

Resistance Marxist Library

Marxism Versus Anarchism

**Karl Marx, Frederick Engels,
Leon Trotsky, John G Wright,
V.I. Lenin**

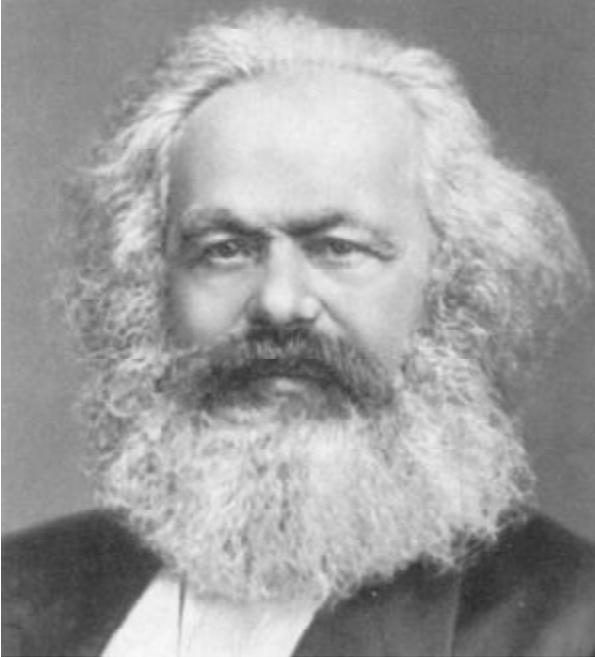
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Above: Karl Marx (1818-83). *Right:* Frederick Engels (1820-95).



Introduction

By Nick Soudakoff

Today anarchism is enjoying a modest revival in many countries. The anarchist circled A symbol can be seen here and there graffitied on city walls and a section of the growing movement of opposition to corporate tyranny identifies itself as anarchist. Young people disenchanted with the decaying world of late capitalism and its obscene inequalities and injustices may come to identify with anarchism, albeit in a very loose and vague way. Anarchism's appeal is all the greater given the general weakness of Marxist socialism and the lack of strong revolutionary workers' parties. However, only a small number of today's "anarchists" are ideologically committed to — or even aware of — the historical doctrines of the movement.

But whatever the case may be, the renewed interest in anarchism has led to some new debates around some old questions. It also invests with fresh relevance the Marxist critique of anarchism and the judgement of historical experience.

If we date the modern scientific socialist movement from the first publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, today we have over 150 years of struggle by the revolutionary Marxist movement. An important part of this experience is the struggle against anarchism. Marxism and anarchism may share a broad vision of a future society in which exploitation and oppression no longer exist, but they differ radically on exactly what that consists of, and on the strategies and tactics required to achieve it.

This book is a selection of Marxist writings on anarchism. It is not an exhaustive compilation of every word by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky on the subject but is rather designed to provide an introduction to the Marxist critique of anarchism by focusing on several key historical episodes.

The material is organised in three sections. The first deals with the First International and its struggle against the anarchist currents inspired by Proudhon and Bakunin. The writings included here give a clear and vivid picture of Bakunin's ideas and his destructive activity. The inclusion of Engels' "The Bakuninists at Work", dealing with the miserable

anarchist role in the 1873 revolt in Spain, is a preview of the anarchist failure in the 1936-39 Spanish Revolution.

The second section looks at the 1921 Kronstadt revolt in Russia and its suppression by the Bolshevik-led Soviet government. In the later 1930s, the alleged mistakes and ruthlessness of the Bolsheviks in regard to Kronstadt became a rallying cry for a diverse range of opponents of the revolutionary socialist movement grouped around Trotsky. For the anarchists then and now, Kronstadt is a central shibboleth. The material in this selection illuminates the key issues involved.

The final section deals with the colossal test provided by the Spanish Revolution and Civil War of the later 1930s. Anarchism in Spain boasted significant support in the workers' movement but, despite the heroism of the rank and file and figures such as Durruti, the record shows that the anarchist leadership betrayed the revolution and bears a heavy burden of responsibility for the ultimate victory of the Franco forces.

The appendix contains some brief notes by Lenin giving a summary outline of the Marxist critique of anarchism and excerpts of a 1918 speech by Trotsky explaining the attitude of the Bolsheviks toward anarchist militants.

Origins of anarchism

Although anarchism is a diverse phenomenon, rejection of the use of state power is common to all its variants. George Woodcock, the well-known anarchist writer and historian of anarchism, writes that anarchism is “a system of social thought aiming at fundamental changes in the structure of society and particularly — for this is the common element that unites all its forms — at the replacement of the authoritarian state by some form of non-governmental cooperation between free individuals.”¹

Historically, anarchism has drawn its support from those petty-bourgeois sectors whose existence was threatened by the development of large-scale capitalist production — independent artisans and traders, small businesspeople and peasants. They opposed big capital and the bourgeois state which defended its interests and looked towards a form of society in which petty-proprietorship predominated.

In anarchism this becomes opposition to *any* form of state and centralisation irrespective of its class basis. Furthermore, if anarchism, like Marxism, looks toward a society without the state or exploiting classes, anarchists see this happening through a spontaneous rebellion of the masses leading to the immediate abolition of the state and the establishment of a completely voluntary cooperative social order.

Marxists, on the other hand, understand that fundamental social change can only result from a process of comprehensive political struggle by the working class and the development of proletarian organisation and leadership. In conditions of social crisis,

this culminates in a revolution which destroys the capitalist state and replaces it with a workers' state, a state of a new type, which is essential to organise the immense process of social transformation. Furthermore, Marxists argue that the working class needs state power in order to suppress the inevitable counterrevolutionary resistance of the former exploiter classes. After a more or less lengthy transition period, in which the rising material well-being of society leads to the gradual withering away of social classes, the state and money-commodity relations, a communist society will come into being.

Although a petty-bourgeois trend in its ideas, anarchism has enjoyed some influence in the working class in particular countries at particular times (Barcelona, Paris, Lyons region, Marseilles and Milan), generally when industry has been relatively undeveloped and when the labour movement has been in its infancy.

But the appeal of anarchism has always been strongest among those classes outside the wage labour-capital relationship and threatened by the rise of large-scale capitalism. Many anarchist militants were artisans and traditional handicraftsmen and the biggest movements took root amongst the poor peasants of Spanish Andalusia and the Ukraine. Starting with Bakunin, anarchism sought and found support amongst some of the lumpen poor.

In France in the 1890s and in Britain and the United States in the 1940s anarchism was fashionable among rebellious artists and intellectuals. Today anarchist ideas and organisations are mainly based among students in the advanced capitalist countries where the expansion of the tertiary education sector has absorbed huge numbers of youth.

Early precursors

The first systematic exponent of anarchism was William Godwin (1756-1836) whose main work, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Political Justice*, first appeared in 1793, when the French Revolution was at its height.

The fundamental idea of Godwin's philosophy is that humanity's unhappiness is essentially caused by injustice: remove injustice and show people the path of a virtuous life and they will avoid error and find happiness. He concluded from this that the state, which prevents the individual from acting in accordance with reason and virtue, should be abolished. Godwin also argued that property which is exploitative should be abolished. His ideal was a return to cottage industry and small-scale production, a society composed of little villages, small enough that none could dominate another, without a state or any other form of centralised administrative or political body.

Another early anarchist was Max Stirner, the pseudonym of Johann Caspar Schmidt

(1806-56). In the early 1840s Stirner belonged to the “Young Hegelian” movement in Berlin along with Marx and Engels. His book *The Ego and His Own* appeared in 1844. A large part of Marx and Engels’ *The German Ideology*, written in 1845-46 (although not published in their lifetimes), is devoted to a comprehensive critique of Stirner’s work.

Stirner’s extreme individualist philosophy rejected not only the state but also society, putting in its place only a collection of self-centred egoists each striving selfishly for their own individual ends. But for all the verbal radicalism of his rejection of the state, morality and society and his glorification of crime, Stirner rejected the idea of the abolition of private property and opposed communism, which he saw as the enslavement of the individual by society.

Marx and Engels refuted this petty-bourgeois notion, explaining that in bourgeois society private property gives freedom and individuality only to the small minority of capitalists, and that it robs the great working majority of their freedom and individuality. The workers can gain these not against society — which is an impossibility — but only by struggling collectively to change it and establish a communist society which will enable the maximum development of every human being.

Proudhon

One of the most influential anarchist theorists was Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65). His writings contain the basic elements from which all later libertarian and decentralist doctrines have been built.

Proudhon was a self-taught French worker. He achieved some fame with his 1840 book, *What is Property?* in which he declared himself to be an anarchist. In response to the question of his title, he gave the famous answer that “property is theft” and demanded its abolition. However, Proudhon condemned only capitalist property which was based on the expropriation of the small producer.

In 1846 Proudhon published *The Philosophy of Poverty*. The following year Marx responded with a withering critique, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, in which he criticised Proudhon’s petty-bourgeois standpoint, his unscientific moral and philosophical explanations of economic conditions and his opposition to strikes by workers to improve their conditions.

Proudhon was firmly opposed to socialism since for him this involved state control and the state was simply a big “gendarme and executioner”. He developed his ideas into a system he called “mutualism” which envisages a society run through mutual contracts. As he put it in an 1851 work: “In the place of laws, we will put contracts: no more laws voted by the majority, not even unanimously. Each citizen, each town, each

industrial union makes its own laws. In place of political powers we will put economic forces.”²

Proudhon’s ideal was a society of peasants and artisans owning their own means of petty production. The condition of the workers could only be improved, not by strikes and other forms of class struggle, but by converting them into owners of common property by means of cooperative societies for production, consumption, mutual aid and insurance, financed by a “people’s bank” lending money on the basis of “free credit”.

Proudhon’s ideas came to exercise a significant influence in the French working class with its marked handicraft and artisan character compared to England with its much more strongly developed system of factory-based large-scale production.

Marx’s early criticism of Proudhon prefigured the struggle against anarchism which played so large a role in the history of the First International.

The First International

The First International — the International Workingmen’s Association — was formed at a meeting in London in September 1864. Marx quickly came to play a decisive role in its activities.

Marx drafted both its Inaugural Address and its General Rules. These contained a number of key ideas: the emancipation of the working class had to be accomplished by the working class itself; this struggle aimed at ending inequality through the abolition of class rule; the task was a social one and was not limited to either local or national perspectives but embraced all countries; and the working class needed not only its own domestic social policy but also its own internationalist foreign policy.

For Marx the fundamental importance of the International lay in its existence as an international centre of the workers’ movement. All working class and socialist forces were invited to join the International. And given the politically very diverse nature of the workers’ movement in the various countries, Marx was concerned that the International not be unnecessarily endangered by prematurely insisting on too strict an ideological agreement and thus many important demands (such as nationalisation of the means of production) were omitted from the first documents.

The International included a very large number of schools of thought, with different and diverse aims [writes Julius Braunthal in his history of the internationals³]. There were the representatives of anti-political, cooperative socialism; representatives of reformist, syndicalist, revolutionary anarchist and utopian ideologies; followers of Proudhon, Fourier, Cabet, Blanqui, Bakunin, Marx — a chaos of mutually conflicting ideas. These differences were fought out at successive congresses in debates on the

social and political program. During the early years the debate centred on the differences between Marxism and Proudhonism, and in the subsequent period between Marxism and anarchism. The history of the International's congresses is mainly a history of this battle of ideas, in which the movement tried to hammer out a common program covering both the aims of socialism and the methods of realising it.

A brief survey of the international gatherings of the organisation provides some background to the readings in the first section of this volume:

- At the September 1865 London conference, the Proudhonist French delegation, following their line of opposition to all working class political action, rejected a resolution proposed by Marx and the International's General Council supporting the Polish independence struggle against tsarist Russia. However, the conference majority voted to put it to the congress set for the next year.
- The first congress of the International met in September 1866 in Geneva. It was marked by a battle with the followers of Proudhon over their opposition to the working-class struggle for reforms. Consistent in their opposition to the state, the Proudhonists opposed even progressive laws such as those enforcing the eight-hour day or curbing child labour. They rejected strikes as "barbarous", counterposing to them the setting up of cooperative associations through which the workers could become collective owners, enjoying their product rather than drawing wages. As Marx wrote shortly afterwards:

The Parisian gentlemen had their heads full of the emptiest Proudhonist phrases ...

They scorn all *revolutionary* action, that is, action arising out of the class struggle itself, all concentrated, social movements, and therefore those which can be carried through by *political* means (for instance the *legal* shortening of the working day).⁴

Marx's 1873 article, "Indifference to Politics", included in this volume, savagely scores the abstentionist attitude of the Proudhonists.

In the event, the congress carried the essence of the program Marx had put forward.

- The second congress of the International was held in Lausanne in September 1867. Although the Proudhonists managed to impose their own agenda, they were not able to take over the leadership of the organisation. Sharp debates took place around a number of questions. Some delegates called for a compulsory secular state education system; the Proudhonists opposed this on the grounds that such a system could be nothing more than a tool of the ruling class.

From their petty producer's perspective, the Proudhonists were firmly opposed to the nationalisation of the means of production. But the railways were a special case. They were discriminating in favour of big business at the expense of the small producers and at Lausanne it was the Proudhonists who raised the question of

their nationalisation. The debate shifted to who would run them on behalf of society — the state, the cooperatives or some other entity. Compromise resolutions were finally adopted on such issues, open to either Marxist or Proudhonist interpretation.

- In September 1868, the third congress of the International was held in Brussels; it was the largest yet. Most notably, against Proudhonist opposition, it adopted a resolution calling for the land, farms, mines and railways to be transferred to public ownership; however, they were not to be run by the state itself but by cooperative associations of workers and farmers.
- The question of nationalisation of the land was revisited at the International's fourth congress, held at Basle in September 1869. Despite the opposition of the Proudhonists, the basic position taken at Brussels was confirmed by the even more representative gathering, although the form of administration of the nationalised land was left open. Basle showed the waning influence of the Proudhonists.

Bakunin

However, a new anarchist current had appeared in the International. Basle was the first congress attended by Mikhail Bakunin (1814-76), a Russian with considerable prestige as a revolutionist. An active participant in the 1848-49 European revolutions, he had been captured by Prussian troops and condemned to death, but was finally handed over to the tsarist authorities and kept in solitary confinement for seven years. Then banished to Siberia, after some years he escaped in 1861 and made his way to the West where he eventually became active in Italy and Switzerland.

At the congress Bakunin called strongly for the abolition of the right of inheritance, arguing that this was one of the “fundamental conditions” for breaking down the private property system and preparing the revolution. Marx, although not present, had prepared a refutation of these claims. He pointed out that the right of inheritance was not the cause but rather a consequence of a system based on private property; abolishing this right would not destroy the system but abolishing capitalism would necessarily end the right of inheritance.

In the event, neither position won majority support and the issue was left unresolved. But the episode showed that Bakunin had already secured considerable support in the organisation, a worrying development for Marx and his supporters given Bakunin's ideas.

For Bakunin, the main evil in society was not the capitalist system, but the state as such, which he considered an entity standing above social classes. Capital was created

by the state and individuals possessing capital did so only by the grace of the state. Thus the state had to be abolished forthwith, after which capitalism would disappear of itself. There would be no overriding authority of any kind whatsoever, nor would there be any such thing as majority rule. Each social community would function on an autonomous basis and each individual within the community would have complete freedom of action (see Engels' letter to Theodore Cuno in this volume).

Bakunin was opposed to Marxist communism "because communism, by concentrating all property in the state, necessarily leads to the concentration of all power in the state. I want to abolish the state; my aim is the complete destruction of the very principle of state authority ..."⁵

Bakunin rejected all working class political action as a diversion from making the revolution. But unlike the Proudhonists, he looked to the forcible overthrow of the existing order. Moreover, he did not place his hopes for social change on the working class but on the peasantry and lumpenproletariat, even its criminal elements.

On Marx's invitation, Bakunin had joined the International in Naples in 1864. But he put all his efforts into establishing a clandestine "International Brotherhood" under his personal control. Moving to Geneva in 1867, he founded there the following year a new organisation, the "International Alliance of Socialist Democracy", which he planned to use to take control of the International.

The Alliance sought to affiliate to the International. However, in view of Bakunin's evident intention to create a factional organisation within the International, Marx and the General Council rejected the request. The Alliance then offered to dissolve itself and have its branches become sections of the International. The General Council agreed to this and Bakunin thus attended the Basle congress as a delegate of the Geneva section.

In fact, Bakunin maintained his conspiratorial organisation and waged a ferocious struggle to gain control of the International. The record of his destructive factional campaign against the International is set out in one of the selections in this volume, "Fictitious Splits in the International", written by Marx and Engels in early 1872.

In September 1871, in the aftermath of the defeat of the Paris Commune, a conference of the International was held in London. It adopted a resolution on the "Political Action of the Working Class" (see pp. 51-52 of this volume) which stressed that political abstention was not an option for the workers' movement; the workers needed to organise themselves in class parties, engage in the political struggle and mobilise and train their forces for the revolution which will secure the power of the working class and lead ultimately to a classless society.

The fifth congress of the International opened in The Hague in September 1872. It

was a widely representative gathering, with more countries represented than ever before. For the first time, Marx himself attended; he regarded the defeat of the anarchists as “a matter of life and death” for the organisation and the workers’ movement.

On Marx’s motion, Bakunin’s Alliance was expelled from the International. Marx and Engels set out the case against Bakunin and his followers and their fantastic ideas in “The Alliance for Socialist Democracy and the First International”, excerpts of which are included in this volume.

The Hague was the last real congress of the International; the organisation was formally dissolved in 1876. Its effective period of activity was little more than eight years but in its brief existence the International registered some great gains. It was really the first successful attempt at international organisation of the proletariat. Furthermore, the struggle it waged under the leadership of Marx and Engels, which exposed anarchism as a dead end for the workers’ movement, was one of its most important achievements.

Kronstadt — anarchist shibboleth

The Russian Revolution of 1917 — the first successful workers’ revolution in history — electrified the world and demonstrated the power of Marxism in action. Many anarchists and syndicalists helped form the new communist parties that developed around the world in the wake of the events in Russia. Indeed, within Russia the revolution polarised the anarchist movement. Many anarchists worked closely with the Bolsheviks in the soviets or actually joined them. However, other anarchists saw the revolutionary government as being just as bad as the tsarist one and so continued their struggle against “the state”.

In the later 1930s, against a backdrop of capitalist crisis, a diverse “united front” of opponents of socialist revolution came together to attack the small revolutionary socialist current around Trotsky. A key component of this de facto front consisted of anarchists. With the Spanish Revolution stalled and the anarchist role there becoming increasingly discredited, some anarchists went on the offensive and sought to discredit the Russian Revolution and Bolshevism. For ammunition in this endeavour they turned to an event which had happened some 17 years earlier — the 1921 uprising against the Soviet government in the Baltic island naval base of Kronstadt, in the Gulf of Finland off the coast of Petrograd (later Leningrad, today St. Petersburg).

Ever since what we might call its second historical appearance, the Kronstadt rebellion has become one of the central shibboleths of anarchism, a convenient club with which to beat communists and obscure the real issues in dispute between the two

currents.

In early 1921, the ruinous Civil War struggle in Russia was coming to an end. On March 1, a meeting of some 12,000 sailors, Red Army soldiers and workers was held on the Kronstadt naval base. The meeting passed a resolution calling for free elections in the soviets, legalisation of socialist parties and anarchists (the parties had been banned due to their open warfare against the Soviet government), abolition of the political department in the fleet and the special purpose detachments, removal of the barrier units (that guarded the Finnish border against smuggling), restoration of free trade, and the freeing of political prisoners.

The next day a "Revolutionary Committee" formed from naval units on the base took control of the island, thus beginning an open rebellion. The Red Army cadets stationed on the base did not join the revolt and left as a unit on March 3.

On March 5 an appeal issued to surrender was rejected by the insurgents. March 8 saw a two-pronged assault on Kronstadt by the Red Army across the frozen sea. Although some units breached the defences, the attack failed with heavy casualties. There were no operations for the following six days. Deserters from Petrograd swelled the insurgents' ranks to over 16,000.

A night assault by Red forces on March 16 breached Kronstadt's defences; alongside regular units were 320 delegates from the Communist Party's 10th Congress, then in session in Petrograd. After two days of heavy street fighting the rebels were defeated, many of them escaping over the ice into Finland.

For many anarchists the Kronstadt rebellion and its suppression by the Red Army is cited as proof that the Marxist conception of winning state power will always end in a new authoritarianism. The insurgent Kronstadt sailors are depicted as heroes of October, genuine revolutionaries who wanted to overthrow the new Bolshevik oppressors.

The background to the Kronstadt uprising is critically important. By 1921 the White forces had been defeated but it was by no means clear that the armed struggle against the imperialist-backed counterrevolution was finally over. Significant White forces were still intact in neighbouring countries and the Red Army was engaged in fighting a range of anti-Soviet forces in regional areas until 1923.

The country was in a state of disorganisation. Industry was close to collapse, armed gangs were looting in rural areas, and there were peasant uprisings throughout the country. One such uprising in Tambov province was led by the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. They built an army of some tens of thousands with a program of ending Soviet rule and establishing a new Constituent Assembly.

The Kronstadt revolt was one of many revolts at the time, but gained prominence due to its strategic location guarding Petrograd and the reputation of its sailors.

However the composition of the naval forces had changed over the course of the Civil War. The revolutionary sailors who had played a large role in 1917 were used to stiffen Red units across the country in the critical early years of the Civil War. But the sailors at Kronstadt in 1921 were not the same as those of 1917. They were overwhelmingly new recruits, many from peasant families in Estonia and Latvia.

The discontent of the peasant-sailor garrison reflected the peasant discontent in the country as a whole. This discontent arose from the privations and requisitions of the Civil War struggle. With the danger of a White victory apparently over, rural dissatisfaction increased. The 10th party congress moved to address this situation by adopting the New Economic Policy which, in particular, replaced the harsh wartime grain requisition system with a moderate tax in kind.

Once the rebellion was launched all the enemies of the Soviet Republic hastened to support it — Left and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, anarchists, Mensheviks and particularly the White Russian émigrés who collected money, arms, food supplies and sought support from European governments for the insurgents.

Negotiations had brought no results and in a few weeks at the most the spring thaw would break up the ice, making the naval base impregnable to assault from the mainland and open to resupply by the White fleet in Finland. The fall of Kronstadt would have left Petrograd exposed to assault by White troops. The Bolshevik leadership had little choice but to suppress the rebellion as rapidly as possible — a “tragic necessity” as Trotsky described it.

The materials reproduced in this volume give the basic facts and argumentation. A more complete selection can be found in Lenin & Trotsky, *Kronstadt* (Monad Press: New York, 1979).

Makhno — anarchist hero

A second focus for anarchist criticism of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution concerns the suppression of the peasant movement in the Ukraine led by Nestor Makhno (1884-1934).

With his fellow anarchists, Makhno, the president of the local soviet in the region around the Ukrainian town of Gulyai-Polye, developed a following among the local peasants during the course of 1917.

After the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the Ukraine was occupied by the German army. The Germans’ puppet government started returning land to the landlords, causing bitter resentment by the peasants. Makhno began a series of operations against the landlords and the German army through which he established a guerilla army based on the local peasantry.

With the withdrawal of German troops after November 1918 Makhno and his “Revolutionary Insurrectionary Army” controlled a large section of the Ukraine east of the Dnieper River. Makhno declared autonomy from the Soviet state and over the following three years fought both the Whites and the Red Army in succession.

His slogan was “soviets without communists” and his forces would clear out the local soviet leaderships whenever they captured territory. The Ukraine was the breadbasket for the Soviet Republic so the Makhnovists’ refusal to supply grain to the cities without proper recompense caused severe food shortages. In the campaigns against the Reds, repeated sabotage strikes throughout the region were common, particularly on railway stock.

Makhno’s army was destroyed as a serious military force in November 1920 although Makhno and what little remained of it continued fighting until August 1921 when he went into exile.

In “Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt”, Trotsky provides a succinct assessment of the meaning of Makhno’s movement:

Only an entirely superficial person can see in Makhno’s bands or in the Kronstadt revolt a struggle between the abstract principles of anarchism and “state socialism”. Actually these movements were convulsions of the peasant petty-bourgeoisie which desired, of course, to liberate itself from capital but which at the same time did not consent to subordinate itself to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The petty-bourgeoisie does not know concretely what it wants, and by virtue of its position cannot know. That is why it so readily covered the confusion of its demands and hopes, now with the anarchist banner, now with the populist, now simply with the Green. Counterposing itself to the proletariat, it tried, flying all these banners, to turn the wheel of the revolution backward.⁶

Spain — a decisive test failed

The Spanish Civil War of 1936-39 is anarchism’s greatest failure and the most devastating refutation of its claims to be taken seriously as a revolutionary doctrine.

For historical and social reasons, anarchism in Spain had mass popular support. The anarchist-led CNT (Confederación Nacional del Trabajo — National Labour Confederation) claimed 1.5 million members in 1931. The CNT was dominated by the FAI (Federació Anarquista Ibérica — Iberian Anarchist Federation). In 1936 the FAI was estimated to have some 30,000 members. The leadership of the CNT-FAI was divided into a left wing led by Buenaventura Durruti and a right wing led by José García Oliver.

In April 1931 the king, Alfonso, abdicated after sweeping republican gains across the country in the municipal elections. Mass expectations of the new bourgeois

republican government were high. The anarchists prepared for revolution which they felt was only months away. The CNT-FAI launched strikes and sporadic insurrections throughout Andalusia and Catalonia which continued into 1933 and won them considerable support.

In the climate of mass strike waves and periodic insurrections the Madrid government resigned and elections were held in November 1933. The CNT carried out a vigorous abstentionist campaign: the lack of the million votes which it influenced meant the defeat of the liberal left and two years of a reactionary right-wing government. In December 1933, in response to the election result, the anarchists staged a considerable rising in Aragon that lasted for four days: in Saragossa and Huesca factories were taken over by the workers and collectivisation of the land was attempted.

In October 1934, following a further rightward shift by the government, the Socialists and anarchists launched a general strike. In the northern province of Asturias, the miners seized the main city and declared a socialist commune. The government called in Franco and his mercenary colonial army from Spanish Morocco to crush the uprising. Over 5000 were killed in the subsequent repressions and 30,000 jailed.

However, the masses were not intimidated. The February 1936 national elections were won by the left-liberal Popular Front. This was a coalition between the bourgeois republican left and the Socialists and Communists. The anarchists did not join at first but encouraged their supporters to vote for it. Even the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista — Workers Party of Marxist Unification), in which former Trotskyists played a prominent role, supported the Popular Front.

But the radicalisation of the masses had gone too far and the ruling class resolved to crush it by any means necessary. In July 1936, the army, led by Franco, staged a revolt in Morocco and across Spain with the support of most of the ruling class. Despite the treachery of the bourgeois Popular Front administrations, which refused to distribute arms to the people, in large parts of the country the fascists were defeated by mass popular heroism.

The CNT-FAI forces were responsible for defeating the fascist uprising in Barcelona, Valencia, in the rural districts of Catalonia and parts of Aragon and the Asturias. The triumph of the working class organisations created a revolutionary situation in these areas and for several months the anarchist-controlled militia units held power. The factories were largely taken over by the workers and run by CNT committees, while hundreds of villages shared out or collectivised the land and many attempted to set up libertarian communes.

For a short time the central republican government had collapsed in the face of Franco's revolt. Most of the army had gone with the generals and so it had no real

ability to control the militia-run areas. This provided a certain breathing space for the insurgent masses — but not for long.

The anarchists' initial optimistic view of the July events was that "the social revolution would sweep away entrenched powers and institutions. Political parties would disappear, and the parasitic classes, no longer able to count on the support of the state, would disintegrate. And all that would remain to be done would be to organise the new anarchist society."⁷

By late autumn of 1936 it became clear that the "social revolution" had not yet taken place and in order to carry on the struggle against Franco's fascists the anarchists decided to join the Popular Front — in total violation of their own fundamental principles. Several anarchist leaders accepted portfolios in the Republican government in November 1936, most notably FAI "insurrectionist" leader García Oliver, who became minister of justice.

The new government rebuilt its control over Republican Spain but only reestablished control in Barcelona after heavy street fighting with the anarchist rank and file in May 1937. This marked the end of the anarchist influence in Catalonia and the dismantling of much of the collectivised land and factories. Though the CNT and the FAI grew numerically they slowly retreated in every field of action. By the time Franco's troops marched into Barcelona in late 1938 there was no opposition in the traditional stronghold of Spanish anarchism.

The anarchist-led CNT dominated the workers' movement. It was anarchist-led local defence committees that heroically led the fightback against the generals' attempted putsch. The fascist uprising forced the collapse of the Republican government — most of the coercive arms of the state apparatus (the military and police) had gone over to Franco — which created a brief period of dual power. Why was it that the anarchist-led workers' and peasants' movements did not press forward to take power into their own hands? As Trotsky pointed out, "to renounce the conquest of power is voluntarily to leave the power with those that wield it, the exploiters".⁸

In fact, the bureaucratic anarchist leadership did not just renounce the working class seizure of power but actively helped the Popular Front government suppress the working class and its organisations.

There was some opposition within the anarchist movement to the resuscitation of the bourgeois state. The Friends of Durruti, named after the outstanding anarchist militia leader who was killed in 1936 during the defence of Madrid, campaigned during the May 1937 events in Barcelona for a seizure of power by the workers through the development of democratic organs of defence. They and their collaborators in the Libertarian Youth were hunted down and smashed by the government after it regained

control of the city. Few words of protest came from the CNT-FAI leadership.

In his 1937 book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain*, Felix Morrow commented on the two aspects of anarchist philosophy that lead it down the road of class collaboration. In the first place, in its opposition to the state, anarchism does not distinguish between a bourgeois state and a workers' state. In the Spanish situation, the anarchists' anti-statism was untenable and had to be abandoned, but without making the all-important distinction between the capitalist state and a workers' state it was bound to fall into a counterrevolutionary policy. As Morrow put it:

Class collaboration, indeed, lies concealed in the heart of anarchist philosophy. It is hidden, during periods of reaction, by anarchist hatred of capitalist oppression. But, in a revolutionary period of dual power, it must come to the surface. For then the capitalist smilingly offers to share in building the new world. And the anarchist, being opposed to "all dictatorships", including the dictatorship of the proletariat, will require of the capitalist merely that he throw off the capitalist outlook, to which he agrees, naturally, the better to prepare the crushing of the workers.⁹

The second tenet of anarchist teaching that leads in the same direction is the call to workers to turn their back on the state and seek control of the factories as the real source of power:

The ultimate sources of power (property relations) having been secured, the state power will collapse, never to be replaced. The Spanish anarchists thus failed to understand that it was only the collapse of the state power, with the defection of the army to Franco, which had enabled them to seize the factories and that, if Companys [the Catalan bourgeois leader] and his allies were allowed the opportunity to reconstruct the bourgeois state, they would soon enough take the factories away from the workers.¹⁰

The example of Spain in 1936-39 tragically highlights a crucial point. By abstaining from taking state power the best the anarchists could hope for in a revolutionary situation is a period of dual power. But dual power is an inherently unstable and transitory phenomenon which must end in the victory of one side and the crushing of the other. Without the perspective of destroying the bourgeois state and replacing it with institutions of working class power, such a phase of dual power will inevitably end in the crushing of the revolutionary masses.

A raincoat full of holes

Anarchists have always regarded themselves as revolutionaries — and so they are in theory — but organised anarchism in the 19th and 20th centuries was really a movement of rebellion rather than a movement of revolution.

The anarchist movement has clearly suffered from the weakness of its inherent

dogmas. Anarchist action, by virtue of its spontaneity, has had the weakness of an almost complete lack of coordination. The history of anarchism shows only a bewildering confusion of small insurrections, individual acts of violence and strikes that served to keep society in a state of tension but which had no lasting results. The typical anarchist rebellions were local risings, easily defeated because of their isolation and by their failure discrediting the anarchist cause in the eyes of the masses. The propaganda by deed turned out all too often to be negative propaganda.

Faced with a decisive test, such as the Spanish Revolution, anarchism failed miserably. As Trotsky noted in his article “The Fifth Wheel”, anarchism is like a raincoat full of holes that works perfectly well when it does not rain but is completely useless when it does. Anarchism is a “revolutionary” theory that does not work in revolutionary situations. ■

Struggle in the First International



Above: Mikhail Bakunin (1814-76). Right: 1848 caricature showing Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65) attacking the property concept.



To Friedrich Bolte in New York¹¹

By Karl Marx

The *International* was founded in order to replace the socialist or semi-socialist sects by a real organisation of the working class for struggle. The original rules¹² and the inaugural address¹³ show this at a glance. On the other hand the International could not have maintained itself if the course of history had not already smashed sectarianism. The development of socialist sectarianism and that of the real working-class movement always stand in inverse ratio to each other. Sects, are justified (historically) so long as the working class is not yet ripe for an independent historical movement. As soon as it has attained this maturity all sects are essentially reactionary. Nevertheless, what history exhibits everywhere was repeated in the history of the International. What is antiquated tries to re-establish itself and maintain its position within the newly acquired form.

And the history of the International was a *continual struggle of the General Council* against the sects and amateur experiments, which sought to assert themselves within the International against the real movement of the working class. This struggle was conducted at the *congresses*, but far more in the private negotiations between the General Council and the individual sections.

In Paris, as the Proudhonists (Mutualists) were co-founders of the Association, they naturally held the reins there for the first few years. Later, of course, collectivist, positivist, etc., groups were formed there in opposition to them.

In Germany — the Lassalle clique. I myself corresponded with the notorious Schweitzer for two years and proved to him irrefutably that Lassalle's organisation was a mere sectarian organisation and, as such, hostile to the organisation of the *real* workers' movement striven for by the International. He had his "reasons" for not understanding.

At the end of 1868 the Russian Bakunin joined the *International* with the aim of forming inside it a *second International* under the name of "*Alliance de la Démocratie*

Written November 23, 1871.

Socialiste” and with himself as leader. He — a man devoid of all theoretical knowledge — laid claim to representing in that separate body the scientific propaganda of the International, and wanted to make such propaganda the special function of that second International within the International.

His program was a hash superficially scraped together from the right and from the left — *equality of classes* (!), *abolition of the right of inheritance* as the *starting point* of the social movement (St. Simonist nonsense), *atheism* as a *dogma* dictated to the members, etc., and as the main dogma (*Proudhonist*) *abstention from the political movement*.

This children’s primer found favour (and still has a certain hold) in Italy and Spain, where the real conditions for the workers’ movement are as yet little developed, and among a few vain, ambitious, and empty doctrinaires in Latin Switzerland and in Belgium.

To Mr. Bakunin doctrine (the mess he has brewed from bits of Proudhon, St. Simon, and others) was and is a secondary matter — merely a means to his personal self-assertion. Though a nonentity as a theoretician he is in his element as an intriguer.

For years the General Council had to fight against this conspiracy (supported up to a certain point by the French Proudhonists, especially in the *south of France*). At last, by means of conference resolutions 1, 2 and 3, IX, XVI, and XVII, it delivered its long-prepared blow.¹⁴

It goes without saying that the General Council does not support in America what it combats in Europe. Resolutions 1, 2, 3 and IX now give the New York committee the legal weapons with which to put an end to all sectarianism and amateur groups, and, if necessary, to expel them ...

The political movement of the working class has as its ultimate object, of course, the conquest of political power for this class, and this naturally requires a previous organisation of the working class developed up to a certain point and arising precisely from its economic struggles.

On the other hand, however, every movement in which the working class comes out as a *class* against the ruling classes and tries to coerce them by pressure from without is a political movement. For instance, the attempt in a particular factory or even in a particular trade to force a shorter working day out of individual capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. On the other hand the movement to force through an eight-hour, etc., *law*, is a *political* movement. And in this way, out of the separate economic movements of the workers there grows up everywhere a *political* movement, that is to say, a movement of the *class*, with the object of enforcing its interests in a general form, in a form possessing general, socially coercive force. While

these movements presuppose a certain degree of previous organisation, they are in turn equally a means of developing this organisation.

Where the working class is not yet far enough advanced in its organisation to undertake a decisive campaign against the collective power, i.e., the political power of the ruling classes, it must at any rate be trained for this by continual agitation against this power and by a hostile attitude toward the policies of the ruling classes. Otherwise it remains a plaything in their hands, as the September revolution in France¹⁵ showed, and as is also proved to a certain extent by the game that Messrs. Gladstone & Co. have been successfully engaged in in England up to the present time ... ■

To Theodore Cuno in Milan¹⁶

By Frederick Engels

... Bakunin, who up to 1868 had intrigued against the International, joined it after he had suffered a fiasco at the Berne Peace Congress¹⁷ and at once began to conspire *within it* against the General Council. Bakunin has a peculiar theory of his own, a medley of Proudhonism and communism. The chief point concerning the former is that he does not regard capital, i.e., the class antagonism between capitalists and wage workers which has arisen through social development, but the *state* as the evil to be abolished. While the great mass of the social-democratic workers hold our view that state power is nothing more than the organisation which the ruling classes — and owners and capitalists — have provided for themselves in order to protect their social privileges, Bakunin maintains that it is the *state* which has created capital, that the capitalist has his capital *only by the grace of the state*. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to blazes of itself. We, on the contrary, say: Do away with capital, the concentration of all means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall of itself. The difference is an essential one: Without a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of capital *is* precisely the social revolution and involves a change in the whole mode of production. Now then, inasmuch as to Bakunin the state is the main evil, nothing must be done which can keep the state — that is, any state, whether it be a republic, a monarchy or anything else — alive. Hence *complete abstention from all politics*. To commit a political act, especially to take part in an election, would be a betrayal of principle. The thing to do is to carry on propaganda, heap abuse upon the state, organise, and when *all* the workers, hence the majority, are won over, depose all the authorities, abolish the state and replace it with the organisation of the International. This great act, with which the millennium begins, is called *social liquidation*.

All this sounds extremely radical and is so simple that it can be learnt by heart in

five minutes; that is why the Bakuninist theory has speedily found favour also in Italy and Spain among young lawyers, doctors, and other doctrinaires. But the mass of the workers will never allow itself to be persuaded that the public affairs of their countries are not also their own affairs; they are naturally *politically-minded* and whoever tries to make them believe that they should leave politics alone will in the end be left in the lurch. To preach to the workers that they should in all circumstances abstain from politics is to drive them into the arms of the priests or the bourgeois republicans.

Now, as the International, according to Bakunin, was not formed for political struggle but to replace the old state organisation as soon as social liquidation takes place, it follows that it must come as near as possible to the Bakuninist ideal of future society. In this society there will above all be no *authority*, for authority=state=absolute evil. (How these people propose to run a factory, operate a railway or steer a ship without a will that decides in the last resort, without single management, they of course do not tell us.) The authority of the majority over the minority also ceases. Every individual and every community is autonomous; but as to how a society of even only two people is possible unless each gives up some of his autonomy, Bakunin again maintains silence.

And so the International too must be arranged according to this pattern. Every section, and in every section every individual, is to be autonomous. To hell with the *Basle resolutions*,¹⁸ which confer upon the General Council a pernicious authority demoralising even to itself! Even if this authority is conferred *voluntarily* it must cease just *because* it is authority!

Here you have in brief the main points of this swindle. But who are the originators of the Basle resolutions? Well, *Mr. Bakunin himself and company!*

When these gentlemen saw at the Basle Congress that they would be unable to get through their plan to remove the General Council to Geneva, that is, to get it into their hands, they followed a different tack. They founded the Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste, an international society *within* the big International, on a pretext which you will encounter again, today in the Bakuninist Italian press, for instance, in the *Proletario* and *Gazzettino Rosa*:¹⁹ for the hotblooded Latin races, it is claimed, a more ardent program is necessary than for the cool, slow-moving Northerners. This neat little scheme came to naught because of the resistance of the General Council, which of course could not tolerate any separate *international* organisation *within* the International. It has since reappeared in every shape and form in connection with the efforts of Bakunin and his crew surreptitiously to substitute the Bakunin program for that of the International. On the other hand the reactionaries, from Jules Favre and Bismarck to Mazzini, always came down hard precisely upon the inane braggadocio of

the Bakuninists when it was a question of attacking the International. Hence the necessity of my statement of December 5 against Mazzini and Bakunin, which was also published in the *Gazzettino Rosa*.

The nucleus of the Bakunin crowd consists of a few dozen people in the Jura whose whole following amounts to scarcely 200 workers. Their vanguard is made up of young lawyers, doctors and journalists in Italy who everywhere now act as spokesmen of the Italian workers; a few of their brand are in Barcelona and Madrid and every now and then, you will find one — hardly ever a worker — in Lyons or Brussels; here^a there is a single specimen, Robin.

The conference,^b convoked under the pressure of circumstances in lieu of the congress that had become impossible, served them as a pretext; and since most of the French refugees in Switzerland went over to their side because they (being Proudhonists) found many a kindred soul among them and for personal reasons, they sallied forth on their campaign. Malcontent minorities and unrecognised geniuses may naturally be found everywhere in the International and these were counted upon, not without reason.

At present their fighting strength is as follows:

- 1) Bakunin himself — the Napoleon of this campaign.
- 2) The 200 Jurassians and the 40-50 members of the French Section (refugees in Geneva).
- 3). In Brussels Hins, editor of the *Liberté*,²⁰ who however does *not* come out *openly* for them.
- 4) Here, the remnants of the French Section of 1871,²¹ which we have never recognised and which has already split into three mutually hostile parts. Then there are about 20 Lassalleans of the type of Herr von Schweitzer, who had all been expelled from the German Section (because of their proposal to *withdraw from the International en masse*) and who, being advocates of extreme centralisation and rigid organisation, fit to a T into the league of anarchists and autonomists.

5) In Spain, a few personal friends and adherents of Bakunin, who have strongly influenced the workers, particularly in Barcelona, at least theoretically. The Spaniards, however, are very keen on organisation and quick to notice any lack of it in others. How far Bakunin can count on success here will not be seen until the Spanish Congress in April, and as workers will predominate there I have no grounds for anxiety.

^a In London. — *Ed.*

^b Engels is referring to the conference of the First International that took place in London in 1871. — *Ed.*

6) Lastly, in Italy, the Turin, Bologna, and Girgenti Sections have, as far as I know, declared in favour of convening the congress *ahead of time*. The Bakuninist press claims that 20 Italian sections had joined; I don't know them. At any rate, almost everywhere the leadership is in the hands of friends and adherents of Bakunin, and they are raising a terrific hubbub. But a closer examination will most likely disclose that their following is not numerous, for in the long run the bulk of the Italian workers are still Mazzinists and will remain so as long as the International is identified there with abstention from politics ... ■

Fictitious Splits in the International²²

Private Circular from the General Council of the International Working Men's Association

By Karl Marx & Frederick Engels

Until now the General Council has completely refrained from any interference in the International's internal squabbles and has never replied publicly to the overt attacks launched against it during more than two years by some members of the Association.

But if the persistent efforts of certain meddlers to deliberately maintain confusion between the International and a society^a which has been hostile to it since its origin allowed the General Council to maintain this reserve, the support which European reaction finds in the scandals provoked by that society at a time when the International is undergoing the most serious trial since its foundation obliges it to present a historical review of all these intrigues.

I

After the fall of the Paris Commune, the General Council's first act was to publish its address on *The Civil War in France*²³ in which it came out in support of all the Commune's acts which, at the moment, served the bourgeoisie, the press and all the governments of Europe as an excuse to heap the most vile slander on the vanquished Parisians. Within the working class itself some still failed to realise that their cause was lost. The council came to understand the fact, among other things, by the resignation of two of its members, Citizens Odger and Lucraft, who repudiated all support of the address. It may be said that the unity of views among the working class regarding the Paris events dates from the publication of the address in all the civilised countries.

On the other hand, the International found a very powerful means of propaganda

Written in January-March 1872 and presented at the General Council on March 5, 1872.

in the bourgeois press and particularly in the leading English newspapers, which the address forced to engage in the polemic kept going by the General Council's replies.

The arrival in London of numerous refugees from the Commune made it necessary for the General Council to constitute itself as a relief committee and function as such for more than eight months, besides carrying on its regular duties. It goes without saying that the vanquished and exiles from the Commune had nothing to hope for from the bourgeoisie. As for the working class, the appeals for aid came at a difficult moment. Switzerland and Belgium had already received their contingent of refugees whom they had either to support or send on to London. The funds collected in Germany, Austria and Spain were sent to Switzerland. In England, the big fight for the nine-hour working day, the decisive battle of which was fought at Newcastle,²⁴ had exhausted both the workers' individual contributions and the funds set up by the trades unions, which could be used, incidentally, according to the rules, only for labour conflicts. Meanwhile, by working diligently and sending out letters, the Council managed to accumulate, bit by bit, the money which it distributed weekly. The American workers responded more generously to its appeal. It is unfortunate that the Council could not avail itself of the millions which the terrified bourgeoisie believed the International to have amassed in its safes!

After May 1871, some of the Commune's refugees were asked to join the Council, in which, as a result of the war, the French side was no longer represented. Among the new members were some old Internationalists and a minority composed of men known for their revolutionary energy whose election was an act of homage to the Paris Commune.

Along with all these preoccupations, the Council had to prepare for the conference of delegates that it had just called.²⁵

The violent measures taken by the Bonapartist government against the International had prevented the holding of the congress at Paris, which had been provided for by a resolution of the Basle Congress.²⁶ Using the right conferred upon it by Article 4 of the rules, the General Council, in its circular of July 12, 1870, convened the congress at Mainz. In letters addressed at the same time to the various federations, it proposed that the General Council should transfer its seat from England to another country and asked that the delegates be provided with definite mandates to that effect. The federations unanimously insisted that it should remain in London. The Franco-Prussian war which began a few days later made it necessary to abandon any plans for convening the congress. It was then that the federations which we consulted authorised

^a International Alliance of Socialist Democracy — *Ed.*

us to fix the date of the next congress as may be dictated by the political situation.

As soon as the political situation permitted, the General Council called a private conference, acting on the precedents of the 1865 conference²⁷ and the private administrative meetings of each congress. A public congress was impossible and could only have resulted in the continental delegates being denounced at a moment when European reaction was celebrating its orgies; when Jules Favre was demanding from all governments, even the British, the extradition of refugees as common criminals;²⁸ when Dufaure was proposing to the Rural Assembly²⁹ a law banning the International,³⁰ a hypocritical counterfeit of which was later presented by Malon to the Belgians; when, in Switzerland, a Commune refugee was put under preventative arrest while awaiting the federal government's decision on the extradition order; when hunting down members of the International was the ostensible basis for an alliance between Beust and Bismarck, whose anti-International clause Victor-Emmanuel was quick to adopt; when the Spanish government, putting itself entirely at the disposal of the butchers of Versailles, was forcing the Madrid Federal Council to seek refuge in Portugal;³¹ at a time, lastly, when the International's prime duty was to strengthen its organisation and to accept the gauntlet thrown down by the governments.

All sections in regular contact with the General Council were invited in good time to the conference, which, even though it was not to be a public meeting, nevertheless faced serious difficulties. In view of the internal situation France was, of course, unable to elect any delegates. In Italy, the only organised section at the time was that of Naples; but just as it was about to nominate a delegate it was broken up by the army. In Austria and Hungary, the most active members were imprisoned. In Germany, some of the more well-known members were persecuted for the crime of high treason, others landed in gaol, and the party's funds were spent on aid to their families. The Americans, though they sent the conference a detailed memorandum on the situation of the International there, employed the delegation's money for maintaining the refugees. All federations, in fact, recognised the necessity of substituting the private conference for a public congress.

After meeting in London from September 17 to 23, 1871, the conference authorised the General Council to publish its resolutions; to codify the administrative regulations and publish them with the General Rules, as reviewed and corrected, in three languages; to carry out the resolution to replace membership cards with stamps; to reorganise the International in England;³² and, lastly, to provide the necessary money for these various purposes.

Following the publication of the conference proceedings, the reactionary press of Paris and Moscow, of London and New York, denounced the resolution on working-

class policy as containing such dangerous designs — the *Times* accused it “of coolly calculated audacity” — that it was to outlaw the International with all possible speed. On the other hand, the resolution that dealt a blow at the fraudulent sectarian sections³³ gave the international police a long-awaited excuse to start a noisy campaign ostensibly for the unrestricted autonomy of the workers whom it professed to protect against the despicable despotism of the General Council and the conference. The working class felt itself so “heavily oppressed”, indeed, that the General Council received from Europe, America, Australia and even the East Indies, reports regarding the admission of new members and the formation of new sections.

II

The denunciations in the bourgeois press, like the lamentations of the international police, found a sympathetic echo even in our Association. Some intrigues, directed ostensibly against the General Council but in reality against the Association, were hatched in its midst. At the bottom of these intrigues was the inevitable *International Alliance of Socialist Democracy*, fathered by the Russian Mikhail Bakunin. On his return from Siberia, the latter began to write in Herzen’s *Kolokol* preaching the ideas of Pan-Slavism and racial war, conceived out of his long experience.³⁴ Later, during his stay in Switzerland, he was nominated to head the steering committee of the League of Peace and Freedom founded in opposition to the International.³⁵ When this bourgeois society’s affairs went from bad to worse, its president, Mr. G. Vogt, acting on Bakunin’s advice, proposed to the International’s congress which met at Brussels in September 1868³⁶ to conclude an alliance with the League. The Congress unanimously proposed two alternatives: either the League should follow the same goal as the International, in which case it would have no reason for existing; or else its goal should be different, in which case an alliance would be impossible. At the League’s congress held in Berne a few days after, Bakunin made an about face. He proposed a makeshift program whose scientific value may be judged by this single phrase: “*economic and social equalisation of classes.*”³⁷ Backed by an insignificant minority, he broke with the League in order to join the International, determined to replace the International’s General Rules by the makeshift program, which had been rejected by the League, and to replace the General Council by his personal dictatorship. To this end, he created a special instrument, the *International Alliance of Socialist Democracy*, intended to become an International within the International.

Bakunin found the necessary elements for the formation of this society in the relationships he had formed during his stay in Italy, and in a small group of Russian emigrants, serving him as emissaries and recruiting officers among members of the

International in Switzerland, France and Spain. Yet it was only after repeated refusals of the Belgian and Paris Federal Councils to recognise the *Alliance* that he decided to submit for the General Council's approval his new society's rules, which were nothing but a faithful reproduction of the "misunderstood" Berne program. The Council replied by the following circular dated December 22, 1868:

**THE GENERAL COUNCIL TO THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF SOCIALIST
DEMOCRACY**

Just about a month ago a certain number of citizens formed in Geneva the *Central Initiative Committee* of a new international society named the *International Alliance of Socialist Democracy*, stating it was their "*special mission* to study political and philosophical questions on the basis of the grand principle of *equality*, etc."

The program and rules published by this Initiative Committee were communicated to the General Council of the International Working Men's Association only on December 15, 1868. According to these documents, the said Alliance is "absorbed entirely in the International", at the same time as it is established entirely outside the Association. Besides the General Council of the *International*, elected successively at the Geneva,³⁸ Lausanne³⁹ and Brussels congresses, there is to be, in line with the rules drawn up by the initiative committee, another General Council in Geneva, which is self-appointed. Besides the local groups of the *International*, there are to be local groups of the *Alliance*, which through their national bureaus, operating independently of the national bureaus of the *International*, "*will ask the central bureau of the Alliance to admit them into the International*"; the *Alliance* central committee thereby takes upon itself the right of admittance to the *International*. Lastly, the *general congress* of the *International Working Men's Association* will have its counterpart in the *general congress* of the *Alliance*, for, as the rules of the initiative committee state, at the annual working men's congress the delegation of the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy, as a branch of the International Working Men's Association, "*will hold its meetings in a separate building*".

Considering,

that the existence of a second international body operating within and outside the International Working Men's Association would be the surest means of its disorganisation;

that every other group of individuals, anywhere, would have the right to imitate the Geneva initiative group, and, under more or less plausible excuses, to bring into the International Working Men's Association other international associations with other special missions;

that the International Working Men's Association would thereby soon become a

plaything of any meddlers of whatever nationality or party;

that the rules of the International Working Men's Association furthermore admit only local and national branches into its membership (see article I and article VI of the rules);

that sections of the International Working Men's Association are forbidden to adopt rules or administrative regulations contrary to the rules and administrative regulations of the International Association (see article XII of the administrative regulations);

that the rules and administrative regulations of the International Working Men's Association can be revised by the general congress only, provided two-thirds of the delegates present vote in favour of such a revision (see article XIII of the administrative regulations);

that a decision on this question is already contained in the resolutions against the *League of Peace*, unanimously passed at the general congress in Brussels;

that in these resolutions the congress declared that there was no justification for the existence of the League of Peace since, according to its recent declarations, its aim and principles were identical with those of the International Working Men's Association;

that a number of members of the Geneva initiative group of the Alliance, as delegates to the Brussels Congress, had voted for these resolutions;

The General Council of the International Working Men's Association unanimously resolved at its meeting of December 22, 1868, that:

1) All articles of the rules of the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy, defining its relations with the International Working Men's Association, are declared null and void;

2) The International Alliance of Socialist Democracy may not be admitted as a branch of the International Working Men's Association.

G. Odger, chairman of the meeting

R. Shaw, general secretary

London, December 22, 1868

A few months later, the Alliance again appealed to the General Council and asked whether, *yes or no*, it accepted its *principles*. If yes, the Alliance was ready to dissolve itself into the International's sections. It received a reply in the following circular of March 9, 1869:

THE GENERAL COUNCIL TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

According to article 1 of our rules, the Association admits all working men's

societies aiming at the same end, viz., the *mutual protection, progress and complete emancipation of the working class*.

The sections of the working class in the various countries finding themselves in different conditions of development, it follows necessarily that their theoretical opinions, which reflect the real movement, should also differ.

The community of action, however, established by the International Working Men's Association, the exchange of ideas facilitated by the public organs of the different national sections, and, lastly, the direct debates at the general congresses, are sure gradually to engender a common theoretical program.

Consequently, it is not the function of the General Council *to subject the program of the Alliance to a critical examination*. We have not to inquire whether, *yes or no*, it is an adequate expression of the proletarian movement. All we have to establish is whether it may contain anything contrary to the *general tendency* of our Association, that is, *the complete emancipation of the working class*. There is one sentence in your program which fails in this respect. Article 2 reads:

"It (Alliance) aims above all at the *political, economical, and social equalisation of classes*."

The *equalisation of classes*, literally interpreted, means *harmony between capital and labour* so persistently preached by the bourgeois socialists. It is not the logically impossible *equalisation of classes*, but on the contrary the *abolition of classes*, this true secret of the proletarian movement, which forms the great aim of the *International Working Men's Association*.

Considering, however, the context, in which the phrase *equalisation of classes* occurs, it seems to be a mere slip of the pen. The General Council feels confident that you will be anxious to remove from your program a phrase which may give rise to such dangerous misunderstandings. The principles of our Association permit every section freely to shape its own theoretical program, except in cases when the general policy of our Association is contradicted.

There exists, therefore, no obstacle to the *transformation* of the sections of the Alliance into sections of the International Working Men's Association.

The *dissolution of the Alliance*, and the *entrance of its sections into the International* once settled, it would, according to our regulations, become necessary *to inform the council of the seat and the numerical strength of each new section*.

Meeting of the General Council on March 9, 1869

Having accepted these conditions, the Alliance was admitted to the International by the General Council, misled by certain signatures affixed to Bakunin's program and supposing it recognised by the Romance federal committee in Geneva which, on the

contrary, had always refused to have any dealings with it. Thus, it had achieved its immediate goal: to be represented at the Basle Congress. Despite the dishonest means employed by his supporters, means used on this and solely on this occasion, in an international congress, Bakunin was deceived in his expectation of seeing the congress transfer the seat of the General Council to Geneva and give an official sanction to the old Saint-Simon rubbish, to the immediate abolition of hereditary rights which he had made the practical point of departure of socialism. This was the signal for the open and incessant war which the Alliance waged not only against the General Council but also against all International sections which refused to adopt this sectarian clique's program and particularly the doctrine of total abstention from politics.

