communists, the followers of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, did?

No, not in a single country did they do so.

* “Socialism and War,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII.

IV.

THE RUSSIAN ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS DURING THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

IN OCTOBER, 1917, the Bolsheviks roused the masses of Russian workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors for the great Socialist Proletarian Revolution. Though opposed by all other parties, including the so-called Socialists—the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—and by most of the anarchists, the revolution triumphed and opened up the new epoch of socialism, which is so replete with deeds of glory and heroism of the working people.

Did the anarchists take any part in this struggle? No. As in 1905, they thought it a sin to fight for the establishment of authority of any kind. But without organized authority the victorious people would have been crushed, for the proletarian revolution had to face the opposition not only of all parties in Russia with the exception of the Bolsheviks, not only of the entire bourgeoisie in Russia and all its hangers-on, but of the entire international bourgeoisie. Fourteen capitalist states organized intervention and economic blockade against the new state.

Today, when we see the fascist governments of Germany, Italy and Portugal aiding the fascist rebels in Spain with the tacit consent and even support of other governments, it would be well for the working people of Spain, and no less for their enemies, to remember that the people of the Soviet state, badly armed and starving, succeeded in routing the forces of both

the internal counter-revolution and the international imperialist intervention, and freed their country. They succeeded in doing this under the leadership of the Communist Party. Members of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League formed the main body which organized resistance, they were the storm troops which invariably displayed valor and heroism at the most critical moments. Twenty-five per cent of the members of the Communist Party and 50 per cent of the Young Communist League were mobilized for the Red Army, and in the region of military operations all Communists and Young Communists without exception were mobilized. During the four great years of civil war outstanding Communist military leaders sprang up from the ranks of the people trained by Lenin and Stalin—men like Voroshilov, Frunze, Budenny, Blucher, Yegorov, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Chapayev, Shchors, and hundreds and thousands of other heroes of the civil war.

Did the anarchists do anything to help in this struggle? When faced with this question, every anarchist points to Nestor Makhno. We shall deal with Makhno and his followers in a chapter specially devoted to them. For the present we will deal with the Russian anarcho-syndicalists, who borrowed many of their theories and forms of practical activity from the French, Spanish and Italian anarcho-syndicalists.

Anarcho-syndicalist ideas played no part in the Russian revolution of 1905, but the trade union organizations certainly did include anarcho-syndicalists. Certain of their ideas found favorable ground in the reformist wing of the Russian Social-Democrats, the Mensheviks. For instance, the Mensheviks upheld the pernicious idea of the neutrality of the trade unions. They overestimated the function and importance of the trade unions to such an extent as to propose the establishment of a "broad labor party" to include all trade unions, cooperative societies and other non-party organizations. This confusion of the trade unions with the party was vigorously opposed by the Bolsheviks.

After the proletarian revolution, certain prominent trade union officials formed in the Bolshevik Party what was known as the Workers' Opposition, led by Shlyapnikov and Medvedyev. As the subsequent struggle showed, the Workers' Opposition had no right to bear this name, for they turned out to be a petty-bourgeois group hostile to the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the proletarian revolution. In 1920, shortly before the Tenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, this Workers' Opposition drew up a set of theses on the trade unions in which they tried to prove that the principal organization of the working class was not the party, but the trade unions. They proposed that the economic administration of the country should be placed in the hands of bodies elected by a Congress of Producers, which in Russia would actually have meant, not the organized socialist proletariat, but the 25,000,000 scattered small peasant farmers, for the small peasants were also "producers." The anarcho-syndicalist nature of these proposals is clear; the anarcho-syndicalists in Spain and France were also of the opinion that the management of industry and agriculture should be placed in the hands of the trade unions and that the trade unions were the principal organizations of the proletariat.

The Tenth Party Congress condemned the Workers' Opposition and proclaimed the propaganda of its views to be incompatible with membership in the Bolshevik Party. Lenin severely criticized this group, pointing out that the attacks on the Party launched by it were undermining the dictatorship of the proletariat and helping the bourgeoisie.

At the time of the Tenth Party Congress the Kronstadt mutiny against the Soviet government broke out, supported by the whiteguards and the entire Russian bourgeoisie. The anarchists have more than once defended the Kronstadt mutiny. Even quite recently, on November 29, 1936, the *Solidaridad Obrero*, organ of the Spanish anarchists, wrote:

The Marxists must know that in Spain there can be no

repetition of that feature of the Russian Bolshevik dictatorship when a whole working class district in Petrograd, in which many leaders of anarchist organizations were gathered, was destroyed at the very moment when the opponents of every form of authority (*i.e.*, the anarchists) were putting the White army to flight in South Russia. Nor can Spain ever be the scene of what took place in the Ukraine in the course of the persecution of our Makhno, the most fearless revolutionary leader in Russia. Nor will the history of Kronstadt, that anarchist town completely demolished by the Red soldiers, ever be repeated in our country.

We, too, are of the opinion that the anarchists in Spain will not commit the crimes against the revolution that were committed by the anarchists in Russia. We shall devote a special chapter to the activities of the anarchists, particularly of Makhno. For the present we must make clear what actually took place in Kronstadt in the spring of 1921.

In the first place, it should be pointed out that neither in the revolution of 1905 nor in the revolution of 1917 was Kronstadt an anarchist town. The sailors of Kronstadt played a great revolutionary role in October, 1917, and in the subsequent Civil War. Their leaders at that time were *Bolsheviks*, and most of the sailors were Bolsheviks, too. However, those sailors who successfully defended revolutionary Kronstadt against the forces of Kerensky and Yudenich were sent to the front, while Kronstadt was filled with new sailors, chiefly from the rural districts, who brought with them the discontent of the peasants and their longing for the cessation of the Civil War. A counter-revolutionary organization fighting against the Communists, against the dictatorship of the proletariat, came into being in Kronstadt under the secret leadership of the whiteguards. The whiteguard emigre Milyukov, formerly a minister in Kerensky's bourgeois government, urged support for the rebels' slogan of "Soviets" of Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Cadets, and anyone you please, against the

Communists, against the proletarian dictatorship, against socialism and for capitalism.

The Spanish, Italian, French and all other workers must never forget that the Bolsheviks in Russia captured political power at a time when the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and the rest had made a united front with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, against the socialist revolution.

*A la guerre, comme a la guerre,** as the French say. It was a very dangerous time for the young Soviet Republic. It would have been a crime to fool around and hesitate to adopt resolute measures against the rebels, for Kronstadt is the key to Leningrad. To have left Kronstadt in the hands of the rebels would have meant endangering the revolution, and more years and years of bloodshed in order to win back such an important point as Kronstadt was. We believe that the Spanish anarchists would act just as the Bolsheviks acted in 1921—they would storm the rebel fortress and drive the rebels out. Kronstadt was not demolished. That is a lie. Kronstadt is still an impregnable fortress of the U.S.S.R. But by a heroic blow, advancing over the uncertain ice, the Red Army men carried the strategic points of the rebels by storm and dislodged them from Kronstadt. During their few days of rule the rebels imprisoned several hundred Bolsheviks; they terrorized the inhabitants who were loyal to the socialist revolution. All the whiteguard bourgeois papers in the capitalist countries glorified the rebels. When have the capitalists ever praised their enemies? They praised the Kronstadt rebels because the latter were actually fighting in their cause, the cause of the capitalists.

That is the truth about Kronstadt.

"But," the reader may ask, "what connection has the Kronstadt rebellion with the anarcho-syndicalists?" The connection is that both the anarcho-syndicalists of the Workers' Opposition and the independent anarcho-syndicalist group—the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation—actually supported

* In war act in a wartime manner.—Ed.

the Kronstadt rebels. In its resolution, the Tenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party pointed out that "the bourgeois counter-revolution and whiteguards in all countries of the world expressed their readiness to accept even the Soviet system if only they could secure the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia." The Congress adopted a resolution on the anarchist and syndicalist deviation in the Party in which it pointed out that the anarchist and syndicalist sentiments of a section of the Communists were due—

partly to the penetration into the Party of elements who have not yet fully assimilated the principles of Communism; but this deviation is due mainly to the influence exerted on the proletariat and the Russian Communist Party by the petty-bourgeois element, which is exceptionally strong in our country, and which inevitably gives rise to vacillations in the direction of anarchism, especially at a time when the conditions of the masses have been very much worsened owing to the failure of the harvest and the devastating results of the war and when the demobilization of an army numbering several million leaves hundreds and hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers who cannot immediately find employment and means of livelihood.

What was the fate of the anarcho-syndicalists who attempted to influence the course of the revolution from *within* the Party? Their further activities showed that the Workers' Opposition, which acted under the anarcho-syndicalist flag, consisted of disguised Mensheviks, of enemies of communism who were out to restore capitalism. All their cheap phrases about equality, all their hypocritical claims to defending the working class were enemy camouflage.

The anarchists may ask why we are judging them by such anarcho-syndicalists. Because, we reply, the Workers' Opposition found full support among the anarchists. Its literature, such as, for instance, the *Workers' Opposition Manifesto* by A. Kollontai, was translated into foreign languages and

distributed by the anarchists. But, worst of all, the Russian anarchists of that time joined the anarchist Council of Action, which during the days of the Kronstadt rebellion served to unite the anarchists with all anti-Soviet organizations.

And who were the Russian anarcho-syndicalists outside the Party? The first national conference of anarcho-syndicalists took place in a perfectly open and legal fashion in August 1918, and this was followed by a second in November. Both these conferences showed that the anarcho-syndicalists had no roots in the working class and exercised no influence over it. Small groups consisting mainly of intellectuals were constantly merging and splitting, which finally resulted in the formation of the short-lived League of Anarcho-Syndicalist Communists of Moscow, established in Moscow in 1920. This league fell to pieces a few weeks after it was established. The following explanation of its weakness and collapse was given in a circular of the Bureau of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation:

Hardly any attempt was made to collect and unite the disintegrating movement; the attempts that were made were inconsistent, were not serious, and therefore did not succeed.

There was only one trade union in Moscow—the Bakers' Union—in which the anarcho-syndicalists enjoyed any influence. At a time when the country was locked in a ring of intervention and drenched with blood, when the country was on starvation rations, the anarcho-syndicalists proposed that the slogan, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," be put into effect—this at a time when it was impossible to provide even half a pound of bread a day for everyone, let alone "to each according to his needs."

Of course, the revolution must lead to an improvement in the life of the working people, otherwise it would be pointless. But is it possible to pursue such a policy immediately after the revolution, when the struggle is not yet at an end, when the wolf is waiting at the door, when strictest accounting and

strictest economy of every pound of supplies are essential?

Under the proletarian dictatorship the Russian anarcho-syndicalists had various publications—*Golos Truda* (*Voice of Labor*), *Volny Golos Truda* (*Free Voice of Labor*), *Trud i Volya* (*Labor and Freedom*), and others. They held several conferences. They spoke at workers' meetings. What was the result of their activity, what did they do to benefit the Russian revolution?

A section of the anarcho-syndicalists tried to discard the Bakunin anarchist attitude to the state and to take part in building up a new social system. But at the same time the anarcho-syndicalists defended the seizure of individual houses by gangs acting under the anarchist flag and also defended the pernicious actions of Makhno.

We will deal here with the reproach often levelled at us by the anarchists, including the Spanish anarchists, that at the beginning of the revolution the Bolsheviks put a stop to the arbitrary seizure of houses by individual armed groups for their private benefit.

What were the facts?

While the Bolsheviks were fighting, arms in hand, against the whiteguard armies, the anarchists and the criminal gangs which made haste to assume their name were seizing houses and valuables for their own personal use. The Bolsheviks and all class conscious workers and peasants regarded the property of the bourgeoisie as the property of the entire people, and not of some particular group which had succeeded in obtaining arms. It was soon established that arms needed for resistance to the whiteguards at the front—rifles, bombs, machine-guns and even cannon—had been seized by bandit groups which had nothing in common with the revolution and were using the name of anarchists to camouflage their criminal activities. They fortified certain houses in Moscow (26 in all), in Leningrad and in Kharkov, turning them into strongholds from which they made armed raids on apartments, restaurants and individuals, searching for and seizing property, which

they shared among themselves. Could the working class put up with such "order"? Did not this threaten the ruin of the revolution? The working class of the young Soviet Republic and its vanguard, the Communist Party, after shedding so much blood in the course of three revolutions, undergoing so much suffering and for the first time in history overthrowing the power of the exploiters, would have been guilty of the gravest crime against the revolution had they permitted such actions. Therefore, the arms of these individuals were confiscated and despatched to the front, and the criminal gangsters were caught and punished.

Woe to the Spanish revolution if it were to permit the name of anarchism to be used in some such way in its country! We see that the anarchists of Spain are beginning to realize, though not all at once, that it is necessary to register all arms, and to arm those, and only those, who need these arms to wage an organized struggle against the counter-revolutionary rebels. Why did the anarchists of the *Solidaridad Obrera* reproach the Russian Bolsheviks for having acted in this way in order to help the revolution? Do they not know that the flag of anarchism can be and often is hoisted for counter-revolutionary purposes? We do not know where the *Solidaridad Obrera* obtained the information that the Bolsheviks destroyed a working class district where the leaders of the anarchists were gathered; we say that this is not true, for the Bolsheviks never destroyed any working class districts either in Petrograd or in any other city. The Bolsheviks disarmed those who seized arms not to fight against enemies of the revolution but for their own criminal ends and thereby injured the revolution and the united front of the working people. And this is what the anarchists too must do if they want the victory of the revolution, not the victory of fascism.

Yes, we Bolsheviks fought against the Russian anarcho-syndicalists, and we did so because the anarcho-syndicalists in Russia not only failed to help the revolution, but played into the hands of its enemies. Let us, for example, take the stand

adopted by the Russian anarcho-syndicalists with regard to the Red Army. In its circular No. 3, dealing with "Work in the Red Army," the executive bureau of the Russian Anarchist-Communist Federation told its members to *demoralize* the Red Army. Why did it want to demoralize the only army in the world that has defended the proletarian revolution from that time until now? The anarchist-communists wrote that:

The Red Army can and undoubtedly will fulfill the function of its predecessor, the tsarist army, so that we must realize beforehand that the success of the anarcho-syndicalist revolution will depend largely on the spirit and morale of the Red Army.

