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The Workers and Peasants :: of Russia ::

How They Live



By Augustine Souchy

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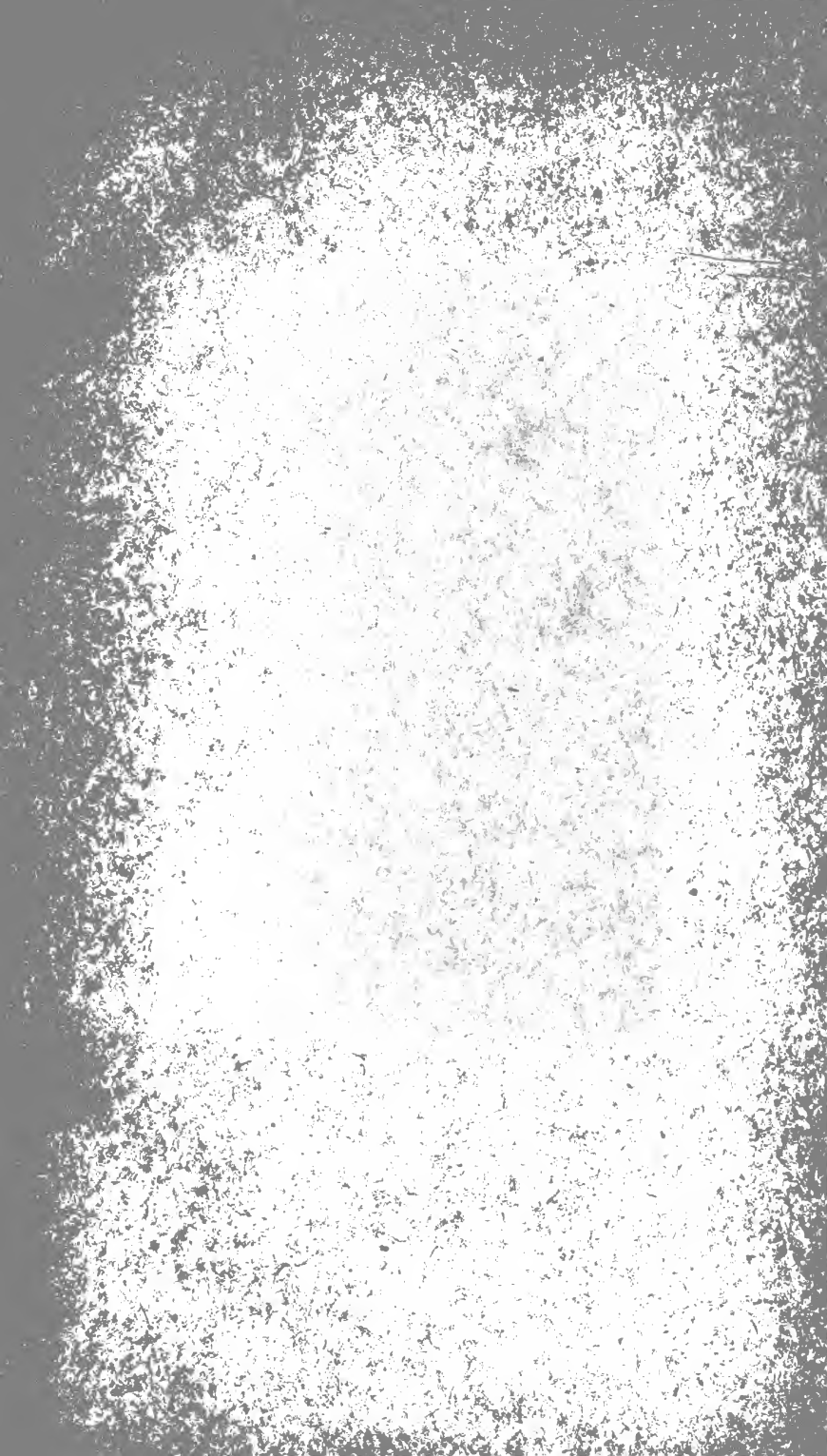
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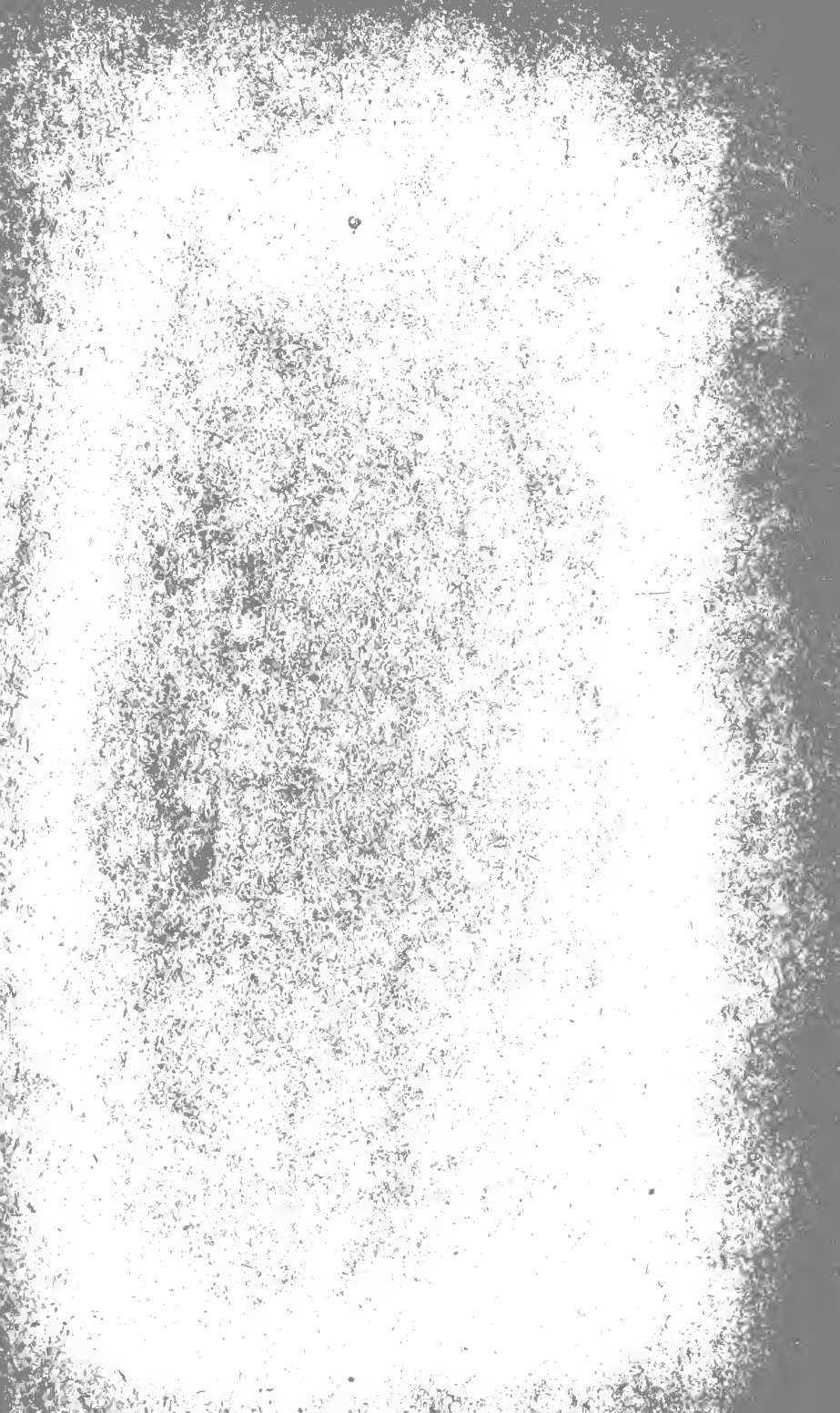
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The Workers and Peasants of Russia and Ukraine How Do They Live?

By Augustine Souchy

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CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	3
Author's Preface	11
Chart of Socialist and Anarchist movements in Russia and Ukraine	16
THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA....	17
The Marxists (Social Democrats).....	17
The Narodniks (National or People's Soc.)	19
Social Revolutionaries of the Right.....	19
Social Revolutionaries of the Left.....	19
The Maximalists	22
The Anarchists	24
The Syndicalists	25
The Nabat Anarchists	29
THE LAND	32
The economic position of the Peasants.....	34
The political position of the Peasants.....	42
THE CITY AND INDUSTRY.....	47
The Development of the Trade Unions.....	47
The organization of the Trade Unions.....	56
The opposition in the Trade Unions.....	62
Nationalization or Socialization?.....	65
Trust Building or Trustification.....	68
The Home Workers and their Co-Operative Societies or Artels	72
Consumption	74
The Life of the Workers in the Cities.....	82
Workers' Insurance	86
National Finance	88
The Soviets or Councils	92
The Red Army	97
Education	103
THE REVOLUTION IN UKRAINE.....	107
Machno	111
The Socialist Movement in Ukraine.....	129
Communism and the Peasantry	133
The Economic Situation in Ukraine	137

Introduction

RUSSIA of the days of 1917, the inspiration of the world's proletariat: What is transpiring behind its endless boundaries?

What forces are shaping themselves on its millions of square miles? Those 180 millions of people; peasants and workers, what of them? How have they fared since the November days of 1917? Are the programs and slogans of those thrilling November days being carried out or is it true that the initiative and revolutionary ardor of the workers in Russia have been stifled by the iron-rule of a party dictatorship? How do the workers and peasants, the great lower layer of the Russian masses, look upon their present government? Is it true that the Russian Soviet Government is a party government and that the workers have no voice in choosing or electing their delegates to the soviets?

Such questions as the above, were they asked a year or two ago by any radical, would have been howled down as heresy. But at the present day and on the eve of Russian recognition by the capitalist powers, the questions above suddenly assume great importance and demand an answer one way or another. And they are being answered as all such questions are, in various ways, depending on what influence prompts the reply. Formerly the capitalist press carried its daily quota of polished news depicting conditions in Russia. But generally these tales were concerned only with the misfortune of the bourgeois class, and lately there is noted from that source a sudden stillness about Russian atrocities and in its place appear conciliatory articles that portend—what?

During the time that has elapsed since 1917 a few people have come from Russia carrying information with them which has, however, only been of a general nature and political in character. Such information because of its vague nature served to create a false impression about Russian conditions, until at present a sharp controversy is manifest between the various elements of the radical movement. In the light of the present day knowledge concerning Russia, even if it is slight, it is beyond doubt that much of the information previously circulated in America about Russia is misleading and some of it basely false. Who needs to be reminded of the many tales circulated about Russia, in which the conditions of the workers there have been O. K. and in which they have been reported as masters of their destinies? Generally the whole text of the

news that have been circulated seemed to concern itself with describing the impossible qualities of certain Russian leaders. What a strange coincidence it is that the real extent of the power wielded by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia is never referred to and yet such a power could not have escaped the notice of a sincere investigator.

It is quite likely that the description of Russia in this book will be greeted in various ways. By some as a source of comparative knowledge; by others in a spirit of rage. Vilification and praise will follow in its wake.

The Communists of America are now busy constructing a great bogey with which they can silence and scare away the critics of their program. They call this bogey "anarchist," "counter-revolutionary," etc. These tactics are peculiar to parties of a political nature, but they are mere puffs of wind which "stirreth not even the leaves."

It is only an act of justice to the reader if we qualify the investigations of the author—Augustin Souchy—by telling briefly who he is.

Souchy is truly an "internationalist". Properly he is a member of the German syndicalist movement, but his activities in the European labor movement have taken him to most of the countries of Europe, and whenever there is an important meeting or a conference of the progressive forces of European labor one can nearly always look for Souchy's name on the list of delegates. The authorities of all countries keep their eyes on him and he has been deported from several countries, notably from Scandinavia. He was a delegate to the Second Congress of the Communist International at Moscow in 1920 and also participated in the conference that organized the Provisional Council of Trade and Industrial Unions, the forerunner of the present R. L. U. I. In these conferences he opposed, on philosophical grounds, the political theories that dominated these conferences. The investigation of conditions in Russia as set down in this book was made in the same period as his attendance to the above mentioned bodies. (1920).

In this book will be found a chapter dealing with Machno who has been variously represented in this country as a bandit, murderer, anarchist and a friend of the upper classes of the Ukraine peasants. It is certain that around this particular person there will always be a fierce dispute as to his real motive. His importance as a figure in the Russian revolutionary period will always base itself on the fact that he had a large following among the peasants of the Ukraine. Historically his intentions and what he sought to accomplish will always be an open question. In short he will always have friends and enemies. The author of the book—Souchy—pictures him in a favorable light. He sees him as a friend of the lower classes of peasants as against the higher element of that class, even to the extent of carrying on open warfare against the

Soviet Government. Perhaps he is justified by his observations in this stand. Be that as it may, his opinion is his own, but his record of this historical figure is as much entitled to consideration as those who tell a different story.

The writer of this introduction was a delegate from the I. W. W. to the first Congress of the Red Labor Union International at Moscow and personally witnessed a stormy debate at the closing session over Machno which developed from the following circumstances:

During the first days of the sessions a movement was launched by the syndicalist delegates of France and Spain to secure the release of some anarchists who were then in Russian prisons. As a result of a petition which was signed by many of the delegates, an interview was arranged between some of the leading figures of the Russian Soviet government (Lenin was present) and a committee of delegates who had signed the petition. At this meeting an agreement was reached that everything possible would be done to have them released under the condition that they would leave the country in the company of the French delegates at the end of the congress, and it was further understood that no issue would be made of this matter in the Congress of the Red International. The delegates left this meeting and said nothing more about it. Suddenly, on the last day of the Congress, just before adjournment, Bukharin appeared as a representative of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party with a statement accusing the imprisoned anarchists of being "Machnovtzi" (members of Machno's band) and raised some question about releasing all of them.

Bukharin's appearance concerning the imprisoned anarchists raised a fierce storm of protest especially from a part of the French delegates who charged the Soviet government with bad faith in bringing up the subject when they had formerly agreed to keep it quiet.

Bukharin, representing the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, reported their action on the subject of the imprisoned anarchists which accused them generally with supporting Machno and indicating that they were in prison on that account. Whether or not these anarchists were supporters of Machno I cannot say, neither do I know whether these particular anarchists were ever released. I heard later that some of them had refused to agree to leaving Russia when released and were on a hunger strike.

Machno at that time was a strange name to me but his prominence in this controversy on the floor of the Red International Congress aroused my interest and I began to inquire about him. But I soon realized that trying to find out who and what Machno is was like trying to uncover the identity of the devil. Thus, Machno was like a sore boil to the communist elements and they emphasized him as a murderer, bandit and

counter-revolutionist. By the non-communist element, anarchists, many syndicalists, and others, Machno is highly praised. Some again, anarchists, and even communists, described the Machno movement as originally having good purposes, but claimed that it had become permeated with elements who were using it for their own particular purposes. When I left Moscow and summed up what I had learned about Machno I was forced to the opinion that this figure will never be quite understood by anyone. His motives will be appreciated or condemned according to the faction his appraisers adhere to. From this viewpoint then, the subject of Machno is important only because he presents one of the problems of the Russian situation. In short, it is not the personal qualities of Machno that we are concerned with, but the movement he has grouped around him.

There is abundant proof that the Russian revolution was not the venture of one particular party, but that it was the spontaneous outburst of the Russian masses. Only after the crash of Czarism do we see the various political parties coming out and manoeuvring for favorable positions. After a period of political moves the Bolsheviki stepped into power on promises and slogans that do not exist today. In fact they are in the same position now as when Kerensky's coalition government assumed their short term of power. But the Bolsheviki or Communists of Russia must undergo, because of their altered revolutionary policy, the same critical examination as any other group. That it still clings to revolutionary phrases is not a cause for adopting a watch-and-wait policy. Conditions, not words, are our chief concern, and only with a knowledge of the conditions of the Workers and Peasants in Russia can we apply the measure of the revolutionary yard-stick.

There are many ways of judging the Russian revolution at its present stage. Many excuse the present policy of the Soviet Government on the ground that the workers and peasants are a dark depraved mass of low intelligence, floundering around in a dumb state of mind, which makes them fertile ground for White-guard activity. Because of this, a strong central dictatorship is necessary to curb their aimless reactionary tendencies. Therefore they have been stripped of every right which they might even have enjoyed under such a rule as the former Czar. But those who say this are as ignorant as they claim the workers and peasants are. If this is the case then the Bolsheviki would have never assumed power. Nor if we judge the situation correctly would there have ever been a revolution. What is paradoxical about this argument is that the old czarist regime acted on the assumption that the workers and peasants were just the opposite and they likewise suppressed them vigorously on the same grounds. But whatever they can make out of the above argument, the communists in any case will never explain away their fierce suppression and abolition of all human rights from the very masses who lifted them

into power. This will always be a blemish that will cling to them like a birth-mark and like the legendary writing on the wall can be never be wiped out.

Another way of judging the Russian situation is the theory that as long as the present government retains a tight hold on the powers of government they can at any period liquidate the new capitalistic economic program for the benefit of the Russian proletariat. This is a high-flown theory, as this book in its discussion of Russia will demonstrate, not in a direct, conscious manner perhaps, as the author did not have this particular phase before him at the time of his investigations, but by acquainting the reader with the development of the Russian revolution up to his time. The Russian revolution to date shows one thing clearly: "that successful revolutions are not the product of the abstract human will." Human will power expressed only by the masses, counts as a factor in social changes. Revolutionary tacticians flounder helplessly trying to regulate social laws to fit their particular plans. They hide their failure in such terms as "transition periods" or "economic retreats." One is as vague as the other and neither means anything.

Whatever explanations are advanced on the Russian situation everybody must admit that for the present at least we can dismiss from our minds any remaining hope that capitalism has not been invited back to Russia, and from this viewpoint we must then inquire why the Russian revolution was forced into this position. Dismissing, too, any wrong idea that any set of individuals were the direct cause, we must search amongst the ruins for the reason and ask: What force obstructed the path of the Russian masses in their surge towards emancipation? And for those who read this book with a mind bent on investigation it is certain that much valuable information can be obtained. Regardless of whatever antipathy the reader may develop because this author holds certain views, there are facts in this book that compel serious thought.

This book deserves praise mainly because it is a study of conditions in Russia, and not men, leaders perchance, of a revolutionary government, because after all is said and recorded about the personal qualities of this or that prominent person in Russia, the Russian revolution cannot ever be correctly judged unless the conditions of the great masses are known and understood. Labor laws, regulations and libertarian decrees are, finally, nothing but dried ink and signify nothing. Soviet institutions are corrupted by much the same methods as any other governing body.

Particular notice is due to the chapters that describe the many socialist parties of Russia as well as the Anarchists and Syndicalists. These various factions are representative of the sociological ideas that dominate the minds of the Russian people. The Chart on page 16, especially, makes a study

of these movements more simple and assists the reader to a clearer understanding of the following chapters.

Lest the point be missed it is necessary to call to the readers' attention, that the principal point which the author has sought to show is that the Soviet government has failed not alone in the sphere of production, but also in the field of distribution. Thus it is that the Soviet government allows a certain amount of latitude to the labor unions as producing organs, but it liquidates entirely into the state the once powerful co-operative societies which were an integral part of the Russian national life. These co-operative societies flourishing and alive under their former mode of operation, in becoming state organs for distribution, and henceforth bureaucratically managed have withered like a cut flower and become lifeless. Free trade inaugurated in the spring of 1921 is an indication of this decay.

Some of the features of bolshevik rule described in this book have now disappeared due to the rapid changes that are being made in the policy of the bolsheviks, but each such feature should be recorded and rescued from oblivion. The failures and the mistakes of the bolsheviks are the red danger lanterns along our own road and will save us in the future from running into the same obstacle, just as the red lanterns hung out by street pavers and sewer workers save us from running into holes or piles of debris. The author of this book hangs out these danger lanterns where everybody can see them. The information the author gathered in 1920 will never be out of date as long as we ourselves have not achieved the great social transformation in this country.

Together with the publishing of this book in America comes the news of a speech made by Lenin on October 17, 1921, in which the prophetic writings of this book are verified. Lenin says in the speech:

"Our new economic policy consists essentially in this, that we in this respect have been thoroughly defeated and have started to undertake a strategic retreat; before we are completely defeated, let us retreat and DO EVERYTHING OVER AGAIN, but more steady. Communists can not have the slightest doubt that we on the economic front have suffered an economic defeat, and a very serious defeat at that."

He also says, in connection with the former policy of food requisition, the following:

"On the economic front we have, with the attempt to go over to a communist society, suffered a defeat in the spring of 1921, more serious than any previous defeat suffered at the hands of Denekin, Kolchak or Pilsudsky, a defeat which has taken expression in the fact that our economic policy in its superstructure has proven to be cut

off from the substructure and did not create the stimulation of the productive powers, which in our party program is recognized as the fundamental and immediate problem.

"The requisition system in the country and the communist method of solving the organization problem in the cities, these are the policies that prevented the increase in the productive powers and proved to be the main cause of the deep-going economic and political crisis with which we collided in the spring of 1921.

"There you have the cause of what has happened, which, from the viewpoint of our general policy, cannot be called anything else than a thorough defeat and a retreat."

But the defeat that Lenin admits and which he terms "our defeat" should not be construed to mean a defeat of all revolutionary principles. It is wholly, and only, a defeat of the political theory of revolution.

Bukharin is perhaps the frankest of all when he says in an article entitled, "The Soviets' New Policy":

"When the state apparatus is in our hands we can guide it in any desired direction. But unless we are at the helm we can give no direction at all.

"Consequently we must seize power and keep it and make no political concessions. But we may make many economic concessions. **But the fact of the matter is we are making economic concessions in order to avoid making political concessions.**

"We shall agree to no coalition government or anything like it, not even equal rights to peasants and workers. We cannot do that."

The above quotations are but proof that when defeats are spoken of they are meant as defeats of political centralism; of party policies. The reasons of these defeats are shown by the contents of this book.

GEO. WILLIAMS.

Feb. 10th, 1922.

Author's Preface

WHEN the Russian Revolution broke out and czarism was overthrown, there was not a socialist who did not greet this revolution with joy. All, from the most moderate state socialist and reformist to the most radical anarchist, yes, even the liberals of Europe, saw progress in the overthrow of czarism. When later *Kerensky* wanted to steer the wreck of the Russian ship of state into the safe harbor of the entente, and continued the war against Germany, dissatisfaction arose among the Russian masses, for was it not *peace* that the revolution was going to bring them! When *Kerensky*, with the coalition *Miljukov* and *Gutschkov*, threw himself in the arms of the entente, he, naturally, could not fulfill the peace wishes of the Russian people. It was evident that the revolutionary wave would not stop but keep on rolling further in the direction of peace. *For that reason, the party that put peace on its program had the greatest prospect of winning. And that party was the bolsheviks.*

The political reasons for a bolshevik victory were at hand. *To these political reasons were added psychologic and economic reasons.*

The psychologic reasons: The Russian people had for centuries lived under the rule of czarism. The autocracy at the top did everything to keep alive the respect for authority at the bottom. This *respect for authority* has penetrated so deeply into the life of the people that it even had set its mark on the relations between the peasants themselves in their daily life. Symbolic of this is the word "Little Father." One of the strongest factors for preserving this respect was *religion*. The catholicism of the Orthodox Greek Church has even today its strongest support in Russia. The revolution has shaken faith in czarist authority, but has not completely eradicated it. Faith in authority continues to live in Russia and is even to-day stronger than in England or America. For this reason it was natural that the new political system would become *authoritarian* to the extent that faith in authority still existed. *Bolshevism is an authoritarian system.* Theoretically it professes to be Marxian, *i. e.*, authoritarian-socialist.

The economic reasons: Already during the *Kerensky* period dissatisfaction grew, and with it the demand for independence grew also among the workers. The workers, represented by the Workers' Councils or the Factory Committees, did not want to remain the wage slaves of the factory owners any longer. They

wanted to dispossess the factory owners and *take over the factories* themselves. After a long-drawn struggle they finally succeeded in this, in a favorable moment. But, as they were in no way prepared to take over production, and as *they had no unions, which could have undertaken that task*, the first period after the taking over of the factories by the workers was notable for a general break-down. The workers did work for *themselves* but not for *society*. They had no industrial unions of their own; what little organization they had was too little developed, and, consequently, in this general break-down, a strong centralistic party was the only power that could in any way combat chaos. One might even say that it was lucky that the bolshevik party was at hand and was vigorous enough to undertake it. Otherwise, perhaps, a non-socialist party, the Cadets, might have paved the way for immediate reaction. Thus, as it happened, the ideal of socialism was not realized, but under the given circumstances it was the only way out. Another economic factor was the support of *the effort made by the peasants to take the land away from the large land owners*. The economic factors in city and country were consequently, favorable to a bolshevik victory.

To-day there are numerous socialists who disapprove of bolshevik rule in Russia. They are adversaries of the bolsheviks because the conditions in Russia under bolshevik rule are not socialistic. And, to be true, if we put the measuring stick of socialism or communism on Russian conditions, then it is really not difficult to find that in Russia no socialism or communism exists, and from that high observation point one can then condemn bolshevism.