Even before the Basle Congress, when Nechayev came to Geneva, Bakunin got together with him and founded, in Russia, a secret society among students. Always hiding his true identity under the name of various "revolutionary committees", he sought autocratic powers based on all the tricks and mystifications of the time of Cagliostro. The main means of propaganda used by this society consisted in compromising innocent people in the eyes of the Russian police by sending them communications from Geneva in yellow envelopes stamped in Russian on the outside "secret revolutionary committee". The published accounts of the Nechayev trial bear witness to the infamous abuse of the International's name.^a

The Alliance commenced at this time a public polemic directed against the General Council, first in the Locle *Progrès*,⁴⁰ then in the Geneva *Égalité*,⁴¹ the official newspaper of the Romance federation, where several members of the Alliance had followed Bakunin. The General Council, which had scorned the attacks published in the *Progrès*, Bakunin's personal organ, could not ignore those from the *Égalité*, which it was bound to believe were approved by the Romance federal committee. It therefore published the circular of January 1, 1870 which said:

We read in the *Égalité* of December 11, 1869:

"It is certain that the General Council is neglecting extremely important matters. We remind it of its obligations under article 1 of the regulations: The General Council is *under* obligation to carry the resolutions of the congress into effect, etc. We could put enough questions to the General Council for its replies to make up quite a long report. They will come later ... Meanwhile, etc. ..."

The General Council does not know of any article, either in the rules, or the regulations,

^a An extract from the Nechayev trial⁴² will be published shortly. The reader will find there a sample of the maxims both stupid and infamous, which Bakunin's friends have laid at the door of the *International*.

which obliges it to enter into correspondence or into polemic with the *Égalité* or to provide “answers to questions” from newspapers. Only the federal committee in Geneva represents the branches of French Switzerland vis-a-vis the General Council. When the federal committee sends us requests or reprimands by the only legitimate means, i.e., through its secretary, the General Council will always be ready to reply. But the Federal Committee has no right either to abdicate its functions in favour of the *Égalité* and *Progrès*, or to let these newspapers usurp its functions. Generally speaking, the General Council’s administrative correspondence with national and local committees cannot be published without greatly prejudicing the Association’s general interests. Consequently, if the other organs of the International were to follow the example of the *Progrès* and *Égalité*, the General Council would be faced with the alternative of either discrediting itself publicly by remaining silent or violating its obligations by replying publicly. The *Égalité* joined the *Progrès* in inviting the *Travail*⁴³ (Paris paper) to denounce, in its turn, the General Council. Which makes it akin to a League of Public Welfare.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, before having read this circular, the Romance federal committee had already expelled supporters of the Alliance from the editorial board of the *Égalité*.

The January 1, 1870 circular, like those of December 22, 1868 and March 9, 1869, was approved by all International sections.

It goes without saying that none of the conditions accepted by the Alliance have ever been fulfilled. Its sham sections have remained a mystery to the General Council. Bakunin sought to retain under his personal direction the few groups scattered in Spain and Italy and the Naples section which he had detached from the International. In the other Italian towns he corresponded with small cliques composed not of workers but of lawyers, journalists and other bourgeois doctrinaires. At Barcelona some of his friends maintained his influence. In some towns in the South of France the Alliance made an effort to found separatist sections under the direction of Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc, of Lyons, about whom we shall have more to say later. In a word, the international society within the International continued to operate.

The big blow — the attempt to take over the leadership of French Switzerland — was to have been executed by the Alliance at the Chauv-de-Fonds Congress, opened on April 4, 1870.

The battle began over the right to admit the Alliance delegates, which was contested by the delegates of the Geneva Federation and the Chauv-de-Fonds sections.

Although, on their own calculation, the Alliance supporters represented no more than a fifth of the Federation members, they succeeded, thanks to repetition of the Basle manoeuvres, to procure a fictitious majority of one or two votes, a majority

which, in the words of their own organ (see the *Solidarité*⁴⁵ of May 7, 1870), represented no more than 15 sections, while in Geneva alone there were 30! On this vote, the French-Switzerland Congress split into two groups which continued their meetings independently. The Alliance supporters, considering themselves the legal representatives of the whole of the Federation, transferred the federal committee's seat to Chaux-de-Fonds and founded at Neuchâtel their official organ, the *Solidarité*, edited by Citizen Guillaume. This young writer had the special job of decrying the Geneva "factory workers",⁴⁶ those odious "bourgeois", of waging war on the *Égalité*, the Federation newspaper, and of preaching total abstention from politics. The authors of the most important articles on this theme were Bastelica in Marseilles, and Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc in Lyons, the two big pillars of the Alliance.

On their return, the Geneva delegates convened their sections in a general assembly which, despite opposition from Bakunin and his friends, approved their actions at the Chaux-de-Fonds congress. A little later, Bakunin and the more active of his accomplices were expelled from the old Romance federation.

Hardly had the Congress closed when the new Chaux-de-Fonds committee called for the intervention of the General Council in a letter signed by F. Robert, secretary, and by Henri Chevalley, president, who was denounced two months later as a *thief* by the committee's organ the *Solidarité* of July 9. After having examined the case of both sides, the General Council decided on June 28, 1870 to keep the Geneva federal committee in its old functions and invite the new Chaux-de-Fonds federal committee to take a local name. In the face of this decision which foiled its plans, the Chaux-de-Fonds committee denounced the General Council's *authoritarianism*, forgetting that it had been the first to ask for its intervention. The trouble that the persistent attempts of the Chaux-de-Fonds committee to usurp the name of the Romance federal committee caused the Swiss federation obliged the General Council to suspend all official relations with the former.

Louis Bonaparte had just surrendered his army at Sedan.⁴⁷ From all sides arose protests from International members against the war's continuation. In its address of September 9,⁴⁸ the General Council, denouncing Prussia's plans of conquest, indicated the danger of her triumph for the proletarian cause and warned the German workers that they would themselves be the first victims. In England, the General Council organised meetings which condemned the pro-Prussian tendencies of the court. In Germany, the International workers organised demonstrations demanding recognition of the Republic and "an honourable peace for France" ...

Meanwhile, his bellicose nature gave the hot-headed Guillaume (of Neuchâtel) the brilliant idea of publishing an *anonymous* manifesto as a supplement and under

cover of the official newspaper *Solidarité*⁴⁹ calling for the formation of a Swiss volunteer corps to fight the Prussians, something which he had always been doubtlessly prevented from doing by his abstentionist convictions.

Then came the Lyons uprising.⁵⁰ Bakunin rushed there and, supported by Albert Richard, Gaspard Blanc and Bastelica, installed himself on September 28 in the Town Hall, where he refrained from posting a guard, however, lest it would be viewed as a political act. He was driven out in shame by some of the National Guard at the moment when, after a difficult accouchement, his decree on the *abolition of the state* had just seen the light of day.

In October 1870, the General Council, in the absence of its French members, co-opted Citizen Paul Robin, a refugee from Brest, one of the best-known supporters of the Alliance, and, what is more, the instigator of several attacks in the *Égalité* against the General Council where, since that moment, he acted constantly as official correspondent of the Chaux-de-Fonds Committee. On March 14, 1871, he suggested the calling of a private conference of the International to sift out the Swiss trouble. Foreseeing that important events were in the making in Paris, the Council flatly refused. Robin returned to the question on several occasions and even suggested that the Council take a definite decision on the conflict. On July 25, the General Council decided that this affair would be one of the questions for the conference due to be convened in September 1871.

On August 10, the Alliance, hardly eager to see its activities looked into by a Conference, declared itself dissolved as from the 6th of August. But on September 15, it reappeared and requested admission to the Council under the name of the *Atheist Socialist Section*. According to administrative resolution no. V of the Basle Congress, the Council could not admit it without consulting the Geneva federal committee, which was exhausted after its two years of struggle against the sectarian sections. Moreover, the Council had already told the Young Men's Christian Association that the International did not recognise theological sections.

On August 6, the date of the dissolution of the Alliance, the Chaux-de-Fonds federal committee renewed its request to enter into official relations with the Council and said that it would continue to ignore the June 28 resolution and to regard itself, in relation to Geneva, as the Romance federal committee, and "that it was up to the general congress to judge this affair". On September 4, the same committee challenged the conference's competence, even though it had been the first to call for its convocation. The conference could have replied by questioning the competence of the Paris federal committee which the Chaux-de-Fonds committee had requested before the siege of Paris to deliberate on the Swiss conflict.⁵¹ But it confined itself to the General Council

decision of June 28, 1870 (see the motives expounded in the *Égalité* of Geneva, October 21, 1871).

III

The presence in Switzerland of some of the outlawed French who had found refuge there put some life back into the Alliance.

The Geneva members of the International did all they could for the emigrants. They came to their aid right from the beginning, initiated a wide campaign and prevented the Swiss authorities from serving an extradition order on the refugees as demanded by the Versailles government. Several risked the grave danger by going to France to help the refugees to gain the frontier. Imagine the surprise of the Geneva workers when they saw several of the ringleaders such as B. Malon^a immediately come to an understanding with the Alliance people and with the help of N. Zhukovsky, ex-Secretary of the Alliance, try to found at Geneva, outside of the Romance federation, the new “Socialist Revolutionary Propaganda and Action Section”.⁵² In the first article of its rules it

... pledges allegiance to the General Rules of the International Working Men’s Association, *while reserving for itself the complete freedom of action* and initiative to which it is entitled as a logical consequence of the principle of autonomy and federation recognised by the rules and *congresses* of the Association.

In other words, it reserves for itself full freedom to continue the work of the Alliance.

In a letter from Malon, of October 20, 1871, this new section for the third time asked the General Council for admission into the International. Conforming to resolution V of the Basle Congress, the Council consulted the Geneva federal committee which vigorously protested against the Council recognising this new “seedbed of

^a Do the friends of B. Malon, who have been advertising him in a stereotyped way for the last three months as *the founder of the International*, who have called his book the *only independent work on the Commune*, know the attitude taken by this assistant of the mayor of Batignolles on the eve of the February elections? At that time, B. Malon, who did not yet foresee the Commune and saw nothing more than the success of his election to the Assembly, plotted to get himself put on the list of the four committees as a member of the International. To these ends he insolently denied the existence of the Paris Federal Council and submitted to the committees the list of a section founded by himself at Batignolles as coming from the entire Association. Later, on March 19, he insulted in a public document the leaders of the great revolution accomplished on the eve. Today, this anarchist from top to toe prints or has printed what he was saying a year ago to the four committees: I am the International! B. Malon has hit on a way of parodying Louis XIV and Perron the chocolate manufacturer at one and the same time. It was Perron who declared that his chocolate was the *only* edible chocolate!

intrigues and dissensions”. The Council acted, in fact, in a rather “authoritarian” manner so as not to bind the whole Federation to the will of B. Malon and N. Zhukovsky, the Alliance’s ex-secretary.

The *Solidarité* having gone out of business, the new Alliance supporters founded the *Révolution Sociale*⁵³ under the supreme management of Madame André Léo who had just said at the Lausanne Peace Congress that

Raoul Rigault and Ferré were the two sinister figures of the Commune who, up till then (up till the execution of the hostages), had not stopped calling for bloody measures, albeit in vain.

From its very first issue, the newspaper hastened to put itself on the same level as the *Figaro*, *Gaulois*, *Paris-Journal*⁵⁴ and other disreputable sheets which have been throwing mud at the General Council. It thought the moment opportune to fan the flames of national hatred, even within the International. It called the General Council a German Committee led by a Bismarckian brain.^a

After having definitely established that certain General Council members could not boast of being “*Gauls first and foremost*” the *Révolution Sociale* could find nothing better than to take up the second slogan put in circulation by the European police and to denounce the Council’s *authoritarianism*.

What, then, were the facts on which this childish rubbish rested? The General Council had let the Alliance die a natural death and, in accord with the Geneva federal committee, had prevented it from being resurrected. Moreover, it had suggested to the Chaux-de-Fonds committee to take a name which would permit it to live in peace with the great majority of International members in French Switzerland.

Apart from these “authoritarian” acts, what use did the General Council make, between October 1869 and October 1871, of the fairly extensive powers that the Basle Congress had conferred upon it?

1) On February 8, 1870, the Paris “Society of Positivist Proletarians” applied to the General Council for admission. The Council replied that the principles of the positivists, the part of the society’s special rules concerning capital, were in flagrant contradiction with the preamble of the General Rules; that the society had therefore to drop them and join the International not as “positivists” but as “proletarians”, while remaining free to reconcile their theoretical ideas with the Association’s general principles. Realising the justness of this decision, the section joined the International.

^a Here is the national composition of the Council: 20 Englishmen, 15 French, seven Germans (of whom five are foundation members of the International), two Swiss, two Hungarians, one Pole, one Belgian, one Irishman, one Dane and one Italian.

2) At Lyons, there was a split between the 1865 section and a recently-formed section in which, amidst honest workers, the Alliance was represented by Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc. As had been done in similar cases, the judgement of a court of arbitration, formed in Switzerland, was turned down. On February 15, 1870, the recently-formed section, besides requesting the General Council to resolve the conflict by virtue of resolution VII of the Basle Congress, sent it a ready-made resolution excluding and branding the members of the 1865 section, which was to be signed and sent back by *return mail*. The Council condemned this unprecedented procedure and demanded that the necessary documents be produced. In reply to the same request, the 1865 section said that the accusatory documents against Albert Richard, which had been submitted to the court of arbitration, were in Bakunin's possession and that he refused to give them up. Consequently, it could not completely satisfy the desires of the General Council. The Council's decision on the affair, dated March 8, met with no objection from either side.

3) The French branch in London, which had admitted people of a more than dubious character, had been gradually transformed into a concern virtually controlled by Mr. Félix Pyat. He used it to organise damaging demonstrations calling for the assassination of Louis Bonaparte, etc., and to spread his absurd manifestos in France under cover of the International. The General Council confined itself to declaring in the Association's organs that Mr. Pyat was not a member of the International and it could not be responsible for his actions. The French branch then declared that it no longer recognised either the General Council or the Congresses; it plastered the walls of London with bills proclaiming that with the exception of itself the International was an anti-revolutionary society. The arrest of French members of the International on the eve of the plebiscite,⁵⁵ on the pretext of a conspiracy, plotted in reality by the police and to which Pyat's manifestos gave an air of credibility, forced the General Council to publish in the *Marseillaise*⁵⁶ and *Réveil*⁵⁷ its resolution of May 10, 1870, declaring that the so-called French branch had not belonged to the International for over two years, and that its agitation was the work of police agents. The need for this *démarche* was proved by the declaration of the Paris Federal Committee, published in the same newspapers, and by that of the Paris members of the International during their trial, both declarations referring to the Council's resolution. The French branch disappeared at the outbreak of the war, but, like the Alliance in Switzerland, it was to reappear in London with new allies and under other names.

During the last days of the conference, a "French Section of 1871", about 35 members strong, was formed in London among the Commune refugees. The first "authoritarian" act of the General Council was to publicly denounce the secretary of this section,

Gustave Durand, as a French police spy. The documents in our possession prove the intention of the police to assist Durand, firstly, to attend the Conference and then to secure for him membership in the General Council. Since the rules of the new section directed its members “not to accept any delegation to the General Council other than from its section”, Citizens Theisz and Bastelica withdrew from the Council.

On October 17, the section delegated to the Council two of its members, holding imperative mandates; one was none other than Mr. Chautard, ex-member of the artillery committee. The Council refused to admit them prior to an examination of the rules of the “1871 section”.^a Suffice it to recall here the principal points of the debate to which these rules gave rise. Article 2 states:

To be admitted as member of the section, a person must provide information as to his means of sustenance, present guarantees of morality, etc.

In its resolution of October 17, 1871, the Council proposed deleting the words “*provide information as to his means of sustenance*”. “In dubious cases”, said the Council, “a section may well take information about means of sustenance as ‘guarantee of morality’, while in other cases, like those of the refugees, workers on strike, etc., absence of means of sustenance may well be a guarantee of morality. But to ask candidates to provide information as to their means of sustenance as a general condition to be admitted to the International, would be a bourgeois innovation contrary to the spirit and letter of the General Rules.” The section replied:

The General Rules make the sections responsible for the morality of their members and, as a consequence, recognise their right to demand such guarantees *as they deem necessary*.

To this the General Council replied, November 7:

On this argument, a section of the International founded by *teetotallers* could include in its own rules this type of article: To be admitted as member of the section, a person must swear to abstain from all alcoholic drinks. In other words, the most absurd and most incongruous conditions of admittance into the International could be imposed by sections’ rules, always on the pretext that they intend, in this way, to be assured of the morality of their members. “The means of sustenance of strikers”, adds the French Section of 1871, “consist of the strike fund”. This might be answered by saying, first, that this fund is often fictitious ... Moreover, official English questionnaires have proved that the majority of English workers ... is forced — by strikes or unemployment,

^a A little later, this Chautard whom they had wanted to put on the General Council was expelled from the section as an agent of Thiers’s police. He was accused by the same people who had judged him worthy among all others of representing them on the General Council.

by insufficient wages or terms of payment, as well as many other causes — to resort incessantly to pawnshops or to *borrowing money*. These are means of sustenance about which one cannot demand information without interfering in an unqualified manner in a person's private life. There are thus two alternatives: either the section is only to seek guarantees of morality through means of sustenance, in which case the General Council's proposal serves the purpose ... Or the section, in article 2 of its rules intentionally says that the members have to provide information as to their means of sustenance as a condition of admission, *over and above* the guarantees of morality, in which case the Council affirms that it is a bourgeois innovation, contrary to the letter and spirit of the General Rules.

Article 11 of their rules states:

One or several delegates shall be sent to the General Council.

The Council asked for this article to be deleted "because the International's General Rules do not recognise any right of the sections to send delegates to the General Council." "The General Rules", it added, "recognise only two ways of election for General Council members: either their election by the congress, or their co-option by the General Council ..."

It is quite true that the different sections existing in London had been invited to send delegates to the General Council which, so as not to violate the General Rules, has always proceeded in the following manner: it has first determined the number of delegates to be sent by each section, reserving itself the right to accept or refuse them depending on whether it considered them able to fulfil the general functions assigned to them. These delegates became members of the General Council not by virtue of their nomination by their sections, but by virtue of the right that the rules accord the Council to co-opt new members. Having operated up to the decision taken by the last conference both as the International Association's General Council and as the Central Council for England, the London council thought it expedient to admit, besides the members that it co-opted directly, also members nominated initially by their respective sections. It would be a serious mistake to identify the General Council's electoral procedure with that of the Paris federal council which was not even a national Council nominated by a national congress like, for example, the Brussels federal council or that of Madrid. The Paris federal council was only a delegation of the Paris sections ... The General Council's electoral procedure is defined in the General Rules ... and its members would not know how to accept any other imperative mandate than that of the rules and general regulations ... If we take into consideration the article that precedes it, article 11 means nothing else but a complete change of the General Council's composition, turning it, contrary to article 3 of the General Rules, into a delegation of

the London sections, in which the influence of local groups would be substituted for that of the whole International Working Men's Association. Lastly, the General Council, whose first duty is to carry out the Congress resolutions (see article 1 of the Geneva Congress's administrative regulations), said that it "considers that the ideas expressed by the French Section of 1871 about a radical change to be made in the articles of the General Rules concerning the constitution of the General Council have no bearing on the question ..."

Moreover, the Council declared that it would admit two delegates from the section on the same conditions as those of the other London sections.

The "1871 section", far from being satisfied with this reply, published on December 14 a "declaration" signed by all its members, including the new secretary who was shortly expelled as a scoundrel from the refugee society. According to this declaration, the General Council, by refusing to usurp the legislative functions, was accused of "a gross distortion of the social idea".

Here are some samples of the good faith displayed in the drawing up of this document.

The London Conference approved the conduct of the German workers during the war.⁵⁸ It was apparent that this resolution, proposed by a Swiss delegate^a seconded by a Belgian delegate and approved unanimously, only referred to the German members of the International who paid and are still paying for their anti-chauvinist behaviour during the war by imprisonment. Furthermore, in order to avoid any possible misinterpretation, the Secretary of the General Council for France^b had just explained the true sense of the resolution in a letter published by the journals *Qui Vive!*, *Constitution*, *Radical*, *Emancipation*, *Europe*, etc. Nonetheless, eight days later, on November 20, 1871, 15 members of the "French Section of 1871" inserted in *Qui Vive!* a "protest" full of abuse against the German workers and denouncing the Conference resolution as irrefutable proof of the General Council's "pan-Germanic idea". On the other hand, the entire feudal, liberal and police press of Germany seized avidly upon this incident to demonstrate to the German workers how their international dreams had come to naught. In the end the November 20 protest was endorsed by the entire 1871 section in its December 14 declaration.

To show "the dangerous slope of authoritarianism down which the General Council was slipping" the declaration cited "the publication by the very same *General Council* of an *official* edition of the General Rules as *revised by it*".

^a Nikolai Utin — *Ed.*

^b Auguste Serraillier — *Ed.*

One glance at the new edition of the rules is enough to see that each new article has, in the appendix, reference to the original sources establishing its authenticity! As for the words “*official* edition”, the first congress of the International decided that “the *official* and *obligatory* text of the rules and regulations would be published by the General Council” (see “Working Congress of the International Working Men’s Association held at Geneva from September 3 to 8, 1866, page 27, note”).

Naturally enough, the 1871 section was in continuous contact with the dissidents of Geneva and Neuchâtel. One Chalain, a member who had shown more energy in attacking the General Council than he had ever shown in defending the Commune, was unexpectedly rehabilitated by B. Malon, who had earlier levelled very grave charges against him in a letter to a Council member. The “French Section of 1871”, however, had scarcely launched its declaration when civil war exploded in its ranks. First Theisz, Avrial and Camélinat withdrew. Thereafter the section broke up into several small groups, one of which was led by Mr. Pierre Vésinier, expelled by the General Council for his slander against Varlin and others, and then expelled from the International by the Belgian commission appointed by the Brussels Congress of 1868. Another of these groups was founded by B. Landeck who had been relieved by the sudden flight of police prefect Pietri, on September 4, of his obligation,

scrupulously fulfilled, not to engage any more in political affairs, nor in the International in France! (See *Third Trial of the International Working Men’s Association in Paris*, 1870, p. 4.)

On the other hand, the mass of French refugees in London have formed a section which is in complete harmony with the General Council.

IV

The men of the Alliance, hidden behind the Neuchâtel federal committee and determined to make another effort on a vaster scale to disorganise the International, convened a congress of their sections at Sonvillier on November 12, 1871. Back in July two letters from *maître* Guillaume to his friend Robin had threatened the General Council with an identical campaign if it did not agree to recognise them to be in the right “*vis-à-vis* the Geneva bandits”.

The Sonvillier Congress was composed of 16 delegates claiming to represent nine sections in all, including the new “Socialist Revolutionary Propaganda and Action Section” of Geneva.

The Sixteen made their debut by publishing the anarchist decree declaring the Romance federation dissolved, and the latter retaliated by restoring to the Alliance members their “autonomy” by driving them out of all sections. However, the Council

had to recognise that a stroke of good sense brought them to accept the name of the Jura federation that the London Conference had given them.

The Congress of Sixteen then proceeded to “reorganise” the International by attacking the conference and the General Council in a “Circular to All Federations of the International Working Men’s Association”.

Those responsible for the circular accused the General Council primarily of having called in 1871 a conference instead of a congress. The preceding explanations show that these attacks were made directly against the International as a whole, which had unanimously agreed to convene a conference at which, incidentally, the Alliance was conveniently represented by Citizens Robin and Bastelica.

The General Council has had its delegates at every congress; at the Basle Congress, for example, it had six. The Sixteen claim that

the majority of the conference was fraudulently assured in advance by the admission of six General Council delegates with deciding vote.

In actual fact, among the General Council delegates at the conference, the French refugees were none other than the representatives of the Paris Commune, while its English and Swiss members could only take part in the sessions on rare occasions, as is attested to by the minutes which will be submitted before the next congress. One Council delegate had a mandate from a national federation. According to a letter addressed to the conference, the mandate of another was withheld because of the news of his death in the papers.^a That left one delegate. Thus, the Belgians alone outnumbered the Council by 6 to 1.

The international police, who in the person of Gustave Durand were kept out, complained bitterly about the violation of the General Rules by the convening of a “secret” conference. They were not conversant enough with our general regulations to know that the administrative sittings of the congress *have to be in private*.

Their complaints, nonetheless, found a sympathetic echo with the Sonvillier Sixteen who cried out:

And on top of it all, a decision of this conference declares that the General Council will itself fix the time and place of the next congress or of the *conference to replace it*; thus, we are threatened with the suppression of the general congresses, these great public sessions of the International.

The Sixteen refused to see that this decision was only affirmed before the various governments to show that, despite all the repressive measures, the International was firmly resolved to hold its general meetings one way or another.

^a This refers to Marx. — *Ed.*

At the general assembly of the Geneva sections, held on December 2, 1871, which gave a bad reception to Citizens Malon and Lefrançais, the latter put forward a proposal confirming the decrees passed by the Sonvillier Sixteen and censuring the General Council, as well as disavowing the conference. The conference had resolved that “the conference resolutions which are not due to be published shall be communicated to the *federal councils of the various countries* by the corresponding secretaries of the *General Council*”.

This resolution, which was in complete conformity with the General Rules and regulations, was fraudulently revised by B. Malon and his friends to read as follows:

Some conference resolutions *shall* be communicated *only* to the federal councils *and* to the corresponding secretaries.

They further accused the General Council of having “violated *the principle of sincerity*” in refusing to hand over to the police, by means of “*publicity*”, the resolutions which were aimed exclusively at reorganising the International in the countries where it is proscribed.

Citizens Malon and Lefrançais complain further that:

the conference had aimed a blow at freedom of thought and its expression ... in conferring upon the General Council the right to denounce and disavow any publicity organ of the sections or federations that discussed either the principles on which the Association rests, or the respective interests of the sections and federations, or finally the general interests of the Association as a whole. (See the *Égalité* of October 21.)

What, then, had the *Égalité* of October 21 published? It had published a resolution in which the conference “gives warning that henceforth the General Council will be bound to publicly denounce and disavow all newspapers calling themselves organs of the International which, following the precedents of the *Progrès* and the *Solidarité*, should discuss in their columns, before the middle-class public, questions exclusively reserved for the local or federal committees and the General Council, or for the private and administrative sittings of the federal or general congresses.”

To appreciate properly the spiteful lamentation of B. Malon we must bear in mind that this resolution puts an end once and for all to the attempts of some journalists who wished to substitute themselves for the main committees of the International and to play therein the role that the journalists’ Bohemia is playing in the bourgeois world. As a result of one such attempt the Geneva Federal Committee had seen some members of the Alliance edit the *Égalité*, the official organ of the Romance federation, in a manner completely hostile to the latter.

Incidentally, the General Council had no need of the London Conference to “publicly denounce and disavow” the improper use of the press, for the Basle Congress had

decided (resolution II) that: “All newspapers countenancing attacks on the Association must be immediately sent by the sections to the General Council.”

It is evident [says the Romance Federal Committee in its December 20, 1871 declaration (*Égalité*, December 24)] that this article was adopted not in order that the General Council might keep in its files newspapers which attack the Association, but to enable it to reply, and to nullify in case of need, the pernicious effect of slander and malevolent denigrations. It is also evident that this article refers in general to all newspapers, and that if we do not want to leave the attacks of the bourgeois papers without retaliation, it is all the more necessary to disavow, through our main representative body, i.e., the General Council, those newspapers whose attacks against us are made under cover of the name of our Association.

Let us note, in passing, that the *Times*, that Leviathan of the capitalist press, the *Progrès* (of Lyons), a publication of the liberal bourgeoisie, and the *Journal de Genève*,⁵⁹ an ultra-reactionary paper, have brought the same charges against the Conference and used virtually the same terms as Citizens Malon and Lefrançais.

After having challenged the convocation of the Conference and, later, its composition and its allegedly secret character, the Sixteen’s circular challenged the Conference resolutions.

Stating first that the Basle Congress had surrendered its rights having authorised the General Council to grant or refuse admission to, or to suspend, the sections of the International,

it accuses the Conference, farther on, of the following sin:

This conference has ... taken resolutions ... which tend to turn the International, which is a free federation of autonomous sections, into a hierarchical and authoritarian organisation of disciplined sections placed entirely under the control of a General Council which may, at will, refuse their admission or suspend their activity!!

Still farther on, the circular once more takes up the question of the Basle Congress which had allegedly “distorted the nature of the General Council’s functions”.

The contradictions contained in the circular of the Sixteen may be summed up as follows: the 1871 conference is responsible for the resolutions of the 1869 Basle Congress, and the General Council is guilty of having observed the Rules which require it to carry out congress resolutions.

Actually, however, the real reason for all these attacks against the conference is of a more profound nature. In the first place, it thwarted, by its resolutions, the intrigues of the *Alliance* men in Switzerland. In the second place, the promoters of the Alliance had, in Italy, Spain and part of Switzerland and Belgium, created and upheld with amazing persistence a calculated confusion between *the program of the International*

Working Men's Association and Bakunin's makeshift program.

The conference drew attention to this deliberate misunderstanding in its two resolutions on proletarian policy and sectarian sections. The motivation of the first resolution, which makes short work of the political abstention preached by Bakunin's program, is given fully in its recitals, which are based on the General Rules, the Lausanne Congress resolution and other precedents.^a

We now pass on to the sectarian sections:

The first phase of the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie is marked by a sectarian movement. That is logical at a time when the proletariat has not yet developed sufficiently to act as a class. Certain thinkers criticise social antagonisms and suggest fantastic solutions thereof, which the mass of workers is left to accept, preach and put into practice. The sects formed by these initiators are abstentionist by their very nature, i.e., alien to all real action, politics, strikes, coalitions, or, in a word, to any united movement. The mass of the proletariat always remains indifferent or even hostile to their propaganda. The Paris and Lyons workers did not want the Saint-Simonians, the Fourierists, the Icarians, any more than the Chartists and the English trades unionists wanted the Owenists. These sects act as levers of the movement in the beginning, but become an obstruction as soon as the movement outgrows them; after which they become reactionary. Witness the sects in France and England, and lately the Lassalleans in Germany who, after having hindered the proletariat's organisation for several years, ended by becoming simple instruments of the police. To sum up, we have here the infancy of the proletarian movement, just as astrology and alchemy are the infancy of science. If the International were to be founded it was necessary that the proletariat would go through this phase.

Contrary to the sectarian organisations with their vagaries and rivalries, the International is a genuine and militant organisation of the proletarian class of all countries united in their common struggle against the capitalists and the landowners, against their class power organised in the state. The International's rules, therefore, speak of only simple "workers' societies", all following the same goal and accepting the same program, which presents a general outline of the proletarian movement, while

^a The Conference resolution on *political action of the working class* reads as follows:

"Considering the following passage of 'the preamble to the Rules: 'The economical emancipation of the working classes is the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate *as a means*';

"That the Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association (1864) states:

"The lords of land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economical monopolies. So far from promoting, they will

leaving its theoretical elaboration to be guided by the needs of the practical struggle and the exchange of ideas in the sections, unrestrictedly admitting all shades of socialist convictions in their organs and congresses.

Just as in every new historical phase old mistakes reappear momentarily only to disappear forthwith, so within the International there followed a resurrection of sectarian sections, though in a less obvious form.

The Alliance, while considering the resurrection of the sects a great step forward, is in itself conclusive proof that their time is over: for, if initially they contained elements of progress, the program of the Alliance, in tow of a “Mohammed without the Koran”, is nothing but a heap of pompously worded ideas long since dead and capable only of frightening bourgeois idiots or serving as evidence to be used by the Bonapartist or other prosecutors against members of the International.^a

The Conference, at which all shades of socialism were represented, unanimously acclaimed the resolution against sectarian sections, fully convinced that this resolution,

continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labour ... To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes’;

“That the Congress of Lausanne (1867) has passed this resolution: ‘The social emancipation of the workmen is inseparable from their political emancipation’;

“That the declaration of the General Council relative to the pretended plot of the French Internationals on the eve of the plebiscite (1870) says: ‘Certainly by the tenor of our statutes, all our branches in England, on the Continent, and in America have the special mission not only to serve as centres for the militant organisation of the working class, but also to support, in their respective countries, every political movement tending towards the accomplishment of our ultimate end — the economical emancipation of the working class’;

“That false translations of the original Statutes have given rise to various interpretations which were mischievous to the development and action of the International Working Men’s Association;

“In presence of an unbridled reaction which violently crushes every effort at emancipation on the part of the working men, and pretends to maintain by brute force the distinction of classes and the political domination of the propertied classes resulting from it;

“Considering, that against this collective power of the propertied classes the working class cannot act, as a class, except by constituting itself into a political party, distinct from, and opposed to, all old parties formed by the propertied classes;

“That this constitution of the working class into a political party is indispensable in order to ensure the triumph of the social revolution and its ultimate end — the abolition of classes;

“That the combination of forces which the working class has already effected by its economical struggles ought at the same time to serve as a lever for its struggles against the political power of landlords and capitalists —

“The Conference recalls to the members of the *International*:

“That in the militant state of the working class, its economical movement and its political action are indissolubly united.”

stressing once again the International's true character, would mark a new stage of its development. The Alliance supporters, whom this resolution dealt a fatal blow, construed it only as the General Council's victory over the International, through which, as their circular pointed out, the General Council assured "the domination of the special program" of some of its members, "their personal doctrine", "the orthodox doctrine", "the official theory, and the sole permissible within the Association". Incidentally, this was not the fault of those few members, but the necessary consequence, "the corrupting effect", of the fact that they were members of the General Council, for

It is absolutely impossible for a person who has power (!) over his fellows to remain a moral person. The General Council is becoming a hotbed of intrigue.

According to the opinion of the Sixteen, the General Rules of the International should be censured for the grave mistake of authorising the General Council to co-opt new members. Thus authorised, they claim,

the Council could, whenever it saw fit, co-opt a group numerous enough to completely change the nature of its majority and its tendencies.

They seem to think that the mere fact of belonging to the General Council is sufficient to destroy not only a person's *morality*, but also his common sense. How else can we suppose that a majority will transform itself into a minority by voluntary co-options?

At any rate, the Sixteen themselves do not appear to be very sure of all this, for they complain further on that the General Council has been

composed for five years running of *the same persons, continually re-elected*, and immediately afterwards they repeat:

most of them are not regular mandatories, *not having been elected by a Congress*.

The fact is that the body of the General Council is constantly changing, though some of the founding members remain, as in the federal councils in Belgium, French Switzerland, etc.

The General Council must fulfil three essential conditions, if it is to carry out its mandate. In the first place, it must have a numerically adequate membership to carry on its diverse functions; secondly, a membership of "working men belonging to the different nations represented in the International Association"; and, lastly, labourers must be the predominant element therein. Since the exigencies of the worker's job

^a Recent police publications on the *International*, including the Jules Favre circular to foreign powers and the report of Sacase, a deputy in the Rural Assembly, on the Dufaure project, are full of quotations from the Alliance's pompous manifestos.⁶⁰ The phraseology of these sectarians, whose radicalism is wholly restricted to verbiage, is extremely useful for promoting the aims of the reactionaries.

incessantly cause changes in the membership of the General Council, how can it fulfil all these indispensable conditions without the right of co-option? The Council nonetheless considers a more precise definition of this right necessary, as it indicated at the recent conference.

The re-election of the General Council's original membership, at successive congresses, at which England was definitely under-represented, would seem to prove that it has done its duty within the limits of the means at its disposal. The Sixteen, on the contrary, view this only as a proof of the "blind confidence of the congresses" carried at Basle to the point of

a sort of voluntary abdication in favour of the General Council.

In their opinion, the Council's "normal role" should be "that of a simple correspondence and statistical bureau". They justify this definition by adducing several articles extracted from an incorrect translation of the Rules.

Contrary to the rules of all bourgeois societies, the International's General Rules touch only lightly on its administrative organisation. They leave its development to practice, and its regularisation to future congresses. Nevertheless, inasmuch as only the unity and joint action of the sections of the various countries could give them a genuinely international character, the rules pay more attention to the Council than to the other bodies of the organisation.

Article 5 of the original rules states: "The General Council shall form an *international agency* between the different national and local groups", and proceeds to give some examples of the manner in which it is to function. Among these examples is a request to the Council to see that "when immediate practical steps should be needed, as, for instance, in case of international quarrels, the action of the associated societies be simultaneous and uniform".

The article continues:

Whenever it seems opportune, the General Council shall take the initiative of proposals to be laid before the different national or local societies.

In addition, the rules define the Council's role in convening and arranging congresses, and charge it with the preparation of certain reports to be submitted thereto. In the original rules so little distinction is made between the independent action of various groups and unity of action of the Association as a whole, that article 6 states:

Since the success of the working men's movement in each country cannot be secured but by the power of union and combination, while, on the other hand, the activity of the General Council will be more effective ... the members of the International Association shall use their utmost efforts to combine the disconnected working men's societies of their respective countries into national bodies, represented by central

national organs.

The first administrative resolution of the Geneva Congress (article I) says:

The General Council is *commissioned to carry* the resolutions of the congress into effect.

This resolution legalised the position that the General Council has held ever since its origin: that of the Association's *executive delegation*. It would be difficult to carry out orders without enjoying moral "authority" in the absence of any other "freely recognised authority". The Geneva Congress at the same time charged the General Council with publishing "the official and obligatory text of the rules".

The same congress resolved (administrative resolution of Geneva, article 14):

Every section has the right to draw up its own rules and regulations adapted to local conditions and to the laws of its own country, but they must not contain anything contrary to the General Rules and regulations.

Let us note, first of all, that there is not the least allusion either to any special declarations of principles, or to any special tasks which this or that section should set itself apart from the common goal pursued by all the groups of the International. The issue simply concerns the right of sections to adapt the General Rules and regulations "to local conditions and to the laws of their own country".

In the second place, who is to establish whether or not the particular rules conform to the General Rules? Evidently, if there would be no "authority" charged with this function, the resolution would be null and void. Not only could police or hostile sections be formed, but also the intrusion of declassed sectarians and bourgeois philanthropists into the Association could warp its character and, by force of numbers at congresses, crush the workers.

Since their origin, the national and local federations have exercised in their respective countries the right to admit or reject new sections, according to whether or not their rules conformed to the General Rules. The exercise of the same function by the General Council is provided for in article 6 of the General Rules, which allows *local independent societies*, i.e., societies formed outside the federal body in the country concerned, the right to establish direct contacts with the General Council. The *Alliance* did not hesitate to exercise this right in order to fulfil the conditions set for the admission of delegates to the Basle Congress.

Article 6 of the rules deals further with legal obstacles to the formation of national federations in certain countries where, consequently, the General Council is asked to function as a federal council (see *Minutes of the Lausanne Congress*, etc., 1867, p. 13⁶¹).

Since the fall of the Commune, these legal obstacles have been multiplying in the various countries, making action by the General Council therein, designed to keep

doubtful elements out of the Association, more necessary than ever. That is why the French committees recently demanded the General Council's intervention to rid themselves of informers, and why, in another great country,^a members of the International requested it not to recognise any section which has not been formed by its direct mandates or by themselves. Their request was motivated by the necessity of ridding themselves of *agents-provocateurs*, whose burning zeal manifested itself in the rapid formation of sections of unparalleled radicalism. On the other hand, the so-called anti-authoritarian sections do not hesitate to appeal to the Council the moment a conflict arises in their midst, nor even to ask it to deal severely with their adversaries, as in the case of the Lyons conflict. More recently, since the conference, the Turin "Workers' Federation" decided to declare itself a section of the International. As the result of the split that followed, the minority formed the Emancipation of the Proletariat Society.⁶² It joined the International and began by passing a resolution in favour of the Jura people. Its newspaper, *Il Proletario*, is filled with outbursts against all authoritarianism. When sending in the society's subscriptions, the secretary^b warned the General Council that the old federation would probably also send its subscriptions. Then he continues:

As you will have read in the *Proletario*, the Emancipation of the Proletariat Society ... has declared ... its rejection of all solidarity with the bourgeoisie, who, under the mask of workers, are organising the Workers' Federation, and begs the Council to communicate this resolution to all sections and to refuse the 10 centimes in subscriptions in the event of their being sent.^c

Like all the International's groups, the General Council is required to carry on propaganda. This it has accomplished through its manifestos and its agents, who laid the basis for the first organisations of the International in North America, in Germany and in many French towns.

Another function of the General Council is to aid strikers and organise their support by the entire International (see General Council reports to the various congresses). The following fact, *inter alia*, indicates the importance of its intervention in the strike

^a Austria — *Ed.*

^b Carlo Terzaghi — *Ed.*

^c At this time these were the *apparent* ideas of the Emancipation of the Proletariat Society, represented by its corresponding secretary, a friend of Bakunin. Actually, however, this section's tendencies were quite different. After expelling this double-dealing traitor for embezzlement and for his friendly relations with the Turin police chief, the society set forth its explanations, which cleared up all misunderstanding between it and the General Council.

movement. The Resistance Society of the English Foundrymen is in itself an international trades union with branches in other countries, notably in the United States. Nonetheless, during a strike of American foundrymen, the latter found it necessary to invoke the intercession of the General Council to prevent English foundrymen being brought into America.

The growth of the International obliged the General Council and all federal councils to assume the role of arbiter.

The Brussels Congress resolved that:

The federal councils are obliged to send a report every quarter to the General Council on their *administration* and *financial state* (administrative resolution, no. 3).

Lastly, the Basle Congress, which provokes the bilious wrath of the Sixteen, occupied itself solely with regulating the administrative relations engendered by the Association's continuing development. If it extended unduly the limits of the General Council's powers, whose fault was it if not that of Bakunin, Schwitzguebel, F. Robert, Guillaume and other delegates of the Alliance, who were so anxious to achieve just that? Or will they accuse themselves of "blind confidence" in the London General Council?

Here are two resolutions of the Basle Congress:

No. IV. Each new section or society which is formed and wishes to be part of the International must immediately announce its adhesion to the General Council ...

[and] No. V. The General Council has the right to admit or reject the affiliation of any new society or group, subject to appeal at the next congress.

As for local independent societies formed outside the federal body, these articles only confirm the practice observed since the International's origin, the maintaining of which is a matter of life or death for the Association. But extending this practice and applying it indiscriminately to every section or society in the process of formation is going too far. These articles do authorise the General Council to intervene in the internal affairs of the federations; but they have never been applied in this sense by the General Council. It defies the Sixteen to cite a single case where it has intervened in the affairs of new sections desirous of affiliating themselves with existing groups or federations.

The resolutions cited above refer to sections in the process of formation, while the resolutions given below refer to sections already recognised:

VI. The General Council has equally the right to suspend until the next congress any section of the International.

VII. When conflicts arise between the societies or branches of a national group, or between groups of different nationalities, the General Council shall have the right to decide the conflict, subject to appeal at the next congress which will decide definitely.

These two articles are necessary for extreme cases, although up to the present the

General Council has never had recourse to them. The review presented above shows that the Council has never suspended any section and, in cases of conflict, has only acted as arbiter at the request of the two parties.

We arrive, at last, at a function imposed on the General Council by the needs of the struggle. However shocking this may be for supporters of the Alliance, it is the very persistence of the attacks to which the General Council is subjected by all the enemies of the proletarian movement that has placed it in the vanguard of the defenders of the International Working Men's Association.

V

Having dealt with the International, such as it is, the Sixteen proceed to tell us what it should be.

Firstly, the General Council should be nominally a simple correspondence and statistical bureau. Once it has been relieved of its administrative functions, its correspondence would be concerned only with reproducing the information already published in the Association's newspapers. The correspondence bureau would thus become needless. As for statistics, that function is possible only if a strong organisation, and especially, as the original rules expressly say, a common direction are provided. Since all that smacks very much of "authoritarianism", however, there might perhaps be a bureau, but certainly no statistics. In a word, the General Council would disappear. The federal councils, the local committees and other "authoritarian" centres would go by the same token. Only the autonomous sections would remain.

What, one may ask, will be the purpose of these "autonomous sections", freely federated and happily rid of all superior bodies, "even of the superior body elected and constituted by the workers"?

Here it becomes necessary to supplement the circular by the report of the Jura federal committee submitted to the congress of the Sixteen.

In order to make the working class the real representative of humanity's new interests [its organisation must be] guided by the idea that will triumph. *To evolve* this idea from the needs of our epoch, from mankind's vital aspirations, by a consistent study of the phenomena of social life, to then carry this idea to our workers' organisations — such should be our aim, etc. [Lastly, there must be created] amidst our working population a real revolutionary socialist *school*.

Thus, the autonomous workers' sections are in a trice converted into *schools*, of which these gentlemen of the Alliance will be the masters. They *evolve the idea* by "consistent studies" which leave no trace behind. They then "carry this idea to our workers' organisations". To them, the working class is so much raw material, a chaos into which

they must breathe their Holy Spirit before it acquires a shape.

All of which is but a paraphrase of the old Alliance program beginning with these words:

The socialist minority of the League of Peace and Freedom, having separated itself from the League [proposes to found] a new Alliance of Socialist Democracy ... having a *special mission* to study political and philosophical questions ...

This is the *idea* that is being “*evolved*” therefrom!

Such an enterprise ... would provide sincere socialist democrats of Europe and America with the means of being understood and of affirming their ideas.^a

That is how, on its own admission, the minority of a bourgeois society slipped into the International shortly before the Basle Congress with the exclusive aim of utilising it *as a means* for posing before the working masses as a hierarchy of a secret science that may be expounded in four phrases and whose culminating point is “the economic and social equality of the classes”.

Apart from this “theoretical mission”, the new organisation proposed for the International also has its practical aspect.

The future society [says the circular of the Sixteen] should be nothing but a universalisation of the organisation which the International will establish for itself. We must therefore take care to bring this organisation as near as possible to our ideal.

How could one expect an egalitarian and free society to grow out of an authoritarian organisation? That is impossible. The International, embryo of the future human society, must be, from now on, the faithful image of our principles of liberty and federation.

In other words, just as the medieval convents presented an image of celestial life, so the International must be the image of the New Jerusalem, whose embryo the Alliance bears in its womb. The Paris Communards would not have failed if they had understood that the Commune was “the embryo of the future human society” and had cast away all discipline and all arms, that is, the things which must disappear when there are no more wars!

^a The gentlemen of the Alliance, who continue to reproach the General Council for calling a private conference at a time when the convocation of a congress would be the height of treachery or folly, these absolute proponents of clamour and publicity organised within the International, in contempt of our rules, a real secret society directed against the International itself with the aim of bringing its sections, unbeknown to them, under the sacerdotal direction of Bakunin.

The General Council intends to demand at the next congress an investigation of this secret organisation and its promoters in certain countries, such as Spain, for example.

Bakunin, however, the better to establish that despite their “consistent studies” the Sixteen did not hatch this pretty project of disorganisation and disarmament in the International when it was fighting for its existence, has just published the original text of that project in his report on the International’s organisation (see *Almanach du Peuple pour 1872*, Genève).

VI

Now turn to the report presented by the Jura committee at the congress of the Sixteen.

“A perusal of the report”, says their official organ, *Révolution Sociale* (November 16), “will give the *exact measure* of the devotion and practical intelligence that we can expect from the Jura federation members.”

It begins by attributing to “these terrible events” — the Franco-Prussian war and the Civil War in France — a “somewhat *demoralising* influence ... on the situation within the International’s sections.”

If, in fact, the Franco-Prussian war could not but lead to the *disorganisation* of the sections because it drew great numbers of workers into the two armies, it is no less true that the fall of the empire and Bismarck’s open proclamation of a war of conquest provoked in Germany and England a violent struggle between the bourgeoisie, which sided with the Prussians, and the proletariat, which more than ever demonstrated its international sentiments. This alone should have been sufficient for the International to have gained ground in both the countries. In America, the same fact produced a split in the vast German proletarian émigré group; the internationalist party definitely dissociating itself from the chauvinist party.

On the other hand, the advent of the Paris Commune gave an unprecedented boost to the expansion of the International and to a vigorous support of its principles by sections of all nationalities, except the Jura sections, whose report continues thus: “The beginning of the gigantic battle ... has caused people to think ... some go away to hide their weakness ... For many this situation (within their ranks) is a sign of decrepitude”, but “on the contrary ... this *situation is capable of transforming the International completely*” according to their own pattern. This modest wish will be understood after a deeper examination of so propitious a situation.

Leaving aside the dissolved Alliance, replaced since by the Malon section, the committee had to report on the situation in 20 sections. Among them, seven simply turned their backs on the Alliance; this is what the report has to say about it:

The section of *box-makers* and that of *engravers and designers of Bienne* have never replied to any of the communications that we sent them.

The sections of *Neuchâtel* craftsmen, i.e., *joiners, box-makers, engravers and*

designers, have made *no* reply to letters from the Federal Committee.

We have not been able to obtain *any* news of the Val-de-Ruz section.

The *section of engravers and designers of Locle* have given *no* reply to letters from the federal committee.

That is what is described as *free* intercourse between the autonomous sections and their federal committee.

Another section, that

of *engravers and designers* of the *Courtelary* district after three years of stubborn perseverance ... at the present time ... is forming a resistance society *independent of the International*, which does not in the least deter them from sending two delegates to the congress of the Sixteen.

Next come four completely defunct sections:

The *central section of Bienne* has currently been *dissolved*; one of its devoted members wrote to us recently, however, saying that *all hope* of seeing the rebirth of the International at Bienne *is not lost*.

The *Saint-Blaise* section has been dissolved.

The Catébat section, after a brilliant existence, *has had to yield* to the intrigues woven by the masters [!] of this district in order to dissolve this *valiant* [!] section.

Lastly, the Corgémont section also has *fallen victim* of intrigues on the part of the employers.

The *central section of Courtelary district* follows, which “took the wise step of *suspending* its activity”; which did not deter it from sending two delegates to the congress of the Sixteen.

Now we come to four sections whose existence is more than problematical.

The *Grange* section has been reduced to a *small nucleus* of socialist workers ... Their local action is paralysed by their numerically modest membership.

The *central section of Neuchâtel* has *suffered considerably* from the events, and *would have inevitably disbanded* if it were not for the dedication and activity of some of its members.

“The *central section of Locle*, *hovering between life and death* for some months, ended up by *being dissolved*. It has been reconstituted quite recently, however, evidently for the sole purpose of sending two delegates to the congress of the Sixteen.

The *Chaux-de-Fonds section of socialist propaganda* is in a *critical situation* ... Its position, far from getting better, *tends rather to deteriorate*.

Next come two sections, the *study-circles of Saint-Imier* and of *Sonvillier*, which are only mentioned in passing, without so much as a word about their circumstances.

There remains the model section, which, to judge by its name of central section, is

nothing but the residue of other defunct sections.

The central section of *Moutier* is certainly the one that has suffered least ... Its committee has been in constant contact with the federal committee ... *no sections have yet been founded* ...

That is easily explained:

The action of the Moutier section was particularly *favoured* by the *excellent attitude* of a working population ... given to their traditional ways; we would like to see the working class of this district make itself still more independent of political elements.

One can see, in fact, that this report

gives the *exact measure* of the devotion and *practical intelligence* that we can expect from the Jura federation members.

They might have rounded it off by adding that the workers of Chaux-de-Fonds, the original seat of their committee, have always refused to have anything to do with them. Just recently, at the general assembly of January 18, 1872, they replied to the circular of the Sixteen by a unanimous vote confirming the London Conference resolutions, as also the French Switzerland congress resolution of May 1871:

To exclude forever from the International Bakunin, Guillaume and their supporters.

Is it necessary to say anything more about the courage of this sham Sonvillier congress which, in its own words, “caused war, open war within the International”?

Certainly these men, who make more noise than their stature warrants, have had an incontestable success. The whole of the liberal and police press has openly taken their side; they have been backed in their personal slander of the General Council and the insipid attacks aimed against the International by ostensible reformers in many lands: by the bourgeois republicans in England, whose intrigues were exposed by the General Council; by the dogmatic freethinkers in Italy, who, under the banner of Stefanoni, have just formed a “Universal Rationalist Society” with permanent headquarters in Rome, an “authoritarian” and “hierarchical” organisation, monasteries for atheist monks and nuns, whose rules provide for a marble bust in the Congress hall for every bourgeois who donates 10,000 francs;⁶³ and, lastly, by the Bismarck socialists in Germany, who, apart from their police mouthpiece, the *Neuer Social-Demokrat*,⁶⁴ played the role of “white shirts”⁶⁵ for the Prusso-German empire.

The Sonvillier conclave requests all sections of the International, in a pathetic appeal, to insist on the urgency of an immediate congress “to curb the consistent encroachments of the London Council”, according to Citizens Malon and Lefrançais, but actually to replace the International with the Alliance. This appeal received such an encouraging response that they immediately set about falsifying a resolution voted at the last Belgian congress. Their official organ (*Révolution Sociale*, January 4, 1872)

writes as follows:

Lastly, which is even more important, the Belgian sections met at the congress of Brussels on December 24 and 25 and voted unanimously for a resolution identical with that of the Sonvillier congress, on the urgency of convening a general congress.

It is important to note that the Belgian congress voted the very opposite. It charged the Belgian congress, which was not due to meet until the following June, to draft new General Rules for submission to the *next congress* of the International.

In accordance with the will of the vast majority of members of the International, the General Council is to convene the annual congress only in September 1872.

VII

Some weeks after the Conference, Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc, the most influential and most ardent members of the Alliance, arrived in London. They came to recruit, among the French refugees, aides willing to work for the restoration of the Empire, which, according to them, was the only way to rid themselves of Thiers and to avoid being left destitute. The General Council warned all concerned, including the Brussels federal council, of their Bonapartist plots.

In January 1872, they dropped their mask by publishing a pamphlet entitled “THE EMPIRE AND THE NEW FRANCE. *Call of the People and the Youth to the French Conscience*, by Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc. Brussels, 1872.”

With the modesty characteristic of the charlatans of the Alliance, they declaim the following humbug:

We who have built up the great army of the French proletariat ... we, the most influential leaders of the International in France,^a ... happily, we have not been shot,

^a Under the heading “*To the Pillory!*”, *L'Égalité* (of Geneva), February 15, 1872, had this to say:

“The day has not yet come to describe the story of the defeat of the movement for the Commune in the South of France; but what we can announce today, we, most of whom witnessed the deplorable defeat of the Lyons insurrection on April 30, is that one of the reasons for the insurrection’s failure was the cowardice, the treachery and the thievery of G. Blanc, who intruded everywhere carrying out the orders of A. Richard, who kept in the shade.

“By their carefully prepared manoeuvres these rascals intentionally compromised many of those who took part in the preparatory work of the insurrectionary committees.

“Further, these traitors managed to discredit the International at Lyons to such an extent that by the time of the Paris Revolution the International was regarded by the Lyons workers with the greatest distrust. Hence the total absence of organisation, hence the failure of the insurrection, a failure which was bound to result in the fall of the Commune which was left to rely on its own isolated forces! It is only since this bloody lesson that our propaganda has been able to rally the Lyons workers around the flag of the International.

“Albert Richard was the pet and prophet of Bakunin and company.”

and we are here to flaunt in their face (to wit: *ambitious parliamentarians, smug republicans, sham democrats of all sorts*) the banner under which we are fighting, and despite the slander, threats, and all manner of attacks that await us, to hurl at an amazed Europe the cry that comes from the very heart of our conscience and that will soon resound in the hearts of all Frenchmen: “*Long Live the Emperor!*”

Napoleon III, disgraced and scorned, must be splendidly reinstated and Messrs. Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc, paid out of the secret funds of Invasion III, are specially charged with this restoration.

Incidentally, they confess:

It is the normal evolution of our ideas that has made us imperialists.

Here is a confession that should give pleasure to their co-religionists of the Alliance. As in the heyday of *Solidarité*, A. Richard and G. Blanc mouth again the old clichés regarding “abstention from politics” which, on the principle of their “normal evolution”, can become a reality only under the most absolute despotism, with the workers abstaining from any meddling in politics, much like the prisoner abstaining from a walk in the sun.

The time of the revolutionaries [they say] is over ... communism is restricted to Germany and England, especially Germany. That, moreover, is where it had been developed in earnest for a long time, to be subsequently spread throughout the International, and this disturbing expansion of *German influence* in the Association has in no small degree contributed to retarding its development, or rather, to giving it a new course in the sections of central and southern France, whom no German has ever supplied with a slogan.

Perhaps this is the voice of the great hierophant,^a who has taken upon himself, ever since the Alliance’s foundation, in his capacity as a Russian, the special task of representing the *Latin races*? Or do we have here “the true missionaries” of the *Révolution Sociale* (November 2, 1871) denouncing “the backward march which endeavours to foist German and Bismarckian mentality on the International”?