This was the slanderous utterance of an enemy. But did not the anarchists of other countries, including Spain, follow the Russian anarchists in writing in a hostile spirit about the Red Army? Did they not try to prove that they would be able to do without such an army during the revolution? Has not their opposition to such an army caused great harm? Fortunately for the revolution, the anarchists in Spain now realize that on this point too the Bolshevik Communists were right, and they are now helping to build up such an army in order to defend the Spanish revolution, to rout fascism, to suppress the enemies of the revolution.

Following Bakunin's anarchist theory that every form of state is an evil, that all state institutions must be combated, the Russian anarcho-syndicalists (followed by the anarchists of other countries as well) failed to realize that the Soviet state has been established in the interests of the working people, of the workers and peasants. After the revolution it is the duty of every revolutionary to take an active part in building life in its new forms, in organizing it. But such was not the attitude of the Russian anarchists. In its circular No. 6, dealing with "Work in Soviet Institutions," the Russian Anarchist-Communist Federation wrote:

It would be foolish, to say the least, to imagine that by working in these institutions we can influence them so

that they will become entirely anarchist or will develop in this direction. Reformism is a foolish nonsensical illusion. *We must attack the system as a whole.* Thus work in a Soviet institution must be regarded not as serving our principles, but—in the same way as we regard working for capitalists—as a means of livelihood, of earning a crust of bread, and nothing more.

This is monstrous, but it is a fact. The Russian anarchists in the Soviet institutions voluntarily adopted the position of the bourgeois wreckers, who also were of the opinion that they must attack the Soviet system as a whole, and also worked merely for the sake of earning a "livelihood."

Fortunately for the Spanish revolution, in this matter too the Spanish anarchists have generally not followed the Russian anarchists in their attitude toward working in the organizations of the republican government; they are neither boycotting them nor sabotaging, as proposed by the Russian anarchists on the basis of the teachings of Kropotkin, Bakunin and the other founders of anarchism. On the contrary, they have agreed to work in the organs of government with other organizations serving the revolution. We welcome this change, for it facilitates cooperation between the anarchists and the Communists.

In the spring of 1921, the anarcho-syndicalists held a conference in Moscow at which they declared that it was necessary to make preparations for an armed rising against the Soviet government. They entered into a *bloc* with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, in conjunction with whom the "Illegal Anarchists" had in August 1919 thrown a bomb at a meeting of responsible Communists, killing 13 and wounding many.

Such was the activity of the anarcho-syndicalists in Russia. Small wonder that the workers refused to follow them, that the working people despised them! The anarcho-syndicalists in Russia did not produce a single beneficial idea, did not perform a single deed for the revolution. Their little puny organizations fell to pieces, while their best members joined the Communist Party.

V.

"THE ANARCHIST GROUP FEDERATION." THE
"NABAT" GROUP AND NESTOR MAKHNO.
THE "ILLEGAL ANARCHISTS"

NESTOR MAKHNO was undoubtedly the most vivid and striking figure in the Russian anarchist movement during the period of the proletarian dictatorship; and the movement that has gone down in the history of the Russian Civil War in his name was the supreme manifestation of anarchist theory and practice. It is impossible to discuss Makhno and the ideas he stood for without showing what the practical application of the teachings of anarchism "on the morrow of the revolution" is like—not in theoretical writings, but in mass action over a large territory. On the other hand, it is impossible to discuss anarchism in Russia without examining in detail the activities of Makhno and his supporters.

First of all, a few words about Makhno himself. The Spanish anarchists to this day call him "our Russian comrade," but if the Spanish workers knew the truth about Makhno they would hardly call him their comrade.

Under the tsarist government, Makhno was a village school-master in the Ukraine and as such joined a group of young peasants which engaged in robberies and murders of landlords and the government officials. For these activities Makhno at the age of 19 was sentenced to penal servitude, from which he was released by the revolution of February-March 1917—

ANARCHIST GROUPS IN RUSSIA

a revolution which certainly was not accomplished by the anarchists. It was in prison that Makhno first came into contact with anarchist ideas. After his release he returned to his native district of Gulyay-Polye, a district of well-to-do peasants in the Ukraine. At first he could not make up his mind whether to join the Bolsheviks or the anarchists, and spoke now as one and now as the other. It was only after the Ukraine was occupied by the Austrian and German troops that Makhno definitely became an anarchist. There was no Bolshevik organization in Gulyay-Polye, the only organizations being those of the anarchists and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

From that time on, assuming the lead of the organization established to resist foreign intervention, Makhno began to gain popularity in the neighboring peasant districts. At the same time he began to rally around himself various prominent anarchists, particularly those belonging to the Alarm (*Nabat*) group—Baron, Volin, Arshinov, Tepper, Glagzon, and others, who tried to guide the movement along the lines of the anarchist theories.

Let us say in advance that we do not consider the Makhno movement to have been hostile to the revolution at every point from its very beginning. There were times when Makhno and his followers *helped* the revolution. Nor can it be denied that many of them displayed great personal courage and readiness to sacrifice their lives.

But, taken as a whole, this movement undoubtedly was harmful to the cause of the proletariat, and the crimes it committed were so great and so disgraceful that in the minds of the people of the Ukraine and of the entire Soviet Union "Makhnovism" has remained a synonym for unrestrained banditry, from which the proletarian revolution and its defenders were the first to suffer.

There can be no doubt that in the summer of 1918, when Makhno headed the revolt in the South of the Ukraine against the forces of Hetman Skoropadsky and of the Austro-German occupation, he was of service to the revolution, for at that

time he acted in conjunction with the workers' and peasants' Red Army and the Soviet government.

At the end of 1918, Makhno together with the insurgent workers of Ekaterinoslav succeeded in dislodging the whiteguards from that town. This was the first important success of Makhno's army. Here, in a big working class center, he could have put his anarchist program into practice. What did the anarchist Makhno and his army do with this town they captured? The anarchists in their literature avoid mentioning the fact that the insurgent workers of Ekaterinoslav, with whose help Makhno took the town, were not anarchists, but Bolsheviks. Moreover—and this must be said explicitly—Makhno needed persuasion before he agreed to help the Bolsheviks. In the negotiations with the Bolshevik Party organization, Makhno and some of his commanders wavered, for they had no confidence in their own forces.

But no sooner had Makhno's army taken the town, than all its weak, negative sides, its lack of discipline and restraint made themselves apparent. Before Makhno had even entrenched himself in Ekaterinoslav, his "partisan army," accustomed to plunder, began to loot the town. Makhno's feeble attempts to establish some kind of order and discipline were futile. His drunken soldiers, including many commanders, plundered the houses not only of the bourgeoisie, but of the working people as well. The Jewish inhabitants suffered particularly.

What were Makhno and his staff doing? These "anti-authoritarian anarchists" were bargaining with the Socialist-Revolutionaries about organizing the government of the town and distributing government positions. In the meantime, a large body of Petlura's troops under General Samokish broke into the town and Makhno's drunken horde of peasant partisans took to their heels in panic. The detachments of workers' Red Guards, disorganized by this flight, were unable to offer resistance to Petlura's troops, and about 2,000 workers and Makhno partisans were killed crossing the Dnieper under enemy fire.

The anarchists surrounding Makhno, and their leader himself, carried on propaganda against the Communists and against the Soviet government, trying to prove that no government was needed, that government was against the interests of the working people, and that a society without a government must be organized. We saw above what this kind of talk led to as soon as Makhno and his army took a big industrial town in which tens of thousands of workers were employed and which governed a large agricultural district. This was a splendid opportunity to show how anarchist society without a government should be organized; but the anarchists established nothing of the kind, and anarchy proved to be not the mother of order, as the anarchists claimed, but the cause of the defeat of the workers by the very first detachment of Petlura's troops, who profited by the disorganization and anarchy for which Makhno and his supporters were to blame.

A month later, in January 1919, Ekaterinoslav was recaptured, but this time by Soviet troops under a Bolshevik, the sailor Dybenko.

What were Makhno and his army doing at this time? They were taking it easy in Gulyay-Polye. Many of Makhno's peasant partisan detachments had simply fallen to pieces and their members had returned to their homes. Were they violating the anarchist "libertarian" principle of absolute individual liberty? On the contrary, they were acting fully in accord with the anarchist principle of "freedom" from obligatory discipline, from military service regulations—they were displaying "organized indiscipline."

Unfortunately, many people fail to realize that in time of civil war the strictest discipline is necessary among all those fighting against the enemies of the proletariat. There were people who said, "We do not want discipline that will limit our valor, intellect and sentiments." There were people who upheld the right of each detachment to act how and when it thought necessary, and not as the common interests of the struggle, the common objective demanded.

Makhno and the other anarchists acting with him were examples of such lack of discipline. They wanted to put their detachments into action where they liked, to act when they liked, and to use the methods of struggle that they liked. But in civil war waged on a large scale partisan detachments can be of use only if their actions are coordinated with those of the revolutionary army, if they help the latter, if they attack the enemy at the necessary point in the common interests of the struggle.

Was this what Makhno did when the Soviet government, after Ekaterinoslav was taken, resolved that all the partisan detachments, including those of Makhno, were to become part of the Red Army? Did he recognize the need for a single military organization, with a single command and a single system of subordination? He did not. He refused to subordinate the interests of his local partisan detachments to the interests of the proletarian revolution throughout the country, he was not concerned about the interests of the proletarian revolution as a whole. Moreover, Makhno was not sincere. He pretended to acknowledge the Red Army command, but actually he went on doing what he chose: he requisitioned for his own use arms, food supplies and coal intended for the country as a whole, hindered the fulfilment of orders of the Soviet government and did not fight against out-and-out enemies of the revolution, but, on the contrary, flirted with them. Hence his early conflicts with the Soviet government.

The Soviet government sincerely wanted to work in cooperation with Makhno and the anarchists in the fight against the whiteguards and foreign intervention, as was proved by the fact that the Red Army command appointed Makhno commander of a division. But the actions of Makhno, his headquarters and his detachments were so repulsive that the poor and middle peasants and the workers, when they saw that Makhno was allying himself with the greedy kulaks and bandit elements who were hostile to the proletarian revolution and the Soviet government, began to desert him.

However, this demoralization of Makhno and his troops did not trouble the anarchist Alarm group, which included anarchist-communists and anarcho-syndicalists, who advanced theoretical arguments in their defense. An anarchist conference held in Kursk in the spring of 1919 adopted a resolution stating that "the Ukrainian revolution will have great chances of rapidly becoming social-anarchist in its ideas." This was said at a time when Makhno had already begun to gather kulaks and bandits around himself after his actions had repelled the poor peasants and the workers.

The anarchists, not taking the trouble to study seriously the relation of class forces, believed that it was possible immediately to introduce anarchist society without a government. What prevented them from doing this? The anarchists considered that they were hindered by the proletarian dictatorship, the Soviet government, which they therefore regarded as an enemy in a war in which all means were fair. In August 1919, when the whiteguards were approaching Moscow, the group known as the "illegal anarchists" threw a bomb at a meeting of responsible Communists, killing thirteen and wounding several score. How did the Moscow workers react? In the course of two weeks 13,000 workers joined the Communist Party in Moscow alone to take the place of the thirteen the anarchists had killed.

German troops were occupying the Ukraine and overthrowing the Soviet government, and the anarchists actually helped them. It is true that the Kursk anarchist conference did not openly advocate the overthrow of the Soviet government. But it declared that "an anarchist must constantly and persistently agitate for the establishment of genuine, non-party and non-government Soviets of workers' and peasants' organizations in place of the present Soviets." It is obvious that if the existing Soviets were to be replaced by others, they had to be dissolved, which during the Civil War meant *overthrown*.

Perhaps the Makhno anarchists did establish such Soviets, perhaps they proved that such non-government Soviets are

possible and that they organize economic life better than the Soviets led by the Communists, that they defend the gains of the revolution better than the organizations led by the Communists? They did nothing of the kind. Their agitation in favor of replacing the existing Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies by non-government Soviets was simply a call to overthrow the Soviets.

The very idea of non-government Soviets was a most dangerous Menshevik, whiteguard fabrication. It is like saying cold fire, it is an expression of senile impotence, it is an empty pernicious phrase. Unable to overthrow the Soviets, unable to combat the wide popular movement for Soviets, the Menshevik lackeys of the bourgeoisie did actually establish non-government Soviets in some places. The first anarchist congress, held in Elizavetgrad, declared outright that the existing Soviets were organs of "democratic centralism, based on the principles of government, state administration, and deadening centralism imposed from above." For these reasons the anarchist congress "finally and categorically opposed the participation of the anarchists in the Soviets."

That was how the anarchists in Russia worked against the proletarian dictatorship, fought against the Soviets, set Makhno's army against the Soviet government and thus helped the counter-revolution.

Who prevented the anarchists from organizing their non-government Soviets in the district which they occupied for such a long time—the district of Gulyay-Polye? Nobody interfered with them. But they did not establish anything of the kind. Instead, they appointed commandants with dictatorial powers, who absolutely ignored the opinions and interests of the population.

In the chapter dealing with the Russian anarcho-syndicalists we saw how the latter regarded the first and only army of the victorious proletariat, which was established to defend the gains of the October Socialist Revolution and to suppress the counter-revolution. They thought that it was no better than

the tsarist army. The attitude of the Alarm-Makhno group, which regarded Makhno's partisan detachments as the ideal army, was the same. Thus, the Elizavetgrad anarchist congress declared, in keeping with the ideas of the anarcho-syndicalists:

No compulsory army, including the Red Army, can be regarded as the true defender of the social revolution. In the opinion of the anarchists, only a partisan, rebel army "organized from below," can be such.

The anarchists failed to realize that in a genuine people's, *proletarian* revolution, such as that of 1917, the army of the proletarian revolution is organized both from above and from below. But the amalgamation of forces of the revolutionary army can be achieved only by subordination to a single command. During the civil war in Russia large and small partisan armies arose in Siberia, in the Far East, in Transcaucasia and in other districts on the initiative of local revolutionary workers and peasants, often isolated from the regular Red Army units and acting independently. But these partisan detachments established contact with the Red Army, asked for orders from its command, coordinated their operations with those of the Red Army—and as a result, their blows in the enemy's rear were very effective. The history of all civil wars shows how valuable partisan, guerilla detachments can be when they act in this way.

The Russian anarchists, however, took up the cudgels for the kulaks who were discontented because the Soviet government requisitioned their surplus products to supply the workers and the army at the front. The anarchists took up the cudgels for speculators and profiteers, and together with the greedy kulaks murdered members of the Soviet government's food detachments and robbed the cooperative stores in the villages and towns.