We can distinguish *three kinds of opponents of bolshevism*.

The first are the representatives of capitalism and the capitalist order of society. These are all the states which during the war formed the entente against Germany and Austria-Hungary and which now have united in the League of Nations, and besides there is America. Add thereto capitalist Germany. All these combat bolshevism, not because it did not bring them what they had hoped for—they were, on the contrary, enemies of bolshevism from the start—but because they felt themselves threatened by it; they fear that a bolshevik Russia may be a constant revolutionary danger to all other countries. But above everything else they fear a revolution in their own country, as they would then lose their privileges, and first of all their private property, on which rests the whole social order of to-day. In addition to these general, international, capitalist interests there are special nationalistic interests. Thus, France belongs to-day to the bitterest opponents of bolshevism, because French capitalists more than all others are interested with their money in Russia. They want, under all circumstances, to get the money back that they had lent to czarist Russia. Although the bolsheviks time and again declared that they were willing to do this—at the start the bol-

sheviks cancelled all the debts of czarism—the French capitalists are not satisfied; they also want to do business in the future with Russia, so rich in natural resources. And this applies also to all other capitalist states. For these reasons they fight Soviet Russia with all the means at their disposition: through open or secret war and through support given to the Russian counter-revolutionaries.

The second kind of opponents of bolshevism are the moderate and reformist social-democrats. These were, in the first place opponents from the start to bolshevik revolutionary tactics, i. e. of the bolshevik approval of the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly by the anarchists (the bolsheviks were, to some extent, implicated in this dispersion); in the second place, they later became opponents of the anti-democratic and anti-humanitarian measures of the bolsheviks, such as, the suppression of the freedom of the press and assembly. They were also opponents by principle to the immediate and absolute expropriation of the capitalists and of the land owners without compensation. According to their opinion the bolsheviks should have sought co-operation with the democrats of the West. They invoked the aid of Marx and said that socialism could only come about by a development through capitalism. *Politically, there should first have come democracy in Russia after the overthrow of czarism, and economically, capitalism. Thereupon, after this development had slowly taken place, Russia would be ripe for socialism.* Socialism must come through a progressive development; it is a product of evolution. Russia was not yet ripe for socialism. They also oppose the liberty-crushing tendencies of the bolsheviks, their extraordinary commissions, etc. But when they are in power, they by no means allow themselves to be guided by humanitarian viewpoints in their policies. A Noske, who is one of this group, as minister of defense, has not behaved more humanely, but perhaps more hypocritically, than the bolsheviks. On the whole, this group of social-democrats, social patriots and reformists, or whatever you call them, turn down the principles, methods and tactics of the bolsheviks, because the bolsheviks are too radical for them. These social democrats, furthermore, combat the bolsheviks secretly or openly—mostly secretly—with all the means of force. They help the armed counter-revolution, support the blockade against Russia, etc. During the social democratic reign in Germany that government did all it could against bolshevik Russia.

To the third kind of opponents of the bolsheviks belong, finally, the anti-authoritarian socialists, the anarchists and the syndicalists. While the two first-mentioned are opponents of the revolution as such, this third kind are entirely revolutionary. And they are not adversaries of bolshevism in the same sense as the two former. They are rather opponents of bolshevik teachings, opponents of the bolshevik authoritarian world philosophy; they are philosophical opponents. They fight the bolsheviks on the intellectual field. While the reformist socialists are against the bolsheviks, because they went too far, the syndicalists and

the anarchists take a negative position towards the bolsheviks, because for them they did not go far enough. They make the objection against the bolsheviks that their methods do not remove the foundations of the old world order of the state and capitalism radically enough, that they have made too great concessions to the spirit of authority, to the discretion of the state, and to the system of wage slavery, and that they in this manner have hindered the revolution in its further development. They reproach the bolsheviks that they have set up *a new state* and thus led the revolution into the wrong channels. They show the bolsheviks the inconsistency of their position, when they, on the one hand, maintain that the state is an institution of oppression and class rule, and that a free society only can exist without the state, but, on the other hand, concentrate all their power on making this class state as powerful as possible, as formidable as it ever was, and perfect it through the strongest kind of centralism. The revolutionary syndicalists and anarchists furthermore say that the bolsheviks through the establishment of this state and this centralism are *not getting nearer to liberty but are getting further away from it*. As opponents of the conquest of political power they make the objection to the bolsheviks that, through the conquest of political power, they have become power-seeking politicians and have pushed the more important side of socialism and communism in the back-ground. When they once struck out on the path leading to political power, they were compelled to it. From this follows suppression of the other socialist parties and tendencies, suppression of the right of free press and assembly, etc. They are also opponents of bolshevik methods of conquering political power, of centralism and of state socialism. But it is hardly necessary to state that they, like the bolsheviks, are bitter enemies of private property, capitalism, bourgeois democracy and any kind of a national assembly.

As will be easily understood, the capitalists and social-reformists are the strongest opponents and political adversaries of the bolsheviks. The anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists, on the other hand, are also opponents on principle of the bolshevik methods, but if the bolsheviks really honestly desire the destruction of the state, then they ought to approach them and the opposition might grow into a fighting alliance. As the matter now stands, the anarchists and the revolutionary syndicalists take a negative position towards the bolsheviks, when it is not downright hostile.

To take refuge behind the cloak of "objectivity" often signifies cowardice, for nobody is capable of free judgment without any subjective views, and least of all when personalities are concerned. For that reason I freely admit that I am a revolutionary syndicalist. But when I, like those sharing my views, do not approve of all the methods and the tactics of the bolsheviks, it would be tactless in the highest degree for the bolsheviks to brand us as counter-revolutionists, as they are so inclined to do, in

order to discredit the revolutionary syndicalists and anarchists before the revolutionary workers. Before the outbreak of the revolution, and before the war, it would not have occurred to any Russian bolshevik to label a revolutionary syndicalist and an anarchist as a counter-revolutionist, only because he rejected the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat and centralism as well as capitalism. On the contrary, at that time, the anarchist and syndicalist would have had far more right to give the bolsheviks that surname. But, of course, he did not call the bolsheviks by any such name. But now the matter has changed. The bolsheviks are the ruling party. Their theories, their methods and their tactics are now no longer platonic; they have become a cold reality which often is quite perceptible to the Russian people. The theories and methods which formerly were more or less useful material for discussion in the papers, are to-day in Russia regulations, decrees and laws for the Russian people. When we to-day enter into polemics against these theories and tactics, we are also compelled to take a stand on the decrees. But when we do this the bolsheviks brand us, if our criticism happens to be disapproving, as counter-revolutionaries. We can, of course, just as little abstain from this criticism now as before. But the difference is that we to-day have a concrete basis while we formerly worked with only an hypothesis. One thing is necessary to note, however: the difference between decrees and laws and regulations which spring from the theories, and those which can be traced to conditions in Russia. A criticism of the latter would be a criticism of the revolution itself, seeing that the bolshevik party is a revolutionary party. But such a criticism we cannot yet enter into, particularly as revolutionaries. A criticism of the former we hold to-day to be just as necessary as formerly the discussion between the different socialist groups. But, besides, we must investigate the effects upon the people of both kinds of decrees and laws, those that spring from theories, and those that are traceable to the conditions. As little as we believe in decrees and laws, still we must admit that they produce a reaction among the people. The popular reaction to these decrees is partly friendly, partly hostile, according to their nature and the wishes of the people. For there are decrees that release the revolutionary powers of the people and stimulate them, and there are decrees that dam them up and annihilate revolutionary initiative.

Such an investigation is very difficult, however. The classification of the decrees and the laws into such as originate in the theories and such as are traceable to the conditions is, namely, in practice not possible in the case of all of them. A number of decrees are the result of a mixture of both elements. If the effects are altogether or partially stimulating to the revolution or are hostile to liberty, and the people reacts accordingly, then one could easily get in the peculiar position of wanting to approve of 60 per cent of them and condemn 40 per cent. But a social revolution is no problem in arithmetic; it is a question of whether

one accepts of the revolution (and then also the unbeautiful things) or one does not accept of it at all.

But for our purpose it is not at all necessary to undertake such an impossible analysis of social events by which we would ascertain the percentage of every component part. It is not here, in the first place, a question of criticizing bolshevism, but the question is of getting a clear understanding of the revolution in Russia and what it has given to us. The main purpose is that the revolutionary workers, for whom this book is written, may learn a lesson from it, and that they, at the outbreak of a revolution in their own country, may have the experiences of the Russian revolution at their disposition. *The purpose of this book is, consequently, not counter-revolutionary but revolutionary. If the workers after a true and exact description of the conditions in Russia should come to a partial or entire rejection of such conditions for their own country, it should not be allowed to mean a rejection of the social revolution, but only a lesson, how not to do it when revolution breaks out in their own country.* This is the main purpose of this book, and the descriptions from Russia which I give, true to facts and without coloring or concealing, should be subordinated to this purpose.

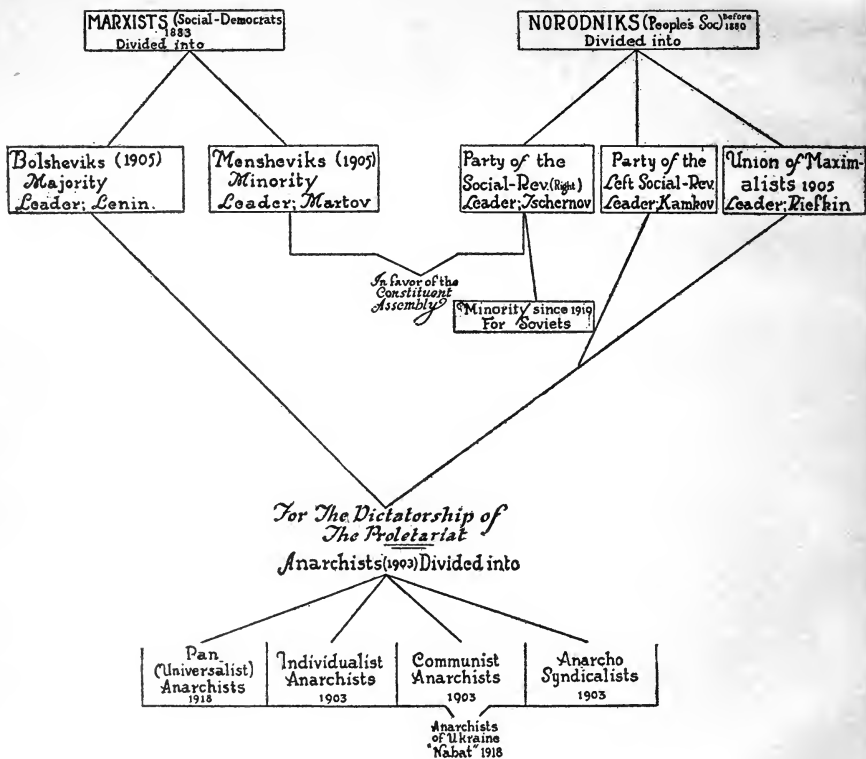
If conditions in Russia are not such as many a man has hoped, or as he had pictured to himself the advent of the social revolution, he should consider that the Russian revolution did not come at a time when the Russian workers and peasants in their great masses were prepared to organize their economic and political life according to the principles of liberty, but that *the revolution found the workers entirely unprepared.* Adding thereto the comparatively low technical development of the Russian worker, one might thereupon ask oneself whether one had imagined that the revolution would come in the forms it took in the brain of a few theorists or far-advanced revolutionaries.

Let us put this question to ourselves: Being that the Russian revolution did not bring what we had hoped for, would we rather wish that it had not come? Only an anti-revolutionist could have such a negative wish. But every revolutionary must stand by the revolution like a soldier with rifle at his side, with his heart, with his whole feeling and sympathy. And how could we otherwise? We, who have always striven for, hoped for, and worked for the revolution, should we now, when she has come, whom we have sung about in our songs, draw back from her, like a loveless mother from a misshapen child? No, the revolution is here. It is not what we had hoped. It is a deformed, perhaps partly substituted child. But it is our child. We are the parents. It is up to us to recognize the child, to take care of it, to bring it up, to change its form and to make it into as strong and free and proud a child as possible.

AUGUSTINE SOUCHY.

Berlin in December, 1920.

Diagram of the Socialist and Anarchist Movements of Russia and Ukraine



See chapter, "The Socialist Movement in Russia", pages 17 to 31 also chapter "The Socialist Movement in Ukraine", pages 129 to 1

If a book is worth reading it is worth studying.

Workers and Peasants in Russia and Ukraine

The Socialist Movement in Russia

AS the main purpose of this book is to give a presentation of the Russian revolution and the conditions it has created, the socialist parties or movements which exist in Russia will be described only to the extent that it is necessary for an understanding of Russian conditions and the revolution.

The Marxists (Social-Democrats)

The Russian socialist movement was in the beginning not social-democratic. Even the kind of socialism that Bakunin represented had not arisen on the ground of social-democratic theories. It was a kind of socialism that grew out of the particular agricultural character of the country. This socialism called itself *the movement of the Narodniks*. This movement was a special *Russian school* of socialism. Later there also arose in Russia, under West-European influence, a special *social-democratic school* of socialism. Principal founder of this school was *Plechanov*, who formed his views under the influence of Marx and Engels. Thus there were formed in the year 1883 the beginnings of the social-democratic-marxist party. As this school did not fetch the corner stones of its theories from the tendencies of the Russian labor and peasant movement but from other countries and developed particularly by leaning on the German labor movement, its principles and theories will be familiar to the West-European workers and to the German workers in particular. *It is Marxism*. Under the rule of the Russian knout a revolutionary fighting spirit has, naturally, flourished among them, like among all Russian revolutionaries, as they were compelled to be radical against czarism.

The social-democratic party of Russia became, however, very early divided in a right and a left wing. In the year of 1905 it came to an open break and a split between the two wings. The radicals were in the majority and called themselves "The Majority" or *Bolsheviki*. The moderates were in the minority, in Russian *Mensheviki*. With the minority, the mensheviks, remained Plechanov, and to them belonged also Martov and Abramov-

vitch. *The leader of the bolsheviks was Lenin.* Plechanov died soon after the outbreak of the Russian revolution. He was considered the father of Russian social-democracy.

The program of the mensheviks is similar to that of the left wing of German social-democracy or the right wing of the independents. They consider themselves of the same standpoint as the right of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany. (U. S. P. D.)

We are here more interested in *the program of the bolsheviks*, because that party is in power and has become the ruling party of Russia. It is, consequently, their program which is more or less realized. And even if we cannot trace the Russian conditions completely to their program, as life always turns out different from the wording of the program, still, the program of this party has, without doubt, had influence on the development since the bolsheviks took the power, as well as on the present situation, if we admit at all that man can exert influence on social events. If we now pick out the most important points in the bolshevik program, we have in a sense a criterion on, to what extent the conditions in Russia are traceable to the politics and the theory of the bolsheviks and to what extent they are traceable to the revolution itself.

To the fundamental principles of the Russian bolsheviks belongs the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the conquest of political power through the social-democratic party, which is falsely said to mean through the proletariat; the confiscation of the factories, mines, shops, furnaces, in short, of the whole industry as well as the land, and transforming it into state property; the organizing of economic life through the state. It says word for word in their program: "The state power ceases to be a parasitical apparatus which stands above the process of production; it begins to change into an organization which easily fills the function of managing the economic life of the country." The suspension of the political rights of the exploiting class, as well as all other curtailments of freedom which proved to be necessary for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the organizing of consumption through the obligatory membership of all citizens of the state in the Consumers' Unions, are necessary consequences. These are then state organs.

We have now briefly sketched the principles and the program of the bolshevik party, which later, after it had conquered the power, took the name of the Communist Party. According to Lenin's explanations it took the name of "The Communist Party" because it wished to differentiate itself from the social-democrats and at the same time wanted to draw over the workers which before were in the anarchist and revolutionary-syndicalist movement. We shall later have the opportunity to see to what extent the party has been able to impress its program upon the social life of Russia.

The Narodniks (National or People's Socialist)

The Social-Revolutionaries of the Right

While the Marxists, the bolsheviks as well as the mensheviks, are a foreign growth on Russian soil, *the socialism of the narodniks is of a purely Russian origin.* Narod means "people." The socialism of the narodniks was the socialism of the people, a special *national* product. One of the first and most prominent men in this movement was *Lavrov.* *Tschernitschevsky* also belonged to them. This movement is older than the Marxian movement. Later they called themselves also the Social-Revolutionary Party. *While the Marxians, in accordance with their theory, ascribe a greater importance to the city proletariat, the Social-Revolutionary Party was mainly a peasant party.* It was more a peasant socialism than a socialism of the city proletariat. As Russia is an agrarian country it was natural that the Social-Revolutionary Party was the most popular among the population, which to more than 80 per cent consists of peasants. To this party belonged the Grandmother of the Revolution, Breschkovskaja, "Babuschka"—as she was called, who after she was freed from Siberian imprisonment through the revolution, went abroad, after the fall of the Kerensky government, and made common cause with the American capitalists.

As was the case with the Marxians, this party also developed a left and a right wing.

The right wing was in favor of the constituent assembly, i. e., it was parliamentarian, like the mensheviks. Its intellectual leader was *Tschernov.* They also had other things in common with the mensheviks, although they were not Marxians, nor are so yet. They were for a coalition government with the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets), and they formed, together with the cadets Gutschkov and Miljukov and the mensheviks, the coalition government under Kerensky. Kerensky himself belonged to the right wing of the Social-Revolutionary Party. According to the program of the social-revolutionaries of the right the National (Constituent) Assembly should have the power to decide over the constitution of the country as well as over socialization and all important questions. It was and is the program of a bourgeois democracy.

The Social-Revolutionaries of the Left

Different was *the Left Wing of the social-revolutionaries.* These revolutionaries were *the old Terrorists* against the czarist system. They are still terrorists to-day but differ from the bolsheviks in this that they *recognize only the personal terror but reject the systematic, organized terror.* They are in favor of murdering a despot (the czar) but against the use of deterrent measures through a special institution formed for that purpose, as the Ochrana was during the czar and The Extra-ordinary Commission (Tscheka) during bolshevik rule.

The revolutionary process accelerated *the split in the large Social-Revolutionary Party*. Even after the revolution, up to November, 1917, the left wing, the party opposition, took a stand against the coalition government; it represented, principally, the international standpoint, and, finally, in November, 1917, it constituted itself *The Social Revolutionary Party of the Left*.

This new party was formed mainly by the active peasantry, and their intellectual leaders strove to pull the masses of the peasantry away from the influence of the Social-Revolutionary Party of the Right. Besides, it wished to pull those elements into the revolutionary process who were strange to Marxism and which had mainly developed in the Russian school of the "Narodnitschestvo": federalism, the ethical viewpoint and activism. Up to the peace of Brest-Litovsk the party of the left social-revolutionaries worked in solidarity with the bolsheviks in all soviets and in the government. Of the seven People's Commissariats it took over Agriculture, which is of such great importance in Russia, in order to carry into effect the law of socialization of the land.

As the party, in connection with the peace of Brest-Litovsk, could not agree with German Imperialism, it stepped out of the government. From the time the party ceased to be a government party, the politics of the Soviet Government were dictated solely by the bolsheviks. Now began the system of terror, the system of forcible requisition of bread from the peasants, the supremacy of the police organs and the re-introduction of capital punishment. All these measures the Social-Revolutionary Party of the Left disapproved of, the same as other socialist parties. In July, 1918, at the time of the V. Soviet Congress, the party already had 40 per cent of the mandates. At that time, however, the party wished to turn with all their might against bolshevik co-operation with German imperialism. This took expression in the act of murdering Count Mirbach, the German ambassador in Moscow.

This act gave the bolsheviks cause and pretense for a settlement with the competing party, and they started a system of persecution, which extends to the present, that is, over two years. All party papers were suppressed, many members were shot and hundreds and thousands of soviet delegates who belonged to that party were excluded from the soviets. The result of this was that the party became illegal, and their most active members came in prison, whereby the party lost the possibility of influencing the masses, especially the work-village. The active peasantry, which in the soviet representatives no longer saw representatives of their class, was driven to a course of desperate insurrections. But the peasant rebellions were suppressed with force and led still closer to the abyss which separates the bolshevik power from the village.

I have given this description of the development of this party after the account of one of its leaders, who in the first period after the overthrow of the Kerensky government was a member of the Council of People's Commissars, *Isaak Steinberg*, who had

the People's Commissariat of Agriculture in charge. Also in the presentation of their program I shall follow his account.

The so-called period of transition does not appear to this party as an epoch which in principle differs from the socialist epoch. The period of transition ought not, in its initial forms, to realize any other principles than those which are intended for socialist society. If one speaks of "the dying out of the state," one must not allow state ideology and state compulsion to be realized in the highest degree. One must not depend on the provisional character of these periods of transition, for world history has already often enough proven that *the provisional has perpetuated itself*.

The Social-Revolutionary Party of the Left does not believe in accomplishing the social revolution by means of a daring minority, perchance a communist party. It takes the standpoint that, insofar as the social revolution means not only the transfer of the means of production from the hands of one owner into the hands of another owner, but also a radical overturning of all social and intellectual habits of men, as well as the remodeling of the process of production and distribution, the result of the revolution can be made safe only by means of the free and active participation of the masses themselves. But this does not mean that the party is parliamentary. It is, on the contrary, anti-parliamentarian and also opposed to the Constituent Assembly.

Nor is this party for the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," but for the *Dictatorship of the active majority*. But in agrarian countries, such as Russia, the foundation of the social revolution must be a union of the active peasantry and the city proletariat, not necessarily in an arithmetic equality on the part of the peasant majority, but in the form of participation with equal rights of these two main classes.

In contradistinction to the bolshevik party the social-revolutionaries of the left *stand on a federalist basis*. The whole social structure of the transition period must be built on the principles of federalism, political as well as economic. The party is a soviet party and demands that the elections to the soviets, which constitute the political axis of the period of transition, only take place on the condition of free elections for the working masses, and that in the activities of the councils the most far-reaching principles of democracy be preserved; otherwise, the whole council or soviet system is, in their opinion, turned into a mockery of the will of the workers, as at present, and forces the working masses, in a sense of disillusionment, to again long for the universal and free franchise and all the other formal principles of bourgeois democracy. The function of the councils or soviets shall only be to serve as an extension structure of socialist society, politically and in a general cultural aspect, and for that reason all branches of labor and all groups of workers must be represented in them. The economic function, the production and distribution of goods, should rest exclusively in the hands of producers and consumers,

which implies labor unions and consumers' unions. The party, consequently, does not demand a nationalization of production, and this on the ground that it means only the turning over of all the economic processes to the state and the worst kind of state capitalism. *The socialization of the means of production and distribution should not mean the transfer of the same into the "ownership" of the state, but their transformation into the common wealth of all the workers*, as the party had outlined it in the land socialization law, which has been almost repealed by the present government. The party advocates the creating of productive societies by the active peasantry. But the distribution of goods shall be in the hands of the workers' and peasants' consumers' societies. The federative co-ordination of these two kinds of economic organs creates the social pyramid which connects the economic activity of the village and the city, through which arrangement the role of the state—including the soviet state—is replaced with the active participation of all the organized citizens.

The party of the social-revolutionaries of the left has from the beginning recognized *individual terror* as one of the fighting methods, with the precaution that it be used with the greatest care. But it rejects completely terrorism as a system of government and as a system for the realization of socialism. For that reason it also rejects capital punishment, which was again introduced by the bolsheviks.

On the *international field* the party wants to enter into connection with all organizations and social-revolutionary movements, which defend other than purely Marxian methods for the building of a socialist society.

I have treated the program of this party a little more at length than that of the bolsheviks, because bolshevik literature has inundated all Europe, and hence it may be assumed that most of the politically interested hand and brain workers know this program. On the other hand, hardly anything is known about this party outside the boundaries of Russia, and it is therefore an act of equalizing justice.

The Maximalists

Out of the great movement of the narodniki or social-revolutionaries there grew, during the pangs of the revolution of 1905, *the Maximalist movement*. At the congress of the social-revolutionaries of 1904, a wing, under *Riefkin*, placed itself to the extreme left. It put up *a maximum program* and rejected not only the minimum program of the Social-Revolutionary Party, but also the program of all other parties, such as the then still united Marxist parties. All other parties, the present bolsheviks included, were then minimalists.

Already at the congress of 1904 they wished to have nothing to do with the reform program of the other parties. They did

not want to be reformists, but revolutionaries, and *demand*ed of a revolution the realization of the maximum that a revolution can bring. Already then, one of their theoreticians represented the idea of the soviets. *The maximalist Tagin was the man who put forward the idea of soviets*, and together with the anarchists he represented the most pronounced maximalism.

When the maximalists could not come to any unity with the minimalists, they cut loose from the other parties and founded an independent organization. But they *did not call themselves a party, but a union*, being that they did not believe in the revolutionary qualities of a party. In a party, tendencies towards power are always noticeable, which never allow the revolutionary principle of freedom to come to full development. For that reason they rejected the centralist party and formed a federalist union.