Fortunately, however, the true tradition has survived, and Messrs. Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc have not been shot! Thus, their own “contribution” consists in “setting a new course” for the International in central and southern France to follow, by an effort to found Bonapartist sections, *ipso facto* basically “autonomous”.

As for the constitution of the proletariat as a political party, as recommended by the London Conference, “*After the restoration of the Empire*”, we — Richard and Blanc — “shall quickly deal not only with the socialist theories but also with any attempts to

^a Mikhail Bakunin. A hierophant is an interpreter of sacred mysteries.— *Ed.*

implement them through revolutionary organisation of the masses.” Briefly, exploiting the great “autonomy principle of the sections” which “constitutes the real strength of the International especially in the *Latin* countries” (*Révolution Sociale*, January 4), these gentlemen base their hopes on anarchy within the International.

Anarchy, then, is the great warhorse of their master Bakunin, who has taken nothing from the socialist systems except a set of slogans. All socialists see anarchy as the following program: once the aim of the proletarian movement, i.e., abolition of classes, is attained, the power of the state, which serves to keep the great majority of producers in bondage to a very small exploiter minority, disappears, and the functions of government become simple administrative functions. The Alliance draws an entirely different picture. It proclaims anarchy in proletarian ranks as the most infallible means of breaking the powerful concentration of social and political forces in the hands of the exploiters. Under this pretext, it asks the International, at a time when the old world is seeking a way of crushing it, to replace its organisation with anarchy. The international police want nothing better for perpetuating the Thiers republic, while cloaking it in a royal mantle.^a ■

^a In the report on the Dufaure law, Sacase, the Rural Assembly deputy, attacks above all the International’s “organisation.” He positively hates that organisation. After having verified “the mounting popularity of this formidable Association,” he goes on to say: “This Association rejects ... the shady practices of the sects that preceded it. Its organisation was created and modified quite openly. Because of the power of this organisation ... it has steadily extended its sphere of activity and influence. It is expanding throughout the world.” Then he gives a “short description of the organisation” and concludes: “Such is, in its wise unity ... the plan of this vast organisation. Its strength lies in its very conception. It also rests in its numerous adherents, who are linked by their common activities, and, lastly, in the invincible impulse which drives them to action.”

Indifference to Politics

By Karl Marx

The working class should not form a political party, and should not, under any circumstances, undertake political action, since to combat the state is to recognise the state, which is contrary to the eternal principles. The workers must not strike, since to make efforts to increase one's wages or prevent them from being reduced is to recognise *wages*, which is contrary to the eternal principles of emancipation of the working class!

“If in the political struggle against the bourgeois state the workers only manage to wrest concessions, they are making compromises, which is contrary to the eternal principles. One must therefore scorn any peaceful movement, as the English and American workers have the bad habit of doing. The workers must make no effort to establish a legal limit to the working day, since this is like making compromises with the bosses, who could then only exploit them for 10 to 12 hours instead of 14 to 16. They must not even bother to have the employment of children below the age of 10 in the factories forbidden by law, since in this way they are not putting an end to the exploitation of children under 10 years of age, and are thus making another compromise, which prejudices the purity of the eternal principles.

“Still less should the workers desire that, as in the American republic, the state whose *budget* is drawn from the working class should be obliged to provide elementary education for the children of workers because elementary education is not complete education. It is better that the working men and women should not know how to read and write or count, than that they should be taught by a teacher of a state school. Far better that the working class should be afflicted by ignorance and 16 hour's drudgery than that the eternal principles should be violated!

“If the political struggle of the working class assumes violent forms, if the workers substitute their revolutionary dictatorship for the dictatorship of the bourgeois class, they are committing the terrible crime of lese-principle, for to satisfy their own base everyday needs and crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, instead of laying down

arms and abolishing the state they are giving it a revolutionary and transient form. The workers should not form individual unions for each trade, since they thereby perpetuate the division of social labour found in bourgeois society. This division which disunites the workers is really the basis of their present servitude.

“In a word, the workers should fold their arms and not waste their time in political and economic movements. These movements can only bring them immediate results. Like truly religious people, scornful of everyday needs, they should cry, full of faith: ‘May our class be crucified, may our race perish, but may the eternal principles remain unstained!’ They should, like pious Christians, believe in the words of the priest, despise earthly blessings and think only of earning paradise. For paradise read THE ABOLITION OF SOCIETY, which will one day arrive in some small corner of the world, no one knows how or by whose efforts, and the mystification will be exactly the same.

“Until this famous abolition of society arrives, the working class must behave decently, like a flock of well-fed sheep, leave the government in peace, fear the police, respect the laws, and provide cannon fodder without complaining.

“In practical everyday life the workers must be most obedient servants of the State, but inside themselves they must protest energetically against its existence, and show their profound theoretical disdain for it by purchasing and reading literary treatises on the abolition of the state. They must moreover take good care not to offer any resistance to the capitalist order apart from holding forth on the society of the future in which the odious order will have ceased to exist!”

No one would deny that if the apostles of indifference to politics were to express themselves in such a clear manner, the working class would soon tell them where to go and would feel highly offended by these bourgeois doctrinaires and displaced gentlefolk who are stupid or naive enough to forbid them every real method of struggle because all the arms to fight with must be taken from existing society, and because the inevitable conditions of this struggle do not unfortunately fit in with the idealist fantasies that these doctors of *social science* have deified under the name of *liberty*, *autonomy* and *anarchy*. But the working-class movement is so strong today that these philanthropic sectarians no longer dare to repeat for the economic struggle the *great truths* they have incessantly proclaimed on the political struggle. They are too pusillanimous to apply them yet to strikes, combinations, and trade unions, to the laws on female and child labour, and on the reduction of working hours, etc., etc.

Now, it remains to be seen whether they are capable of appealing to the fine traditions, to modesty, to good faith and the eternal principles!

Since the social conditions were not sufficiently developed to permit the working

class to form a militant class, the first socialists (Fourier, Owen, Saint-Simon and others) were inevitably bound to subscribe to dreams of the *ideal society* of the future and condemn all such attempts as strikes, associations and political movements undertaken by the workers to bring some improvement to their lot. But if we have no right to reject these patriarchs of socialism, just as the chemists have no right to reject their fathers, the alchemists, we must at least avoid repeating their mistakes, which if committed by us would be inexcusable.

Later, however — in 1839 — when the working-class political and economic struggle had acquired a fairly marked character in England, Bray — a disciple of Owen and one of those who had found *mutualism* considerably earlier than Proudhon — published a book entitled *Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy*.

In one of the chapters, which deals with the inefficacy of *all the remedies it is hoped will be achieved by the present struggle*, he submits to bitter criticism all the movements, whether political or economic, of the English working class, condemning the political movement, strikes, the reduction of working hours, legislation on female and child labour in the factories, since all this — according to him — instead of enabling us to pass out of the present state of society, keeps us there and only intensifies the antagonisms.

Now we come to the oracle of these doctors of social science, Proudhon. While the master had the courage to energetically condemn all economic movements (coalitions, strikes, etc.) that were contrary to the redeeming theories of his *mutualism*, he encouraged the working-class political movement by his writings and his own personal participation: his disciples do not dare to openly condemn the movement. In 1847, at the time when the master's major work *Système des contradictions économiques* appeared, I confuted his sophisms against the working-class movement.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, in 1864, after the Ollivier law, which accorded the French workers the right to combination in such a limited manner, Proudhon returned to his task in his book *Political Capacities of the Working Classes*, published a few days after his death.

The attacks of the master were so to the taste of the bourgeoisie that the *Times*, on the occasion of the big tailors' strike in London in 1866, did Proudhon the honour of translating him and condemning the strikers with his own words. Here are a few examples from it.

The miners of Reve-de-Gier had gone on strike and the soldiers had come hurrying to return them to reason.

The authority that had the miners of Reve-de-Gier shot [Proudhon exclaims] was in an unfortunate position. But it acted like the ancient: Brutus standing between his paternal love and his duty as consul: he had to sacrifice his sons in order to save the republic.

Brutus did not hesitate, and posterity dare not condemn him.⁶⁷

As long as the proletariat has existed, one cannot recall a single case of a bourgeois having hesitated to sacrifice his workers to save his own interests. What Brutuses the bourgeois are!

No, there is no right to combination, just as there is no right to fraud or theft, just as there is no right to incest or adultery.⁶⁸

It must be said, however, that there is certainly the right to *stupidity*.

What then are the eternal principles in the name of which the master hurls his abracadabra excommunications?

First eternal principle:

Wages determine prices.

Those who have not the faintest notion of political economy and do not know that the great bourgeois economist Ricardo in his *Principles of Political Economy*, published in 1817, refuted once and for all this traditional error know that remarkable fact of English industry, which can offer its products at a price greatly inferior to that of any other nation while the wages are relatively higher in England than in any other country in Europe.

Second eternal principle:

The law authorising combinations is highly anti-juridical, anti-economic, contrary to every society and order.

In a word, it is “contrary to the economic *right* of free competition”.

If the master had been a little less of a chauvinist, he would have wondered how it was that 40 years earlier a law so contrary to the *economic right of free competition* was promulgated in England, and how it is that as industry develops, and with it *free competition*, this law contrary to *every society and order* is imposing itself as a necessity upon the bourgeois states. He might have discovered that this Right (with a capital R) only exists in the *economic manuals* published by the Ignoramus Brothers of bourgeois political economy, in which manuals one finds such pearls as the following: “*Property is the fruit of labour*”. They omitted to say “*of other people’s*” labour.

Third eternal principle:

Thus, under the pretext of raising the working class from so-called social inferiority, it will be necessary to begin denouncing a whole class of citizens: the class of masters, entrepreneurs, bosses and bourgeois. It will be necessary to excite working-class democracy to scorn and hatred for these unworthy colleagues of the middle class, it will be necessary to prefer mercantile and industrial warfare to legal repression, and class antagonism to the state police.⁶⁹

In order to prevent the working class from emerging from its so-called *social inferiority*,

the boss condemns the associations formed by the working class which make it a class antagonistic to the respectable *category of the bosses, entrepreneurs and bourgeois* who certainly prefer, like Proudhon, *the state police to class antagonisms*. In order to avoid displeasing this respectable class in any way, the good Proudhon advises the workers (until the coming of the *mutualist society* and despite the great inconvenience caused them) “liberty or competition, our only guarantee”.⁷⁰

The master preached indifference to economics *in order to safeguard liberty or bourgeois competition*, our only guarantee. The disciples preach indifference to politics in order to safeguard bourgeois liberty, their only guarantee. If the early Christians, who also preached indifference to politics, needed the helping hand of an emperor to change them from oppressed into oppressors, the modern apostles of indifference to politics do not believe that their eternal principles oblige them to abstain from the pleasures of the world and the transient privileges of bourgeois society. And yet we must recognise that it is with a stoicism worthy of the Christian martyrs that they put up with the 14 to 16 hours of work with which the factory workers are overloaded! ■

On Authority⁷¹

By Frederick Engels

A number of socialists have latterly launched a regular crusade against what they call the *principle of authority*. It suffices to tell them that this or that act is *authoritarian* for it to be condemned. This summary mode of procedure is being abused to such an extent that it has become necessary to look into the matter somewhat more closely. Authority, in the sense in which the word is used here, means: the imposition of the will of another upon ours; on the other hand, authority presupposes subordination. Now, since these two words sound bad and the relationship which they represent is disagreeable to the subordinated party, the question is to ascertain whether there is any way of dispensing with it, whether — given the conditions of present-day society — we could not create another social system, in which this authority would be given no scope any longer and would consequently have to disappear. On examining the economic, industrial and agricultural conditions which form the basis of present-day bourgeois society, we find that they tend more and more to replace isolated action by combined action of individuals. Modern industry with its big factories and mills, where hundreds of workers supervise complicated machines driven by steam, has superseded the small workshops of the separate producers; the carriages and wagons of the highways have been substituted by railway trains, just as the small schooners and sailing feluccas have been by steamboats. Even agriculture falls increasingly under the dominion of the machine and of steam, which slowly but relentlessly put in the place of the small proprietors big capitalists, who with the aid of hired workers cultivate vast stretches of land. Everywhere combined action, the complication of processes dependent upon each other, displaces independent action by individuals. But whoever mentions combined action speaks of organisation; now, is it possible to have organisation without authority?

Supposing a social revolution dethroned the capitalists, who now exercise their authority over the production and circulation of wealth. Supposing, to adopt entirely

the point of view of the anti-authoritarians, that the land and the instruments of labour had become the collective property of the workers who use them. Will authority have disappeared or will it only have changed its form? Let us see.

Let us take by way of example a cotton spinning mill. The cotton must pass through at least six successive operations before it is reduced to the state of thread, and these operations take place for the most part in different rooms. Furthermore, keeping the machines going requires an engineer to look after the steam engine, mechanics to make the current repairs, and many other labourers whose business it is to transfer the products from one room to another, and so forth. All these workers, men, women and children, are obliged to begin and finish their work at the hours fixed by the authority of the steam, which cares nothing for individual autonomy. The workers must, therefore, first come to an understanding on the hours of work; and these hours, once they are fixed, must be observed by all, without any exception. Thereafter particular questions arise in each room and at every moment concerning the mode of production, distribution of materials, etc., which must be settled at once on pain of seeing all production immediately stopped; whether they are settled by decision of a delegate placed at the head of each branch of labour or, if possible, by a majority vote, the will of the single individual will always have to subordinate itself, which means that questions are settled in an authoritarian way. The automatic machinery of a big factory is much more despotic than the small capitalists who employ workers ever have been. At least with regard to the hours of work one may write upon the portals of these factories: *Lasciate ogni autonomia, vol che entrate!*^a If man, by dint of his knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him by subjecting him, in so far as he employs them, to a veritable despotism independent of all social organisation. Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry is tantamount to wanting to abolish industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel.

Let us take another example — the railway. Here too the cooperation of an infinite number of individuals is absolutely necessary, and this cooperation must be practised during precisely fixed hours so that no accidents may happen. Here, too, the first condition of the job is a dominant will that settles all subordinate questions, whether this will is represented by a single delegate or a committee charged with the execution of the resolutions of the majority of persons interested. In either case there is very pronounced authority. Moreover, what would happen to the first train dispatched if

^a “Leave, ye that enter in, all autonomy behind!” (Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, Hell, Song III, Verse 3) — *Ed.*

the authority of the railway employees over the Hon. passengers were abolished?

But the necessity of authority, and of imperious authority at that, will nowhere be found more evident than on board a ship on the high seas. There, in time of danger, the lives of all depend on the instantaneous and absolute obedience of all to the will of one.

When I submitted arguments like these to the most rabid anti-authoritarians the only answer they were able to give me was the following: Yes, that's true, but here it is not a case of authority which we confer on our delegates, *but of a commission entrusted!* These gentlemen think that when they have changed the names of things they have changed the things themselves. This is how these profound thinkers mock at the whole world.

We have thus seen that, on the one hand, a certain authority, no matter how delegated, and, on the other hand, a certain subordination, are things which, independently of all social organisation, are imposed upon us together with the material conditions under which we produce and make products circulate.

We have seen, besides, that the material conditions of production and circulation inevitably develop with large-scale industry and large-scale agriculture, and increasingly tend to enlarge the scope of this authority. Hence it is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good. Authority and autonomy are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society. If the autonomists confined themselves to saying that the social organisation of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable, we could understand each other; but they are blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately fight the word.

Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly 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 — authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought

in vain, it must maintain this 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 people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?

Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction. ■

From The Alliance of Socialist Democracy & the International Working Men's Association

**Report & Documents Published by Decision of the Hague
Congress of the International**

By Karl Marx & Frederick Engels

I. Introduction

The International Working Men's Association, in setting itself the aim of rallying under one banner the scattered forces of the world proletariat and thus becoming the living representative of the community of interests that unites the workers, was bound to open its doors to socialists of all shades. Its founders and the representatives of the workers' organisations of the old and new worlds who at international congresses sanctioned the General Rules of the Association, forgot that the very breadth of its program would allow the declassed elements to worm their way in and establish, at its very heart, secret organisations whose efforts, instead of being directed against the bourgeoisie and the existing governments, would be turned against the International itself. Such has been the case with the Alliance of Socialist Democracy.

At the Hague Congress, the General Council demanded an inquiry into this secret organisation. The congress entrusted the task to a commission of five (citizens Cuno, Lucain, Spingard, Vichard, and Walter, who resigned), which delivered its report at the session of September 7. The Congress passed the following resolution:

1. To expel from the International Mikhail Bakunin, as founder of the Alliance and also for an act committed on his own behalf;⁷²
2. To expel James Guillaume, as a member of the Alliance;
3. To publish the documents relating to the Alliance ...

Written by Marx and Engels in collaboration with Paul Lafargue in April-July 1873.

Here we have a society which, under the mask of the most extreme anarchism, directs its blows not against the existing governments but against the revolutionaries who refuse to accept its dogma and leadership. Founded by a minority at a bourgeois congress,⁷³ it infiltrates the ranks of the international organisation of the working class, at first attempts to dominate it and, when this plan fails, sets to work to disorganise it. It brazenly substitutes its sectarian program and narrow ideas for the broad program and great aspirations of our Association; it organises within the public sections of the International its own little secret sections which obey the same instructions and in a good many instances succeed in gaining control of the public section by prearranged action; in its newspapers it publicly attacks all those who refuse to submit to its will, and by its own avowal provokes open warfare within our ranks. It resorts to any means, any disloyalty to achieve its ends; lies, slander, intimidation, the stab in the back — it finds them all equally suitable. Finally, in Russia it substitutes itself entirely for the International and commits, in its name, crimes against the common law, acts of fraud and an assassination for which the government and bourgeois press has blamed our Association. And the International must remain silent about all these acts because the society responsible for them is secret! The International has in its possession the statutes of this society, which is its mortal enemy; statutes in which it openly proclaims itself a modern Society of Jesus and declares that it has the right and the duty to practise all the methods employed by the Jesuits; statutes that explain in a flash the whole series of hostile acts to which the International has been subjected from this quarter; but the International must not make use of these statutes — that would be denouncing a secret society!

There is only one means of combating all these intrigues, but it will prove astonishingly effective; this means is complete publicity. Exposure of all these schemings in their entirety will render them utterly powerless. To protect them with our silence would be not only an act of naïveté that the leaders of the Alliance would be the first to ridicule; it would be sheer cowardice. What is more, it would be an act of treachery towards those Spanish members of the International who, while belonging to the secret Alliance, have not hesitated to divulge its existence and its mode of action, since it has set itself up in open hostility to the International. Besides, all that is contained in the secret statutes is to be found, in much more emphatic form, in the documents published in Russian by Bakunin and Nechayev themselves. The statutes are but their confirmation.

Let the ringleaders of the Alliance cry out that they have been denounced. We deliver them up to the scorn of the workers and the benevolence of the governments whom they have served so well in disorganising the proletarian movement. The Zurich

Tagwacht, in a reply to Bakunin, had every right to say:

If you are not a paid agent, the one thing quite certain is that a paid agent would never have succeeded in doing as much harm as you ...⁷⁴

II. Secret Alliance

So far we have analysed the secret organisation designed to perpetuate the dictatorship of “Citizen B.”;^a now let us deal with his program.⁷⁵

The association of international brothers aspires to a universal revolution, simultaneously social, philosophical, economic and political, so that of the present order of things, based on property, exploitation, and the principle of authority, whether religious, metaphysical, bourgeois-doctrinaire, or even Jacobin-revolutionary, not a stone will be left standing first in Europe and then in the rest of the world. With the cry of peace for the workers, liberty for all the oppressed and death to rulers, exploiters and guardians of all kinds, we seek to destroy all states and all churches along with all their institutions and laws, religious, political, juridical, financial, police, university, economic and social, so that the millions of deceived, enslaved, tormented and exploited human beings, liberated from all their directors and benefactors, official and officious, collective and individual, may breathe at last with complete freedom.

Here indeed we have revolutionary revolutionism! The first condition for the achievement of this astounding goal is to refuse to fight the existing states and governments with the means employed by ordinary revolutionaries, but on the contrary to hurl resounding, grandiloquent phrases at

the institution of the state and that which is both its consequence and foundation —
i.e., private property.

Thus it is not the Bonapartist state, the Prussian or Russian state that has to be overthrown, but an abstract state, the state as such, a state that nowhere exists. But while the international brothers⁷⁶ in their desperate struggle against this state that is situated somewhere in the clouds know how to avoid the truncheons, the prison and the bullets that real states deal out to ordinary revolutionaries, we see on the other hand that they have reserved themselves the right, subject only to papal^b dispensation, to profit by all the advantages offered by these real bourgeois states. Fanelli, an Italian deputy, Soriano, an employee of the government of Amadeus of Savoy, and perhaps Albert Richard and Gaspard Blanc, Bonapartist police agents, show how accommodating the Pope is in this respect ... That is why the police shows so little

^a Bakunin — *Ed.*

^b Bakunin’s — *Ed.*

concern over “the Alliance or, to put it frankly, the conspiracy” of Citizen B. against the abstract idea of the state.

Well then, the first act of the revolution must be to decree the abolition of the state, as Bakunin did on September 28th in Lyons,⁷⁷ despite the fact that abolition of the state is of necessity an authoritarian act. By the state he means all power, political, revolutionary or reactionary,

because it matters little to us whether this authority be called the church, the monarchy, the constitutional state, the bourgeois republic or even the revolutionary dictatorship. We detest them and reject them all in equal measure as unflinching sources of exploitation and despotism.

And he goes on to declare that all the revolutionaries who, on the day after the revolution, want “construction of a revolutionary state” are far more dangerous than all the existing governments put together, and that

we, the international brothers, are the natural enemies of these revolutionaries because to disorganise the revolution is the first duty of the international brothers.

The reply to this bragging about the immediate abolition of the state and the establishment of anarchy has already been given in the last General Council’s private circular on “Fictitious Splits in the International” of March 1872, page 37:

Anarchy, then, is the great warhorse of their master Bakunin, who has taken nothing from the socialist systems except a set of slogans. What all socialists understand by anarchy is this: once the aim of the proletarian movement, the abolition of classes, has been attained, the power of the state, which serves to keep the great majority of producers under the yoke of a numerically small exploiting minority, disappears, and the functions of government are transformed into simple administrative functions. The Alliance puts matters the other way round. It proclaims anarchy in the proletarian ranks as the surest means of breaking the powerful concentration of social and political forces in the hands of the exploiters. Under this pretext it demands of the International, at the very moment when the old world is seeking to crush it, that it should replace its organisation by anarchy.^a

Let us see, however, just what the consequences of the anarchist gospel are; let us suppose the state has been abolished by decree. According to article 6, the consequences of this act will be: bankruptcy of the state, ending of state intervention to enforce payment of private debts, cessation of payment of all taxes and all tribute, disbandment of the army, the magistracy, the bureaucracy, the police and the clergy (!); abolition of official justice, accompanied by an auto-da-fé of all title deeds on property and all

^a See page 67 of this volume. — *Ed.*

judicial and civil junk, confiscation of all productive capital and instruments of labour for the benefit of the workers' associations and an alliance of these associations, which "will constitute the commune". This commune will give individuals thus dispossessed the strict necessities of life, while granting them freedom to earn more by their own labour.

What happened at Lyons has proved that merely decreeing the abolition of the state is far from sufficient to accomplish all these fine promises. Two companies of the bourgeois National Guards proved quite sufficient, on the other hand, to shatter this splendid dream and send Bakunin hurrying back to Geneva with the miraculous decree in his pocket. Naturally he could not imagine his supporters to be so stupid that they need not be given some sort of plan of organisation that would put his decree into practical effect. Here is the plan:

For the organisation of the commune a federation of permanently functioning barricades and a council of the revolutionary commune shall be set up by delegating one or two deputies from each barricade, one per street or per district, deputies vested with imperative mandates, responsible in all respects and subject to recall any time [odd barricades, these barricades of the Alliance, where instead of fighting they spend their time writing mandates]. The *commune council*, thus organised, will be able to choose from its midst *executive committees*, a special one for each branch of the revolutionary administration of the commune.

The insurgent capital, thus constituted as a commune, then proclaims to the other communes of the country that it renounces all claim to govern them; it invites them to reorganise themselves in a revolutionary way and then to send their responsible and recallable deputies, vested with their imperative mandates, to an agreed place where they will set up a federation of insurgent associations, communes and provinces and organise a revolutionary *force* capable of triumphing over reaction. This organisation will not be confined to the communes of the insurgent country; other provinces or countries will be able to take part in it, while

the provinces, communes, associations and individuals who take sides with reaction *will not be allowed to join it.*

So the abolition of frontiers goes hand in hand with the most benevolent tolerance towards the reactionary provinces, which would not hesitate to resume the civil war.

Thus in this anarchistic organisation of the tribune-barricades we have first the council of the commune, then the executive committees which, to be able to do anything at all, must be vested with some power and supported by a police force; this is to be followed by nothing short of a federal *parliament*, whose principal object will be to organise this *police force*. Like the commune council, this parliament will have to assign

executive power to one or more *committees* which by this act alone will be given an authoritarian character that the demands of the struggle will increasingly accentuate. We are thus confronted with a perfect reconstruction of all the elements of the “authoritarian state”; and the fact that we call this machine a “revolutionary commune organised from bottom to top”, makes little difference. The name changes nothing of the substance; organisation from bottom to top exists in any bourgeois republic and imperative mandates date from the middle ages. Indeed Bakunin himself admits as much when (in article 8) he describes his organisation as a “new revolutionary state”.

As for the practical value of this plan of revolution with its talking instead of fighting, we shall say nothing.

Now we shall reveal the secret of all the Alliance’s double and triple-bottomed boxes. To make sure that the orthodox program is adhered to and that anarchy behaves itself properly,

it is necessary that in the midst of popular anarchy, which will make up the very life and all the energy of the revolution, *the unity of revolutionary thought and action should be embodied in a certain organ*. That organ must be the *secret and worldwide association of the international brothers*.

This association arises from the conviction that revolutions are never made either by individuals or by secret societies. They come about, as it were, of their own accord, produced by the force of circumstances, by the course of events and facts. They slowly mature in the depths of the instinctive conscience of the popular masses, then they explode ... the only thing a well-organised secret society can do is first to assist the birth of revolution by spreading among the masses ideas that accord with the instinct of the masses, and to organise, not the army of the revolution — that army must always be the people [cannon fodder], but *a revolutionary general staff* composed of devoted, energetic and intelligent individuals who are above all sincere — not vain or ambitious — friends of the people, capable of serving as intermediaries between the revolutionary idea [monopolised by them] and the popular instincts.

The number of these individuals should not, therefore, be too large. For the international organisation throughout Europe *one hundred serious and firmly united revolutionaries would be sufficient*. Two or three hundred revolutionaries would be enough for the organisation of the largest country.

So everything changes. Anarchy, the “unleashing of popular life”, of “evil passions” and all the rest is no longer enough. To assure the success of the revolution one must have “*unity of thought and action*”. The members of the International are trying to create this unity by propaganda, by discussion and the public organisation of the proletariat. But all Bakunin needs is a secret organisation of 100 people, the privileged

representatives of the *revolutionary idea*, the general staff in the background, self-appointed and commanded by the permanent “Citizen B.”. Unity of thought and action means nothing, but orthodoxy and blind obedience. *Perinde ac cadaver*.^a We are indeed confronted with a veritable Society of Jesus.

To say that the hundred international brothers must “serve as intermediaries between the revolutionary idea and the popular instincts” is to create an unbridgeable gulf between the Alliance’s revolutionary idea and the proletarian masses; it means proclaiming that these hundred guardsmen cannot be recruited anywhere but from among the privileged classes.

VIII. Alliance in Russia

In the student unrest⁷⁸ Bakunin discovers “an all-destroying spirit opposed to the state ... which has emerged from the very depths of the people’s life”; he congratulates “our young brothers on their revolutionary tendencies ... This means that the end is in sight of this infamous Empire of all the Russias!” ...

The Russian people, Bakunin continues, are at present living in conditions similar to those that forced them to rise under Tsar Alexei, father of Peter the Great. Then it was Stenka Razin, the Cossack brigand chief, who placed himself at their head and showed them “the road” to “freedom”. In order to rise today the people are waiting only for a new Stenka Razin; but this time he

will be replaced by the legion of declassed youth who are already living the life of the people ... Stenka Razin, no longer an individual hero but a collective one [!] consequently they have an invincible hero behind them. Such a hero are all the magnificent young people over whom his spirit already soars.

To perform this role of a collective Stenka Razin, the young people must prepare themselves through ignorance:

Therefore abandon with all speed this world doomed to destruction. Leave its universities, its academies, its schools and go among the people [to become] the midwife of the people’s self-emancipation, the uniter and organiser of their forces and efforts. Do not bother at this moment with learning, in the name of which they would bind you, castrate you ... Such is the belief of the finest people in the West ... The workers’ world of Europe and America calls you to join them in a fraternal alliance ...

Citizen B. ... acclaims here for the first time the Russian brigand as the type of true revolutionary and preaches the cult of ignorance to young Russians under the pretext

^a “Be like unto a corpse.” The phrase used by Loyola to formulate the Jesuit principle imposing unquestioning obedience on the junior members of the Society. — *Ed.*

that modern science is merely official science (can one imagine an official mathematics, physics or chemistry?), and that this is the opinion of the finest people in the West. Finally he ends his leaflet by letting it be understood that through his mediation the International is proposing an alliance to these young people, whom he forbids even the *learning* of the Ignorantines ...⁷⁹

By the law of anarchist assimilation Bakunin assimilates student youth:

The government itself shows us the road *we* must follow to attain *our* goal, that is to say, the goal of the people. It drives *us* out of the universities, the academies, the schools. We are grateful to it for having thus put us on such glorious, such strong ground. Now we stand on firm ground, now we can do things. And what are we going to do? Teach the people? That would be stupid. The people know themselves, and better than we do, what they need [compare the secret statutes which endow the masses with “popular instincts”, and the initiates with the revolutionary idea]. Our task is not to teach the people but to rouse them. [Up to now] they have always rebelled in vain because they have rebelled separately ... we can render them invaluable assistance, we can give them what they have always lacked, what has been the principal cause of all their defeats. We can give them the unity of a universal movement by rallying their own forces.⁸⁰

This is where the doctrine of the Alliance, anarchy at the bottom and discipline at the top, emerges in all its purity. First by rioting comes the “unleashing of what are today called the evil passions” but “in the midst of the popular anarchy, which will constitute the very life and energy of the revolution, there must be an organ expressing unity of revolutionary idea and action”. That organ will be the universal “Alliance”, Russian section, the *Society of the People’s Judgement*.

But Bakunin is not to be satisfied merely with youth. He calls all brigands to the banner of his Alliance, Russian section.

Brigandage is one of the most honourable forms of the Russian people’s life. The brigand is a hero, a protector, a people’s avenger, the irreconcilable enemy of the state, and of all social and civil order established by the state, a fighter to the death against the whole civilisation of the civil servants, the nobles, the priests and the crown ... He who fails to understand brigandage understands nothing of Russian popular history. He who is not in sympathy with it, cannot be in sympathy with Russian popular life, and has no heart for the measureless, age-long sufferings of the people; he belongs to the enemy camp, among the supporters of the state ... Brigandage is the sole proof of the vitality, the passion and the strength of the people ... The brigand in Russia is the true and only revolutionary — the revolutionary without phrases, without rhetoric culled from books, an indefatigable revolutionary, irreconcilable and irresistible in action, a

popular and social revolutionary, not a political or class revolutionary ... The brigands in the forests, in the towns and in the villages scattered all over Russia, and the brigands held in the countless gaols of the empire make up a single, indivisible, close-knit world — the world of the Russian revolution. It is here, and here alone, that the real revolutionary conspiracy has long existed. He who wants to undertake real conspiracy in Russia, who wants a people's revolution, must go into this world ... Following the road pointed out to us now by the government, which drives us from the academies, the universities and schools, let us throw ourselves, brothers, among the people, into the people's movement, into the brigand and peasant rebellion and, maintaining a true and firm friendship among ourselves, let us rally into a single mass all the scattered outbursts of the muzhiks [peasants]. *Let us turn* them into a people's revolution, meaningful but pitiless.^a

In the second leaflet, *The Principles of Revolution*, we find a development of the order given in the secret statutes for “not leaving a stone standing”. Everything must be destroyed in order to produce “complete amorphism”, for if even “one of the old forms” be preserved, it will become the “embryo” from which all the other old social forms will be regenerated. The leaflet accuses the political revolutionaries who do not take this amorphism seriously of deceiving the people. It accuses them of having erected

new gallows and scaffolds where the surviving brother revolutionaries have been done to death ... So it is that the people have not yet known a real revolution ... A real revolution does not need individuals standing at the head of the crowd and commanding it, but men hidden invisibly among the crowd and forming an invisible link between one crowd and another, and thus invisibly giving one and the same direction, one spirit and character to the movement. This is the sole purpose of bringing in a secret preparatory organisation and only to this extent is it necessary.

Here, then, the existence of the *international brothers*, so carefully concealed in the West, is exposed before the Russian public and the Russian police. Further the leaflet goes on to preach systematic assassination and declares that for people engaged in practical revolutionary work all argument about the future is

^a To mystify his readers Bakunin confuses the leaders of the popular uprisings of the 17th and 18th centuries with the brigands and thieves of the Russia of today. As regards the latter, the reading of Flerovsky's book *The Condition of the Working Class in Russia* would disillusion the most romantic souls concerning these poor creatures from whom Bakunin proposes to form the sacred phalanx of the Russian revolution. The sole brigandage — apart from the governmental sphere, of course — that is carried on still on a big scale in Russia is the stealing of horses, run as a commercial enterprise by the capitalists, of whom the “revolutionaries without phrases” are but the tools and victims.

criminal because it hinders *pure destruction* and delays the march of revolution. We believe only in those who show their devotion to the cause of revolution by deeds, without fear of torture or imprisonment, because we renounce all words that are not immediately followed by deeds. We have no further use for aimless propaganda that does not set itself a definite time and place for realisation of the aims of revolution. What is more, it stands in our way and we shall make every effort to combat it ... We shall silence by force the chatters who refuse to understand this.

These threats were addressed to the Russian émigrés who had not bowed to Bakunin's papal authority and whom he called doctrinaires.

We break all ties with the political émigrés who refuse to return to their country to join our ranks, and, until these ranks become evident, with all those who refuse to work for their public emergence on the scene of Russian life. *We make exception for the émigrés who have already declared themselves workers of the European revolution.* From now on we shall make no further repetitions or appeals ... He who has ears and eyes will hear and see the men of action, and if he does not join them his destruction will be no fault of ours, just as it will be no fault of ours if all who hide behind the scenes are cold-bloodedly and pitilessly destroyed, along with the scenery that hides them.

At this point we can see right through Bakunin. While enjoining the émigrés on pain of death to return to Russia as agents of his secret society — like the Russian police-spies who would offer them passports and money to go there and join in conspiracies — he grants himself a papal dispensation to remain peacefully in Switzerland as “a worker of the European revolution”, and to occupy himself composing manifestos that compromise the unfortunate students whom the police hold in their prisons.

While not recognising any other activity but that of destruction, we acknowledge that the forms in which it manifests itself may be extremely varied: poison, dagger, noose, etc. The revolution sanctifies all without distinction. The field lies open! ... Let all heads that are young and healthy undertake at once the sacred work of killing out evil, purging and enlightening the Russian land by fire and sword, joining fraternally with those who will do the same thing throughout Europe.

Let us add that in this lofty proclamation the inevitable brigand figures in the melodramatic person of Karl Moor (from Schiller's *Robbers*), and that no. 2 of *The People's Judgement*,⁸¹ quoting a passage from this leaflet, calls it straight out “a proclamation of Bakunin's” ...

No one will venture to doubt that these Russian pamphlets, the secret statutes, and all the works published by Bakunin since 1869 in French, come from one and the same source. On the contrary, all these three categories complement one another. They correspond to some extent to the three degrees of initiation into the famous

organisation of universal destruction. The French brochures of Citizen B. are written for the rank and file of the Alliance, whose prejudices are taken into account. They are told of nothing but pure anarchy, of anti-authoritarianism, of a free federation of autonomous groups and other equally harmless things: a mere jumble of words. The secret statutes are intended for the international brothers of the West; there anarchy becomes “the complete unleashing of popular life ... of evil passions”, but underneath this anarchy there lies the secret directing element — the brothers themselves; they are given only a few vague indications on the morality of the Alliance, stolen from Loyola, and the necessity of leaving not a stone standing is mentioned only in passing, because these are Westerners brought up on philistine prejudices and some allowances have to be made for them. They are told that the truth, too blinding for eyes not yet accustomed to true anarchism, will be fully revealed in the program of the Russian section. Only to the born anarchists, to the people elect, to his young people of Holy Russia does the prophet dare to speak out openly. There anarchy means universal, pan destruction; the revolution, a series of assassinations, first individual and then *en masse*; the sole rule of action, the Jesuit morality intensified; the revolutionary type, the brigand. There, thought and learning are absolutely forbidden to the young as mundane occupations that could lead them to doubt the all-destructive orthodoxy. Those who persist in adhering to these theoretical heresies or who apply their vulgar criticism to the dogmas of universal amorphism are threatened with a holy inquisition. Before the youth of Russia the Pope^a need feel no restraint either in the form or substance of his utterances. He gives his tongue free play and the complete absence of ideas is expressed in such grandiloquent verbiage that it cannot be reproduced in French without weakening its comic effect. His language is not even real Russian. It is Tatar, so a native Russian has stated. These small men with atrophied minds puff themselves up with horrific phrases in order to appear in their own eyes as giants of revolution. It is the fable of the frog and the ox.

What terrible revolutionaries! They want to annihilate and amorphise everything, “absolutely everything”. They draw up lists of proscribed persons, doomed to die by their daggers, their poison, their ropes, by the bullets from their revolvers; they “will tear out the tongues” of many, but they will bow before the majesty of the tsar. Indeed, the tsar, the officials, the nobility, the bourgeoisie may sleep in peace. The Alliance does not make war on the established states, but on the revolutionaries who do not stoop to the role of supernumeraries in this tragicomedy. Peace to the palaces, war on the cottages! ...

^a Bakunin — *Ed.*

The third article is entitled: *The Fundamental Principles of the Future Social Order*.⁸² This article shows that if the ordinary mortal is punished like a criminal for even thinking about the social organisation of the future, this is because the leaders have arranged everything in advance.

The ending of the present social order and the renewal of life with the aid of the new principles can be accomplished *only by concentrating all the means of social existence in the hands of our committee, and the proclamation of compulsory physical labour for everyone.*

The committee, as soon as the present institutions have been overthrown, proclaims that everything is common property, orders the setting up of workers' societies (*artels*) and at the same time publishes statistical tables compiled by experts and pointing out what branches of labour are most needed in a certain locality and what branches may run into difficulties there.

For a certain number of days assigned for the revolutionary upheaval and the disorders that are bound to follow, each person must join one or another of these *artels* according to his own choice ... All those who remain isolated and unattached to workers' groups without sufficient reason will have no right of access either to the communal eating places or to the communal dormitories, or to any other buildings assigned to meet the various needs of the brother workers or that contain the goods and materials, the victuals or tools reserved for all members of the established workers' society; in a word, he who without sufficient reason has not joined an *artel*, will be left without means of subsistence. All the roads, all the means of communication will be closed to him; he will have no other alternative but work or death.

Each *artel* will elect from its members an assessor ("*otzienchtchik*"), who regulates the work, keeps the books on production and consumption and the productivity of every worker, and acts as go-between with the general office of the given locality. The office, consisting of members elected from among the *artels* of the locality, conducts exchange between these *artels*, administers all the communal establishments (dormitories, eating places, schools, hospitals) and directs all public works: "All general work is managed by the office, while all individual work requiring special skills and craftsmanship is performed by special *artels*." Then comes a long set of rules on education, hours of work, feeding of children, freeing of inventors from work and so on.

With full publicity, knowledge and activity on the part of everyone all ambition, as we now know it, all deception will disappear without a trace, will vanish forever ... Everyone will endeavour to produce as much as possible for society and consume as little as possible; all the pride, all the ambition of the worker of those times will rest in the awareness of his usefulness to society.

What a beautiful model of barrack-room communism! Here you have it all: communal eating, communal sleeping, assessors and offices regulating education, production, consumption, in a word, all social activity, and to crown all, *our committee*, anonymous and unknown to anyone, as the supreme director. This is indeed the purest anti-authoritarianism ...

Now that the common herd knows the role “our committee” is destined to perform, it is easy to understand this competitive hatred of the state and of any centralisation of the workers’ forces. Assuredly, while the working class continues to have any representative bodies of its own, Messrs. Bakunin and Nechayev, revolutionising under the incognito of “our committee”, will not be able to put themselves in possession of the public wealth or reap the benefit of this sublime ambition which they so ardently desire to inspire in others — that of working much to consume little! ...

This same man who in 1870 preaches to the Russians passive, blind obedience to orders coming from above and from an anonymous committee; who declares that jesuitical discipline is the condition sine qua non of victory, the only thing capable of defeating the formidable centralisation of the state — not just the Russian state but any state; who proclaims a communism more authoritarian than the most primitive communism — this same man, in 1871, weaves a separatist and disorganising movement into the fabric of the International under the pretext of combating the authoritarianism and centralisation of the German communists, of introducing autonomy of the sections, a free federation of autonomous groups, and of making the International what it should be: the image of the future society. If the society of the future were modelled on the Alliance, Russian section, it would far surpass the Paraguay of the Reverend Jesuit Fathers,⁸³ so dear to Bakunin’s heart.

IX. Conclusion

While granting the fullest freedom to the movements and aspirations of the working class in various countries, the International had nevertheless succeeded in uniting it into a single whole and making the ruling classes and their governments feel for the first time the cosmopolitan power of the proletariat. The ruling classes and the governments recognised this fact by concentrating their attacks on the executive body of our whole organisation, the General Council. These attacks became increasingly intense after the fall of the Commune. And this was the moment that the Alliancists chose to declare open war on the General Council themselves! They claimed that its influence, a powerful weapon in the hands of the International, was but a weapon directed against the International itself. It had been won in a struggle not against the enemies of the proletariat but against the International. According to them, the General

Council's domineering tendencies had prevailed over the autonomy of the sections and the national federations. The only way of saving autonomy was to decapitate the International.

Indeed the men of the Alliance realised that if they did not seize this decisive moment, it would be all up with their plans for the secret direction of the proletarian movement of which Bakunin's hundred international brothers had dreamed. Their invective wakened approving echoes in the police press of all countries.

Their resounding phrases about autonomy and free federation, in a word, war-cries against the General Council, were thus nothing but a manoeuvre to conceal their true purpose — to disorganise the International and by doing so subordinate it to the secret, hierarchic and autocratic rule of the Alliance.

Autonomy of the sections, free federation of the autonomous groups, anti-authoritarianism, anarchy — these were convenient phrases for a society of the “declassed”, of “down-and-outs” “with no career or prospects”, conspiring within the International to subject it to a secret dictatorship and impose upon it the program of M. Bakunin!

Stripped of its melodramatic finery, this program amounts to the following:

1. All the depravities in which the life of declassed persons ejected from the upper strata of society must inevitably become involved are proclaimed to be so many ultra-revolutionary virtues.

2. It is regarded as a matter of principle and necessity to debauch a small minority of carefully selected workers, who are enticed away from the masses by a mysterious initiation, by making them take part in the game of intrigues and deceit of the secret government, and by preaching to them that through giving free rein to their “evil passions” they can shake the old society to its foundations.

3. The chief means of propaganda is to attract young people by fantastic lies about the extent and power of the secret society, prophecies of the imminent revolution it has prepared and so on, and to compromise in government eyes the most progressive people from among the well-to-do classes with a view to exploiting them financially.

4. The economic and political struggle of the workers for their emancipation is replaced by the universal pan-destructive acts of heroes of the underworld — this latest incarnation of revolution. In a word, one must let loose the street hooligans suppressed by the workers themselves in “the revolutions on the Western classical model”, and thus place gratuitously at the disposal of the reactionaries a well disciplined gang of agents-provocateurs.

It is hard to say what predominates in the theoretical elucubrations and practical endeavours of the Alliance — clowning or infamy. Nevertheless, it has succeeded in

provoking within the International a muffled conflict which for two years has hindered the actions of our Association and has culminated in the secession of some of the sections and federations. The resolutions adopted by the Hague Congress against the Alliance were therefore merely a matter of duty; the Congress could not allow the International, that great creation of the proletariat, to fall into nets spread by the riffraff of the exploiting classes. As for those who wish to deprive the General Council of the prerogatives without which the International would be nothing but a confused, disjointed and, to use the language of the Alliance, “amorphous” mass, we cannot regard them otherwise than as traitors or dupes. ■

The Bakuninists at Work⁸⁴

By Frederick Engels

Foreword

A few chronological data may help to make the following review more easily understood.

On February 9, 1873, King Amadeo, tired of wearing the Spanish crown, abdicated, thus becoming the first king ever to go on strike. On the 12th, a republic was proclaimed, and immediately a new Carlist revolt broke out in the Basque provinces.

On April 10, a Constituent Assembly was elected which met at the beginning of June, and on June 8 proclaimed a federal republic. On the 11th, a new government was formed under Pi y Margall. At the same time a commission was elected to draw up a new constitution, but the radical republicans, the so-called Intransigents, were excluded from it. When the new constitution was announced on July 3, it did not go far enough for the Intransigents as regards the dismemberment of Spain into “independent cantons”. The Intransigents therefore at once organised uprisings in the provinces. Between July 5th and 11th, the Intransigents triumphed in Seville, Córdoba, Granada, Málaga, Cadiz, Alcoy, Murcia, Cartagena, Valencia, etc., and set up an independent cantonal government in each of these towns. On July 18, Pi y Margall resigned and was replaced by Salmeron, who immediately sent troops against the insurgents. The latter were defeated in a few days after slight resistance; by July 26, with the fall of Cadiz, government power was restored throughout Andalusia and, almost simultaneously, Murcia and Valencia were subdued. Only Valencia fought with any energy.

Cartagena alone held out. This naval port, the largest in Spain, which had fallen to the insurgents together with the navy, was defended on the landward side by a wall and 13 separate forts, and was thus not easy to take. The government being not at all eager to destroy its own naval base, the “Sovereign Canton of Cartagena” survived until January 11, 1874, the day on which it finally capitulated, since in fact there was absolutely nothing else left for it to do.

Written in the latter half of 1873; the foreword was written in January 1894.

All that concerns us here in this whole ignominious insurrection are the even more ignominious actions of the Bakuninist anarchists; only these are presented here in some detail, as a warning example to the contemporary world.

I

The report just published by the Hague Commission on the secret Alliance of Mikhail Bakunin^a (see the article *El Cagliostro Bakunin*⁸⁵ in Nos. 87-90 of *Volksstaat*) has brought to the attention of the labour world the intrigues, villainies and empty phrases by which it was intended to place the proletarian movement in the service of the swollen ambition and selfish designs of a few misunderstood geniuses. Meanwhile, these megalomaniacs have given us the opportunity in Spain to see something of their practical revolutionary activity. Let us see how they put into practice their ultra-revolutionary phrases on anarchy and autonomy, on the abolition of all authority, especially that of the state, and on the immediate and complete emancipation of the workers. We are at last in a position to do so now, since, apart from the newspaper reports on the events in Spain, we have before us the report sent to the Congress of Geneva by the new Madrid federation of the International.

It is common knowledge that in Spain the schism in the International gave the upper hand to the members of the secret Alliance; the vast majority of Spanish workers joined them. When the republic was proclaimed in February 1873, the Spanish members of the Alliance found themselves in a serious predicament. Spain is such a backward country industrially that there can be no question of *immediate* and complete emancipation of the working class. Spain will first have to pass through various stages of development and remove a considerable number of obstacles from its path. The republic offered a chance of passing through these stages in the shortest possible time and quickly surmounting these obstacles. But this chance could only be made use of through the active *political* intervention of the Spanish working class. The working masses sensed this: everywhere they pressed to participate in events, to take advantage of the opportunity to act, instead of leaving the owning classes a clear field for action and intrigues, as had been hitherto the case. The government announced that elections were to be held to the Constituent Cortes. What stand should the International take? The Bakuninist leaders were in a quandary. Continued political inaction became more ridiculous and impossible with every passing day; the workers wanted "action". On the other hand, the members of the Alliance had been preaching for years that it was

^a *L'Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste*, London 1873. The German edition was published under the title: *Ein Komplott gegen die Internationale* (Buchhandlung des "Vorwärts").

wrong to participate in any revolution that did not have as its goal the immediate and complete emancipation of the working class; that to undertake any political action implied recognition of the State, the source of all evil; and that, therefore, participation in any form of elections was a crime worthy of death. How they resolved the dilemma is recounted in the above-mentioned Madrid report.

The same people who rejected the resolution of the general congress at The Hague on the political action of the working class and trampled on the rules of the International, thereby introducing division, conflict and disorder within the Spanish federation; the same people who had the cheek to present us to the workers as ambitious power-seekers, who, under the pretext of bringing the working class to power, wish to seize power themselves; the same people who call themselves autonomists, anarchist-revolutionaries, etc., have on this occasion thrown themselves enthusiastically into politics, but into the worst kind, bourgeois politics. They have worked not to give political power to the working class — an idea which they view with horror — but to help a bourgeois faction to gain control, a faction composed of adventurists, and ambitious power-seekers who call themselves Intransigent Republicans.

On the eve of the general election for the Constituent Cortes, the workers of Barcelona, Alcoy and other places wanted to know what policy they should follow in the parliamentary and other struggles. Two large meetings were held for this purpose, one in Barcelona and the other in Alcoy. At both the Alliance made every effort to oppose a decision being reached on what policy the International [their own, mark!] should adopt. It was resolved that *the International, as an Association, should undertake no political action whatsoever; but that its members, as individuals, could act as they wished and join any party that suited them*, according to their famous principle of autonomy! What was the result of the application of such an outlandish doctrine? That the majority of members of the International, including the anarchists, took part in the elections with no program, no banner, and no candidates, thereby contributing to the fact that almost exclusively bourgeois republicans were elected, with the exception of two or three workers who represent absolutely nothing, whose voice has not once been raised in defence of the interests of our class and who calmly vote for any of the reactionary proposals advanced by the majority.

This is what Bakunist “political abstention” leads to. In peaceful times when the proletariat knows in advance that the most it can achieve is to get a few deputies into parliament and that it has no chance at all of gaining a parliamentary majority, it may be possible to convince the workers here or there that it is a great revolutionary action to stay at home during elections and, in general, instead of attacking the concrete state in which we live and which oppresses us, to attack an abstract state that exists nowhere,

and therefore cannot defend itself. This is a magnificent way of playing the revolutionary for people who are easily disheartened; and just how much the Alliance leaders belong to this kind of people is shown in detail in the report on the Alliance mentioned at the beginning.

However, as soon as events themselves push the proletariat into the foreground, abstentionism becomes a tangible absurdity, and the active intervention of the working class is an unavoidable necessity. This was the case in Spain. The abdication of Amadeo ousted the radical monarchists⁸⁶ from power and from the possibility of recovering it in the near future; the Alfonsists⁸⁷ were for the time being in even greater disarray; the Carlists,⁸⁸ as they almost invariably do, preferred civil war to an election struggle. All these parties abstained in true Spanish style. Only the federal republicans, divided into two groups, and the bulk of the workers took part in the elections. Given the tremendous fascination that the name of the International still exerted at the time on the workers of Spain and given the excellent organisation which, at least for practical purposes, the Spanish section still preserved, it was certain that in the factory districts of Catalonia, in Valencia, in the towns of Andalusia, etc., all the candidates nominated and supported by the International would have achieved a brilliant victory, producing a sufficiently strong minority in the cortes to decide the issue every time it came to a vote between the two republican groups. The workers felt this; they felt the time had come to set their still powerful organisation in motion. But the honourable leaders of the Bakuninist school had long been preaching the gospel of unconditional abstention, and could not suddenly reverse course; and so they invented that lamentable way out of having the International abstain as a body, but allowing individual members to vote *as they liked*. The result of this declaration of political bankruptcy was that the workers, as always in such cases, voted for those who appeared to be the most radical, the Intransigents, and thus, feeling themselves more or less responsible for the subsequent steps taken by their deputies, became involved in them.

II

The members of the Alliance could not possibly persist in the ridiculous position in which their cunning electoral policy had put them; it would have meant the end of their current domination of the International in Spain. They had to act for appearance sake. Salvation lay in a *general strike*.

In the Bakuninist program, a general strike is the lever for unleashing social revolution. One fine morning, the workers in all the industries of a country, even of the whole world, stop work and, in four weeks at the maximum, oblige the ruling classes to surrender, or to attack the workers, thereby giving the latter the right to

defend themselves and use this opportunity to tear down the whole of the old society. The idea is far from new; the French socialists, and later the Belgian, have ridden this horse repeatedly since 1848. Actually, however, it is originally English-bred. During the rapid and intense development of Chartism among the English workers following the crisis of 1837, the “holy month” of national strike was preached as early as 1839 (see Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, second edition, p. 234); and the idea so resounded that the factory workers of northern England tried putting it into practice in July 1842. At the Alliance congress held in Geneva on September 1, 1873, also a major role was attributed to general strike, although it was recognised by all that a complete organisation of the working class and a full kitty were necessary. This indeed was the problem. On the one hand, the governments, especially if encouraged by political abstentionism, will never allow the organisation or the funds of the workers to go so far; and on the other hand the political actions and abuses of the ruling classes will promote the emancipation of the workers long before the proletariat manages to achieve this ideal organisation and this vast reserve fund. And if it did have them, then it would not need to resort to a general strike to achieve its purpose.

Anybody who knows anything at all about the secret intrigues of the Alliance cannot doubt that the idea of using this well-tried method emanated from the Swiss centre. Be that as it may, the Spanish leaders saw it as a means of doing something without turning directly “political” and seized it with delight. Everywhere the miraculous properties of a general strike were being preached and preparations were at once made in Barcelona and Alcoy to begin it.

Meanwhile, political affairs were relentlessly developing towards a crisis. Castelar and company, the old federal republican boasters, were frightened by the movement which had outgrown them; there was nothing left for them to do but to surrender power to Pi y Margall, who attempted to come to an agreement with the Intransigents. Of all the republican officials, Pi was the only socialist, the only one who understood the necessity for the republic to rely on the workers. He also at once presented a program of social measures for immediate implementation, which were not only directly beneficial to the workers, but whose results would entail further steps and would thus at least set the social revolution in motion. But the Bakuninists in the International, who are obliged to reject even the most revolutionary measures when these emanate from the “state”, preferred to support the biggest swindlers among the Intransigents rather than a minister. Pi’s negotiations with the Intransigents dragged on. The Intransigents began to lose patience; and the most passionate of them began the cantonal uprising in Andalusia. The time had come for the leaders of the Alliance to act too if they did not want merely to be towed along by the bourgeois Intransigents.

They thus ordered the general strike.

In Barcelona the following poster, among others, appeared on the walls:

“Workers! We are calling a general strike to show the profound repugnance we feel on seeing the government send in the army against our brother workers, while hardly bothering about the war against the Carlists”, etc.

In other words the workers of Barcelona — the most important industrial centre in Spain, which has seen more barricade fighting in its history than any other city in the world — were invited to confront the armed power of the government, not with arms in their hands, but with ... a general strike, with a means that only directly affects individual bourgeois, but not their collective representative — state power. The workers of Barcelona had been able, in the inactivity of peacetime, to listen to the militant phrases of docile men like Alerini, Farga Pellicer and Viñas; but when the time came for action, Alerini, Farga Pellicer and Viñas first announced their famous election program, then attempted to calm passions, and finally, instead of issuing a call to arms, declared a general strike, provoking the general contempt of the workers. However, even the weakest of the Intransigents showed more energy than the strongest member of the Alliance. The Alliance and the sections of the International it had deceived lost all their influence, and when these gentlemen called for a general strike, on the pretext of paralysing the government, the workers simply laughed at them. But one thing at least which the activity of the false International achieved was to ensure that Barcelona took no part in the cantonal uprising. In Barcelona the working-class element was strongly represented everywhere; and Barcelona was the only city whose participation could firmly back up this working-class element, thereby giving it the opportunity of eventually becoming master of the whole movement. Moreover, the participation of Barcelona would have made its triumph as good as certain. But Barcelona did not raise a finger; the Barcelona workers, who knew the Intransigents only too well and had been deceived by the Alliance, did nothing, thereby ensuring the ultimate triumph of the Madrid government. All of which did not prevent Alerini and Brousse, members of the Alliance (details about whom are to be found in the report on the Alliance), from declaring in their newspaper *Solidarité révolutionnaire*:⁸⁹

The revolutionary movement is spreading like wildfire throughout the peninsula ... In

Barcelona *nothing has yet happened, but in the market place the revolution is permanent!*

But it was the revolution of the Alliance, which consists in keeping up an oratorical barrage, and for this reason remains “permanently” in the same “place”.