Like the Communists, the anarchists have always proclaimed that they are opposed to private property in the instruments and means of production, that they are fighting to establish

a social system of economy. But the town and village cooperative societies organized by the workers and peasants during the revolution were not private property: they were social property, they were organizations established with the hard-earned money of the workers and peasants. By raiding these cooperative stores, Makhno's gangs showed that their anarchist banner only served as a screen for criminal bandits, with whom they acted to the detriment of the interests of the working people, of the peasants and workers. They very skillfully exploited the discontent of the kulaks and others harboring a grudge against the revolution. No revolution can satisfy all classes. Every revolution which brings about the transference of power from one class to another means the complete break-up of the old economic and political relationships, and dissatisfies those whom it deprives of power, whom it deprives of the opportunity of making easy profits by robbing and exploiting the masses.

The proletarian revolution in Russia dissatisfied many people—it dissatisfied all the landlords, all the capitalists, all the clergy, nearly all the old government officials, and most of the officers of the old tsarist army; it dissatisfied fairly large numbers of people who under tsarism, under the bourgeois-landlord system, led the life of parasites.

No wonder, therefore, that numerous counter-revolutionary revolts of people dissatisfied with the proletarian revolution broke out throughout the country during the period of the Civil War. But who took part in these rebellions? It was those whom the revolution had deprived of the opportunity to exploit the labor of others. We know that the anarchists put the kulaks in the category of "working people"; and in connection with these kulak revolts, the *Nabat*, the anarchist publication, wrote:

Every revolt that springs from the discontent of the working people with the government is in its essence revolutionary, for the working people instinctively tend to the Left rather than to the Right.

There were also many counter-revolutionary revolts in which the kulaks succeeded in securing the following of the middle and even part of the poor peasants in their counter-revolutionary movement. The anarchists proclaimed all these revolts to be popular and revolutionary in nature.

When Makhno and his henchmen began to defend the kulaks and profiteers against the poor peasants, against the Soviet government and against the workers, the best of those who had joined his army deserted him. But the anarchist leaders surrounding Makhno failed to realize the significance of this. They took it as a sign that the revolution was dying. The anarchist, Baron, wrote: "The revolution is dying. Black reaction is setting in." But the revolution in Russia was not dying. Eventually, the revolution in Russia succeeded in crushing all its enemies. It destroyed part of the intervention troops, and compelled the rest to leave Soviet territory. It routed all the whiteguard generals and their armies. Foreign intervention proved unavailing. It was not the Russian revolution, but Russian anarchism, Makhnoism, that was dying.

The Makhno anarchists' attacks on the Soviet government, their support of the kulaks, their refusal to coordinate their operations with those of the Red Army, played into the hands of the whiteguard generals. Soviet towns and districts were taken one after another by the whiteguard general Denikin, who was supplied with arms and ammunition by the foreign imperialists, as General Franco is now being supplied by the German, Italian and Portuguese fascists. Denikin's troops were advancing on Kharkov and Ekaterinoslav, two of the most important cities of the Ukraine. It was with great difficulty that the Red Army withstood the onslaught of the whiteguards. Did Makhno come to its assistance? No, Makhno had other things to do. In June 1919 he convened another anarchist congress in Gulyay-Polye to organize an anarchist state in that district.

Makhno could not and would not subordinate his actions to the interests of the revolution; he did not help the Red

Army at this most critical moment. But that is not all. He acted as a traitor by withdrawing his army to another district and causing a breach in the front for the Whites to penetrate. Thanks to this the bloodthirsty White general Shkuro took the Red Army in the rear, which cost the Soviet government not only territory but the lives of tens of thousands of working people who were tortured by the White terror of General Shkuro's brutal gangs. Makhno retreated far into the rear, where his men spent their time disarming, robbing and murdering Red Army men. The White generals could have asked for no better allies than these anarchists. Most of Makhno's men adopted the same slogans as the whiteguards—"Kill the Commissars, Communists and Jews!"

At the beginning of this chapter we said that we do not regard the Makhno movement as having been counter-revolutionary from beginning to end. We do not deny that sometimes Makhno and his army fought against the counter-revolution and helped the revolution. Such was the case after the troops of General Denikin had succeeded, as a result of Makhno's treachery, in seizing the peasant districts he had abandoned. Denikin restored the rule of the landlords and proceeded to take revenge on the peasants. The peasant war flared up again, and since it was not only the land of the poor and middle peasants, but also that of the kulaks which Denikin was seizing in order to return them to the landlords, this war affected Makhno's detachments, which by this time included many kulaks. Now Makhno could not help taking part in the struggle against Denikin, the more so since the Red Army, receiving fresh reinforcements, had begun to press on Denikin's army from the North. The defeatist plans of Trotsky had been abandoned and this Southern army was led by Comrade Stalin. Makhno was faced with the alternative of either engaging in the struggle against Denikin or of losing his last supporters.

Hard pressed by the Red Army, Denikin's troops were retreating rapidly to the South. Makhno's detachments managed

to take Ekaterinoslav for the second time. The Ekaterinoslav workers had not forgotten how Makhno's troops had sacked the town at the end of 1918 and disgracefully surrendered it to Petlura's troops under Colonel Samokish, from whom they fled in panic. Nor had they forgotten how, abandoned by Makhno's anarchists, thousands of workers had drowned in crossing the river under the fire of Petlura's troops.

What did Makhno do now, when he again found himself in Ekaterinoslav together with the whole anarchist organization? How did he carry out the doctrine, the program of anarchism? As an anarchist he had advocated absence of all authority, but actually he established unlimited dictatorial authority. He did not establish the "free non-government Soviets" about which the anarchists had talked so much, but put to death the Bolsheviks who wanted to establish Soviets of Workers' Deputies. (One of these was the Bolshevik Polonsky.) Makhno appointed a commandant whom he invested with unlimited military and civil authority. This was an absolutely unlimited anarchist dictatorship. The commandant robbed, raped and executed with impunity. The treatment meted out to the Communists was particularly brutal. Makhno's men plundered not only the bourgeoisie, but the workers as well. The least protest against this intolerable regime brought on the most brutal punishment without trial from the secret service established by Makhno and run by the two Zadov brothers, professional criminals capable of the vilest atrocities. Those they caught were either shot or put to death in some more painful manner, for Makhno surrounded himself with sadists who, like himself, took pleasure in torturing human beings. The Chief of Staff of Makhno's army, formerly a worker, in giving evidence to the Soviet authorities explained that the anarchists—Makhno, Levko, Zinkovsky, Golik, Petrenko and others—used torture to inspire terror in their enemies.

Makhno practiced the most inhuman tortures from the first days of his activities—people were cut to pieces, and their bodies were thrown into the fire-boxes of railway

engines. Cases occurred when this was done to people who were sentenced to death but were still alive.

It was necessary to organize the economic life of this big town, to organize the workers and peasants and establish supplies. But Makhno and his anarchists cared nothing for all this. When the railwaymen and telegraph operators appealed to Makhno to be paid wages and supplied with food in return for their work, the latter replied: "We are not Bolsheviks, to feed you at the expense of the state, we don't need the railways, and if you do then get bread from those who want your railway and telegraph." Was this the answer of a serious statesman who is responsible for the economic life of a big city? And yet this was the answer Makhno gave to other workers' organizations as well. The anarchists were absolutely incapable of organizing a new, more perfect, socialist system of economy in place of the old capitalist system.

This proved the utter futility of anarchism. The anarchists believed that a centralized organization was superfluous. But can the railways, the telegraphs, telephones and other means of communication, can the industry of a big state or even of a large region exist without centralized organization and administration? Can an organized system of national economy exist without organizations to govern it, to help the villages, factories, collective enterprises and individual peasant farms? Anarchism proved incapable of organizing national economy.

The relations that existed between Makhno and Ataman Grigoryev are extremely interesting. At one time Ataman Grigoryev had helped the Soviet government capture Odessa and take the Crimea. These successes turned Grigoryev's head, leading him to conceive the plan of becoming Ataman of the entire Ukraine. But Makhno also entertained this idea. The composition of Grigoryev's army differed but little from that of Makhno, apart from the fact that the latter included many anarchists, both genuine and spurious. The march of Grigoryev's army was accompanied by a series of pogroms against Jews. In Cherkassy and Elizavetgrad the Grigoryevites killed

about 6,000 people—not only Jews, but poor people in general.

The Soviet troops succeeded in halting this wave of pogroms and in disarming Grigoryev's detachments. Did Makhno help the revolution to do this? No, he did not. Makhno's gang later murdered Grigoryev not because they wanted to defend the revolution, but because Makhno regarded Grigoryev as a rival whom he wanted to put out of the way. During this period Makhno was no more reliable a supporter of the revolution than Grigoryev. Makhno got rid of his rival in order to be able to act the more freely under the flag of anarchism.

Seeing that Makhno was planning a new betrayal and doing great damage to the revolution by his arbitrary actions, the Military Command of the Red Army ordered him to hand over his division to another commander. Makhno pretended to obey this order, but at the same time put his own men in various parts of the division with instructions to demoralize it.

After handing over the division he still retained a detachment of his own, with which he began his raids in the Ukraine in the beginning of 1920. This was a new phase in Makhno's struggle against the Soviet government. It was characterized by pogroms, raids on Soviet institutions, murders of Communists and Red Army men. This period is very vividly portrayed in the diary of Makhno's mistress, who traveled with him. Here are some excerpts from this diary:

Feb. 23, 1920. Our boys captured some Bolshevik agents, who were then shot.

Feb. 25, 1920. We moved to Mayorovo. Three grain-collecting agents were caught and shot.

Mar. 1, 1920. Soon the boys arrived and reported that Fedyukin, a Red Army commander, had been taken prisoner. Makhno sent for him, but the messenger returned with the news that the boys had not been able to mess around with him—he was wounded—and had shot him at his own request.

Mar. 7. In Varvarovka. Makhno got very drunk, began swearing loudly in the street in unprintable language. We arrived in Gulyay-Polye, and something incredible

began under Makhno's drunken orders. The cavalymen used their whips and the butts of their rifles against all the former Red partisans they met in the streets. They charged like a mad horde into innocent people. . . . Two had their heads broken and one was driven into the river. . . .

Mar. 11, 1920. Last night the boys took two million rubles and today they all got a thousand apiece.

Mar. 14, 1920. Today we moved to Mikhailovka. One Communist was killed here.

Three months later the picture was still the same:

June 5, 1920. At Zaitsevo station Makhno had telephone and telegraph communications cut, the track in front and behind train No. 423 torn up, the property on the train plundered and all Communists hacked to pieces.

July 16, 1920. Makhno made a raid on Grishino Station, where he stayed three hours. Fourteen officials of Soviet and workers' organizations were shot, telegraph communications destroyed and the railwaymen's food storehouse looted.

July 26, 1920. Makhno broke into Konstantinograd Junction and eighty-four Red Army men were killed in two days.

Aug. 12, 1920. In Zenkovo, Makhno killed two Ukrainian Communists and seven officials of workers' and rural organizations.

Another four months later:

Dec. 12, 1920. A raid on Berdyansk. In the course of three hours the Makhno anarchists, led by Makhno himself, killed 83 Communists, including Mikhalevich, one of the best Ukrainian workers, twisting their arms, hacking off legs, ripping up stomachs, bayonetting and hacking them to death.

Dec. 16, 1920. A train was derailed between Sinelnikovo and Alexandrovsk. About fifty workers, Red Army men, and Communists were killed.

Such is the horrible unvarnished truth about the activities

of the anarchist Makhno and his henchmen. After this, will any honest anarchist say that Makhno was a revolutionary leader and "our comrade"?

All this was done at a time when the workers and peasants of the Soviet state had to withstand the onslaughts of the Polish whiteguards and the forces of Baron Wrangel, who were armed by the foreign imperialists for the purpose of restoring capitalism. Shooting and torturing Communists, overthrowing the Soviets, the Makhno anarchists did not even think of establishing the "free" Soviets they wrote about in their papers; they simply appointed dictators.

But perhaps exemplary order prevailed in Makhno's army? For the anarchists never cease to repeat that "anarchy is the mother of order." V. Ivanov describes this "order" as follows:

A brutal regime, iron discipline. . . . The men getting knocked about for the least misdemeanor. . . . The revolutionary Military Council, an institution never elected, never controlled and never re-elected. A special department of the Revolutionary Military Council which deals secretly and ruthlessly with insubordinates.

At the end of 1920 the white army commanded by Baron Wrangel threatened the Donetz Basin and the Ukraine. Wrangel openly wrote that Makhno was helping him. Many of Makhno's supporters deserted him, and in an attempt to regain his popularity he offered the Soviet government his services in the struggle against Wrangel. Notwithstanding the crimes Makhno and his henchmen had committed against the revolution, the Soviet government accepted their services and concluded an agreement with Makhno, according to which his units were to retain their separate organization but were to be subordinate to the Soviet Army Command. The Makhno anarchists were permitted full freedom to carry on propaganda for their views, provided they did not call for the overthrow of the Soviet government. All anarchists imprisoned for various offences against the Soviet government and against the

working people were freed. The anarchists were allowed to publish in Kharkov the *Nabat*, organ of the secretariat of the Ukrainian Anarchist Federation, and the *Golos Makhnoutsa*, organ of the Ukrainian Revolutionary Rebels—Makhno's group.

But Makhno's anarchists did not keep the agreement. Only a small detachment was sent to the front, while the main forces remained in the rear and engaged in plundering the Red Army units. Comrade Frunze, Commander of the Southern Front, wrote in an appeal, dated December 20, 1920:

Makhno and his staff have soothed their consciences by sending a handful of their supporters against Wrangel, while they themselves have preferred for some reason to remain in the rear. Makhno is hastily organizing new detachments, arming them with the weapons we have captured from the enemy.

At the same time Makhno tried to mobilize peasants for his army by force. It was announced that the mobilization was voluntary, but anyone who failed to report was ruthlessly dealt with by Makhno's secret police. Nor was Makhno's treatment of Red Army men in any way different from that meted out to them by the whiteguards. On November 12 Makhno's men killed and stripped twelve Red Army men in the village of Mikhailovka. On November 16 they robbed the men of the 124th Red Army Brigade in the village of Pologi. On November 17 the commander of the 376th regiment was attacked in the same village. On November 7 Makhno's men killed six Red Army men in the village of Ivanovka, and so on.

This was the blackest treachery. Makhno disobeyed the explicit orders of Comrade Frunze, Commander of the Southern Front, to set out for the front, and the Soviet government could not treat his army as anything else than traitors.