Already from the start the maximalists took an anti-parliamentarian standpoint. They never took part in the elections to the Duma and were, together with the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists, the first and most passionate adversaries of the Constituent Assembly. The Maximalist Union was recruited from the ranks of the poorer peasants and the city proletariat. They have the qualities of a fighting class organization and are in the highest degree active class militants. They always emphasize with the greatest force the staking of the personality and differ on this point from the Marxists. They were also terrorists; they are still adherents of the personal terror, but like the left social-revolutionaries, they reject governmental terror and the system of terror.

As already indicated, they are a soviet movement, yes, in fact, they belonged to those who first came forward with the soviet idea. They differ, though, from other soviet parties, for instance, from the ruling Bolshevik Party, in that they *take exception to party soviets*. One of their mottoes is: *All power to the soviets—not to the party soviets but to the class soviets*. They demand class power but not party power, while the bolsheviks, in their opinion, demanded only power for the party. Principally from these reasons they are also opponents of the Bolshevik Party.

In the beginning of the revolution, after the overthrow of Kerensky, they had, in common with the anarchists, their greatest influence in such places as Kronstadt, Samara and Kursk. They were not organized according to centralist, but decentralist principles. In many places their faction was the strongest one in the soviet. But the faction was not tied down by party discipline in the voting. Everybody could vote as he desired. This connects with the fact that they did not want to acquire the power. The bolsheviks, on the other hand, who for fifteen years had prepared themselves for the power, were naturally compelled to resort to a different, much more rigid principle of organization. The iron party discipline of the bolsheviks required absolute obedience to the party orders issued. This centralism and this discipline helped

the Bolshevik Party to power, although it was by far not the strongest party in every place.

As the program of the maximalists in many respects coincides with the program of the social-revolutionaries of the left, a separate presentation is unnecessary. *Since 1905 the motto of the maximalists was: In unity of hammer, plow and thought lies power and right, and since 1919: All power to the soviets; no power to the party.*

As, at present, during the rule of the Bolshevik Party, all parties have become illegal, they have retired to the place where it still is most possible to bring their ideas before the people, namely to Ukraine. Thus the maximalists and the anarchists, etc., especially under Machno, had the best possibility in Ukraine to propagate their ideas. Besides the maximalists, there is still another union of left social-revolutionaries, who have also developed out of the narodniki and now call themselves *Barbists*. The name Barbists comes from the name "barba," struggle. They are fighters. In principle they do not differ from the maximalists.

The agrarian program of the maximalists and the barbists rests on the mir-organization. As far as possible the peasants shall cultivate the land on communist lines. The land of the large land owners and the kulaks (rich peasants) shall be delivered into the possession of the commune. The peasants shall thereafter cultivate it in common. Where the peasants divide up the land between themselves they shall not be stopped with force, but care should be taken that nobody receives more than he himself can cultivate. The peasants of a village, both those who cultivate their own land and those who cultivate the land in common, form a commune. They enter into exchange relations with other communes and the cities. In so far as the exchanged objects consist of larger agricultural implements, agricultural machinery and so on, they go into the possession of the commune. The peasants shall be guaranteed the greatest independence, politically and economically.

These currents have developed principally in Ukraine, and even the anarchists of Ukraine accept this or a very similar program, so that all these movements differ only in their shadings, but not in principle. They are all decentralist, anti-parliamentarian, anti-state and federalist.

The Anarchists

Besides the above mentioned movements there is still another group which belongs to the socialist world in Russia, namely *the anarchists*. If we disregard single personalities, such as Bakunin and Kropotkin and the Russian anarchists in foreign countries, we can trace the definite establishment of the anarchist movement in Russia to the year of 1903.

As among the social-democrats and the narodniks, there are also many currents among the anarchists. The *Individualist*

Anarchists have no movement worth mentioning. *The Communist Anarchists* and *the Anarcho-Syndicalists*, on the contrary, had at the outbreak of the revolution in 1917, and later, a mass movement. But as they did not want to conquer power but only destroy it, in accordance with their principles, they have to-day again lost their importance. *The anarcho-syndicalist tendencies are stronger among the working people, and the anarchist ideas gain a footing among the peasantry of Ukraine.*

There was, and is now, in Russia, *anarchist-narodniks*, that is, the native movement of the people, and the *anarchist-emigrants*. The ideas of the anarchists are the same as in other countries. Of importance here is only the position taken by the anarchists to the revolution. *The Tolstoyan Anarchists* were in the minority. The revolutionary anarchists have taken a very active part in the revolution and played a prominent role, particularly in the beginning of the revolution, in its destructive period against czarism and Kerensky. They were, self-evidently, against the Constituent Assembly, according to the formula: All power to the soviets; and all this before the bolsheviks adopted these mottoes. *In many places the anarchists began the revolution.* For instance, in Jekaterinburg in the Ural the anarchists had carried out the revolution earlier than the workers of Petrograd. Already on June 5, 1917, the workers demonstrated under the leadership of anarchists in Moscow and Petrograd against the Kerensky government with the motto: *All power to the soviets.*

The credit for dissolving the constituent assembly does not belong to the bolsheviks, but to the anarchists. It was the anarchist Anatol Gregorevitch Zelesniakoff who, in January, 1918, at the head of the Kronstadt sailors, broke into the session of the Constituent Assembly and told the gentlemen representatives that they had now talked enough and that they could now go home, or the sailors would help to get them started on the road. First after they, through the direct action of the workers and soldiers with anarchist leanings, were faced with a *fait accompli* (an accomplished fact), the parties accepted the situation, and subsequently Lenin also gave this fact his approval. Zelesniakoff fell in the fight against Denekin's white guardists at Jekaterinoslav on July 26, 1919, after Denekin had put a price on his head of 400,000 rubles.

The Syndicalists

The position of the *Anarcho-Syndicalists* is best explained by their resolutions. In their first congress after the revolution, on August 25, 1918, the following decisions were adopted by the Congress of the Confederation of the All-Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists:

1. To battle against the power of state and capitalism.
2. To co-ordinate according to federalist principles the in-

dependent soviets and to break way for uniting the independent productive organizations of workers and peasants.

3. To recommend to the workers the forming of free soviets and to combat the institutions of the Councils of Commissars of the People, as this is an organization that is injurious to the workers.
4. To dissolve the military armies and arm the workers and the peasants; at the same time making clear to them the absurdity of the idea of a "socialist vaterland"; for the workers and the peasants can only have the world for their country.
5. To battle against the counter-revolutionary Czecko-Slovaks and all other attempts of the imperialists in the most forcible way, not forgetting, however, that the extremely revolutionary bolshevik party has become stationary and reactionary.
6. To transfer the distribution of the food stuffs and other necessities into the hands of the organizations of the workers and peasants directly and to discontinue the armed excursions into the country, for through these measures the farmers become the enemies of the workers, the solidarity between workers and peasants weakens, and the revolutionary front is played into the hands of the counter-revolutionists.

But no hard and fast program has been put up by the anarcho-syndicalists. In order to get a clear understanding of their standpoint one must turn to the resolutions in their congresses and their publications. For this reason I have asked one of the most notable anarcho-syndicalists of Moscow, *A. Shapiro*, for an explanation of his standpoint and here I will give the most important points:

1. Fundamental rule: Outside the proletariat, the policy of the present state of society is anti-revolutionary and counter-revolutionary. Parliamentarism, consequently, is counter-revolutionary while it lies outside the proletariat. The policy inside the ranks of the proletariat is in the most intimate manner connected with the economic life. Revolutionary economic policy and revolutionary proletarian policy are the driving forces of the social revolution.
2. If a revolution is to assume a social character it must be laid out on the broadest foundation, that is, the annihilation of the existing state machinery, the overthrow of capitalism and all its resources; bourgeoisie, liberalism, phrase socialism, middle class; the organization of a new society must be worked out on the basis of economic independence under negation and abolition of the wage system.

3. The dictatorship of the proletariat, so-called, must not be anything but a tool in the hand of the revolutionary people. Characteristic of every dictatorship is that it hides within itself the tendency to autocracy, in so far as it is a true dictatorship. A dictatorship of the proletariat can, consequently, never exist. When the class struggle comes to such a stage that the working class is on top and the other classes underneath, the other classes will always try to get their property back. It will, therefore, be a small part of the proletariat that carries the responsibility. But no party can do this, neither a communist, nor an anarchist. The parties have the knowledge, the theoretical basis, and also the great ideals, but they have not the spirit of the transition. A party must with necessity always be dogmatic.
4. A social revolution is an economic revolution. The annihilation of capitalism, the control of all the industries and of the economic life through the workers. The enemy class cares little about the form of the state, it cares for capitalism, the economic system, the factories, etc. On this ground *the most natural and best qualified carrier of the social revolution is the revolutionary labor organizations, the unions. Without the participation of these no social revolution can be successful.*
5. On this ground one could, at most, speak of the dictatorship of the revolutionary labor organizations inside the proletariat. The deeper the revolutionary political parties dive down into the revolutionary proletarian mass, the shorter will be the period of transition.
6. It is not in the first place a question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but of the building of a body which is created by the proletariat for the maintenance of the social gains of the revolution. The dictatorship of one party over the proletariat leads to a soul-less mechanism, being that the party recognizes the principles of discipline and not the tactics of true life.
7. Dogmatic, mechanical party dictatorship leads to dogmatic, mechanical centralization, as a party is not able to control the economic life of a country in any other manner. Dogmatic and mechanical centralism kills every initiative and destroys more than it builds up. It is characterized by destruction and not by construction.
8. Axiom: In building a house one first lays the foundation and the roof comes last! In Russia it was the opposite way. The central decides what there is to do. The structure falls to pieces halfway up because there is no responsive action from below. The Industrial Councils must not be tools in the hands of a central body, they

must be the initiators, and their activity should only be regulated by the central body.

9. The soviets must not be tools in the hands of a centralist body but the real source of life in their field of activity. Russia teaches us through dearly bought experience that our motto must be "from the bottom to the top". Centralist dictatorship is not necessary, and least of all for all branches of life. Every branch should itself decide what is to be centralized.
10. Political and economic activity must be melted together into one. When political and economic problems go hand in hand, they become social problems. Economics is the organization of the conditions of life. Social politics is the relations between man and man in all the conditions of life.

The anarcho-syndicalists are also for the soviets but against the soviets of political parties. From their resolutions on soviets one can learn the difference between them and the bolsheviks in this respect. Among other things they contain:

"In consideration of the role which the soviets play in the struggle against counter-revolution, we have to note the following:

1. That the dissatisfaction of the workers with the bolshevik tactics in regard to soviets and other organizations is on the increase.
2. That the dictatorship of the bolsheviks over the soviets and other organizations of labor is pulling the workers over on the side of the Constituent Assembly.
3. That it is necessary for the working masses to have a clear understanding of the soviets to carry on a successful revolutionary struggle.

"The anarcho-syndicalists declare themselves for the soviets, the purpose of which is to destroy the present centralist form of the state. We reject, on the contrary, the soviets of the people's commissars, as these are in contradiction of the essence of the soviets and paralyze the workers in the true soviets of the workers and peasants.

"We are for the soviets of the active population who are elected under such conditions that the workers from the factories and the peasants from the village are directly represented and that the delegates are no party politicians, who cause the soviet meetings to be degraded into talking orgies.

"We are for free soviets, who make their decisions only in accordance with the wishes of the electorate. Hence, the congress decides that all anarcho-syndicalist fellow workers

have to take part in the provincial soviets in which the bolshevik party is not yet the ruling power, and where it is still possible to act in freedom.”

Besides these anarcho-syndicalists there are also the *Anarchist-Universalists* and the *Pan-Anarchists*, who have come into development first after the revolution. These two tendencies are represented by the brothers *Gordin*. These tendencies are still new and unripe, and it would be too early to describe these ideas in this connection.

The “Nabat” Anarchists

Besides those already mentioned there is *in Ukraine a special anarchist movement*, which has come into existence since the revolution: *The Nabat Federation*. “Nabat” means alarm or trumpet blast. In their last conference, which took place in Charkov in the beginning of September, 1920, they formulated their standpoint as follows:

1. The statement of anarchist deserters that the Russian revolution has corroborated the weakness of anarchist theories, is completely without foundation. On the contrary, the fundamental principles of anarchist doctrine remain unshaken and are being confirmed through the test they have gone through in the Russian revolution. The experiences confirm us in this that we remain strongly opposed to any form of power and to capitalism.
2. The anarchists have never denied that between the first days of the revolution in the anarchist sense and the final purpose of anarchism, or the anarchist commune, is a period of time during which the rest of the old servitude slowly disappears and the new forms of a new society gropingly struggle into life. These periods, full of faults and errors and uninterrupted efforts towards perfection, can be given different names: the period of gathering experiences in living without masters, the period of deepening the social revolution, or the first step to the anarchist commune. One may also call it the period of transition, in order to denote the characteristic features which lead from the imperfect to the perfect form of social life. We prefer, though, not to use this demarcation, because it has already acquired a distinct meaning in the socialist movement of the last 50 years. With the term “period of transition” is connected something statistical and stiff. The expression “period of transition” in the program of international social-democracy is so penetrated by the historic-marxian spirit of slowness and historically conditioned predestination that it is unacceptable to us anarchists.

3. We are not of the opinion that the anarchist-communist system must be preceded by a syndicalist step, as a period of transition from state to anti-state anarchist-communism. In the theory of the syndicalist order, which shall come in the place of the soviets, is plainly discernible the influence of the orthodox, Marxist theory of the stepping stones which according to the relentless iron laws of social development must follow upon one another.
4. We also reject the use of the expression "dictatorship of labor," in spite of the efforts of some comrades who advise us to accept it. This "dictatorship of labor" means nothing else than the widening of the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat", which is now so conspicuously gone into bankruptcy. It must, finally, unavoidably lead to the dictatorship over the masses of a part of the proletariat, the party, the officials and some leaders. It is impossible to co-ordinate anarchy with any kind of dictatorship, even with a dictatorship of the class-conscious workers over the others, even if it were in the interest of the others! We are agreed that the period of deepening of the social revolution may be designated as the gathering of anarchist experiences or, if one so desires even the dictatorship of labor, on the ground that in this period the interests of the workers will stand higher than the interests of the parasites. One could just as well call these periods "the period of the dictatorship of consumption", "dictatorship of justice", "dictatorship of agreement" or by some other equally foolish name. We are compelled to exclude the contents of the word "dictatorship". With the idea of dictatorship is connected the idea of Ludendorff and Rennenkampf, the idea of unbridled brutal force and government power. The introduction of the idea of the dictatorship into the anarchist program would cause an unpardonable confusion in the minds.
5. The revolution that anarchism strives for, the revolution in which the parole of no rulership and of communism determines the course of events, finds many obstacles to its development. The strength of the active resistance on the part of those who are interested in the maintenance of capitalism and power, the inertia and the ignorance of the broad masses of the workers, can create conditions under which the rising anarchist commune will be driven far from their ideal. To concretely fix the eventual social forms of the future is impossible for the moment, because we cannot foresee the quantitative and qualitative contents of the forces which determine the reality of the future. For this reason we consider it useless to elaborate a program which should be applied to something that we do not know. We do not come forward with any minimum

program but step upon the ground of present events with full rights and full conviction before the working masses, in order to show them the ideals of anarchism and communism in their purity”.

These anarchists are also strong opponents of the bolsheviks and the present soviet government and not only declare that the bolsheviks have ceased to be revolutionary but stamp them openly as counter-revolutionary and reactionary. The “Nabats” are not identical with the Machno movement; they have, on the contrary, in another resolution taken quite strong exceptions to Machno and see in him only a revolutionary but not an anarchist. They are also vigorously fought and persecuted by the bolsheviks, recommend illegal work, and many are in prison.

The Land

THE abolition of private property in land is perhaps the deepest change which the Russian revolution has brought into the social life of our private capitalist age. It was this that gave the Russian revolution the character of a social, or an economic, revolution. The German revolution has not shaken the foundation of the social order of private capitalism and for that reason did not go beyond the boundaries of a political revolution.

Now the Russian revolution has shown us that, on account of the poor knowledge of the Russian workers on the technical field, the expectations of the socialists of all shades that private property could be abolished have not been fulfilled. It has also shown that for economic equality, such as communism presupposes, is further required the elimination of the organized power of the capitalists and the taking over of all these functions through the proletariat itself. This, however, cannot happen in a revolution of one or two years but requires a period of time, the length of which depends upon the development and the ability of the proletariat of the country. But the first and principal step has been taken by the Russian revolution. The land no longer belongs to the large land owners. In an agrarian country like Russia, the land question is the most important one. We will therefore start with this question.

The taking away of the land from the owners of great estates was such an elementary peasant demand, that it did not require any socialist theories to induce them to it. On the contrary, the peasants were glued to the land. Frequently they did not wait for the law, which was to transfer to them the possessions of the large land owners; they confiscated it themselves. Already during the Kerensky regime the peasants started with this confiscation.

In Russia, before the revolution, the land tenure was different from land tenure in Germany. The peasants still had to a great extent *remains of the old Mir organization*. They still had common pastures and similar common economic interests. Part of them also had their own land, but had to pay such great taxes to the Czarist state, as well as rent to the estate owner, that they, in spite of it, lived in very poor circumstances.

Nevertheless, 76.3% of the total arable land belonged to the peasants and 23.7% to the estate owners. In Ukraine only 55.5% of the land belonged to the peasants and 44.5% to the

estate owners. In Ukraine the power of the land owners was still greater than in the rest of Russia.

When the revolution of 1917 broke out, the peasants took the largest part of the land of the estate owners and divided it between themselves. In Russia about 90% of the land fell into the hands of the peasants through the revolution while the state obtained only 10%. *Now (1920) 96.7% of the arable land belongs to the peasants and 3.3% to the government.* In Ukraine 96.2% of the land belongs to the peasants and 3.8% to the government. The land which the state took over was changed into *government estates*. Where formerly the owners of an estate ruled, there rules now the state. In many cases the present form is more agreeable to the peasants. Frequently the fine mansions of the former estate owner are in the possession of the peasants, who have fitted them up into meeting and amusement halls as well as schools. But quite often these gentry mansions are now put at the disposition of soviet employees who spend their summer vacations there or send their children there. Others have been changed into homes for children, and according to the nature of the new arrangement the peasants are satisfied or dissatisfied. If it is at their own or their children's disposition, then they feel satisfied. But if the "Sowbur", as the peasants call the soviet employees, have taken possession, then the peasants are dissatisfied.

In some of these mansions *children's colonies* have been established, as already stated. In the gouvernement of Saratoff a large estate was nationalized. In the large buildings and gardens 120 children have been accommodated. Nearly all are war orphans or children of red soldiers. The children are well taken care of and are given schooling which according to Russian standards is good but, compared to German standards, deficient.

The form of nationalizing the estates is, to be sure, no ideal of socialism or communism. Under the circumstances (war, the peasants' faith in authority, demoralization, etc.), however, it would have been more difficult to drive through a different form. According to the account of an Armenian secretary of the organization of agricultural workers in Saratoff the fact of the matter, in that gouvernement, was that *the agricultural workers, after driving away the owners of the estates, took no pains to maintain agricultural production.* They sold part of the implements or took them along for their own personal needs; furthermore, they did only as much work as was necessary for their own maintenance, so that the state saw itself compelled to take the estate under its centralistic management, as it desired to obtain from this gouvernement, which belongs to the most fertile in Russia, the grain which it required for its army and for the cities. Through this arrangement the agricultural workers are certainly no better off than they were before. The only difference is that formerly they were exploited by the estate owner and now by the state. Thus the Armenian in question ended his story. I may remark in this connection that

this man belonged to no party and, consequently, did not look at things through any party glasses.

All agricultural workers who labor on these soviet estates are organized in the union of agricultural workers. In the gouvernement Saratoff this union has 7000 members, among them 70 communists, of whom 50 are state employees, leaving 20 communists among the real agricultural workers.

Through their union the agricultural workers receive their implements and other use-objects furnished by the state, when there is anything to be had. *The workers on the soviet estates are the only country laborers or peasants who are industrially organized. All other peasants are unorganized.*

In the whole gouvernement of Samara there are 120 soviet estates. On an average there are 100-300 workers on each estate. I visited estate No. 6. There, 100 workers are employed. Of these 7 are office people. The estate is 500 dessiatins in area, but only 200 dessiatins are cultivated (1 dessiatin - 2.7 acres). The permanent workers are paid 2000 rubles per month. With "bonus" they may come to 4000 rubles. Day laborers receive 100 rubles per day. The working day is 8 hours. In the summer, however, they worked 2 hours overtime, for which they were paid 3 hours wages. The buying power of money in this neighborhood is: a pair of new shoes 16,000 rubles; a pair of old shoes 8,000 rubles; an earthenware teacup with saucer 750 rubles.

The Economic Position of the Peasants

The land is not to be sold, but under the formula: each one receives only as much land as he can cultivate, shuffling can take place. Thus: in the district of Seelman in the German Volga colony, the poor peasants give one dessiatin of land for 6 lbs. of butter and 10 eggs. They need food stuffs. Land they can always get again, if they only want to cultivate it.

The German colonies on the Volga have existed for 163 years. The capital is Katrinenstadt, but is now re-baptized to Marxstadt. The second, i. e., the soviet revolution broke out there 3½ months later, in February 1918. There also the peasants of the whole colony took the land from the large land owners before the decree was issued which adjudged them the land. Already under Kerensky they took the land unto themselves.

Besides the government estates there are two other forms of possessing and working the land. First, there is the *personal ownership*. There are richer peasants and there are poorer peasants, exactly as in Germany there are smaller and bigger peasants and cottagers. Second, we have the so-called *artels*. An artel is a Russian workers' partnership. In this case it means a peasant partnership, mostly inside a commune or a village. There is still a *third collective form* of working the land. In the spring and the fall the peasants work the land by *mutually assisting one another* with plowing, sowing and reaping.

The bolshevik-communists oppose this form of possessing and working the soil. In their VIII. party convention during the past year they have adopted a program in which they specify their position on the peasant question, as follows:

"Considering that small peasant husbandry will continue to exist for a long time, the Communist Party of Russia is trying out a series of endeavors which have for their purpose to increase the productivity of peasant labor. To such measures belong the regulation of the cultivation of the peasant's soil (discontinuance of the three-fallow system, the narrow strip field, etc.)."

Inequality of wealth and the difference in the standard of living is still by no means evened out among the peasants. They did divide the land between themselves, but, according to my observations, the individualist tendencies of the peasants were more conspicuous in this partitioning of the land than the communist tendencies. In the village of Riliensko, in the gouvernement of Nischni-Novgorod, there was government land when the revolution broke out. The peasants divided this land so that each peasant received one dessiatin. This proves that they preferred personal possession to communal possession. In the village of Wuskristiansk in the gouvernement of Samara each peasant has now more land than before. A family of five persons receives 4 dessiatins of land. This village has 10,000 inhabitants. Among these are 250 communists, while the social-revolutionaries are a little more numerous.

That there are still rich and poor peasants in the country is traceable to the circumstance that the richer ones have rescued a larger stock of cattle and agricultural implements for their own part from pre-revolutionary times. The "kulaks" were the rich peasants who generally had a store in the village and became more well-to-do than their neighbors. But the cattle was not confiscated. Although the government fixed certain rules about the permissible maximum and requisitions what was above the maximum, the buying and selling of horses and cattle continues. A peasant, whom I know, bought a horse in the gouvernement of Tambov for 300,000 rubles, while in the gouvernement of Moscow it would have cost him 500,000 rubles. In the above mentioned village of Riliensko the peasants are allowed to keep from 3-5 sheep, 1-2 horses, and several cows, according to the size of the family. In that village there are peasants who still have five cows.

In the village of Novo Djevitsch, in the gouvernement of Samara, with a population of 5,000, there are 7,000 head of cattle and 120 horses. A further reason why some peasants are getting along better than others is, that the formerly well-to-do still have satisfactory agricultural implements. But the poor peasants, who have nothing, and can get nothing from the state, are compelled to lean on the richer peasants. The rich ones lend them their implements, but require, in return, labor from the

poorer ones or compensation in some other manner. In this village there is not a single communist.

The social inequality among the peasants which is created through the difference in wealth is still further accentuated through the lack of all kinds of manufactured articles and industrial products. The misery of the poor peasants is on the increase. Plows and harrows, if they happen to get to the village, which is very seldom, are, on account of their scarcity, not distributed to the peasants personally but to the communal management. If it now happens that a rascal hides under the mask of a communist commissar, he keeps, of the two plows consigned to the village, one for himself and the other he gives to the whole village. Hardly any but "communists" were made commissars.

The foregoing is an actual case which I have observed. It took place in the village of Strokino in the gouvernement of Moscow. *The commissar nuisance* causes other similar things to happen. In the Marxstadt district, in the German Volga colony, there are commissars who requisition the cows from the peasants, in order to put them in their own barn. What the government can give the peasant of manufactured articles is so insignificant that it in no manner covers even the most pressing needs. In Novo Djevitsch each peasant obtained, in three months, not more than 1 lb. (400 gram; 0.88 American lb.) of salt. Once they also received 4 archins of cloth (1 archin equal to .71 meter or 2 1-3 ft.).