The general strike was on the agenda at the same time in Alcoy. Alcoy is a recently created industrial centre with a population of some 30,000, in which the International, in the Bakuninist form, had only penetrated a year before and at once developed

apace. Socialism, in any form, was well received by these workers, who had hitherto remained outside the movement, as is sometimes the case in certain backward places in Germany, where the General Association of German Workers suddenly acquires a large number of ephemeral adherents. Alcoy was thus chosen for the headquarters of the Spanish Bakuninist federal commission, and it is this federal commission that we are here going to see in action.

On July 7 a workers' meeting voted in support of the general strike, and the following day sent a deputation to the alcalde (mayor), asking him to summon together the factory owners within twenty-four hours and present them with the workers' demands. Alcalde Aldors, a bourgeois republican, stalled off the workers, sent to Alicante for troops and advised the factory owners not to give in to the workers' demands, but to barricade themselves in their houses. As for himself, he would remain at his post. After a meeting with the factory owners — we are following the official report of the Alliance federal commission, dated July 14, 1873 — the alcalde, who had originally promised the workers to remain neutral, issues a proclamation in which he “insults and slanders the workers and takes the side of the factory owners, thus destroying the rights and liberty of the strikers and challenging them to do battle”. Just how the pious wishes of a mayor could destroy the rights and liberty of the strikers is not made clear. Anyway, the workers led by the Alliance informed the municipal council, via a commission, that if it did not intend to uphold its promised neutrality in the strike, it had better resign to avoid a conflict. The commission was turned away, and as it was leaving the town hall the police fired on the unarmed people peacefully assembled in the square. That was how the struggle began, according to the Alliance report. The people armed themselves, and a battle began that was to last “twenty hours”. On one side, the workers, which *Solidarité révolutionnaire* numbers at 5,000; on the other, 32 gendarmes in the town hall, and several other armed individuals, barricaded in four or five houses round the market place, which the people burnt down in good Prussian manner. Eventually, the gendarmes ran out of ammunition and had to surrender.

There would have been less misfortunes to lament [says the Alliance report] had not Alcalde Aldors deceived the people by pretending to surrender and then treacherously murdering those who entered the town hall, trusting his word; and the alcalde himself would not have perished as he did at the hands of the justly indignant people, had he not fired his revolver point-blank at those who went to arrest him.

What were the casualties in this battle?

Although it is impossible to calculate exactly the number of dead and wounded [on the people's side], they certainly amount to *no less than 10*. On the part of the provokers,

there were no less than 15 dead and wounded.

This was the Alliance's first street battle. For twenty hours, 5,000 people fought against 32 gendarmes and a few armed bourgeois, and beat them after the latter had run out of ammunition, losing 10 men in all. It would appear that the Alliance has successfully taught its followers to be guided by Falstaff's wise words, "the better part of valour is discretion".

Naturally the terrible reports in the bourgeois press of factories burnt down for no reason at all, gendarmes shot en masse, people having petrol poured over them and being set ablaze, are pure inventions. The victorious workers, even when led by the Alliance, whose motto is "Break, destroy!", are always far too generous with their defeated opponents to act thus, so that the latter accuse them of all the atrocities they never fail to commit themselves when they are victorious.

And so victory was achieved.

"In Alcoy", *Solidarité révolutionnaire* declares jubilantly, "our friends, numbering 5,000, are masters of the situation".

Let us see what these "masters" did with their "situation".

At this point the Alliance report and the Alliance newspaper leave us completely in the lurch and we have to rely on ordinary press reports. From the latter we learn that a "Committee of Public Safety", that is to say, a revolutionary government, was immediately set up in Alcoy. Although at the Alliance congress held at Saint-Imier (Switzerland) on September 15, 1872, it was agreed that "any organisation of a political power, so-called provisional or revolutionary power, can only be a new fraud and would be just as dangerous to the proletariat as all existing governments". Moreover, the members of the Spanish federal commission, meeting in Alcoy, did their utmost to get the congress of the Spanish section of the International to adopt this decision as its own. Yet, in spite of all this, we find Severino Albarracin, a member of that commission, and, according to some reports, its secretary Francisco Tomas, too, becoming members of this provisional and revolutionary government, the Alcoy committee of public safety!

And what did this committee of public safety do? What measures did it adopt to bring about the "immediate and complete emancipation of the workers"? It forbade any man to leave the town, allowing women to do so, provided they ... had a *pass*! The enemies of all authority reestablishing the pass system! What is more, there reigned complete confusion, complete inactivity and complete ineptitude.

Meanwhile, General Velarde was advancing from Alicante with troops. The government had every reason for wishing to put down the local insurrections in the provinces quietly. And the "masters of the situation" in Alcoy had every reason to wish

to extricate themselves from a situation in which they were at a loss as to what to do. Thus, deputy Cervera, acting as mediator, had an easy time of it. The committee of public safety resigned, and the troops entered the town on July 12 without encountering the slightest resistance, the only condition made by the committee of public safety being ... general amnesty. The Alliance “masters of the situation” had thus avoided the issue again. And this marked the end of the Alcoy adventure.

At Sanlucar de Barrameda, near Cadiz, the Alliance report relates, the alcalde closed down the International’s premises and by his threats and incessant attacks on the personal rights of the citizens provoked the anger of the workers. A commission demanded of the minister observation of the law and the reopening of the premises which had been arbitrarily dosed down. Señor Pi agreed in principle but refused to comply in practice; the workers saw that the government was systematically trying to outlaw their Association, and dismissed the local authorities, replacing them with others who ordered the reopening of the Association’s premises.

“In Sanlucar ... the people are masters of the situation!” *Solidarité révolutionnaire* declares triumphantly. The Aliancistas, who here too, contrary to their anarchist principles, formed a revolutionary government, did not know what to do with their power. They wasted time in empty debates and paper resolutions, and on the 5th of August, after occupying Seville and Cadiz, General Pavia sent a few companies from Soria’s brigade to Sanlucar and ... met with no resistance whatsoever.

Such were the heroic deeds performed by the Alliance where it had no competition.

III

Immediately after the street battle in Alcoy, the Intransigents rose up in Andalusia. Pi y Margall was still in power and engaged in continuous negotiations with the leaders of this party with the object of forming a ministry with them. What, then, was the point of beginning an uprising while negotiations were still in progress? It has not been possible to determine the reason for this haste; one thing is certain, however, and that is that the Intransigents were eager to establish the federal republic in practice as quickly as possible, in order to seize power and the many new governmental posts that would be created in the separate cantons. In Madrid, the Cortes were delaying the dismemberment of Spain too long; and so it was time to take matters into one’s own hands and proclaim sovereign cantons everywhere. The attitude hitherto maintained by the members of the International (the Bakuninists), deeply involved since the elections in the actions of the Intransigents, made it possible to count on their support. They had, after all, just seized power in Alcoy by force, and were thus in open conflict with the government. Moreover, the Bakuninists had been preaching for years that all

revolutionary action from above was pernicious and that everything should be organised and carried out from below. And here they were with the opportunity to implement the famous principle of autonomy from below, at least in a few towns. It could not be otherwise; the Bakuninist workers swallowed the bait and began to draw the chestnuts from the fire for the Intransigents, only to be rewarded later by their allies, as ever, with kicks and bullets.

What was the position of the Bakuninist International in this whole movement? They helped to give it the character of federalist atomisation and realised their ideal of anarchy as far as was possible. The same Bakuninists who a few months before in Córdoba had pronounced anathema on the establishment of revolutionary governments, declaring such to be treason and a swindle for the workers, now participated in all the municipal governments of Andalusia, but always in a minority, so that the Intransigents were able to do exactly as they wished. The latter monopolised the political and military leadership of the movement, dismissing the workers with a few fine speeches or a few resolutions on social reforms of a most crude and ridiculous nature, which anyway only existed on paper. Whenever the Bakuninist leaders requested some real, positive concession, they rejected it scornfully. On being questioned by English newspaper correspondents, the Intransigents who led the movement hastened to declare that they had nothing at all to do with the so-called “members of the International”, were in no way responsible for their actions, and that they were keeping its leaders and all the fugitives from the Paris Commune under strict police surveillance. Finally, as we shall see, in Seville, during the battle with the government troops, the Intransigents also fired on their Bakuninist allies.

Thus, within a few days, the whole of Andalusia was in the hands of the armed Intransigents. Seville, Málaga, Granada, Cadiz, etc., fell to them almost without resistance. Each town declared itself an independent canton and set up a revolutionary junta. Murcia, Cartagena and Valencia followed suit. A similar attempt, but of a more pacific nature, was made in Salamanca. Thus the majority of Spain’s large cities were in the hands of the insurgents, with the exception of the capital, Madrid — simply a city of luxury, which hardly ever assumes a decisive role — and Barcelona. Had Barcelona revolted, ultimate success would have been almost certain, and at the same time it would have ensured solid support for the worker element in the movement. But we have already seen how in Barcelona the Intransigents were practically powerless and the Bakuninists, although very strong there at the time, chose general strike as a means of *avoiding the issue*. Thus, this time Barcelona was not at its post.

Nevertheless, this insurrection, although begun in a hair-brained manner, would have had a good chance of success if only it had been conducted with some intelligence

— if only in the manner of Spanish military revolts, in which the garrison in one town rises, marches to the next town, talks over the garrison there and leads it away with it, and, growing like an avalanche, advances on the capital, until a fortunate engagement or the desertion to its side of the troops sent out against it decides the victory. This method was especially suitable to the present occasion. The insurgents had long been organised everywhere into volunteer battalions, whose discipline was, it is true, pathetic, but certainly no worse than that of the remnants of the old, largely demoralised Spanish army. The only troops on which the government could rely were the gendarmes (guardias civiles), and these were scattered all over the country. The main task was thus to prevent the gendarmes from concentrating, and this could only be done by assuming the offensive in the open field. There was little risk involved in this since the government was only able to oppose the volunteers with troops as undisciplined as they themselves. This was the only way to win.

But no. The federalism of the Intransigents and their Bakuninist appendix actually consisted in leaving each city to fend for itself, insisting on the importance not of cooperation with the other towns but separation from them, thus preventing any possibility of a general offensive. What was an unavoidable evil in the German Peasant War and the German uprisings of May 1849 — the disunity and isolation of the revolutionary forces, which enabled the same government troops to go around suppressing one revolt after another⁹⁰ — was here declared to be the principle of supreme revolutionary wisdom. Bakunin had this satisfaction. Back in September 1870 (in his *Lettres à un français*⁹¹) he had declared that the only way of driving the Prussians from France by a revolutionary struggle was to abolish all centralised leadership and leave every city, every village, every community to wage war for itself. One had only to oppose the Prussian army with its single command, with the outburst of revolutionary passions, and victory was certain. Faced by the collective intelligence of the French people, finally restored to it, the individual intelligence of Moltke would, naturally, vanish. The French just would not understand that then, but in Spain Bakunin had achieved a brilliant triumph, as we have already seen and shall yet see.

Meanwhile, this rash uprising, sparked off without any motive at all, made it impossible for Pi y Margall to continue negotiations with the Intransigents. He was forced to resign, and was replaced by pure republicans like Castelar, undisguised bourgeois, whose first aim was to crush the workers' movement, which they had formerly made use of but which was now a hindrance to them. One division was formed under the command of General Pavia to be sent against Andalusia, and another, under General Campos, to be sent against Valencia and Cartagena. The nucleus of these divisions were gendarmes drawn from all over Spain, all old soldiers whose

discipline was still intact. As was the case in the attacks of the Versailles army on Paris, the gendarmes were once again called upon to hold together the demoralised military forces and to always take the head of the attacking columns, tasks which they accomplished to the best of their abilities. Apart from these, the divisions contained some composite line regiments, so that each of them numbered some 3000 men. This was all the government could mobilise against the insurgents.

General Pavia set out by July 20. On the 24th, Córdoba was occupied by a detachment of gendarmes and troops of the line under Ripoll. On the 29th, Pavia launched an attack on barricaded Seville which fell to him on the 30th or the 31st (the telegrams are contradictory). Leaving a mobile column to put down the surrounding countryside, he advanced on Cadiz, whose defenders only fought on the approaches to the city, and even then with little spirit, and then, on August 4, allowed themselves to be disarmed without resistance. In the next few days, Pavia disarmed, also without resistance, Sanlucar de Barrameda, San Roque, Tarifa, Algeciras, and a multitude of other small towns, all of which had set themselves up as independent cantons. At the same time he sent detachments against Málaga and Granada, which surrendered without firing a shot on the 3rd and 8th of August respectively; so that by August 10, in less than a fortnight and almost without a struggle, the whole of Andalusia had been subdued.

On July 26, Martinez Campos mounted his attack on Valencia. Here the insurrection had been started by the workers. When the schism in the Spanish International took place, the real International had obtained the majority in Valencia and the new Spanish Federal Council was transferred there. Shortly after the proclamation of the republic, when revolutionary battles were clearly imminent, the Bakuninist workers of Valencia, mistrusting the Barcelona leaders who masked appeasement with ultra-revolutionary phrases, promised the real International that they would make common cause with them in all local movements. When the cantonal movement broke out, both immediately struck together and, making use of the Intransigents, dislodged the government's troops. It is not known what the composition of the Valencia junta was; however, from the reports of English press correspondents it is clear that in it, as in the Valencian volunteers, the workers were definitely in the majority. These same correspondents spoke of the Valencian insurgents with a respect which they were far from according to the other rebels, predominantly Intransigents. They praised their discipline and the order that reigned in the city and predicted protracted resistance and a fierce struggle. They were not mistaken. Valencia, an open city, resisted the attacks of Martinez Campos' division from July 26 to August 8, that is to say, for longer than the whole of Andalusia put together.

In the province of Murcia, the capital of the same name was occupied without resistance. After the fall of Valencia, Martínez Campos marched on Cartagena, one of the best defended strongholds in Spain, protected on the landward side by a wall and a series of separate forts on the dominating heights. The 3000 government soldiers, without any siege artillery, were naturally powerless with their light field weapons against the heavy artillery of the forts, and had to limit themselves to laying siege to the city from the landward side. This did not mean much, however, as long as the people of Cartagena dominated the sea with the warships they had captured in the port. The insurgents, who while the struggle had been going on in Valencia and Andalusia had only bothered about themselves, began to think about the outside world after most of the revolts had been quelled, when they began to run short of money and provisions. Only then was an attempt made to march on Madrid, which lay at least 60 German miles away, more than twice as far as, for example, Valencia or Granada! The expedition ended in disaster not far from Cartagena: and the siege put an end to any further attempts at a land sortie. They then took to making attacks with the fleet. And what attacks! There could be no question of inciting the recently subdued coastal towns to a fresh revolt with Cartagenan warships. The navy of the sovereign canton of Cartagena thus limited itself to threatening to bombard most of the coastal towns from Valencia to Málaga — which according to the Cartagenan theory were also sovereign — and when necessary to actually bombarding them, if they failed to bring on board the requested provisions and war contribution in hard cash. While these cities had been up in arms against the government as sovereign cantons, the principle of “every man for himself” reigned in Cartagena! Now that they had been defeated, the principle of “everyone for Cartagena” was proclaimed. That was how the Intransigents of Cartagena and their Bakuninist associates understood federation of sovereign cantons.

In order to reinforce the ranks of the freedom fighters, the government of Cartagena set free ,800 prisoners from the town jail, the worst thieves and murderers in all Spain. In the light of the information revealed in the report on the Alliance, there is no doubt at all but that this revolutionary measure was suggested to them by the Bakuninists. The report shows how Bakunin dreams of the “releasing of all evil passions” and how he presents the Russian robber as a model for all true revolutionaries. What is alright for the Russians must do for the Spaniards. The government of Cartagena was acting completely in the spirit of Bakunin when it freed the “evil passions” of 1800 locked-up thugs, thereby taking demoralisation among its troops to the limit. And when the Spanish government, instead of pounding its own fortifications to dust, awaited the fall of Cartagena through the internal disintegration of its defenders, it was following a perfectly correct policy.

IV

Let us now take a look at what the report of the new Madrid federation has to say of the whole of this movement:

The congress was due to be held in Valencia on the second Sunday in August. Among other things it had the important task of determining the attitude of the Spanish federation towards the serious political events taking place in Spain since February 11, the day on which the republic was proclaimed. But the scruffy cantonal uprising, so pathetically abortive, in which members of the International took an active part in almost all the insurgent provinces, has not only paralysed the federal council, by dispersing most of its members, but has almost completely disorganised the local federations, drawing upon their individual members — and this is the worst part about it — all the hatred and persecution that a clumsily handled and defeated uprising always entails ...

When the cantonal movement broke out and the juntas, or cantonal governments, were set up, those same people” (the Bakuninists) “who cried out so strongly against political power and accused us so violently of authoritarianism, lost no time in joining those governments. And in such important towns as Seville, Cadiz, Sanlucar de Barrameda, Granada and Valencia many of those members of the International who call themselves anti-authoritarians participated in the cantonal juntas, with no program other than the autonomy of the province or canton. This is officially proved by the proclamations and other documents issued by the above-mentioned juntas, which bear the names of well-known members of the International.

Such a flagrant contradiction between theory and practice, between propaganda and action, would not mean much if such behaviour had led, or could have led, to any advantage for our Association, any progress towards the organisation of our forces, or have brought us any nearer the achievement of our basic aim, the emancipation of the working class. But in fact the contrary happened, as it was bound to, in the absence of collective action on the part of the Spanish proletariat, which could have been so easily achieved by acting in the name of the International, in the absence of agreement between the local federations, with the result that the movement was abandoned to individual or local initiative, with no leadership *other than that which could be imposed on it by the mysterious Alliance, which unfortunately still rules the Spanish section of the International*, and with no program other than that of our natural enemies, the bourgeois republicans. Thus it was that the cantonal uprising succumbed in a shameful manner, almost without resistance, dragging with it in its fall the prestige and organisation of the Spanish International. There is no excess, crime or act of violence that the republicans today do not lay at the door of the International; we are even

reliably informed that in Seville, during the battle, the Intransigents fired on their own allies, members of the International” (Bakuninists). “Reaction, taking clever advantage of our follies, is inciting the republicans to persecute us, at the same time arousing impartial people against us; what they were unable to achieve in the time of Sagasta they are accomplishing now. Today, the name of the International in Spain is abhorred even by the working masses.

In Barcelona, many workers’ sections have withdrawn from the International in protest against the men of the newspaper *La Federacion* [main organ of the Bakuninists] and against their inexplicable behaviour in Jérez, Puerto de Santa Maria and other places, the federations have dissolved themselves; in Loja (Granada province) the few members of the International that lived there have been expelled by the local population; in Madrid, where the greatest freedom is enjoyed, the old federation [Bakuninist] shows not the slightest signs of life, while our own is forced to remain inactive and silent in order to avoid taking the blame for other people’s sins. In towns in the north the increasingly bitter Carlist war prevents us from undertaking anything. Finally, in Valencia, where the government won after a two-week siege, members who did not flee are forced to remain in hiding. The federal council has completely dissolved.

So much for the Madrid report. As we see, it fully coincides with the above historical account.

Let us now look at the results of our investigation.

1. As soon as they were confronted with a serious revolutionary situation, the Bakuninists were compelled to throw their whole previous program overboard. To begin with they sacrificed their dogma of political, and above all electoral, abstention. Then came the turn of anarchy, the abolition of the state; instead of abolishing the state, they tried, on the contrary, to set up a number of new small states. They went on to abandon their principle that the workers must not participate in any revolution that did not have as its aim the immediate and complete emancipation of the proletariat, and took part in a movement whose purely bourgeois character was patently evident. Finally, they trampled underfoot the principle they themselves had only just proclaimed — that the establishment of a revolutionary government is but a new deception and a new betrayal of the working class — by comfortably installing themselves in the government juntas of the separate towns, moreover almost always as an impotent minority, paralysed and politically exploited by the bourgeois.
2. Denying the principles they had always preached, they did so in the most cowardly and false manner and under the pressure of a guilty conscience; neither the Bakuninists themselves nor the masses they led joined the movement with any

program, or any idea at all of what they wanted. What was the natural outcome of this? It was that the Bakuninists either obstructed any movement, as in Barcelona; or found themselves drawn into isolated, unplanned and senseless uprisings, as in Alcoy and Sanlucar de Barrameda; or that leadership of the insurrection fell into the hands of the bourgeois Intransigents, as happened in the majority of cases. Thus, when it came to action, the ultra-revolutionary cries of the Bakuninists gave way to evasion, uprisings doomed to defeat in advance, or adherence to a bourgeois party which not only subjected the workers to the most shameful political exploitation but even rewarded them with blows.

3. All that remains of the so-called principles of anarchy, free federation of independent groups, etc., is the boundless, senseless disintegration of the revolutionary means of struggle, which enabled the government to subdue one town after another with a handful of troops, practically unresisted.
4. The final outcome of this whole farce is that not only has the once so numerous and well-organised Spanish International — both the false and the authentic — found itself involved in the collapse of the Intransigents so that it is today *de facto* dissolved, but, moreover, that all sorts of invented crimes without which the philistines of all countries cannot imagine a workers' revolt are being heaped upon it, thereby making impossible, at least for many years to come, the International reorganisation of the Spanish proletariat.
5. In a word, the Spanish Bakuninists have given us an unsurpassed example of how *not* to make a revolution. ■

*From The Conspectus of Bakunin's book State and Anarchy*⁹²

By Karl Marx

We have already expressed our profound aversion to the theory of Lassalle and Marx which advises the workers to establish <a people's state> — at least as an immediate principal goal if not as an ultimate ideal — which, they explain, will be simply “the proletariat <transformed into the ruling class>”. If the proletariat will be the ruling class, the question arises, whom will it rule? <This means> that another proletariat will still remain which will be subject to this new rule, this new <state>.

It means that as long as other classes, and the capitalist class in particular, still exist, and as long as the proletariat fights against them (for its enemies and the old organisation of society do not vanish as a result of its coming to power) it must employ *coercive* measures, that is, government measures; so long it is still a class itself, and the economic conditions which give rise to the class struggle and the existence of classes have not yet disappeared and must be forcibly removed or transformed, and the process of their transformation accelerated by the use of force.

For example, the common peasant, <the peasant rabble>, who, as we know, [are not regarded] with favour by the Marxists, and are at the lowest stage of civilisation, will probably be governed by the urban and industrial proletariat.

That is to say, wherever large numbers of peasants exist as private proprietors, and where they even constitute a more or less considerable majority, as in all countries of the West European continent where they have not disappeared and been supplanted by agricultural day-labourers as in England, the following alternatives exist: either the peasants prevent and doom to failure every workers' revolution, as they have done in

Written in 1874-75. The words in the arrowhead brackets < > were written by Marx in Russian.

France up to now, or the proletariat (for the peasant proprietor does not belong to the proletariat; even where he does belong to it by reason of his position, he does not consider himself as belonging to it) functioning as the government must take steps that will directly improve his position and thus win him over to the revolution; these steps moreover further the transition from private to communal ownership of land in such a way, that the peasant comes to it of his own accord on economic grounds. But one must not affront the peasant, for instance, by proclaiming the abolition of the right of inheritance or the abolition of his property — the latter can only be done where the peasant has been ousted by the capitalist tenant farmers, so that the real cultivator is as much a proletarian, a wage-worker, as the urban worker, and consequently shares with him, not indirectly, but *directly*, the same interests; still less should parcelled property be reinforced by enlarging the parcel simply by allowing the peasants to annex the larger estates, as Bakunin advocated in his revolutionary campaign.

Or if the matter is regarded from a national standpoint, one has to assume that as regards the Germans the Slavs will for that very reason be placed in the same servile subordination to the victorious German proletariat in which the latter now stands in relation to its bourgeoisie. (p. 278)

Schoolboy nonsense! A radical social revolution depends on particular historical conditions of economic development; they are its prerequisites. Thus a revolution is possible only where, together with capitalist production, the industrial proletariat occupies at least an important place within the population. And to have any chance of success it must *mutatis mutandis* be able immediately to do at least as much for the peasants as the French bourgeoisie during its revolution did for the French peasants of the time. A fine idea to assume that the rule of the workers stands for the subjugation of agricultural workers. This is where the inmost thoughts of Mr. Bakunin are revealed. He understands nothing whatever about social revolution; all he knows about it is political phrases; its economic prerequisites do not exist for him. Since all the economic forms, developed or undeveloped, that have existed till now included the enslavement of the worker (whether in the shape of the wage-worker or the peasant, etc.) he presumes that a *radical revolution* is equally possible in all of them. What is more, he wants the European social revolution, which is based on the economic foundation of capitalist production, to be carried out on the level of the Russian or Slav agricultural or pastoral nations, and not to overstep this level, although he perceives that navigation creates distinctions among brethren, but only *navigation*, since these distinctions are known to all politicians! The basis of Bakunin's social revolution is the *will*, and not the economic conditions.

Where there is <state> there is bound to be <domination>, consequently slavery too; domination without slavery, whether open or disguised, is inconceivable, and that is why we are enemies of the state. (p. 278)

What is meant by the proletariat transformed into the ruling class?

It means that the proletariat, instead of fighting individually against the economically privileged classes, has gained sufficient strength and is sufficiently well organised to employ general means of compulsion in its struggle against these classes. It can, however, use only economic means designed to abolish its own distinctive trait as a wage-earner, and hence to abolish itself as a class. Its complete victory is consequently also the end of its domination, since its class character has disappeared.

Will perhaps the proletariat as a whole head the government?

Does in a trade union, for instance, the whole union constitute the executive committee? Will all division of labour in a factory disappear and also the various functions arising from it? And will everybody be at the top in Bakunin's construction built from the bottom upwards? There will in fact be no below then. Will all members of the commune also administer the common affairs of the region? In that case there will be no difference between commune and region.

The Germans number nearly 40 million. Will, for example, all 40 million be members of the government?

Certainly, for the thing begins with the self-government of the commune.

The whole people will govern and no one will be governed.

If a man has self-control, then, according to this principle, he has no self-control, for he is only himself and nobody else.

Then there will be no government and no state, but if there should be a state then there will also be rulers and slaves. (p. 279)

That is simply to say, when class rule has disappeared a state in the now accepted political sense of the word no longer exists.

This dilemma contained in the theory of the Marxists is easily solved. By people's government they [i.e., Bakunin] understand governing the people by means of a small number of representatives elected by the people.

This democratic drivel, political claptrap is asinine. Elections are a political form which exists in the smallest Russian commune and artel. The nature of the elections is determined not by the name, but by the economic basis, the economic interrelations of the voters, and from the moment when the functions have ceased to be political ones (1) government functions no longer exist; (2) the distribution of general functions becomes a routine matter and does not entail any domination; (3) elections completely lose their present political character.

The universal right of election of representatives and rulers of the state by the whole people [such a thing as the whole people in the present sense of the word is a phantasm] this last word of the Marxists as well as of the democratic school is a lie, which conceals the despotism of the *ruling minority*, and is all the more dangerous for appearing as the expression of a would-be popular will.

Under collective property the so-called popular will disappears to be replaced by the genuine will of the cooperative.

Hence the result is that the vast majority of the people is governed by a privileged minority. But this minority will consist of workmen, say the Marxists.

Where?

Yes it may perhaps consist of former workmen, but as soon as they become representatives or rulers of the people they *cease to be workmen* [no more than does a manufacturer today cease to be a capitalist on becoming a town-councillor] and view all ordinary workers from the eminence of state; they will then no longer represent the people, but only themselves and their pretensions to govern the people. Anyone who doubts this does not understand human nature. (p. 279)

If Mr. Bakunin understood at least the position of a manager in a cooperative factory, all his illusions about domination would go to the devil. He ought to have asked himself what form the functions of management could assume in such a workers' state, if he chooses to call it thus.

On p. 279 he writes:

But these elected men will become fervently convinced and also learned socialists. The words which the Lassalleans and Marxists constantly use in their writings and speeches [the words "*learned socialism*" have never been used "and *scientific socialism*" used only in contradistinction to utopian socialism which seeks to foist new fantasies upon the people instead of confining its field of investigation to the social movement created by the people; see my book against Proudhon] only go to prove that the so-called people's state will be nothing but a rather despotic rule over the masses of the people exercised by a very small aristocracy of genuine or spurious scholars. The people is not scientifically trained, it will accordingly be completely relieved of all the cares of government and wholly included in the herd that has to be governed. A fine liberation! (pp. 279-80)

The Marxists are aware of this [!] contradiction and realising that the government of scholars [what a fantastic notion!] will be the world's most oppressive, resented and despicable government and that despite its democratic forms it will in fact be a dictatorship, they seek consolation in the thought that this dictatorship will be a provisional and shortlived measure.

Non, mon cher! [in the thought] that the *class rule* of the workers over the resisting strata of the old world can only continue with the economic basis that makes the existence of classes possible has been destroyed.

They say that their only concern and aim will be to educate and raise the people [armchair politician!] both economically and politically to such a level that any sort of government will soon become superfluous, that the state will completely lose its political, i.e., authoritarian, nature, and that it will automatically become a free organisation of economic interests and communes. This is an obvious contradiction. If their state is really a people's state, then why should it be abolished and if its abolition is essential to the real liberation of the people, how dare they call it a people's state? (p. 280)

Leaving aside this harping on Liebknecht's *people's state*,⁹³ which is nonsense directed against the *Communist Manifesto*, etc., this means simply that since the proletariat, during the period of struggle to overthrow the old society, still acts on the basis of the old society and consequently within political forms which more or less belong to that society, it has, during this period of struggle, not yet attained its ultimate structure, and to achieve its liberation it employs means which will be discarded after the liberation: hence Mr. B. concludes that the proletariat should rather do nothing at all and wait for the *day of universal liquidation* — the Last Judgement.

"*By our polemic*" (which was, of course, published before my book against Proudhon, before the *Communist Manifesto*, and even before Saint-Simon) "against them" (a wonderful hysteron proteron) "*we have made them admit* that freedom, or anarchy" (Mr. Bakunin has merely translated Proudhon's and Stirner's anarchy into the crude language of the Tartars),

that is, the free organisation of the working masses from below upwards [nonsense] is the ultimate goal of social development, and that every state, including the people's state, is a yoke that creates despotism on the one hand, and slavery on the other. (p. 280) ■

The Case of Kronstadt



Top: Red Army soldiers cross the ice to attack Kronstadt naval fortress, March 1921. Above: Leon Trotsky (Mexico, late 1930s).

The Questions of Wendelin Thomas⁹⁴

Esteemed Comrade:

I do not think that the questions which you asked me have a direct relationship to the investigations of the New York Commission and can have an influence on its conclusions. Nevertheless, I am fully prepared to reply to your questions in order to acquaint with my actual views all those who are interested in them.

Like many others, you see the source of evil in the principle: “The end justifies the means.” This principle is in itself very abstract and rationalistic. It permits the most varied interpretations. But I am prepared to take upon myself the defence of this formula — from the materialistic and dialectical viewpoint. Yes, I consider that there are no means that are good or bad in themselves or in connection with some absolute supra-historical principle. Those means that lead to raising the power of man over nature and liquidating the power of man over man are good. In this broad historical sense the means can only be justified by the end.

Does this not mean, however, that falsehood, treachery, betrayal are permissible and justified if they lead to the “end”? All depends on the nature of the aim. If the aim is the liberation of mankind, then falsehood, betrayal, and treachery can in no way be appropriate means. The Epicureans were accused by their opponents of sinking to the ideals of a pig when they advocated “happiness.” To which the Epicureans replied, not without foundation, that their opponents understand happiness . . . in a piggish way.

You make reference to Lenin’s words that a revolutionary party has the “right” to make its opponents hated and despised in the eyes of the masses. In these words you see a principled defence of amoralism. You forget, however, to point out where, in which political camp, are the representatives of lofty morals. My observations tell me that political struggle in general widely utilises exaggeration, distortion, falsehood, and slander. The revolutionists are always the most slandered: in their time Marx, Engels,

and their friends; later, the Bolsheviks, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg; at the present time, the Trotskyists. The hatred of the possessors toward the revolution; the dull conservatism of the petty-bourgeoisie; the conceit and superciliousness of the intellectuals; the material interests of the labour bureaucrats — all these factors combine in the hounding of the revolutionary Marxist. At the same time the Messrs. Slanderers do not forget to be indignant at the amorality of the Marxists. This hypocritical indignation is nothing but a weapon of the class struggle.

In the words quoted by you, Lenin merely wanted to say that he no longer considers the Mensheviks proletarian fighters and he makes it his task to make them hateful in the eyes of the workers. Lenin expressed his thought with his characteristic passion and opened the possibilities for ambiguous and unworthy interpretations. But on the basis of the complete works of Lenin and his life's work I declare that this irreconcilable fighter was a most loyal opponent, for despite all exaggerations and extremes he always strove to tell the masses what is. The struggle of the reformists against Lenin, on the contrary, was thoroughly penetrated with hypocrisy, falsehood, trickery, and forgeries, under the cover of universal truths.

Your evaluation of the Kronstadt uprising of 1921 is basically incorrect. The best, most self-sacrificing sailors were completely withdrawn from Kronstadt and played an important role at the fronts and in the local soviets throughout the country. What remained was the gray mass with big pretensions ("We are from Kronstadt"), but without political education and unprepared for revolutionary sacrifice. The country was starving. The Kronstaders demanded privileges. The uprising was dictated by a desire to get privileged food rations. The sailors had cannon and battleships. All the reactionary elements, in Russia as well as abroad, immediately seized upon this uprising. The White émigrés demanded aid for the insurrectionists. The victory of this uprising could bring nothing but a victory of counterrevolution, entirely independent of the ideas the sailors had in their heads. But the ideas themselves were deeply reactionary. They reflected the hostility of the backward peasantry to the worker, the conceit of the soldier or sailor in relation to "civilian" Petersburg, the hatred of the petty-bourgeois for revolutionary discipline. The movement therefore had a counterrevolutionary character, and since the insurgents took possession of the arms in the forts they could only be crushed with the aid of arms.

No less erroneous is your estimate of Makhno. In himself he was a mixture of fanatic and adventurer. He became the concentration of the very tendencies which brought about the Kronstadt uprising. The cavalry in general is the most reactionary part of the army. The equestrian despises the pedestrian. Makhno created a cavalry of peasants who supplied their own horses. These were not downtrodden village poor

whom the October Revolution first awakened, but the strong and well-fed peasants who were afraid of losing what they had. The anarchist ideas of Makhno (the ignoring of the state, non-recognition of the central power) corresponded to the spirit of this kulak cavalry as nothing else could. I should add that the hatred of the city and the city worker on the part of the followers of Makhno was complemented by a militant anti-semitism. At the very time when we were carrying on a life-and-death struggle against Denikin and Wrangel, the Makhnovists attempted to carry on an independent policy. Straining at the bit, the petty-bourgeois (kulak) thought he could dictate his contradictory views to the capitalists on the one hand and to the workers on the other. This kulak was armed; we had to disarm him. This is precisely what we did.

Your attempt to conclude that Stalin's forgeries flow from the "amoralism" of the Bolsheviks is basically false. In the period when the revolution fought for the liberation of the oppressed masses it called everything by its right name and was in no need of forgeries. The system of falsifications flows from the fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy fights for the privileges of the minority and is compelled to conceal and mask its real aims. Instead of seeking an explanation in the material conditions of historical development, you create the theory of the "original sin", which fits the church but not the socialist republic.

Respectfully yours,

L. Trotsky

Hue & Cry Over Kronstadt⁹⁵

By Leon Trotsky

A “People’s Front” of denouncers

The campaign around Kronstadt is being carried on with undiminished vigour in certain circles. One would think that the Kronstadt revolt occurred not 17 years ago, but only yesterday. Participating in the campaign with equal zeal and under one and the same slogan are anarchists, Russian Mensheviks, left social-democrats of the London Bureau, individual blunderers, Milyukov’s paper,⁹⁶ and, on occasion, the big capitalist press. A “People’s Front” of its own kind!

Only yesterday I happened across the following lines in a Mexican weekly which is both reactionary Catholic and “democratic”: “Trotsky ordered the shooting of 1500 [?] Kronstadt sailors, the purest of the pure. His policy when in power differed in no way from the present policy of Stalin.” As is known, the left anarchists draw the same conclusion. When for the first time in the press I briefly answered the questions of Wendelin Thomas, member of the New York Commission of Inquiry, the Russian Mensheviks’ paper immediately came to the defence of the Kronstadt sailors and ... of Wendelin Thomas. Milyukov’s paper came forward in the same spirit. The anarchists attacked me with still greater vigour. All these authorities claim that my answer was completely worthless. This unanimity is all the more remarkable since the anarchists defend, in the symbol of Kronstadt, genuine anti-state communism; the Mensheviks, at the time of the Kronstadt uprising, stood openly for the restoration of capitalism; and Milyukov stands for capitalism even now.

How can the Kronstadt uprising cause such heartburn to anarchists, Mensheviks, and “liberal” counterrevolutionists, all at the same time? The answer is simple: all these groupings are interested in compromising the only genuinely revolutionary current, which has never repudiated its banner, has not compromised with its enemies, and alone represents the future. It is because of this that among the belated denouncers of my Kronstadt “crime” there are so many *former* revolutionists or *half*-revolutionists,

January 15, 1938.

people who have lost their program and their principles and who find it necessary to divert attention from the degradation of the Second International or the perfidy of the Spanish anarchists. As yet, the Stalinists cannot openly join this campaign around Kronstadt but even they, of course, rub their hands with pleasure; for the blows are directed against “Trotskyism”, against revolutionary Marxism, against the Fourth International!

Why in particular has this variegated fraternity seized precisely upon Kronstadt? During the years of the revolution we clashed not a few times with the Cossacks, the peasants, even with certain layers of workers (certain groups of workers from the Urals organised a volunteer regiment in the army of Kolchak!). The antagonism between the workers as consumers and the peasants as producers and sellers of bread lay, in the main, at the root of these conflicts. Under the pressure of need and deprivation, the workers themselves were episodically divided into hostile camps, depending upon stronger or weaker ties with the village. The Red Army also found itself under the influence of the countryside. During the years of the civil war it was necessary more than once to disarm discontented regiments. The introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) attenuated the friction but far from eliminated it. On the contrary, it paved the way for the rebirth of kulaks and led, at the beginning of this decade, to the renewal of civil war in the village. The Kronstadt uprising was only an *episode* in the history of the relations between the proletarian city and the petty-bourgeois village. It is possible to understand this episode only in connection with the general course of the development of the class struggle during the revolution.

Kronstadt differed from a long series of other petty-bourgeois movements and uprisings only by its greater external effect. The problem here involved a maritime fortress under Petrograd itself. During the uprising proclamations were issued and radio broadcasts were made. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the anarchists, hurrying from Petrograd, adorned the uprising with “noble” phrases and gestures. All this left traces in print. With the aid of these “documentary” materials (i.e., false labels), it is not hard to construct a legend about Kronstadt, all the more exalted since in 1917 the name Kronstadt was surrounded by a revolutionary halo. Not idly does the Mexican magazine quoted above ironically call the Kronstadt sailors the “purest of the pure.”

The play upon the revolutionary authority of Kronstadt is one of the distinguishing features of this truly charlatan campaign. Anarchists, Mensheviks, liberals, reactionaries try to present the matter as if at the beginning of 1921 the Bolsheviks turned their weapons on those very Kronstadt sailors who guaranteed the victory of the October insurrection. Here is the point of departure for all the subsequent falsehoods. Whoever wishes to unravel these lies should first of all read the article by Comrade John G.

Wright in the *New International* (February 1938). My problem is another one: I wish to describe the physiognomy of the Kronstadt uprising from a more general point of view.

Social & political groupings in Kronstadt

A revolution is “made” directly by a *minority*. The success of a revolution is possible, however, only where this minority finds more or less support, or at least friendly neutrality, on the part of the majority. The shift in different stages of the revolution, like the transition from revolution to counterrevolution, is directly determined by changing political relations between the minority and the majority, between the vanguard and the class.

Among the Kronstadt sailors there were three political layers: the proletarian revolutionists, some with a serious past and training; the intermediate majority, mainly peasant in origin; and finally, the reactionaries, sons of kulaks, shopkeepers, and priests. In tsarist times, order on battleships and in the fortress could be maintained only so long as the officers, acting through the reactionary sections of the petty officers and sailors, subjected the broad intermediate layer to their influence or terror, thus isolating the revolutionists, mainly the machinists, the gunners, and the electricians, i.e., predominantly the city workers.

The course of the uprising on the battleship *Potemkin* in 1905 was based entirely on the relations among these three layers, i.e., on the struggle between proletarian and petty-bourgeois reactionary extremes for influence upon the more numerous middle peasant layer. Whoever has not understood this problem, which runs through the whole revolutionary movement in the fleet, had best be silent about the problems of the Russian revolution in general. For it was entirely, and to a great degree still is, a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for influence upon the peasantry. During the Soviet period the bourgeoisie has appeared principally in the guise of kulaks (i.e., the top stratum of the petty-bourgeoisie), the “socialist” intelligentsia, and now in the form of the “communist” bureaucracy. Such is the basic mechanism of the revolution in all its stages. In the fleet it assumed a more centralised, and therefore more dramatic expression.

The political composition of the Kronstadt Soviet reflected the composition of the garrison and the crews. The leadership of the soviets already in the summer of 1917 belonged to the Bolshevik Party, which rested on the better sections of the sailors and included in its ranks many revolutionists from the underground movement who had been liberated from the hard-labour prisons. But I seem to recall that even in the days of the October insurrection the Bolsheviks constituted less than one-half of the

Kronstadt Soviet. The majority consisted of SRs and anarchists. There were no Mensheviks at all in Kronstadt. The Menshevik Party hated Kronstadt. The official SRs, incidentally, had no better attitude toward it. The Kronstadt SRs quickly went over into opposition to Kerensky and formed one of the shock brigades of the so-called Left SRs. They based themselves on the peasant part of the fleet and of the shore garrison.

As for the anarchists, they were the most motley group. Among them were real revolutionists, like Zhuk and Zhelezniakov, but these were the elements most closely linked to the Bolsheviks. Most of the Kronstadt “anarchists” represented the city petty-bourgeoisie and stood upon a lower revolutionary level than the SRs. The president of the soviet was a non-party man, “sympathetic to the anarchists,” and in essence a peaceful petty clerk who had been formerly subservient to the tsarist authorities and was now subservient ... to the revolution. The complete absence of Mensheviks, the “left” character of the SRs, and the anarchist hue of the petty-bourgeois were due to the sharpness of the revolutionary struggle in the fleet and the dominating influence of the proletarian sections of the sailors.

Changes during years of Civil War

This social and political characterisation of Kronstadt, which, if desired, could be substantiated and illustrated by many facts and documents, is already sufficient to illuminate the upheavals which occurred in Kronstadt during the years of the civil war and as a result of which its physiognomy changed beyond recognition. Precisely about this important aspect of the question, the belated accusers say not one word, partly out of ignorance, partly out of malevolence.

Yes, Kronstadt wrote a heroic page in the history of the revolution. But the civil war began a systematic depopulation of Kronstadt and of the whole Baltic Fleet. Already in the days of the October uprising detachments of Kronstadt sailors were being sent to help Moscow. Other detachments were then sent to the Don, to the Ukraine, to requisition bread and to organise the local power. It seemed at first as if Kronstadt were inexhaustible. From different fronts I sent dozens of telegrams about the mobilisation of new “reliable” detachments from among the Petrograd workers and the Baltic sailors. But already in 1918, and, in any case, not later than 1919, the fronts began to complain that the new contingents of “Kronstadters” were unsatisfactory, exacting, undisciplined, unreliable in battle, and doing more harm than good. After the liquidation of Yudenich (in the winter of 1919), the Baltic Fleet and the Kronstadt garrison were denuded of all revolutionary forces. All the elements among them that were of any use at all were thrown against Denikin in the south. If in 1917-

18 the Kronstadt sailors stood considerably higher than the average level of the Red Army and formed the framework of its first detachments as well as the framework of the soviet regime in many districts, those sailors who remained in “peaceful” Kronstadt until the beginning of 1921, not fitting in on any of the fronts of the civil war, stood by this time on a level considerably lower, in general, than the average level of the Red Army, and included a great percentage of completely demoralised elements, wearing showy bell-bottom pants and sporty haircuts.

Demoralisation based on hunger and speculation had, in general, greatly increased by the end of the civil war. The so-called sack-carriers (petty speculators) had become a social blight, threatening to stifle the revolution. Precisely in Kronstadt where the garrison did nothing and had everything it needed, the demoralisation assumed particularly great dimensions. When conditions became very critical in hungry Petrograd, the Political Bureau more than once discussed the possibility of securing an “internal loan” from Kronstadt, where a quantity of old provisions still remained. But delegates of the Petrograd workers answered: “You will get nothing from them by kindness. They speculate in cloth, coal, and bread. At present in Kronstadt every kind of ruffraff has raised its head.” That was the real situation. It was not like the sugar-sweet idealisations after the event.

It must further be added that Lettish and Estonian ex-sailors who feared they would be sent to the front and were preparing to cross into their new bourgeois fatherlands, Latvia and Estonia, had joined the Baltic Fleet as “volunteers”. These elements were in essence hostile to the Soviet authority and displayed this hostility fully in the days of the Kronstadt uprising ... Besides these there were many thousands of Lettish workers, mainly former farm labourers, who showed unexampled heroism on all fronts of the civil war. We must not, therefore, tar the Latvian workers and the “Kronstadters” with the same brush. We must recognise social and political differences.

The social roots of the uprising

The problem of a serious student consists in defining, on the basis of the objective circumstances, the social and political character of the Kronstadt mutiny and its place in the development of the revolution. Without this, “criticism” is reduced to sentimental lamentation of the pacifist kind in the spirit of Alexander Berkman, Emma Goldman, and their latest imitators. These gentlefolk do not have the slightest understanding of the criteria and methods of scientific research. They quote the proclamations of the insurgents like pious preachers quoting Holy Scriptures. They complain, moreover, that I do not take into consideration the “documents”, i.e., the gospel of Makhno and the other apostles. To take documents “into consideration” does not mean to take

them at their face value. Marx has said that it is impossible to judge either parties or peoples by what they say about themselves. The characteristics of a party are determined considerably more by its social composition, its past, its relation to different classes and strata, than by its oral and written declarations, especially during a critical moment of civil war. If, for example, we began to take as pure gold the innumerable proclamations of Negrin, Companys, Garcia Oliver and company, we would have to recognise these gentlemen as fervent friends of socialism. But in reality they are its perfidious enemies.

In 1917-18 the revolutionary workers led the peasant masses, not only of the fleet but of the entire country. The peasants seized and divided the land most often under the leadership of the soldiers and sailors arriving in their home districts. Requisitions of bread had only begun and mainly from the landlords and kulaks at that. The peasants reconciled themselves to requisitions as a temporary evil. But the civil war dragged on for three years. The city gave practically nothing to the village and took almost everything from it, chiefly for the needs of war. The peasants approved of the "Bolsheviks" but became increasingly hostile to the "communists". If in the preceding period the workers had led the peasants forward, the peasants now dragged the workers back. Only because of this change in mood could the Whites partially attract the peasants, and even the half-peasants-half-workers, of the Urals to their side. This mood, i.e., hostility to the city, nourished the movement of Makhno, who seized and looted trains marked for the factories, the plants, and the Red Army; tore up railroad tracks; shot communists; etc. Of course, Makhno called this the anarchist struggle with the "state". In reality, this was a struggle of the infuriated petty property owner against the proletarian dictatorship. A similar movement arose in a number of other districts, especially in Tambov, under the banner of Socialist-Revolutionaries. Finally, in different parts of the country so-called "Green" peasant detachments were active. They did not want to recognise either the Reds or the Whites and shunned the city parties. The "Greens" sometimes met the Whites and received severe blows from them, but they did not, of course, get any mercy from the Reds. Just as the petty-bourgeoisie is ground economically between the millstones of big capital and the proletariat, so the peasant partisan detachments were pulverised between the Red Army and the White.

Only an entirely superficial person can see in Makhno's bands or in the Kronstadt revolt a struggle between the abstract principles of anarchism and "state socialism". Actually these movements were convulsions of the peasant petty-bourgeoisie which desired, of course, to liberate itself from capital but which at the same time did not consent to subordinate itself to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The petty-bourgeoisie does not know concretely what it wants, and by virtue of its position cannot know. That is why it so readily covered the confusion of its demands and

hopes, now with the anarchist banner, now with the populist, now simply with the “Green”. Counterposing itself to the proletariat, it tried, flying all these banners, to turn the wheel of the revolution backward.

The counterrevolutionary character of the Kronstadt mutiny

There were, of course, no impassable bulkheads dividing the different social and political layers of Kronstadt. There were still at Kronstadt a certain number of qualified workers and technicians to take care of the machinery. But even they were chosen by a method of negative selection as politically unreliable and of little use for the civil war. Some “leaders” of the uprising came from among these elements. However, this completely natural and inevitable circumstance, to which some accusers triumphantly point, does not change by one iota the anti-proletarian character of the revolt. Unless we are to deceive ourselves with pretentious slogans, false labels, etc., we shall see that the Kronstadt uprising was nothing but an armed reaction of the petty-bourgeoisie against the hardships of social revolution and the severity of the proletarian dictatorship.

That was exactly the significance of the Kronstadt slogan, “soviets without Communists”, which was immediately seized upon not only by the SRs but by the bourgeois liberals as well. As a rather farsighted representative of capital, Professor Milyukov understood that to free the soviets from the leadership of the Bolsheviks would have meant within a short time to demolish the soviets themselves. The experience of the Russian soviets during the period of Menshevik and SR domination and, even more clearly, the experience of the German and Austrian soviets under the domination of the social-democrats, proved this. Socialist-Revolutionary-anarchist soviets could serve only as a bridge from the proletarian dictatorship to capitalist restoration. They could play no other role, regardless of the “ideas” of their participants. The Kronstadt uprising thus had a counterrevolutionary character.

From the class point of view, which — without offence to the gentlemen eclectics — remains the basic criterion not only for politics but for history, it is extremely important to contrast the behaviour of Kronstadt to that of Petrograd in those critical days. The whole leading stratum of the workers had also been drawn out of Petrograd. Hunger and cold reigned in the deserted capital, perhaps even more fiercely than in Moscow. A heroic and tragic period! All were hungry and irritable. All were dissatisfied. In the factories there was dull discontent. Underground organisers sent by the SRs and the White officers tried to link the military uprising with the movement of the discontented workers. The Kronstadt paper wrote about barricades in Petrograd, about thousands being killed. The press of the whole world proclaimed the same

thing. Actually the precise opposite occurred. The Kronstadt uprising did not attract the Petrograd workers. It repelled them. The stratification proceeded along class lines. The workers immediately felt that the Kronstadt mutineers stood on the opposite side of the barricades — and they supported the Soviet power. The political isolation of Kronstadt was the cause of its internal uncertainty and its military defeat.

The NEP & the Kronstadt uprising

Victor Serge, who, it would seem, is trying to manufacture a sort of synthesis of anarchism, POUMism, and Marxism, has intervened very unfortunately in the polemic about Kronstadt. In his opinion the introduction of the NEP one year earlier could have averted the Kronstadt uprising. Let us admit that. But advice like this is very easy to give after the event. It is true, as Victor Serge remembers, that I had proposed the transition to the NEP in 1920. But I was not at all sure in advance of its success. It was no secret to me that the remedy could prove to be more dangerous than the malady itself. When I met opposition from the leaders of the party, I did not appeal to the ranks, in order to avoid mobilising the petty-bourgeoisie against the workers. The experience of the ensuing twelve months was required to convince the party of the need for the new course. But the remarkable thing is that it was precisely the anarchists all over the world who looked upon the NEP as ... a betrayal of communism. But now the advocates of the anarchists denounce us for not having introduced the NEP a year earlier.

In 1921 Lenin more than once openly acknowledged that the party's obstinate defence of the methods of war communism had become a great mistake. But does this change matters? Whatever the immediate or remote causes of the Kronstadt rebellion, it was in its very essence a mortal danger to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Simply because it had been guilty of a political error, should the proletarian revolution really have committed suicide to punish itself?

Or perhaps it would have been sufficient to inform the Kronstadt sailors of the NEP decrees to pacify them? Illusion! The insurgents did not have a conscious program, and they could not have had one because of the very nature of the petty-bourgeoisie. They themselves did not clearly understand that what their fathers and brothers needed first of all was free trade. They were discontented and confused but they saw no way out. The more conscious, i.e., the rightist elements, acting behind the scenes, wanted the restoration of the bourgeois regime. But they did not say so out loud. The "left" wing wanted the liquidation of discipline, "free soviets", and better rations. The regime of the NEP could only gradually pacify the peasant, and, after him, the discontented sections of the army and the fleet. But, for this, time and experience were

needed.

Most puerile of all is the argument that there was no uprising, that the sailors had made no threats, that they “only” seized the fortress and the battleships. It would seem that the Bolsheviks marched with bared chests across the ice against the fortress only because of their evil characters, their inclination to provoke conflicts artificially, their hatred of the Kronstadt sailors, or their hatred of the anarchist doctrine (about which absolutely no one, we may say in passing, bothered in those days). Is this not childish prattle? Bound neither to time nor place, the dilettante critics try (17 years later!) to suggest that everything would have ended in general satisfaction if only the revolution had left the insurgent sailors alone. Unfortunately, the world counterrevolution would in no case have left them alone. The logic of the struggle would have given predominance in the fortress to the extremists, that is, to the most counterrevolutionary elements. The need for supplies would have made the fortress directly dependent upon the foreign bourgeoisie and their agents, the White émigrés. All the necessary preparations toward this end were already being made. Under similar circumstances only people like the Spanish anarchists or POUMists would have waited passively, hoping for a happy outcome. The Bolsheviks, fortunately, belonged to a different school. They considered it their duty to extinguish the fire as soon as it started, thereby reducing to a minimum the number of victims.

The ‘Kronstadters’ without a fortress

In essence, the gentlemen critics are opponents of the dictatorship of the proletariat and by that token are opponents of the revolution. In this lies the whole secret. It is true that some of them recognise the revolution and the dictatorship — in words. But this does not help matters. They wish for a revolution which will not lead to dictatorship or for a dictatorship which will get along without the use of force. Of course, this would be a very “pleasant” dictatorship. It requires, however, a few trifles: an equal and, moreover, an extremely high development of the toiling masses. But in such conditions the dictatorship would in general be unnecessary. Some anarchists, who are really liberal pedagogues, hope that in a hundred or a thousand years the toilers will have attained so high a level of development that coercion will prove unnecessary. Naturally, if capitalism could lead to such a development, there would be no reason for overthrowing capitalism. There would be no need either for violent revolution or for the dictatorship which is an inevitable consequence of revolutionary victory. However, the decaying capitalism of our day leaves little room for humanitarian-pacifist illusions.

The working class, not to speak of the semi-proletarian masses, is not homogeneous, either socially or politically. The class struggle produces a vanguard

that absorbs the best elements of the class. A revolution is possible when the vanguard is able to lead the majority of the proletariat. But this does not at all mean that the internal contradictions among the toilers disappear. At the moment of the highest peak of the revolution they are of course attenuated, but only to appear later at a new stage in all their sharpness. Such is the course of the revolution as a whole. Such was the course of Kronstadt. When parlour pinks try to mark out a different route for the October Revolution, after the event, we can only respectfully ask them to show us exactly where and when their great principles were confirmed in practice, at least partially, at least in tendency? Where are the signs that lead us to expect the triumph of these principles in the future? We shall of course never get an answer.

A revolution has its own laws. Long ago we formulated those “Lessons of October”, which have not only a Russian but an international significance. No one else has even tried to suggest any other “lessons”. The Spanish revolution confirms the “Lessons of October” by the inverted method. And the severe critics are silent or equivocal. The Spanish government of the “People’s Front” stifles the socialist revolution and shoots revolutionists. The anarchists participate in this government, or, when they are driven out, continue to support the executioners. And their foreign allies and lawyers occupy themselves meanwhile with a defence ... of the Kronstadt mutiny against the harsh Bolsheviks. A shameful travesty!