The anarchist organizations never intended to fulfil the obligations they had undertaken. Moreover, they assumed the leadership of the backward, self-seeking sections of the working class. In retaliation to the measures taken by the Soviet

factory managers and trade unions against absences from work they declared a strike. It was necessary to restore the country's industry, which had been dislocated by seven years of imperialist war and civil war, but the anarchists never stopped to think about that. They bluntly declared that they "refused to take an organized part in the economic bodies of the republic." Thus they refused to do any constructive work. Their talk about "the spirit of destruction" being at the same time "a creative spirit" proved that they had no intention of doing any constructive work. Only after the treachery of Makhno and the anarchists supporting him had become absolutely obvious, did Comrade Frunze issue orders to dissolve Makhno's units and draft his men into the Fourth Red Army. Thereupon most of Makhno's working class and peasant supporters deserted him.

Deserted by his troops, Makhno fled with his miserable handful of supporters across the Rumanian border and took shelter from the judgment of the revolutionary people, of the workers and peasants, under the wing of the Rumanian boyards, the exploiters and enemies of the people. Such was the inglorious end of the career of this adventurer whom some anarchists represent as a hero of the revolution. But the revolution of the proletariat, the revolution of the working people, has no use for such heroes.

Thus we have seen that a large anarchist organization, occupying extensive territory and a large town, having a whole army and large funds at its command, and publishing several newspapers, proved absolutely incapable of developing the forces of the revolution, organizing any constructive work and establishing a collective, socialist system of economy in place of the capitalist, bourgeois system that had been destroyed. We have seen that, while denying the need for any state organization, Makhno and his supporters established the worst form of personal dictatorship; while rejecting all organs of government, they set up a secret police answerable to no one, which dealt without trial with every worker or

peasant who was in Makhno's way, torturing, executing, hacking to pieces and burning alive thousands of people.

We have seen that Makhno repeatedly helped the enemy. From a leader of detachments of rebellious peasants which fought against the foreign intervention and Russian white-guard forces, he became a defender of the kulaks and bandits and acted against the workers and poor peasants. Makhno's troops consisted largely of kulaks, which explains their hatred of the poor peasants and the workers.

Like the Ekaterinoslav workers, the workers of the Donetz Basin, who had supported Makhno at the beginning of his career, eventually realized that he was their enemy. The anarchist theoreticians surrounding Makhno—Arshinov, Volin, Baron, Tepper and the rest—had every opportunity to apply the anarchist principle of construction and of the organization of society; but they created nothing. Finally, they became a mere appendage of the kulaks, fighting against the proletariat, against the poor peasants and their committees.

In the Gulyay-Polye district, which was in the hands of Makhno, power fell into the hands of the kulaks, who installed a system of forcible exploitation and suppression of the workers and poor peasants. While fighting against the conscious revolutionary discipline of the Red Army, they enforced unquestioning obedience by means of fear in their own army. This army served the kulaks and not the proletariat. In the districts under their rule Makhno and his supporters did not abolish either hired farm labor or the most brutal exploitation of the workers.

What actually happened was that, having entered the struggle against the Soviet government for the sake of anarchy, the Makhno anarchists set up a kulak state, with their own army, their own secret police, their own executioners, and their own prisons, with tyrannical commandants who were answerable to no one, destroying all freedom of the press, and all political liberty.

No wonder the whiteguards carried on direct negotiations

with the anarchists with a view to joint action against the Soviet government. The anarchists wrote about it themselves. An editorial in *Anarchia*, No. 34, stated that criminal robberies and counter-revolutionary acts committed under the name of anarchy were becoming ever more frequent. The anarchists realized that:

These are the vile, dark deeds of the whiteguards. A large part of these robbers are former army officers and people with university education. . . . The picture is clearly one of counter-revolutionary provocation—a counter-revolutionary organization is at work. They have made attempts to establish contact with the Federation. After a number of unsuccessful attempts and proposals which we rejected, they have decided to act independently, and they are doing so.

Is not this statement by the anarchists a deadly indictment of themselves? And indeed, in the midst of a ruthless civil war between the workers and the monarchists, whiteguards, landlords and capitalists, whose power the October Revolution had overthrown, replacing it by the Soviet government of the workers and peasants—would the whiteguards, the counter-revolutionaries have approached the anarchists if the latter had been revolutionaries; would they have attempted to negotiate with them with a view to joint counter-revolutionary action against the Soviet government? And yet they did do so, and more than once, though the anarchists claim to have rejected their proposals.

Some of the anarchists attempted to break through the vicious circle into which their theories had driven them. We have seen that after futile attempts to carry out anarcho-syndicalist ideas in the revolution, some of the anarcho-syndicalists, convinced of the harmfulness of these ideas, joined the Communists. Another attempt to find a common ground with the proletarian revolution by abandoning their hostile attitude towards the dictatorship of the proletariat and riding themselves of the bandits and whiteguards was made

by the group known as the Anarcho-Universalists. An anarchist named Gordin, the leader of this movement, maintained that "the transitional period is inconceivable without a dictatorship." "If unorganized violence can be used against individual bourgeois," he wrote, "why cannot organized violence be used against them as a class?" The conclusion he arrived at was: "Without a dictatorship during the transition period there can be no transition to anarchy and freedom." Thus, the Anarcho-Universalists raised the fundamental question, the question of government. Accordingly, they proposed that their attitude towards the Soviet government and towards the part they should play in the revolution be changed. While remaining anarchists, they came somewhat nearer to a correct understanding of the revolution, of its course and tasks. We shall not give a detailed exposition of the history of Anarcho-Universalism. The Anarcho-Universalists even had a legally existing club in 1920-21. But when the Kronstadt rebellion broke out most of them supported it. In a leaflet issued during this period they called for an insurrection against the Soviet government.

The anarchist majority excommunicated Gordin for his "heretical" advocacy of the dictatorship of the proletariat during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Anarcho-Universalism was a faint gleam of true ideas in the chaos of Bakuninist and Kropotkinist contradictions in which the Russian anarchists got themselves hopelessly entangled.

We have reviewed the development of Russian anarchism from its cradle to its grave. Born at a time when the proletariat had not yet come forward as an independent force, the anarchism of Bakunin and Kropotkin gave rise to a movement that hindered the formation of a working class party capable of solving the problems with which history had confronted the working people of Russia—the overthrow of tsarism, the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists. These problems the working people solved under the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the banner of Communism.

During the period of the proletarian revolution in Russia, anarchism went completely bankrupt. By repudiating the dictatorship of the proletariat after the socialist revolution, the anarchists of various trends came into direct conflict with the interests of the revolution, they began to fight the proletariat and to betray the interests of the proletarian revolution, defending the kulaks and allying themselves with the enemies of the revolution.

These lessons are edifying. Every anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist must study them carefully and draw his conclusions from them.

VI.

PRESENT-DAY ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

WE have already dealt with Russian anarcho-syndicalism, which has gone down in the history of the Bolshevik Party as the Workers' Opposition. We saw that in the opinion of the anarchists it was not the Party but the trade unions that were the principal and fundamental organization of the working class. European and American anarcho-syndicalists also regard the trade unions as the principal organization of the working class. Many anarcho-syndicalists do not openly proclaim themselves such, but call themselves "revolutionary" syndicalists, "pure" syndicalists, or plain syndicalists, combining the idea that the trade unions (syndicates) are the principal organizations, or indeed the only organizations that are capable of revolutionary action, with the doctrine of anarchism, which is certainly a party doctrine, the theory of a definite party.

As we know, anarchism is based on the doctrine of a non-government, non-state society, of the destruction of all authority, of all state organization. The anarcho-syndicalists maintain that the trade unions by themselves are capable of effecting the socialist revolution (or the social revolution, as they call it), and of substituting socialist organization for capitalist organization. The anarcho-syndicalists tell the workers that they must be free of the influence of all parties and must act independently of them. They maintain that the only party among the working class should be the anarchist party.

The anarcho-syndicalists may object to the words "anarchist party." But E. Puget, the well-known French anarcho-syn-

PRESENT-DAY ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

dicalist, in his book, *The Foundations of Syndicalism*, speaks of a party of labor, which, he explains, is an "autonomous organization of the working class, united on economic grounds and having as its basic cell the syndicate, *i.e.*, the trade or industrial union." Hence, according to Puget, the anarcho-syndicalist organization is a special party, "The Party of Labor." True, this is a special kind of party, which, in Puget's words, "pursues no political aims. It is a party social and revolutionary in nature. Its principal basis is the class interest of the proletariat, and therefore it can under no circumstances become a party of politicians."

Unfortunately, Puget is not the only anarcho-syndicalist theoretician to stuff the workers' heads with this kind of jumble about the class struggle of the proletariat. But every class conscious worker knows that the consistent class struggle is a political struggle, for it affects not only the economic but also the political interests of the classes concerned. If the working class wages the economic struggle against the capitalist class and is successful, it thereby not only improves its material position, but displays its political (*i.e.*, social) force. It forces the capitalists to make concessions, thereby undermining the political power of the capitalist class. A party cannot be "social and revolutionary in nature," as Puget says, without pursuing political aims. The struggle for anarchist society, the struggle for the abolition of all authority, is an acute political struggle. A spade should be called a spade—but the anarcho-syndicalists, unfortunately, do not adhere to this rule.

Let us take an example. The strongest anarchist organization in Spain is the I.A.F. (the Iberian Anarchist Federation). No one will attempt to deny that the I.A.F. leads the National Labor Federation, enjoying great influence within it and directing its activities in nearly every locality, though not all members of the N.L.F. are anarchists. Therefore the N.L.F. is directed by the Spanish anarchist party. Call a spade a spade. This party has its own program, its own tactics, its

own organization. And however different our ideas of party discipline may be, however the anarchists may deny the need for discipline, the I.A.F. has its own discipline, which by written and unwritten law is binding on the members of the organization.

Although there are certain differences among the anarcho-syndicalists in the various countries, although there is a reformist wing and a more revolutionary Left wing among them, they are everywhere distinguished by the combination of these two basic features—the anarchist doctrine of the abolition of all forms of state, all authority, and the view that the trade unions are the principal and fundamental organizations of the working class.

The shades of anarchist doctrine adopted by the anarcho-syndicalists in various countries differ widely. Some take Mikhail Bakunin as their principal theoretician, others take the fairly peaceable professor A. Labriola, and still others take Puget. At the first congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, held in June, 1921, some syndicalists on the Tactics Commission declared that revolutionary syndicalism is the attempt to reconcile Marx with Proudhon. We thus see how varied and contradictory are the views of the anarcho-syndicalists themselves.

However, all anarcho-syndicalists accept, as a fundamental document laying down the principles of anarcho-syndicalist activities, the resolution adopted by the Amiens Congress of the General Confederation of Labor on the motion of the syndicalist Griffuel. This document is known as the Amiens Charter. Here is its full text:

This Confederation Congress at Amiens endorses the fundamental second clause of the rules of the G.C.L., which states: "The G.C.L. unites all workers, irrespective of their political views, who recognize the need for fighting to abolish the wage system." This Congress is of the opinion that its declaration is equivalent to the recognition of the class struggle, in which, on economic grounds

the rebel workers stand opposed to all forms of exploitation and oppression, both material and spiritual, practiced by the capitalist class against the working class. The Congress adds the following points to make this theoretical declaration more precise:

In its struggle for everyday demands, syndicalism strives to coordinate the forces of the working class, to raise the standard of living of the working people by means of immediate palliatives, such as the reduction of the working day, increase of wages, and so on.

But this work represents only part of the functions of syndicalism: it paves the way for complete emancipation, which can be achieved only by the expropriation of the capitalists; it presupposes the general strike as the method of struggle, and holds that the trade unions, which at present are organizations for resistance, will in the future become organizations for production and distribution, the basis of the reorganization of society.

This Congress declares that this work—both everyday work and work directed to the final goal—follows logically from the very position of wage workers, which oppresses the working class, and makes it the duty of all workers, regardless of their political and philosophical convictions, to join the trade union, which is the principal organization.

In conformity with this view, as regards individuals, the Congress declares that outside of the unions every member is quite free to take part in the forms of struggle that correspond to this philosophical or political views, and all that is demanded of him is that he shall refrain from introducing into the union the views he advocates outside the trade union movement.

As regards organization, the Congress declares that in order that syndicalism may achieve the greatest results, the economic struggle must be waged against the employers directly, since the federated organizations, being trade unions, should ignore parties and sects, which, outside or alongside the trade unions, may freely strive for the reorganization of society in their own way.

Why cannot a Communist accept this charter? Every Com-

munist realizes that it is necessary to fight to abolish the wage system. Every Communist recognizes the need for the class struggle. More than that, he takes the class struggle as his starting point. But these are practically the only points on which he agrees with this charter.

Subsequent resolutions of various organizations and congresses of the anarcho-syndicalists supplement this anarcho-syndicalist gospel. Let us examine the main features of this charter and of present day anarcho-syndicalism. The anarcho-syndicalists recognize the class struggle, but that is not their particular merit. The class struggle was recognized long before the anarcho-syndicalists made their appearance. The *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, written in 1847—ninety years ago—contained the statement:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

The entire revolutionary movement of our time is a class struggle. Thus the recognition of the class struggle is not a distinguishing feature of anarcho-syndicalism, for the Communist Party is guided in its activities by an analysis of class society and leads the class struggle of the proletariat for its complete emancipation. The great service that Marx rendered was to prove that the class struggle going on in present-day society must lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is essential for the suppression of the enemies of the revolution, for the abolition of all classes, and the establishment of socialist society.

In his letter to Weydemeyer, dated March 5, 1852, Marx explained:

What I did that was new was to prove: (1) that the

existence of classes is only bound up with the particular, historic phases in the development of production; (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.

Thus a much more important question is how the division of society into classes is to be abolished. As we know, Bakunin's answer is absolutely utopian. Bakunin demanded the leveling of classes. But several decades of working class struggle in present-day society have shown that the levelling of classes is out of the question. Proletarians cannot be levelled with capitalists, or peasants with landlords. As the whole course of the socialist revolution in Russia has proved, classless society is achieved not by the levelling of classes, which is impossible, but by the elimination of the exploiting classes and the transformation of the peasants into people working in socialist society on equal terms with the workers. The abolition of classes cannot be accomplished in a day, for classes remain even after the social revolution. The parasite classes must be ruthlessly combatted, they must be deprived of the implements and means of production which they use to exploit the masses. As for the classes of small producers—peasants and handicraftsmen—they cannot be abolished and levelled with the class of industrial workers in one day. A way must be found of living side by side with these classes. Numerous measures must be taken to efface the distinction between town and country, between manual labor and intellectual labor. Only when labor is organized socialistically will it be possible to abolish classes and establish classless society. The force to perform this great historic task is the dictatorship of the proletariat, which arises after the socialist revolution and as a result of the latter, and not before the socialist revolution.