The Russian peasant's hunger for manufactured articles and industrial products is insatiable. Furthermore, the peasants are compelled to turn over their grain to the state. In the village of Novo Djevitsch the peasants must every year surrender 32 pud of flour. For their own needs they can keep a minimum of 20 pud (1 pud equals 34 lbs.). Besides, *the peasants must pay taxes.* The taxes are, generally, very low. In the villages the taxes are delivered mostly in natural products. The paper of the communist party among the Volga Germans writes on May 12, 1920, about an "Order for collection of the natura tax in the Marxstadt district": "According to decision of the Marxstadt District Executive Committee the natura tax for the year 1919 shall be collected from the villages of Strassenfeld, Otrogovska, Morgentau-Sujedino (and 19 others)."

Besides these taxes the peasant *must further deliver certain products.* In number 83 of the same paper of May 9 appears a decree, signed by Lenin, as president of the Council of People's Commissars, by manager Bonch-Brujevitch and secretary Fotijeva, concerning the *obligatory delivery of butter and eggs.* Article 3 of this decree reads:

"The butter quantum prescribed by the People's Commissar of the Foodstuffs Commissariat for the year of 1920 for all rayons of European Russia, which have no dairies, amounts on an aver-

age to three lbs. of melting-butter for each cow. The total of butter delivered and placed at the disposition of the public organs shall be paid for at the receiving points at fixed prices.

Article 9 says: "Careless or slow delivery of the prescribed duties will cause the state to take recourse to the strictest measures against persons guilty of such neglect, such as loss of right to their share of goods, exacting of a double quantum of butter, requisition of their cows, in order to turn them over to persons who have punctually complied with their duties, arrest of the guilty and his turning over to the local courts."

A good deal has been said about the bad relationship between the soviet government and the peasants as a result of *the requisition policy of the government*. I have also heard much, very much, of it in Moscow. Not from the counter-revolutionists, but partly from the left social-revolutionaries, maximalists, and anarchists, and partly also from the communists themselves.

But I shall say nothing about it, except what I myself have learnt from direct sources. The other information, perhaps, can be proven by others, but not by myself. For the cases that I state, I have no other proof than that I can refer to the fact that the peasants themselves have told it to me.

For the cities and the armies *the state needs grain more than anything else*. *The peasants need industrial products*, textile goods, manufactured articles and hardware, etc. But the state cannot supply them with these, because it has nothing or next to nothing for the great needs. But it cannot allow the soldiers to go hungry on that account. Hence it is compelled to demand the grain from the peasants. It pays them a *maximum price* for it. This maximum price of the government is in proportion to the government's maximum price for industrial products. If the peasant could obtain the needed industrial products from the government he would, no doubt, give his grain to the state without delay. But such is not the case. *The peasant must buy the industrial products in open smuggle trade in the open market at usury prices*. From the government he receives 100 rubles for one pud of flour. But for a roll of yarn he has to pay 3,000 to 5,000 rubles and for a pound of soap from 800 to 1,200 rubles. In order to buy what he necessarily must have, he is compelled to also sell his grain or his flour at usury prices in the market. Then he receives 20,000 rubles for a pud of flour. That enables him to cover his most pressing needs.

The peasant is, consequently, not inclined to turn over his grain to the state. The reason for this we have just seen. They are obvious. *But as the state must have the flour for its existence, it sends soldiers into the villages who requisition the grain from the peasants*, waiving the question of right or wrong. The peasants hide their grain. If it is found, then one may often say: "May God have mercy on them." We have previously quoted a decree of Lenin's, which deals with punishment of the peasants. Not infrequently it happens that the requisitioning soldiers take

more rights than the decrees give them. It is also easy to understand that it is not the most honorable proletarians which form the requisition companies, but it is mostly the worst elements, which have been brutalized by the war. Finally, the peasants themselves are no aestheticizing philosophers or pacifists, but naturally coarse, and as a consequence *it frequently comes to a collision*, in which the peasants generally come out second best, as they are either unarmed or poorly armed.

Single instances may be picked out at will. Although these do not give a whole picture, they can serve as illustrations of the events. In the Seelman district of the German Volga colonies, 2,000 soldiers made their entry into the villages about the end of May, in order to take the last grain supplies away before the new harvest. In the village of Novo Djevitch there were peasant riots three times, each time suppressed. I have also heard of similar cases in the Ukraine.

Another cause for peasant rebellions or discontent is *the law about mobilization of labor power*. By means of this law the peasants can be compelled to fell trees. Frequently the peasants do not want to go. They prefer to go after their work in the fields. I came to a village in which a government deputation had just arrived, in order to make the peasants start felling trees. *The women were also required to go along*. They did not want to do it, and they began to cry. But finally they went. The peasants were willing to fell trees at some other time, they said, but not then. But it was easy to understand that they would rather not go at all. And why should they? They reaped no advantage from so doing. The pay which they were to receive for it is so insignificant, that they do not want to work for the state.

On the other hand, the state has succeeded in considerably improving *the fuel situation* through these energetic, frequently quite draconic measures. In the cities of Moscow and Petrograd it has this winter (1920-1921) been a good deal better than it was last year. The city dwellers, including the city proletariat, are the ones who are benefited by this, and not only the bolsheviks but everybody else concedes that the providing of fuel now is somewhat improved. Nevertheless, there are many non-bolsheviks, such as mensheviks, social-revolutionaries and even anarchists who reject the tactics through which the bolsheviks have exacted these performances.

The precarious position of the cities and their dependence upon the country for provisions and, partly, for fuel leads to *opposition between city and country*. The peasants are hostile to the cities. But above everything they hate the requisitioning soldiers, and they are no friends of the state, as they get nothing from the state, or as good as nothing, while the state wants to get a good deal from them. The opposition, and in a certain sense, the hostility between the peasants and the state took expression, from the side of the peasants, in hostility to the city. There is a danger lurking in this fact, which, however, will be

removed as soon as the state (which to the peasants means the city) can again supply them with industrial products.

Through all these circumstances and *through the distress in which the peasant finds himself, he has lost his inclination to cultivate the soil. The peasants no longer cultivate the land as intensively as before. The productivity has diminished.* When in Germany it is said in influential government circles, that only work, only the raising of the intensity of labor can save German economic life, it is very true. The capitalists, of course, mean the labor of wage slaves, while the socialists, who can also accept this formula, mean the work of the whole population, with elimination of the capitalist coupon clipper, snobs and idlers. But this applies in still greater measure to Russia. For, without doubt, Russian economic life is a hundred times more disarranged than German economic life. Just as little as the German proletarians obey their government's call for more intensive labor but, on the contrary, rather decrease the intensity where possible, so the Russian workers also do not think of any increase of production. Like the German proletarians they say to themselves: "For whom? The fruits of this do not go to me."

Thus it may be recorded that *the cultivated area in Russia has considerably decreased.* According to the reports of the soviet government the cultivated area in the gouvernement of Charkov has gone down 65% in the year 1920, in the gouvernement of Jekaterinoslov 40%, in the gouvernements of Cherson, Poltava and Odessa 15%. But it is to be noted that in the gouvernements of Jekaterinoslav and Poltava large parts have been covered by the war operations, and still the cultivated area has not decreased as much as in the Charkov district, which, since Denikin was beaten, has been free from every kind of invasion and from armies. *These figures are of extra-ordinary importance.* Unfortunately, it has not been possible for me to get figures for the other gouvernements, particularly from Central Russia.

The decrease in the cultivated area on the part of the peasants corresponds to the falling off in the productivity of the industrial workers and the city proletarians. But, while in regard to the proletarians we must seek the principal reason in poor nourishment and in the general nervous break-down after years of war-like efforts, that is, in unconscious factors, and only partly in conscious will, springing from revolutionary class consciousness (with the Russian proletarians it is almost exclusively the first named causes), we must seek it elsewhere when it concerns the peasants. Only to a small extent are they affected by break-down and indifference due to many years of war. The principal reason lies in the simple words: *We have nothing to gain by it.*

To all this comes another circumstance: *The shortage of seed grain.* In many villages the peasants use up the seed grain or the seed potatoes for other purposes. Frequently the government was compelled to requisition the seed grain of the peasants for other gouvernements.

But the distribution has been undertaken by means of the worst sample of Russian organization, so bad, that it could not be worse even under czarism. Russian bureaucracy is a chapter of its own, but the distribution of the seeds interests us in this connection. The bolshevik paper "The Ural Worker" gives the following picture of the conditions. In an article of May 19, 1920, number 119, the paper writes, under the heading: "It is impossible to delay any longer":

"To supply the need of seed grain of the farms there is needed, according to the reports of the district committees, 2,910,487 pud of grain (1 pud equals 34 lbs.), outside of vegetable seeds and seed potatoes. But the government committee has delivered only 26.25% of the seeds, that is, little more than one quarter of the quantity needed. Of this the district Schadrinsky has received 9.5%, the district Irbitsky and Krasnoufimsky 17.5%, but the district Kamischlovsky 51%. How can such an unjust and unequal distribution of the seed be explained?" The writer of the article seeks the reason in the incompetency and lack of good will of the persons on the distribution committee.

As a matter of fact there obtains in the Food Stuffs Committees of the governments (these committees are called "Gubprodkom") a *terrible bureaucratism*, which in the most intimate manner connects with the system of centralism.

The paper further relates that in the government of Jekaterinburg in Ural a total of 461,136 pud of seed potatoes were required. Up to May 9 there was available only 10,000 pud, or about 2.2%. But even this insufficient quantity was not divided in a regular way, but it was all sent, with the exception of 2,600 pud, to four districts, while six districts received nothing. Of the remaining 2,600 pud the consumers' society of the commune took 1,000 pud for its own part. (Since the bolshevik victory the consumers' societies in Russia have been made state organs.) The figures quoted show plainly in what position the government finds itself when it comes to ability to deliver and distribute seed grain, particularly seed potatoes.

"I shall not look for the causes of this bankruptcy, but must point out that the 'Gubprodkom' in its present composition has leaders to whom momentary effect is the main thing, instead of organizing the work rationally. The measures adopted by the leaders of the 'gubprodkom' stand far behind the real needs in the place concerned."

(Quoted from the report of a committee of the Food Stuffs Commissariat before the council of the first labor army, of May, 1920, No. 1743.)

The author of the article sought a way out of the dilemma by allowing the collective peasant organizations, the partnerships and the communes, as well as other organizations, to buy the seed

grain and the vegetable seeds and seed potatoes in open trade. He refers to the gouvernement of Petrograd, where this remedy was found. In the gouvernement of Petrograd permission has been given to the communal vegetable gardens, the soviet organizations and other organizations to practice free buying of seeds, and better results have been obtained. More than 10,000 dessiatins of land were supplied with seed grain.

From these reports it is evident that *the unsatisfactory delivery of seeds and seed grain is an important cause of the unsatisfactory cultivation of the soil.*

I am not here concerned with criticizing Soviet Russia; that is a thing which we in the present period must leave to the Russian workers themselves. What interests me here is to depict the economic conditions of the peasants. That this condition is not brilliant the descriptions given have proven. *The Russian peasants are suffering want, dire want, but less for want of food than for want of industrial products.* If the Russian revolution, the party ruling at present, succeeds in appeasing the hunger for industrial products, then the revolution will develop into freer forms, then no reaction can any longer interrupt its progress; but, if not, then the fate of the revolution is in the dark.

As I am writing down my experiences not that they may merely be condemned to an archive existence as dead matter, nor in order to give the counter-revolutionaries water on their mills, nor in order to call on the German workers for a spiritless and ape-like imitation of the Russian bolshevik and revolutionary policy, but rather have been inspired with the sincere desire that the revolutionary workers should benefit from the experiences of the Russian revolution and learn from it, I cannot abstain from pointing out that the world's hand and brain workers, as well as the peasants, *must guard against turning over the organization of distribution to a soulless and lifeless state bureaucracy—even if it be a communist bureaucracy.* Revolutionary workers! You see from the examples of Russia that the state was not able to get the seed grain and the vegetable seeds and the seed potatoes to the peasants, through its organs! You have also learnt that the peasants, when they had a free hand to supply their own needs themselves, as happened in the gouvernement of Petrograd, solved these problems quicker, easier and better. May this be an admonition and a hint for the world's workers *not to trust too much to the state and its omnipotence.* Even a communist-proletarian state is no exception to this; yes, in such a state it might be still more difficult, because, to begin with, the workers are not trained and accustomed to organizatory state work, and because the old bureaucrats will sabotage as far as possible. This is also what they did in Russia. Besides, the state is compelled, in all urgent cases, to turn the matter over to free organizations or private persons, who are then better able than the state to find the right way and complete the organization. With this we will not say that the private initiative of the capitalist ought to be restored—

although this also is done in Russia, inasmuch as more important purveying for the army and other similarly important matters were turned over to private parties; *we only wish to point out that there is no more incompetent apparatus for organizing the economic life than the state.* The bolsheviks may try to maintain as often as they please that it was not possible to organize all this in a satisfactory manner, as long as it was necessary to concentrate all power on the war, but that now, the war being over, the economic side of reconstruction can begin. The fact that during the war time, when the state made its greatest efforts to solve all problems quickly, when the knife was on its throat and it did not shrink from any measures, it was not able to solve the problems that confronted it, but placed the most difficult matters in the hands of free organizations or even individual persons, is a striking proof of the incapacity of the state, for when it cannot make good at a time when it is strongest, when idealism is in danger, then it is still less capable of doing it in less dangerous times.

The Political Conditions of the Peasants

That the economic life is of great significance for the political form, that is something one can easily admit without being a Marxist. Thus, taking possession of the land by the peasants is in more than one respect an economic and a political act at the same time. *The new form of political life, the soviets (the councils), connects in the most intimate manner with the economic transformation.* In many places the peasants divided the property of the landowner. In order to divide this in a just manner between themselves, and for the purpose of arranging the new relationships with neighboring villages as well as its relations to the whole country, they elected councils. Here we already have the roots of the soviet system. The building of this soviet system could, naturally, not be the same among the peasants as with the city proletariat. The peasants could not elect their soviets by the factory. They elected them by the communes or by the districts. They did not elect them according to economic units but according to territorial units. The state soviet communes, however, also elect according to their agricultural occupations.

The local soviets, the smaller district soviets and the government soviets of the peasants had, and have, mostly economic functions, if we except a few educational and school questions. It is a question of regulating traffic, roads, transportation to connect with the cities for trade purposes or, speaking socialistically, for exchange, and similar things. *The economic and political life are here very intimately connected.* But all these things have nothing to do with party politics. Although most of the peasants belong to no party, they still have elected their soviets according to party. This, of course, was done in party interest, not in the

interest of the peasants; but that springs from historic reasons. Still, the peasants frequently elect non-partisan soviets.

Naturally, all the parties tried their luck among the peasants in the beginning of the revolution. For *he who in Russia has the peasants behind him is building on a strong power*. Thus the bolsheviks gained great sympathies among the peasants when Lenin made the peace at Brest-Litovsk. Later they lost these sympathies again by sending the soldiers into the villages to requisition grain.

To-day the peasants are no longer so much interested in the parties as they were in the beginning of the revolution. They are still for the soviets and will probably always remain in favor of them, but the parties are not of such a stable nature as the soviet idea. It has often happened that the peasants have showed themselves against all parties. Socialism, or rather, communist husbandry and mode of living, does not strike the peasants as a party matter. For that reason the soviets are not identical with communism, as many workers think. Still, libertarian communism has always been connected with a kind of council system. For when the peasants or the workers in a place manage their own affairs, then they always elect their councils, or soviets, which decide on all matters that cannot be decided by each one separately. At the present time there are in Russia many peasants who are not communists but who take a stand for the soviet system. The soviet system is then for them only a form of direct political representation with elimination of all interferences from a central body in the local self-government. But, as in the historic moment of the outbreak of the revolution the parties still exerted some power of attraction over the peasants, we have to note that one party finally succeeded to gain and assert influence and power in the councils. But *to the extent that the party succeeded in gaining power and control in the soviets, to that extent the free soviets lost their power*. Of course, the larger the party is, the less this loss of freedom is felt. If most of the soviets consist of representatives elected as party members, then the party members feel correspondingly free, provided they agree with the tactics and politics of the party. But it often happens that the peasants have not put any party lists in the field for the soviet elections. Particularly in the Ukraine have I found instances of this. I have been present at several meetings of the executive committee of the district soviets and gouvernement soviets, as well as once in the congress of all the gouvernement soviets in Samara. The deliberations turned upon the economic situation. But I noticed that the economic policy was determined in accordance with the program of the bolshevik party. The higher authorities, such as the Council of People's Commissars, issue decrees through the different People's Commissariats and their department for agriculture, for education, for traffic and transportation, and *the soviets are the organs which have to carry out these decrees* or see to it that they are carried out.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the District Soviet in the province of Charkov on Sept. 13, 1920, there were two matters under discussion: (1) The provisioning of the army, and (2) The procuring of fire wood. According to the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, each precinct had to deliver a certain quantity of wood and provisions, according to its possibilities. A representative reported how the peasants in one precinct refused to help out with the wood cutting because they received no pay. He thought it would be necessary to, at least, give the peasants promises of delivery of goods to them, after which they would probably help out. Without such help of the peasants it would be impossible to obtain the required quantity of wood. Another representative spoke of the fact that there were bands of men in the woods which made the wood cutting difficult for the peasants. It would be necessary to induce the peasants to drive these bands away, but this the peasants do not want to do. (The reason why the peasants did not want to do this was that many of them belonged to these "bands" themselves.) There was also a speech by a delegate from the department for care of the wounded soldiers from the Polish and the Wrangel fronts. He described the misery of the wounded in lurid colors, in order to prevail upon the representatives of the Executive Committee of the Soviets to send them the means of life on a greater scale than before.

From these accounts it is evident that the business and the political functions of the soviets are limited to a certain circumscribed field outside of which it cannot go. For the biggest part it is no longer an organization working from the bottom to the top, but, on the contrary, from the top to the bottom; and it could hardly be otherwise for a state with a war-time administration of its national husbandry.

For the peasants this administration from above frequently proves oppressive and disagreeable, not to use a more powerful term. This comes plainly to expression in the soviet commune, where the administration in many cases is not in the hands of a locally elected soviet or manager, but in the hands of a person selected by a Supreme Council of National Economy, or an agricultural commissariat. The peasants thus feel anything but free. To begin with, the estate is in the hands of the state, as we have already shown. The peasants do not feel as owners of the soil they cultivate. In the second place, the appointed manager frequently carries on a regime comparable to that of the old land owner. Thus we read in the "Pravda," a well known bolshevik paper, of July 1, 1919, No. 141:

"The manager ("Sovchos") is often like the dog in the hay who does not eat it himself but won't let anybody else eat it, either. The whole establishment is in a state of collapse. (It refers to a soviet establishment in the gouvernement Tver.) The manager, an ex-land-owner, is a dirty, run-down old man of melancholy aspect, who seems already to belong

to another world. The peasants feel only hatred towards such a "sovchos" or "spez" (specialist). In every government or local district one may hear angry attacks on such management. The result of such an agrarian policy is an aggravation of the strained relations between the peasants and the soviet power."

It is clear that when the "Pravda" writes this it also has reason for so doing, as it is calling the attention of the government to these conditions. The government has, of course, no interest in aggravating such conditions, but, on the contrary, in removing them. But it appears from the numerous attempts that it is very difficult. And we must not blame it on lack of good will on the part of the government or governments, for the leaders of the soviet republic do not lack good will, but *the cause of it is the system of nationalization*, the system of indirect relations of the peasants to the soil and to the management in working the soil.

The ideal of the peasants is to feel free and to work on free soil. But that is also the ideal of all socialists. Under the conditions described, the Russian revolution has not yet come to a realization of this ideal, as the quoted lines from the "Pravda" show. It is not to be wondered at that Russian revolutionists make the question whether they would not have come nearer to these ideals if different tactics had been adopted. *The social-revolutionaries of the left, the anarchists, the anarcho-syndicalists, the maximalists, as well as part of the Ukrainian communists* answer "Yes" to this question. Above everything they are against the requisition policy of the government and, according to their agrarian program, against the nationalization of the land, for a more communal form, for a form that would give the peasants more independence, for such a form of possession and cultivation of the soil as would give the peasants the management, through soviets elected by themselves.

Against this the bolsheviks declare that they also are for these principles, but that the realization of them is so difficult—the peasants delivered nothing to the armies of the government and the cities—that it became necessary to resort to stern measures. The decree policy of the bolsheviks is in their opinion correct. Lenin says on the question, in a speech on "the position of the bolsheviks to the middle peasantry," made in Moscow in March, 1919:

"Fundamentally our decrees on agricultural economy are correct. We have not the least occasion to disown or deplore any of them. But if these decrees in themselves are correct, then it is absolutely false to force them upon the peasants with violence. In not a single decree is there any question of this. They are conceived as guides, as a summons to political activities."

But these words of Lenin could not prevent that the practical enforcement of these decrees meant the use of force against the peasants. That is what constitutes *the difference between*

fine-polished theories and rough practice. Although the bolsheviks give the peasant question the greatest attention, well knowing that it is a question of life and death for them, still the peasants repudiate with thanks the attention of the government. It cannot be denied that Lenin is right when he says that these decrees are fundamentally right. He should have added *for us*, but not for the peasants. The decree policy is in the interest of the state. It is, consequently, only the above mentioned anti-state parties who reject the decree policy in principle. But as the realization of socialism, communism and liberty is possible only through the abolition of the state, a change or improvement in the position of the peasants which would make them more satisfied, is attainable only in the anti-state direction. For these ideals cannot be banished from the efforts and the wishes of the people, not even by means of the *article by Trotzky and Radek in which they try to inform the workers and the peasants that free labor is a bourgeois superstition.* But the anti-state movement is characterized by the cancelling of all decrees. Along that road the soviet government is being pressed through the striving of the peasants for self-government and independence. These endeavors are also in harmony with the anti-state tendencies of the maximalists, the anarcho-syndicalists and also the social-revolutionaries of the left. *If the endeavors and movements of the peasants and the tendencies of the anti-state socialists get a better footing and finally press forward to victory, then first will the program of the social revolution have a chance of being realized.* The peasants do not desire any state communism in which everything is accomplished by order from the top, they want communal self-government, communalism, if you so want to call it, which means freedom to regulate their own affairs after their own desires and wishes. But this liberty they do not have under bolshevism, in spite of all well-meaning decrees. *As long as this most important of questions, the peasant question, is not solved to the satisfaction of the peasants, we cannot consider even the first stage of the social revolution completed.* First when this happens, the foundation is created for a peaceful development upward of social life. Under the present conditions, created by the bolsheviks, the suppression of one layer of the people, or class, by the other is still a living fact, carrying with it armed, violent uprisings. Under the rule of the bolsheviks the Russian revolution has not solved the peasant question but only complicated it still more. But that should not cause us to be astonished, for the bolshevik party is a Marxist, a city-proletarian party, and it is natural that the conquest of the state through a part of the city proletariat—in which the peasants have no part—cannot bring them liberation. The emancipation of the peasants can be accomplished only by the peasants themselves. Without doubt the social-revolutionaries of the left or the maximalists would, as peasant parties, have dealt with the question with more understanding than the bolsheviks. The latter are the least fit to solve the peasant question along socialist lines.

The City and Industry

The Development of the Unions

FOR the peasants the principal feature of the revolution was taking possession of the land. *For the proletariat of the cities and the industries the aim was to take possession of the factories, mines and means of transportation.* The problem was easily solved in the country, because no more knowledge than before was necessary for the cultivation of the soil (in Russia scientific cultivation of the soil was not yet introduced), but in industry the situation was more difficult.

In the country the combination of things was easy. But in industry the combination was complicated. In the country there were no intermediate stages. Taking possession of the soil was the immediate aim. In the industrial centers another effort came to the surface in the first period of the revolution and demanded a solution, namely, *workers' control, control of the industries.* *This rallying word was sounded already during the Kerensky period.* It corresponded to the attempts of the workers to overthrow autocracy in the factories as well as the czar's autocracy in politics. Democracy was desired in industry as well as in economic life. The workers felt that, to make their emancipation a reality, *the revolution in political life would have to be followed by a revolution on the economic field.* That the workers did not immediately demand the turning over of the factories had several reasons. For this purpose the Kerensky government would first have to be overthrown or compelled to resign, but even then they did not feel sure that they were in a condition to conduct production in its entirety without the private owner, who in many cases also was the technical leader. Finally the workers were probably influenced by the circumstance that they felt that the czar ruled over the people but was not the owner of the people, and that he was sovereign in the state but did not own the state. Nor is a general the owner of the soldiers but he rules them just the same. Authority, consequently, is not always based on property. The possibility was thinkable that, even if private property in the factories and in industry was abolished, mastery could still continue. In fact, this instinct of the workers was correct, for at present private property is, on the whole, abolished in Russia, without giving the workers cause to feel that they are controllers of production or masters of the shop. The decree creating individual management of the shops is the cause of this. Con-

trol of industry in the shop is an essential part of proletarian democracy. The proletariat must, consequently, first of all conquer.