The present disputes around Kronstadt revolve around the same class axis as the Kronstadt uprising itself, in which the reactionary sections of the sailors tried to overthrow the proletarian dictatorship. Conscious of their impotence on the arena of present-day revolutionary politics, the petty-bourgeois blunderers and eclectics try to use the old Kronstadt episode for the struggle against the Fourth International, that is, against the party of the proletarian revolution. These latter-day “Kronstadters” will also be crushed — true, without the use of arms since, fortunately, they do not have a fortress. ■

More on the Suppression of Kronstadt⁹⁷

By Leon Trotsky

In my recent article on Kronstadt I tried to pose the question on a political plane. But many are interested in the problem of personal “responsibility”. Souvarine, who from a sluggish Marxist became an exalted sycophant, asserts in his book on Stalin that in my autobiography I consciously kept silent on the Kronstadt rebellion; there are exploits — he says ironically — of which one does not boast. Ciliga, in his book, *In the Country of the Big Lie*, recounts that in the suppression of Kronstadt “more than 10,000 seamen” were shot by me (I doubt whether the whole Baltic Fleet at that time had that many). Other critics express themselves in this manner: yes, objectively the rebellion had a counterrevolutionary character, but why did Trotsky use such merciless repressions in the pacification and subsequently?

I have never touched on this question. Not because I had anything to conceal but, on the contrary, precisely because I had nothing to say. The truth of the matter is that *I personally did not participate in the least in the suppression of the Kronstadt rebellion, nor in the repressions following the suppression*. In my eyes this very fact is of no political significance. I was a member of the government, I considered the quelling of the rebellion necessary and therefore bear responsibility for the suppression. Only within these limits have I replied to criticism up to now. But when moralists begin to annoy me personally, accusing me of exceeding cruelty not called forth by circumstance, I consider that I have a right to say: “Messrs. moralists, you are lying a bit.”

The rebellion broke out during my stay in the Urals. From the Urals I came directly to Moscow for the 10th congress of the party. The decision to suppress the rebellion by military force, *if the fortress could not be induced to surrender, first by peace negotiations, then through an ultimatum* — this general decision was adopted with my

direct participation. But after the decision was taken, I continued to remain in Moscow and took no part, direct or indirect, in the military operations. Concerning the subsequent repressions, they were completely the affair of the Cheka.

How did it happen that I did not go personally to Kronstadt? The reason was of a political nature. The rebellion broke out during the discussion on the so-called “trade-union question”.⁹⁸ The political work in Kronstadt was wholly in the hands of the Petrograd committee, at the head of which stood Zinoviev. The same Zinoviev was the chief, most untiring, and most passionate leader in the struggle against me in the discussion. Before my departure for the Urals I was in Petrograd and spoke at a meeting of communist seamen. The general spirit of the meeting made an extremely unfavourable impression upon me. Dandified and well-fed sailors, communists in name only, produced the impression of parasites in comparison with the workers and Red Army men of that time. On the part of the Petrograd committee the campaign was carried on in an extremely demagogic manner. The commanding personnel of the fleet were isolated and terrified. Zinoviev’s resolution received, probably, 90% of the votes. I recall having said to Zinoviev on this occasion: “Everything is very good here, until it becomes very bad.” Subsequent to this Zinoviev was with me in the Urals where he received an urgent message that in Kronstadt things were getting “very bad”. The overwhelming majority of the sailor “communists” who supported Zinoviev’s resolution took part in the rebellion. I considered, and the Political Bureau made no objections, that negotiations with the sailors and, in case of necessity, their pacification, should be placed with those leaders who only yesterday enjoyed the political confidence of these sailors. Otherwise, the Kronstadters would consider the matter as though I had come to take “revenge” upon them for voting against me during the party discussion.

Whether correct or not, in any case it was precisely these considerations which determined my attitude. *I stepped aside completely and demonstratively from this affair.* Concerning the repressions, as far as I remember, Dzerzhinsky had personal charge of them, and Dzerzhinsky could not tolerate anyone’s interference with his functions (and properly so).

Whether there were any needless victims I do not know. On this score I trust Dzerzhinsky more than his belated critics. For lack of data I cannot undertake to decide now, *a posteriori*, who should have been punished and how. Victor Serge’s conclusions on this score — from third hand — have no value in my eyes. But I am ready to recognise that civil war is no school of humanism. Idealists and pacifists always accused the revolution of “excesses”. But the main point is that “excesses” flow from the very nature of revolution, which in itself is but an “excess” of history. Whoever

so desires may on this basis reject (in little articles) revolution in general. I do not reject it. In this sense I carry full and complete responsibility for the suppression of the Kronstadt rebellion. ■

The Truth About Kronstadt⁹⁹

By John G. Wright

By December 1920 the fronts in the civil war that had gripped the Soviet Union for more than three years had been liquidated. There were no fronts, but danger indeed remained. The land with the barbaric heritage of Asiatic tsarism had been bled white by the havoc of the imperialist war, the years of the civil war, and the imperialist blockade. The crisis in foodstuffs was aggravated by a fuel crisis. Vast sections of the population faced the immediate prospect not only of dying from hunger but of freezing to death. With industry in ruins, transportation disrupted, millions of men demobilised from the army, the masses on the point of exhaustion, fertile soil was indeed available for the intrigues of the counterrevolution.

Far from reconciling themselves to defeat, the White Guards and their imperialist allies were stirred to new activity by the objective difficulties confronting the Bolsheviks. They made attempt after attempt to force a breach “from the inside”, banking largely upon the support of petty-bourgeois reaction against the difficulties and privations imposed by the proletarian revolution.

In January-March 1921 the Tyumen mutiny occurred in the Tobolsk area in Siberia. The insurgents numbered 20,000 men. In May 1921 White Guard detachments aided by the Japanese descended on Vladivostok, which they held for a short time. After the signing of the Riga treaty (March 18, 1921), White Guard bands — some numbering into thousands, others mere handfuls — invaded the Ukraine and other points of Soviet territory. Another series of raids followed into Karelia, begun on October 23, 1921, and liquidated only in February 1922. As late as October 1922, Soviet territory was dotted with roaming guerilla bands of the counterrevolution.

The most important episode in this series took place in the very heart of the revolutionary stronghold: in the naval fortress of Kronstadt, a mutiny flared on March 2, 1921. Around this mutiny a “controversy” has raged for years with the supporters of Menshevism, anarchism, and other ideological opponents of the October Revolution

Written at the beginning of 1938.

ranged on one side, and the Bolsheviks and the unwavering proponents of Bolshevism (revolutionary Marxism) on the other.

During the years of the upsurge of the revolutionary movement, the anarchists, Mensheviks, SRs, and the rest of the brotherhood were on the defensive. Today, they are seizing upon the Kronstadt episode to launch an offensive against the very principles of Bolshevism. Stalinism has provided them with a demagogic cover for dealing blows at these principles, which alone made October possible. They seek to compromise Bolshevism and cover up their own bankruptcy and treachery by identifying Stalinism with Bolshevism. Kronstadt serves them as a point of departure. Their theorem is most elementary: Stalin shoots workers, only because it is the essence of Bolshevism to shoot down workers; for example, Kronstadt! Lenin and Stalin are one. QED.

On the surface it might appear to be well-nigh impossible to sustain this line of reasoning. How could anyone conceivably succeed in minimising the fact that arms were taken up against the Soviet power? How could anyone conceivably draw an analogy between the regime of Stalinism and the regime of Lenin and the Bolsheviks?

The whole art lies in distorting historical facts, monstrously exaggerating every subsidiary issue or question on which the Bolsheviks may or may not have erred, and throwing a veil over the armed uprising against the Soviet power and the real program and aims of the mutiny. We propose to take up the falsifications now current one by one and refute them either by evidence, or by the testimony not of the Bolsheviks but of their political opponents — i.e., the very people who engineered and led and attempted to extend the mutiny

The aspects we shall treat involve: (1) the actual circumstances relating to the uprising, i.e., the mechanics of it, the real driving forces behind it, just who provoked it, and how the provocation was effected; (2) the actual connection between the counterrevolution and the mutiny; (3) the direct participation of counterrevolutionists, in particular General Kozlovsky, in the mutiny; (4) the question of the time element, namely: Were the Bolsheviks rashly precipitate in crushing the mutiny instead of “negotiating” with the insurgents, or were they more than justified in their handling of the situation? (5) the question of whether the insurgents were the revolutionary sailors of 1917, or a “grey mass” — a heterogeneous and politically backward section, demoralised by the dire threat of cold and hunger that hovered over the Soviet land. These are the aspects that are now being maliciously distorted, and therefore we shall deal, in the limited scope of this pamphlet, only with them. The reader should bear in mind that the essential political questions involved (which are the real and vital points in dispute) are not dealt with directly. That would require a far more extended treatment. Our task, we repeat, is primarily to expose the distorters and falsifiers at work, on the

historical “facts” that serve them as a basis for their arraignment of Bolshevism.

In 1921 the infamous treachery of the SRs and the Mensheviks was all too fresh in the minds of the working-class movement for them to take the offensive in justifying their part in the Kronstadt events. Nowadays a Dan says blandly: “The Kronstadters did not at all begin the insurrection. It is a slanderous myth” (*Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, August 25, 1937). But in 1921 the Mensheviks crawled out of their skins to make light of the uprising and all that it implied. The SRs vowed that “the peaceful character of the Kronstadt movement was beyond any doubt”. If any insurgent steps were taken, they were only as “measures of self-defence”.

This ancient garbage is being deodorised and dished up again. And what is its source? In 1921, after the suppression of the Kronstadt mutiny, the Russian Social Revolutionaries, whose representatives in Russia had engineered the uprising, issued a volume entitled *The Truth About Kronstadt*. In publishing this book the SRs abroad — *Volia Rossii* — made only a belated acknowledgment of their political part in the mutiny, even though their spokesmen in Russia at the time hid behind a mask of nonpartisanship. This book has served as the principal, if not the only, source drawn upon by all the past and present critics of Bolshevism. The anarchists, for instance, piously believe that they are peddling their own version in citing Berkman. But Berkman’s pamphlet *The Kronstadt Rebellion* (1922) is merely a rehashing of the alleged facts and interpretations of the SRs, with a few significant alterations, which we shall shortly touch upon. The same thing applies to all the Menshevik historians, to say nothing of the latter-day “historians” like David Lawrence.

In 1921, the Mensheviks, far from doubting that the uprising was initiated by Kronstadt, tried to minimise it and explain it away as something really unimportant in itself. Here is what they wrote not in the year 1937 but in 1921 when the events were still fresh:

The fact that Kronstadt’s break with the Soviet power assumed the character of an armed uprising and ended in a bloody tragedy is of secondary importance in itself, and to a certain measure, accidental. Had the Soviet power evinced a little less granite hardness and aggressiveness towards Kronstadt, the conflict between it and the sailors would have unfolded in less grave forms. This, however, would have in no way changed its historical significance ... *Only on March 2*, in reply to repressions, threats, and commands to obey unconditionally did the fleet reply with a *resolution of non-recognition of the Soviet power and place two commissars under arrest*. [*Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, April 5, 1921; my emphasis — JGW.]

Thus, when the Mensheviks originally presented their version of the Kronstadt events, they did not at all deny that the Kronstadters *began* the mutiny. To be sure, they tried

to convey the impression that there was more than ample justification for this in the alleged “repressions, threats, and commands”. But you will observe that they simultaneously tried to evade the nub of the issue, the uprising itself, as a fact after all of little importance — secondary and even “accidental”. Why this glaring contradiction? They themselves supply the answer. It is their open avowal that this mutiny unfolded on the basis of anti-Soviet aims and program. We have the word of the Mensheviks for that. The SRs were a trifle less precise on the political and seamy side of the mutiny. They said: “The working-class organisations demanded a drastic change of power: some in the form of freely elected Soviets, others in the form of convoking the Constituent Assembly” (*The Truth About Kronstadt, Volia Rossii*, Prague, 1921, p. 5).

The truth being what it was, it is hardly surprising that Berkman rushed to give us his oath that the Kronstadt mutineers of 1921 “were staunch adherents of the Soviet *system* and they were earnestly seeking to find, by means friendly and peaceful, a solution of the pressing problems” (*The Kronstadt Rebellion*, Russian Revolution Series No. 3, 1922, p. 12, emphasis in original). In any case, these purveyors of “truth” are all agreed upon one thing, namely that all of these “staunch” partisans of the Soviet power proceeded in the friendliest spirit of peace to take up arms on the basis of a resolution of “non-recognition of the Soviet power”. But they did it, you see, “only on March 2”.

“Only on March 2!” Every pertinent detail must be dolled up, otherwise the truth might not be so palatable. By this formulation the Mensheviks, who only echo the SRs and anarchists, intend to evoke in the reader’s mind, if not years and months then at least weeks of “provocation”, “threats”, “commands”, “repressions”, etc., etc. But stretch their chronology as they will, these historians together with their neophytes cannot antedate March 2 except by reference to events “towards the end of February”. Their history of Kronstadt dates back as far as (and no farther than) February 22 — for occurrences not in Kronstadt but in Petrograd. As for Kronstadt itself, they can anticipate March 2 only by a reference to February 28! Count as they will, they have at their disposal: *three days* and *three resolutions*. March 2 with its resolution of non-recognition of the Soviet power is preceded only by March 1 with its resolution for “freely elected soviets”. What happened within this interval of less than twenty-four hours to cause this swing from one alleged pole to its diametrical opposite? The only answer we get from the lips of the adversaries is the following: A conference took place at Kronstadt. And what happened there? Each “historian” gives his own account.

We give the floor first to David Lawrence:

Sixteen thousand sailors, red army men, and workers attended. The chairman of the meeting was the communist Vassiliev. The president of the RSFSR, Kalinin, and the

communist commissar of the Baltic Fleet, Kuzmin, were present and addressed the meeting. At this meeting a resolution was drawn up and passed by a tremendous majority ... How did you answer these heroes? Did you really believe that these men who had faced death without number would cringe before the threats of your communist commissar? "If you want open warfare", your spokesman said, "you shall have it, for the communists will not give up the reins of government. We will fight to the bitter end." The Kronstadt sailors were not old women. After such provocation they simply sent the communists on their way and retained your two commissars as hostages. They then elected a new Kronstadt Soviet and proceeded to defend themselves. [*Vanguard*,¹⁰⁰ Vol. 3, No. 6, February-March 1937.]

Let us strip this account of its bombastic verbiage and its equally vapid mistakes both as regards the purpose of the meeting, the attendance, and the speakers there (Kalinin was not present at the meeting Lawrence refers to); subtract the brazen lie that a new soviet was elected when no such election took place, but instead the presidium was appointed as a Provisional Revolutionary Committee (no less!); and Lawrence's account boils down to the following "provocation": two (alleged) sentences (allegedly) quoted from an (alleged) speech! Kuzmin bears the historical responsibility for the mutiny, if you were to believe Lawrence.^a

Where did this historian cull this pearl? He merely improved on Berkman, who was far more adroit, and who supplied a good deal of pathetic psychology to lead up to the two sentences which Lawrence so confidently puts in quotation marks as a decisive provocation for all those who are not "old women". We therefore give Berkman's more extended account of this crucial meeting, and the crucial sentences:

Kuzmin, Commissar of the Baltic Fleet, was the first to address the conference. A man of more energy than judgment, he entirely failed to grasp the great significance of the moment. He was not equal to the situation: he did not know how to reach the hearts and minds of those simple men, the sailors and workers who had sacrificed so much for the Revolution and who were now exhausted to the point of desperation. *The delegates had gathered to take counsel with the representatives of the government.* Instead, Kuzmin's speech proved a firebrand thrown into gunpowder. He incensed the conference by his arrogance and insolence. He denied the labour disorders in Petrograd, declaring that the city was quiet and the workers satisfied. He praised the work of the commissars, questioned the revolutionary motives of Kronstadt, and warned against danger from

^a Victor Serge believes that it was all Kalinin's fault. "The Central Committee committed the enormous mistake of sending Kalinin who had already behaved as a harsh and incapable bureaucrat" (*Révolution Proletarienne*, September 1937).

Poland. He stooped to unworthy insinuations and thundered threats. “If you want open warfare”, Kuzmin concluded, “you shall have it, for the communists will not give up the reins of government. We will fight to the bitter end.” This tactless and provoking speech of the Commissar of the Baltic Fleet served to insult and outrage the delegates. The address of the Chairman of the Kronstadt Soviet, the Commissar Vassiliev, who was the next speaker, *made no impression on the audience*: the man was colourless and indefinite. As the meeting progressed, the general attitude became more clearly anti-Bolshevik. [Berkman, pp. 12-13; my emphasis — JGW.]

Strip Berkman’s account of Berkman’s psychology, grant Berkman that — understanding the moods of “simple men” — he had grasped the great significance of the meeting far better than Kuzmin, etc., etc., and what explanation do you receive for what took place? To believe Berkman, at a meeting where delegates had gathered “to take counsel with the representatives of the government” one of these representatives made a “provoking” speech, another was “colourless and indefinite” — and that just about blew up everything.

For the moment we leave aside Berkman’s alleged quotation, and his failure to tell us the substance if not the detail of Kuzmin’s “unworthy insinuations”. His account does provide us with a little more information about the actual content of Kuzmin’s speech: (1) Kuzmin denied that Petrograd was in ferment; (2) he questioned the revolutionary motives of Kronstadt; (3) he warned against danger from Poland; (4) he made a concluding statement.

Let us now turn to the account supplied by the SRs to see what light they cast on the great significance of the speech and the meeting. We immediately learn that the conference was called, not for the purpose of passing a resolution, as Lawrence would have it, nor for the purpose of consultation, as Berkman insists, but rather it was an electoral body gathered for the specific purpose of electing a new soviet, although the incumbent soviet’s term *had not yet expired*. We quote from *The Truth About Kronstadt*:

The main point on the order of the day was the question of elections to the Kronstadt Soviet, on a basis more just. Moreover, the powers of the old soviet, composed almost wholly of communists, *were already drawing to their termination*. The speeches of Kuzmin and Vasiliev not only failed to calm the meeting but on the contrary fed oil to the flames. Kuzmin began to assure the body that all was quiet in Petrograd; he threatened [?] with danger from Poland, spoke of dual power, etc., etc. *At the conclusion of his speech he declared that the communists would not renounce power voluntarily and would fight to the last ditch. The speech of Vasiliev was identical in spirit*. These speeches proved to the meeting that it was impossible to trust Kuzmin and Vasiliev ...

and that it was necessary to detain them. [P. 11; my emphasis — JGW.]

We leave it to future psychologists to decide why the SRs chose to treat the contents of one and the same speech in a different manner from Berkman, and why they refrained from resorting to quotation marks in referring to Kuzmin's concluding statement. The pertinent facts, apart from the contention of the SRs that Vasiliev made *exactly the same sort of speech as Kuzmin*, are identical with Berkman's except for an additional piece of information, namely, that Kuzmin in his speech dwelt on "dual power, etc., etc.". Berkman preferred to pass over this point in silence and to talk instead about "unworthy insinuations". Berkman, who was improved upon by Lawrence, it appears, himself only improved on the SRs.

Let us now pass on to cite from the most "authentic" of all sources, to wit, the account of this meeting as given by the *Kronstadt Izvestia*. In other words, the account of eyewitnesses and chief participants. Here it is:

Instead of calming the meeting Comrade Kuzmin irritated it. He spoke of the *equivocal position of Kronstadt, of patrols, of dual power, the danger threatening from Poland, and of the fact that the eyes of all Europe were upon us*; he assured us that all was quiet in Petrograd; underscored that *he was wholly at the mercy of the delegates*; that they had it in their power to shoot him if they so willed, and he concluded his speech *with a declaration that if the delegates wanted an open armed struggle, then it would take place — the Communists would not voluntarily renounce power and would fight to the last ditch*. [*Izvestia*, of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Kronstadt, No. 11, March 13, 1921; my emphasis — JGW.]

The more we learn about Kuzmin's speech, the more acutely the question poses itself.. Just who did play the part of provocateur at this meeting in Kronstadt? Let the adversaries of Bolshevism spout all they will about the lack of oratorical skill of the local authorities at this all-important meeting, but let them not fail to answer a few questions that we should now like to put to them:

Whom could Kuzmin possibly threaten by warning against danger from Poland? Was there no such danger? A special point is made in all the accounts of the fact that Kuzmin insisted that Petrograd was quiet (Berkman adds — on whose authority? — that Kuzmin said, "and the workers satisfied"). Why should this have provoked anybody who was not being goaded into provocation? Was Kuzmin telling the truth? Or did the *Kronstadt Izvestia* lie when in its very first issue, on the next day, it carried a sensational headline: "General Insurrection in Petrograd"? Moreover, why did *Kronstadt Izvestia* keep on lying about this and other alleged insurrections, and why did it even reprint dispatches from Helsinki and elsewhere to substantiate its campaign of slander? In short, take Kuzmin's speech point by point as reported by *Kronstadt Izvestia* — or in

any of the alleged summaries of it, yes, with or without Berkman's insidious quotation marks — and tell us — not whether you are simple men, “men and not old women”, etc., etc. — but whether if *you* had been delegates gathered at this meeting to elect a “new soviet”, you would thereupon have stayed and elected a “Provisional Revolutionary Committee”. Tell us, furthermore, whether you would have taken up arms in mutiny against the Soviet state?

If not, why do you peddle this SR garbage and seek to confuse the vanguard of the working class with regard to what actually took place in Kronstadt — and especially at this meeting?

An incident far more important and elucidative than anything that Kuzmin might or might not have said took place at this meeting, which all the Berkman slurs over in a very telltale fashion. The conference was thrown into a frenzy not by anything said by Kuzmin or Vasiliev (or Kalinin who was not present) but by a statement made from the floor that the Bolsheviks were marching with arms in hand to attack the meeting. It was this that precipitated the “election” of a Provisional Revolutionary Committee. Upon whose authority do we say so? Upon that of the SRs, who reported this incident as follows: “Owing to the rumours that arose, a very alarmed mood developed, and the delegates recalling the threats of Kalinin, Kuzmin and Vasiliev decided to create a Provisional Revolutionary Committee”. (*Kronstadt Izvestia*, No. 11, p. 12; my emphasis — JGW.)

Who spread this rumour and why? We say: The ones who circulated it were the same gentlemen who spread the lies about the insurrection in Petrograd. The very ones who raised the slogan of the constituent assembly at the beginning and then switched to the “more realistic” slogan of “down with the bankrupt commune!” (resolution adopted in Kronstadt on March 7); the very ones who charged that the “Bolshevik power had led us to famine, cold, and chaos”; those who, masquerading as nonpartisans, were duping the grey mass in Kronstadt; those who were seeking to capitalise on the difficulties of the Soviet power just emerging from the devastation of the civil war and who headed the movement in order to guide it into the channels of the counterrevolution.

We look in vain in the writings of the “truthful” historians for any clarification as to the source of this rumour. More than that, they conveniently “forget” (Berkman among others) that the Provisional Revolutionary Committee officially laid this rumour at the door of *the Bolsheviks themselves*. “This rumour was circulated by Communists in order to break up the meeting” (*Kronstadt Izvestia*, No. 11).

Here is how Berkman reports the incident in *The Kronstadt Rebellion*, page 14:

At that moment the conference was thrown into great excitement by *the declaration*

of a delegate^a [!] that the Bolsheviks were about to attack the meeting and that 15 carloads of soldiers and communists, armed with rifles and machine guns, had been dispatched for that purpose. “This information”, the *Izvestia* report continues, “produced passionate resentment among the delegates. Investigation soon [?] proved the report groundless but rumours persisted that a regiment of *kursanti*, headed by the notorious Chekist Dulkiss, was already marching in the direction of the fort Krasnaia Gorka.” In view of *these new developments* [continues Berkman, deftly transforming an *incendiary lie* into a *development*] and remembering the threats of Kuzmin and Kalinin [what, no Vasiliev?], the conference at once took up the question of organising the defence of Kronstadt against Bolshevik attack. Time pressing, it was decided to turn the presidium of the conference into a Provisional Revolutionary Committee, which was charged with the duty of preserving the order and safety of the city. The Committee was also to make the necessary preparations for holding the new elections to the Kronstadt Soviet. [My emphasis — JGW.]

Assuredly, only the simple-minded, i.e., politically backward people, will accept this prattle of the Berkman school of psychology in politics. Even after the mutiny was suppressed the SRs insisted that “according to the testimony of one of the authoritative leaders of the Kronstadt movement”, the rumour about Dulkiss and the *kursanti* was true. Not only were rumours spread throughout the meeting by delegates from the floor, but the chair concluded on this selfsame note. From the account in the *Kronstadt Izvestia* we learn that: “At the very last moment, the *Comrade Chairman* made an announcement that a detachment of 2000 men was marching to attack the meeting, whereupon the assembled body dispersed with mingled emotions of alarm, excitement and indignation ...” (No. 9, March 11, 1921.)

There is not a shadow of doubt that the SRs were the prime, if not the sole, movers of this campaign of “rumours”, which brought such infamous fruit. Any possibility for a peaceful solution of the Kronstadt crisis was eliminated once a dual power was organised in the fortress. Time was indeed pressing, as we shall shortly prove. However one may speculate about the chances for averting bloodshed, the fact remains that it took the leaders of the mutiny only 72 hours to lead their followers (and dupes) into a direct conflict with the Soviets.

It is by no means excluded that the local authorities in Kronstadt bungled the situation. The fact that the best revolutionists and fighters were urgently needed at vital centres would tend to support the contention that those assigned to so relatively “safe” a sector as Kronstadt were not men of outstanding qualifications. It is no secret

^a *Izvestia* declared that it was “a delegate from the *Sevastopol* who made this “report”.

that Kalinin, let alone Commissar Kuzmin, was none too highly esteemed by Lenin and his colleagues. The affinity between “mistakes” and such individuals as Kalinin is wonderful indeed, but it cannot serve as a substitute for political analysis. Insofar as the local authorities were blind to the full extent of the danger or failed to take proper and effective measures to cope with the crisis, to that extent their blunders played a part in the unfolding events, i.e., facilitated the counterrevolutionists’ work of utilising the objective difficulties to attain their ends.

How was it possible for the political leaders to turn Kronstadt so swiftly into an armed camp against the October revolution? What was the *real* aim of the mutineers? The supposition that soldiers and sailors could venture upon an insurrection under an abstract political slogan of “free soviets” is absurd in itself. It is doubly absurd in view of the fact that the rest of the Kronstadt garrison consisted of backward and passive people who could not be used in the civil war. These people could have been moved to an insurrection only by profound economic needs and interests. These were the needs and interests of the fathers and brothers of these sailors and soldiers, that is, of peasants as traders in food products and raw materials. In other words the mutiny was the expression of the petty-bourgeoisie’s reaction against the difficulties and privations imposed by the proletarian revolution. Nobody can deny this class character of the two camps. All other questions can be only of a secondary importance. That the Bolsheviks may have committed errors of a general or concrete character cannot alter the fact that they defended the acquisitions of the proletarian revolution against the bourgeois (and petty-bourgeois) reaction. That is why every critic must be himself examined from the standpoint as to which side of the firing line he finds himself on. If he closes his eyes to the social and historical content of the Kronstadt mutiny then he is himself an element of petty-bourgeois reaction against the proletarian revolution. (That is the case with Alexander Berkman, the Russian Mensheviks, and so on.) A trade union, say, of agricultural labourers may commit errors in a strike against farmers. We can criticise them, but our criticism should be based upon a fundamental solidarity with the workers’ trade union and upon our opposition to the exploiters of the workers even if these exploiters happen to be small farmers.

The Bolsheviks never claimed that their politics were infallible. That is a Stalinist credo. Victor Serge, in his assertion that the NEP (a limited concession to unlimited bourgeois demands) was belatedly introduced, only repeats in a mild form the criticism of an important political error which Lenin himself sharply recognised in the spring of 1921. We are ready to grant the error. But how can this change our basic estimate? Far outweighing a speculation on the part of Serge or anybody else that the mutiny could have been avoided if only the Bolsheviks had granted the concession of the NEP to

Kronstadt is the mutiny itself and the categorical declaration of *Kronstadt Izvestia* that the mutineers were demanding “not free trade but a genuine Soviet power” (No. 12, March 14, 1921).

What could and did this “genuine Soviet power” signify? We have already heard from the SRs and Mensheviks their estimate of the basis of the mutiny. The SRs and Mensheviks always maintained that their aims were identical with those of the Bolsheviks, only they intended to attain them in a “different” way. We know the class content of this “difference.” Lenin and Trotsky contended that the slogan of “free soviets” signified materially and practically, in principle as well as essence, the abolition of proletarian dictatorship, instituted and represented by the Bolshevik Party. This can be denied only by those who will deny that, with all their partial errors, the policies of the Bolsheviks stood always in the service of the proletarian revolution. Will Serge deny it? Serge forgets that the elementary duty of a scientific analysis is not to take the abstract slogans of different groups but to discover their real social content.^a In this case such an analysis presents no great difficulties.

Let us listen to the most authoritative spokesman of the Russian counterrevolution on his evaluation of the Kronstadt events. On March 11, 1921, in the very heat of the uprising, Milyukov drew the following conclusions: “The instigators of the *coup* in Kronstadt and in Petrograd have already demonstrated by the entire course of developments that they are capable of guiding events, even in the military sphere.” He then proceeded to castigate the over-impatient and rather myopic “candidates for power” who look askance at the slogan of freely elected soviets. Milyukov lectured them: “The main thing is — and this grieves naive people greatly — that they have

^a In his recent comments on Kronstadt, Victor Serge conceded that the Bolsheviks once confronted with the mutiny had no other recourse but to crush it. In this he demarcates himself from the assorted varieties of anarcho-Menshevism. But the substance of his contribution to the discussion is to lament over the experiences of history instead of seeking to understand them as a Marxist. Serge insists that it would have been “easy” to have forestalled the mutiny — if only the Central Committee had not sent Kalinin to talk to the sailors! Once the mutiny flared, it would have been “easy” to have avoided the worst — if only Berkman had talked to the sailors! To adopt such an approach to the Kronstadt events is to take the viewpoint of a dilettante: “Ah, if history had only spared us Kronstadt!” It can and does lead only to eclecticism and the loss of all political perspectives. If the Moscow Kalinin had been spared us by history (or by his parents) would that have safeguarded us against the spectacle of a man of Serge’s courage and talents serving as a cover for all the Kalinins, including those of the POUM? When it comes to serious questions, Serge departs from Marxism, preferring a more “broadminded” outlook. With such a viewpoint, he can serve as a guide not for the vanguard, but only for such an individual as has “Observed the golden rule, Till he’s become the golden fool”.

their own program.” What was it? Said Milyukov:

This program may be expressed in the brief slogan: “Down with the Bolsheviks! Long live the soviets!” ... “Long live the soviets!” at the present time, most likely signifies that the power will pass from the Bolsheviks to the moderate socialists, who will receive a majority in the soviets. There are, of course, many people who view the latter in the same light as they do the Bolsheviks. Apart from the fact that we do not share this viewpoint, we have many other reasons for not protesting against the Kronstadt slogan. In the first place it removes the objection which has become so current and of which Lloyd George and Wells have so frivolously delivered themselves: “The Bolsheviks are preferable to anarchy.” ... It is self-evident for us, that leaving aside a forceful installation of power from the right or left, this sanction [of the new power] which is of course temporary, can be effected only through institutions of the type of soviets. Only in this way can the transfer be effected painlessly and be recognised by the country as a whole. Our conclusion from what has been said is this, that “not only the monarchists but other candidates for power living abroad have no rhyme or reason for being in a hurry”. [*Poslednie Novosti*, March 11, 1921.]

In a subsequent issue, Milyukov’s *Poslednie Novosti* carried an article entitled “Soviets”, which stressed that in any discussion of the form of government in Russia after the fall of the Bolsheviks, it was impermissible to ignore the question of soviets — because “in the eyes of the insurrectionary populace, the ‘Soviets’ are not only consultative or legislative bodies, but also the organs of power as a whole, and only as such can they supplant the Bolshevik power” (March 18, 1921).

Surveying the revolution at the close of the civil war, the Mensheviks were more certain than ever that “The Bolshevik dictatorship did not create socialist production and could not have created it in Russia” (*Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, February 16, 1921). As staunch partisans of capitalist restoration,^a the Mensheviks held essentially the same viewpoint as Milyukov in their defence of the Kronstadt mutiny. Together with Milyukov they defended in Kronstadt a step toward the restoration of capitalism. In the years that followed they could not but favour in the main Stalin’s course (advised by Abramovich and others in 1921) of “decisively breaking with all adventurist plans of spreading ‘the world revolution’”, and undertaking instead the building of socialism in one country.

^a In the programmatic theses on Russia proposed by the Central Committee of the Mensheviks in 1921, we find the following: “Inasmuch as in the immediate period ahead the capitalist forms will retain their sway in world economy, therefore the economic system of the Russian Republic cannot but be consonant with the capitalist relations prevailing in the advanced countries of Europe and America” (*Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, December 1921).

With a reservation here and a bleat there, they are today quite in favour of Stalin's gospel of socialism in one country. In this, as in remaining true to the banner raised by the Kronstadt mutiny, they only remain true to themselves — as the arch supporters of every open or veiled trend toward capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and capitalist stabilisation in the rest of the world.

The connection between the counterrevolution and Kronstadt can be established not only from the lips of the adversaries but also on the basis of irrefutable facts.

At the beginning of February there was not a sign of any disturbance either in Petrograd or nearby Kronstadt. In the middle of the month, well in advance of the developments that followed, the capitalist press abroad began publishing dispatches purportedly relating to serious ferment in *Kronstadt*, giving details about an uprising in the fleet and the arrest of the Baltic commissar. These dispatches, while false at the time, materialised with amazing precision a few weeks later.

On February 14, 1921, *L'Echo de Paris* carried a signed article entitled "The Revolt of the Baltic Fleet Against the Soviet Government". On the same day, *Le Matin*, another Parisian paper, carried a dispatch under the heading, "Moscow Takes Measures Against the Kronstadt Insurgents". Similar dispatches were carried by the Russian White Guard press. The specified source was Helsinki, the centre of anti-Soviet propaganda, from where the dispatches were sent out on February 11.

Referring to this curious "coincidence," Lenin in his report to the 10th Party Congress had the following to say (on March 8, 1921):

It was an attempt to seize political power from the Bolsheviks by a motley crowd or alliance of ill-assorted elements, apparently just to the right of the Bolsheviks, or perhaps even to their "left" — you can't really tell, so amorphous is the combination of political groupings that has tried to take power in Kronstadt. You all know, undoubtedly, that at the same time White Guard generals were very active over there. There is ample proof of this. A fortnight before the Kronstadt events, the Paris newspapers reported a mutiny at Kronstadt. It is quite clear that it is the work of Socialist-Revolutionaries and White Guard émigrés, and at the same time the movement was reduced to a petty-bourgeois counterrevolution and petty-bourgeois anarchism.¹⁰¹

It is an established fact that when these dispatches came to the attention of Trotsky, before any outbreaks in *Kronstadt*, he immediately communicated with Kuzmin, the commissar of the Baltic Fleet, warning him to take precautions. The appearance of similar dispatches in the bourgeois press referring to other alleged uprisings had been shortly followed by counterrevolutionary attempts in the specified regions. The advance news of the arrest of the commissar of the Baltic Fleet and of an uprising there was not to be taken lightly, Trotsky insisted. Trotsky later referred to this incident

in a government statement issued from Moscow on March 2, and again in an interview he gave to the representatives of the press on March 16, 1921.

We reprint the first section of the interview, which bears directly on this point: That the mutiny in Kronstadt coincides with the pending signing of the peace treaty with Poland and a trade agreement with England is, of course, not accidental. Forces far too powerful, not so much from the standpoint of number as of political influence, not only in France and among Russian émigrés but also in Poland and England, are interested in thwarting the peace treaty and the trade agreement.

You are doubtless aware of the fact that in a number of foreign newspapers, among them *Le Matin*, news of an uprising in Kronstadt appeared as far back as the middle of February, that is to say, at a time when complete tranquility reigned in Kronstadt. How explain this? Very simply. The centres of counterrevolutionary plots are located abroad. Between those Russian émigré centres and certain groupings of European imperialism, and of the European press, there is the most intimate connection, naturally, not at all platonic in character. The Russian counterrevolutionary organisers promise to stage a mutiny at a propitious moment, while the impatient yellow and financial press write about it as an already accomplished fact.

On the basis of the dispatch in *Le Matin*, I sent a warning to Petrograd to my naval colleagues, in which I cited the fact that in the course of the past year the foreign press — to our complete surprise — carried news of a coup in Nizhny-Novgorod and the formation of a Chernov-Spiridonova government there; and to be sure within a month or thereabout, after the publication of this dispatch, an attempt at a coup was made in Nizhny-Novgorod.

Thus, the imperialist press not only prints, and deliberately so, a great number of fictitious reports about Russia but also, from time to time, with a certain degree of precision, forecasts attempts at overturns in specified centres of Soviet Russia. The journalistic agents of imperialism only “forecast” that which is entrusted for execution to other agents of this very imperialism.

Kronstadt was selected as the closest point to Europe and Petrograd. Inasmuch as the Baltic Fleet had not been able to play any active role during the current international situation faced by the republic, it has inevitably been thinned out with respect to personnel. A great many of the revolutionary sailors, who played a major part in the October revolution of 1917, were transferred in the interim to other spheres of activity. They were replaced in large measure by accidental elements, among whom were a good many Latvian, Estonian, and Finnish sailors, whose attitude toward their duties was that of holding a temporary job, and among whom the bulk were indifferent to the revolutionary struggle. This circumstance naturally facilitated the work of the organisers

of the conspiracy. They took advantage of a partial conflict and so extended its framework that, for a large section of the sailors, all avenues of retreat were cut off. While the garrison and civilian populations, which did not have an opportunity to orient themselves in this situation, remained passive, the insurgents seized control of the powerful artillery of the fortress and the two warships.

It goes without saying that all the “truthful” historians from Berkman down to the scurrilous contributors of the *International Review* prefer to pass over this “coincidence” in silence.

The capitalist press seized upon the Kronstadt events to conduct one of its major anti-Soviet campaigns of rumour and slander, aimed to assist the work of the counterrevolution. Referring to this “unprecedented, hysterical campaign” of international imperialism, Lenin brought out the following facts in his concluding speech to the 10th Party Congress on March 16, 1921:

Now that world capitalism has started its incredibly frenzied, hysterical campaign against us, it would be particularly inappropriate for us to panic, and there is no reason to do so. Yesterday, by arrangement with Comrade Chicherin, I received a summary of the news on this question, and I think you will find it instructive. It is a summary of the news on the slander campaign about the situation in Russia. Never before, writes the comrade who made the summary, has the West European press indulged in such an orgy of lies or engaged in the mass production of fantastic inventions about Soviet Russia as in the last two weeks. Since the beginning of March, the whole of the West European press has been daily pouring out torrents of fantastic reports about insurrections in Russia; a counterrevolutionary victory; Lenin and Trotsky’s flight to the Crimea; the white flag over the Kremlin; barricades in Petrograd and Moscow and their streets running with blood; hordes of workers converging on Moscow from the hills to overthrow the Soviet government; Budenny’s defection to the rebels; a counterrevolutionary victory in a number of Russian towns, a succession of names adding up to virtually all the gubernia capitals of Russia. The scope and method of the campaign betray it as a far-reaching plan adopted by all the leading governments. On March 2, the British Foreign Office announced through the *Press Association* that it regarded these reports as improbable, but immediately thereafter issued its own bulletin about a rising in Petrograd, a bombardment of Petrograd by the Kronstadt fleet, and fighting in the streets of Moscow.

On March 2, all the British newspapers published cabled reports about uprisings in Petrograd and Moscow: Lenin and Trotsky have fled to the Crimea; 14,000 workers in Moscow are demanding a constituent assembly; the Moscow arsenal and the Moscow-Kursk railway station are in the hands of the insurgent workers; in Petrograd, Vasilyevsky

Ostrov is entirely in the hands of the insurgents.

Let me quote a few of the radio broadcasts and cables received on the following days: on March 3, Klyshko cabled from London that Reuters had picked up some absurd rumours about a rising in Petrograd and was assiduously circulating them.

March 6. The Berlin correspondent Mayson cables to New York that workers from America are playing an important part in the Petrograd revolution, and that Chicherin has radioed an order to General Hanecki to close the frontier to émigrés from America.

March 6. Zinoviev has fled to Oranienbaum; Red artillery is shelling the working-class quarter in Moscow; Petrograd is beleaguered (cable from Wiegand).

March 7. Klyshko cables that according to reports from Revel, barricades have been erected in the streets of Moscow; the newspapers carry reports from Helsinki that anti-Bolshevik troops have taken Chernigov.

March 7. Petrograd and Moscow are in the hands of the insurgents; insurrection in Odessa; Semyonov advancing in Siberia at the head of 25,000 Cossacks; a Revolutionary Committee in Petrograd is in control of the fortifications and the fleet (reported by the Poldhu wireless station in England).

Nauen, March 7. The factory quarter in Petrograd is in revolt; an anti-Bolshevik insurrection has broken out in Volhynia.

Paris, March 7. Petrograd in the hands of a Revolutionary Committee; *Le Matin* quotes reports from London saying the white flag is flying over the Kremlin.

Paris, March 8. The rebels have captured Krasnaya Gorka; Red Army regiments have mutinied in Pskov Gubernia; the Bolsheviks are sending Bashkirs against Petrograd.

March 10. Klyshko cables: the newspapers are asking whether Petrograd has fallen or not. According to reports from Helsinki three-quarters of Petrograd is in the hands of the insurgents. Trotsky, or according to other reports, Zinoviev, is in command of operations and has his headquarters in Tosna, or else in the Peter and Paul Fortress. According to other reports, Brusilov has been appointed commander in chief. Reports from Riga say that Petrograd, except for the railway stations, was captured on the ninth; the Red Army has retreated to Gatchina; strikers in Petrograd have raised the slogan: "Down with the Soviets and the Communists." The British War Office states that it is not yet known whether the Kronstadt rebels have joined up with the Petrograd rebels, but, according to information at its disposal, Zinoviev is in the Peter and Paul Fortress, where he is in command of the Soviet troops.¹⁰²

Similar news items could be adduced to any number, but no list would be complete without the reports on the same subject that appeared in the *Kronstadt Izvestia*. In its first issue, on March 3, it reported "General Insurrection in Petrograd".

In its fifth issue, on March 7, under the heading "Last Minute News from Petrograd",

it reported: “Mass arrests and executions of workers and sailors continue. Situation very tense. All the toiling masses await an overturn at any moment.”

In its sixth issue, on March 8, under the headline “What Is Happening in Petrograd” it printed the following: “The Helsingfors newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet* in issue No. 60 prints the following news from Petrograd ... Petrograd workers are striking and demonstratively leaving the factories, crowds bearing red banners demand a change of government — the overthrow of the Communists.”^a

In its March 11 issue, *Kronstadt Izvestia* carried an article entitled: “The Government in Panic” which stated: “Our cry has been heard! Revolutionary sailors, Red Army men and workers in Petrograd are already coming to our assistance ... The Bolshevik power feels the ground slipping from under its feet and has issued orders in Petrograd to open fire at any group of five or more people gathering in the streets.”

It is hardly surprising that the White Guard press abroad launched an intense drive to raise funds, clothing, food, etc., under the slogan: “For Kronstadt!”

How explain away this array of facts and incontrovertible evidence? Very simply: by charging the Bolsheviks with slander!

Even a Dan is compelled to admit that “It is of course true that reactionary elements both in Russia and abroad seized upon the insurrection” (*Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, August 25, 1937).

And the scurrilous scribbler in the *International Review* (no. 8, 1937) chimes in: “Indeed, ‘all the reactionary elements, in Russia as well as abroad, immediately seized upon this uprising’. Did they not seize on the very similarly provoked Barcelona May Days?¹⁰³ Do not such elements seize on the counter-accusations hurled by Trotsky against Stalin’s ‘anti-Trotskyist-Gestapo’ campaign of slander and extermination? Kerensky also warned against playing into the arms of ‘reaction’.”

A German proverb insists that there are some things beyond satire. What possible

^a The Mensheviks in Russia were not behindhand in adding their contribution to the rabid campaign of the imperialists abroad, and their SR allies in Kronstadt. As they had no press of their own, their campaign was necessarily clandestine. Here is an opening paragraph in one of their leaflets issued in the name of the “Petersburg Committee of the RSDLP”, dated March 8, 1921, and distributed in Petrograd during the crucial days of the mutiny: “The structure of the Bolshevik dictatorship is cracking and crumbling. Peasant uprisings — in the Ukraine, in Siberia, in Southwest Russia ... Strikes and ferment — among workers in Petersburg and Moscow ... The sailors of Kronstadt have risen ... Starvation, cold, misery and unprecedented embitterment rife among the population in the rest of Russia ... This is the unalluring picture of the Soviet Republic three years after the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. The structure of the Bolshevik dictatorship is cracking and crumbling ...” The Mensheviks abroad proudly reproduced this “well gotup” circular in *Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, April 20, 1921.

analogy could anyone draw between the “use” reaction may make of, say, the Barcelona uprising against the counterrevolutionary People’s Front, and the direct participation of the counterrevolutionary forces in a mutiny against the victorious revolution? Only triflers and scoundrels would resort to such demagoguery.

There is no spectacle more revolting than that of people who have, like the anarchists and Mensheviks, been among other things the co-partners of Stalinism in its people’s frontism, and who bear direct responsibility for the massacre of the flower of the Spanish proletariat, pointing an accusing finger at the leaders of the October revolution for putting down a mutiny against the revolution: It was all the fault of the Bolsheviks. They provoked the Kronstadters, etc., etc.

There is no denying that the SRs and Mensheviks are experts if not authorities on provocation. Nothing that Kerensky and company did ever provoked them to even justify the taking up of arms against the Provisional Government. On the contrary, the Mensheviks were very emphatic in 1917 in their demands that revolutionary Kronstadt and the Bolsheviks in general be curbed. As for the SRs, they did not long hesitate to take up arms in the struggle against the October revolution. Bolshevism always did “provoke” these gentlemen, who have invariably taken their positions on the other side of the barricades.

The direct participation of counterrevolutionary elements in the mutiny — especially the ex-tsarist General Kozlovsky and a group of his officers — if not cynically evaded is flatly denied. No one is more brazen than Berkman, who has stated categorically: “He [Kozlovsky] played no role whatever in the Kronstadt events” (Berkman, p. 15). To believe Berkman, Kozlovsky was merely an artillery specialist placed in the fortress “by Trotsky”. Again, this is merely Berkman’s improvement on the version of the SRs.

First, let us establish Kozlovsky’s status. To do so we shall cite not the Bolsheviks but their bitterest adversaries. The SRs pictured Kozlovsky’s role as follows: The commandant of the fortress, a Bolshevik, “ran away”. His duties thereupon devolved on the chief of the artillery, i.e., General Kozlovsky. But the latter “refused” to assume them, “being of the opinion that the former regulations no longer applied, inasmuch as the Revolutionary Committee was now in control”. The Revolutionary Committee then proceeded to appoint one Solovianov, another officer, while Kozlovsky was “merely placed in charge of supervising the technical work of the artillery, as a specialist” (*The Truth About Kronstadt*, p. 14).

This is alleged to have taken place on March 2. The next day, on March 3, “a military Council of Defence was elected, and a plan for *defending* the fortress was elaborated” (*The Truth About Kronstadt*, p. 15; my emphasis — JGW).

Who was elected to this “Council of Defence”? And what kind of “defence” plans

did the council elaborate?

On this point we have the testimony of General Kozlovsky himself, who shortly after his flight abroad gave an interview to the press. Among those who cited this interview were the Mensheviks, and here is how they reported Kozlovsky: “On the very *first day* of the insurrection the Council of Military Specialists had elaborated a plan for an immediate assault on Oranienbaum, which had every chance for success at the time, for the Government was caught off-guard and could not have brought up reliable troops in time ... The political leaders of the insurrection would not agree to take the offensive and the opportunity was let slip” (*Sotsialisticheskyy Vestnik*, April 5, 1921; my emphasis — JGW).

From the lips of the counterrevolutionary general himself (as quoted by the Mensheviks) we get the unambiguous declaration that *from the very first day*, he and his colleagues had openly associated themselves with the mutiny, had elaborated the “best” of plans to capture Petrograd itself, and all this “while the government was caught off-guard.” If the plan failed it was only because Kozlovsky and his colleagues were unable to convince the “political leaders”, i.e., his SR allies, that the moment was propitious for exposing their true visage and program. The SRs thought it best to preserve the mask of “defence” and to temporise. They “rejected” Kozlovsky’s plan, just as they “refrained” from accepting “for the present” Victor Chernov’s offer of aid.^a

On March 2, 1921, Trotsky wrote: “The former general Kozlovsky and three of his officers, whose names we have not yet ascertained, have openly assumed the role of insurgents ... Thus, the meaning of the latest events has become completely clear. Behind the SRs again stands a tsarist general.” The admissions of the SRs and of General Kozlovsky himself, prove these words to the hilt.

When Berkman wrote his pamphlet, he knew all of the above-cited facts. Indeed, he reproduced the interview of Kozlovsky almost verbatim in his pages, making as is his custom a few significant alterations, and hiding the real source of what appears as his own appraisal. Hear Berkman:

^a Berkman, after piously pretending that Chernov’s offer was flatly rejected, proceeds to cite the text of Petrichenko’s reply, in which the chairman of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Kronstadt gives the lie directly to his anarchist apologist. After expressing his deep gratitude “to all our brothers abroad ... for their sympathy”, Petrichenko goes on to say: “The Provisional Revolutionary Committee is thankful for the offer of Comrade Chernov but *it refrains for the present*”; that is, *till further developments become clarified. Meantime, everything will be taken into consideration*” (Berkman, p. 16; my emphasis — JGW). The “political leaders” were afraid, we repeat, that the “psychological moment” was not yet ripe for them to accept the “offers” of either Kozlovsky or Chernov, i.e., drop their convenient mask of nonpartisanship and come out in their true colors.

Having arrested a few Commissars, the sailors prepared to defend themselves against attack. *Kronstadt refused to act upon the advice of the military experts immediately to take Oranienbaum.* The latter was of utmost military value, besides having 50,000 poods of wheat belonging to Kronstadt. *A landing in Oranienbaum was feasible, the Bolsheviks having been taken by surprise and having had no time to bring up reinforcements. But the sailors did not want to take the offensive, and thus the psychological moment was lost.* [Berkman, p. 40; my emphasis — JGW.]

Observe the miracle! You need only change “the Council of Defence” to read “military experts”, alter “political leaders” to read “Kronstadt” or “the sailors” — and then with all the Berkman-Lawrence-Ayres you are at liberty to charge the Bolsheviks with a “campaign of calumny and defamation of Kronstadt”.

More than that, you can then utilise this system of hocus-pocus to interchange Kronstadt with the Paris Commune, Kozlovsky’s conclusions with Marx’s analysis, and say with Berkman (and the Mensheviks who said it before him) that: “The same happened to the Paris Commune. In the Paris Commune as in the Kronstadt uprising *the tendency toward passive, defensive tactics proved fatal*” (*The Kronstadt Rebellion*, p. 40; emphasis in original).

It is no accident that Berkman and his neophytes have to plagiarise from all the Kozlovskys and the SRs and the Mensheviks. The rejection of the Marxian analysis of the state by the anarchists inevitably leads them to the acceptance of any and all other views up to and including their participation in the bourgeois state at every crucial moment. The participation of the anarchists in the counterrevolutionary mutiny in Kronstadt is identical in all fundamental respects with their participation in the counterrevolutionary people’s front regime in Spain. Their defence of Kronstadt is identical with their hypocritical defence of their course in Spain.

It took the “political leaders” of the mutiny from February 28 to March 2 to turn Kronstadt into an armed camp against the October revolution. The position of the insurgents, in control of a first-class naval fortress commanding the naval approaches to Petrograd, was extremely favourable. They had at their disposal battleships, heavy artillery, machine guns, etc. Kozlovsky and Berkman both vouch for the fact that the Bolsheviks had been “caught by surprise”. Trotsky arrived in Petrograd only on March 5. The first attack against Kronstadt was launched on March 8. Could the Bolsheviks have waited longer?

Kozlovsky assigns (as does Berkman) the collapse of the Kronstadt mutiny to the failure to take Oranienbaum and thus place Petrograd at the mercy of the insurgents. Many military experts held to the opinion that the failure of the mutiny was largely due to the failure of the ice to thaw. Had the waters begun to flow freely between

Kronstadt and Petrograd, land troops could not have been used by the Soviet government and, on the other hand, naval reinforcements could have been rushed to the aid of the insurgents. The danger of this development is not a “myth” or a “Bolshevik slander”. *In the streets of Kronstadt, ice was already thawing*. On March 15, three days before the capture of the fortress, in a heroic assault in which over 300 delegates of the 10th Party Congress participated, the *Kronstadt Izvestia*, in its 13th issue, featured on its front page an order instructing the streets to be cleared “in view of the thaw”. Had the Bolsheviks temporised they would have precipitated a situation that would have taken an immeasurably greater toll of lives and sacrifices, let alone jeopardising the very fate of the revolution.^a

The name Kronstadt evokes in the minds of the general run of readers not the Kronstadt mutiny of 1921, but the glorious record of the revolutionary sailors of 1917 — the revolutionists whose suppression Dan and his brothers demanded at the time. When all these historians cite the name of the fortress and the names of the warships, *Petrovavlovsk* and *Sevastopol* — “The ships that in 1917 had been the main support of the Bolsheviks” (Berkman, p. 8) — they carefully avoid mentioning the fact that the

^a In approaching so serious a question as Kronstadt, Victor Serge, after lamenting over Kalinin, goes on to bewail alleged “excesses” in the suppression of the mutiny. Therewith, Serge rubs shoulders with all those whose lips never tire of chanting about the “bloodthirstiness” of revolutionists. For these pious hypocrites and vilest philistines we have nothing but contempt. But we burn with shame that Serge should have dipped his hand so low — with the pen that has so ably chronicled the deathless pages of the civil war, yes, with all of its “excesses”.

A fortress had been finally taken by storm, after a resistance that was most stubborn and determined. Previous assaults had been repulsed with heavy losses. Now the fighting shifted to the streets, block to block, house to house. A hand-to-hand struggle ensued, the most savage form of modern warfare. “A massacre!” wails Serge, hoping no doubt with these admonitions to spare us future bloodshed, but in reality only preparing the soil for greater losses and sacrifices on the part of the vanguard of the class. Let us disregard for the moment Serge’s apparent unconcern for the fighters who fell under the bullets and bayonets of the mutineers — their blood, after all, is only the blood of Bolsheviks, meant to be spilled endlessly. Let us venture with Serge to consider only those corpses he chooses to count on this occasion. Would Serge have been mollified with one-half or one-tenth of the “massacre”? At what point would his arithmetic tip the scales to equalize the monstrous disparity with which he juggles? Just where would he draw the line — not only in Kronstadt, for the problem goes far deeper, but, say, on a picket line? Were we bound to apply Serge’s “golden rule”, we should be duty bound to compute beforehand, pencil and paper in hand, all the “needless” sacrifices on the part of the workers before we counsel and lead them to engage in any action. And should the prospect be a grueling, merciless struggle, then must we fold our hands and thus avoid any possibility of “excesses”, either in strikes or on the barricades? Yet that and that alone is the political logic of Serge’s views on Kronstadt drawn to their conclusion.

personnel of the fortress as well as of the warships could not possibly have remained static throughout the years between 1917 and 1921. The fortress and the ships remained well nigh intact physically, but a great deal had happened to the revolutionary sailors in the period of the civil war, in which they played a heroic part in practically every sphere. It is of course impossible to paint the picture as if the Kronstadt sailors had participated in the October revolution of 1917 only to remain behind in the fortress and on the ships, while their comrades in arms fought the Wrangels, Kolchaks, Denikins, Yudeniches, etc. But that is, in effect, what the opponents of Bolshevism attempt to imply with their incessant harping on the words *Kronstadt*, *revolutionary sailors*, etc. The trick is all too obvious. Trotsky's recent reply to Wendelin Thomas, which pricks this bubble, could not help but have aroused their ire. With contemptible hypocrisy, all of them from Dan to Lawrence rise up in fake indignation against Trotsky's pretended slur of the "mass". Yet, in replying to Thomas, Trotsky merely rephrased the facts which he brought out in his above-cited interview on March 16, 1921, when he said:

Kronstadt was selected [by the counterrevolutionaries — JGW] as the closest point to Europe and Petrograd. Inasmuch as the Baltic Fleet has not been able to play any active role during the current international situation faced by the Republic, it has inevitably been thinned out with respect to personnel. A great many of the revolutionary sailors, who played a major part in the October revolution of 1917, were transferred in the interim to other spheres of activity. They were replaced in large measure by accidental elements, among whom were a good many Latvian, Estonian, and Finnish sailors, whose attitude toward their duties was that of holding a temporary job, and among whom the bulk were indifferent to the revolutionary struggle. This circumstance naturally facilitated the work of the organisers of the conspiracy. They took advantage of a partial conflict and so extended its framework that, for a large section of the sailors, all avenues of retreat were cut off. While the garrison and civilian populations, which did not have an opportunity to orient themselves in this situation, remained passive, the insurgents seized control of the powerful artillery of the fortress and the two warships.