The anarcho-syndicalists maintain that the trade unions are the embryo of the future society and will be able to undertake

the organization and administration of production. We shall not dwell on the fact that in many countries the trade unions include only manual workers; intellectual workers—teachers, physicians, actors, writers and others—do not belong to them (although recently the anarcho-syndicalists have begun to realize that intellectual workers must also be organized). But the anarcho-syndicalists imagine that the trade unions existing under capitalism can serve as the basis of the future socialist society, that they are a ready-made apparatus capable of taking over and administering the economic system on social principles as soon as the revolution takes place.

Nothing could be more pernicious than such a theory. It is true that capitalism has created the technical base on which the socialist economic system begins to develop after the socialist revolution. It is true that under capitalism the proletariat is not only exploited but is also trained and united into a mighty force which overthrows capitalism by armed force—wrests power from its grasp, confiscates the implements and means of production and organizes the socialist system of economy. Without the socialist revolution a socialist system of economy is out of the question.

The Russian Narodniks, who, after their revolutionary attempts had failed, adopted the road of liberalism, believed that the workers' and peasants' producing cooperative societies existing under tsarism, under capitalism, were the embryo of the future communist society. Lenin violently opposed this self-deception, this utopian idea that the production cells of socialism could be formed within the framework of tsarism and capitalism. This idea is a survival of Proudhon's old anarchist doctrine that producers' cooperative societies, producers' associations growing up under capitalism, would absorb the capitalist system and thus abolish capitalism without a socialist revolution. These are illusions injurious to the working class, for they prevent it from seeing things as they really are and finding the road to the victory of socialism.

The socialist system of economy requires higher labor pro-

ductivity than capitalism. No trade unions, no associations, no handicraft cooperatives under capitalism can produce the labor discipline, the higher technical methods and the higher labor productivity that will demonstrate the superiority of socialist economy over capitalist economy. The proletariat will be able to organize the socialist system of economy only after it accomplishes the socialist revolution, after it overthrows the power of capital, after it takes over all the implements and means of production. But even then elements of capitalism and of other systems will survive for a certain time, as has been shown by the experience of the Soviet state. Years and years of persistent, systematic, coordinated work are necessary to oust these elements, to eliminate them, to replace them by socialist elements, to conquer the anarchy of the market, to develop planned economy. No trade unions can pave the way for this in capitalist society. Without the socialist revolution, without the socialist organization of state power, no trade unions will be capable of performing this task.

There are some peaceable socialists who advocate what is known as constructive socialism. These peaceable constructive socialists who dream of building "bits of the future" that will exist peacefully under capitalism are twin brothers of the anarcho-syndicalists.

To organize production as the anarcho-syndicalists plan—to organize it through the trade unions and cooperative societies—would not only fail to eliminate anarchy in production, the overproduction of some commodities and underproduction of others, but might even accentuate all these, since the issue would be determined by the means and machinery at the disposal of the various unions.

We shall now deal with one of the principal problems in the theory of anarcho-syndicalism and of anarchism in general. The anarchist Bakunin wrote:

The social revolution and the political revolution will in reality be inseparable. And that is as it should be, for the former is impossible without the latter, while the

latter without the former is a deception. The political revolution, which is simultaneously the social revolution, will not bring about a change in the state, but its sweeping destruction and the dissolution of all political and judicial institutions.

As the revolutionary movement in Russia and other countries has shown, the anarcho-syndicalists do not take the trouble seriously to discuss the nature of the revolution. They skip the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, proclaiming the bourgeois-democratic revolution to be the social, *i.e.*, socialist revolution, and begin to put into effect measures suitable only for the socialist revolution. As a result they cause damage to the movement.

The socialist revolution in Russia has deprived the landlords and capitalists of power, it has deprived them of the implements and means of production, confiscated their capital, their factories, land, means of transport, etc., and has turned over all this to the working class and the peasantry, making it the property of the entire people.

The first four articles of the New Stalin Constitution,* recently adopted by the Soviet Union, state:

1. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants.
2. The political foundation of the U.S.S.R. is the Soviets of Toilers' Deputies, which developed and grew strong as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the winning of the dictatorship of the proletariat.
3. All power in the U.S.S.R. belongs to the toilers of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Toilers' Deputies.
4. The economic foundation of the U.S.S.R. is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the implements and means of production firmly established as a result of the liquidation of the capitalist system of

* *Constitution of the U.S.S.R.*, International Publishers, New York. 10 cents.

economy, the abolition of private property in the implements and means of production and the abolition of exploitation of man by man.

Article 6 of the Constitution states:

The land, mineral deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, railways, water and air transport, banks, means of communication, large state-organized agricultural enterprises such as state farms (*sovkhoz*), machine and tractor stations and the like, as well as municipal enterprises and the principal dwelling house properties in the cities and industrial localities, are state property, that is, the property of the whole people.

Could all this have been accomplished if the working class of tsarist Russia, after overthrowing the power of the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists, had followed the anarchists and refrained from establishing its organ of power—the dictatorship of the proletariat—for the purpose of crushing the counter-revolution, repulsing foreign intervention, laying the foundations of the socialist economic system and carrying out its political and economic measures? If it had not been for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the counter-revolutionary classes, supported by world imperialism, would have overthrown the working class and perhaps imposed upon it shackles even heavier than it bore before, as has been the fate of the workers of Germany, Austria, Poland and certain other states.

For decades the anarchist leaders reiterated that the proletariat must establish no authority, no state, after overthrowing the power of capitalism. Such was the teaching of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, Puget, Reclus and other anarchist leaders.

Taking as their basis the experience of all *bourgeois* revolutions—for up to October 1917 there had been no genuine proletarian socialist revolution—the anarchists maintained that “all governments, whatever their name, have always taken the part of the rich” (E. Puget). This is true: all bourgeois revo-

lutions gave rise to governments which took the part of the rich. But then Puget goes on to make another statement, which is not true: "However the form of property and government may change in the course of time, their future remains the same."

The October Revolution established an absolutely new form of government. But many anarchists fail to understand this fact, or else they lose sight of it. The government of the Soviets had as its predecessor the government of the Paris Commune of 1871. But the Paris Commune existed for only a few weeks. It did not succeed in applying its constructive energies, it could not reconstruct society on a new basis. In our own century the proletariat has found a new form of state, the proletarian, Soviet state.

It is not true to say that collective farm property in the U.S.S.R., where all land is national property, does not differ essentially from the small peasants' property in capitalist society. It is not true to say that the socialist ownership of the implements and means of production, of the mills, factories, forests, mineral deposits, land, waters, banks, and so on, in no way differs from capitalist ownership. Capitalist property serves as an instrument for the exploitation of the masses of workers and peasants for the sake of enriching the capitalists. Socialist property in the Soviet state serves the working class and the peasantry as a means for improving their material and cultural standard of living, a means for creating new conditions, the like of which history has never known. The proletarian, socialist revolution in Russia has infused a totally new meaning into the forms of property and the forms of government, for it has established forms of property and forms of government such as mankind has never known before. These forms of property and government do not serve the purpose of enriching the exploiters, but the purpose of enriching the working people themselves. And just as a beacon shines forth in the darkness, dispelling the phantoms of the night and lighting up the path to the goal, so the socialist revolution in

the U.S.S.R. dispelled the phantom raised by all anti-proletarian doctrines, including anarcho-syndicalism, about all government and all property being pernicious, and lit up a new path of struggle for the workers of the whole world.

The anarchists said, "property is theft." It is true that capitalist property has always been theft. The capitalists have always stolen the labor of the working class, appropriating part of it in the form of surplus value. But the property of a collective farmer is not theft. A working peasant, a collective farmer, takes nothing that does not belong to him, he exploits no one and appropriates no one's labor. The workers and office employees of the Soviet socialist state take nothing that does not belong to them, they appropriate no labor of others. The workers, peasants and intellectuals of the U.S.S.R. have their wages, their dwelling houses and furniture, the right to rest and leisure, guaranteed by the state, the right to education, guaranteed by the state, the right to social maintenance, guaranteed by the state, the right to work, guaranteed by the state, and other material, political and moral benefits won in the revolution. But they have all this not because they are appropriating something that is not their own, or are exploiting someone, but because these are their gains in their struggle for socialism; it is their sacred property, which has nothing in common with the right of private property of the capitalists, landlords and other exploiters in capitalist society.

The experience of the Russian revolution has shown that even after the proletariat comes into power as a result of the socialist revolution, years may elapse before the foundation of the socialist economic system is laid and the system itself built up. In Russia, a country that proved strong enough to put down whiteguard counter-revolution and foreign intervention during the first four years of the revolution, nearly twenty years were required to build up the socialist system of economy. Therefore it is wrong to say, as the anarchists do, that the socialist revolution comes to an end the moment the political power of the bourgeoisie is overthrown. It is wrong

to think that the state withers away immediately after the revolution. The proletariat needs the proletarian state in order to smash its enemies and to build up its socialist system of economy.

This point is of enormous importance, for unless it correctly analyzes events, unless it correctly determines the nature of the revolution that is taking place, the proletariat cannot determine the proper policy to pursue.

We shall discuss the abolition, or rather the withering away of the state in the chapter on "The Criticism of Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism in the Works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin." For this reason we shall not dwell at present on the most important criticism of the anarchist theories of the state contained in the works of these authors.

Let us take up the anarcho-syndicalist conception of the method of accomplishing the revolution. The anarcho-syndicalist doctrine on this point advocated by the anarchists in the First International is that the only effective means of bringing about a revolution is a general strike. The Communists have never denied the importance of the general strike. On the contrary, it was the Bolshevik Communists who during the revolution of 1905 defended the general strike in their controversies with the opportunists. The history of the first Russian revolution showed the enormous importance of a general strike of all workers, but it showed that a general strike alone cannot succeed in overthrowing capitalism, or even in overthrowing the tsarist government. Present-day capitalist governments have sufficiently effective means at their disposal to counter the workers' general strike. Under certain conditions—as was the case in 1905—the workers are forced to resort to the highest form of struggle of the working class, the armed insurrection. During the 1905 revolution it was the general strike in October that forced the tsar to issue a manifesto with promises of freedom for the workers. But in December 1905 the workers were compelled to resort to armed insurrection. It was not a general strike but armed insurrection that secured

the victory of the proletariat in October, 1917. Consequently, a general strike not intended to develop into an armed insurrection may end in the defeat of the workers, as was shown by the British general strike of 1926, in which the workers were defeated—although they were very well organized from the trade union, syndicalist, point of view—because they were not led by a sufficiently strong political party, the Communist Party.

During the last few years events have compelled the anarcho-syndicalists to admit that the general strike is not the only means of revolutionary struggle of the working class. This idea has collapsed, as has also another anarchist theory—that the workers should abstain from the political struggle, from voting in elections. The actual result of this theory has been that many workers belonging to the trade unions vote for the bourgeois parties and thus strengthen the bourgeoisie.

Again, many anarcho-syndicalists have become convinced that the general strike must not be made the sole and universal method of struggle, for this blunts the weapon of the general strike and renders it ineffectual.

Let us deal with another question of the greatest importance for the working class—the party. Are the anarcho-syndicalists right in asserting that a party based on the similarity of views of its members is not a class organization, that it cannot be the vanguard of the working class, or, in any case, the principal and fundamental organization of the working class, and that the principal organizations of the working class are the trade unions? Why do the anarcho-syndicalists make this assertion? Because, they claim, through the medium of trade unions the workers defend their economic interests, and it is economics that determine the consciousness of people; whereas a political party is only an organization of people having similar views and ideas.

But, in the first place, these ideas do not drop from the skies. They are determined by the actual life of the class. Socialist, Communist ideas are determined primarily by the life and interests of the proletariat. Secondly, what distin-

guishes the Communist Party as the vanguard of the working class from all other organizations? The resolution of the Second Congress of the Comintern on the role of the Communist Party in the proletarian revolution states:

The Communist Party is created by the selection of the best and most class-conscious, most self-sacrificing and most far-sighted workers. The Communist Party has no interests differing from the interests of the working class. The Communist Party is distinguished from the entire mass of workers in that it reviews the entire historical road covered by the working class as a whole and at all crises on this road strives to defend not the interests of individual groups or trades but the interests of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party is the organizational and political means with which the more advanced section of the working class leads the entire mass of the proletariat and semi-proletariat along the right road.

In his remarkable work, *Problems of Leninism*, Comrade Stalin points out in the chapter on the Party that the revolutionary party of the working class, the Bolshevik, Communist Party, is distinguished from all other parties by a number of features. It is first and foremost the vanguard of the working class. But in order really to be the vanguard, the working class party must be well armed with revolutionary theory—understanding of the laws of the movement, the laws of revolution. Otherwise the party will be incapable of leading the struggle of the entire proletarian class, of leading it onward. The party must see ahead, it must march in the van and not drag at the tail of the spontaneous movement of the working class; it must not allow itself to be carried away by the interests of the moment, but must see far ahead, and at every given point, in every given locality, raise the masses to the level of the class interests of the entire proletariat.

This vanguard must be in close contact with the non-party masses, with the entire working class, with all the working

people, for "the party is an inseparable part of the working class, the party is the organized unit of the proletariat." Being an organized unit, the party demands discipline—the subordination of all party organizations to the Central Committee elected by them, and subordination of every party member to the decisions of the organization to which he belongs. For the Bolshevik Party is not simply the sum total of the party organizations, but their unified system. These organizations are not only formally united as a party—they are built up on the principle of democratic centralism: lower party organizations are subordinate to superior bodies, the minority is subordinate to the majority. Otherwise there can be no organized whole.

The working class can and must have trade union, cooperative, and various other kinds of organizations. It may have some kind of parliamentary organization; in the Soviet, socialist state it establishes Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies (Soviets of the Toilers in the U.S.S.R. at the present time), non-Party associations of women, youth leagues, and other mass organizations. None of these is the principal, supreme organization of the working class. These organizations may include people with different views and political convictions. For instance, the rules of the Union of Educational Workers of the U.S.S.R. grant the right of membership to all employees of institutions and bodies engaged in educational work or scientific research, the press and also to employees in the union's own offices, regardless of their nationality and religious or political convictions.