Control of industry, which was the demand of the workers in the October days of 1917, finally became so strong that it resulted in control over the employer. After this, taking possession of the shops came as a matter of course and began soon after. But the taking over of the factories is only the negative side; the positive side is their management. First in the managing of them begins socialist or communist economy. In the country the case is similar, but there it is much simpler.

The most burning question now, the question which forms the very center of socialization, is: *What organization will undertake to procure the raw material and the disposal of the manufactured products, and what organs will supply the workers with the necessary means of life. Only when the workers have created organizations for this purpose can the taking over of the factories meet with success. The misfortune of the Russian workers was that they had no such organs at their disposition, that they, under the rule of czarism, were not in a position to create such organs. It was exactly on this rock that socialization in Germany stranded in the November days of 1918. The theoretical foundation of the German trade unions was not of that kind. On this point only the French syndicalist unions have fought themselves through to a clear understanding of the role of the labor organizations for the realization of the social revolution. The German syndicalists also have taken this standpoint, even if not always so clearly, but in their congress of Christmas, 1919, they adopted a clear program. Up to the present time they are the only labor organization in Germany with whom we can find a clear program for the taking over and the organizing of production and consumption by the workers.*

The lack of a clear understanding of how the different industries work hand in hand, as well as the lack of proper organizations for the purpose, had for result that the workers, who had no idea of these things and only knew capitalist economic methods, retained the idea of these and kept on running along capitalist lines. But when they had taken over the factories they found themselves in the place of the single private owner, the factory owner, or the capitalist stock companies. That means that they now divided the owners' profits between them. But that did not abolish capitalism; it had only been changed from private ownership into another, collective form of ownership. Capitalist competition, the cheating of consumers, the more favorable position of the workers who produced goods more in demand or more important, all this remained as before, and under similar circumstances it will be the same in any place.

The workers of the world must keep this in sight. That the idea has not yet broken through in the labor movement that the workers are not only exploited as producers but also as consum-

ers, that depends very likely upon the influence of Marx. The whole labor movement which calls itself Marxian has never been directed upon the carrying on of a struggle against the exploitation of the workers as consumers. There was not sufficient attention called to this circumstance in their propaganda. *The workers are not cheated and exploited only in the factory, but also in the satisfying of all their needs.*

Economic life consist of two parts, *production and consumption.* In the capitalist system both parts, naturally, offer a chance for the exploitation of the workers. For that reason the workers should combat both these kinds of exploitation equally, if they want to annihilate the capitalist system and replace it with a socialist or communist system. But they did not do this, and they are not doing it yet. Even to-day their struggle is directed more against the exploitation on the field of production. *Only as producers have they created class struggle organizations,* and only as producers are they fighting the battle against capital. The consumers' societies, which existed in Russia, were not class struggle organizations. Nor are they so in Germany. Even if there are consumers' societies who only have workers as members, they still are only class organizations, but no class struggle organizations. Towards the end they also began to function as such a little, by taking care of workers in strikes. Evident as this matter is, equally regrettable is it that the workers neither have nor had any class struggle organizations on the field of consumption. It can be understood because the workers were, and are, *directly exploited only as producers. But as consumers they are indirectly exploited.* The direct exploitation the workers can easily see and understand, the indirect exploitation they discern with more difficulty. The socialists made use of this circumstance. They showed the workers that they were exploited as producers and called on them to organize and to fight. But this is quite unpardonably thoughtless. It was the duty of the socialist propaganda to point out to the workers that side of the exploitation which was equally important, although not so easy to see and understand. It was, of course, easy to induce the workers to struggle for a higher wage. But what good did this one-sided battle as producers do them? No good at all! *Even if they won the struggle and got higher wages, the capitalists always had the other side of the exploitation open, the side of which the workers had not thought. The capitalist raised the price of his wares and thus rolled the wage increase on the consumers, or, in other words, through the wage increase the exploitation was not diminished by one iota.*

With impetuous force the Russian workers fought for the abolition of private ownership of the establishments by capitalists. And they succeeded. If they had fought with the same impetuosity against the second kind of exploitation, on the field of consumption, then—. But this they could not do; for the Russian workers the abolition of capitalism was equal to the abolition of

the capitalists. They had embodied the exploiter in their own employer. But the exploitation through consumption was not a person; it was a system. *A system, however, can not be removed by removing or driving away persons.* This was also verified on the field of production. An economic system which in the human society fills the functions of supplying the population with all the things that are necessary for life, cannot be removed except by means of another economic system, and only to the extent that this new system is capable, in each single instance, of stepping into the breach of the old.

The development of the Russian revolution shows us this on every point. The German workers and the workers of other countries must learn from this experience. *They have to build up a socialist economic system in their organizations, which steps in the place of the capitalist system. If they do not do this and a political revolution breaks out, then the revolution will remain only political.* For this reason they should begin with it immediately. The workers have to organize themselves into consumers' unions or *create unions which on the day after the revolution are capable of taking consumption into their hands.* Such organizations are the "Bourse du Travail" (labor exchanges), or "Arbeiterboerse," as the Germans call them. Without such organizations they will commit the same errors as the Russian workers did, and capitalism, which they had thrown out through one door and thought they had conquered because its political representative has been made powerless, comes into evidence again from all corners and crevices and overgrows the socialist beginnings, until the workers are able to make it superfluous through their own new-formed economic organizations. *But it is a fatal error to put this new economic system into the hands of the state.*

We left the Russian revolution at the stage where the workers took possession of the factories and, partly at their own expense, produced for themselves without attacking the capitalist system of consumption. This is by some German social-democratic theoreticians, among them Kautsky, being described as "syndicalism." There is nothing more false than such a statement, which they either make out of ignorance or intentional deceit. A glance at the declaration of principles of the syndicalists is sufficient in order to convince any one of this. A thorough refutation of this error or deception is, however, beyond the scope of this book.

That the Russian workers undertook nothing else and were in no position to do anything else is traceable to the circumstance that they had no organization for the purpose. They lacked the unions which as the embryonic cells of the new socialist economic system develop the required abilities and organize for the tasks which enable the workers to crowd out the capitalist economic system with a socialist system.

The Russian unions date back only from the year 1905. After the victory of the reaction they were again dissolved and had mostly to lead an underground existence. After 1910 they

started to develop once more, but during the years of the war they were again fought most strenuously by the czarist government and suppressed.

After the overthrow of czarism in March 1917 the unions began to push forward in a powerful manner, so that, when in July a conference of the unions took place in Petrograd (the third conference), already 1,475,425 members were represented by 220 delegates. At this conference it became apparent of what character the Russian unions were. Two different tendencies were represented; *one left and one right*. The left wing took the stand that the unions should repudiate every thought of class conciliation and of the possibility of co-operation with the bourgeoisie. But this left wing lacked about 15-20 votes of a majority and its propositions did not carry. But resolutions were adopted calling for a greater taxation of the owning classes, for the introduction of maximum prices on the most important products, for control of production, for direct participation in the affairs of the state by the most important branches of production, for rigid bank control, for compulsory syndicating and trustification, for reorganization of the organs of state control. At the same time a declaration was made that the process of control were too difficult for the proletariat to take over, alone or in preponderance.

From the stand thus taken by the unions it will be seen that, in consequence of the revolutionary situation, the unions occupied themselves with problems, which came to the front even in *the German revolution*, — control over production, the right of the workers to a voice in engaging and discharging workers, and so on. In Germany also they have occupied themselves with democratic demands, with the transplantation of democracy into industry, something which the capitalists resisted under the slogan that they were "master of the house". In spite of all the progress that this workers' control signifies, it still is nothing else than the introduction of democracy in the economic life, but it is not the social revolution in itself. Even such organizations which are not in principle for the social revolution may put up such demands for joint control, as for instance the German "free" unions did, unions which were free only in the sense that they did not stand in the service of any socialist ideas.

When later the October revolution broke out and ended in a bolshevik victory, the bolsheviks, as a radical-democratic party, wished to carry the revolution over to the place of work. The workers themselves also, naturally, wanted to make the revolution into a social revolution, that is, altogether eliminate the capitalists.

But then it became evident that this was not so easy as was expected. And why not? Because the workers of Russia were not in a position to abolish capitalism, in the hands of which the whole economic life had rested up to that time, without exposing economic life to the worst kind of crisis. *The social*

revolution confronted the workers with tasks to which they were not equal in their first onrush. But as a party which could only lean on the working class and on no other class (on the peasants only conditionally) had the power in the state, this party also had to take over the responsibility for the economic life, if it did not wish to either leave the capitalists in their position of power on the economic field or again give up its political power. But they could undertake nothing without the workers, as they had no state organs at their disposition for these purposes.

They, consequently, turned to the unions. The workers strove for economic liberty, for elimination of exploitation by the employers. In many cases they chased the employer to the devil; in many cases he left his factory or his works in the lurch, from despair, or from the hope to be able to sabotage production by this means, so that the workers, who would then understand their own incapacity, would call him back again. In a number of cases it has also happened that to-day the old employer is again the leader of the establishment. Not with the old right of ownership, it is true, but as a so-called specialist, who is far better off than the worker.

As the workers now started to run industry, they elected for that purpose committees, so-called factory committees. These factory committees took over the factories. But as the state needed the products created, it entered into indirect contact with the factory committees through the unions. With the factory committees themselves the state could not do business, because for that purpose a large apparatus would have been necessary. The unions thus received the role of negotiating production for the state. The ruling party soon recognized the important role which falls to the unions on the field of production and on the whole economic field in general, and, as many of the party members belonged to the unions (it continued, after all, to be a party mostly composed of workers), it sought, through its members, to place the unions under the influence of the party and make them subordinate to the party. This was the best way for the ruling party to secure control of production and to place the whole of production in their service. The bolshevik party also declared in their program that "the organization apparatus of nationalized industry must first of all rest upon the unions."

The factory committees were, consequently, children of the revolution, sprung from the needs of the workers to create organs of managing the factories. But the workers could not help but soon perceiving that this alone was not sufficient. If they did not want to remain in the capitalist economic system they were compelled to place consumption also upon an organized fellowship basis. But for all these tasks they had never prepared themselves. All this was so new to them that they, to begin with, had to go through many experiments, many mistakes. Instinctively, or from very obvious reasons they turned to their unions. In

these they now had to look for their natural agents and representatives. They were further strengthened in their confidence in the unions through the circumstance that the new ruling party, or, to speak more plainly, the state, also turned to the unions with the same errands and wanted to use the unions for the same purpose. As the unions still were of too new a structure and were confronted with functions to which they were unaccustomed, it is easy to understand that they leaned for support more or less on the state and recognized as leader the party which sat at the rudder, especially as it was a proletarian party with many members in their own ranks. But the party, with all the power of the state at its disposition, began an intensive propaganda in the ranks of the unions, in order to get greater influence. And in this it succeeded, but the greater the influence of the party became, the more the unions lost in independence, the more they came under the party whip. To the extent that this development progressed, the rights of the factory councils or committees were circumscribed.

The party, which desired to get control of production through the unions (and it succeeded in getting it) wished to make production as abundant and profitable as possible. But production did not rise; on the contrary, with the decreasing supply of foodstuffs it fell more and more. The party's policy towards the peasants was determined through the grain monopoly. In accordance with this the peasants were to deliver all grain to the state. The peasants did not want to do this. It came to disputes. The state began to requisition the grain. But the grain deliveries were not increased through these means, and *the workers did not receive enough bread. This had a tendency to diminish their productivity.* The factory committees were not energetic enough, and the state took to other means. *It took the management out of the hands of the committees and placed it in the hands of individuals. The managing councils had thus played their role as managers of production to the end and lost their right of self-determination.*

During the period of czarism and capitalism the Russian unions were, in part, organizations similar to the German "free" unions, but a good deal more radical. Their radical position was evident already from the persecution by czarism. They were compelled to be not only relief organizations but also fighting organizations. In how far they served this purpose, we can best learn from the third conference, already mentioned, which took place during the storms of the revolution in November 1917. Already then managing councils were recognized as necessary organs with the function of control over the workers. But during this period the unions were still class struggle organizations. *Later they changed from class struggle organizations to productive organizations.*

The change in the character of the unions was also accompanied by a change in the form of the organization. *While*

they were formerly organized along craft lines, they now became industrial organizations. Without doubt the industrial form of organization is the best one for unions which shall serve as organs of production. For the workers organized along industrial lines are better in position to manage production than the craft unions. This has been shown in America. The organization of the Industrial Workers of the World is also built on this principle, as in accordance with its theory it intends to take over production. The I. W. W. are, no doubt, the forerunners of this modern form of union movement. But the Communist Party of Russia (the bolsheviks) contributed to the acceleration of this development. It had, through the above mentioned process, obtained more and more influence in the unions, so that their resolutions always went through at the later congresses. Through the overwhelming influence of the government party the unions became more and more the tools of the state; they were made into state organs.

The formal decision to make them state organs was made at the second congress of the unions in January 1919.

There it says: "that the nationalization of all the means of production and the organization of society on a new socialist foundation requires slow and persevering labor with the rebuilding of the whole state machinery, as well as the creating of new organs of accounting, and organs for control and regulation of the whole system of production and distribution. This requires of the unions a more energetic and more active participation in the exercise of soviet power, through direct representatives in all organs of the state. The whole process of melting the unions together with the organs of state power, must take place as the unavoidable result of their most intimate co-operation."

This would, consequently, mean that the unions have influence on the policy of the state, just as, inversely, the soviet organs have influence on the unions. I was told in Moscow that this was the case, and that the unions had representations in the different commissariats. Thus; the president of the All-Russian Central Council of the Unions, M. Tomski, is also a member of the war commissariat. Besides, there are other members of the Central Council of the Unions in other commissariats, through which arrangement the fusion spoken of in the congress decision and the changing of the unions into state organs (Verstaatlichung) is secured. But this is not so to understand that any union member can become a member of a commissariat of the Council of People's Commissars. In order to have this possibility he must first have been elected to the Council of the Trade Unions. *To this Central Council of the Unions only members of the Communist Party (bolsheviks) can be elected.* I know old revolutionaries who were communists before the social-democratic party of the bolsheviks called itself communist,

who belong to the unions. They are also intelligent and surely have all the qualities which make them suitable for the Central Council of the Trade Unions. But they can never come to this as long as they do not join the Communist Party. Thus they can never participate in the work of the soviets, and the so-called co-operation of the workers through their unions is possible only for the members of the ruling party. *Not the unions as such, but the communist-bolsheviks who are in the unions, have the right to co-operate in the state organs.*

It must be admitted that the revolutionary party could not make use of all workers or employees, organized into the unions, on all kinds of work and, particularly, not in the responsible positions. For in the unions there were, and is now, many who are against the revolution on principle and who, if they had been made use of, without doubt would have done everything to retard and hold up revolutionary progress. But this should not have been done with revolutionaries, only because they had a different opinion or because they belonged to a different party or movement. That means that the bolsheviks seek to monopolize the revolution, that they want to claim the right to the revolution for only one party, while there still are several revolutionary parties in Russia.

The Industrial Union is an advanced form compared with the guild or craft form. The industrial unions of Russia were organized on centralist lines. Thus the soviet government was best in a position to use the unions as their own apparatus. In the mad tempo of the Russian revolution the unions were too unripe to be able to choose their forms of organization. In order to come to some sort of order in the general disorder, the bolsheviks tried for a short while to eliminate the unions and only created Councils, Central Councils or Factory Councils, but these experiments have gone out of fashion. They disappeared after a very short duration; after the unions in their first congress, in January, 1918, had liquidated these central councils of the factory councils,—as they neither wished to have nor could have any competing organizations which only led to mutual provocation and quarrels,—the whole thing was laid into the hands of one central body which was given great authority. Through this central body the state could now place its hands on the smallest body, the outermost points on the circumference. Thus, the form of organization of the unions in Russia was born in the hour of need and carried the stamp of the process upon itself. *The unions have lost their independence, they are tools of the state.* Trotzky is not so very wrong when in his anti-Kautsky book he says: "After once taking the power one cannot accept certain consequences and repudiate others." From the possession of power, which they wanted to keep, and had to keep at any cost, one thing followed the other, *and the workers are again ruled over.*

While the industrial union form is the most proper form of

union for the workers, even of other countries, still, the centralism of these industrial unions, which made the subordination of the union under the party and the soviet government possible, was to be traced to that particular circumstance. But if the Russian bolsheviks want to transfer their own forms of organization upon the rest of the countries, then they make a fatal error. As, the peculiar form of organization called "Labor Bureaus" arose out of French soil, and as the Industrial Unions arose in America, so there grew up in Russia under particular circumstances the dependence of the unions upon the party. *Just as it would be a failure to transfer the French form to American conditions, so it is also a failure to try to carry over the Russian form to other countries, as provided for in the statutes of the Third International.* In Sweden, for instance, the local samor-ization is a far better form for that country, not only as a fighting organization but also as a future foundation for socialist production. Anyhow, it would be difficult for the centralistic leadership of a political party to work its way into control of such a form of organization, in fact, it is inconceivable.

The Organization of the Unions

The building of the Russian unions is partly done from the top downward and partly from the bottom upward. But their functions take place exclusively from the top downward. We therefore get a better picture of the general activity of the unions, which at the same time serve as a regulator of production, when we consider their growth outward from the center, as the rules prescribe. In Russia, membership in the unions is obligatory for all industrial workers. There are 4½ millions of organized workers in Russia, (1920).

Every organization must be practical, that is, its form must correspond to the functions it has to fill. As the present function of the Russian unions is to manage industry and to fill the tasks given it by the Supreme Council of National Economy, which has production in its hands, the unions must be so organized that they can do justice to these tasks. The shops (factories, furnaces, mines, transport and distribution facilities) are no longer in the hands of private employers but in the hands of the state. When the shops still were in the hands of private employers, a union organization of the kind that exists today was not necessary for capitalist production. But when everything was nationalized and thus became the property of a single owner, (the state), this single owner, also had to be in the position of being able to supervise everything from one central point. We can best illustrate this if we imagine a great capitalist company, which does not either belong to any single person but still all threads run together in one central point. Everything is conducted from this central point. Everything must again come back to that point.

The manager of production is the Supreme Council of National Economy. To production belong two parts: men and things. The organization of the human part is the unions. For this reason the Supreme Council of National Economy must act through the unions. The manner of procedure is this: *The managers of the factories are appointed by the S. C. of N. E. after nominations by the unions.* Furthermore, representatives of the S. C. of N. E. have a seat in the councils of the unions. Besides, the unions have a representative in the Commissariat of Labor. The commissar of the Commissariat of Labor, who at the same time is a member of the Council of People's Commissars is put on this post through the joint selection of the unions.

a) *The Central Council of the All-Russian Unions* consists of 120 members and is elected from a congress of local district committees, government committees, local district councils and government councils. The president of the Central Council of the All-Russian Unions is *Michael Tomski*. The members of the Central Committee are eleven. They are, besides Tomski: A. Andrejeff, W. Kossior, E. Holzman, H. Ziperovitch, N. Ivanoff, N. Bucharin, P. Rutzutak, J. Lutovinow and W. Schmidt.

Of these, two sit in the Council of People's Commissars (Sownarkom), one with a deciding vote, Schmidt, as People's Commissar of Labor, and M. Tomski with a consultative voice. Besides, Tomski takes part in the Committee of Defense of the Soviet Republic, with a deciding vote. Both are communists, members of the bolshevik party, to which also all the others mentioned belong. *Non-members of the bolshevik party cannot be elected to the Central Council of the All-Russian Unions.*

The functions of this Central Council of the All-Russian Unions are:

1. Regulating the work and the wages (sanctioning of the wage scale). Dividing of the workers into three groups, by means of which the qualified workers, the premiums and the rations are determined. The establishment of a scientific institute for calculation of the workers' expenditure of energy.
2. The establishment of a labor secretariat to include all unions. 25 instructors are sent to the different gouvernements for the carrying out of this measure in the provinces and to fix membership contributions. At present the contribution amounts to 2% of the wages. It is obligatory and is deducted from the wages.
3. Culture department: Representatives are sent to the presiding board of the Commissariat of Education, in order to organize, under the leadership of that commissariat, continuation schools for the working youth and establish evening courses for all workers.
4. Participation in the work of the Supreme Council of National Economy.

Besides the above mentioned presiding board of eleven persons there is a general session of representatives of the Central Committees of the various industrial unions. This consists of 40 persons.

b) *Gouvernement or Provincial Councils.* In order to transmit these functions to the ranks of the workers, the Central Council sends its decisions (partly of their own making), as well as the decrees of the Supreme Council of National Economy or the Commissariat of Labor to the gouvernement or provincial Councils of the unions in all crafts or industries, as well as to the central committees of the Industrial Unions.

These "gouvernement councils" consist of 7-15 persons. They are elected by the local district councils of all unions. The gouvernement councils comprises all the workers of all occupations in a gouvernement. The functions of a gouvernement council are to carry out the decisions and the tasks referred to it by the Central Council of the All-Russian Unions which are worked out on the basis of the functions outlined in the above mentioned four paragraphs.

c) *The Local District Councils.* They are elected by all the organized workers of the whole local district (in German "Kreis") They consist of 5-9 members. Their tasks are to carry out the work turned over to them by the gouvernement union councils.

d) *The Central Committee of the Industrial Union.* Besides the above mentioned organs there are the Industrial Unions. The central committees of these industrial unions have a membership of 15-21. These central committees are elected by the local district and provincial committees of the unions in question. The functions of these central committees of the industrial unions are about the same as those of the Central Council of the All-Russian Unions, only they are specially adapted for the particular industry such as metal, textile, or food stuffs. They occupy themselves in particular with the elaboration of tariffs, serve as information and propaganda bureaus, have charge of the central supply of the special kind of working clothes for the workers of their calling, which are necessary for the work, and send instructors to the lower sub-committees. There are also special commissions or boards elected by these central committees in connection with the Supreme Council of National Economy. Such boards formed, with the corresponding departments of the S. C. of N. E., the Central Committee of the Industrial Unions of the foodstuff industry, the machinery industry, the electrical industry and all those which had charge of the provisioning of the country. It was the duty of these boards to take part in the provisioning. In January 1920 there were 32 Industrial Unions and an equal number of central committees. At the last III. congress it was, however decided to undertake amalgamations which *will reduce the number to 23.*

e) *The Provincial Committee* is the next organ with which the Central Committee of the Industrial Unions has direct relations. It consists of 5-9 members. Each union has such a provincial committee. There is a provincial committee of the unions of the metal workers, the foodstuffs workers, etc. This provincial committee is elected by the local district (Kreis) committees and the shop councils. Its functions are to carry out the instructions given it by the Central Committee of the Industrial Unions. To this provincial committee the Supreme Council of National Economy also send a representative, in order to help the committees in their work.

f) *The Local District Committee* is in its functions a daughter organization of the provincial committee. Each union has such a local district committee. Thus, there is one for the metal industry, one for the foodstuffs industry, etc. The local district committee is elected by the shop councils or factory committees.

g) *The Factory Committees*. The lowest organs of the unions, which are also called cells, are the factory committees or shop councils. They are elected by the workers. *Their tasks or functions* were worked out about the middle of 1918 by the Central Council of the All-Russian Unions, which consists only of party communists and were announced to the workers as decrees. They read as follows:

1. The shop councils, according to the decision of the central council of the unions, take all measures desirable for welding together the workers and employees of an enterprise into a productive organization.
2. They establish among the workers and employees a *strict proletarian discipline* determined by the union.
3. To watch over the *rigid enforcement* of all measures and rules by the Commissariat of Labor for the protection of the worker and to devise ways and means of improving the conditions of work.
4. They investigate whether the establishment has *enforced all the rules of the Supreme Council* aiming at the increase of production and the maintenance of business procedure.
5. *They enforce* strictly and exactly the mutual observance of the tariff agreements and normal productivity.
6. They *exercise full control* over the work.
7. They undertake the supplying of the workers with the articles needed, *in accordance with the rules* of the foodstuffs authorities. For that purpose they enter into connection with the corresponding organizations and establish people's kitchens, consumers' unions, etc.
8. They *execute the decisions* of the workers grievance com-

mittees and the punishments measured out by these, in accordance with the tariff agreements.

9. They *participate* in the engaging and discharging of workers and employees, *according to the decree* about labor exchanges and the instructions of the union.

These are to-day the functions of the shop councils. Thus, we must here add, that *the workers no longer have the right to manage the establishment or to say a word about the process of production.* In the third congress, in March 1920, position was expressly taken against this right of the workers, on the ground that this right now belonged to the unions as a whole and not to single groups. But it is not even the unions who appoint the managers of the enterprises; it is the Supreme Council of National Economy, which has this right, after the recommendation of the unions. *Manager of the establishment becomes he who is appointed by the S. C. of N. E.* In the decision of March, 1920, it says:

"The shop committees are hereby established as the local units of the unions, with functions analogous to the unions, with retention of responsibility, and under the report sphere of the higher instances of the unions, and they are hereby enjoined from in any manner meddling with the conduct of the establishment's business; for the elimination of parallel work in the offices of the management and the unions of an establishment all production commissions of the shop committees are hereby disestablished."