These are the incontestable facts. The sailors composed the bulk of the insurgent forces; the garrison and the civilian population remained passive. Caught off guard by the mutiny the Red Army command at first sought to temporise, hoping for a shift in the moods of the insurgents. Time was pressing. When it became obvious that there was no possibility of tearing the "grey mass" from the leadership of the SRs and their henchmen, Kronstadt was taken by assault. In so doing, the Bolsheviks only did their duty. They defended the conquests of the revolution against the assaults of the counterrevolution. That is the only verdict that history can and will pass. ■

Debate on Kronstadt

The following section carries two episodes in a debate on the significance of the Kronstadt uprising carried in the Socialist Workers Party's journal, New International, following publication of Trotsky's response to Wendelin Thomas, his "Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt" and a summarised version of John G. Wright's article, "The Truth About Kronstadt". The first letter by Victor Serge, the letter by Dwight Macdonald and the response of the editors was carried in the July 1938 issue; the second letter by Serge and the editors' reply was run in the February 1939 issue of the magazine.

Letter from Victor Serge

I receive your review with great pleasure. It is obviously the best revolutionary Marxian organ today. Believe me that all my sympathies are with you and that if it is possible for me to be of service to you, it will be most willingly rendered.

I shall some day reply to the articles of Wright and L.D. Trotsky on Kronstadt. This great subject merits being taken up again thoroughly and the two studies that you have published are far, very far, from exhausting it. In the very first place, I am surprised to see our comrades Wright and L.D. Trotsky employ a reasoning which, it seems to me, we ought to beware of and refrain from. They record that the drama of Kronstadt, 1921, is evoking commentaries at once from the Social Revolutionists, the Mensheviks, the anarchists and others; and from this fact, natural in an epoch of ideological confusion, of the revision of values, of the battles of sects, they deduce a sort of amalgam. Let us be distrustful of amalgams and of such mechanical reasoning. They have been too greatly abused in the Russian revolution and we see wher; it leads. Bourgeois liberals, Mensheviks, anarchists, revolutionary Marxists consider the drama of Kronstadt from different standpoints and for different reasons, which it is well and necessary to bear in mind, instead of lumping all the critical minds under a single heading and imputing to all of them the same hostility towards Bolshevism.

The problem is, in truth, much vaster than the event of Kronstadt, which was only an episode. Wright and L.D. Trotsky support a highly simple thesis: that the Kronstadt uprising was objectively counterrevolutionary and that the policy of Lenin's and

Trotsky's Central Committee at that time was correct before, during and after. Correct this policy was, on an historic and moreover grandiose scale, which permitted it to be tragically and dangerously false, erroneous, in various specific circumstances. That is what it would be useful and courageous to recognise today instead of affirming the infallibility of a general line of 1917-1923. There remains broadly the fact that the uprisings of Kronstadt and other localities signified to the party the absolute impossibility of persevering on the road of war communism. The country was dying of bitter-end state-ification. Who then was right? The Central Committee which clung to a road without issue or the masses driven to extremities by famine? It seems to me undeniable that Lenin at that time committed the greatest mistake of his life. Need we recall that a few weeks before the establishment of the NEP, Bukharin published a work on economics showing that the system in operation was indeed the first phase of socialism? For having advocated, in his letters to Lenin, measures of reconciliation with the peasants, the historian Rozhkov had just been deported to Pskov. Once Kronstadt rebelled, it had to be subdued, no doubt. But what was done to forestall the insurrection? Why was the mediation of the Petrograd anarchists rejected? Can one, finally, justify the insensate and, I repeat, abominable massacre of the vanquished of Kronstadt who were still being shot in batches in the Petrograd prison three months after the end of the uprising? They were men of the Russian people, backward perhaps, but who belonged to the masses of the revolution itself.

L.D. Trotsky emphasises that the sailors and soldiers of the Kronstadt of 1921 were no longer the same, with regard to revolutionary consciousness, as those of 1918. That is true. But the party of 1921 — was it the same as that of 1918? Was it not already suffering from a bureaucratic befoulment which often detached it from the masses and rendered it inhuman towards them? It would be well to reread in this connection the criticisms against the bureaucratic régime formulated long ago by the Workers' Opposition; and also to remember the evil practises that made their appearance during the discussion on the trade unions in 1920. For my part, I was outraged to see the manoeuvres which the majority employed in Petrograd to stifle the voice of the Trotskyists and the Workers' Opposition (who defended diametrically opposed theses).

The question which dominates today the whole discussion is, in substance, this: When and how did Bolshevism begin to degenerate?

When and how did it begin to employ towards the toiling masses, whose energy and highest consciousness it expressed, non-socialist methods which must be condemned because they ended by assuring the victory of the bureaucracy over the proletariat?

This question posed, it can be seen that the first symptoms of the evil date far back.

In 1920, the Menshevik social-democrats were falsely accused, in a communiqué of the Cheka, of intelligence with the enemy, of sabotage, etc. This communiqué, monstrously false, served to outlaw them. In the same year, the anarchists were arrested throughout Russia, after a formal promise to legalise the movement and after the treaty of peace signed with Makhno had been deliberately torn up by the Central Committee which no longer needed the Black Army. The revolutionary correctness of the totality of a policy cannot justify, in my eyes, these baneful practises. And the facts that I cite are unfortunately far from being the only ones.

Let us go back still further. Has not the moment come to declare that the day of the glorious year of 1918 when the Central Committee of the party decided to permit the Extraordinary Commissions to apply the death penalty *on the basis of secret procedure, without hearing the accused who could not defend themselves*, is a black day? That day the Central Committee was in a position to restore or not restore an Inquisitional procedure forgotten by European civilisation. In any case, it committed a mistake. It did not necessarily behove a victorious socialist party to commit that mistake. The revolution could have defended itself better without that.

We would indeed be wrong to conceal from ourselves today that the whole historical acquisition of the Russian revolution is being called into question. Out of the vast experience of Bolshevism, the revolutionary Marxists will save what is essential, durable, only by taking up all the problems again from the bottom, with a genuine freedom of mind, without party vanity, without irreducible hostility (above all in the field of historical investigation) towards the other tendencies of the labour movement. On the contrary, by not recognising old errors, whose gravity history has not ceased to bring out in relief, the risk is run of compromising the whole acquisition of Bolshevism. The Kronstadt episode simultaneously poses the questions of the relations between the party of the proletariat and the masses, of the internal regime of the party (the Workers' Opposition was smashed), of socialist ethics (all Petrograd was deceived by the announcement of a *White* movement in Kronstadt), of humaneness in the class struggle and above all in the struggle within our classes. Finally it puts us today to the test as to our self-critical capacity.

Unable to reply more thoroughly for the moment to comrades Wright and L.D. Trotsky, I hope you will be good enough to submit this letter to the readers of the *New International*. It will perhaps contribute towards priming a discussion which we ought to know how to bring to a successful issue in a spirit of healthy revolutionary comradeship.

Paris, April 28, 1938

Letter from Dwight Macdonald

Trotsky's article on Kronstadt in your April issue was, to me, disappointing and embarrassing. Disappointing because I had hoped for a frank and reasonably objective explanation of the Kronstadt affair. Embarrassing because I admire Trotsky and accept many of his theories. An article like this — essentially a piece of special pleading, however brilliant, makes it harder to defend Trotsky from the often-made accusation that his thinking is sectarian and inflexible.

For those who believe, as I do, that the proletarian revolution is the only road to socialism, the question of the day is: how can we avoid the sort of degeneration that has taken place in the USSR? Specifically, to what extent must Bolshevik theory bear the responsibility for the rise of Stalinism? In *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky demonstrates that Stalinism is primarily a reflection of the low level of productivity and economic development of Russia. But even if one accepts this analysis, as I do, an important contributory cause may still be found in certain weaknesses of Bolshevik political theory. Is it not the duty of Marxists today relentlessly to search out these weaknesses, to reconsider the entire Bolshevik line with scientific detachment? My impression is that Trotsky has shown little interest in any such basic reconsideration. He seems to be more interested in defending Leninism than in learning from its mistakes.

The article on Kronstadt is a good example of what I mean. It is impassioned, eloquent, and — unconvincing. Trotsky may be correct in all his contentions. But he approaches the subject in such a way as to make it impossible for the detached observer to form an intelligent opinion. I have neither the time nor the knowledge — and the *New Internationalist* certainly hasn't the space — to argue the Kronstadt question here. But I would like to indicate a few misgivings about the *tone* of Trotsky's article. In general, it seems to me that Trotsky takes a polemical approach to a question that should be considered dispassionately, with some respect for the other side. The very title is contemptuous: "Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt". The opposition is characterised in police court terms — "this variegated fraternity", "this truly charlatan campaign". To justify such abuse, Trotsky must bring forward much stronger evidence to offset the statements of Serge, Thomas, Berkman, and Souvarine than he (or Wright) has up to now.

Trotsky begins his article with an amalgam worthy of Vyshinsky: "Participating in the campaign ... are anarchists, Russian Mensheviks, left social-democrats ... individual blunderers, Milyukov's paper, and, on occasion, the big capitalist press. A 'People's Front' of its own kind!" (The only category which seems to fit me is "individual blunderer". Trotsky seems unable to imagine anyone criticising Kronstadt unless he

has a political axe to grind or is a dupe, while the Stalinists catalogue all critics of the Moscow Trials as Trotskyists, fascists, assassins, and — my own label — Trotskyist stooges.) I can't see as much difference as I would like to see between Trotsky's insistence that, because the enemies of the revolution have used the Kronstadt affair to discredit Bolshevism, therefore all who express doubts about Kronstadt are ("objectively" considered) allies of counterrevolution; and Vyshinsky's insistence that the Fourth International and the Gestapo are comrades-in-arms because both oppose the Stalinist regime. This exclusion of subjective motivation as irrelevant, this refusal to consider aims, programs, theories, anything except the objective fact of opposition — this cast of mind seems to me dangerous and unrealistic. I insist it is possible to have doubts about Kronstadt without being either a knave or a fool.

Having created his amalgam, Trotsky defines its lowest common denominator — and very low it is. "How can the Kronstadt uprising cause such heartburn to anarchists, Mensheviks, and 'liberal' counterrevolutionists, all at the same time?" he asks. "The answer is simple: all these groupings are interested in compromising the only genuinely revolutionary current which has never repudiated its banner ..." The answer is perhaps a bit too simple — another thing that bothers me, by the way, about Trotsky's answers. So far as I am conscious, I am not interested in "compromising" Bolshevism; on the contrary, I wish I were able to accept it 100%. But I unfortunately have certain doubts, objections, criticisms. Is it impossible to express them without being accused of counterrevolution and herded into an amalgam of anarchists, Mensheviks and capitalist journalists?

Most of Trotsky's article attempts to show that the social base of the Kronstadt uprising was petty-bourgeois. He makes one major point: that the Kronstadt sailors of 1921 were quite a different group from the revolutionary heroes of 1917. But the rest of his lengthy argument boils down to an identification of all the elements which opposed the Bolsheviks as "petty-bourgeois". He advances little evidence to support this labelling, beyond the indisputable fact that they were all anti-Bolshevik. His reasoning seems to be: only the Bolshevik policy could save the revolution; the Makhno bands, the Greens, the Social Revolutionaries, the Kronstadters, etc., were against the Bolsheviks; therefore, objectively, they were counterrevolutionary; therefore, they were, objectively, working for the bourgeoisie. This reasoning begs the whole question. But even if the initial assumption be accepted, it is still a dangerous intellectual process. It rationalises an unpleasant administrative necessity — the suppression of political opponents who also are acting for what they conceive to be the best interests of the masses — into a struggle between Good and Evil. A police measure becomes a political crusade, by simply refusing to distinguish between the subjective and the objective

categories — as if a bank robber should be indicted for trying to overthrow capitalism! Stalin has learned the trick all too well.

Trotsky has very little to say about the way the Bolsheviks handled the Kronstadt affair itself. He presents no defence for the mass executions which, according to Victor Serge, took place for months after the rebels had been crushed. In fact, he doesn't mention this aspect at all. Nor does he pay much attention to the crucial question: how seriously did the Bolsheviks try to reach a peaceful settlement before they brought up the field guns? He dismisses this: "Or perhaps it would have been sufficient to inform the Kronstadt sailors of the NEP decrees to pacify them? Illusion! The insurgents did not have a conscious program and they could not have one because of the very nature of the petty-bourgeoisie." Here Trotsky admits, by implication, that Souvarine states: that Lenin was putting the finishing touches on the NEP during the Tenth Party Congress, which broke up to allow the delegates to take part in the attack on Kronstadt. It was a serious decision Lenin and Trotsky took: to withhold public announcement of NEP until after the rebellion, which asked for some of the very concessions which the NEP granted, had been drowned in blood. How could they be so sure it would have been impossible to compromise with the Kronstadters on the basis of the NEP? A few sentences earlier, Trotsky admits that "the introduction of the NEP one year earlier would have averted the Kronstadt uprising". But the Kronstadters, writes Trotsky, being petty-bourgeois, didn't have any "conscious program" and so couldn't have been appealed to by programmatic concessions. Petty-bourgeois or not, the Kronstadters *did* have a program. Souvarine, for one, gives it in his life of Stalin as, "Free elections to the Soviets; free speech and a free press for workers and peasants, left-wing socialists, anarchists and syndicalists; the release of workers and peasants held as political prisoners; the abolition of the privileges of the Communist party; equal rations for all workers; the right of peasants and self-employed artisans to dispose of the product of their work." Perhaps Trotsky uses the term "conscious program" in a special sense.

To me the most interesting statement in the article is: "It is true ... that I had already proposed the transition to NEP in 1920 ... When I met opposition from the leaders of the party, I did not appeal to the ranks, in order to avoid mobilising the petty-bourgeoisie against the workers." As Trotsky points out, Lenin admitted that the policy of "War Communism" was adhered to longer than it should have been. Was this simply a mistake in judgment, as Trotsky implies, or was it a mistake which springs from the very nature of Bolshevik political organisation, which concentrates power in the hands of a small group of politicians so well insulated (by a hierarchic, bureaucratic party apparatus) against pressure from the masses that they don't respond

to the needs of the masses — until too late? Even when one of the leaders is able correctly to judge the needs of the masses, he can only try to persuade his colleagues of the correctness of his views. If they can't be persuaded, he is inhibited by his political philosophy from appealing to the rank and file for support. It is true, as Trotsky writes, that the bourgeoisie would have sought to profit by any division in the ranks of the Bolsheviks. But are not the dangers of an air-tight dictatorship, insulated against mass pressure, even greater? Are not episodes like Kronstadt inevitable under such conditions? And would a Stalinist clique be able so easily to usurp control of a party which allowed greater participation to the masses and greater freedom to left-wing opposition, both inside and outside the dominant party?

These are the questions which Kronstadt raises. Trotsky does not answer them when he summarises: "In essence, the gentlemen critics are opponents of the dictatorship of the proletariat and by that token are opponents of the revolution. In this lies the whole secret." The secret is more complicated than this formulation. Rosa Luxemburg all her life opposed Lenin's conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the guard officers who assassinated her in 1919 knew very well what her attitude was towards the 1917 revolution.

New York City, April 26, 1938

Reply by the Editors

The Main Point. Our contributors seem to have missed the main point of the articles by J. G. Wright and Leon Trotsky, developed in even greater detail by the latter, namely, that the flood of Kronstadt-criticism lately unleashed by anarchists, Mensheviks, bourgeois politicians and others is aimed by the latter to discredit revolutionary Marxism, represented by the Fourth International, so that their respective political wares may seem all the more attractive, or at least not quite so unattractive. Macdonald's complaint, that all who express doubts about Kronstadt are thrown into a single counterrevolutionary pot, is totally unwarranted. We have yet to see a study of the Kronstadt uprising made from the standpoint of pure historical research or animated by anything but the crassest political aim of demonstrating that Bolshevism is reactionary or bankrupt or that, at the very least, a different political program, party or philosophy should be substituted for it. Whoever wishes, is entitled to do this. The anarchists can show that by their policy there would have been no Kronstadt in Russia, just as there is none in Spain; also, there would have been no proletarian revolution in Russia, just as there is none in Spain. The Menshevik critics are absolutely correct in saying that their policy would have averted Kronstadt and the degeneration of the revolution, because there would have been no revolution to degenerate. Milyukov

and Kerensky may boast of the fact that they produced no Stalin in 1923 or Kronstadt two years earlier; but as we recall they almost produced a victorious Kornilov-Cavaignac in 1917.

All critics are entitled to engage in the most thoroughgoing study of Kronstadt, and also to propose a program so different from that of the Bolsheviks — or the essential Bolshevik program with such improvements and safeguards — as would guarantee against or at least lessen the danger of Kronstadts and degeneration. What is more, we are ready to discuss all such proposals. But we are frank to say that while we do not believe in the immaculate conception and evolution of Bolshevism, or in its flawlessness and infallibility, we remain the stoutest partisans of its fundamental principles, proud of its traditions and not very receptive to the substitutes offered by the social-democrats, centrists, anarchists or plain bourgeois democrats. We are ready to discuss all revolutionary problems, but from a viewpoint of our own, which we defend until we are shown one that is superior.

Degeneration of Bolshevism. It is quite possible that more foresight and skill *might have* reduced the danger of a Kronstadt or in any case minimised the scope of its repercussions. The Russian revolution committed many excesses and had many a blunderer, coward and scoundrel in its leadership; we know of no revolution without them. It is unworthy of a Marxist, however, to confuse the excesses with the main line of activity, or to lose his sense of proportions by identifying the two. There is a difference between the zealous fireman who may needlessly ruin some furniture in putting out a conflagration and the arsonist who sets the house afire or the sheriff who evicts the man who built the house. Macdonald wonders if the degeneration is not inherent in the very nature of Bolshevik party organisation and its dictatorship; Victor Serge asks when and where Bolshevism began to degenerate and finds the answer in Kronstadt, 1921, before that in the treatment of the Mensheviks in 1920, before that in the Inquisitional procedure of 1918. Neither facts nor Marxian theory support either of these fundamentally idealistic standpoints.

The consummate expression of degeneration — Stalinism — triumphed in the degree to which it *wiped out* the Bolshevik party and its “dictatorship”. The degeneration marks the victory of the Thermidorian counterrevolution. The social representatives of this counterrevolution were the better-situated peasantry, the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois elements in the country, increasingly resentful of proletarian and Bolshevik rule. After the War Communism rigors, came the reaction, to which the peasants set the tone. Stalinism represents the yielding of the workers’ bureaucracy to this reaction. To the Marxist it is clear that fundamentally the social forces behind Kronstadt, the social forces behind the Menshevik companions-in-arms of the Allied imperialists,

found a far more finished and triumphant expression in the victory of Stalinism! For what does the latter's development represent, with its labour aristocracy, its "millionaire kolkhozniki", its reconciliation with "democratic" imperialism, its Soviets without communists, its abandonment of revolutionary principle: the product of the *social forces* variously represented by the Mensheviks, the SRs, the Makhnos — or the organisational deficiencies or excesses of Lenin's party?

Even if we grant Macdonald's argument that while all this is generally true, "certain weaknesses [which exactly?] of Bolshevik political theory" were a contributory cause of the degeneration, we would still have to say about this vague formula that it was only in the period of reaction, coinciding with Stalin's rise to power, that the unspecified weaknesses acquired any decisive social significance.

And even if we grant Victor Serge's proposal to "take up all the problems again from the bottom", we would still have to say that in endorsing the POUM's substitute for Bolshevism in Spain, he did not go very far beyond his point of departure.

Question of Tone. Victor Serge, implicitly, and Macdonald, explicitly, complain about our "tone". We find it difficult to understand them. The anarchist bureaucracy is killing the proletarian revolution in Spain and trying to cover its perfidy by shouting: "Stop thief! There go the assassins of Kronstadt and Trotsky the butcher!" How shall we characterise them and their pleantries? Or those of their social-patriotic and bourgeois counterparts throughout the world? By polite chafings and chidings? We deliberately word our polemics so that the thinking worker will understand how seriously we take service to the proletarian revolution and its opposite, treachery; so that he will not imagine that the conflict between the two is no more than a misunderstanding between two good friends.

Macdonald charges Trotsky with an amalgam. An amalgam is the equivalent in politics of a mechanically forced union of diverse metals: the Opposition and the Wrangel officer, Trotsky and Hitler, Macdonald and Hearst. What has that in common with the assertion, entirely indisputable, that the anarchist politicians, the social-patriots and bourgeois democrats à la Milyukov, are all fighting Bolshevism with the cry of "Kronstadt!" in order to enhance the looks of their respective political wares? But does Macdonald, whom we know as a friend of our movement, notice the tone of his own words?

It happens quite often that amiable critics of the "Trotskyists" will say in the most sophisticated and nonchalant manner: "You people are just like the Stalinists, fundamentally." Or: "Didn't you people massacre the Kronstadters and the Makhanovists?" Or: "If you were in power, you'd act just like Stalin or Vyshinsky or Yagoda." Or: "Don't you think there is just a little truth in the charges of Trotsky's

relations with Hitler?” And when we reply to such irresponsible or monstrous remarks with only half the sharpness they deserve, our critics become inexpressibly shocked, and exclaim: “How can you discuss with these Trotskyists! Their tone is insufferable, their manners deplorable!”

Against such criticism, polemic itself is disarmed.

Second Letter From Victor Serge

Dear Comrades:

Here are a few pages of discussion on Kronstadt 1921 in which I reply simultaneously to L.D. Trotsky and to A. Ciliga. I should like to see the *New International*, where our comrade Trotsky has several times criticised my views on this important subject.

In publishing in your August number a letter which I sent to you, you followed it with commentaries which did not come to my attention, as I did not receive that number. I am sorry. I am told that you raised the question of my attitude towards the POUM. I would not have failed to answer you fundamentally. Since I am not acquainted with your text, I confine myself today to two remarks:

1. Our comrade L. D. Trotsky wrote recently that “it is necessary to learn to think ...” On this point (as on many others) I am entirely of his opinion. It is even necessary, I think, to learn to discuss and that means not to mix up with historical subjects subjects of present-day policy; not to inject into the discussion of a question concerning the Russian revolution in 1921 the polemics concerning the Spanish revolution in 1936-1938. The Marxian method is more serious and more concrete; or if one wishes to discuss, for the purpose of broad syntheses, all the great questions at once, it is well charitably to notify the reader and the interlocutor of the fact; for my part I would excuse myself ...

2. On the POUM, however. This heroic and persecuted workers’ party alone represented revolutionary Marxism in the ranks of the Spanish revolution. It gave proof of clairvoyance and a magnificent courage. It was all the more up against it by the fact that even in the best days the uncomprehending and brutal attitude of the Third International towards anarchists and syndicalists had made Marxism unpopular in the labour movement of Spain. Nevertheless, it was not infallible, far from it. And I do not dream of reproaching it for that, for I know of nobody, really, of nobody, infallible down there. On the other hand, nothing is easier than for a dozen comrades to meet, and then announce that they possess the monopoly of the full truth, the only correct theory, the infallible recipe on how to make the revolution succeed — and thenceforth to denounce as traitors, opportunists and incompetents the militants who are at grips with that reality which events and masses constitute. This way of acting

seems to me incorrect and vexatious, even if it happens that its defenders say things which are, in themselves, quite right ...

Paris, Oct. 31, 1938

Reply to Trotsky

By a note published in America at the end of July, Leon Trotsky finally specified his responsibilities in the episode of Kronstadt. The political responsibilities, as he has always declared, are those of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party which took the decision to “suppress the rebellion by military force if the fortress could not be induced to surrender first by peace negotiations and then through an ultimatum”. Trotsky adds: “I have never touched on this question. Not because I had anything to conceal but, on the contrary, precisely because I had nothing to say ... *I personally did not participate in the suppression of the rebellion nor in the repressions following the suppression ...*”

Trotsky recalls the differences which separated him at the time from Zinoviev, chairman of the Petrograd Soviet. “*I stepped aside*”, he writes, “*completely and demonstratively from this affair.*”

It will be well to remember this after certain personal attacks directed against Trotsky out of bad faith, ignorance and sectarian spirit. For there is room, after all, in history for distinguishing between the general political responsibilities and the immediate personal responsibilities.^a

“Whether there were any needless victims”, continues Trotsky, “I do not know. On this score I trust Dzerzhinsky more than his belated critics ... Victor Serge’s conclusions on this score — from third hand — have no value in my eyes ...” Dzerzhinsky’s conclusions, however, are from seventh or ninth hand, for the head of the Cheka did not come to Petrograd at that time and was himself informed only by a hierarchical path on which a lot could be said (and Trotsky knows it better than anybody). As for myself, residing in Petrograd, I lived among the heads of the city. I know what the repression was from eyewitnesses. I visited anarchist comrades in the Shpalernaya prison, imprisoned moreover in defiance of all common sense, who saw the vanquished of Kronstadt leave every day for the ordnance yard. The repression, I

^a As certain of the attacks to which I allude have come from the anarchist press, let me ask to specify here my thought by means of a recent example: The comrades of the POUM and of the CNT have been persecuted and assassinated with impunity in the Spanish republic while the CNT participated in various capacities in a bourgeois government; the CNT obviously bears its share of the political responsibility for these crimes against the labour movement, though it would be unjust to render its leaders *personally* responsible for them.

repeat, was atrocious. According to the Soviet historians, mutinous Kronstadt had some 16,000 combatants at its disposal. Several thousand succeeded in reaching Finland over the ice. The others, by hundreds and more likely by thousands, were massacred at the end of the battle or executed afterward. Where are Dzerzhinsky's statistics — and what are they worth if they exist? The single fact that a Trotsky, at the pinnacle of power, did not feel the need of informing himself precisely on this repression of an insurrectional movement of workers, the single fact that a Trotsky did not know what all the rank and file communists knew: that out of inhumanity *a needless crime* had just been committed against the proletariat and the peasants — this single fact, I say, is gravely significant. It is indeed in the field of repression that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party committed the most serious mistakes from the beginning of the revolution, mistakes which were to contribute most dangerously, on the one hand, to bureaucratising the party and the state, and on the other, to disarming the masses and more particularly the revolutionists. It is high time this was acknowledged.

Reply to Ciliga

What greater injustice can be imagined towards the Russian revolution than to judge it in the light of Stalinism alone? Of Stalinism which emerged from it, it is true, only to kill it, but in the course of 13 or 15 years of struggles, by favour of the defeat of socialism in Europe and in Asia! It is often said that “the germ of all Stalinism was in Bolshevism at its beginning”. Well, I have no objection. Only, Bolshevism also contained many other germs, a mass of other germs and those who lived. through the enthusiasm of the first years of the first victorious socialist revolution ought not to forget it. To judge the living man by the death germs which the autopsy reveals in a corpse — and which he may have carried in him since his birth — is that very sensible?

“... All that was still socialistic and revolutionary in this Russia of 1921, was contained in the rank and file”, writes Ciliga in the *Révolution Proletarienne* of Nov. 10. “In standing up against them, Lenin and Trotsky, in agreement with Stalin, with Zinoviev, Kaganovich and other, responded to the desires and served the interests of the bureaucratic cadres. The workers were then fighting for the socialism whose liquidation the bureaucracy was already pursuing.”^a One can see, Ciliga, that you did not know the Russia of those days; thence the enormity of your mistake.

In reality, a little direct contact with the people was enough to get an idea of the

^a Kaganovich scarcely existed in 1921. Stalin stayed in the background. I do not like to see, under the pen of so honest a writer as Ciliga, this hunching together of names belonging to different phases of history

drama which, in the revolution, separated the communist party (and with it the dust of the other revolutionary groups) from the masses. At no time did the revolutionary workers form more than a trifling percentage of the masses themselves. In 1920-1921, all that was energetic, militant, ever-so-little socialistic in the labour population and among the advanced elements of the countryside had already been drained by the communist party, which did not, for four years of civil war, stop its constant mobilisation of the willing — down to the most vacillating. Such things came to pass: a factory numbering a thousand workers, giving as much as half its personnel to the various mobilisations of the party and ending by working only at low capacity with the 500 left behind for the social battle, 100 of them former shopkeepers ... And since, in order to continue the revolution, it is necessary to continue the sacrifices, it comes about that the party enters into conflict with that rank and file. It is not the conflict of the bureaucracy and the revolutionary workers, it is the conflict of the organisation of the revolutionists — and the backward ones, the laggards, the least conscious elements of the toiling masses. Under cover of this conflict and of the danger, the bureaucracy fortifies itself, no doubt. But the healthy resistances that it encounters — I mean those not based upon demoralisation or the spirit of reaction — come from within the party and the other revolutionary groups. It is within the Bolshevik party that a conflict arises in 1920, not between the rank and file — which is itself *already very backward* — but between the cadres of the active militants and the bureaucratic leadership of the Central Committee. In 1921, everybody who aspires to socialism is inside the party; what remains outside isn't worth much for the social transformation. Eloquence of chronology: it is the non-party workers of this epoch, joining the party to the number of 2 million in 1924, upon the death of Lenin, who assure the victory of its bureaucracy. I assure you, Ciliga, that these people never thought of the Third International. Many of the insurgents of Kronstadt did think of it; but they constituted an undeniable élite and, duped by their own passion, they opened in spite of themselves the doors to a frightful counterrevolution. The firmness of the Bolshevik party, on the other hand, sick as it was, delayed Thermidor by five to 10 years.

Let us recall that several analogous movements occurred at the same time. Makhno held the countryside. Red Siberia was in a ferment throughout. In the Tambov region, the peasant army of Antonov numbered more than 50,000 men, with an excellent organisation. Led by right-wing Social-Revolutionists, it too demanded the end of the regime of repressions and the "dictatorship of the commissars"; it proclaimed the Constituent Assembly. It was the peasant counterrevolution of the plainest kind. Tukhachevsky subdued it with difficulty in the summer of 1921. To try to conceive what would have been the consequences of a defaulting of the Bolshevik party at the

time of Kronstadt, it is well to have in mind the spectacle of vast famished Russia, in which transportation and industry were succumbing, while almost everywhere there rose, under variegated forms, not the Third Revolution but a rural Vendée.

Editors reply to Victor Serge

1. What is said so appropriately by Victor Serge in replying to the superficial elucubrations of A. Ciliga is well worth calling to the attention of our readers, especially in light of the widespread attempts by all sorts of liberal muddleheads, social-democrats, anarchists and renegades from Marxism to cover their crimes by condemning, as the twin of its antithesis Stalinism, the party that organised and defended the Russian revolution. It is also worth calling to the attention of Victor Serge, for the realities of 18-19 years ago which he describes, are in conflict with his own afterthoughts on the early period of the Russian revolution — afterthoughts, we must repeat, that are *not* unrelated to his position in Spain.

2. Victor Serge finds that a factor which contributed heavily to the victory of Stalinism was “the most serious mistakes from the beginning of the revolution” committed by the Bolshevik leaders in the repression of other groups. We cannot subscribe to this repetition, however guarded, of the hoary reformist analysis of the Bolsheviks’ repressions and their role in the subsequent development of the Russian revolution. It is unhistorical; it is thoroughly one-sided — and therefore thoroughly false — because it says nothing of *how* and *why* the repressions were directed at Mensheviks, Social Revolutionists and anarchists. That can be learned not from Victor Serge’s reflections of recent date, but from that excellent history, *L’An I de la Révolution Russe* (The Year I of the Russian Revolution). For instance:

For the first time the Bolsheviks were obliged by the anarchists to suppress by force a dissident minority within the revolution. Sentimental revolutionaries would have hesitated. But what would have been the consequence? Either the [anarchist] Black Guard would have eventually organised a rising, and Moscow would have undergone some days of infinitely perilous disturbance (it is enough to think of the famine and the waiting counterrevolution, already powerfully organised): or else the Guard would have gradually been dissolved, after a whole series of incidents with uncertain outcome. Any revolution which could not subdue its dissidents when they were armed to form an embryonic state within the state would be offering itself, divided, to the blows of its enemies.¹⁰⁴ [...]

The leaders of the counterrevolutionary parties (SRs, Mensheviks and Cadets) had recently, in March [1918], set up a common organisation, the “League of the Renewal”

(*Soyuz Vozrozhdeniya*). “The League”, one of the SR leaders has written, “entered into regular relations with the representatives of the Allied missions at Moscow and Vologda, mainly through the agency of M. Noulens.” ... The League for Renewal was the main clandestine organisation of the “socialist” petty-bourgeoisie and of the liberals who were determined to overthrow the Soviet government by force ... There was thus a chain of counterrevolutionary organisations running interruptedly from the most “advanced” socialists to the blackest reactionaries.¹⁰⁵

We commend these quotations, and a hundred others which give a complete and accurate picture of *how* the anti-Bolshevik “working-class” groups brought down upon themselves the repressions of the Soviet power, to the attention of the book’s author, Victor Serge. They need re-reading, not rewriting. Or, if a new edition is needed, would it not be more in place, in view of the realities of the labour movement today, to add a few pages showing that the Menshevik and anarchist “weapon of criticism” nowadays directed at Bolshevism is in no way superior to their “criticism of weapons” directed at Bolshevism two decades ago?

3. Victor Serge’s latest contribution to the story of the suppression of Kronstadt, which does not describe the alleged excesses of the Bolsheviks in the most restrained manner, in our opinion adds nothing fundamental to the discussion. Having already given a good deal of space to Kronstadt, allowing the presentation of contending opinions and stating our own views, we are now terminating, at least for the time being, the discussion of this question in the review. ■

The Spanish Revolution: The Decisive Test



Above: Anarchist militia, Madrid 1937. *Right:* Women militia members.



The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning¹⁰⁶

By Leon Trotsky

Menshevism & Bolshevism in Spain

All general staffs are studying closely the military operations in Ethiopia, in Spain, in the Far East, in preparation for the great future war. The battles of the Spanish proletariat, heat lightning flashes of the coming world revolution, should be no less attentively studied by the revolutionary staffs. Under this condition and this condition alone will the coming events not take us unawares.

Three ideologies fought — with unequal forces — in the so-called republican camp, namely, Menshevism, Bolshevism, and anarchism. As regards the bourgeois republican parties, they were without either independent ideas or independent political significance and were able to maintain themselves only by climbing on the backs of the reformists and anarchists. Moreover, it is no exaggeration to say that the leaders of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism did everything to repudiate their doctrine and virtually reduce its significance to zero. Actually two doctrines in the so-called republican camp fought — Menshevism and Bolshevism.

According to the Socialists and Stalinists, i.e., the Mensheviks of the first and second instances, the Spanish revolution was called upon to solve only its “democratic” tasks, for which a united front with the “democratic” bourgeoisie was indispensable. From this point of view, any and all attempts of the proletariat to go beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy are not only premature but also fatal. Furthermore, on the agenda stands not the revolution but the struggle against the insurgent Franco.

Fascism, however, is not feudal but bourgeois reaction. A successful fight against bourgeois reaction can be waged only with the forces and methods of the proletarian revolution. Menshevism, itself a branch of bourgeois thought, does not have and cannot have any inkling of these facts.

The Bolshevik point of view, clearly expressed only by the young section of the Fourth International, takes the theory of permanent revolution as its starting point, namely, that even purely democratic problems, like the liquidation of semi-feudal land ownership, cannot be solved without the conquest of power by the proletariat; but this in turn places the socialist revolution on the agenda. Moreover, during the very first stages of the revolution, the Spanish workers themselves posed in practice not merely democratic problems but also purely socialist ones. The demand not to transgress the bounds of bourgeois democracy signifies in practice not a defence of the democratic revolution but a repudiation of it. Only through an overturn in agrarian relations could the peasantry, the great mass of the population, have been transformed into a powerful bulwark against fascism. But the landowners are intimately bound up with the commercial, industrial, and banking bourgeoisie, and the bourgeois intelligentsia that depends on them. The party of the proletariat was thus faced with a choice between going with the peasant masses or with the liberal bourgeoisie. There could only be one reason to include the peasantry and the liberal bourgeoisie in the same coalition at the same time: to help the bourgeoisie deceive the peasantry and thus isolate the workers. The agrarian revolution could have been accomplished only *against* the bourgeoisie, and therefore only through measures of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no third, intermediate regime.

From the standpoint of theory, the most astonishing thing about Stalin's Spanish policy is the utter disregard for the ABC of Leninism. After a delay of several decades — and what decades! — the Comintern has fully rehabilitated the doctrine of Menshevism. More than that, the Comintern has contrived to render this doctrine more “consistent” and by that token more absurd. In tsarist Russia, on the threshold of 1905, the formula of “purely democratic revolution” had behind it, in any case, immeasurably more arguments than in 1937 in Spain. It is hardly astonishing that in modern Spain “the liberal labour policy” of Menshevism has been converted into the reactionary anti-labour policy of Stalinism. At the same time the doctrine of the Mensheviks, this caricature of Marxism, has been converted into a caricature of itself.

‘Theory’ of the Popular Front

It would be naive, however, to think that the politics of the Comintern in Spain stem from a theoretical “mistake.” Stalinism is not guided by Marxist theory, or for that matter by any theory at all, but by the empirical interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. In their intimate circles, the Soviet cynics mock Dimitrov's “philosophy” of the Popular Front. But they have at their disposal for deceiving the masses large cadres of propagators of this holy formula, sincere ones and cheats, simpletons and charlatans.

Louis Fischer, with his ignorance and smugness, with his provincial rationalism and congenital deafness to revolution, is the most repulsive representative of this unattractive brotherhood. “The union of progressive forces!” “The triumph of the idea of the Popular Front.” “The assault of the Trotskyists on the unity of the antifascist ranks!” ... Who will believe that the *Communist Manifesto* was written 90 years ago?

The theoreticians of the Popular Front do not essentially go beyond the first rule of arithmetic, that is, addition: “Communists” plus Socialists plus anarchists plus liberals add up to a total which is greater than their respective isolated numbers. Such is all their wisdom. However, arithmetic alone does not suffice here. One needs as well at least mechanics. The law of the parallelogram of forces applies to politics as well.

In such a parallelogram, we know that the resultant is shorter, the more the component forces diverge from each other. When political allies tend to pull in opposite directions, the resultant may prove equal to zero.

A bloc of divergent political groups of the working class is sometimes completely indispensable for the solution of common practical problems. In certain historical circumstances, such a bloc is capable of attracting the oppressed petty-bourgeois masses whose interests are close to the interests of the proletariat. The joint force of such a bloc can prove far stronger than the sum of the forces of each of its component parts. On the contrary, the political alliance between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, whose interests on basic questions in the present epoch diverge at an angle of 180 degrees, as a general rule is capable only of paralysing the revolutionary force of the proletariat.

Civil war, in which the force of naked coercion is hardly effective, demands of its participants the spirit of supreme self-abnegation. The workers and peasants can assure victory only if they wage a struggle for their own emancipation. Under these conditions, to subordinate the proletariat to the leadership of the bourgeoisie means beforehand to assure defeat in the civil war.

These simple truths are least of all the products of pure theoretical analysis. On the contrary, they represent the unassailable deduction from the entire experience of history, beginning at least with 1848. The modern history of bourgeois society is filled with all sorts of Popular Fronts, i.e., the most diverse political combinations for the deception of the toilers. The Spanish experience is only a new and tragic link in this chain of crimes and betrayals.

Alliance with the bourgeoisie’s shadow

Politically most striking is the fact that the Spanish Popular Front lacked in reality even a parallelogram of forces. The bourgeoisie’s place was occupied by its shadow. Through

the medium of the Stalinists, Socialists, and anarchists, the Spanish bourgeoisie subordinated the proletariat to itself without even bothering to participate in the Popular Front. The overwhelming majority of the exploiters of all political shades openly went over to the camp of Franco. Without any theory of “permanent revolution”, the Spanish bourgeoisie understood from the outset that the revolutionary mass movement, no matter how it starts, is directed against private ownership of land and the means of production, and that it is utterly impossible to cope with this movement by democratic measures.

That is why only insignificant debris from the possessing classes remained in the republican camp: Messrs. Azaña, Companys, and the like — political attorneys of the bourgeoisie but not the bourgeoisie itself. Having staked everything on a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were able, at the same time, to make use of their political representatives of *yesterday* in order to paralyse, disorganise, and afterward strangle the socialist movement of the masses in “republican” territory.

Without in the slightest degree representing the Spanish bourgeoisie, the left republicans still less represented the workers and peasants. They represented no one but themselves. Thanks, however, to their allies — the Socialists, Stalinists, and anarchists — these political phantoms played the decisive role in the revolution. How? Very simply. By incarnating the principles of the “democratic revolution”, that is, the inviolability of private property.

The Stalinists in the Popular Front

The reasons for the rise of the Spanish Popular Front and its inner mechanics are perfectly clear. The task of the retired leaders of the left bourgeoisie consisted in checking the revolution of the masses and thus in regaining for themselves the lost confidence of the exploiters: “Why do you need Franco if we, the republicans, can do the same thing?” The interests of Azaña and Companys fully coincided at this central point with the interests of Stalin, who needed to gain the confidence of the French and British bourgeoisie by proving to them in action his ability to preserve “order” against “anarchy”. Stalin needed Azaña and Companys as a cover before the workers: Stalin himself, of course, is for socialism, but one must take care not to repel the republican bourgeoisie! Azaña and Companys needed Stalin as an experienced executioner, with the authority of a revolutionist. Without him, so insignificant a crew never could nor would have dared to attack the workers.

The classic reformists of the Second International, long ago derailed by the course of the class struggle, began to feel a new tide of confidence, thanks to the support of Moscow. This support, incidentally, was not given to all reformists but only to those

most reactionary. Caballero represented that face of the Socialist Party that was turned toward the workers' aristocracy. Negrín and Prieto always looked towards the bourgeoisie. Negrín won over Caballero with the help of Moscow. The left Socialists and anarchists, the captives of the Popular Front, tried, it is true, to save whatever could be saved of democracy. But inasmuch as they did not dare to mobilise the masses against the gendarmes of the Popular Front, their efforts at the end were reduced to complaints and walls. The Stalinists were thus in alliance with the extreme right, avowedly bourgeois wing of the Socialist Party. They directed their repressions against the left — the POUM, the anarchists, the "left" Socialists — in other words, against the centrist groupings who reflected, even in a most remote degree, the pressure of the revolutionary masses.

This political fact, very significant in itself, provides at the same time a measure of the degeneration of the Comintern in the last few years. I once defined Stalinism as *bureaucratic centrism*, and events brought a series of corroborations of the correctness of this definition. But it is obviously obsolete today. The interests of the Bonapartist bureaucracy can no longer be reconciled with centrist hesitation and vacillation. In search of reconciliation with the bourgeoisie, the Stalinist clique is capable of entering into alliance only with the most conservative groupings among the international labour aristocracy. This has acted to fix definitively the counterrevolutionary character of Stalinism on the international arena.

Counterrevolutionary superiorities of Stalinism

This brings us right up to the solution of the enigma of how and why the Communist Party of Spain, so insignificant numerically and with a leadership so poor in calibre, proved capable of gathering into its hands all reins of power, in the face of the incomparably more powerful organisations of the Socialists and anarchists. The usual explanation that the Stalinists simply bartered Soviet weapons for power is far too superficial. In return for munitions, Moscow received Spanish gold.

According to the laws of the capitalist market, this covers everything. How then did Stalin contrive to get power in the bargain?

The customary answer is that the Soviet government, having raised its authority in the eyes of the masses by furnishing military supplies, demanded as a condition of its "collaboration" drastic measures against revolutionists and thus removed dangerous opponents from its path. All this is quite indisputable but it is only one aspect of the matter, and the least important at that.

Despite the "authority" created by Soviet shipments, the Spanish Communist Party remained a small minority and met with ever-growing hatred on the part of the

workers. On the other hand, it was not enough for Moscow to set conditions; Valencia had to accede to them. This is the heart of the matter. Not only Zamora, Companys, and Negrin, but also Caballero, during his incumbency as premier, were all more or less ready to accede to the demands of Moscow. Why? Because these gentlemen themselves wished to keep the revolution within bourgeois limits. Neither the Socialists nor the anarchists seriously opposed the Stalinist program. They feared a break with the bourgeoisie. They were deathly afraid of every revolutionary onslaught of the workers.

Stalin with his munitions and with his counterrevolutionary ultimatum was a saviour for all these groups. He guaranteed them, so they hoped, military victory over Franco, and at the same time, he freed them from all responsibility for the course of the revolution. They hastened to put their Socialist and anarchist masks into the closet in the hope of making use of them again after Moscow reestablished bourgeois democracy for them. As the finishing touch to their comfort, these gentlemen could henceforth justify their betrayal to the workers by the necessity of a military agreement with Stalin. Stalin on his part justified his counterrevolutionary politics by the necessity of maintaining an alliance with the republican bourgeoisie.

Only from this broader point of view can we get a clear picture of the angelic toleration which such champions of justice and freedom as Azaña, Negrin, Companys, Caballero, García Oliver, and others showed towards the crimes of the GPU. If they had no other choice, as they affirm, it was not at all because they had no means of paying for airplanes and tanks other than with the heads of the revolutionists and the rights of the workers, but because their own “purely democratic”, that is, antisocialist, program could be realised by no other measures save terror. When the workers and peasants enter on the path of *their* revolution — when they seize factories and estates, drive out the old owners, conquer power in the provinces — then the bourgeois counterrevolution — democratic, Stalinist, or fascist alike — has no other means of checking this movement except through bloody coercion, supplemented by lies and deceit. The superiority of the Stalinist clique on this road consisted in its ability to apply instantly measures that were beyond the capacity of Azaña, Companys, Negrin, and their left allies.

Stalin confirms in his own way the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution

Two irreconcilable programs thus confronted each other on the territory of republican Spain. On the one hand, the program of saving *at any cost* private property from the proletariat, and saving *as far as possible* democracy from Franco; on the other hand,

the program of abolishing private property through the conquest of power by the proletariat. The first program expressed the interests of capitalism through the medium of the labour aristocracy, the top petty-bourgeois circles, and especially the Soviet bureaucracy. The second program translated into the language of Marxism the tendencies of the revolutionary mass movement, not fully conscious but powerful. Unfortunately for the revolution, between the handful of Bolsheviks and the revolutionary proletariat stood the counterrevolutionary wall of the Popular Front.

The policy of the Popular Front was, in its turn, not at all determined by the blackmail of Stalin as a supplier of arms. There was, of course, no lack of blackmail. But the reason for the success of this blackmail was inherent in the inner conditions of the revolution itself. For six years, its social setting was the growing onslaught of the masses against the regime of semifeudal and bourgeois property. The need of defending this property by the most extreme measures threw the bourgeoisie into Franco's arms. The republican government had promised the bourgeoisie to defend property by "democratic" measures, but revealed, especially in July 1936, its complete bankruptcy. When the situation on the property front became even more threatening than on the military front, the democrats of all colours, including the anarchists, bowed before Stalin; and he found no other methods in his own arsenal than the methods of Franco.

The hounding of "Trotskyists", POUMists, revolutionary anarchists and left Socialists; the filthy slander; the false documents; the tortures in Stalinist prisons; the murders from ambush — without all this the bourgeois regime under the republican flag could not have lasted even two months. The GPU proved to be the master of the situation only because it defended the interests of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat more consistently than the others, i.e., with the greatest baseness and bloodthirstiness.

In the struggle against the socialist revolution, the "democrat" Kerensky at first sought support in the military dictatorship of Kornilov and later tried to enter Petrograd in the baggage train of the monarchist general Krasnov. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks were compelled, in order to carry the democratic revolution through to the end, to overthrow the government of "democratic" charlatans and babblers. In the process they put an end thereby to every kind of attempt at military (or "fascist") dictatorship.

The Spanish revolution once again demonstrates that it is impossible to defend democracy against the revolutionary masses otherwise than through the methods of fascist reaction. And conversely, it is impossible to conduct a genuine struggle against fascism otherwise than through the methods of the proletarian revolution. Stalin

waged war against “Trotskyism” (proletarian revolution), destroying democracy by the Bonapartist measures of the GPU. This refutes once again and once and for all the old Menshevik theory, adopted by the Comintern, in accordance with which the democratic and socialist revolutions are transformed into two independent historic chapters, separated from each other in point of time. The work of the Moscow executioners confirms in its own way the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution.

Role of the anarchists

The anarchists had no independent position of any kind in the Spanish revolution. All they did was waver between Bolshevism and Menshevism. More precisely, the anarchist workers instinctively yearned to enter the Bolshevik road (July 19, 1936, and May days of 1937) while their leaders, on the contrary, with all their might drove the masses into the camp of the Popular Front, i.e., of the bourgeois regime.

The anarchists revealed a fatal lack of understanding of the laws of the revolution and its tasks by seeking to limit themselves to their own trade unions, that is, to organisations permeated with the routine of peaceful times, and by ignoring what went on outside the framework of the trade unions, among the masses, among the political parties, and in the government apparatus. Had the anarchists been revolutionists, they would first of all have called for the creation of soviets, which unite the representatives of all the toilers of city and country, including the most oppressed strata, who never joined the trade unions. The revolutionary workers would have naturally occupied the dominant position in these soviets. The Stalinists would have remained an insignificant minority. The proletariat would have convinced itself of its own invincible strength. The apparatus of the bourgeois state would have hung suspended in the air. One strong blow would have sufficed to pulverise this apparatus. The socialist revolution would have received a powerful impetus. The French proletariat would not for long have permitted Léon Blum to blockade the proletarian revolution beyond the Pyrenees. Neither could the Moscow bureaucracy have permitted itself such a luxury. The most difficult questions would have been solved as they arose.

Instead of this, the anarcho-syndicalists, seeking to hide from “politics” in the trade unions, turned out to be, to the great surprise of the whole world and themselves, a fifth wheel in the cart of bourgeois democracy. But not for long; a fifth wheel is superfluous. After García Oliver and his cohorts helped Stalin and his henchmen to take power away from the workers, the anarchists themselves were driven out of the government of the Popular Front. Even then they found nothing better to do than jump on the victor’s bandwagon and assure him of their devotion. The fear of the

petty-bourgeois before the big bourgeois, of the petty bureaucrat before the big bureaucrat, they covered up with lachrymose speeches about the sanctity of the united front (between a victim and the executioners) and about the inadmissibility of every kind of dictatorship, including their own. “After all, we could have taken power in July 1936 ...” “After all, we could have taken power in May 1937 ...” The anarchists begged Stalin-Negrín to recognise and reward their treachery to the revolution. A revolting picture!

In and of itself, this self-justification that “we did not seize power not because we were unable but because we did not wish to, because we were against every kind of dictatorship”, and the like, contains an irrevocable condemnation of anarchism as an utterly antirevolutionary doctrine. To renounce the conquest of power is voluntarily to leave the power with those who wield it, the exploiters. The essence of every revolution consisted and consists in putting a new class in power, thus enabling it to realise its own program in life. It is impossible to wage war and to reject victory. It is impossible to lead the masses towards insurrection without preparing for the conquest of power.

No one could have prevented the anarchists after the conquest of power from establishing the sort of regime they deem necessary, assuming, of course, that their program is realisable. But the anarchist leaders themselves lost faith in it. They hid from power not because they are against “every kind of dictatorship” — in actuality, grumbling and whining, they supported and still support the dictatorship of Stalin-Negrín — but because they completely lost their principles and courage, if they ever had any. They were afraid of everything: “isolation”, “involvement”, “fascism”. They were afraid of Stalin. They were afraid of Negrín. They were afraid of France and England. More than anything these phrasemongers feared the revolutionary masses.

The renunciation of conquest of power inevitably throws every workers’ organisation into the swamp of reformism and turns it into a toy of the bourgeoisie; it cannot be otherwise in view of the class structure of society. In opposing the *goal*, the conquest of power, the anarchists could not in the end fail to oppose the *means*, the revolution. The leaders of the CNT and FAI not only helped the bourgeoisie hold on to the shadow of power in July 1936; they also helped it to reestablish bit by bit what it had lost at one stroke. In May 1937, they sabotaged the uprising of the workers and thereby saved the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Thus anarchism, which wished merely to be antipolitical, proved in reality to be antirevolutionary, and in the more critical moments — counterrevolutionary.

The anarchist theoreticians, who after the great test of 1931-37 continue to repeat the old reactionary nonsense about Kronstadt, and who affirm that “Stalinism is the

inevitable result of Marxism and Bolshevism”, simply demonstrate by this they are forever dead for the revolution.

You say that Marxism is in itself depraved and Stalinism is its legitimate progeny? But why are we revolutionary Marxists engaged in mortal combat with Stalinism throughout the world? Why does the Stalinist gang see in Trotskyism its chief enemy? Why does every approach to our views or our methods of action (Durruti, Andrés Nin, Landau, and others) compel the Stalinist gangsters to resort to bloody reprisals? Why, on the other hand, did the leaders of Spanish anarchism serve, during the time of the Moscow and Madrid crimes of the GPU, as ministers under Caballero-Negrín, that is, as servants of the bourgeoisie and Stalin? Why even now, under the pretext of fighting fascism, do the anarchists remain voluntary captives of Stalin-Negrin, the executioners of the revolution, who have demonstrated their incapacity to fight fascism?

By hiding behind Kronstadt and Makhno, the attorneys of anarchism will deceive nobody. In the Kronstadt episode and in the struggle with Makhno, we defended the proletarian revolution from the peasant counterrevolution. The Spanish anarchists defended and continue to defend bourgeois counterrevolution from the proletarian revolution. No sophistry will delete from the annals of history the fact that anarchism and Stalinism in the Spanish revolution were on one side of the barricades while the working masses with the revolutionary Marxists were on the other. Such is the truth which will forever remain in the consciousness of the proletariat!

Role of the POUM

The record of the POUM is not much better. In point of theory, it tried, to be sure, to base itself on the formula of the permanent revolution (that is why the Stalinists called the POUMists Trotskyists). But the revolution is not satisfied with theoretical avowals. Instead of mobilising the masses against the reformist leaders, including the anarchists, the POUM tried to convince these gentlemen of the superiorities of socialism over capitalism. This tuning fork gave the pitch to all the articles and speeches of the POUM leaders. In order not to quarrel with the anarchist leaders, they did not form their own nuclei inside the CNT, and in general did not conduct any kind of work there. To avoid sharp conflicts, they did not carry on revolutionary work in the republican army. They built instead “their own” trade unions and “their own” militia, which guarded “their own” institutions or occupied “their own” section of the front.

By isolating the revolutionary vanguard from the class, the POUM rendered the vanguard impotent and left the class without leadership. Politically the POUM remained throughout far closer to the Popular Front, for whose left wing it provided the cover, than to Bolshevism. That the POUM nevertheless fell victim to bloody and base

repressions was due to the failure of the Popular Front to fulfil its mission, namely to stifle the socialist revolution — except by cutting off, piece by piece, its own left flank.

Contrary to its own intentions, the POUM proved to be, in the final analysis, the chief obstacle on the road to the creation of a revolutionary party. The platonic or diplomatic partisans of the Fourth International like Sneevliet, the leader of the Dutch Revolutionary Socialist Workers Party, who demonstratively supported the POUM in its halfway measures, its indecisiveness and evasiveness, in short, in its centrism, took upon themselves the greatest responsibility. Revolution abhors centrism. Revolution exposes and annihilates centrism. In passing, the revolution discredits the friends and attorneys of centrism. That is one of the most important lessons of the Spanish revolution.