The rules of other trade unions follow the same principle. The nationality or religious and political convictions of employees cannot serve as an obstacle to becoming members of these trade unions. What are the objects of a trade union? The rules of the Educational Workers' Union, adopted at the Fifth Congress of the Union, in February, 1925, state:

Striving towards its final goal of completely emancipating the working people from economic and spiritual

bondage, the Union of Educational Workers of the U.S. S.R. directs all its activities towards serving the general class interests of the proletariat, educating and training its members to perform the task confronting the working class—the realization of communism through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The party of the working class, however, leads the struggle not only of the workers of a given trade, but of the entire working class, coordinating the leadership of individual organizations and helping them to conduct the struggle in a single direction; for it unites all the best elements of the entire working class and is in close contact with all the non-party organizations and with the masses. It trains professional revolutionaries capable of guiding all forms of the struggle of the working class. That is why the party is the highest form of class organization of the proletariat.

The party is the instrument of struggle of the working class; in the socialist state it is the instrument of its proletarian dictatorship. The proletariat has to wage the struggle along various lines—cultural, economic, military and commercial; it has to guide the foreign policy of the socialist state. The party is the headquarters staff of the working class, which not only helps it to capture power but also to retain it until the final victory of socialism is achieved. To fulfil this purpose the party must be united, it cannot permit groups to exist in its midst which do not follow the opinion of the party. That is why the Bolshevik Party combats all factions, for which it is branded as intolerant by the opportunists. That is why it expelled the Trotskyites—those agents of fascism, who have caused great damage to the international working class movement.

It has been established that Trotsky and the Trotskyites entered into agreements regarding mutual assistance with the German fascists and the Japanese imperialists, and that the Trotskyites rendered the fascists important services. On their instructions the Trotskyites in the U.S.S.R. killed Comrade

Kirov, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.; on their instructions they caused explosions at the Kemerovo mine as a result of which many miners were killed; on their instructions they organized several train-wrecks including the wreck of a troop train at Shumikha station, in which 29 Red Army men were killed and 29 injured. On the instructions of the enemies of the proletariat the Trotskyites undertook to undermine the defense capacity of the U.S.S.R. They were provocateurs and instigators of war against the U.S.S.R. In Spain the Trotskyite organization known as the P.O.U.M. is also a provocateurs' organization. There can be no doubt that the Trotskyites acted in agreement with the German and Italian fascists in prompting the Spanish anarchists to actions injurious to the revolution. It is clear that they made use of their connections with the fascists to injure the movement of the proletariat not only in the U.S.S.R., but in other countries as well.

The Bolshevik, Communist Party is also liable to the penetration of alien, hostile elements; it is not immune against individual careerists, self-seekers and degenerates. The Communist Party ruthlessly drives them out of its ranks by means of systematic party purgings.

In fighting against party spirit and discipline, the anarcho-syndicalists lose sight of the fact that anarcho-syndicalism is itself a party trend, that, as we pointed out above, what actually exists is an anarcho-syndicalist party. The anarcho-syndicalist organization was not sincere when it stated in the Amiens Charter that parties and sects must be ignored and that opinions held by individual members outside the trade union movement should not be introduced into the union, for within the trade unions they themselves pursue the policy of their anarchist party. Thus they have no right to demand that the Communists should refrain from advocating their views and opinions in the trade unions. Has not a trade union a program? According to Clause 2 of its rules, the French General Confederation of Labor unites all workers, irrespect-

ive of their political views, who recognize the need for fighting to abolish the wage system. This is a political program, for the abolition of the wage system is the most important political demand of the proletariat as a whole.

The history of the working class struggle has proved that the anarcho-syndicalist views on the political struggle and on the forms of the state are altogether unsound. We congratulate those anarcho-syndicalists in Spain and France who have grasped this fact and have joined with the Communists and Socialists in a united front of struggle against fascism. This struggle is a thoroughly political struggle, to refrain from which would greatly injure the working class. The working class, the trade unions, cannot and must not adopt the position of "neutrality" in the political struggle so recently advocated by the anarcho-syndicalists. The working class must have definite views on every problem and it must advocate these views.

Finally, are the anarcho-syndicalists right in their assertion that all centralized organizations are pernicious?

We have quoted the opinion of the revolutionary anarchist Puget, who opposed syndicalism to democracy, maintaining that "the laws of syndicalism have nothing in common with the laws of democracy," and that "democracy, with its universal suffrage and the political rule of the people, serves to perpetuate the economic bondage of the working class." Puget countered democracy with syndicalism, which, he argued, "is based on the recognition of the individual."

At a conference held in London in 1906 the anarchists discussed forms of organization. They denied that it was necessary to establish a Central Committee and any kind of centralized organization. They rejected the adoption of decisions by a majority vote. Among the anarchists, decisions are followed only by those who agree with them of their own free will. What is the result? The result is that instead of a collective opinion binding on all members of the organization and carried out in practice, every member is "his own master,"

free to follow any view he chooses. The result is the cult of the individual, an aristocratic cult; the result is that at the critical moment, when the working class must act without delay, an endless discussion ensues, to the advantage of the enemy. The enemy gains if the working class has no one opinion binding on all who take part in the struggle. The enemy gains if every man acts for himself, as he thinks fit, and not as the general interests of the working class demand. The enemy gains if there is no discipline, no decision binding upon all; the enemy gains by such anarchy in the organization, which causes untold damage to the working class. The entire history of working class struggles, and particularly of struggles during recent years, including the struggle of the working people of Spain, demonstrates the enormous damage caused by this doctrine to the working class.

VII.

THE CRITICISM OF ANARCHISM AND ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM IN THE WORKS OF MARX, ENGELS, LENIN AND STALIN

FROM the very inception of the Communist movement Marx and Engels combated all non-proletarian doctrines which penetrated the working class. It is not only the proletariat that suffers under capitalism. The development of capitalism put capital, the land, and the means of production into the hands of an ever diminishing number of owners, ruining not only the small proprietors, the peasants and the vast majority of the handicraftsmen; in times of crisis it also led to the ruin of the smaller capitalists who were less fitted for the struggle. Among the supporters of the anarchist movement combated by Marx and Engels there were many such bourgeois who were roused to a frenzy by the horrors of capitalism. The fundamental issue on which Marx and Engels fought the anarchists was the problem of the state.

Anarchists are people who deny that a state power is necessary; whereas we say that a state power is absolutely essential; and essential not only for Russia now, but for every state, even if it were directly passing to socialism. A strong state power is absolutely essential! All we desire is that this power shall be entirely and exclusively in the hands of the majority of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies.*

These words of Lenin's, uttered at the first All-Russian Con-

* Lenin, "Speech on the Agrarian Question Delivered at the First All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, p. 355. International Publishers, New York.

MARXIST-LENINIST CRITICISM OF ANARCHISM

gress of Peasants' Deputies in the summer of 1917, shortly before the Socialist October Revolution, show the gulf that lies between the anarchists and the Communists. For indeed, the principal question that divides the anarchists and the Communists is their attitude towards the state, towards the question as to whether the proletariat needs revolutionary government in the period of transition to complete communist society.

As is generally known, Marx severely criticized Proudhon, the founder of anarchism, at the very beginning of his political activities. He realized that the works of this petty-bourgeois utopian contained a doctrine that was harmful to the proletariat. In his *Poverty of Philosophy* he subjected Proudhon's petty-bourgeois views to withering criticism.

In 1847 Proudhon published a book entitled *The System of Economic Contradictions*, in which he opposed all forms of the economic movement (trade unions, strikes, etc.). Proudhon planned a future society based on mutualism—mutual exchange of products between independent, autonomous groups of producers. Proudhon opposed the organized economic struggle of the working class. He wrote that "a law permitting the formation of trade unions is utterly opposed to law and economics, and contradicts all society and order." He opposed the class struggle and advocated class collaboration. He opposed all interference on the part of political parties in the struggle between labor and capital and maintained that all issues should be settled by free competition.

Marx was bound to combat a theory of this kind, which was very useful to the capitalists, for it served solely the interests of the exploiters. In his book, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, he gave a comprehensive and deservedly severe reply to these petty-bourgeois plans.

Proudhon was also the founder of the anarchist views on the state. He advocated the abolition of every kind of state. Bakunin borrowed his ideas from Proudhon.

What is the fundamental difference between the anarchists

and the Communists in their attitude towards the state? Lenin reduces this difference to the following three most important points:

The difference between the Marxists and the anarchists is this: (1) The former, while aiming at the complete abolition of the state, recognize that this aim can only be achieved after classes have been abolished by the socialist revolution, as the result of the establishment of socialism, which leads to the withering away of the state. The latter want to abolish the state completely overnight, failing to understand the conditions under which the state can be abolished; (2) the former recognize that after the proletariat has conquered political power it must utterly destroy the old state machine and substitute for it a new one consisting of the organization of armed workers, after the type of the Commune. The latter, while advocating the destruction of the state machine, have absolutely no clear idea of *what* the proletariat will put in its place and *how* it will use its revolutionary power; the anarchists even deny that the revolutionary proletariat should utilize its state power, its revolutionary dictatorship; (3) the former demand that the proletariat be prepared for revolution by utilizing the present state; the latter reject this.*

The anarchists claim that they are in favor of the complete abolition of the state and that the Communists want to preserve the state forever. Are they right in making this assertion? No, they are not. Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have repeatedly stated in their writings that it is necessary to fight for the complete victory of communism—a social system under which there will be no need for any form of state power. But when will this be possible? It will be possible only when there is no longer a danger of capitalism being restored in the country by states where the capitalist system still prevails; when society, completely socialist in nature, has developed to such an extent that it will be possible to adopt the rule, "from each

* Lenin, "The State and Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, pp. 104-105. International Publishers, New York.

according to his ability, to each according to his needs," as a consequence of which a new labor discipline and new relations among human beings will arise. The proletarian state will no longer be necessary then, and will wither away.

Only in communist society—Lenin wrote—when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely broken, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (*i.e.*, when there is no difference between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), *only then does* "the state . . . cease to exist," and it "*becomes possible to speak of freedom.*" Only then will really complete democracy, democracy without any exceptions, be possible and be realized. And only then will democracy itself begin to *wither away* owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually become accustomed to observing the elementary rules of social life that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims; they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without compulsion, without subordination, without the special apparatus for compulsion which is called the state.*

The anarchists, on the other hand, have always considered that the state must wither away on the morrow of the socialist revolution, or the social revolution, as they call it. The Communists are of the opinion, and the proletarian socialist revolution of 1917 has shown, that after the socialist revolution the proletariat smashes the apparatus of the bourgeois state. But the state as such does not wither away. The apparatus of the bourgeois state demolished in the revolution is superseded by a new, socialist, proletarian state.

This proletarian state is necessary in order to build up a new, socialist system of economy, to crush the resistance of the exploiting classes, to help the peasantry to adopt the road

* *Ibid.*, p. 81.

of socialism, to eliminate the parasitic classes and thereby pave the way for a classless society. It was this task that was performed by the Soviet government, the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R., after the October Revolution of 1917. Some anarchists fail to understand this, for they have learned by rote the theory of Bakunin and Proudhon that every form of state must be abolished and therefore do not trouble to think whether the actual conditions for transition to socialism exist in the given state at the given time. Consequently, they imagine that the socialist revolution can take place in any given country under any conditions.

It is a still more dangerous error when the leaders and members of the anarchist movement fail to distinguish what kind of revolution is taking place and confuse the socialist revolution with the bourgeois-democratic revolution. To mistake the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the socialist revolution and to launch measures which cannot be carried out in the bourgeois-democratic revolution is dangerous in the extreme, for in this case the anarchist leaders may come into conflict with the general course of development of the revolutionary movement. This has occurred in numerous instances. That is why Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are so severe in their criticism of the anarchist attitude to the state, to state power and the participation of the proletariat in the organs of power established by the revolution. Expounding the views of the anarchists, Lenin wrote:

"We must think *only* of destroying the old state machine; it is no use studying the *concrete* lessons of previous proletarian revolutions and analyzing *what* to put in the place of what has been destroyed and *how*," argues the anarchist (the best of the anarchists, of course, and not those who, with Messrs. Kropotkin and Co., follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie); consequently, the tactics of the anarchist become the tactics of *despair* instead of a ruthlessly bold revolutionary effort to solve concrete problems while taking into account the practical conditions of the mass movement.*

* *Ibid.*, p. 109.

Thus the Communists and anarchists both agree that it is necessary to establish a system under which the need for all state power will disappear, but, while the Communists consider that a transition period is necessary under a proletarian state, under the rule of the proletarian dictatorship, the anarchists imagine that it is possible to pass to communism directly from any other system—capitalist, landlord or semi-feudal.

But the difference is not confined to this. While the Communists call for the establishment of a definite centralized administration, the anarchists advocate federalism—agreements between individual, independent, autonomous, "communes," to be introduced from below. In the case of Makhno and his supporters we saw that the anarchists did not introduce federalism from below, but established an anarchist dictatorship by appointing commandants with dictatorial powers. Beginning with anarchist declarations about abolishing every form of state, of state power and dictatorship, the Makhno anarchists in the district under their control established a Makhno police state with unlimited authority, with a secret police, with courts whose decisions were never disputed, with armies ruled by kulaks and bandits, and so on. But even after this the European anarchists think that every municipality, every trade union, every rural organization, every cooperative society is to be independent and to enter into voluntary federation agreements with whatever other organization it chooses. Moreover, they believe that such an organization can be established on any scale. The experience of the Russian revolution and of the revolutionary movement of other countries proves that this view is wrong, and therefore the Communists cannot adopt it. That, too, is why Lenin, in his remarkable work, *The State and Revolution*, says:

Marx agreed with Proudhon on the necessity of "smashing" the present state machine. . . . Marx differed with Proudhon and with Bakunin precisely on the point of federalism (quite apart from the dictatorship of the pro-

letariat). The petty-bourgeois views of anarchism advance federalism as a principle. Marx was a centralist. There is no departure from centralism in the observations of Marx quoted above. Only those who are imbued with the petty-bourgeois "superstitious belief" in the state can mistake the abolition of the bourgeois state machine for the abolition of centralism!