Here is, as we see, quite openly expressed, that the workers have no right whatsoever in the management of production on the place of work; yes, even the control, which in the first days of the revolution was such a popular demand, has been suspended. It says plainly that *the workers must keep from any meddling with the conduct of the business.*

Nor is the right of engaging and discharging workers mentioned in Article 9 saved to the workers. Through the "Law of Mobilization of Labor Power" the workers are compelled to go to the place of work to which they are assigned. *If they leave that place without permission of their superiors they can be punished.* And that happens often. The idea with this is to hit the bourgeoisie, all labor power being registered. But, as the Moscow papers related in the spring of 1920, there were in Moscow 312,000 unregistered persons, which were not affected by this decree, or only in an unsatisfactory way. Among these 312,000, few are workers, most of them belonging to the bourgeois element. This instance proves how difficult it is to hit the right ones and pull the bourgeoisie out to work. Now it is attempted to combat this by means of work-books. It is to be hoped that this will be successful now and in the future, in order that the burden of the workers may be lightened.

But if we consider the form of organization by itself and compare it with other unions, we find the form used by the Ger-

man syndicalists to be most like the Russian form. Here also we have two poles, the industrial or craft union with its groupings, and the Labor Bureaus. The difference consists only in this that the Russian unions have not fully carried out the idea of Labor Bureaus (Arbeiterboerse). In Russia we have only the local district council (this would correspond to the labor bureau of the German syndicalists) and gouvernement or provincial councils. In Russia there is no federation of all the "labor bureaus" of the country. This function falls to the Central Councils of the All-Russian Unions, which, however, at the same time is expected to be, and is, principally a centralistic grouping of the Industrial Unions. But as this is a centrum for both functions, its function must with necessity be a difficult one.

A further difference consists in the very nature of the two organizations; the Russian unions are absolutely centralistic; the single parts have no right to self-determination; they have to carry out the decisions and orders of the central councils to the limit. But in Freie Arbeiter-Union Deutschlands (Free Labor Union of Germany), that is, the Syndicalist Movement, the local organizations, the Labor Bureaus as well as individual unions belonging to the industrial or craft federations have the right of complete self-determination. The idea which serves as a foundation of the Russian unions is the same as, or similar to the fundamental idea of the German syndicalists. Both wish to be the organizations which have to solve the problem of production and consumption in the socialist society.

These tasks which the Freie Arbeiter-Union of Germany has set for itself, theoretically, the Russian unions had an opportunity to put into practice, although under other conditions and with the use of other means. *But it has not yet been possible to completely grip the whole economic life through the unions.* Lozovsky, one of the presiding members of the Central Council of the All-Russian Unions, says in a pamphlet treating of the Russian unions, that this is an ideal to which they would, without doubt, approach in the future, but that it is not possible for the present.

The provisioning is still largely handled by the nationalized Consumers' Societies (Centrosoyuz), who co-operate with the Food Stuffs Commissariat and have a branch in each locality. This branch supplies the workers with foodstuffs through the shop councils or factory committees. For the rest, the supplying of food stuffs is not in the hands of one single organization. As the food stuffs are so scarce everybody is bungling with it. Lozovsky also says that "in the same measure as the unions are perfecting themselves and fill all the functions of economic life, the soviets will disappear. In bolshevik theory the soviets are, in consequence, intended only as the weapons of the period of transition, the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the breaking down of capitalism.

The Opposition in the Unions

We have now discussed the program, the form and the functions of the Russian unions. I have also taken pains to ascertain whether the Russian workers are all satisfied with the present condition of the unions or whether there are tendencies which are in opposition. And I was able to observe *an opposition coming from two different camps, first from the menshevik camp, and, second, from the camp of the anarcho-syndicalists.* The opposition of the mensheviks has taken root principally in the ranks of the printers. It takes the standpoint of democracy. It is of the opinion that the workers should co-operate with other parties and classes, as only then a continued development of economic conditions would be thinkable. Earlier this tendency stood for the Constituent Assembly, but now that the assembly has ceased to exist, they accept *fait accompli*. Nevertheless, it demands that the unions, as in the capitalist state, should have the right to strike and that they should be free from the state.

The opposition of the anarcho-syndicalists shows itself in several different unions. Among these we may mention: the bakery workers' unions in Moscow as well as several clubs of anarcho-syndicalists, which function as propaganda centers inside the industrial organizations of the workers of all occupations. This is a trade union opposition, whose form of organization corresponds to the Danish Trade Union Opposition. The position of this trade union opposition towards the central unions is not like that of the mensheviks, but of a radical nature. *The leading ideas of this opposition* come from the anarcho-syndicalist world conception, which against Marxist bolshevism raises the theory of libertarian socialism, and against state communism the theory of anti-state communism. On this ground they *combat the subordination of the unions to political parties, generally, and to the state in particular.* They point to the workers' loss of interest in their unions, which has resulted from *the changing of the unions into state organs.* This change tends to destroy the free development of the worker, and is dangerous to the social revolution. According to them the workers have, through the change of the unions into state organs, come under the control of the ruling party, while the sense of the social revolution is that the workers should be economic masters. Briefly, *against the "statifying" of the unions they propose the syndicalization of the state, i. e., the dissolution of the state functions into functions of economic organizations.* (In principle the bolsheviks agree with the syndicalists on this point, f. i. Lozovsky in his pamphlet on the Russian unions. But they hold that this should be deferred to a later time; now, during the dictatorship, it is not to be thought of, in their opinion.)

But as they thought that the rise of such tendencies would weaken the rule of the proletarian party, they see a danger in it and combat it. The syndicalists, consequently, see a danger in the

“statifying” of the unions and the communist-bolsheviks see a danger in the syndicalization of the state. *But the bolsheviks admit that development is bound to go in the direction in which the syndicalists are driving.* These ideas of the anarcho-syndicalists are also supported by so-called industrialists. The industrialists also object to the supremacy of the state over the unions and demand self-determination and autonomy and independence of the state. In Petrograd this tendency was quite strongly represented this summer of 1920, and the presiding officer of the Petrograd Soviet, Zinovieff, who is also known as the chairman of the Executive Committee of the III. International, was then strenuously combatting this tendency.

The union demand for independence from the party as well as of the state lately showed itself also among the party-communist unions. At the railroad workers congress in the summer of 1920, when the Executive Committee of the union was elected, consisting of 20 men, one half stood for the independence of the unions, that is, they favored giving the unions the last word in union affairs and not the party. And still all of the elected were party members. Persons not members of the Communist Party cannot be elected to the executive committee of any union. As this executive committee now was to elect a chairman, they could not agree, being that ten of them belonged to one tendency while ten were of the other tendency, and each tendency, naturally, wanted one of their own as a chairman. As will appear from this *the aversion of the union men against being ruled by a party is on the increase.* But in the same measure as this takes place the syndicalist and industrialist ideas gain influence, and these demand the absolute independence from the party for the unions.

Due to the sovereignty of the party over the unions, no actions are permitted the unions which are against the party. As it also is the party which has the rudder of state in its hands, *every attack of the unions which is directed against the party, is also directed against the state,* and vice versa.

Thus there was, as an instance, a strike of bakers in Moscow. The bakers demanded a larger bread ration. Up to that time they had had the same quantity as the population of Moscow, that is, 1 lb. or 400 grams daily (.88 lb. American weight). But the military bakers had 4 lbs. of bread daily, that being the military ration. Now the other bakers demanded just as much. Their demand would have been more just if they had taken the stand that the military should also have received no more than 1 lb. The strike does not bear testimony of a high moral level. The government, naturally, did not accede to the demands of the bakers, and the bakers struck. It is to be noted that the secretary of the union of the bakers was an anarcho-syndicalist, by the name of N. Pavlov. The measures which the government took in the matter are reported in the “Pravda” of June 19, 1920, in the following manner: “The plenary meeting of the unions took up the matter in their capacity of a government organ. Comrade Melnitschansky,

the chairman of the Moscow Council of the unions, reported on the case and said that the investigation had shown, that the influence of the anarcho-syndicalists were strongly apparent among the bakers. A complete report by Comrade Melnitschansky appeared in No. 125 of the "Pravda." The meeting thereupon adopted the following resolution: Due to the systematic abuse and breach of union discipline by the members of the union committee of the Moscow bakers, it was decided to dissolve the section of the Moscow bakers and include the bakers in the union of the foodstuff workers. The members of the former committee of the section of the bakers' union, N. Pavlov, Kameschov, Nuschenkov, Vurgov and Komsnitzov are excluded from the union movement and shall, furthermore, be held to answer before a judiciary board. They lose their right to speak before any assembly and can never more be elected to a responsible post in the unions."

Naturally, other conflicts occur in the union movement, such as strikes, insubordination, etc. But the mentioning of one conflict is sufficient to make us understand that friction and conflicts can occur even in the Russian unions, and first of all, also between the individual unions and the government, just as in other capitalist states. But which of the different tendencies shall finally gain the upper hand is not difficult to say; very plainly the one that uses the slogan, that in the unions all power shall belong to the unions, being that the workers want to finally make themselves independent and establish the rights of labor. The tendency which says that the state shall go up in the unions shall finally conquer, because the workers feel most free through such a victory.

Even if the Russian anarcho-syndicalists, anarchists and industrialists as well as all other revolutionists have every reason in the world to work on the unions until the whole system answers the demands of communism, *we must not for a moment forget the progress implied in the fact that the workers have come so far as to organize the work through their own organizations and thereby the whole of industry.* The progress lies in the victory of the idea, and even if the idea has not yet been completely realized, we have not the right, as friends of progress, to reject the first, imperfect beginnings. In comparison to the idea of czarism, the offensive taken by the labor organizations, the unions, as productive organizations, is quite a big step forward, the importance of which we cannot to-day sufficiently appreciate. To set the real value on this is reserved for future generations. In the same manner that we look at the French revolution at the end of the 18th century as a gigantic step forward, in spite of the despotism of Napoleon, which was not surpassed by the despotism of Louis XVI., for the fruits of the revolution, the abolition of serfdom, could not be undone, just so we greet the Russian revolution, in spite of the rule of the bolsheviks. For, after all, the bolsheviks are not for the Russian revolution what Napoleon was for the French revolution; but they are, if we want to accept the com-

parison, the Russian Jacobins, with a strong admixture of proletarian elements. But the spirit of progress lives in the realization of the idea, that the workers can, through their own organizations, themselves form a society which is based on labor. As revolutionaries and champions of freedom we approve of the Russian revolution, approve of the idea that the labor unions have to be the guides of economic life, and will guarantee that these ideas shall be realized with ever greater perfection. Thus shall our ideal, a society based upon labor, attain its realization.

Nationalization or Socialization?

The difference between nationalization and socialization is often very fine, especially where it is a question of industrial undertakings. When referring to the land it is simpler. In Russia we can on the whole speak of a socialization of the soil. Its distinguishing marks are that the land belongs to the peasants personally, but that they have not the legal right to sell it. That this happens here and there, in spite of it, only shows that new forms of economic life cannot be introduced through decrees alone. Leases and rents have ceased to exist, and the only thing that remains are taxes, principally in kind. Part of the former large estates have passed over into state ownership, and in the case of these one might speak of nationalization rather than socialization. What applies to these state lands also applies to the nationalized ("statified") industrial undertakings. The state monopolized the mines, the means of transportation, the larger part of the big factories, commerce and business houses. While formerly these undertakings belonged to a great number of small industrial knights, and partly also to a small number of big "captains of industry (comparable to Stinnes in Germany), *all of it belongs today to one owner, the state.* But here we have before us something more than a simple nationalization. In Germany we had already under the Wilhelm regime nationalized railroads and postal service. Even in America the railroads were to a great extent nationalized during the war. But this kind of nationalization differs from the Russian kind in this respect that private persons have economic interest in the same. The state issues notes and debt obligations and the owners of these obligations or bonds enjoy an income without work by collecting interest, etc. The state has here, so to speak, taken over the role of a capitalist stock company. The same is often the case with municipalization. In the latter case the municipal authorities of the cities play this role.

This has been abolished in Russia. The Russian Soviet government writes out no obligations and has cancelled all capitalist claims. In relation to foreign countries the procedure has not been altogether consistent. *Through the present concession policy to the capitalist states, the soviet republic has—right or wrong—gone back to a more primitive form of private economy.*

The difference between the nationalization in capitalist states and in Soviet Russia is plain. But is this difference so great that it runs into socialization?

In order to be able to answer these questions we must first make up our mind *what is to be understood by socialization.* If the economic life is completely cut off from the state as an organization of power, then we can speak of socialization. But the problem may be stated differently. To some English guild socialists the state is the organization of the consumers under completely independent democracy or self-government for industry. To other guild socialists, such as S. G. Hobson, the state is an institution which has nothing to do with economic life, not even with consumption. For that reason we cannot say that the guild socialists strive for a nationalization (*Verstaatlichung*), but what they want is a socialization, that is a transfer of production and consumption to the organizations for production and consumption.

If we put on this measuring stick, then we cannot speak of any socialization in Russia as yet, but of nationalization (Verstaatlichung). When the factories, mines and means of transportation, that is, what is included under the name industry, is *not directly in the hands of the productive organizations but belong to the state, then we must speak of a ("Verstaatlichung") nationalization* even if it is of a different kind from what it is in the capitalist countries.

But looked at from another side we must refrain from considering the economic system of Russia as a socialist system. *Nationalization changes nothing in the wage system.* With the thought of socialization we connect at the same time the abolition of the wage system. But in Russia we still have the wage system. The circumstance that they pay is partly in kind and that an attempt is made to further develop this pay system may be traced to the enormous depreciation of the currency. They made a virtue out of necessity. With the abolition of the wage system social equality is attained. But this social or, more strictly speaking, economic equality we do not find in Russia as yet. *We can, consequently, not speak of socialization but we must speak of nationalization ("Verstaatlichung").*

The last expression is being used by the bolsheviks themselves. But this expression is not altogether correct. For just as there are national states and nationalities, so there is also a difference here. In the large country of Russia, there is not only one nation but many. The wealth consisting in land and industry, which is worked by many nationalities, is put under the sovereignty of a state, the bolshevik government. From this point of view, also, the expression "*Verstaatlichung*" (statification or statization) is the most exact.

One question that here interests us more is whether all establishments, factories, shops, mines, means of transportation,

business houses, etc., are included in the nationalization. According to the observations I have personally made, as well as according to the statistics of the Soviet government, the success in this regard is only partial. Thus, according to statistics given by Miljutin, a member of presiding board of the Supreme Council of National Economy, the number of nationalized establishments up to Feb. 1, 1920, was: In the stone industry 437 establishments with 106,109 workers. Against these stood 561 establishments, not nationalized. In mining and smelting nationalization is carried out almost completely. There are only six small establishments of that kind in which not more than 480 workers are employed. Against these stand 81 establishments with together 39,880 workers that are nationalized.

In the metal and machinery industry, on the other hand, the number of establishments which even to-day are privately owned is particularly great. There are together 601 establishments with 29,417 workers not nationalized. But these statistics cannot lay claim to completeness. I know of a foundry in Moscow which belongs to a private owner, Pirvitz, which I do not find included in the statistics. And still 106 workers are employed there. Against these private establishments stand 553 nationalized ones which employ 156,146 workers.

In the food stuff industry there are 638 establishments with 3,532 workers which are still privately owned. Against them stand 1,799 establishments with 151,699 workers that are nationalized. In the establishments for manufacture of animal products over one-third of the workers of that industry are still in private service. They number 10,711 workers, working in 2,226 establishments, while 32,979 workers are employed in 195 nationalized establishments. In the textile industry, which before the war belonged to the highest developed industries of Russia, there are now 232 establishments with 36,664 workers still in private hands, while 615 establishments with 337,346 workers are nationalized. To these belongs also the ready-made clothing branch.

According to the same statistics there are still in all Russia 985,413 workers who work in 4,237 state establishments and 84,853 workers who work in 4,609 private establishments.

From these statistics we can gather that the larger establishments are mostly nationalized while the smaller are still privately owned. These statistics, however, apply only to industry or production, but say nothing about the business houses. These were closed nearly without exception. To-day one may still see shut-and-sealed stores in Moscow and Petrograd, in whose show windows everything still lies as it did before it was confiscated. The confiscation was so poorly organized that it is still not known exactly what has been confiscated. Frequently articles of clothing are booked as hardware, or kitchen utensils as furniture. But the worst is, that even in case of the most urgent necessity the people can get nothing. Thus a fellow worker in Petrograd asked me to get him a rubber nipple from Germany for his little daugh-

ter's milk bottle. He said: "We have this article in our confiscated stores but it is impossible to get anything. The mensheviks also reproach the bolsheviks that they undertook the so-called nationalization without thorough preparations. They say that the stores were closed before other organs were created which could have undertaken to supply the people. They themselves, the mensheviks, would have done this in a more deliberate and slow way. They are not so radical but more moderate.

A little exception was made for vegetable and delicatessen stores. There are very few of the latter. But the former one finds in every block.

Trust Building or Trustification

The monopolization and nationalization of industry abolished the competition existing in small capitalist industry. Industry became concentrated and centralized. *Great state trusts came into existence.* Compared with the private capitalist enterprise, in which production for the profit of individuals or stock companies is carried on in quite meaningless and unregulated fashion, production by a single organization, even if it is capitalistic, is to be greeted as a step forward, because it can then be carried on in a more rational manner. The advantage is so much greater if the motive of production is not profit, but the needs of the nation. But here it must be remembered that care should be taken that the liberty of individuals, of the producers, is not lost, for in the measure that liberty is infringed upon, progress is impeded. Yes, it may go so far that, through unequal compensation for services rendered, in a society where nationalization, as well as the trustification of the whole national industry has been fully carried out, even while the production for use is the basic plan—it may go so far, we say, that the position of deep layers of the workers is not better than it is under private capitalism. Or, expressing it in a different manner: The state socialism introduced presses (through the premium system such as is used in Russia) the workers down in the same disagreeable position as capitalism did. This system may be called state capitalism, and historically it may be pointed out as a higher stage; but as for the workers who labor in the factory the social revolution must bring them an improvement in their position, for the aim of the social revolution is the liberation of the working class.

The workers who by means of the revolution desired to realize their own emancipation, felt instinctively that they must direct their efforts on taking over production and managing it according to their own principles. They also elected shop committees to manage the shops. *The shops independently managed by those workers who work in the shops,* that is how the Russian workers first pictured to themselves the socialization of industry, or the realization of the social revolution.

But the Communist Party of Russia considered this tendency of the workers only as the first and lowest form. On Dec. 5, 1917, the Supreme Council of National Economy was founded. The management of the factories was thereafter more and more twisted out of the workers' hands. The Supreme Council of National Economy took over this task. This S. C. of N. E. should properly not be anything but the co-ordination of all the establishments from the bottom upward, with retention of the independent shop management by the workers. But what came was something else. The S. C. of N. E. is an institution which manages the industry of the country from the top downward.

The Supreme Council of National Economy consists of 11 persons. The president's name is Rykoff. He is appointed by the All-Russian Executive Committee. The rest of the members are, in part, nominated by the Central Council of the Unions and finally appointed by the Council of People's Commissars. This Council of the People's Commissars can at any time cancel the decisions of the Economic Council, so that the Council of People's Commissars, a political institution which consists principally of communists, has the last word. Miljutin, a member of the Supreme Council of National Economy, mentioned in an interview with me that all important questions must be submitted to the Council of People's Commissars. Also there are tendencies to still more centralize the council, instead of decentralizing it, after the end of all wars, thus allowing the state to get a grip on the whole economic life.

....*The Supreme Council of National Economy has a special department for each industry. There are 50 of them.* Each one of these departments manages a separate branch of industry. Miljutin described their activity as follows: They carry out the plans of production, distribute the raw materials, keep account of what is being produced and finance the undertakings. Besides they engage and discharge the management of the shops. The management of such an industrial department consists of one, three or five persons, which are appointed by the Supreme Council of National Economy, after consultation with the unions.

It would take us too far to follow up the various functions more closely into the gouvernement or local district management. They are all built on the same principle. And it is sufficient for us to know the principle. But the principle is consistently carried out from the top downward, as may be seen from the above. The organization from the bottom upward does not exist in industry, and for that reason there is no talk of self-government. The workers have no direct influence, yes, in practice they have no influence at all, not even indirect, over the management of industry, or the shop and the factory in which they work.

The workers get their wages paid through the Finance Department of the Supreme Council of National Economy. Even the prices are set on the goods by the S. C. of N. E. and thereafter made into a law.

The staff of officials of the Supreme Council of National Economy is in Moscow, which is the centre for all Russia, and consists of 20,000 persons. Besides there are, according to the statements of Miljutin, 35 local councils and each one of these has 2,000 employees. This would give a total of 90,000 employees. According to the figures given before there are in the nationalized industries 985,414 employees, or in round numbers one million. *There is, consequently, about one official for each ten workers.*

This apparatus, as at presently constituted, works heavily rather than elastically. For many purposes it cannot be used. And we should not wonder at this. A political body, which in the last instance depends upon the All-Russian Executive Committee, cannot function on the economic field like a purely economic organization of hand and brain workers, which are in straight line with one another or alongside of one another.

They have also come to feel that way in Russia, so that *they turn to private undertakings when it is a question of work that requires quick and prompt attention.* In pointing this out, I am merely stating facts, but nevertheless, it is by no means proven that capitalism is indispensable or has any advantages. It only proves that this kind of state socialism, which was started in Russia under such unfavorable conditions, has not the power to live; there might very well be other socialist economic forms which are so much the more rational. But the fact that in Russia the few private undertakings have a superior capacity for work can be traced to the circumstance that the private undertakings pay their workers better than the state enterprises. In the already mentioned iron foundry in Moscow, belonging to Pirvitz, the workers are a good deal better off than in the Soviet shops. A commercial and technical employee, a Miss Wegener, receives, for instance, free board and lodging, the usual Payok (food stuff ration) and, like all the people of Moscow, free apartment and 15,000 rubles. According to her own statement she is far better off than in Soviet service, in which she was formerly working, and works with greater interest. The same thing applies to the workers. Another case may contribute still more to illustrating what we have said. As the supplying of fuel did not work satisfactorily in years past a certain official was given free hands. He engaged private persons and workers who under better conditions got the necessary railroad cars ready much quicker, and as a result the transportation took place much quicker. Still more such examples could be cited. *The bolsheviks themselves constantly complain of the slowness of their apparatus,* and particularly at the last party conferences as well as at the soviet congresses, the complaints are piling up.

In consideration of the sad condition in which industry finds itself the dissatisfaction of the ruling bolsheviks is easy to understand, and if they give the ideas of syndicalism such great concessions as to have for chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy, Rykov, a representative of the syndicalist ideas—

and that is the case not with him alone but in most of the leading circles—this can largely be ascribed to *the bankruptcy from which their own theories of state socialism have suffered*, and which is most evident in the organization of industry. Already in the year of 1918, the first year of bolshevik power, Mnogin, the commissar of the textile department of the S. C. of N. E., wrote in No. 40 of the "Isvestija," that the Russian Soviet Republic did not need any unions but only small factory committees which had to carry out the orders of the government. To-day, when they see that industry cannot get into a flourishing state through "governing," they have finally found the road to the unions. As cheering as this is, so regrettable is it, on the other side, that through the state tendencies of the state socialists the ruinous way of nationalization was entered upon, and is in practice still followed. If industry is not to suffer further collapse, the bolsheviks must soon make a reality of the now recognized theory, turn over production to the productive organs the workers possess in their unions, under complete self-administration of the factories by those employed there, and not by individual managers put in by the Supreme Council of National Economy.

He who comes with the expectations of finding communism can get very little satisfaction from the conditions in Russia. But even he, who only hopes for a little improvement of economic life will, as we have seen, find little to cheer him in Russia. Those in power at present repeatedly give as a reason for this the long duration of the war, the world war and the civil war. Without doubt this is one of the main causes. But as this is being sung so often and always in a new fashion by the bolsheviks, a repetition would be tedious. For it is equally certain that other factors of principle, tactics and organization play a role in this respect.

One of these factors is *the principle of political centralism*, which is given such limitless praise by the bolsheviks. This principle, which is being lauded by Radek, Trotzky and all leaders of bolshevism as the best ripened fruit on the tree of socialist development, has, nevertheless, had a truly devastating influence on economic life, and this is the case up to the present day. For that reason the songs of praise sung to centralism by the bolsheviks must with necessity wind up in a lugubrious wail due to the facts of the economic collapse. And the most sparkling dialectics of Radek and Trotzky cannot hide their character of hollow demagoguery. I cannot here keep from using the words "hollow demagoguery" when reading in what a dirty, genuinely Marx-Engels way, Radek attacks Bertrand Russel in his provoking effusions: "Bertrand Russel's Sentimental Trip to Russia." In that work one can, in fact, find nothing but pure demagoguery. Against Russel's sincere descriptions Radek brings up no facts, but only writes about "Russel's slippers by the hot stove." With this he may be able to impress his Russian worshipers, but not thinking people, and certainly not the working class of the world. This reference to the tactics of the bolshevik theoreticians has here

been made only to show what value should be put on their arguments.

We need not enter into a theoretical discussion of the principles of centralism. It is sufficient in this connection to show how, with the principle of centralism as a fundamental principle of organization, the economic life does not prosper, how the free development of private initiative is completely suppressed and how economic life has suffered from it in an unspeakable manner.