The problem of arming

The Socialists and anarchists who seek to justify their capitulation to Stalin by the necessity of paying for Moscow's weapons with principles and conscience simply lie and lie unskillfully. Of course, many of them would have preferred to disentangle themselves without murders and frame-ups. But every goal demands corresponding means. Beginning with April 1931,¹⁰⁷ that is, long before the military intervention of Moscow, the Socialists and anarchists did everything in their power to check the proletarian revolution. Stalin taught them how to carry this work to its conclusion. They became Stalin's criminal accomplices only because they were his political cothinkers.

Had the anarchist leaders in the least resembled revolutionists, they would have answered the first piece of blackmail from Moscow not only by continuing the socialist offensive but also by exposing Stalin's counterrevolutionary conditions before the world working class. They would have thus forced the Moscow bureaucracy to choose openly between the socialist revolution and the Franco dictatorship. The Thermidorean bureaucracy fears and hates revolution. But it also fears being strangled in a fascist ring. Besides, it depends on the workers. All indications are that Moscow would have been forced to supply arms, and possibly at more reasonable prices.

But the world does not revolve around Stalinist Moscow. During a year and a half of civil war, the Spanish war industry could and should have been strengthened and developed by converting a number of civilian plants to war production. This work was not carried out only because Stalin and his Spanish allies equally feared the initiative of the workers' organisations. A strong war industry would have become a powerful instrument in the hands of the workers. The leaders of the Popular Front preferred to depend on Moscow.

It is precisely on this question that the perfidious role of the Popular Front was very strikingly revealed. It thrust upon the workers' organisations the responsibility for the treacherous deals of the bourgeoisie with Stalin. Insofar as the anarchists remained in the minority, they could not, of course, immediately hinder the ruling bloc from assuming whatever obligations they pleased toward Moscow and the masters of Moscow: London and Paris. But without ceasing to be the best fighters on the front, they could and should have openly dissociated themselves from the betrayals and betrayers; they could and should have explained the real situation to the masses, mobilised them against the bourgeois government, and augmented their own forces from day to day in order in the end to conquer power and with it the Moscow arms.

And what if Moscow, in the absence of a Popular Front, should have refused to give arms altogether? And what, we answer to this, if the Soviet Union did not exist altogether? Revolutions have been victorious up to this time not at all thanks to high and mighty foreign patrons who supplied them with arms. As a rule, counterrevolution enjoyed foreign patronage. Must we recall the experience of the intervention of French, English, American, Japanese, and other armies against the Soviets? The proletariat of Russia conquered domestic reaction and foreign interventionists without military support from the outside. Revolutions succeed, in the first place, with the help of a bold social program, which gives the masses the possibility of seizing weapons that are on their territory and disorganising the army of the enemy. The Red Army seized French, English, and American military supplies and drove the foreign expeditionary corps into the sea. Has this really been already forgotten?

If at the head of the armed workers and peasants, that is, at the head of so-called republican Spain, were revolutionists and not cowardly agents of the bourgeoisie, the problem of arming would never have been paramount. The army of Franco, including the colonial Riffians¹⁰⁸ and the soldiers of Mussolini, was not at all immune to revolutionary contagion. Surrounded by the conflagration of the socialist uprising, the soldiers of fascism would have proved to be an insignificant quantity. Arms and military "geniuses" were not lacking in Madrid and Barcelona; what was lacking was a revolutionary party!

Conditions for victory

The conditions for victory of the masses in a civil war against the army of exploiters are very simple in their essence.

1. The fighters of a revolutionary army must be clearly aware of the fact that they are fighting for their full social liberation and not for the reestablishment of the old ("democratic") forms of exploitation.

2. The workers and peasants in the rear of the revolutionary army as well as in the rear of the enemy must know and understand the same thing.
3. The propaganda on their own front as well as on the enemy front and in both rears must be completely permeated with the spirit of social revolution. The slogan "First victory, then reforms", is the slogan of all oppressors and exploiters from the Biblical kings down to Stalin.
4. Politics are determined by those classes and strata that participate in the struggle. The revolutionary masses must have a state apparatus that directly and immediately expresses their will. Only the soviets of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies can act as such an apparatus.
5. The revolutionary army must not only proclaim but also immediately realise in life the more pressing measures of social revolution in the provinces won by them: the expropriation of provisions, manufactured articles, and other stores on hand and the transfer of these to the needy; the redivision of shelter and housing in the interests of the toilers and especially of the families of the fighters; the expropriation of the land and agricultural inventory in the interests of the peasants; the establishment of workers' control and soviet power in place of the former bureaucracy.
6. Enemies of the socialist revolution, that is, exploiting elements and their agents, even if masquerading as "democrats", "republicans", "Socialists", and "anarchists", must be mercilessly driven out of the army.
7. At the head of each military unit must be placed commissars possessing irrefragable authority as revolutionists and soldiers.
8. In every military unit there must be a firmly welded nucleus of the most self-sacrificing fighters, recommended by the workers' organisations. The members of this nucleus have but one privilege: to be the first under fire.
9. The commanding corps necessarily includes at first many alien and unreliable elements among the personnel. Their testing, re-testing, and sifting must be carried through on the basis of combat experience, recommendations of commissars, and testimonials of rank-and-file fighters. Coincident with this must proceed an intense training of commanders drawn from the ranks of revolutionary workers.
10. The strategy of civil war must combine the rules of military art with the tasks of the social revolution. Not only in propaganda but also in military operations it is necessary to take into account the social composition of the various military units of the enemy (bourgeois volunteers, mobilised peasants, or as in Franco's case, colonial slaves); and in choosing lines of operation, it is necessary to rigorously take into consideration the social structure of the corresponding territories

(industrial regions, peasant regions, revolutionary or reactionary, regions of oppressed nationalities, etc.). In brief, revolutionary policy dominates strategy.

11. Both the revolutionary government and the executive committee of the workers and peasants must know how to win the complete confidence of the army and of the toiling population.
12. Foreign policy must have as its main objective the awakening of the revolutionary consciousness of the workers, the exploited peasants, and oppressed nationalities of the whole world.

Stalin guaranteed the conditions of defeat

The conditions for victory, as we see, are perfectly plain. In their aggregate they bear the name of the socialist revolution. Not a single one of these conditions existed in Spain. The basic reason is — the absence of a revolutionary party. Stalin tried, it is true, to transfer to the soil of Spain, the outward practices of Bolshevism: the Politburo, commissars, cells, the GPU, etc. But he emptied these forms of their social content. He renounced the Bolshevik program and with it the soviets as the necessary form for the revolutionary initiative of the masses. He placed the technique of Bolshevism at the service of bourgeois property. In his bureaucratic narrow-mindedness, he imagined that “commissars” by themselves could guarantee victory. But the commissars of private property proved capable only of guaranteeing defeat.

The Spanish proletariat displayed first-rate military qualities. In its specific gravity in the country’s economic life, in its political and cultural level, the Spanish proletariat stood on the first day of the revolution not below but above the Russian proletariat at the beginning of 1917. On the road to its victory, its own organisations stood as the chief obstacles. The commanding clique of Stalinists, in accordance with their counterrevolutionary function, consisted of hirelings, careerists, declassed elements, and in general, all types of social refuse. The representatives of other labour organisations — incurable reformists, anarchist phrasemongers, helpless centrists of the POUM — grumbled, groaned, wavered, manoeuvred, but in the end adapted themselves to the Stalinists. As a result of their joint activity, the camp of social revolution — workers and peasants — proved to be subordinated to the bourgeoisie, or more correctly, to its shadow. It was bled white and its character was destroyed.

There was no lack of heroism on the part of the masses or courage on the part of individual revolutionists. But the masses were left to their own resources while the revolutionists remained disunited, without a program, without a plan of action. The “republican” military commanders were more concerned with crushing the social revolution than with scoring military victories. The soldiers lost confidence in their

commanders, the masses in the government; the peasants stepped aside; the workers became exhausted; defeat followed defeat; demoralisation grew apace. All this was not difficult to foresee from the beginning of the civil war. By setting itself the task of rescuing the capitalist regime, the Popular Front doomed itself to military defeat. By turning Bolshevism on its head, Stalin succeeded completely in fulfilling the role of gravedigger of the revolution.

It ought to be added that the Spanish experience once again demonstrates that Stalin failed completely to understand either the October Revolution or the Russian civil war. His slowmoving provincial mind lagged hopelessly behind the tempestuous march of events in 1917-21. In those of his speeches and articles in 1917 where he expressed his own ideas, his later Thermidorean “doctrine” is fully implanted. In this sense, Stalin in Spain in 1937 is the continuator of Stalin of the March 1917 conference of the Bolsheviks. But in 1917 he merely feared the revolutionary workers; in 1937 he strangled them. The opportunist had become the executioner.

‘Civil war in the rear’

But, after all, victory over the governments of Caballero and Negrin would have necessitated a civil war in the rear of the republican army! — the democratic philistine exclaims with horror. As if apart from this, in republican Spain no civil war has ever existed, and at that the basest and most perfidious one — the war of the proprietors and exploiters against the workers and peasants. This uninterrupted war finds expression in the arrests and murders of revolutionists, the crushing of the mass movement, the disarming of the workers, the arming of bourgeois police, the abandoning of workers’ detachments without arms and without help on the front, and finally, the artificial restriction of the development of war industry.

Each of these acts is a cruel blow to the front, direct military treason, dictated by the class interests of the bourgeoisie. But “democratic” philistines — including Stalinists, Socialists, and anarchists — regard the civil war of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, even in areas most closely adjoining the front, as a natural and inescapable war, having as its task the safeguarding of the “unity of the Popular Front”. On the other hand, the civil war of the proletariat against the “republican” counterrevolution is, in the eyes of the same philistines, a criminal, “fascist,” Trotskyist war, disrupting ... “the unity of the antifascist forces”. Scores of Norman Thomases, Major Attlees, Otto Bauers, Zyromskys, Malrauxes, and such petty peddlers of lies as Duranty and Louis Fischer spread this slavish wisdom throughout our planet. Meanwhile the government of the Popular Front moves from Madrid to Valencia, from Valencia to Barcelona.

If, as facts attest, only the socialist revolution is capable of crushing fascism, then

on the other hand a successful uprising of the proletariat is conceivable only when the ruling classes are caught in the vice of the greatest difficulties. However, the democratic philistines invoke precisely these difficulties as proof of the impermissibility of the proletarian uprising. Were the proletariat to wait for the democratic philistines to tell them the hour of their liberation, they would remain slaves forever. To teach the workers to recognise reactionary philistines under all their masks and to despise them regardless of the mask is the first and paramount duty of a revolutionist!

The outcome

The dictatorship of the Stalinists over the republican camp is not long-lived in its essence. Should the defeats stemming from the politics of the Popular Front once more impel the Spanish proletariat to a revolutionary assault, this time successfully, the Stalinist clique will be swept away with an iron broom. But should Stalin — as is unfortunately the likelihood — succeed in bringing the work of gravedigger of the revolution to its conclusion, he will not even in this case earn thanks. The Spanish bourgeoisie needed him as executioner, but it has no need for him at all as patron or tutor. London and Paris on the one hand, and Berlin and Rome on the other, are in its eyes considerably more solvent firms than Moscow. It is possible that Stalin himself wants to cover his traces in Spain before the final catastrophe; he thus hopes to unload the responsibility for the defeat on his closest allies. After this Litvinov will solicit Franco for the reestablishment of diplomatic relations. All this we have seen more than once.

Even a complete military victory of the so-called republican army over General Franco, however, would not signify the triumph of “democracy”. The workers and peasants have twice placed bourgeois republicans and their left agents in power: in April 1931 and in February 1936. Both times the heroes of the Popular Front surrendered the victory of the people to the most reactionary and the most serious representatives of the bourgeoisie. A third victory, gained by the generals of the Popular Front, would signify their inevitable agreement with the fascist bourgeoisie on the backs of the workers and peasants. Such a regime will be nothing but a different form of military dictatorship, perhaps without a monarchy and without the open domination of the Catholic church.

Finally, it is possible that the partial victories of the republicans will be utilised by the “disinterested” Anglo-French intermediaries in order to reconcile the fighting camps. It is not difficult to understand that in the event of such a variant the final remnants of the “democracy” will be stifled in the fraternal embrace of the generals Miaja (communist!) and Franco (fascist!). Let me repeat once again: victory will go

either to the socialist revolution or to fascism.

It is not excluded, by the way, that tragedy might at the last moment make way for farce. When the heroes of the Popular Front have to flee their last capital, they might, before embarking on steamers and airplanes, perhaps proclaim a series of “socialist” reforms in order to leave a “good memory” with the people. But nothing will avail. The workers of the world will remember with hatred and contempt the parties that ruined the heroic revolution.

The tragic experience of Spain is a terrible — perhaps final — warning before still greater events, a warning addressed to all the advanced workers of the world. “Revolutions”, Marx said, “are the locomotives of history.” They move faster than the thought of semirevolutionary or quarter-revolutionary parties. Whoever lags behind falls under the wheels of the locomotive, and consequently — and this is the chief danger — the locomotive itself is also not infrequently wrecked.

It is necessary to think out the problem of the revolution to the end, to its ultimate concrete conclusions. It is necessary to adjust policy to the basic laws of the revolution, i.e., to the movement of the embattled classes and not the prejudices or fears of the superficial petty-bourgeois groups who call themselves “Popular” Fronts and every other kind of front. During revolution the line of least resistance is the line of greatest disaster. To fear “isolation” from the bourgeoisie is to incur isolation from the masses. Adaptation to the conservative prejudices of the labour aristocracy is betrayal of the workers and the revolution. An excess of “caution” is the most baneful lack of caution. This is the chief lesson of the destruction of the most honest political organisation in Spain, namely, the centrist POUM. The parties and groups of the London Bureau obviously either do not wish to draw the necessary conclusions from the last warning of history or are unable to do so. By this token they doom themselves.

By way of compensation, a new generation of revolutionists is now being educated by the lessons of the defeats. This generation has verified in action the ignominious reputation of the Second International. It has plumbed the depths of the Third International’s downfall. It has learned how to judge the anarchists not by their words but by their deeds. It is a great inestimable school, paid for with the blood of countless fighters! The revolutionary cadres are now gathering only under the banner of the Fourth International. Born amid the roar of defeats, the Fourth International will lead the toilers to victory. ■

The Fifth Wheel⁰⁹

By Leon Trotsky

The so-called International Workers' Association (AIT), representing the anarcho-syndicalist groupings in various countries, convened in Paris December 8-17. As is well known, the only large section of this international is the Spanish CNT. All the other organisations (Swedish, Portuguese, French, Latin American) are completely insignificant in size.

Of course, even a small organisation can be quite significant if it has an independent revolutionary position that anticipates the future development of the class struggle. But, as can be seen from the brief account printed in the *Information Bulletin of the AIT* (number 67 of the German edition of the *Boletín de información*), the special congress in Paris ended with the full victory of the politics of García Oliver, that is, the politics of capitulation to the bourgeoisie.

During the past year, a few anarchist publications, especially the French, have mildly criticised the Spanish CNT's methods of action. There are quite enough bases for this criticism: instead of building stateless communism, the leaders of the CNT became ministers in a bourgeois state! This circumstance did not, however, hinder the Paris congress of the AIT from "approving the line of the CNT". In turn the leaders of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism explained to the congress that if they had betrayed the socialist revolution in the interests of saving the bourgeoisie, that was merely due to the "insufficient solidarity of the international proletariat".

The congress invented nothing new. All reformist betrayers have always laid the blame for their betrayal upon the proletariat. If social patriots support their "national" militarism, it is, of course, not because they are lackeys of capital but because the masses are not "matured yet for real internationalism". If the leaders of the trade unions appear as strikebreakers, it is because the masses "have not matured" for the struggle.

The account does not say a word about revolutionary criticism at the Paris congress.

In this respect, as in many others, the gentlemen anarchists fully imitate the bourgeois liberals. Why let the rabble hear of differences among the higher circles? This can only shake the authority of the arch-bourgeois ministers. It is very likely that in answer to the “left” criticism from the French anarchists, the latter were reminded of their own conduct during the last imperialist war.

We have already heard from some anarchist theoreticians that at the time of such “exceptional” circumstances as war and revolution, it is necessary to renounce the principles of one’s own program. Such revolutionists bear a close resemblance to raincoats that leak only when it rains, i.e., in “exceptional” circumstances, but during dry weather they remain waterproof with complete success.

The decisions of the Paris congress are entirely on the same level as the politics of García Oliver and his kind. The leaders of the AIT have resolved to appeal to the Second, Third, and Amsterdam Internationals with a proposal to create a “united international antifascist front”. Not one word about the struggle against capitalism! The methods of battle are announced: “boycott of fascist goods” and ... “pressure upon democratic governments” — the most reliable methods with which to liberate the proletariat.

Evidently with the aim of exerting “pressure”, the leader of the Second International, Blum, became premier in “democratic” France and did everything to crush the revolutionary movement of the French proletariat. Together with Stalin, and with the cooperation of García Oliver, Blum helped Negrín and Prieto stifle the socialist revolution of the Spanish proletariat. In all these acts, Jouhaux took a most prominent part.

With such actions, the united front of the three internationals for the struggle against the revolutionary proletariat has already been conducted for a long time. In this front, the leaders of the CNT have occupied not a conspicuous place but a sufficiently shameful one!

The Paris congress signifies the imposition of the betrayal of the Spanish anarchists upon anarchism throughout the world. This finds its expression particularly in the fact that from now on the general secretary of the AIT will be appointed by the Spanish CNT. In other words, the general secretary will from now on be an official of the Spanish bourgeois government.

Gentlemen anarchist and semi-anarchist theoreticians and semi-theoreticians, what do you have to say about all this? Following the example of the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists, do you agree to play the role of fifth wheel on the cart of bourgeois democracy?

Many anarchists do not, of course, feel completely at ease. But to overcome this

uneasiness they change the subject of conversation. Why, indeed, occupy oneself with Spain or the Paris congress of the AIT ... when one can talk about ... Kronstadt or Makhno? ... the most burning issues.

In its decomposition and decay, the Anarchist International evidently does not wish to lag behind the Second and Third Internationals. All the sooner will the honest anarchist workers find the Fourth International. ■

The Tragedy of Spain¹¹⁰

By Leon Trotsky

One of the most tragic chapters of modern history is now drawing to its conclusion in Spain. On Franco's side there is neither a staunch army nor popular support. There is only the greed of proprietors ready to drown in blood three-fourths of the population if only to maintain their rule over the remaining one-fourth. However, this cannibalistic ferocity is not enough to win a victory over the heroic Spanish proletariat. Franco needed help from the opposite side of the battlefield. And he obtained this aid. His chief assistant was and still is Stalin, the gravedigger of the Bolshevik Party and the proletarian revolution. The fall of the great proletarian capital, Barcelona, comes as direct retribution for the massacre of the uprising of the Barcelona proletariat in May 1937.

Insignificant as Franco himself is, however miserable his clique of adventurers, without honour, without conscience, and without military talents, Franco's great superiority lies in this, that he has a clear and definite program: to safeguard and stabilise capitalist property, the rule of the exploiters, and the domination of the church; and to restore the monarchy.

The possessing classes of all capitalist countries — whether fascist or democratic — proved, in the nature of things, to be on Franco's side. The Spanish bourgeoisie has gone completely over to Franco's camp. At the head of the republican camp, there remained the cast-off "democratic" armour-bearers of the bourgeoisie. These gentlemen could not desert to the side of fascism, for the very sources of their influence and income spring from the institutions of bourgeois democracy, which require (or used to require!) for their normal functioning lawyers, deputies, journalists, in short, the democratic champions of capitalism. The program of Azaña and his associates is nostalgia for a day that has passed. This is altogether inadequate.

The Popular Front resorted to demagogy and illusions in order to swing the masses behind itself. For a certain period, this proved successful. The masses who had

assured all the previous successes of the revolution still continued to believe that the revolution would reach its logical conclusion, that is, achieve an overturn in property relations, give land to the peasants, and transfer the factories into the hands of the workers. The dynamic force of the revolution was lodged precisely in this hope of the masses for a better future. But the honourable republicans did everything in their power to trample, to besmirch, or simply to drown in blood the cherished hopes of the oppressed masses.

As a result, we have witnessed during the last two years the growing distrust and hatred of the republican cliques on the part of the peasants and workers. Despair or dull indifference gradually replaced revolutionary enthusiasm and the spirit of self-sacrifice. The masses turned their backs on those who had deceived and trampled upon them. That is the primary reason for the defeat of the republican troops. The inspirer of deceit and of the massacre of the revolutionary workers of Spain was Stalin. The defeat of the Spanish revolution falls as a new indelible blot upon the already bespattered Kremlin gang.

The crushing of Barcelona deals a terrible blow to the world proletariat, but it also teaches a great lesson. The mechanics of the Spanish Popular Front as an organised system of deceit and treachery of the exploited masses have been completely exposed. The slogan of "defence of democracy" has once again revealed its reactionary essence, and at the same time, its hollowness. The bourgeoisie wants to perpetuate its rule of exploitation; the workers want to free themselves from exploitation. These are the real tasks of the *fundamental* classes in modern society.

Miserable cliques of petty-bourgeois middlemen, having lost the confidence and the subsidies of the bourgeoisie, sought to salvage the past without giving any concessions to the future. Under the label of the Popular Front, they set up a joint stock company. Under the leadership of Stalin, they have assured the most terrible defeat when all the conditions for victory were at hand.

The Spanish proletariat gave proof of extraordinary capacity for initiative and revolutionary heroism. The revolution was brought to ruin by petty, despicable, and utterly corrupted "leaders". The downfall of Barcelona signifies above all the downfall of the Second and Third Internationals, as well as of anarchism, rotten to its core. Forward to a new road, workers! Forward to the road of the international socialist revolution! ■

Anarchism in Spain: A Debate

The January 1938 issue of New International carried a short article by Felix Morrow summarising the party's criticism of the role played by anarchism in Spain and inviting anarchists to respond. The February 1938 issue of the New York anarchist journal Vanguard carried several responses and in March New International carried the following key excerpts from the contributions by Guy Aldred and T.H. Bell. The introductory biographical notes are by New International.

Guy A. Aldred

[In anti-parliamentarian movement since 1906; founder of Bakunin Press in London; author of several anarcho-communist pamphlets; arrested for sedition for first time in 1909; editor of *Herald of Revolt*, *Spur* and other journals; now member of United Socialist Movement, whose secretary, Ethel MacDonald, was in Barcelona for 11 months as radio propagandist and editor of English edition of *CNT Bulletin*; formerly associated with Spanish anarchists, but broke with them and contacted radical sections of Dutch and French anarchists. We print below the important excerpts from Aldred's contribution to the discussion.]

There was no strategy in the CNT leadership. It shut itself up from the world of struggle, a bureaucracy hidden in a big building in Barcelona, and was prepared to pay any price for place and position, miscalled power. It had no strategy. Had the CNT pursued anarchist strategy, the onus of responsibility for the struggle against fascism would have been thrown on the shoulders of the world proletariat. In Barcelona, after July 19, the CNT had the opportunity to socialise life; to destroy all bourgeois credit; to make war on the alien capitalist exploiter; and to render impossible of existence the petty property groups that became the backbone of the Stalinist counterrevolution. It is true to say that the CNT is responsible for this counterrevolution. It lacked revolutionary moral courage, despite the barricade heroism of Durruti, Ascaso, etc. Its foreign leadership rejoiced in the idea of power. Emma Goldman spoke to the *Manchester Guardian* as the representative of the Barcelona and Valencia governments

and defended Montseny's position. Ethel MacDonald was told that, on July 20, 1936, the CNT Committee secretly met, and declared that the time was not ripe for the revolutionary struggle. Stevens asserted this in the Dutch syndicalist press and challenged contradiction.

The CNT leadership cannot be defended. This does not indict anarchism and even less anti-parliamentarism. It does not indict the rank and file of the CNT or the Friends of Durruti. It indicts the CNT leadership for its departure from, and betrayal of, anarchism. The anarchist leadership in Spain is tending to forget the crimes of Stalinism by a growing flirting with this monstrous evil of Red fascism. This fact does not justify Trotskyism. And it does not mean the bankruptcy of anarchism; only of reformism as opposed to social revolution.

Anarchism and class collaboration. When Rocker explains the anarchist failure to take power in May 1937, or at least, to resist the Stalinist aggression, by stating that the anarchists "were opposed to any dictatorship from whichever side it proceeded", he betrays his ignorance of the class issue involved. To be so opposed to dictatorship that you surrender to dictatorship is obviously confusion. Actually, of course, the anarchists surrendered to the anti-fascist or Popular Front government.

When Felix Morrow deduces from this conduct of the anarchists, inspired by various motives, some good, some bad, that anarchism, per se, stands for class collaboration in the period of social revolution, he is writing nonsense. If he is arguing from fact, one can deduce from the events of the Russian Revolution that Trotskyism and Leninism stand equally for class collaboration. Actually, anarchism does not stand for class collaboration but for the conquest of bread and freedom by the working class; for the liquidation of political into industrial or use-value society.

Felix Morrow is quite right when he declares that there exists in Spain today a corrupt, degenerate Spanish bureaucracy. It is quite true to aver that Rudolf Rocker defends that bureaucracy. Emma Goldman does the same. On that account, when she came to Britain, she set to work to destroy the anti-parliamentary movement here and to establish a controlled, dictated anarchist bureau, defended by capitalists and on all fours with the Stalinist bureaus of murder apology. But this is not anarchism any more than Stalinism is communism or socialism.

Felix Morrow denies that Kronstadt is a burning question. At least it is a key issue. Surely Trotsky's attitude towards the imprisonment and murder of anarchists in the Soviet republic, the question of the legitimate revolutionary demands of Kronstadt that were drowned in blood, the reactions of Zinoviev and others, since murdered themselves, Trotsky's falsehood about Makhno, are historical matters worthy of consideration. If the Stalinists are wrong to believe that history begins and ends with

Stalin, what right has Morrow to assume that it begins and ends with Trotsky.

Trotsky's falsehood — "The Makhno movement was a kulak movement" — may not be in the same category as the rewriting of John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*, the producing of films of the revolution that leave out Trotsky, the re-telling of Lenin's hiding until Stalin overshadows Lenin; but the earlier, simple falsehood contains the seeds of the later gigantic crop of lies and slanders. Falsehood is falsehood; and one cannot play at error without expecting ambition to improve on one's prentice and amateurish beginnings. To my mind, the genius of Trotsky notwithstanding, Trotskyism did pioneer Stalinism. I do not think it would be difficult to develop this point in debate; and personally, I would like to debate it on the public platform. I would be glad of an opportunity of defending the anarchist case against Trotskyism as well as against Stalinism. This is not to defend the Rockers, the Goldmans or the foreign service of the corrupt, bureaucratic Spanish CNT.

Glasgow, December 29, 1937

T.H. Bell

[Anarchist for almost 50 years; personal friend of Kropotkin, Malatesta, Tarrida del Marmol, Tucker, Goldman, Rocker; introduced first Spanish anarchist literature in Mexico in 1891; host in England of released survivors of Montjuich tortures; declares that Rudolf Rocker "will tell you if you ask him that no one in his opinion has any better title than I have to speak for that English-speaking anarchist movement which your article attacked"; frequent contributor to American and English anarchist journals. Below are printed the most relevant excerpts from Bell's contribution to the discussion.]

But although I admit that some of your criticisms are amply justified, I laugh at your notion that because of the errors it has committed in Spain the anarchist movement is to be dismissed from the scene. It is just coming on to it. For even if the CNT-FAI, and the other radical workers of Spain are to be crushed completely by the Franco-Hitler-Mussolini combination they have already accomplished one great historic feat of the highest importance. For, crushed or victorious, they have stopped the triumphant march of fascism which seemed about to trample on all Europe. You remember how at one time the workers in northern Italy had seized the factories and we thought the social revolution just on the edge. Alas! They looked for leadership to the men of their political party. These men were lawyers, doctors, journalists, politicians, everything but producers; they felt their own incompetence in matters of production; so they advised the workers to give the factories back; matters would be adjusted by political means. Just then too it became evident to the Italian workers that the *affaire* in Russia

had resulted not in a free society, but in a fresh tyranny. They were discouraged and bewildered for the moment. And Mussolini, inspired and taught by the example of Lenin, saw his opportunity and took it. Later in Germany seven millions of social-democrats, disheartened, stood patiently to have fetters fitted on their feet; five million communists, “left without orders”, obediently held out their hands for the handcuffs.

The fascists and the Nazis therefore seemed fully justified in their claim that they represented daring and energy; anyhow they marched in triumph onward and onward — till at Barcelona the men of the CNT-FAI, the anarcho-syndicalists, met them — with bare hands and heroic hearts — and stopped them dead. The overblown balloon of fascist reputation went off there with a pop.

The anarcho-syndicalists of Spain have put a stop not only to the triumphant march of fascism; they have put a stop to the westward march of “communism”. You people of the *New International* are behind the times on the Spanish news. It is true that the Stalinists did seize power in the Spanish revolution; but they were not able to hold it. The indignation of the Spanish people arose to such a degree, and the increased moral influence of the CNT became so apparent — in spite of the blunders of some leaders and the imprisonment or murder of others — that Stalinist Russia has finally recognised its inevitable defeat and quit the scene. Even if the anarcho-syndicalists in the long run are trampled into the mire by the overwhelming forces of the fascist enemy, in the next rising in Europe the workers will begin just where they left off.

In one other important matter the anarcho-syndicalists of Spain have vindicated their doctrine with extraordinary success. Many of your readers are probably aware now that the workers in Russia when they themselves ran the workshops at first — before the communists put in their commissars — organised production with more ability than has been generally conceded to them. Their difficulties lay in the region of exchange rather than that of production. Given a little experience and made to feel the responsibility, they could soon have obtained a considerable degree of efficiency. But the tale of their failure, “necessitating communist control”, has been told so often that those who tell it really take it to be true. It has even affected some of us who ought to have known better. I make my confession here that I was not myself over-optimistic about the immediate success of the workers in organising industry in Spain, though I knew that a good deal of study had been given to it. It is evident that they have really had magnificent success, a success that should stop once for all the old notion that things can be run at first only by a superior class, a Samurai or a Bolshevik party. The Catalonian workers are not only producing with greater efficiency than ever before the necessities of life, they have developed in an incredibly short time a production of arms and ammunitions which enables them now to face the enemy on something

more approaching an equal footing. The anarchist doctrine of the creative ability of a free people has been vindicated nobly.

Let me point out that when the anarchists in Spain have blundered and have failed, it has been not when they attempted to apply anarchist doctrines but when they abandoned them. They did quite right not to seize power — and begin another tyranny; though I confess they seem to me to have been too slow to accept responsibility and leadership. (I say, “it seems to me”, because their difficulties were certainly enormous.) One would have expected them to set off with heads up and banners flying direct to their own goal, instead of negotiating and compromising with governmentalsists as they did. But, you know, they could not fight the fascists for long with their bare fists; arms had to be obtained somehow or other; the government at Madrid, if it did not possess the arms, possessed at least the sinews of war. He who pays the piper can insist generally on calling the tune. That excuse, I admit, does not cover the utterly wretched weakness of some of these leaders, such as that praise to Stalin to which you refer. It is evident that when anarchists abandon the methods of anarchism they can make a most deplorable mess of it.

Los Angeles, January 1938

The Editors

In addition to the contributions of Guy A. Aldred and T.H. Bell, the February 1938 issue of *Vanguard*, which eagerly seeks to capitalise upon the prominence of its sister-movement in Spain by advertising itself as the only organ that “presents the authentic position of the CNT-FAI”, devotes almost one-third of its pages to a reply to the article by Felix Morrow on “Anarchism in Spain” in the January issue of the *New Internationalist*. The article, as readers will recall, ended with an invitation by the editors to anarchist spokesmen to participate in a public discussion in our columns of the criticisms made by the author. The three replies made, two of which are printed in their germane essentials above, require only some brief comments.

1. Reference to the indubitable militancy, bravery and revolutionary spirit which animates every fibre of the masses of Spanish anarchist workers, is, when not demagogic, beside the point under discussion. These qualities of the masses no more justify the treacherous course of the Spanish anarchist leadership than the heroism of the Austrian workers in February 1934 could cover up the perfidy of the social-democratic bureaucracy. The point under discussion is the philosophy and practice of the anarchist leadership as recorded in life by the class struggle in Spain.

2. Notwithstanding all of *Vanguard's* hoarse denials of the existence and growth of an anarcho-syndicalist *bureaucracy* in Spain, the disagreeable fact is too plain and big

to be concealed any longer. Guy Aldred, well aware of the facts, does not seek to contest them. Nor can any informed person who knows of the arbitrary and wretched manner in which the CNT-FAI pontiffs excommunicated the Friends of Durruti and left wingers of the Libertarian Youth when they rebelled against the policy of the petty-bourgeois cabinet ministers who were the official spokesmen of anarchism in Spain — Mesdames and Messieurs Montseny, Garcia Oliver and consorts. *Vanguard* says smugly that “a critical evaluation of this [the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist] policy in the light of the accumulated experience of the last 16 months, is on the order of the day”. But you will look in vain for such a “critical evaluation”. Is it to be made later, perhaps when it is ... too late? The international anarchist congress in London found not a word of criticism to make; instead it gave an unqualified endorsement to the line of the Spanish anarchist bureaucracy. At the congress of the Union Anarchiste in France towards the end of last year a motion was adopted prohibiting any criticism of the leaders of the CNT-FAI even if uttered in the ranks of the organisation! The Stalinist parties have such a motion in practise, but even they have not been brazen enough to adopt it formally.

3. The main point in Morrow’s indictment of anarchist policy in Spain dealt with class collaboration and participation in a bourgeois coalition government. Aldred joins him in condemnation. Bell seeks to make a halting explanation. But in the almost five pages of reply by *Vanguard*, which discourses on almost everything and everybody, there is not a word — not one single word! — devoted to discussing this most vital point. It is hard to believe, but it is true. The anarchists — anti-authoritarian, anti-stateist, anti-governmentalist — for decades derided and castigated the social-democrats for entering bourgeois coalition governments even when the argument of “emergency situation” or “need of unity against reaction” was made. Suddenly they too find themselves confronted with an “emergency situation” (i.e., the intensification of the class struggle) in the only country where they are a powerful mass movement and — they become ministers of state (yes, of the state which is the source of all evil!), ministers of a bourgeois coalition government. And even after they are unceremoniously kicked out, after the May Days in Barcelona when the anarchist workers were massacred by the same government, they whimper and plead for the right to re-enter it: “The participation of the CNT in the government is considered [by the ‘liberal and democratic powers of Europe’] as the strong guarantee of the independence of Spain.” (Augustin Souchy, *Solidaridad Obrera*, Aug. 28, 1937.)

When these little details are pointed out, the mouth of the *Vanguard* writer suddenly fills up with water. He does not even mention anarchist participation in a bourgeois coalition government, but in a shamefaced manner makes an implicit defence of it by

reference — to whom? — to Lenin! “As is known, the revolutionary elements (Bolsheviks included) made a united front with the petty-bourgeois elements of the so-called Kerensky democracy.” Quite so, in the struggle against Kornilov. Only, the Bolsheviks never entered the bourgeois government of Kerensky; the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionists did. Therein lies the difference.

4. It is not anarchism that is bankrupt; the collapse is due to the abandonment of anarchism. Thus argue Aldred and Bell. We cannot agree. The source of the failure in Spain is to be found in the very heart of anarchist philosophy itself. Anarchism is not a proletarian class doctrine. It is based upon a petty-bourgeois *idealistic* conception of the state. The bourgeoisie admonishes the workers: Don't take power, it is corrupting by its very nature. The anarchists echo this warning. The state is not a class organ to them; it is, per se, Evil Incarnate, regardless of what class is in power. They do not, therefore, counterpose the proletarian state to the bourgeois state. It is not surprising, then, that when the concrete “emergencies” of real life jerk the anarchists out of the blue sky of abstraction; when, as a mass movement imminently imperilled by fascism, they find themselves forced to employ all the weapons of power they can lay hands on, including the most concentrated weapon of power, namely, the machinery of state — they do not try to create such a political weapon in a new (proletarian) form but simply fall back upon it in its existing (bourgeois) form. Why? Because in their doctrinaire narrowness, they consider a proletarian state no different from — and therefore an unnecessary duplication of — the bourgeois state. That is why the Spanish anarchists did not develop the embryonic organs of proletarian power, but simply capitulated to the democratic bourgeois state of Azaña-Companys-Caballero-Negrín-Díaz. That is the essence of the matter.

How significant it is that in the face of so monstrous a disavowal of the basic traditional anarchist principle, not one of the bishops of the anarchist movement has cried out against the CNT bureaucracy in the tone and spirit of Lenin, when he called for a break with the Second International for its war betrayal. The Goldmans, Rockers, Souchys, Frémonts, Santillans — to say nothing of the lesser novices of *Vanguard* — take anarcho-bourgeois coalitionism in their stride as though it were a bagatelle. When it is referred to at all, it is justified on the ground of “emergency”, as if, in Trotsky's words, anarchist principles were a raincoat that is good on sunny days but, alas! leaks badly on those “emergency” days when it rains.

5. As for the sempiternal question of Kronstadt and Makhno, we again refer our readers to John G. Wright's article in our last issue and to an article by Leon Trotsky on the same subject in our next issue. The present-day anarchist pother about Kronstadt is usually calculated to becloud the burning question of their policy in Spain. It is more

than a little hypocritical for the anarchists to thunder about the “Kronstadt massacre”, when their leaders covered up the murder of Durruti by the Stalinists for the sake of ministerial unity with the latter; when they sat in one government with the Stalinists while the latter censored and suppressed their papers and imprisoned or assassinated scores of anarchist and other revolutionary militants; when, for the sake of governmental unity with the Stalinists, their leaders sing the praises of Stalin; when the same leaders, who could not reconcile themselves to Leninism or the Bolshevik revolution, officially join in Barcelona with the Friends of the Soviet Union (read: Friends of the GPU) to celebrate the triumph of the Stalinist counterrevolution on November 7, 1937. Kronstadt may have been a great historical tragedy of 1921. But it is not, after all, a paint brush to be used on any and all occasions to whitewash the bankrupt anarchist bureaucracy of 1938. For that job, there is no brush big enough. ■

Appendix 1
**Notes on Anarchism &
Socialism**¹¹¹

By V.I. Lenin

Theses:

1. Anarchism, in the course of the 35 to 40 years (Bakunin and the *International*, 1866-) of its existence (and with Stirner included, in the course of many more years), has produced nothing but general platitudes against *exploitation*.

These phrases have been current for more than 2000 years. What is missing is (a) an understanding of the *causes* of exploitation; (b) an understanding of the *development* of society, which leads to socialism; (c) an understanding of the *class struggle* as the creative force for the realisation of socialism.

2. An understanding of the *causes* of exploitation. *Private* property as the basis of *commodity* economy. Social property in the means of production. In anarchism — nil.

Anarchism is bourgeois *individualism* in reverse. Individualism as the basis of the entire anarchist world outlook.

Defence of petty property and *petty economy* on the land.

Keine Majorität.^a

Negation of the unifying and organising power of authority.

3. Failure to understand the development of society — the role of large-scale production — the development of capitalism into socialism.

(Anarchism is a product of *despair*. The psychology of the unsettled intellectual or the vagabond and not of the proletariat.)

4. Failure to understand the *class* struggle of the proletariat.

Written in 1901.

^a No majority (i.e., the anarchists' non-acceptance of the submission by the minority to the majority). — *Ed.*

Absurd negation of politics in bourgeois society.

Failure to understand the role of the organisation and the education of the workers.

Panaceas consisting of one-sided, disconnected means.

5. What has anarchism, at one time dominant in the Romance countries, contributed in recent European history?
 - No doctrine, revolutionary teaching, or theory.
 - Fragmentation of the working-class movement.
 - Complete fiasco in the experiments of the revolutionary movement (Proudhonism, 1871; Bakuninism, 1873).
 - Subordination of the working class to *bourgeois* politics in the guise of negation of politics. ■

Appendix 2

*From A Paradise in This World*¹¹²

By Leon Trotsky

I am asked further: *You call yourselves socialist communists, and yet you shoot and imprison your comrades, the anarchist communists?*

This is a question, comrades, which, indeed, requires elucidation — a serious question, no doubt. We, Marxist communists, are deeply at variance with the anarchist doctrine. This doctrine is erroneous, but that would not in any way justify arrests, imprisonment, not to speak of shootings.

I will first explain in a few words wherein the mistake of the anarchist doctrine lies. The anarchist declares that the working class needs no state power; what it does need is to organise production. State power, he says, is a bourgeois service. State power is a bourgeois machine, and the working class must not take it into its hands. This is a thoroughly mistaken view. When you organise your economic life in a village, generally in small areas, no state power, indeed, is required. But when you organise your economic system for the whole of Russia, for a big country — and however much they robbed us, we are still a big country — there is need for a state apparatus, an apparatus which was hitherto in the hands of a hostile class that exploited and robbed the toilers. We say: in order to organise production in a new manner, it is necessary to wrest the state apparatus, the government machine from the hands of the enemy and grasp it in our own hands. Otherwise nothing will come of it. Where does exploitation, oppression, come from? It comes from private property in the means of production. And who stands up for it, who supports it? The state, so long as it is in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Who can abolish private property? The state, as soon as it falls into the hands of the working class.

The bourgeoisie says: don't touch the state — it is a sacred hereditary right of the "educated" classes. And the anarchists say: don't touch it — it is a hellish invention, a devilish machine, keep away from it. The bourgeoisie says: don't touch — it is holy; the

An excerpt from a speech to Moscow workers, April 14, 1918.

anarchists say: don't touch — it is sinful. Both say: don't touch. But we say: we shall not only touch it, but take it over into our hands and run it in our own interests, for the abolition of private property, for the emancipation of the working class.

But, comrades, however mistaken the doctrine of the anarchists, it is perfectly inadmissible to persecute them for it. Many anarchists are perfectly honest champions of the working class; only they don't know how the lock can be opened, how to open the door into the kingdom of freedom, and they crowd at the door, elbowing one another, but unable to guess how to turn the key. But this is their misfortune, not their fault — it is not a crime, and they must not be punished for it. But comrades, during the period of the revolution, under the flag of anarchism — as everybody knows, and the honest idealist anarchist better than anybody else — a host of all sorts of hooligans, jailbirds, thieves, and night bandits have crowded in. Only yesterday the man served his term of hard labour for rape, or of prison for stealing, or was deported for banditry, and today he declares: "I am an anarchist — a member of the club", the "Black Crow", the "Tempest", the "Storm", the "Lava", etc., etc., a lot of names, a great lot.

Comrades, I have talked about it to the idealist anarchists, and they themselves say: "A lot of these jailbirds, hooligans, and criminals have smuggled themselves into our movement ..."

You all know what occurs in Moscow. Whole streets are forced to pay tribute. Buildings are seized over the heads of the soviets, of the labour organisations, and it happens also that when the soviets occupy a building, these hooligans under the mask of anarchists break into the building, fix up machine guns, seize armoured cars and even artillery. Lots of plunder, heaps of gold have been discovered in their nests. They are simply raiders and burglars who compromise the anarchists. Anarchism is an idea although a mistaken one, but hooliganism is hooliganism; and we told the anarchists: You must draw a strict line between yourselves and the burglars, for there is no greater danger to the revolution than when it begins to decay at any point the whole tissue of the revolution will then go to pieces. The Soviet regime must be of firm texture. We took power not in order to plunder like some highwaymen and burglars, but in order to introduce a common labour discipline and an honest labour life.

I hold that the Soviet authorities acted quite correctly when they said to the pseudoanarchists: "Don't imagine that your reign has come, don't imagine that the Russian people or the Soviet state is now a carrion upon which the crows alight to peck it to pieces. If you want to live together with us on the principles of common labour, then submit with us to the common Soviet discipline of the labouring class, but if you put yourselves in our way, then don't blame us if the labour government, the Soviet power, handles you without mittens."

If the pseudoanarchists or, to be plain, the hooligans will attempt in the future to act in the same way, the second chastisement will be thrice, 10 times as severe as the first. It is stated that among these hooligans there are a few who are honest anarchists; if that is true — and this looks as if it were true with respect to a few men — then it is a great pity, and it is necessary to render them their freedom as quickly as possible. It is necessary to express to them our sincere regret, but at the same time to tell them — Comrades, anarchists, in order that no such mistakes should occur in the future you must put between you and those hooligans a sort of watershed, a hard line in order that you should not be mixed up one with another, that one should know once for all: that is a burglar, and this is an honest idealist ...

[At this point a commotion, a noise, and a general confusion interrupt the speaker.]

[The chairperson: Nothing extraordinary has happened. Some 15 anarchists demonstratively left the hall.]

Order, comrades.

Well, comrades, we have just now seen, in a small way, an example of how a small group of men can break up solidarity and order. We were calmly discussing our common problems here. The platform was open to all. The anarchists had the right to demand their turn and speak, if they wanted. I spoke of the true anarchists without animosity or bitterness, as everybody can testify; more than that, I said that among the anarchists there are many mistaken friends of the working class, that they must not be arrested or shot. Against whom did I speak with rancour? Against the hooligans, who put on the mask of anarchism in order to destroy the order and life and labour of the working class. I don't know to what camp these persons belong who thought it possible to create at a crowded meeting a provocative scene of this sort, which frightened many of you and brought in confusion and chaos at our popular meeting. ■

Notes

Introduction

- 1 Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements* (Penguin Books: London, 1962), p. 11.
- 2 Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century* (Pluto Press: London, 1989), p. 245.
- 3 Braunthal, *History of the International 1864-1914* (Thomas Nelson: London, 1966), pp. 120-121.
- 4 Marx, To L. Kugelmann in Hanover, Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1969), p. 417.
- 5 Quoted in Braunthal, *ibid.*, p. 139.
- 6 See this volume, pp. 123-124.
- 7 Leval, “The Limitations of the Revolution” in Dolgoff ed., *The Anarchist Collectives* (Black Rose Books: Quebec, 1974), p. 51.
- 8 See this volume, p. 179.
- 9 Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* (Pathfinder Press: New York, 1974) pp. 101-102.
- 10 Morrow, *ibid.*, p. 102.

To Friedrich Bolte in New York

- 11 The text is taken from Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1969).
- 12 Marx, “General Rules of the International Working Men’s Association”, Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2.
- 13 Marx, “Inaugural Address of the International Working Men’s Association”, Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2.
- 14 This refers to the following resolutions of the London Conference of 1871: “Designations of National Councils, etc.” (resolution II, clauses 1, 2 and 3); “Political Action of the Working Class” (resolution IX); “The Alliance of Socialist Democracy” (resolution XVI); and “Split in the French-speaking Part of Switzerland” (resolution XVII).

- 15 On September 4, 1870, upon hearing of the defeat of the French army by the Prussians at Sedan, the people of Paris held revolutionary demonstrations which led to the fall of Louis Napoleon's Second Empire and the proclamation of a republic. The resulting bourgeois provisional government included monarchists and moderate republicans. It was headed by Trochu, the military governor of Paris, and Thiers, its actual inspirer. In mortal fear of the masses, it colluded with the Prussians against them.

To Theodore Cuno in Milan

- 16 The text is taken from Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2.
- 17 The League of Peace and Freedom was a bourgeois-pacifist organisation founded in Switzerland in 1867 by various petty-bourgeois and bourgeois republicans and liberals. At its conference held in Berne in September 1868, Bakunin attempted to secure the adoption of a muddled socialist program which he had drawn up (the "social and economic equalisation of classes", the abolition of the state and the right of inheritance, etc.). When his project was rejected by a majority vote, Bakunin withdrew from the League and founded the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy.
- 18 The reference is to the resolutions of the Basle Congress (September 1869) which extended the powers of the General Council.
- 19 *Il Proletario* — Italian newspaper published in Turin from 1872 to 1874; it supported the Bakuninists and opposed the General Council and the London Conference resolutions.
Gazzettino Rosa (Red Newspaper) — Italian Daily, organ of the left-wing Mazzinists; appeared in Milan between 1867 and 1873; in 1871 it came out in support of the Paris Commune and published the International's documents; from 1872 onwards, it was under the influence of the Bakuninists.
- 20 *La Liberté* — Belgian democratic newspaper published in Brussels from 1865 to 1873; from 1867, one of the press organs of the International in Belgium.
- 21 *The French Section of 1871* was formed in London in September 1871 by French refugees. Its leaders established close contacts with the Swiss Bakuninists and joined forces with them in their attacks against the organisational principles of the International. This section was not admitted to the International since some clauses in its rules contradicted the General Rules of the organisation. Subsequently it split into several groups.

Fictitious Splits in the International

- 22 First distributed as a private circular of the General Council, it was published in French at the end of May 1872. The text is taken from Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2.
- 23 Marx, "The Civil War in France", Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2.
- 24 From the end of the 1850s one of the basic demands of the English workers was that of the

introduction of the nine-hour working day. In May 1871 a big strike of building workers and engineers started in Newcastle. It was headed by the Nine Hours' League which, for the first time, had drawn into the struggle workers who did not belong to the trade unions. The League asked the International to try and stop the import of scabs into England, which was already underway. The import was prevented by the work of the General Council. In October 1871 the strike ended in victory with the workers obtaining a 54-hour working week.

- 25 On July 25, 1871, the General Council adopted Engels's proposal to convene in London, in September 1871, a closed conference of the International. The conference was held on September 17-23. Meeting at a time of harsh repressions against the members of the International following the defeat of the Paris Commune, its numbers were rather depleted: it was attended by 22 delegates with the right to vote and 10 delegates with voice but no vote. The London Conference marked an important stage in the struggle which Marx and Engels waged for the foundation of a proletarian party. It adopted a resolution on the "Political Action of the Working Class". (See footnote pp. 53-54.)
- 26 The Basle Congress of the International was held September 6-11, 1869.
- 27 This refers to the London Conference held September 25-29, 1865, attended by members of the General Council and leaders of individual sections.
- 28 Jules Favre's circular letter of May 26, 1871 proposed to the diplomatic representatives of France abroad that European governments should be persuaded to arrest and extradite Commune refugees as mere criminals.
- 29 The Rural Assembly, the Landlord Chamber and the Assembly of "Rurals" were nicknames given to the French National Assembly of 1871 which met in Bordeaux. It was largely made up of monarchist reactionaries elected in rural districts.
- 30 Dufaure submitted a bill drawn up by a special commission of the French National Assembly and passed on March 14, 1872. Under this law affiliation with the International was punishable by imprisonment.
- 31 In the summer of 1871 Bismarck and Beust, the Austro-Hungarian Chancellor, initiated a joint struggle against the working-class movement. On June 17, 1871 Bismarck sent Beust a memorandum on the measures taken in Germany and France against the activities of the International. The German and Austrian emperors met in Gastein in August 1871, and in September in Salzburg, for a special discussion of measures to be adopted against the International.

The Italian Government joined the general anti-International campaign. In August 1871 it banned the Naples section and began persecuting members of the International, Theodor Cuno in particular.

The Spanish Government, too, adopted repressive measures against the workers'

organisations and the International's sections in the spring and summer of 1871; this forced Mora, Morago and Lorenzo, members of the Spanish Federal Council, to move to Lisbon.

- 32 The London Conference instructed the General Council, on Marx's proposal, to form a federal council for England since the General Council itself had been performing the functions of such a council until the autumn of 1871. In October 1871 the British Federal Council was founded, composed of representatives of the English section of the International.

But from the start a group of reformers headed by Hales wormed its way into the council's leadership and began a campaign against the General Council and its policy of proletarian internationalism on the Irish question. In their struggle Hales and other reformers collaborated with the Swiss anarchists, US bourgeois reformers, etc. Following the Hague Congress the reformist wing of the British Federal Council refused to recognise the congress decisions and, jointly with the Bakuninists, launched a slanderous campaign against the General Council and Marx. The reformers were opposed by the other members of the federal council who actively supported Marx and Engels. Early in December 1872 there was a split in the federal council; some members of the council true to the Hague Congress decisions constituted themselves as the British Federal Council and established direct ties with the General Council whose seat was transferred to New York. The reformers' attempt to gain leadership of the British Federation of the International thus ended in failure.

The British Federal Council actually existed until 1874 when it ceased its activities following the end of the activity of the International as a whole and the temporary victory of opportunism in the British working-class movement.

- 33 This refers to resolution II of the London Conference of 1871 — "Designations of National Councils, etc." — which barred various sectarian groups from the International.
- 34 This refers to Bakunin's manifesto "To the Russian, Polish and All Slav Friends" published in a supplement to *Kolokol*, No. 122-23, of February 15, 1862.
- 35 See note 17.
- 36 The Brussels Congress of the International was held on September 6-13, 1868. Marx took an active part in its preparations but did not attend. Nearly 100 delegates were present representing the workers of Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Spain. The congress adopted a major decision on the necessity of transferring railways, mineral resources, mines, forests and arable land into public ownership. This decision testified to the fact that the majority of French and Belgian Proudhonists had adopted the standpoint of collectivism, and marked the victory in the International of the ideas of proletarian socialism over petty-bourgeois reformism. The congress also adopted resolutions proposed by Marx on the eight-hour working day, on the use of machinery, on the attitude

towards the Berne Congress (1868) of the League of Peace and Freedom, as well as a resolution submitted by Lessner, in the name of the German delegation, recommending the workers of all countries to study Marx's *Capital* and to promote its translation from German into other languages.

- 37 See note 17.
- 38 The Geneva Congress of the International met on September 3-8, 1868 and was attended by 60 delegates from the General Council sections and workers' societies of Britain, France, Germany and Switzerland. Marx read the "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council. The Different Questions" (see Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2) as the General Council's official report. Despite the Proudhonists participating in the congress, most of the points of the "Instructions" were endorsed as congress resolutions. The Geneva Congress likewise adopted the "Rules and the Regulations of the International Working Men's Association".
- 39 The Lausanne Congress of the International was held on September 2-8, 1867. It heard the General Council's report and reports from the localities attesting to the strengthening of the International's organisations in different countries. The Proudhonists were able to impose their own agenda but although they managed to secure the adoption of some of their resolutions, they failed to take over the leadership of the International. The congress re-elected the General Council with its former composition and voted to keep its seat in London.
- 40 *Le Progrès* — A Bakuninist newspaper published in French in Locle in Switzerland, under the editorship of Guillaume, from December 1868 to April 1870.
- 41 *L'Égalité* (Equality) — The weekly organ of the Swiss Romance federation of the International, published in French in Geneva from December 1868 to December 1872. For some time it was under Bakunin's influence. In January 1870 the Romance federal council succeeded in withdrawing Bakuninists from the editorial board, after which the newspaper began to support the policy pursued by the General Council of the International.
- 42 The Nechayev trial, the trial of students charged with secret revolutionary activities, was held in St. Petersburg in July-August 1871. As far back as 1869, Nechayev established contacts with Bakunin and developed activities directed at founding, in a number of Russian cities, a secret society called the Narodnaya Rasprava (People's Retribution) which preached the anarchist ideas of "absolute destruction". Revolutionary-minded students and middle-class intellectuals entered the Nechayev organisation because they were attracted by its sharp criticism of the tsarist regime and by the appeals to wage a resolute struggle against it. Nechayev had received from Bakunin the credentials of a representative of the so-called European Revolutionary Union and used them to pass himself off as a representative of the International, thereby misleading the members of his organisation. In 1871 the

Nechayev organisation was broken up and its adventurist methods were made public at the trial of its members.

The London Conference instructed Utin to draw up a brief report of this trial. Instead of such a report, Utin sent Marx in late August 1872, for the Hague Congress of the International, a detailed confidential report on the anti-International activities conducted by Bakunin and Nechayev.