But will it not be centralism when the proletariat and poorest peasantry take political power in their own hands, organize themselves freely in communes, and *unite* the action of all the communes in striking at capital, in crushing the resistance of the capitalists, in transferring the ownership of the railways, factories, land and so forth, to the *entire* nation, to the whole of society? Will that not be the most consistent democratic centralism? And proletarian centralism at that?*

Thus the point on which the anarchists and the Communists fundamentally disagree is whether the working class should organize state power after its victory, whether the working class must preserve the state or not. This question did not confront the proletariat for the first time during the socialist revolution in 1917. In 1905, when the bourgeois-democratic revolution was in progress in Russia, Lenin and the other Bolsheviks also urged the need for organizing a provisional revolutionary government and for the representatives of the workers and peasants participating in this government. Lenin, Stalin and the entire Bolshevik Party insistently maintained that this government must be a revolutionary dictatorship of the workers and peasants. This dictatorship was necessary to crush the resistance of the landlords and capitalists, to confiscate the landed estates and to defend the gains of the revolution. State power is even more necessary when the proletariat has overthrown the capitalists and is building socialist society.

At the very beginning of 1917, when tsarism had been overthrown and a new program of action became necessary, Lenin

* *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

said quite definitely in his "Letters from Afar" that the Communists must organize a revolutionary government.

We need a revolutionary government—Lenin wrote—we need a *state* (for the duration of a certain transition period). This is where we differ from the anarchists. The revolutionary Marxists differ from the anarchists not only by the fact that the former stand for centralized large-scale communist production and the latter stand for scattered, small production. No, the difference between us on the problem of government, of the state is that we are *for* the revolutionary utilization of the revolutionary forms of the state in the struggle for socialism, while the anarchists are *against* it.*

In their time Marx and Engels ridiculed the petty-bourgeois philosopher Eugen Duehring, who championed the anarchist idea that the state can be "abolished." It was not the abolition of the state that Marx and Engels wrote of, but its withering away. It must never be forgotten that while the bourgeois state machine is smashed by the proletariat after its victory in the socialist revolution, the proletarian, socialist state withers away only when all the conditions exist for the transition to complete communism, after classless socialist society has been established, after fully developed socialist branches of economy have been organized in all fields and the survivals of capitalism have been finally eliminated from economics and the minds of men.

In the bourgeois-democratic revolutions of 1905 and of February-March, 1917, it was necessary to establish a government of workers and peasants that would enable them to cope with all enemies of the revolution and pave the way to its next stage, the socialist revolution.

Before the socialist revolution of October, 1917, there had been no example of a proletarian dictatorship, and the anarchists of all countries could still argue theoretically that the proletariat needs no state power, that a proletarian dictator-

* Lenin, "Letters From Afar," *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book I, p. 49. International Publishers, New York.

ship is not necessary. But now it would be hard to find a single serious political worker, a single fully class conscious worker who maintains that after overthrowing the rule of the tsar and the rule of the capitalists and landlords in 1917, the workers and poor peasants of former tsarist Russia could have done without state power. There can be no doubt that if the Russian proletariat had not established its dictatorship, the united forces of the foreign interventionists, in league with the Russian capitalists, landlords, merchants, priests, kulaks and officials who had just been overthrown by the revolution, would have restored capitalism and landlord rule in an even more brutal form than before, that they would have drenched the country with blood in order to restore the old order. No district by itself could have held its own against the alliance of fourteen capitalist states, against all the forces of the old world united for the struggle against the working class movement.

The victory of the proletarian socialist revolution and the development of socialism in the course of twenty years is due to the fact that the Soviet government—that new form of the proletarian state, discovered in the epoch of imperialism—was established from the very beginning. The proletarian government, the dictatorship of the proletariat, took all the threads of government into its own hands and united the whole country, all the might of the toiling people of this multi-national land. It gathered all the means of struggle in its own hands, and amidst the most incredible poverty and the terrible economic ruin caused by the imperialist and civil wars, amidst want, laxity, disorganization, sabotage by the old officials and specialists, this proletarian dictatorship succeeded in rescuing the country from its state of collapse, in transforming the young Soviet state from a poverty-stricken, devastated country into a land of wealth; in transforming this technically backward country into an up-to-date socialist state; in transforming it from a country of petty, scattered individual peasant farming into an industrial-agrarian country, into the

only country in the world where agriculture is conducted on a collective basis by means of powerful machinery, in transforming it from a country of illiterates into a highly cultured country among whose population there are no illiterates.

Take Soviet agriculture, for instance: by the end of 1936 the collective farms were served by 316,000 tractors, with a total capacity of 5,700,000 hp., while the total number of tractors on collective and state farms was over 400,000, having a capacity of 7,580,000 hp. These figures were quoted by Comrade Stalin in his report on the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R. And it is common knowledge that before the October Revolution no tractors were employed in agriculture in Russia, and there was not a single factory manufacturing tractors. This enormous army of iron horses was created by the Soviet state.

Could disconnected agricultural communes or disconnected trade unions have accomplished this even if there had been no foreign intervention, even if the Soviet state had not been hindered in its work? And it was not only tractors that Soviet agriculture received from the proletarian state, but also automobiles, electric motors, steam engines, oil engines, motors for harvester combines, and other machinery. At the end of 1936 the mechanical power employed in agriculture in the U.S.S.R. totalled 19,000,000 hp.—a figure that we never even dreamed of twenty or thirty years ago in our illegal organizations, fighting against tsarism, against the landlords and capitalists.

As recently as 1928 mechanical power amounted to only four per cent of the total energy expended in Soviet agriculture, while in 1936 it amounted to sixty per cent. Hundreds of thousands of harvester combines and large quantities of other agricultural machinery are employed in the fields of socialist agriculture. The former peasant often used the wooden plow. This antiquated implement has now disappeared entirely, to make room for splendid steel plows and machines—tractors, sheaf-binders, wind-rowers, beet-diggers, harvester combines, multiple plows, various kinds of mechani-

cal seeders, cultivators, powerful mechanized threshers, and other machinery. Machine and Tractor Stations serving the collective farms have been organized everywhere. The Soviet Union now has thirty times as many tractors as Germany and forty times as many as Italy. The proletarian state alone, directing all its might and powers of organization towards building the socialist system of economy, towards the victory of socialism, could have achieved such results.

Thus, in the light of the proletarian revolution, the anarchist theories that all forms of state and government are pernicious appear miserable and ridiculous.

The proletariat must not oppose and smash the state and government as such. It must oppose and smash the bourgeois state and in its place set up a state that will act in the interests of the revolution, in the interests of the proletariat. Consequently, the proletariat cannot refrain from taking part in a government such as the government of the anti-fascist People's Front, which defends the revolution against the fascists and imperialists; it must take an active part in the work of such a government in order to help solve the complicated problems which confront the working people at such a time. Hence, the attitude of a party towards the state in time of revolution is connected with its attitude towards taking part in the work of government bodies, towards taking part in the political struggle. In 1905 the Bolsheviks argued with the Menshevik opportunists over the question of whether the proletariat should take part in a revolutionary government. The anarchists know the true nature of the Mensheviks, and none of them will maintain that the Russian petty-bourgeois Menshevik party was a truly revolutionary party in 1905. Even at that time they tried to hinder the revolution; in this bourgeois-democratic revolution they actually behaved as the agents of the bourgeoisie within the working class movement, although for a number of years they formally belonged to the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party together with the Bolsheviks. The fact that they used Marxist phrases only to

camouflage their anti-proletarian nature was fully revealed at the time of the proletarian revolution, when they openly opposed the revolution, when they lined up on the other side of the barricades together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Constitutional-Democrats and other bourgeois parties against the proletariat and the peasants. They leagued themselves with the whiteguards to combat the proletarian dictatorship, the proletarian revolution. And it is these opportunist Mensheviks who in 1905 reproached the Bolshevik Communists for wanting the proletariat to take part in a Provisional Revolutionary Government! Events put the Mensheviks to shame. In 1917 they entered the counter-revolutionary government of Kerensky and opposed the proletarian dictatorship.

For years the anarchists argued that they must not participate in any kind of government. But when the revolution broke out in Russia they acted otherwise. We have seen that the Makhno anarchists established a government, and, what is more, a dictatorial government unrestricted by any laws. Evidently, the Russian anarchists must have become convinced that their attitude towards the state was futile. But this did not prevent them, and is not preventing the anarchists in other countries today, from reiterating in their press and in their speeches that the anarchists are opposed to all state power and to the proletariat participating in state activities. This doctrine does great harm to the cause of the proletariat, and consequently we Communists must combat it.

For instance: should workers take part in parliamentary elections? The anarchists have always replied that the workers must not take part in parliamentary activities. But what should trade unionists do, for whom should they vote? The anarchists usually reply that they do not advise them to vote for anybody, but if they want to vote, that is their business, they can vote for whom they like. But this is the worst possible advice that could be given. It utterly misleads the workers, leaving them to be influenced by bourgeois politicians, and impairs the unity of the proletariat. Bourgeois politicians

often win elections because, under the influence of the anarchists, workers abstain from voting against them.

The proletariat cannot "abstain" from the political struggle, of which the parliamentary struggle is one of the forms. It is for this doctrine of abstention from political struggle that Marx and Engels criticized the Spanish anarchists.

In 1873 Engels wrote three articles entitled "The Bakuninists at Work," published in the *Volksstaat*, in which he criticized the actions of the Spanish anarchists during the insurrection of 1873. What were the mistakes committed by the Spanish anarchists? After the abdication of the King of Spain, a republic was proclaimed on February 9, 1873. In response, a monarchist rebellion of the Carlists broke out in the Basque provinces. The struggle that took place was waged between Republicans and Monarchists. Should the anarchists have kept out of this struggle? From the standpoint of the theories of Bakunin and Kropotkin, they should have done so. Were they able to keep out of it? No, they were not; they were compelled to take part in it. What happened? For many long years the anarchists had maintained that the workers must not take part in any revolution that did not strive for the immediate and complete emancipation of the working class, that the workers must not take part in elections, and so on. On the eve of the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the workers of Barcelona, Alcoy and other localities called on the anarchists to advise them what policy they should pursue in the struggle, parliamentary and otherwise. The Bakuninists replied that "the International, as an association, must not engage in any political activities, but the members of the International may act as they choose, each for himself, joining whichever party they elect," by virtue of their much talked of autonomy.

What was the result of the application of this absurd doctrine?—asked Engels in the above-mentioned article.—The result was that the bulk of the members of the International, including the anarchists, took part in the

elections without a program, without a banner and without their own candidates and, as a consequence, almost without exception bourgeois-republican candidates were elected.

Can the most revolutionary class behave in this way, can it fail to have its own class policy on such an important question? Obviously, the line of policy of the anarchists was very injurious to the cause of the working class.

For many years the anarchists had maintained that the only serious means of struggle was the general strike. Bakunin's program pointed to the general strike as the means of accomplishing the social revolution, though, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, the general strike alone, without an armed uprising, cannot lead to the victory of the revolution. In 1873 a general strike was proclaimed in Barcelona. The anarchists who proclaimed it said:

Workers! We are calling a general strike to express the profound indignation we feel at seeing the government use the army against our fighting brothers, while at the same time it neglects the war against the Carlists.

Again, instead of deciding and telling the workers on whose side they were to fight, arms in hand, the anarchists confined themselves to calling a general strike of protest.

According to the anarchist newspaper *Solidarite Revolutionnaire*, in Alcoy, with a population of 30,000, about 5,000 workers took part in the fighting. They were opposed by 32 armed gendarmes and a few more armed men. The workers won. What did they do next, under the leadership of the anarchists? They set up a Committee of Public Safety, that is, they established a revolutionary government; after advocating non-participation in the government for so many years, the anarchists in Alcoy established a revolutionary government. Did this revolutionary government take steps to secure the "immediate and complete emancipation of the workers," in accordance with its program? No, all the Committee did was to forbid all men to leave the town, while women were allowed

to do so if in possession of passports. When the forces of General Velarde arrived from Alicante, the Committee of Public Safety disbanded, after receiving the general's promise that its members would be pardoned.

In San Lucar de Barrameda and certain other localities affairs were no better.

Engels fiercely ridiculed Bakunin and his Spanish disciples for all this. His conclusions are so important for revolutionary Spain and for the struggle of the proletariat of the whole world at the present time that we give them here in full.

What, then, is the outcome of our whole inquiry?

1. The Bakuninists were compelled to throw their whole previous program overboard as soon as they were faced with a serious revolutionary situation. First they abandoned the doctrine of abstaining from politics, and particularly from elections. Next came the turn of anarchy, the abolition of the state; instead of abolishing the state, they attempted, on the contrary, to bring into being a number of new small states. Then they gave up the principle that the workers must not take part in any revolution whose purpose is other than the immediate and complete emancipation of the proletariat, and joined an avowedly bourgeois movement. Finally, they went against the article of faith which they had just proclaimed—that the establishment of a revolutionary government would be nothing but a new deception and a new betrayal of the working class—by calmly figuring in the government committees of the various towns, in which nearly everywhere they constituted a powerless minority, outvoted and politically exploited by the bourgeoisie.

2. This repudiation of the principles preached up to that time was performed in the most cowardly, lying manner and with pricking of conscience, so that when they entered the movement neither the Bakuninists themselves nor the masses they led had any program or even knew what they wanted. What was the natural result? Either that the Bakuninists hindered all movement, as in Barcelona; or that they were driven to scattered, unplanned, foolish risings, as in Alcoy and San Lucar de Barrameda;

or else that the leadership of the rising fell into the hands of the bourgeois intransigents, as in most cases. Thus, when it came to action, the ultra-revolutionary clamor of the Bakuninists was either transformed into evasion, or into risings that from the outset had no chances of success, or else into support of a bourgeois party which exploited the workers politically in the most shameful manner and treated them with kicks into the bargain.

3. Nothing was left of the so-called principles of anarchy, of the free federation of independent groups, and so on, but a boundless and senseless splitting up of the revolutionary means of struggle, which enabled the government, with a mere handful of troops, to subdue one town after another practically without resistance.

4. The end of the business was not only that the well-organized and numerous Spanish section of the International—both the false and the real—was dragged under in the collapse of the intransigents and has now practically been dissolved, but also that it has been saddled with all the invented excesses without which the philistines of all countries cannot imagine a workers' rising; and thereby the international reorganization of the Spanish proletariat may have been made impossible for years.