Already in treating of the agricultural question we have seen from examples quoted that, through the policy applied by the Communist Party and the situation resulting therefrom, the area of cultivated land has diminished. At the VIII. All-Russian Soviet Congress interesting proofs of this were added. In industry it is not much better. Of the 1,191 metal works in Russia only 300 are running. Only 20% of the pig iron of peace production is being worked. The food stuffs industry has also gone down considerably. In a steam mill in Samara there were before the war 18,000 pud of flour milled per day, but now only 5,000-6,000 pud. In the whole Samara gouvernement there were 60 million pud grain produced before the war, but now only 20 million pud. These figures show an extra-ordinary decrease of production, to which we may seek the causes where we will.

The Home Workers and Their Co-operative Societies or Artels

Besides the nationalized establishments which are managed by the Supreme Council of National Economy, the structure and functions of which we have already considered, *there is a second kind of socialized production.* These are the joint labor societies of Russian peasants and independent home workers, which are called *artels*. *The kustar* is an industrial home worker, a poor peasant or a small artisan. These small people band together in a joint labor society, buy their products in common and deliver their finished products to their societies. This society or artel takes over the selling of the products and supplies the artisan at the same time with raw material and working tools.

As this society in no way can be considered a capitalist company but purely as a banding together of voluntarily working individuals, the bolshevik government has been unable to destroy these joint labor groups. Peter Kropotkin takes a friendly position towards these labor societies and wrote for their paper, at the time I was in Russia, several articles and letters for their congress. These joint labor societies are no exploiting organizations, but during the czarist period they had to suffer from oppression by the big capitalists just as the factory workers did. Now they are *also hit by the compulsory policy of the Soviet government.* Thus, in Moscow, the central of all the artels was dissolved, and when I visited it, it was just in the stage of liquidation.

But a number of artels still have their joint organizations. In the Moscow society 98 shops were enrolled. *Affiliation to the artel is done by the family.* A total of about 9,000 families are enrolled in the artels. They make a total of 24,000 productive workers. Among these are 700-800 larger shops. All sorts of handicrafts are represented in these artels. The product consists of leather goods, saddles, boots, furniture, combs, brushes, toys, jewelry, textile goods, metal goods, papier-maché goods, wagons, sleds, valises, school material, books and similar goods. For the present the Soviet government is delivering raw materials to the artels, at least to a limited extent. The society supplies, for instance, lumber to the cabinet makers and distributes it to the different shops. Payment to the different shops differs in nature. Some have their finished articles sold by the society for their account, others arrange to have wages paid them and turn the selling over to the society without reservations. This latter is the case in some of the larger shops. The members of the same get a wage of from 100 to 1,000 rubles daily. But in paying the wages it is taken into consideration whether the member has property or is poor. Thus, to cite examples, the owners of a little farm are paid a little less than those who have nothing. By this means it is sought to bridge over the inequalities of wealth. In the government of Moscow there are many peasants who are members of this artel society.

The first artel in Moscow came into existence 20 years ago. In other governments the artels have been in existence since 1890. So far, such artels exist in the governments Moscow, Jaroslov, Nischni-Novgorod, Vladimir, Thula and Kostroma. The Soviet government tried to nationalize these artels. The artisans and peasants belonging to them were, however, opposed to this nationalization. They objected to have their central exchange made into a state organ, and as most of the members of these artels are the poorest peasants, the government uses no force in order to carry out a compulsory nationalization.

The work of the artisans belonging to the artel societies amounts to 50 railroad cars of goods per month, which have a value of 250 million rubles.

The society of the home workers, the artel of the "kustarnije" in Russia, is a piece of socialist life. True, it is no large industry, and as small handicraft it has something narrow-mindedly petit-bourgeois over it. But in socialism we must not include only the technically highest developed large industry. Socialist life is not tied to the forms of large industry, and it is entirely absurd to wish to force people, in the name of socialism, into economic forms which are considered best for the welfare of the state. Socialism means, under the present forms of technical development, the elimination of wage slavery, economic equality and equalizing of interests. The development of the method of production to more rational forms can thereafter take place without hindrance, but under no circumstances must we force it into ex-

istence at the cost of the liberty of the workers, for that is exactly what the capitalists do. Socialist life consists in the side-by-side activities of voluntary associations of workers. Such an association is the Russian artel. If it is not yet ideal, still it is a start made by the workers, by the poor who work for their living.

Consumption

It is a truism of political economy that the quantity of goods used depends on the quantity of goods produced. In conformity herewith *the economic doctrines of a Marx, principally, have laid the chief stress on the conquest of production by the workers.* If the producers are in possession of the products through their organization, then it is also in their power to distribute the products justly, under the supposition that they are justice-loving, socialist organizations.

But there is another way of paving the way for socialism. It is true that the working class as a whole cannot obtain more than the quantity of products that is turned over to it by the class that is master of production. When the capitalists weaken the buying power of the workers through high prices and low wages, they diminish their power of consumption. When the workers organize themselves as consumers and find ways and means to keep the prices low, then they are also in a position to increase their consumption. Besides, the organization of workers as consumers carries with it a second advantage. Even if the quantity of products which the working class as a whole consumes depends upon the monopolists of production and the means they employ, the workers can still obtain a just division of the products through their organizations of consumption. And this also is a piece of socialism.

The workers have in fact organized themselves in both directions, that is, as producers and consumers. *They have trade unions and consumers' unions, or co-operative societies, as they are also called.* That is also fully the case in Russia.

But not only the workers and poor peasants have acknowledged the necessity of organizing consumption in the interest of all; even the state was forced to it through the need of the hour. As the food stuffs became ever scarcer as a result of the war, the state, which led the nation into war, could no longer tolerate that the necessary food stuffs remained objects of speculation. The result of this would have been a still greater famine than they already had without it, and this would have had a bad influence on the defense. From these causes sprang *national husbandry by force.* The governments of all capitalist states, who were in such a position, used this means. Even the Russian Soviet government saw itself compelled to resort to such steps. But as they, in order to consistently carry out husbandry by force, would have been compelled to have a large apparatus, which it was not able to

stamp out of the ground so quickly, they used for this purpose the already existing consumers' societies. The consumers' societies were nationalized.

In Russia, conditions are on many points entirely different from what they are in western Europe. Thus, for example, *the consumers' union movement reached a stronger and higher development than the trade union movement.* This is caused by the fact that the consumers' unions in the first line were organizations of the consumers. The peasants had no need for organizations of production, but they had need of organizations of consumption. And as over 80% of the population of Russia are peasants, so were also, in perfect coincidence herewith, 80% of the members of the consumers' societies peasants.

No party and no union in Russia was before the war so powerful as the Co-operative movement. The Siberian butter producers united, in order to sell their butter in common to Russia or even to foreign countries. There we had already a large consumers' union of the peasants, which later, as it grew larger, also occupied itself with other products. This was a uniting of all the above mentioned artels.—These Siberian unions had in the year of 1907 a turn-over of 957,000 pud butter, of a value of 160,000,000 rubles. (1 pud equal to 34 lbs.)

All these consumers' unions or distributing artels or "co-operatives" were united into a central body which is known under the name of Centrosoyuz. To the Centrosoyuz belonged in 1914 13,500 affiliated distributing artels with a membership of 1,500,000 and a turn-over of 300,000,000 rubles.

When the war broke out the consumer's unions of Russia developed as in no other country. There are principally two circumstances back of the mighty growth of the Centrosoyuz that attract our attention. First, the czar's government did not worry itself very much about supplying food stuffs to the population, so that the workers and peasants had to help themselves—and since that time the workers in the industries also have joined this movement, while it formerly comprised mostly peasants; second, the prices of food stuffs began to rise in such a manner that the working population of the cities in mass joined these societies, in order to procure more cheaply the necessary means of life. *So the number of single consumers' societies rose in the year 1917 to 20,000; to 25,000 in 1918; to 50,000 in the year 1919. At the same time the membership rose to 7,000,000 in 1917, to 10,000,000 in 1918, and 15,000,000 in 1919. In the year of 1919 the turn-over was not less than 15 billion rubles (15,000,000,000).*

Politically, these unions were of a more or less neutral character. But as they grew ever more powerful, their influence also, naturally, became noticeable in politics. After the growth of the movement there was a *division into two parts. One agricultural society, consisting of peasants, and one distribution society, consisting of the working population of the cities.* After the out-

break of the revolution some leaders of both kinds of societies entered the provisional government. But in doing so they had given up their political neutrality. As economic life influences political life, so these co-operatives had, through their economic power, become an important factor politically, with which the government was compelled to count.

In the course of development there arose under the Centrosoyuz even productive societies, which produced goods which the peasants could not create. The co-operatives distribute not only food stuffs, but also garments, cloth, silk and other articles.

After the outbreak of the October revolution, the co-operatives developed with considerably greater rapidity than before, as will appear from the figures given above. One of the most active men was Tugon Baranovski, a friend of Peter Kropotkin's. But these newly arisen consumers' unions had only a short life. *Through the decree of the soviet government of March 28, 1918, the consumers' unions or co-operatives were nationalized,* and all of the consumers' unions founded by the workers themselves were deprived of their independence and inserted among the state organs.

The vicarious chairman of the executive committee of the present nationalized "Centrosoyuz," P. L. Voikoff, related in an interview which we had with him on June 22, 1920, that the bolsheviks after the outbreak of the October revolution desired to use the existing co-operatives as organs of the new state for the distribution of food stuffs. But difficulties arose, for the co-operatives, represented by their old leaders, made active resistance to the nationalization. But the government, which desired to lead the consumers' unions into new channels, removed the persons which stood in its way and installed a new executive committee) which consisted of men who carried out the intentions of the government. This new executive committee consists of 9 members, who all belong to the Communist Party (bolsheviks).

According to the opinion of the old, dismissed leaders of the Centrosoyuz, the consumers' unions were associations of free citizens, but the tendency of nationalization was against the character of the organization. The government desired to "democratize" the unions, as they called it. For this purpose the whole population had to enter into these unions. *The government issued a decree, according to which every citizen had to be a member of the consumers' union.* By the decree of March 18, the old committees of the consumers' union were forced by the state to call in an assembly; in this assembly a new committee was elected. In the elections for this committee the whole population could take part, whether they were members of the old consumers' unions or not; each one had the right to vote. This is what they called "democratization." This committee, which is to be found in all localities, in every commune, elects a representative to a district com-

mittee, and this district committee elects the members of the executive committee of the Centrosoyuz.

This is, however, the case only theoretically, for, according to the statements of the vicarious chairman already referred to, the executive committee was, in practice, not elected but appointed by the government, by which process only members of the Communist Party were picked out.

One representative of this Centrosoyuz is Krassin, and he is not only a representative of the Centrosoyuz, but, the Centrosoyuz being a state organ, he is also an official representative of the Soviet government. As such he was received by the English government. Krassin represents the commercial interests of the Soviet government, and for lack of a different apparatus the government is using this Centrosoyuz. Through the Centrosoyuz the Soviet government will carry on import and export business with foreign countries.

But if the Centrosoyuz is an official organ of the government as regards foreign countries, such is not the case domestically. *The official government organ is the Food Stuffs Commissariat.* But as this proved itself incapable of handling the provisioning of the population, the Soviet government makes use of the consumers' unions.

The function of such a consumers' union are known to every organized west-European worker. In Russia they were similar to what they are in the rest of Europe. The small consumers' unions gathered money for the purchase of goods. When they did not collect enough money, they received the necessary means as a loan from a bigger union affiliated with the Centrosoyuz. The goods purchased they divided among their members. In the peasant co-operatives production is mostly individual, as we have already indicated in the chapter about the Land. The co-operative societies of the peasants embrace only consumption, not production. The peasants must deliver to the government everything that they do not need for themselves. The government organ for this purpose is the Food Stuffs Commissariat and the consumers' unions. Thus, while the government has two ways of obtaining goods, the peasants have only one, namely through their co-operative societies.

The purpose of the government in nationalizing the consumers' unions or co-operative societies was twofold: First, it was desired to disestablish the unions as being "capitalistic undertakings" which had their own private banks. This was done by confiscating the larger productive undertakings of the societies; second, it was desired to discontinue private trade. The supplying of the people should be done exclusively through the organs of the state. The most important question for us is: Has nationalization proven a success, have the co-operative societies had the capacity of their service increased through nationalization, and can an imitation of these tactics be recommended?

The Sucherevka market in Moscow, the fish market in Char-

kov, and similar markets in all the cities of Russia give the first answer to this question, namely, that the government has not succeeded in regulating the provisioning of the population through its measures. But even when there is only a small market in a city, such as in Petrograd, it only means that the population is procuring the necessary provisions in some other more underground manner. *Today the co-operative societies no longer have the service capacity which they had before nationalization.* Why? The societies no longer are unions of peasants' artels, in which the peasants leave their products to be sold, but the government has rather taken over the task of handling the agricultural products. How this takes place we have already seen. The peasants are compelled to part with their grain for 100 rubles per pud. Whether the organs through which the government handles this work are called departments of the Food Stuffs Commissariat or departments of the Centrosoyuz, it all comes to the same thing, for if the peasants refuse to deliver at those prices, they are forced to it through the military. In each case the soldiers requisition the grain. The societies also receive their products through the government and cannot distribute any more than they receive from the government. But as this, for reasons mentioned, is not sufficient, the societies are far less serviceable than before the nationalization. The societies are to-day no longer free institutions, but, according to the words of the vicarious chairman, the population are forced to become members. And it is clear that a compulsory organization cannot work as well as a free one. The societies are to-day less capable of supplying the population with the necessary provisions, and for that reason everybody tries to supply through private channels what is missing.

Branches of the co-operative societies were established by the government in conjunction with the trade unions in the factories, and these committees conduct the distribution of the products. In that manner the workers receive through this committee their pound of bread directly in the factory. But oftener the factory committee, elected in the factory, performs this function. But I must here note that in all factories which I have visited—and they amounted in Russia and Ukraine to 20—the workers complained of not receiving a sufficient ration of food stuffs. In a chocolate factory the girls cried and complained that they had not received any bread for three days. In a textile factory they were just receiving bread when we visited them. They started to use harsh language and complained that they were not receiving full weight. The manager, who showed us the factory, wanted to prove to them that they were mistaken, and he went to the scales and weighed portions of the bread, and, in fact, there was 25 gram missing to the pound. The soldiers, however, receive much richer rations. On a Volga steamer the sailors, beaming with joy, showed us the great quantity of bread and sugar that they received.

As the reason for the low productivity of the workers we

may put down the lack of food stuffs. One would think that the food shortage was general, as the workers could not themselves procure food stuffs in a different manner, and it would lead one to think that there was a shortage in the market place, or everywhere. But such is not the case. While the workers were unable to obtain sufficient through the organs of the government, for the stated reason that there was not enough, it is possible to *buy everything in the market*. Besides, the workers *organize small circles in the factory*, pool their money and send one of several of their fellow workers out in the country to buy provisions from the peasants. These provisions are thereafter divided between the participants. Thus, *the workers have again created new, voluntary, small co-operatives*, or consumers' unions, although of only a temporary character, because the nationalized consumers' societies no longer were able to cover their needs.

Just as little as the state was able to acquire the whole of production, just so little was it possible to force the whole of consumption into the state organization. *Economic life cannot be forced into the compulsory forms of the state; if it is tried, the impossibility of it comes to light*. Centralism is always greatest in governments during times of war, and this applies also to Russia. While during the war it was not possible to force the whole economic life into the centralist mold, after the war it was still less possible to handle everything by means of the centralist apparatus of the state, it being then necessary to loosen up the tight reins a little, if a catastrophe shall not be conjured up. *Society and social-economic life are not a machine, nor an apparatus. But the bolsheviks seem to conceive of them as an apparatus*—to their daily vocabulary belongs the word "apparatus," for the single parts of an apparatus or a machine are dead things. But the separate parts, of which human society is composed, are beings with will power. The mistake inherent in all bolshevik theories and which all bolsheviks are always making, is that they do not sufficiently count with this. And that is also the reason why all their organizing and "apparatus creating" so far has been so imperfect, as they themselves admit, while they, naturally, do not want to use any other name for the organizations which are born out of their autocratic world conception. In the future it will be still more impossible than in the three past years of bolshevik rule to lay hold of everything by means of various kinds of apparatus in the bolshevik sense, by means of state organs. Leaving out the fact that the bolsheviks degrade the individual to a will-less tool in the hands of an apparatus, they can never reach what they are striving for by such means.

We have already seen that outside of the economic organizations of production and consumption maintained by the state, the workers help themselves, and that *a large part of the economic activities of the country takes place outside the limitations fixed by the state*.

A special chapter in Russia is *shuffling*. In order to get an idea of it, it is sufficient to refer to the statements of the bolsheviks themselves. Thus, as an example, the Moscow paper "Communist Labor" writes in the second half of June, 1920, in regard to goods which had been located in several sections of Moscow, and which could be labeled as shuffle-goods, that is, as goods which had nowhere been entered, and which consequently had been shuffled to one side by "responsible soviet employees." In the Rogoshevsky-Simenovski-Rayon were found 1,546 lots of shuffle-goods. Among these were 59,149 pud (1 pud equal to 34 lbs.) nickle, 30,135 pud aluminium; 25,071 pud tin; 237,076 pud zink; 18,332 pud lead plate; 921,857 pud brass; 535,979 pud steel; undetermined quantities of wire; 18,000 two-handle saws; 20,610 axes; 32,330 pairs of boots; 5 million archins of woolen-goods; 110,566 archins (2 1-3 feet) of linen; 20,426 pud coffee and tea, and many other things that are mentioned in the paper but which it is useless to enumerate here, as this already is sufficient to show that *through the centralist system the biggest kind of conscious shufflings are possible*. It remains to mention that in another rayon, among other goods, were found 1/2 million pairs of stockings and 47 carloads of agricultural machinery. This would, of course, be impossible if a decentralistic, that is, a federalistic system were applied, and the workers of every rayon or the workers handling it, had control over the goods. As it is now, under the centralistic system, only one central needs to know where the goods belong, and all other sub-departments have to follow the order of the central. Through this system nothing is easier than that shuffling will sneak in, for if there is only one shuffler at the central, goods to the value of millions can be shuffled, because the workers who are handling it are only the horses that pull the chariot of the Central.

Another *example given by Zinoviev* himself shows how wonderfully the "apparatus" of the centralistic organization of national economy functions. At a conference of the Communist Party of Russia, which was held in Moscow in October, 1920, Zinoviev spoke of the shortcomings and weaknesses of the party and in the organizations created by it. He related that, on the Murman coast there is, as is well known, a rich run of fish, but particularly so in recent weeks, when the season had been at its height. The comrades there say that the fish is so plentiful that it is sufficient only to pull about three times in the water with a stick with a hook attached, in order to catch fish. But in spite of that the Murman railroad workers and laborers do not get a single pound of fresh fish and are compelled to live from dried fish, at best. How does that come about? It arises from the fact that we have a fish central ("Glavryba"), which says: "First you must catch the fish, thereafter register it on the books and throw salt on its tail," and only then can the workers receive it. But if the workers try to get in touch with the fish central, the latter is far out of range." Another example quoted by Zinoviev: "I

want to tell you about another case. In Ussolje immense supplies of salt were stored up. The peasants asked for permission to fetch the salt quantities due them on their own wagons, under the control of food stuffs authorities. The chauncery nag began its trot, but in the meantime the river rose above its banks and licked up all the salt. What do you expect the peasant to say to this? Fifty miles from the Baku the workers and the peasants are without petroleum. And there in Baku is the main spring of petroleum! That is due to the shortcomings of our organization."

So far Zinoviev. I have myself heard of numerous such cases in Russia from different people, but if I refer to Peter Kropotkin, Emma Goldman or Spiridonova, or other pronounced anti-centralists who have gathered together much material, it would probably appear to some that these tales are colored. But it cannot very well be received in that manner when it comes from the mouth of the arch centralists. What happened to the peasants of Ussolje, also happened to innumerable other peasants about wood, and also to the Petrograd workers, and so it will always go and must go as long as the system of centralism rules in all economic organizations. *It is not only a few shortcomings, sa Zinoviev would have you believe, but it is the principle of political centralism on which the blame falls.* I can further illustrate this through a personal experience: A female friend of mine in Moscow asked me to procure some antiquarian books for her. After a long search I happened to see the books in a soviet book store, and I stepped in and wanted to buy them. But there my troubles began. Yes, I could buy the books but had first to obtain permission from the book central, "Centropitschatsch." I took the address and went forth. But the place was at the other end of Moscow. Upon arriving there (one has to walk, for the population cannot ride in autos like foreign delegates) I found it closed. The next day I went again, but I was told that it was no longer there but in a different location. Finally finding the Book Central, I first came to a lady who sat at a desk. She ordered me to fill out a slip and sent me to the next office. There another blank had to be filled out with the names of the books that I wanted, and with this blank I was further sent into a different room. There it was registered, and I was sent back to the second room with the order blank. Now the order blank was signed, and now I could go to the book store and get the three antiquarian books. But now I saw a German book in the store, which I would have liked to buy for myself, I was told that it was necessary for me to again get an order blank from the central. By this time I had enough of this and let the book lie where it was. In order to buy a couple of antiquarian books, one needs, consequently, two days. No wonder if life gets clogged and dissatisfaction over it grows. But these are not merely some shortcomings of the organization, but the whole system is wrong.

That *bureaucracy*, the intimate friend of centralism, prospers under such conditions is clear without further argument. And

there are twice as many bureaucrats in Moscow as there are workers. According to a Rosta poster—one often finds these stuck up on the walls in Russia—the following are the population figures given for 1919-1920:

400,000 children under 16 years,
250,000 housewives,
105,000 workers organized in unions,
233,000 soviet employees and officials,
312,000 persons of the bourgeois element.

Total 1,300,000 inhabitants in Moscow.

Although it is compulsory for all workers in Russia to belong to the union, there are no more workers in Moscow than those here mentioned. There are, consequently, only 105,000 workers, but 233,000 soviet employees. But the remaining 312,000 parasitic elements also “work” together with the soviet officials, that is, they are engaged in some sort of *smuggle* trade. Naturally, not very much of productive work can be accomplished in this manner, and as a matter of course it reacts on the food stuffs and provision situation of the country.

The Life of the Workers in the Cities

The workers cannot live from the food stuffs that they receive. They are, therefore, compelled to resort to self-help and to smuggle. This is not said in order to paint something in black colors, but only in order to illustrate the situation which arose from a complex of different circumstances. Street railways handle very little traffic in Petrograd, in Moscow they are still scarcer, and at the end of October the whole street car service was suspended. The workers must, consequently, often walk over an hour to their work or their soviet office (if it is a soviet employee). For lunch they remain in the factory or the bureau. They receive their noon-day meal at the place of work, in the soviet offices or in most of the factories. It consists almost exclusively of soup and “kascha” (mush). In Moscow this meal is very poor everywhere, but in some places in Charkov comparatively good. For a worker one must consider the meal even quantitatively as insufficient. Besides, they receive other food, the so-called “payok.” This also is unsatisfactory. But in the fall, when there are apples or wood at the bureau, then everybody must bring them home on his or her back which may require an hour. When he comes home he is, of course, not able to do anything. And still he lacks every convenience in the house. Having to do everything himself, his whole activity is expended on a lot of petty things, so that he can do very little productive work.

The product turned out by the workers in the factories is minimal, as one can understand from the standard of life. But this is frequently regarded by the government as sabotage, and

the communist cell in the factory, which has to watch over it, often denounces the worker for sabotage. For this they are then punished.

The rations (payok) to which the workers are entitled in a locomotive repair shop which I inspected, are, per month: 25 lb. flour (1 Russian lb. equal to 400 gram or .88 lb. American weight); 1 lb. oil; 8 lbs. fish; 5 lbs. groats; 1½ tobacco; 2 lbs. sugar; ¼ lb. coffee; 1½ lb. salt. But the workers do not receive these rations regularly. When I visited the factory, the shop committee was just in session, and they complained that during the previous month the workers had not received any oil and not enough flour.

If the workers do not get enough they *try to procure more through private channels*. The bakers take dough with them home in their long pockets. Their women make small cakes out of it and sell them in the market. The bread carriers steal the ready baked bread; I spoke with one of the carriers, who told me quite openly that if he did not do this he could not exist. The same thing other workers do, who are employed in other branches of industry. Everybody tries to pull through in ways that are permitted or not permitted.

Perhaps many a person will ask the question why the workers do not buy what they need. This is not exactly possible, because they *simply cannot pay the prices that are asked in free trade*. The workers receive from 3,000 to 10,000 rubles per month. The meal in the factory is not expensive; its costs only about 20 rubles. Similarly the prices of the things which they receive in their rations are very cheap. Also the prices for everything received from the government are very low, so that, if the workers received sufficient from that source, they would get along very well with their money, yes, they even could save a good deal of money. But the reason they receive such a high wage is because the rations are not sufficient. When they are compelled to pay 500-600 rubles for a pound of bread in the market and from 5,000-6,000 rubles for a pound of butter, then they would have to earn 100,000 rubles per month if they want to come out right.