- 43 *Le Travail* (Labour) — The weekly newspaper of the Paris sections of the International; published in Paris from October 3 to December 12, 1869.
- 44 This association of feudal gentry was founded in France in late 1464 and opposed the policy of Louis XI to unite France in a single centralised state. The League members acted for the “common good” of France.
- 45 *La Solidarité* — A Bakuninist weekly newspaper published in French in Neuchâtel from April to September 1870, and in Geneva from March to May 1871.
- 46 That is, the workers engaged in the production of watches and jewellery carried on in large and small workshops in Geneva and its environs; also home-producers of these articles.
- 47 At the battle of Sedan the French army led by Napoleon III was defeated by the Prussian troops and surrendered on September 2, 1870. This defeat led to the downfall of the Second Empire, the proclamation of a republic on September 4, 1870 and the formation of the Government of National Defence.
- 48 See Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 198
- 49 This refers to the September 5, 1870 manifesto to the sections of the International, written by James Guillaume and Gaspard Blanc and published in Neuchâtel as a supplement to the newspaper *Solidarité*.
- 50 The Lyons uprising began on September 4, 1870, on receipt of the news of the defeat at Sedan (see note 47). Bakunin arrived in Lyons on September 15 and made an attempt to take over the leadership of the movement and to implement his anarchistic program. On September 28, his followers attempted a coup d'état, which failed because they were not supported by the workers and had no definite plan of action.
- 51 In April 1870, Paul Robin, a follower of Bakunin, suggested to the Paris federal council that it should recognise the federal committee formed by the anarchists at a congress in La Chaux-de-Fonds as the Romance federal committee. After the General Council had explained the meaning of the split in Switzerland to the members of the Paris federal council the latter decided that it had no right to interfere in the matter since it came within the competence of the General Council.
- 52 This section was founded on September 6, 1871 in place of the Geneva section called the “Alliance of Socialist Democracy” which was dissolved in August of the same year. Besides former members of this section, Zhukovsky, Perron and others, some French refugees,

including Jules Guesde and Benoit Malon, took part in organising the new “Socialist Revolutionary Propaganda and Action Section”.

- 53 *La Révolution Sociale* — A French weekly published in Geneva from October 1871 to January 1872; from November 1871 it was the official organ of the anarchist Jura federation.
- 54 *Le Figaro* — French reactionary newspaper appearing in Paris since 1854 and connected with the government of the Second Empire.
- Le Gaulois* — Daily newspaper of conservative-monarchist views, organ of the influential bourgeoisie and aristocracy; came out in Paris from 1867 to 1929.
- Paris-Journal* — Reactionary daily with police connections; published by Henri de Pène in Paris from 1868 to 1874. It slandered the International and the Paris Commune.
- 55 The plebiscite was conducted by Napoleon III in May 1870 for the alleged purpose of ascertaining the attitude of the masses to the empire. The questions were so worded that it was impossible to express disapproval of the policy of the Second Empire without at the same time declaring opposition to all democratic reforms. The sections of the First International in France exposed this demagogic manoeuvre and instructed their members to abstain from voting. On the eve of the plebiscite the Paris federation members were arrested on a charge of conspiring against Napoleon and a witch-hunt was launched against the International in a number of areas. At the trial of the Paris federation members, the frame-up was exposed but a number of members were convicted merely for being members of the International. The French workers responded to these persecutions with mass protests.
- 56 *La Marseillaise* — A left republican daily newspaper published in Paris from December 1869 to September 1870. It carried reports on the activities of the International and the workers’ movement.
- 57 *Le Réveil* (Awakening) — A left republican newspaper edited by Louis Charles Delescluze in Paris from July 1868 to January 1871. It carried the documents of the International and other material on the workers’ movement.
- 58 The reference is to resolution 2 from section XIII “Special Votes of the Conference” declaring that “the German working men have done their duty during the Franco-German war”.
- 59 *Journal de Genève national, politique et littéraire* — A conservative newspaper appearing since 1826.
- 60 This refers to the foreign minister’s circular letter to the diplomatic representatives of France of June 6, 1871, in which Jules Favre called upon all governments to join forces in the struggle against the International, as well as to the Sacase report made on February 5, 1872 on behalf of the commission engaged in the examination of the Dufaure law (see note 28). The General Council’s statement on of Favre’s circular was written by Marx and Engels.

- 61 This is an error: article 6 of the General Rules was adopted at the Geneva Congress of the International in 1866. See *Congrès ouvrier de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs, tenu à Genève du 3 au 8 septembre 1866*, Genève, 1866, pp. 13-14.
- 62 The Workers' Federation was founded in Turin in the autumn of 1871 and was influenced by the Mazzinists. In January 1872 the proletarian elements split away from the federation and formed a society called L'Emancipazione del Proletario, later admitted to the International as a section. Carlo Terzaghi, a secret police agent, headed this society until February 1872.
- Il Proletario* — see note 19.
- 63 In November 1871 Stefanoni, a bourgeois democrat, put forward a plan for founding a Universal Rationalist Society whose program was a mixture of bourgeois-democratic views and petty-bourgeois utopian socialism (the setting up of agricultural colonies for solving the social question, etc.). The purpose of the society was to divert the workers' attention from the International and curb its influence in Italy. Simultaneously Stefanoni declared his solidarity with the Alliance of Socialist Democracy. Statements made by Marx and Engels exposing Stefanoni's true aims and the anarchists' direct ties with the bourgeois democrats, as well as by some leaders of the Italian working-class movement against Stefanoni's plan, foiled his attempts to subject the Italian working-class movement to bourgeois influence.
- 64 *Neuer Social-Demokrat* — A German newspaper published in Berlin from 1871 to 1876, organ of the Lassallean General Association of German Workers; it waged a campaign against Marxist leaders of the International and the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party, supporting the Bakuninists and other anti-proletarian trends.
- 65 The "white shirts" or "white blouses" were gangs organised by the police of the Second Empire. Composed of déclassé elements claiming to be workers, they organised provocative demonstrations and disturbances, in order to furnish the authorities with pretexts for persecuting genuine workers' organisations.

Indifference to Politics

- 66 See Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1955), Ch. II, section 5: "Strikes and combinations of workers".
- 67 Proudhon, *De la capacité politique des classes ouvrières* (Lacroix et Cie: Paris, 1868), p. 327.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 333.
- 69 *Ibid.*, pp. 337-338.
- 70 *Ibid.*, p. 334.

On Authority

71 The text is taken from Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2.

The Alliance of Socialist Democracy & the International Working Men's Association

72 Among the documents relating to the activities of the secret Alliance which Marx and Engels submitted to the Hague Congress of the IWMA was a letter by Nechayev written in February 1870. The letter, which was addressed to Lyubavin, was written on Bakunin's instructions and in the name of a non-existent Russian revolutionary organisation. It threatened Lyubavin, who was making arrangements for the publication of the first volume of Marx's *Capital* in Russia, with retaliatory measures if he did not release Bakunin from his obligations with regard to the Russian translation of the volume. In August 1872 the letter was sent by Lyubavin via Danielson to Marx.

73 An allusion to the congress of the League for Peace and Freedom.

74 This is a quotation from the anonymous article "Noch einiges über Bakunin", which was published in *Tagwacht*, October 5, 1872.

75 The program was published in section XI of this report.

76 There were three grades of membership in the Alliance: international brothers; national brothers; and the partly secret, partly public organisation of the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy. The international brothers comprised a relatively small number of "initiates", to whom members of the other two grades were subordinated.

77 See note 50.

78 Large student demonstrations took place in many universities, especially in St. Petersburg and Moscow, against new university regulations issued by the government in 1861. The student movement, which reached unprecedented dimensions, was suppressed. Many students were arrested and either put into prison or banished to Siberia.

79 *Ignorantines* — A name given to members of a religious order founded in Rheims in 1680. It was the duty of its members to teach the children of the poor, but the children received mainly religious instruction and had an extremely meagre knowledge of any other subject.

80 This and the following quotations are from Bakunin's leaflets "Postanovka revoliutsionnogo voprosa" (Statement of the Revolutionary Issues) and "Nachala revoliutsii" (Revolutionary Principles), both published in 1869.

81 *Izdaniya obshchestva "Narodnoi raspravvy"* No. 2 (issue no. 2, published by Narodnaya Rasprava), St. Petersburg, 1870, p. 9. Issue no. 2, like no. 1, was printed in Geneva.

82 The article was written by Nechayev and published in *Izdaniya obshchestva "Narodnoi raspravvy"* No. 2.

83 A reference to the theocratic state set up by the Jesuits in South America in the 16th and

17th centuries; it was mainly situated in what is now Paraguay.

The Bakuninists at Work

84 First published in the newspaper *Volksstaat* on October 31, and November 2 and 5, 1873, this analysis was written by Engels immediately after the events of the summer of 1873 in Spain, which marked the culmination of the Spanish bourgeois revolution of 1868-1874. Engels took his facts from the daily newspapers and various documents of the Spanish sections of the International.

Engels wrote the foreword at the beginning of January 1894, for the republication of “The Bakuninists at Work” as part of the collection of articles *Internationales aus dem “Volkstaat” (1871-1875)*.

The foreword contains several minor inaccuracies as regards the dating of events. The Republic was proclaimed in Spain on February 11, 1873, and the elections to the Constituent Cortes were held on May 10, 1873.

The text is taken from Engels, *The Bakuninists at Work* (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1971).

85 A series of articles by Engels constituting a short summary in German of the work “The Alliance of Socialist Democracy and the International Working Men’s Association” was published in *Volksstaat* on September 19, 21, 24 and 26, 1873, under the title *El Cagliostro Bakunin*.

86 This refers to the constitutional monarchists who supported King Amadeo, placed on the Spanish throne by the European powers.

87 *Alfonsists* — A group connected with reactionary sections of the big Spanish landowners, the clergy and the higher layers of the bourgeoisie, who supported the Bourbon pretender to the Spanish throne, proclaimed king as Alfonso XII in 1874.

88 *Carlists* — A reactionary, absolutist and clerical group who in the first half of the 19th century supported the claim to the Spanish throne of Don Carlos, brother of Ferdinand VII. Relying on the support of the military and the Catholic clergy and also on that of the backward peasantry in several regions of the country, in 1833 the Carlists began a civil war that lasted until 1840 and developed into a struggle between Catholic and feudal elements on the one hand, and bourgeois liberals on the other. After the death of Don Carlos in 1855, the Carlists supported his grandson, Don Carlos the Younger. In 1872, in a situation of political crisis and exacerbation of the class struggle, the Carlists intensified their activities, leading to another civil war that lasted until 1876.

89 *Solidarité révolutionnaire* (Revolutionary Solidarity) — An anarchist weekly in French published in Barcelona from June to September 1873. It was the organ of the Committee of Socialist Revolutionary Propaganda for the South of France, founded by Alerini and

Brousse for the purpose of propagating anarchist ideas in France and among the émigrés of the Paris Commune.

- 90 See Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany* (Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1956) and Engels, “The Campaign for the German Imperial Constitution”, Marx & Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1978).
- 91 Engels is referring to Bakunin’s pamphlet *Lettres à un français sur la crise actuelle* (Letters to a French Friend on the Present Crisis), published anonymously at Neuchâtel in 1870.

The Conspectus of Bakunin’s Book *State and Anarchy*

- 92 The text is taken from Marx, Engels & Lenin, *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism* (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1972).
- 93 The free people’s state was a slogan of the German social-democrats in the 1870s. For a Marxist criticism of this slogan see Lenin, *State and Revolution*, chapter I, section 4 and chapter IV, section 3 (Resistance Books: Chippendale, 1999).

The Questions of Wendelin Thomas

- 94 First published in *Socialist Appeal*, August 21, 1937.

Hue & Cry Over Kronstadt

- 95 First published in the Socialist Workers Party’s journal, *New International*, April 1938.
- 96 Milyukov’s paper was *Poslednie Novosti* (Latest News), published in Paris.

More on the suppression of Kronstadt

- 97 First published in *New International*, August 1938.
- 98 The “trade-union discussion” took place in the Russian Communist Party from November 1920 to March 1921. It concerned the role of the unions in a workers’ state. Trotsky argued that, under the conditions of war communism, the unions should be tied to the state and party administrations in order to mobilise the labour force and revive the productive process. Lenin countered that the unions must remain independent organisations in order to defend the interests of the workers, even though the employer was now the state. Zinoviev allied himself with Lenin’s position. The syndicalist Workers’ Opposition wanted the unions to have sole charge of production. The issue was settled at the 10th congress of the party in March 1921, where both the NEP and a resolution along the lines of Lenin’s position on the unions were adopted overwhelmingly.

The Truth about Kronstadt

- 99 First published by the National Education Department of the SWP in 1939. A condensed

version appeared the February 1938 *New International*.

100 *Vanguard* — An anarchist monthly published in New York, 1932-39.

101 Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1965), p. 184.

102 Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 267-269.

103 *Barcelona May Days* — In May 1937 Stalinists attempted to seize the Barcelona telephone exchange from its anarchist defenders. The workers of the city responded with a massive upsurge, pouring onto the streets to defend their organisations from attack. But instead of going forward and taking power the POUM and anarchist leaders made a truce with the Stalinists and the bourgeois Popular Front government and sent their followers home. Shortly after the central government sent troops to Barcelona, suppressed the left, arresting POUM members, anarchists and Trotskyists. The May upsurge was the last occasion on which the Spanish masses might have imposed their own solution and established their own government.

104 Serge, *Year One of the Russian Revolution* (Allen Lane The Penguin Press: London, 1972), p. 217.

105 *Ibid.*, p. 230.

The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning

106 First published in *Socialist Appeal*, January 8 and 15, 1938.

107 *April 1931* — King Alfonso went into exile, a republic was declared and a coalition government between liberal bourgeois parties and the Socialist Party was set up. The masses expected big changes from the new regime but this did not happen; instead the new government defended the established order with repressions when challenged.

108 *Riffians* — Berber tribes in north-east Morocco. In the 1920s they waged an armed struggle against Spanish colonialism, defeating the Spanish army in 1920 but succumbing to a combined Spanish-French onslaught in 1926. Many later served in the Spanish military units in Morocco.

The Fifth Wheel

109 First published in *Socialist Appeal*, February 12, 1938.

The Tragedy of Spain

110 First published in *Socialist Appeal*, February 10, 1938.

Notes on Anarchism & Socialism

111 The text is taken from Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1961)

A Paradise in This World

112 A few days earlier anarchist offices in Moscow had been surrounded and disarmed; in some cases force had been necessary. The talk was issued as a pamphlet by the British Socialist Party in 1920. ■

Glossary

- Abramovich, Rafail** (1880-1963) — A leader of the Jewish Bund; in 1917 joined the Menshevik Internationalists; after October Revolution opposed Soviet power; emigrated and became leading figure in the Second International, editor of *Sotsialistichesky Vestnik*.
- Albarracín, Severino** — Spanish anarchist, teacher; member of the Spanish Federal Council of the International (1872-73); one of the leaders of the uprising in Alcoy in 1873, after its defeat emigrated to Switzerland.
- Alcalá Zamora, Niceto** (1877-1949) — Spanish politician; head of the Progressive Party; large landowner, liberal Catholic; prime minister of first republican government April-May 1931, president June 1931-May 1936.
- Alerini, Charles** (1842-?) — French anarchist, member of the Marseille section of the International; an organiser of the Marseille Commune (April 1871); after its defeat emigrated to Italy and subsequently to Spain, where he propagated anarchist views; in 1873 was expelled from the International.
- Alexei Mikhailovich** (1629-76) — Tsar of Russia 1645-76.
- Amadeo** (1845-90) — Son of Victor Emmanuel II; king of Spain 1870-73.
- Ascaso Abadia, Francisco** (1901-1936) — Spanish revolutionary, anarchist; longtime collaborator of Durruti; killed in July fighting in Barcelona when people crushed the fascist uprising.
- Attlee, Clement** (1883-1967) — Labour politician; deputy prime minister in wartime coalition with Tories 1942-45; prime minister 1945-51 in Labour government; accepted an earldom in 1955.
- Avrial, Augustin** (1840-1904) — Active participant in the French working-class movement; left-wing Proudhonist, member of the International, member of the Paris Commune, an émigré.
- Azaña y Diaz, Manuel** (1880-1940) — Leading Spanish politician; republican prime minister 1931-33; again following February 1936 victory of Popular Front; then president from May 1936 until 1939 defeat of republic in Civil War by Francoist forces.

- Bakunin, Mikhail** (1814-76) — Russian democrat and writer, took part in the 1848-49 revolution in Germany. One of the best-known ideologists of anarchism. He participated in the First International but opposed the Marxists and was expelled at the Hague Congress in 1872.
- Bastelica, André** (1845-84) — Active participant in the French and Spanish working-class movement; member of the International; follower of Mikhail Bakunin.
- Bauer, Otto** (1883-1938) — Pseudonym: Heinrich Weber. A leader of the right-wing Austrian Social-Democrats and the Second International; chief theorist of so-called Austro-Marxism, which used Marxist terminology to cover the non-Marxist, reformist politics of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party. In 1918-19 Bauer was minister of foreign affairs of the Austrian bourgeois republic; was active in suppressing the revolutionary actions of the Austrian working class.
- Berkman, Alexander** (1870-1936) — Polish-born anarchist in US; during 1892 steel strike at Homestead, Pennsylvania attempted to kill the plant manager Frick, served 14 years in jail; imprisoned in 1917 for antiwar agitation, deported to Russia 1919; living in Petrograd at time of March 1921 Kronstadt revolt, became outspoken critic of Bolsheviks over issue.
- Bervi, Vasili Vasilyevich** (1829-1918) — Pseudonym N. Flerovsky; Russian economist and sociologist, representative of Narodnik utopian socialism, author of the book *The Condition of the Working Class in Russia*.
- Beust, Friedrich, Count** (1809-86) — Saxon and Austrian statesman, Austrian minister of foreign affairs 1866-71 and chancellor 1867-71.
- Bismarck, Otto von** (1815-98) — Prussian and German politician, championed the interests of Prussian junkers; prime minister of Prussia 1862-71 and then prime minister of the German Empire 1871-90; introduced anti-socialist law in 1878.
- Blanc, Gaspard** — French Bakuninist, took part in the Lyon uprising of 1870.
- Blum, Léon** (1872-1950) — Joined the French Socialist Party in 1902; backed the chauvinist right-wing in 1914; main leader of the party in the 1930s; premier of the Popular Front government 1936-37.
- Bolsheviks** — Majority faction of Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party formed at 1903 Second Congress; led by Lenin; became separate party in 1912; led the 1917 October revolution that established first workers' state; later changed name to Communist Party.
- Bolte, Friedrich** — American labour leader of German descent; secretary of the Federal Council of the North American sections of the International (1872); member of the General Council of the International (1872-74).
- Bonaparte, Louis** (1808-73) — Nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte (Napoleon I); following

1848 revolutionary events, became president later that year; carried out a coup d'état in 1851 and assumed title of emperor (Napoleon III) of Second Empire; based on financial and industrial bourgeoisie, he carried out an anti-labour policy at home and supported reaction abroad; declared war on Prussia in 1870 but was crushed, especially at battle of Sedan; his defeat led to formation of republic.

Brousse, Paul (1854-1912) — French physician, petty-bourgeois socialist, took part in the Paris Commune, after its defeat emigrated and became an anarchist; joined the French Workers' Party in 1879, later became one of the leaders of the Possibilists.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1888-1938) — Bolshevik publicist and economist, member of the RSDLP from 1906 onwards. In 1918 when the Brest peace was discussed he headed the group of "Left Communists"; editor of Russian Communist Party central organ *Pravda* 1919-29; succeeded Zinoviev as president of the Comintern 1926-29; after 1923 became the major spokesperson for right-wing pro-kulak policies; formed Right Opposition 1928; expelled from party 1929; executed after March 1938 frame-up trial ("trial of the 21").

Caballero — See *Largo Caballero, Francisco*.

Cabet, Etienne (1788-1856) — French utopian communist. Author of *Travels in Icaria*. On the eve of the 1848 revolutionary upsurge in Europe, he led 1500 followers across the Atlantic in an unsuccessful attempt to establish a utopian communist ("Icarian") colony in the United States.

Caligiostro, Alessandro (1743-95) — Real name: Guiseppe Balsamo; Italian adventurer.

Camélinat, Zéphyrin (1840-1932) — Prominent figure in the French working-class and socialist movement; one of the leaders of the Paris sections of the International; member of the Paris Commune; member of the Communist Party of France from 1920-26.

Campos — See *Martinez de Campos, Arsenio*.

Cervera, Rafael (1828-1908) — Spanish politician, republican and federalist, member of the Constituent Cortes (1873).

Chalain, Louis Denis (1845-?) — French worker; member of the Paris Commune and its commissions; later on, an émigré, member of the French section in London (1871); subsequently joined the anarchists.

Chartism — A mass revolutionary movement of the British workers in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1838 the Chartists drew up a petition (People's Charter) to be presented to parliament, demanding universal suffrage for men over 21, a secret ballot, repeal of the property qualifications for parliamentary candidates, etc. The movement began with big meetings and demonstrations, its slogan being the struggle for the implementation of the People's Charter. On May 2, 1842 the

Chartists sent a second petition to parliament, which this time contained a number of social demands (a shorter working day, higher wages, and the like). The petition was rejected by parliament. In reply the Chartists organised a general strike. In 1848 they planned a mass march to parliament with a third petition, but the government brought in the troops and prevented it. The petition was examined many months later and rejected. After 1848 the Chartist movement began to decline. The main reason for the failure of the Chartist movement was the absence of a clear program and tactics and the lack of consistently revolutionary proletarian leadership. However, the Chartists had a tremendous influence on the political history of Britain and on the international working-class movement.

Chautard — French spy, member of the French Section of 1871 in London; was exposed and expelled from the section.

Cheka — Extraordinary Commission for Struggle Against Sabotage and Counterrevolution; special agency set up after October revolution in Russia; later transformed into chief Stalinist repressive agency (known in the 1930s as the GPU).

Chernov, Viktor (1876-1952) — Founder and most prominent leader of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. In May-August 1917, was agriculture minister in the bourgeois Provisional Government, pursued a policy of brutal repressions against the peasants who were seizing the landed estates. After the 1917 October Revolution, he was one of the organisers of anti-Soviet revolts; emigrated from Russia in 1920.

Chevalley, Henri — Swiss tailor, anarchist.

Chicherin, Georgi Vasilevich (1872-1936) — Joined RSDLP 1905; belonged to Menshevik organisations before World War I; internationalist during war, jailed by British until end of 1917; returned to Russia January 1918, joined Bolsheviks and became deputy commissar of foreign affairs and shortly after succeeded Trotsky as head of Soviet foreign affairs until 1930.

Ciliga, Ante (1898-?) — In 1922 elected secretary of Croatian Communist Party; in 1929 joined Trotskyist opposition while studying in Moscow; arrested in 1930 and spent almost six years in prison and exile. Allowed to leave for the West, he wrote a number of books on conditions in the Soviet Union; later broke with Marxism.

CNT — Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Labour), the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist trade union federation, formed in 1911; had mass influence in Barcelona in 1930s; controlled by the FAI, the Iberian Anarchist Federation.

Comintern — Third or Communist International; founded in 1919 as the revolutionary alternative to the class-collaborationist Second International. Guided by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in its early years it later became bureaucratised under

Stalin. Following the coming to power of the Nazis in Germany without any serious opposition from the Communist Party, and the Comintern's endorsement of the ruinous policy of the German CP, Trotsky concluded that the Comintern was bankrupt as a revolutionary organisation. In 1935 the Comintern adopted the class-collaborationist Popular Front policy, supporting bourgeois coalition governments in Spain and France and the Roosevelt administration in the US. The Comintern was dissolved by Stalin in 1943 as a sign to his wartime imperialist allies of his non-revolutionary intentions.

Companys y Jover, Luis (1883-1940) — Spanish politician; headed the regional government in Catalonia during the 1936-39 civil war; his party was the bourgeois nationalist Catalan Esquerra.

Cuno, Theodor Friedrich (1846-1934) — Prominent figure in the German and international working-class movement, socialist, fought anarchism in Italy; helped to organise the Milan section of the International in 1871; emigrated to the USA in 1872, where he took part in the work of the International; later one of the leaders of the Knights of Labour; contributor to the *New-Yorker Volkszeitung*.

Dan, Fyodor I. (1871-1947) — Menshevik leader; member of presidium of Petrograd Soviet after February 1917 revolution; emigrated to Berlin 1922 where he edited *Sotsialistichesky Vestnik*; died in the US.

Denikin, Anton (1872-1947) — Tsarist general; during the Russian Civil War (1918-21) commander-in-chief of the anti-Soviet armed forces in the south of Russia; defeated by the Reds at Orel 1919; went into exile in 1920, living in France and the USA and writing books on his military experiences.

Diaz — See *Azaña y Diaz, Manuel*.

Dimitrov, Georgi M. (1882-1949) — Bulgarian communist; tried 1933 in Germany by Nazis on frame-up charges of having set fire to Reichstag building, acquitted; executive secretary of Comintern 1934-43, closely associated with turn to People's Front policy in 1935; prime minister of Bulgaria from October 1946.

Dufaure, Jules (1798-1881) — French lawyer and politician, Orleanist; minister of the interior (1848 and 1849), minister of justice (1871-73 and 1875-79) and chairman of the Council of Ministers (1876, 1877-79); hangman of the Paris Commune.

Durad, Gustave (1835-?) — French goldsmith, police spy; after the defeat of the Paris Commune pretended to be an émigré in London and became secretary of the French section in 1871, but was soon unmasked and expelled from the International.

Duranty, Walter (1884-1957) — *New York Times* journalist in Moscow in 1930s, supported Stalin against Trotskyists.

- Durruti, Buenaventura** (1896-1936) — Spanish anarchist and revolutionary; leader of left wing of the FAI; organiser of militias; outstanding military figure on republican side; died directing desperate defence of Madrid in November 1936.
- Dzherzinsky, Felix E.** (1877-1926) — A founder of the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania; Old Bolshevik; after October Revolution first head of the Cheka.
- Engels, Frederick** (1820-95) — Co-founder with Karl Marx of the modern socialist workers' movement; co-author of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), a leader of the revolutionary-democratic movement in Germany in 1848-49, outstanding theorist and populariser of scientific socialism.
- FAI** — Federación Anarquista Ibérica (Iberian Anarchist Federation); dominant influence in CNT; divided between left wing led by Buenaventura Durruti and a right wing led by Jose Garcia Oliver.
- Fanelli, Giuseppe** (1826-77) — Italian bourgeois democrat; took part in the Italian revolution of 1848-49 and in Garibaldi's campaign of 1860; a follower of Mazzini; in the middle sixties he became a close friend of Bakunin and a leader of the Alliance of Socialist Democracy; he was the first to organise sections of the International and groups of the Alliance in Spain (in 1868); in 1865 he became a member of the Italian parliament.
- Farga Pellicer, Rafael** (1840-90) — Spanish printshop worker in Barcelona; member of the First International; editor-in-chief of *La Federación* 1869; delegate to the Basle and Hague congresses (1869 and 1872).
- Favre, Jules** (1809-80) — French lawyer and politician, one of the leaders of the bourgeois republicans; minister of foreign affairs (1870-71); hangman of the Paris Commune and instigator of the struggle against the International.
- Ferré, Theophile Charles** (1845-71) — French revolutionary; Blanquist; member of the Paris Commune, member and then leader of the Committee of Public Safety and deputy-procurator of the Commune; shot by the Versaillais.
- First International** — See *International Working Men's Association*.
- Fischer, Louis** (1896-1970) — *Nation* correspondent in Europe, mainly in Soviet Union; Trotsky regarded him as an apologist for the Moscow trials.
- Flerovsky** — See *Bervi, Vasili Vasilyevich*.
- Fourier, Charles** (1772-1837) — Outstanding French utopian socialist. Marx and Engels admired his sharp criticism of capitalist society and his ideas influenced their work.
- Fourth International** — Formed by exiled Russian revolutionist Leon Trotsky and his cothinkers in 1938 as an alternative to the Stalinised Comintern. He hoped that out of the crisis of the coming war the small organisation would grow to become a

powerful force. However, the outcome of the Second World War was a strengthening of Stalinism and the continued isolation of the Trotskyist forces. At the end of 1953, in a context of the Cold War, the International split into two factions, the International Committee, to which the US Socialist Workers Party and the British group of Gerry Healy adhered, and the International Secretariat, among whose prominent leaders were Michel Pablo, Pierre Frank and Ernest Mandel. The split was healed at the 1963 Reunification Congress, but Healy and Pablo did not participate.

Franco, Francisco (1892-1975) — Spanish general; led victorious counterrevolutionary forces during 1936-39 civil war; set up fascist dictatorship.

Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) — Between Second Empire of Napoleon III and Prussia led by Bismarck; French defeat at battle of Sedan led to fall of Second Empire and struggle between Paris Commune (March-May 1871) and Versailles government of Adolphe Thiers.

Garcia Oliver, José (1901-?) — Right-wing Spanish anarchist; minister of justice in republican government from 1936 until end of civil war; helped Stalinists crush the revolutionary wing of the loyalists.

Gladstone, William Ewart (1809-98) — English politician, a leader of the Liberal Party in the second half of the 19th. century; finance minister 1852-55 and 1859-66 and prime minister 1868-74, 1880-85, 1886, 1892-94.

Goldman, Emma (1869-1940) — Russian-born anarchist; emigrated to US at 17 but deported to Russia in 1919 for anti-draft agitation; lived in Petrograd at time of 1921 Kronstadt revolt, supported rebels; previously a supporter of the Bolsheviks, she became an opponent; defended line of anarchist CNT leadership in 1936-39 Spanish Civil War.

GPU — The name of the Soviet political police in the 1930s, also known as the Cheka, NKVD, MVD, and, from 1956, the KGB.

Guillaume, James (1844-1916) — Swiss teacher; a Bakuninist; member of the First International; one of the organisers of the Alliance of Socialist Democracy; the Hague Congress (1872) expelled him from the International.

Hague Congress (of the International Working Men's Association) — Held in September 1872 and ratified the decision of the London Conference of the International a year earlier to expel Bakunin from the International for his secret faction activities within it.

Hales, John (b. 1839) — A leader of the English trade union movement and secretary of the General Council of the First International from 1866 to 1872. He led the reformist wing of the British Federal Council of the International.

Hearst, William Randolph (1863-1951) — US newspaper magnate.

Hitler, Adolf (1889-1945) — Leader of the fascist National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazis); German dictator 1933-45; suicided in his Berlin bunker.

Icarians — See *Cabet, Etienne*.

International Working Men's Association — The First International; founded in London in 1864. Marx wrote its inaugural address and rules and was its acknowledged leader; in the period of reaction that followed the suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, the International's centre was transferred to the United States and the organisation ceased to exist in 1876.

Jouhaux, Léon (1879-1954) — French trade union leader; began as an anarcho-syndicalist; head of the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) 1904-40. A chauvinist during World War I; opposed the Russian revolution; played a leading role in founding the reformist Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions in 1919; a French delegate to the imperialist powers' League of Nations; in 1948 founded the anti-communist union federation Force Ouvriere.

Kaganovich, Lazar M. (1893-1991) — Joined Bolsheviks 1911; Stalinist, played prominent role in 1930s purges; removed from all party and state positions by Khrushchev in 1957 as member of Stalinist "anti-party" group.

Kalinin, Mikhail (1875-1946) — Old Bolshevik; peasant background; from 1919 head of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviets; one of two central leaders sent to Kronstadt in March 1921 to negotiate with the rebels; from 1938 head of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

Kerensky, Aleksandr (1881-1970) — A leading right-wing figure in the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary Party; during World War I he was a rabid social-chauvinist; after the February Revolution of 1917 he was successively, minister of justice, of war and then prime minister in the bourgeois Provisional Government (holding this office at the time of the October 1917 Bolshevik insurrection); emigrated from Russia in 1918.

Kolchak, Aleksandr (1873-1920) — Tsarist admiral, monarchist, head of the White armies in Siberia and "supreme ruler" of the White forces in 1918-19; tried and executed after his forces were defeated by the Red Army.

Kolkhoz — A Soviet-era collective farm (as distinct from the fully state-owned sovkhoz); the farm was collectively owned by its members, the cooperating kolkhozniki.

Kolokol (The Bell) — Russian revolutionary-democratic newspaper published in 1857-67 by Alexander Herzen (1812-70) and Nikolai Ogaryov in Russian, and in 1868-69 in French with Russian supplements; printed in London until 1865 and then in Geneva.

- Kornilov, Lavr** (1870-1918) — Tsarist general, monarchist; supreme commander-in-chief of the Russian army in 1917; planned reactionary coup against revolution. Relying on the top army officers, the conspirators planned to use officer cadet and Cossack units to seize Petrograd, crush the Bolshevik Party, dissolve the soviets and establish military dictatorship in the country. The workers of Petrograd and revolutionary soldiers and sailors rose up in response to the appeal of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and crushed Kornilov's revolt. Subsequently the Bolsheviks' popularity grew massively, their influence in the soviets increased and they again raised the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!"
- Popular pressure compelled the Provisional Government to order the arrest of Kornilov and his associates and bring them to court. Kornilov was imprisoned but managed to flee to the Don where he organised and subsequently commanded the Whiteguard "Volunteer Army"; he was killed in battle at Yekaterinodar (Krasnodar).
- Kozlovsky, Alexander N.** (1861-?) — Former tsarist general; served in Red Army, in charge of artillery at Kronstadt at time of 1921 revolt; aided and advised rebels, fled to Finland as revolt failed.
- Krasnov, Pyotr N.** (1869-1947) — Tsarist general; lead 1918 revolt of Don Cossacks against Soviet Republic but routed by Red Army at Tsaritsin (Stalinigrad, Volgograd) in northern autumn of 1918; emigrated 1919.
- Kropotkin, Pyotr** (1842-1921) — Prominent leader and theorist of anarchism; during World War I he supported the tsarist regime's war effort; in 1920 addressed a letter to the workers of Europe acknowledging the historical significance of the October Revolution and urging them to stop imperialist intervention against Russia.
- Kuzmin, N.N.** (1883-1939) — Old Bolshevik; commissar of the Baltic fleet at time of 1921 Kronstadt revolt; arrested by insurgents March 2; remained in Red Army until 1930, then carried out diplomatic work; victim of Stalinist purges.
- Landau, Kurt** (1903-37) — Member Austrian CP; sided with Left Opposition, but broke with Trotsky 1931 and formed own group; in 1936 went to Spain and supported the POUM; kidnapped and murdered by the GPU.
- Landeck, Bernar** (1832-?) — French jeweller; member of the International and of the French section.
- Largo Caballero, Francisco** (1869-1946) — Leader of the left wing of the Socialist Party; prime minister of the Spanish republic September 1936-May 1937 during the civil war struggle with the Francoists; replaced by Negrín.
- Lassalle, Ferdinand** (1825-64) — German writer and lawyer. Participated in the 1848-49 revolution. In 1863 he founded the General Association of German Workers

but his energetic work was compromised by his dealings with the Prussian chancellor Bismarck. He called on the state to provide aid to establish workers' cooperatives.

Lefrançais, Gustave (1826-1901) — French teacher; member of the International and of the Paris Commune; left-wing Proudhonist; emigrated to Switzerland where he joined anarchists.

Left Opposition — Faction in CPSU formed by Trotsky in 1923 to fight for revolutionary line and workers' democracy; became international grouping from 1930; led to founding of Fourth International in 1938.

Lenin, V.I. (1870-1924) — Founder and leader of the Bolshevik Party; principal leader of the October 1917 Russian revolution; founder of the Communist International; outstanding Marxist theorist of 20th century.

Loyola — See *Society of Jesus*.

Lucain — Pseudonym Potel; French émigré to Belgium; member of the International; delegate to the Hague Congress (1872).

Lucraft, Benjamin (1809-97) — English worker; trade union leader; reformist; member of the General Council of the International 1864-71; in 1871 opposed the Paris Commune, withdrew from the General Council which denounced him as a renegade.

Macdonald, Dwight (1906-82) — New York intellectual, an editor of *Partisan Review*; joined SWP in 1939 but left in 1940 Shachtman split; moved right during Cold War but opposed later Vietnam War.

Makhno, Nestor (1884-1934) — Led peasant guerilla bands against Whites and German occupation forces in Ukraine; in ensuing civil war his anarchist-kulak bands variously fought both Whites and Reds; was finally defeated by Red Army in 1921; went into exile.

Malatesta, Errico (1851?-1932) — Italian anarchist leader.

Malon, Benoît (1841-93) — French socialist, member of the First International and Paris Commune; after its defeat he emigrated and became an anarchist; later he was a leader of the Possibilists.

Malraux, André (1901-76) — French writer; somewhat sympathetic to Trotsky in 1933-34 but Stalinist collaborator during Popular Front period; fought in Spain in Republican airforce; minister of information in de Gaulle government 1945-46 and minister of cultural affairs with de Gaulle 1960-69.

Martinez de Campos, Arsenio (1831-1900) — Spanish general and reactionary politician, who put down the cantonalist uprising in Catalonia and Valencia in 1873; headed the monarchist coup d'état which brought Alfonso XII to the throne (December

24, 1874) and was minister of war (1881-83).

Marx, Karl (1818-83) — Co-founder with Frederick Engels of scientific socialism; leader of the Communist League 1847-52; co-author of the *Communist Manifesto*; central leader of the International Working Men's Association (the First International) 1864-76; author of *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*.

Maurin Julia, Joaquin (1897-?) — An early leader of the Spanish CP; formed Workers and Peasants Bloc which in 1935 merged with former Left Opposition group led by Andrés Nin to form the centrist POUM; arrested by Franco forces after civil war but survived and went into exile, withdrawing from political activity.

Mazzini, Giuseppe (1805-72) — Italian revolutionary, bourgeois democrat, a leader of the national liberation movement in Italy; when the First International was being founded sought to bring it under his influence; hampered the development of an independent workers' movement in Italy.

Mensheviks — Literally “of the minority”; originated in split at 1903 2nd congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in opposition to the Bolsheviks (literally, “of the majority”) led by Lenin. Afterwards, it was used to designate the pseudo-Marxist petty-bourgeois reformist current within the Russian socialist movement. The Mensheviks claimed allegiance to Marxism, but believed that the working class should combine with the liberal bourgeoisie to overthrow tsarism and establish a bourgeois “democratic republic”. In 1912 the Bolshevik faction led by Lenin expelled the Mensheviks from the RSDLP. They supported and participated in the bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917. During the civil war that followed the Bolshevik-led overthrow of the Provisional Government by the soviets (councils) of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies in November 1917, one wing of the Mensheviks supported the counterrevolutionary White armies.

Miaja Menant, José (1878-1958) — Spanish army officer, stayed with republic after Franco's revolt; supported by Stalinists; in charge of defence of Madrid in 1936 after government fled to Valencia in November; in final period of the war he broadcast a repudiation of the republic and advocated surrender to fascists.

Milyukov, Pavel N. (1849-1943) — Russian historian and politician; leader of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie and its party, the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets); in 1917 he was minister of foreign affairs in the Provisional Government (until May) where he tried to continue the foreign policy of tsarism; after the October Revolution he emigrated to Paris where he edited the Cadet journal *Poslednie Novosti*.

Moltke, Count Helmuth von (1800-91) — Prussian military leader; chief of the general staff 1858-88; fought successful wars with Denmark (1863-64), Austria (1866) and

France (1870-71).

Montserrat Mañé, Federica — Spanish anarchist leader; minister in Popular Front government from November 1936.

Morrow, Felix (1906-?) — Joined CP 1931; joined Trotskyist movement 1933; elected to SWP National Committee 1938; one of 18 Trotskyists convicted and jailed in 1941 Minneapolis “sedition” trial; after war, with Albert Goldman argued for unity with Max Shachtman’s Workers Party; expelled 1946 for disloyalty; moved to right in Cold War; supported US aggression in Korea.

Mussolini, Benito (1883-1945) — Founder of fascism in Italy; began his political career as a member of the Socialist Party but during World War I adopted a chauvinist position. With the blessing and assistance of the Italian bankers and big industrialists he rose to power on October 30, 1922, when a fascist government was appointed by the Italian king. He was killed by Italian resistance fighters while attempting to flee Italy.

Napoleon III — See *Bonaparte, Louis*.

Nechayev, Sergei Gennadiyevich (1847-82) — Russian anarchist; took part in the student movement in St. Petersburg (1868-69); while in Switzerland (1869-71) he was a close associate of Bakunin; in 1869 he set up a secret organisation, the Narodnaya Rasprava. In 1872 the Swiss Government extradited him to the Russian authorities and he died in the Peter-and-Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg.

Negrín López, Juan (1889-1956) — The last premier of the Spanish republican government (1937-39) during the civil war.

NEP — Adopted by 10th congress of the Soviet Communist Party in March 1921, the New Economic Policy replaced the emergency system of war communism (1918-21); forced requisitioning of peasant grain surpluses gave way to a modest tax in kind, limited private trade and private enterprise in general was permitted, and the state looked for joint ventures with foreign capitalists; the policy was successful in restarting the economy after the devastating Civil War.

Nin, Andrés (1892-1937) — A founder of Spanish Communist Party; expelled 1927 for supporting Left Opposition; broke with Trotsky 1935 when merged Spanish section of International Left Opposition with Joaquín Maurín’s Workers and Peasants Bloc to form centrist POUM; supported Popular Front in 1936 elections and took post in Catalan regional government; arrested by Stalinists in Barcelona in June 1937 and murdered.

Noulens, J. — French ambassador to Russia in 1918; diehard bourgeois reactionary; aided counterrevolutionary forces.

Odger, George (1820-77) — English shoemaker; trade union leader; reformist; president

of the General Council of the International 1864-71; in 1871 came out against the Paris Commune; withdrew from the General Council which condemned him as a renegade.

Owen, Robert (1771-1858) — Great English utopian socialist; as a Welsh factory owner, he formed a model industrial community at New Lanark in Scotland; turning towards communism he immersed himself in the workers' movement; but he remained a pacifist utopian, opposed the Chartist movement and did not understand the need for an independent workers' party; played an active role in promoting labour legislation and pioneered cooperative societies.

Pavia y Rodriguez, Manuel (1827-95) — Spanish general and politician; in 1873 commanded the republic's troops against the Carlists; put down the Cantonalist revolt in Andalusia.

People's Front — See *Popular Front*.

Pietri, Joseph Marie (1820-1902) — French politician; Bonapartist; prefect of the Paris police 1866-70.

Pi y Margall, Francisco (1824-1901) — Spanish politician, lawyer and writer; leader of the left-wing federalist republicans, he was influenced by utopian-socialist ideas; took part in the bourgeois revolutions of 1854 to 1865 and 1868 to 1874; minister of the interior and provisional head of the republican government from June 11 to July 18, 1873.

Popular Front — The Anti-Fascist People's Front was proclaimed by the Stalinist leadership of the Communist International in 1935. The objective of this policy was to defeat the rise of fascism in Europe by forming coalition governments of Communists and liberal capitalist parties that would enter into diplomatic-military alliances with the Soviet Union. The Popular Front governments in both France and Spain in the thirties served to brake the revolutionary movement of the masses and preserve the capitalist order in a period of severe crisis.

Potemkin — Russian battleship famous for an episode in the 1905 revolution; in June in the Black Sea, not far from Odessa where a general strike had just been declared, the crew mutinied, overcame the officers and seized the ship; eventually they surrendered to Romanian authorities.

POUM — Workers Party of Marxist Unification. Centrist party prominent in Spanish civil war; formed in 1935; led by Andrés Nin and Juan Andrade; supported bourgeois Popular Front government but outlawed in June 1937. Strongly criticised by Trotsky.

Prieto y Tuero, Indalecio (1883-1962) — Leader of right wing of the Spanish Socialist Party; minister of navy and air in Largo Caballero government (September 1936-May 1937); remained in Negrín government until Stalinists insist on removal in

1938.

- Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph** (1809-65) — French economist and ideologist of petty-bourgeois socialism. Author of *What Is Property?* (1840) and *The Philosophy of Poverty* (1846). An opponent of Marxist communism, he opposed strikes and participation in the political struggle, advocating instead various schemes (such as a people's bank) to overcome the contradictions of capitalist society.
- Pyat, Félix** (1810-1889) — French journalist, playwright and politician; petty-bourgeois democrat; took part in the 1848 revolution and had to emigrate in the following year; he was against an independent labour movement, and for a number of years carried on a slander campaign against Marx and the International and used the French section in London for this purpose; a member of the Paris Commune.
- Razin, Stenka** (c. 1630-1671) — Russian Don Cossack; leader of the great 1670-71 uprising of peasants and Cossacks against feudal oppression; defeated and executed; celebrated in folk culture as the embodiment of popular rebellion against injustice.
- Richard, Albert** (1846-1925) — French journalist, a leader of the Lyons section of the International, and a member of the secret Alliance; he took part in the Lyons rising of 1870; after the defeat of the Paris Commune he became a Bonapartist.
- Riga Treaty** (1921) — Signed March 18, ending the war between Poland and Soviet Republic; disadvantageous to the Soviet Republic which ceded large parts of Byelorussia and the Ukraine to Poland.
- Rigault, Raoul** (1846-71) — French revolutionary, follower of Blanqui; member of the Paris Commune, delegate of the Committee of Public Safety, procurator of the Commune (from April 26); shot by the Versailles.
- Robert, Fritz** — Swiss teacher, member of the International, Bakunist.
- Robin, Paul** (1837-?) — French teacher; Bakunist, one of the leaders of the Alliance of Socialist Democracy; member of the General Council 1870-71; delegate to the Basle Congress (1869) and the London Conference (1871) of the International.
- Rocker, Rudolf** (1873-1958) — German-born anarchist; emigrated to US after Hitler came to power; became most prominent anarchist intellectual and public figure, especially after deaths of Emma Goldman and Carlo Tresca.
- Rozhkov, Nikolai A.** (1868-1927) — Historian and publicist; after February 1917 revolution he became a member of Menshevik Central Committee, minister in bourgeois Provisional Government; hostile to October Revolution and Soviet government; retired from politics 1922.
- Saint-Simon, Henri** (1760-1825) — Great French utopian socialist. He championed industrial society against feudalism and called for the reorganisation of society along industrial lines with scientists as the new spiritual leaders. Only in his last and

most important work, *Le Nouveau Christianisme* (1825), does he directly advocate the cause of the workers, declaring their emancipation to be the final aim of his activities.

Schiller, Friedrich (1759-1805) — Great German writer.

Schweitzer, Johann Baptist von (1834-75) — German lawyer; Lassallean; president of the General Association of German Workers (1867-71), he was against the affiliation of the German workers to the First International; in 1872 he was expelled from the Association when his ties with the Prussian authorities became known.

Schwitzguébel, Adhémar (1844-95) — Swiss engraver, a member of the International; anarchist, a leader of the Alliance of Social Democracy and of the Jura Federation; he was expelled from the International in 1873.

Serge, Victor (1890-1947) — Outstanding writer and historian; anarchist in his youth; after October revolution, moved to Soviet Union and worked for Comintern; joined Left Opposition; arrested in 1928 and again in 1933 but freed in 1936 following campaign by French intellectuals; developed differences with Trotsky over Spanish revolution, etc.; wrote *Year One of the Russian Revolution* and other historical-political works as well as many novels dealing with political themes.

Serrailier, Auguste (1840-?) — Participant of the French and international working-class movement; member of the General Council of the International (1869-1872) and of the Paris Commune; Marx's associate.

Shaw, Robert (?-1869) — Member of the General Council of the International 1864-69 and its treasurer 1867-68.

Society of Jesus — Catholic religious order founded in 1534 by Ignatius Loyola (1496-1556); the Jesuits originally played key role in struggle against protestant heresy; carried out world-wide missionary activity (especially in the Americas).

Soria Santa Cruz, Federico (1815-91) — Spanish general, fought in the war against the Carlists in 1872; crushed the Cantonalist uprising in Andalusia in 1873; military governor of Cadis (1874-75).

Soriano, Trinidad — Spanish anarchist.

Souvarine, Boris (1893-?) — A founder of French CP; in 1921-22 he headed the struggle of the left wing of the party against the rightist Frossard leadership; early supporter of Trotsky but broke with him in 1929; later breaking with Leninism; for Trotsky he was synonymous with Stalinophobic pessimism and defeatism.

Spiridonova, Maria M. (1884-1941) — A leader of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries; after October Revolution opposed Brest-Litovsk peace treaty (1918); participated in July 1918 revolt of Left SRs; subsequently retired from politics.

Splingard, Roch — Belgian anarchist who represented one of the Belgian sections of

the International at the Hague Congress (1872); he was expelled from the International in 1873.

SRs — Socialist-Revolutionary Party or Social Revolutionaries; founded in 1900; emerged as the political expression of the earlier Narodnik (populist) currents. They advocated a revolution to overthrow tsarism and achieve “socialism”, by which they meant not the abolition of capitalist ownership of industry by the proletariat but the “socialisation” (egalitarian distribution) of land by the labouring classes in general (wage workers, the urban petty-bourgeoisie, and the peasantry). The Bolsheviks described the SRs as petty-bourgeois democrats expressing the outlook and interests of the peasantry. The right-wing of the SRs, which oriented toward an alliance with the liberal bourgeois Constitutional Democrats (Cadets), was led by Aleksandr Kerensky, who became head of the landlord-capitalist Provisional Government in 1917. Toward the end of 1917 the SR Party split into pro- and anti-Bolshevik wings. The Left SRs supported the October Revolution and participated in the Soviet government until July 1918 when they organised an attempted coup against the Bolsheviks. During the Russian Civil War both wings of the SRs aligned themselves with the monarchist-led White armies against the Soviet workers’ and peasants’ republic.

Stalin, Joseph (1879-1953) — Joined the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in 1896 and sided with the Bolsheviks in the 1903 split. He became general secretary of the Russian Communist Party in 1922. He was the central leader and spokesperson for the privileged party-state bureaucracy that came to power in the Soviet Union in the 1920s.

Stirner, Max (1806-56) — Pseudonym of Kaspar Schmidt; German philosopher; Young Hegelian; an ideologist of bourgeois individualism and anarchism, author of *The Ego and His Own*.

Theisz, Albert (1839-80) — French worker; Proudhonist; member of the Paris Commune; an émigré, member of the General Council of the International and its treasurer (1872).

Thiers, Adolphe (1797-1877) — French bourgeois historian and politician; Orleanist; after fall of Second Empire, leading figure in Versailles republic 1871-73; butcher of the Paris Commune.

Thomas, Norman (1884-1968) — Presbyterian minister and Christian socialist; Socialist Party member from 1918; reformist leader of the SP from 1933; six-time SP presidential candidate 1928-48.

Thomas, Wendelin (1884-?) — A leader of November 1918 revolt in German navy that helped end World War I; communist Reichstag deputy 1920-24; emigrated to

US after Hitler's victory; member of Dewey commission of inquiry into the charges brought against Trotsky in the Moscow trials.

Tomas, Francisco (1850-1903) — Spanish stonemason; anarchist; a member of the Spanish Federal Council of the First International (1872-73), one of the leaders of the anarchist organisation in Spain; was expelled from the International in 1873.

Trochu, Louis Jules (1815-96) — French general and politician, Orleanist; head of the Government of National Defence, commander-in-chief of the Paris armed forces (September 1870-January 1871) but sabotaged the defence of the city; deputy of the National Assembly of 1871.

Trotsky, Leon (1879-1940) — A leading member of the RSDLP. He aligned himself with the Mensheviks in 1903-04, after which he took an independent position within the RSDLP. In the 1905 revolution he became chairman of the St. Petersburg Soviet. He played a central role in organising the August 1912 conference of anti-Bolshevik Russian social-democrats in Vienna that set up the Organising Committee, which soon became dominated by the Mensheviks. During the first world war he took an anti-war position but opposed the Bolshevik party's policy of calling for an organisational break with the Kautskyite "Centre" current in the socialist movement. In July 1917 he joined the Bolsheviks and became a central leader. Chief organiser of October insurrection; first commissar of foreign affairs after revolution; leader of Red Army (1918-25). After Lenin's death, led communist opposition to Stalinism; exiled in 1929; founded Fourth International in 1938; assassinated in Mexico by Stalinist agent August 21, 1940.

Tucker, Benjamin R. (1854-1939) — US anarchist intellectual; published journal *Liberty* 1881-1908; translated and published works by Proudhon, Bakunin and Stirner into English; emigrated to France 1908.

Utin, Nikolai Isaakovich (1845-83) — Russian revolutionary, participant in the student movement; an émigré; one of the founders of the Russian section of the International, member of the *Narodnoye Dyelo* (People's Cause) editorial board 1868-70; fought against Bakuninists; left the revolutionary movement in the middle of 1870s.

Vasiliev, P.D. — Bolshevik chairman of the Kronstadt Soviet in 1921; arrested by the rebels March 2.

Velarde, José Maria — Spanish general; Captain-General of Catalonia from April to September 1873.

Vichard, Paul — Participant of the French working-class movement; took part in the Paris Commune; represented the French section in London at the Hague Congress of the International (1872).

Victor-Emmanuel II (1820-78) — King of Sardinia 1849-61; king of Italy 1861-78.

Viñas, García José — Spanish medical student, anarchist; an organiser of the Alliance of Socialist Democracy in Spain in 1868; took part in revolutionary movement of 1873.

Vogt, Gustav (1829-1901) — Swiss economist; bourgeois pacifist, one of the organisers of the League of Peace and Freedom; brother of Karl Vogt.

Vyshinsky, Andrei (1883-1954) — Menshevik from 1902 to 1920 when he joined the Communist Party; prosecutor in 1930s Moscow frame-up trials; Soviet foreign minister 1949-53.

Walter (c. 1847-?) — Pseudonym Van-Heddeghem; A police agent who managed to become a member of the Paris section of the First International; delegate to the Hague Congress of the International (1872); unmasked 1873.

War communism — System of economy put in place in Russia during the 1918-1920 Civil War in order to guarantee military victory against the Whites and the foreign interventionists; characterised by total nationalisation of industry and trade, concentration of production on war needs, severe rationing and forcible requisitioning of peasant grain surpluses; replaced in March 1921 by much more relaxed New Economic Policy.

Workers' Opposition — Tendency in Soviet Communist Party led by Alexandra Kollontai and Alexander Shlyapnikov; it advocated transferring control of production and the economy to the trade unions; its views were rejected at the 10th party congress in March 1921.

Wrangel, Pyotr N. (1878-1928) — Tsarist general; White military leader in Ukraine and south Russia during civil war; fled abroad after final defeat by Red Army in Crimea in 1920.

“Wrangel officer” — An episode in the 1920s Stalinist campaign against the Left Opposition in the Soviet Communist Party; in 1927 the GPU planted an agent in the Opposition and then “exposed” him as a former officer of the White general Wrangel.

Wright, John G. (1902-56) — Pseudonym of Joseph Vanzler. Joined Trotskyist movement 1933; elected to national committee 1939. Translator of Trotsky's works and writer for party press.

Yagoda, Genrikh (1891-1938) — Headed NKVD 1934-36; organiser of first wave of Stalinist terror and first Moscow trial; executed after featuring in third Moscow trial.

Yudenich, Nikolai (1862-1933) — Tsarist general; commander-in-chief of counterrevolutionary north-western army during Russian Civil War; with Allied

aid he organised an offensive against Petrograd but was defeated by Red Army in November 1919.

Zamora — See *Alcalá Zamora, Niceto*.

Zhukovsky, Nikolai Ivanovich (1833-95) — Russian anarchist; émigré; one of the leaders of Bakunin's secret Alliance.

Zinoviev, Gregory (1883-1936) — Old Bolshevik; head of Comintern 1919-26; allied with Kamenev and Stalin against Trotsky 1923-25; formed United Opposition with Zinoviev and Trotsky 1926-27; capitulated to Stalin 1928; executed following August 1936 Moscow show trial ("trial of the 16").

Zyromsky, Jean (1890-1975) — Founder of the left-wing Bataille Socialiste tendency in the French Socialist Party; an advocate of "organic unity" of CP and SP in the 1930s; joined CP after World War II. ■

With the growth of anti-corporate sentiment among significant layers of the population in many countries, anarchism is enjoying a modest revival, especially among young people. However, its new adherents are often unfamiliar with the historical doctrines and record of anarchism.

Marxism Versus Anarchism deals with just this question. It is organised around three major historical episodes: the struggle of the First International, led by Marx, against the anarchist current inspired by Proudhon and Bakunin; the 1921 revolt of the Kronstadt naval base against the Soviet government, extensively used as a point of attack against revolutionary socialism; and, finally, the Spanish Revolution and Civil War of 1936-39, where anarchism, despite its mass following, failed utterly to measure up to the needs of the struggle.

This collection of writings provides a clear Marxist critique of anarchism's core doctrines as well as its historical record. As in the past, so in the new century, only Marxist socialism can provide answers to the key questions of revolutionary advance and the creation of a society free of exploitation and oppression.

Resistance books