5. In a word, the Bakuninists in Spain have given us an inimitable example of how *not* to make a revolution.

All this occurred over sixty years ago. It would be sad if the events of all these years, the Russian revolution, the accession to power of the fascists in Italy, Germany, Poland and Portugal and the experience of the Spanish revolution were to produce no effect on anarchism, if the anarchists failed to draw the necessary conclusions. Fortunately for the revolution, we now see that the anarchists have learnt a great deal; they have realized that they must revise many of their theories and practical activities. This paves the way for closer relations between the anarchists and the Communists.

A question of no less importance connected with those we have enumerated is the question of authoritarianism—the rec-

ognition of authority, of the obligations imposed by organization.

As against the Communist organization, which the anarchists call "authoritarian," they style theirs "libertarian." They are champions of complete liberty, complete autonomy for every individual and for every organization. But they go further than that. They not only demand the abolition of all authority in the socialist revolution; in their anxiety to be loyal to the anarchist doctrine that all power is injurious, they oppose the authority of the government which is responsible for the fate of the revolution at the particular moment. In this connection Engels rightly asked:

Have these gentlemen never seen a revolution? A revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing there is. It is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, which are authoritarian means if ever there were any. And the victorious party, if it does not wish to have fought in vain, must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed population against the bourgeoisie? Should we not on the contrary reproach it for not having made more extensive use of this authority? *

On this question too the present revolution in Spain has demonstrated to the anarchists that they must abandon the views on authority which they have defended for so many years. Revolutionary violence is indispensable in every revolution, including the socialist revolution. It was the interests of the victory of socialism, of the victory of the proletariat, that Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin always had at heart when they advocated the need for revolutionary violence and the organization of revolutionary authority.

* Quoted by Lenin, "The State and Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, p. 58. International Publishers, New York.

Another very important difference between anarchism and Marxism (Communism) was brought out by Comrade Stalin in 1906, in an article entitled "Anarchism and Socialism," published in the Georgian newspaper, *Akhali Droeba*. Comrade Stalin wrote:

Marxism and anarchism are built on totally different principles, although both appear in the arena of struggle under the flag of socialism. The keystone of anarchism is the individual, whose emancipation anarchism regards as the principal condition for the emancipation of the masses; thus, according to anarchism, the emancipation of the masses is impossible before the individual has been emancipated; hence the slogan of anarchism—"Everything for the individual." The keystone of Marxism, on the other hand, is the masses, whose emancipation Marxism regards as the principal condition for the emancipation of the individual; thus, according to Marxism, the emancipation of the individual is impossible before the masses have been emancipated; hence the slogan of communism—"Everything for the masses."

*It is hardly necessary to prove now that history has borne out the truth of the ideals of Marxism. On the basis of the anarchist theory Count Leo Tolstoy, the writer, maintained that human happiness is not dependent on political and economic conditions, that it is achieved by the self-perfection of the individual. Investing this doctrine with a religious and moral form, he preached that "the Kingdom of God is within us." The well-known anarchist Max Stirner put the ego in the center of all things. But all human history, the history of class struggle, and especially the history of the fight for socialism in the U.S.S.R., has proved that the emancipation of the individual is impossible without the emancipation of the masses. It is only in the U.S.S.R. that the conditions for the complete and all-round development of personal ability and individual talent can be and are being created. In order that the masses of workers, peasants and office employees, the masses of working people, might bring forth brilliant musi-

cians, artists, engineers, inventors, aviators and scientists it is essential to have what the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. now ensures: the right to work for all, the right to education for all, the right to rest and leisure for all, complete equality between men and women, and the other conditions enjoyed by working people in socialist society. It is necessary to abolish unemployment, to abolish the opportunity for exploitation, in order to create the conditions for free development for all working people. Only if these social conditions exist can the creative energy of the individual freely develop.

But what if the interests of the individual conflict with the interests of the class? Only when every worker subordinates his will and interests to the will and interests of the class, to the will and interests of the people, can the struggle be successful. This has been proved by the experience of all revolutions. It has been proved by the revolution and the fight for socialism in the U.S.S.R. It is being proved every day in the Spanish revolution. We think that the solution of this problem found by the revolution provides the basis upon which the anarchists can come to an understanding with the Communists. By their joint efforts the Communists and anarchists can achieve the victory of the working masses and secure for them a position that will render possible an enormous rise in the economic, political and cultural standard of living of all working people and the transition to the highest stage of the revolution. And only these conditions can bring about the freedom of the individual and create the opportunity for his all-round development. Thus the slogan, "everything for the masses," means the emancipation of the individual.

The questions we have dealt with—the attitude towards the state, participation in government bodies, participation in the constructive work of government—are also connected with the question of discipline and coercion. Obviously, every serious proletarian organization must be ruled by conscious proletarian, revolutionary discipline. Such discipline is tested not by words but by deeds, by devotion to the cause and readiness

to sacrifice oneself for its sake. Proletarian discipline must not be less than discipline in a bourgeois state; on the contrary, it must be greater and stronger. The proletariat must fight against laxity and indiscipline which are camouflaged by cries about freedom.

Freedom in the new society is inconceivable without conscious revolutionary discipline among its members; it is inconceivable without this discipline, which renders the decisions of the leading bodies binding upon the entire proletariat. We can only rejoice that in this matter too the revolution in Spain has succeeded to a considerable extent in clarifying the minds of the anarchist masses and that anarchist workers are beginning to grasp the need for iron discipline. They have realized how dangerous is the talk about "organized indiscipline" and what disasters to the revolution its preaching can and does entail; they have realized that the revolution can be saved only by constructive, iron, revolutionary discipline.

There are two other points of importance in the controversy between the anarchists and the Communists.

The first point is whether it is possible to abolish classes or to achieve Bakunin's slogan of levelling classes. A recent communication in a Spanish anarchist newspaper about the collectivization of the Alcoy metal industry was printed under the heading: "Free agreement between toilers abolishes classes. —In the Alcoy metal industry there are only toilers, there are no more exploiters or exploited."

Our interest was roused by this statement that in a town in Catalonia, where the socialist revolution has not yet taken place, and private property in the implements and means of production has not been abolished, classes could already have been abolished, and by the "free agreement between toilers," to boot. How is it that there were "no more exploiters or exploited?" If this can be achieved in the Alcoy metal industry, the same thing was surely possible in all other industries and other places.

HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN RUSSIA

After we had read the whole report we became convinced that no such thing as the abolition of classes had actually taken place. What actually happened was that the Alcoy metal works were actually sequestered. Thereupon the United Metal Workers' Union of Alcoy called a joint meeting of employers and representatives of the factory committees. In opening the meeting, Gonzalo Bo, the chairman of the union, made the following speech:

Gentlemen, capitalism has been overthrown, the only basis for its further existence is fascism, which in Spain is on the road to destruction. You know that there is an extreme shortage of labor. We do not want to aggravate this crisis, which will bring poverty and starvation. In order to solve all the problems connected with the crisis our union is putting forward a definite program. But we realize that although circumstances favor us we must give you the opportunity to propose a solution which you consider would render the situation more normal.

What did the owners reply? They declared that they had no suggestions to make. Towards the end of the meeting one of the employers, Francisco Rodez, stated that he had planned to establish an Alcoy Metal Industry Consortium, which he had intended to submit for discussion to the employers under capitalism, but since capitalism no longer existed this proposal would be inappropriate.

The chairman then made the following proposals:

The expropriation or socialization of all enterprises, warehouses, factories and current accounts, including the assets and liabilities of every firm. Expropriation of enterprises to be carried out on behalf of the United Metal Workers' Union, now to be called the United Union of Workers in the Socialized Metal Industry. Formation of an administrative center of representatives of former owners, workers, engineers and office employees. Abolition of all social distinctions. Former owners to be given work as organizers of production in any enterprises, their remuneration to be the same as they were receiving when

MARXIST-LENINIST CRITICISM OF ANARCHISM

the present situation arose. These rates of wages are subject to revision and alteration. Meanwhile, workers' wages must be raised, if only slightly, with a general trend towards levelling wages.

In order to become absorbed in the workers' environment the employers must join the workers' organization.

"It may be said," the correspondent of the anarchist paper concludes, "that by means of joint action of the employers and the workers a problem of the greatest importance has now been solved in the Alcoy metal industry. The capitalists and millionaires of yesterday are now happy to work hand in hand with the workers and belong to the National Labor Federation."

We do not undertake to judge whether it was necessary to sequester the plants in Alcoy. The working people of Spain will be able to settle this question themselves. But we doubt whether a resolution is enough to "abolish all social distinctions." The future will show whether such measures are correct, but the whole experience of revolution teaches that classes cannot be abolished in this way. Classes continue to exist not only in present-day Spain, in many parts of which not even the bourgeois-democratic revolution has been completed. Classes continue to exist for some time even after the socialist revolution. Capitalist economics also continue to exist for a certain time, and to disregard this would involve great danger for the revolution.

In 1921, when Georgia was freed from the rule of the Georgian Mensheviks, the Armenian Dashnaks, and other petty-bourgeois groups allied with the imperialists, Lenin wrote to the leader of Georgia—Orjonikidze and others—about the specific features of Georgia. In this letter he offered the following advice:

In the first place, it is essential immediately to arm the workers and the poor peasants and establish a large Georgian Red Army. Secondly, a special policy of concessions is necessary in relation to the Georgian intellectuals

HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN RUSSIA

and small tradesmen. It is essential to realize that, far from intending to nationalize them, we must even make certain sacrifices in order to improve their position and leave them the opportunity to carry on their small businesses.

Further on Lenin wrote:

Please remember that Georgia's internal and international situation require of the Georgian Communists not a slavish imitation of the Russian model but skilful and flexible tactics of a special kind based on greater readiness to make concessions to various petty-bourgeois elements.*

In another letter, addressed to the Communists of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Daghestan and the Gorsky Republic in April 1921, Lenin also wrote that "more mildness, caution and willingness to yield to the petty bourgeoisie, to the intellectuals and particularly to the peasantry" were essential. Further on he said: "A slower, more cautious, more systematic transition to socialism—this is what is possible and necessary for the republics of the Caucasus as distinct from the R.S.F.S.R." **

What Lenin wrote about Transcaucasia should be taken into account by workers in many other countries in time of revolution.

The second question is the attitude of the anarchists and Communists respectively towards religion. This is a very important question.

The Communists advocate anti-religious propaganda. They are not supporters of the church, of religion. They have never concealed this, and have always fought against religious philosophy and against the church; but they have never demanded the prohibition of religion or of religious worship, they have never pursued the tactics of abolishing the church by force. The Communists put forward the demand included in the

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 187-88 (Russian edition).

** Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. IX, p. 204.

MARXIST-LENINIST CRITICISM OF ANARCHISM

programs of many bourgeois parties as well—the separation of the church from the state, and of the school from the church. But the difference between them and the bourgeois parties is that the latter proclaimed these demands but never carried them out consistently and completely, for it is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie to support the reactionary church, which helps to justify inequality and the class division of society.

Unlike the Communists, the anarchists, beginning with Bakunin, demand the prohibition of religion. Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have always opposed such an attitude towards religion. The Stalin Constitution of the U.S.S.R., recently adopted by the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, contains an article guaranteeing all citizens the right of religious worship and the right to engage in anti-religious propaganda. Anti-religious propaganda in the U.S.S.R. has achieved great successes. But at the same time priests in the U.S.S.R. are granted all civil rights on equal terms with other citizens. There is a special law dealing with the existence of religious communities. True, the revolution abolished all monasteries, which were inhabited by parasites and exploiters maintained at the expense of the state. The priests have nothing to do with the schools, which are educating new people who have no need of the religious system of morality, for they are developing the superior Communist system of morality of all mankind.

It would be wrong to prohibit religious worship. Why? Because among the workers and peasants in every country there are still large numbers of religious people who cannot throw off religion as easily and willingly as they threw off the hated militarists and exploiters. The product of centuries of religious education cannot be destroyed in a day. Much cultural and educational work must be done to achieve this, and even more necessary are the profound changes in economic life, in the entire system, which alone can free the working people from the influence of religion.

It will be useful to recall what Lenin wrote on this subject in a special article entitled "The Attitude of the Workers' Party Towards Religion." Lenin demanded that anti-religious propaganda, the propaganda of atheism, should be completely subordinated to the principal task of the proletariat—"the development of the class struggle of the exploited masses against the exploiters."

Let us take an example—Lenin wrote.—The proletariat in a given district and in a given branch of industry is divided, let us assume, into an advanced section of fairly class-conscious Social-Democrats, who are, of course, atheists, and rather backward workers who are still connected with the countryside and the peasantry, still believe in God, go to church, or are even under the direct influence of the local priest, who, let us suppose, has organized a Christian labor union. Let us assume furthermore that the economic struggle in this locality has resulted in a strike. It is the duty of a Marxist to place the success of the strike movement above everything else, to vigorously resist the division of the workers in this struggle into atheists and Christians, to vigorously combat such a division. Under such circumstances, atheist propaganda may be both unnecessary and harmful—not from the philistine fear of scaring away the backward sections, of losing a seat in the elections, and so on, but from consideration for the real progress of the class struggle which in the conditions of modern capitalist society is a hundred times better adapted to convert Christian workers to Social-Democracy and to atheism than bald atheistic preaching. He who preached atheism at such a moment and in such circumstances would only be playing *into the hands* of the church and the priests, who desire nothing better than that the division of the workers according to their participation in the strike movement should be replaced by their division according to their beliefs in God. An anarchist who preached war against God at all costs would in practice be helping the priests and the bourgeoisie.*

* Lenin, "The Attitude of the Workers' Party Towards Religion," *Marx-Engels-Marxism*.

Every worker, and especially the militant atheist, should ponder over these words of Lenin. For he must enter into a united front not only with atheists, but with all working people, including believers; therefore, as regards the attitude towards religion he must adopt tactics that will not obstruct the principal task at the present moment—the preservation and consolidation of the people's front for victory over fascism. The workers and peasants who are already atheists, regardless of the party to which they belong, must never forget that many of their brothers in the struggle are religious people and that these religious people are equally interested in the fight against the fascist oppressors. That is why the anarchist slogan of prohibiting religion and religious worship is wrong and dangerous.

Only when believers themselves are convinced that they have no need of religion, and they must be left to decide this for themselves, will they decide whether to belong to a religious organization, whether to engage in religious worship or not.

In this brief account we cannot claim to have given an exhaustive criticism of anarchism from the standpoint of the doctrine of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. We have dealt with the most important questions affecting the theory and practice of the present-day revolutionary movement. Nor is it our intention to ridicule the anarchists, but only to help them to join as painlessly as possible in a united front of struggle with the Communists and all others fighting for the emancipation of the working people.