Of the mentioned 312,000 individuals of the bourgeois elements, which according to the Rosta statistics are to be found in Moscow, there are also many wretched persons, which deserve any name but bourgeois. In the summer, visitors to the second congress of the III. International could see men and women lying in the streets at night, sleeping. If you asked these people why they slept in the street, they answered that they wanted to be the first in the morning when the bureau was opened to get their allowance of railway travel. These people then went to the railway and traveled to the surrounding villages, in order to buy milk and, if possible, other things which they later sold in the Moscow market. At the railway stations one can later see hundreds of ragged persons, who have traveled a long way for from two to five liters of milk (1 liter equal to 1.76 pint), in order to sell it

later for a small gain, and, too, always in danger of being arrested. Milk distribution is so poorly organized that thousands fetch a liter a piece from the village, instead of one bringing a thousand liters of milk, as is done in Berlin. In spite of the overwhelming centralism they have not been able to arrange this. Disregarding this highly irrational supply system there is not a spark of the socialist spirit to be seen in it. The bolsheviks have not yet even made arrangements for a communal milk supply, such as is introduced in Berlin for children and for the sick' and then they want to talk about communism and call themselves communists!

Nor can we designate as communistic the wage policy in force. There are two standards by which to size up this question: (1) The land, the nation, the state, perhaps also the class; (2) the workers and the individual. The first is the starting point to the state socialists, the social-democrats, the bolsheviks, the "communists"; the second is the starting point of the anti-state socialists. If we think of the welfare of the country, the state—even if it is a proletarian state—or of the class, then we will do everything to defend these. That is what the bolsheviks do. When the revolution broke out, it was in this sense that they had to defend the revolution. *They had to keep the industry of the country going at any price, even if they had to give up the principal demands of socialism, namely the equal wage.* At present there are in Russia 35 wage steps or wage classes, the academically educated people, the engineers, the technicians, the organizers, etc., are in the highest classification of wages, the trained workers in the middle classes and the unskilled workers in the lowest classes. Furthermore, consideration is given to the question whether the workers labor in establishments which are important for the war and against the counter-revolution. They have even proposed to the railwaymen, in the summer of 1920, the tariff which was laid before them in 1912 during czarism, but which was then declined. We are, consequently, forced to say that Russia has gone to the dogs on the wage question, no matter what beautiful phrases or important reasons Lenin may put forward to defend it.

The bolsheviks were driven to this wage policy, which we have just designated as anti-socialist, through an important turn of the conditions. The workers were not in a position to take over the industries. They were not prepared for it and they had not organized themselves for the purpose of taking over production. In Russia this was certainly not possible. The revolution did not come when the workers or a group of revolutionaries were ready with their revolutionary preparations, or when the workers were technically so well prepared that they could take over production without friction from the capitalistic leaders (whether they be technicians or organizers), but the revolution came in Russia before the workers were in a position to prepare for it. When too, a political party takes the power, then, naturally, nothing socialistic can come from it. One need not, conse-

quently, be astonished over the fact that the bolsheviks did not carry through a socialist wage policy, but, on the contrary, there would have been reason for astonishment if they had worked out such a wage policy.

The bolsheviks had thus been compelled to retain the bourgeoisie which had been the leader of industry before the revolution, in their employ, either by means of physical force or through extra-ordinary high pay. The last method proved to be the best one, and the capitalist wage policy was continued, but at the same time they explained, and they do so yet, that the aim was to further develop the workers, in order to make the bourgeoisie more superfluous and replace them by workers.

But if they now had such bad luck in Russia, that the revolution found the workers unprepared and in no position to take production out of the hands of the capitalists, then we must at least draw a lesson therefrom. For the bad thing about it is that the workers who, naturally, are no political economists and do not understand the connection of things, put the blame on the revolutionary party or organization which happens to be in power. This time it happens to be the bolsheviks, but if it were the syndicalists or the anarchists or any other revolutionary government, then it would be the same lyre they would be compelled to play on, and the workers would consider them as their rulers, just as they now consider the bolsheviks.

This lesson *the syndicalists* drew already long ago, insofar as they *admonish the workers to prepare and develop themselves personally, as well as their organizations, in such a manner that when a revolution breaks out, from various economic, psychological and political reasons, it finds the workers prepared.* Peculiarly enough, the syndicalists who teach this are decried and "accused" by the same bolsheviks and party communists as reformists. Thus, things are being put on their head. Instead of the bolsheviks saying to the syndicalists: "Yes, you are right; if the revolution and socialism shall not become entirely discredited before the workers, then we must strike out for this road," they say to the syndicalists that, "if revolution breaks out we will either put you in jail or stand you up against a wall." That is what they have done in Russia at all events, where many anarcho-syndicalists have been put in jail.

They cannot entirely cut loose from this doctrine, which on one side is promulgated by the syndicalists and on the other side also by Eugen Dühring in his book "Social Salvation" many years ago, and for that reason the doctrine is smuggled into the theses of the III. International, where a great role is assigned to the trade unions in the conquest of the political power and in the economic up-building of communism. But the principal role shall, of course, be played by a political, communist party.

In spite of all this obscuratation and veil-pulling it is not possible to hide the fact that the social revolution shall be so much

the more successful, that is, social equality shall be the sooner realized, the better the workers are prepared for it. Whoever wants to be an adherent of the social revolution and does not set his eyes chiefly on this, but on the conquest of political power, he shows that in his innermost self he is more of a rioter, an adherent of violent phrases rather than a socialist. But such are the bolsheviks in Russia and the political communist parties in all other countries. The principal task for a real socialist or communist, if you so want to call them, lies just in preparing himself, the workers and the peasants for social equality, on the economic, the intellectual and the moral field; but he must be a syndicalist to do this.

Still another circumstance must be added, which contributed to the development of the 35 wage grades or to the fact that the bourgeoisie is better paid than the workers. This was the use of the motto: "*Who does not work, neither shall he eat*" as a tactical principle. As a theory this sentence is a commonplace of socialist, or, if we want to be ironical, of biblical propaganda. It is correct and just: Who does not work, neither shall he eat. But this must not be interpreted so as to mean, that he who has not worked before this time shall from now on get nothing to eat. *The social revolution is an act of social justice*, through which social injustices are done away with, and not vice versa. *The social revolution must give everybody something to eat*, no matter what he has done before, even if he has done nothing at all. This method is, however, to be recommended, not only from the standpoint of justice, but also from the standpoint of revolutionary tactics. That the bourgeoisie of Russia was given nothing or less to eat than others has revenged itself. When they later were needed for the organization of technical and industrial life they had become still more embittered enemies of the working class than before, through these very tactics.

From this, also, we have a lesson to draw: Not to support the negative tendencies, not to give free vent to instincts of revenge in ourselves or in others, but to combat them and, on the contrary, do everything to make the birth of the social revolution an act of equalization and social justice. Or, putting it in more common words: *To give bread to everybody must be the first duty of the social revolution.*

Workers' Insurance

When formerly, in pre-revolutionary days, socialists, syndicalists, or anarchists imagined their ideal society realized or painted it before themselves, they never thought of such a thing as workers' insurance or labor laws. For the German anarcho-socialists or syndicalists such things always had the flavor of Bismarckian politics. Social law-making against unemployment, sickness, accident, etc., in behalf of the workers was considered necessary only in the capitalist state while already *the funda-*

mental principle of socialism is mutual help, so that social law-making in the old capitalist sense of the word could not be thought of.

That workers' insurance is being introduced in Russia only proves again that there we have not to do with a social revolution but with a political revolution, which has deeply impressed itself upon the social life of Russia. Private property has for the largest part been abolished and the revolution might develop into a social revolution in a more far-reaching sense if other countries also are entangled in the revolution.

That influential, revolutionary, bolshevik circles in Russia first of all thought of introducing the progressive measures which had been realized in the rest of Europe for some time past, should not be counted to their discredit. Thus, *the bolsheviks carried out the social law-making which Kerensky had commenced on a small scale, but on a much larger scale.* True, one cannot defend oneself for the thought, that Kerensky would have done the same thing if he had remained in power longer. This policy of social law-making gives us the impression of a certain reformist tendency. Up to then all social law-making had had the significance of an addition or improvement to the structure of capitalist society. But one cannot pass judgment on the basis of this single point; we must rather take into consideration the whole achievement of the bolsheviks and the whole Russian revolution. Such a general consideration shows us that the Russian revolution was one half political and one half social and in its later development even partly inclined to reaction. This all constitutes the curves of development we cannot yet consider as ended.

In the realm of the czar, workers' insurance was only poorly developed. Up to the year 1917, including the brief Kerensky period, there were in all Russia 1,457,503 workers insured. In the year 1919 the number grew to 3,009,510, and *in the year 1920, according to the statement of the Commissar of Labor, there were 6,000,000 persons, who were all subject to insurance.* But in a population of 120,000,000 this is still very small. Besides one must consider the whole insurance, in the present situation, to be *more on paper than carried out into reality.*

The institution which has worked out the insurance system is *the Commissariat of Labor.* At the head of it stands the People's Commissar of Labor, Schmidt. But this commissariat has to care for not only the workers without an income, but also for the active ones, that is, it has to give out the work to the workers. The commissariat has five sub-departments. The first branch handles the distribution of the work and the workers; the second, protection of the workers; the third, the tariff service; the fourth, labor statistics; the fifth, a labor museum. *The Commissariat of Labor has sections in every city.* If workers are needed in a place, they are sent from a central in Moscow or from a provincial division. This institution also manages the negotiations and arrange-

ments with foreigners who wish to immigrate into Russia. The workers must labor according to the conditions fixed by the commissariat. As the commissar of labor is put in office by the trade unions, the conditions are in conformity with the wishes of the Executive Committee of the unions, and *the tariff, statistics, etc., are worked out by the Commissariat in conjunction with the unions.* When a job of some kind is to be started, such as *the erection of a building, the Commissariat for Building Construction addresses itself to the Supreme Council of National Economy for material, and to the Labor Commissariat for workers.* Just as the Supreme Council of National Economy has to supply the material, so the Commissariat of Labor has to supply the labor power.

These measures of labor protection include motherhood insurance, child insurance and the bringing up of children, invalid and sickness insurance. According to the statements of Labor Commissar Schmidt *the basic support for all needy is 1,200 rubles per month.* This is the minimum wage for workers, for unemployed, for women whose husbands are in the red army, etc. Of the workers actually employed—and that is practically all the workers included in the unions—about one-sixth receives this minimum wage; five-sixths receive additional payments of all kinds, through overtime, through piece work, through premiums, so that the worker comes to an average of 4,000-5,000 rubles per month. The wage is paid partly in kind, partly in money. Workers under 15 years are allowed to work only 6 hours a day.

So far Commissar Schmidt. But in the factories I have found that many qualified workers earn much more than the sums given here; they come as high as from 10,000 to 15,000 rubles per month. In the factories I also spoke with 16-year old youths, who had already for four years worked 8 hours a day at the turning lathe, so that the protection of the youth, which now exists on paper, has not yet been carried over into reality. *It may be that the decree on workers' insurance is partly carried out, but that it is not completely carried out was proven by my observations.*

National Finance

In another place in this book we have already discussed the question whether we in Russia have to do with state capitalism or state socialism. The financial problem shows us this question in new light.

When the November revolution of 1917 broke out and went on to victory, all large land owners were dispossessed. *The banks were nationalized. Interest on money was abolished, private capital was changed into national capital.* All mortgages were annulled. The government made great efforts to collect all the money outstanding on mortgages, but received only 4 million rubles under that head.

The most important feature of the revolution on the financial field is *the depreciation of money.* The government printed

paper money without regard to the gold reserve. These paper bills are no national debt certificates, no credit certificates; they are *nothing but paper*. The state does not borrow and has no creditors like the capitalist states. Capitalism, that is, interest bearing capital, is abolished. The money issued by the bolsheviks represents no national debt and *it is not intended to have it redeemed by the state*. The security back of it is the wealth of the country, the land, which has become state property, the forests, the mines, the oil springs, the factories and the machinery; all these are the assets of the state. We have also seen that the bolsheviks in their commercial treaties with other countries pay with natural resources, which they turn over in form of concessions to the capitalist states for exploitation, seeing that they have no possibility of exploiting them themselves. In consonance therewith the bolshevik paper money does not carry the legend "Loan Certificate" or "National Bank Note" or a statement to the effect that the state pays the amount upon demand, but in 6 languages it has the words: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

This is nearly a precise verbal account of an interview with Minister of Finance Krestinsky. From this we can see that it has not been possible to abolish money, as many socialist theories teach, but that interest was abolished and therewith also the income without work, which fell to the rich through their ownership of shares and other valuable papers. By this means, however, only one form of income without work is abolished, though it is the most parasitic form. Through the retention of paper notes it was possible to make the notes themselves into merchandise just as well as other goods. In fact, there are in Russia a great number of *currency speculators*. They buy German, Swedish, Finnish, Esthonian and Russian money and afterwards sell it with a good profit. Naturally, speculation is heavily punished, but it is an old truism that punishments do not protect us from misdeeds or foolishness. The second form of parasitical income, i. e., *trade, is, consequently, not done away with, and money keeps right on existing*.

Third, through the retention of money, *the standard by which the value of labor is measured continues to be money*, and it is exactly for this reason that money has an independent magnitude and significance.

The circumstance that no private person can draw money or other values from the bank for a note, and that the state has stepped into the place of the private capitalist, is of far-reaching importance. The private person no longer has the right to demand any material values whatsoever in the form of inheritance, etc.; these values belong to the whole people, to the collectivity; to the state. Thus *the financial system is collectivistic* or part of the state business, in contradistinction to the capitalist states, where there is private economy.

We have also seen that in Russia there is no private financial system, but a state financial system. The answering of the ques-

tion whether we can speak of state capitalism or state socialism in this connection, depends on the definition of the word capitalism. If with capital we mean interest bearing values, sums of money or such, then we can only speak of the Russian soviet regime as state socialism. But if we by capital mean the sum total of the values of land, machines, the means of production and the mines, etc., in short, the sum total of the accumulated values, not of the individual, but of the whole collectivity, then we would strike the right meaning by using the word state capitalism. With capital and capitalism, however, the socialists, disregarding all more or less scientific and hair-splitting explanations, have meant the power through which the workers are being exploited, through the medium of private property and the wage system connected therewith. But that the wage system exists not only under private ownership but also under a collective or state ownership, is demonstrated to us by the municipalities, the state-owned railways and the nationalized post offices, as well as all nationalized undertakings in the capitalist state, on the one side, and in the Soviet republic on the other. But for the worker who is employed by the municipal administration, the state railways and the post offices, their employer, even if it is the state, has the same significance as the private capitalist Krupp, Thyssen or Stinnes. As long as they are wage slaves they feel the ruling power of capitalism and the state over themselves. Just as little as it would occur to the workers employed by a state employer to consider themselves as members of a state socialist system, just so is it in the case with Soviet Russia. *From now on we must recognize the word "state capitalism" as more correct.* By so doing we shall in no way paint the actual conditions worse than they are, but have only found a more correct definition, which in a concise way designates the conditions with a single phrase. And that is *state capitalism*.

More important than this purely formal definition is the nature of the financial system. As a result of the revolution, the nationalization of private property and with the cancellation of the national debts of the former governments came *the colossal crash of the Russian ruble*. This is no new phenomenon. In the French revolution of 1789-1793 the assignats had comparatively a still lower value than the present soviet ruble. In Moscow (1920) you could for a German mark obtain 100 soviet rubles from speculators, and for a Swedish crown 500-600 rubles; the rubles of the old regime (paper) are generally valued ten times as much as a soviet ruble. Czar and Kerensky rubles are not permitted to circulate, but in spite of this prohibition one finds them in trade.

The increased cost of food stuffs which resulted from the crash of the ruble, is not by far proportional to the fall in the money value, and the food stuffs, such as 1 lb. of bread for 500 rubles, is to-day more dearly bought than formerly at 5 kopek. The soviet ruble has, just like the assignats, not sunk in this man-

ner through the purposes of the politicians but through the revolutionary situation. When now the bolsheviks declare that the depreciation of money was splendidly suited for the purpose of banishing the spirit of capitalism from the thought of the people, they are only trying to make a virtue out of necessity. Looking at it one-sidedly, a physician who treated me, may have stated the matter correctly when he said that to-day, with an income of 30,000 rubles he did not have as much as before with 300 rubles, and that he was not particular about getting paid in money, but would prefer to get his pay in clothes, and what else he needs in order to live. Speaking subjectively the desire for money is certainly curbed, if not altogether killed.

But as the workers do not receive sufficient food stuffs and other articles of use, they are *compelled to continue the use of money in their daily economy*. *The only difference between the present and past is that one counts with greater sums, and where they formerly strove to get 1 ruble, they now need 1,000*. The spirit of capitalism consists in this that each one thinks only of himself and does not worry about the weal and woe of his fellow man. But I must admit that I have not seen very much more of the disappearance of this spirit and its replacement by the opposite, the spirit of mutual aid and of socialism, in Russia than in Western Europe. On the contrary, one makes the observation, that the people in Russia, generally, are more greedy than for instance, in Sweden. But this we must blame on the long war, which has demoralized people, as well as on the economic distress. Poverty brings misdeeds and depravity, but prosperity restores things again.

The depreciation of money and above all, in connection therewith, the shortage of goods, has brought this with it, that *the workers, and still more the peasants, prefer to exchange products against products*; for they know that, even if they have the money, they cannot get what they need, as it is not to be had in the country. This explains why they will exchange a hen for a glass of salt, and the like. But, as already indicated, we must ascribe this direct exchange of goods, not so much to the depreciation of money but rather to the lack of products.

Of late the policy of the Soviet government is ever more in the direction of replacing the money wage with the wage in kind. This would be equal to the abolition of money if it were carried out completely, but for the present it has not gone so far. It is possible that they will arrive at this stage, especially if a similar movement starts in other countries. But if capitalism in Western and Middle Europe keeps alive, then this hope is very poor. The concession policy which Russia now follows will again inject new life into the money system in Soviet Russia. Foreign capitalism, English and American, which is stronger than Russian capitalism ever was, will step into the latter's place. Of all the results obtained in the revolution there will then remain only the labor laws pertaining to insurance and workers' relief.

The Soviets (Councils)

The council idea is not new. It always comes up wherever the people, the working masses themselves directly try to organize their life with full independence and with the elimination of unnecessary between-hands or middlemen. The times in which people mostly get into this position are the times when old authorities are being overthrown, that is, in times of revolution. During the great French revolution the Parisians elected in their sections the organs which we to-day would call councils or soviets.

But disregarding the fact that the council idea always has risen to the surface in revolutionary times, *the anti-authoritarian socialists, anarchists and syndicalists were the ones who stood nearest to the council idea.* Only an ignorant person could take the notion to deny that this is so. This springs from the anti-authoritarian world conception of the doctrines mentioned. The anarchists have always proclaimed the formula: Peasant, to you belongs the land; factory worker, to you belongs the factory; miner, to you belongs the mine. The syndicalists made it their aim, not to conquer political power—for that purpose no councils were necessary—but to take possession of the economic power, the land, the factories, the mines, the means of transportation, etc., through the workers who are there employed. In order to carry this out, the workers and the peasants must manage these establishments. But not all can do this at once; for this purpose they must elect trustees in the factory, on the country estate, in the mines, and so on. And *there we have the council idea.* The workers in the factories elect factory councils; in the country, peasant councils; and for regulating the affairs in the community, community councils. Thus we see, in fact, that the socialist labor movement—which from the beginning renounced parliamentary representation and for the realization of socialism and communist anarchism chose the direct road through the workers—was the most qualified, yes, we may even say, the only carrier of the council idea. If in the present revolutionary times even others, besides anarchists and syndicalists, are in favor of the direct way, the direct action, such as bolsheviks and communists, then they can also, of course, claim to represent the council idea to the same extent as they uphold the direct method. But it is necessary to remind *the "November socialists,"* who before and during the war were for the largest part social patriots and who now pose as "the only representatives of the council system," of the priority of the anarchists and the syndicalists, in order to bridle their imagination a little. The Spanish anarchists have really for decades propagated the council idea, so that it is possible to even point out concrete examples.

It has also been shown that *the soviet or council idea is not a newly invented patent of the Russian bolsheviks,* but that it emerged from the Russian revolution and was represented by all

revolutionaries, not only the bolsheviks, but also the left social-revolutionaries, the anarchists, the syndicalists and the maximalists. When the October revolution broke out and the workers elected their councils (in Russian: soviets), there were elected to the Kronstadt soviet 105 maximalists, 95 bolsheviks, 76 social revolutionaries, and 12 anarchists. But the latter had, according to a statement of the maximalist leader, a great influence. In most cities the workers and the peasants elected soviets, and the bolsheviks were by no means always in the majority.

Originally *the soviet formation was quite spontaneous*. Later a system was created out of this sudden movement which then was anchored in the constitution. In Germany the anchoring of the council system in the constitution meant the annihilation of the free councils. But in Germany the bourgeois constitution with Parliament and "Reichstag"; was retained. *In Russia* the revolutionary workers (not the bolsheviks alone but all the revolutionary workers) had the power to dissolve the constituent assembly (by us called the national assembly) and to lay the soviet system, not only as an ornament in the basket of the bourgeois parliamentary constitution, but *made it the sole foundation for the building of the whole new state structure*. The constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is, as the name indicates, exclusively a soviet constitution. The decisions providing for a soviet constitution were adopted on July 10, 1918, by an All-Russian Soviet Congress.

The Russian soviet (council) constitution is so built that *in the cities the workers elect a city soviet* from their factories, bureaux or shops. The Moscow soviet has 400 members, and the president is Kamenieff. *In the country, gouvernement soviets are elected*. These gouvernement soviets meet every half year in congress. In the Samara gouvernement are 3½ million electors, which are represented in the congress by 300 delegates. The All-Russian Soviet Congress consists of representatives of all the city soviets, who send a representative for each 25,000 electors, and of the representatives of the gouvernement soviets, who send a representative for each 125,000 of population. These rules will be found in the constitution of the Russian republic, Article 25. This All-Russian Soviet Congress is called in at least twice a year by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee is elected by the All-Russian Soviet Congress and consists of at most 200 members. This executive committee is the highest authority outside of the congress. It forms the Soviet (Council) of People's Commissars, who may be compared to the cabinet ministers in the capitalist states. There are 18 different People's Commissariats.

On the functions of the individual commissariats I have already reported here. But whoever wishes to study these matters more in detail will find it in the flood of bolshevik propaganda literature which may be obtained in all languages.

More important it seems to me to point out here what I have observed in Russia in regard to *the functioning of the present soviets*, which is something one does not find in the bolshevik literature mentioned. Then we must first call your attention to the circumstance that *the soviets have lost a good deal of their independence and freedom* through the so-called soviet constitution. The soviets were mixed up with the state. The soviets are a revolutionary institution, but the state is and remains, in spite of the most beautiful recitations of the bolshevik about the proletarian state, a reactionary institution. It will, therefore, not be surprising that the original council system has also become reactionary in the same measure as it was mixed up with the state. That will appear already from the elections. The bolsheviks may assert ever so loudly that it is principally the workers who elect them and that the course of the revolution shows that the workers are ever more turning to the bolsheviks, as can be seen from the elections, that the majority in all soviets consists of bolsheviks. But this changes nothing in the fact that *the bolsheviks are in the majority because they themselves make the majority*.

Without for a moment allowing myself to be intimidated by the loud outcries of the bolsheviks, who brand everybody making these assertions as a counter-revolutionary, I must mention some examples. The workers in a Moscow munition factory, the name of which I have forgotten, elected as their representative in the Moscow soviet the anarchist *Gordin*. This was in the first months of 1920. The election of *Gordin* was not recognized by the bolsheviks, and for this factory new elections were announced. He was again elected. Because his electors as well as he himself stood fast by the election he was arrested and given two months in prison as a "demagogue." Such names they have always at hand. But the workers of this factory did not elect any other soviet member and remained during that legislative period without representation in the Moscow soviet. Besides this case there are many, *many cases when the election has been declared null and void by the ruling party*. As this is an every-day occurrence the people no longer get excited about it. As *Gordin* told me his case in the presence of many witnesses, he laughed over it when I found the case amazing. In Samara there is a munition factory which at the outbreak of the revolution employed 23,000 workers. These elected members to the Samara soviet. When I visited the factory on May 21, 1920, there were only 1,600 people working there. A year before the bolsheviks had dissolved the executive committee of the Workers' and Peasants' Council of the gouvernement Samara, because they did not have the majority therein. The opposing parties, however, did not want to undertake anything at that moment because the rich peasants were just making a counter-revolutionary attempt, and thus the dissolution of the executive committee of the soviet was accomplished without friction. But in the same year only 1,000 people worked in that factory, because they were out fighting the Czecho-Slovaks

who had taken Kasan and were in the neighborhood of Samara. The bolsheviks did not hold any new elections to replace the city soviet elected while there were 23,000 workers. The reason was that in that soviet the bolsheviks had the majority. Through such illegalities they held the whole government in check, but it was a representation which did not reflect the real conditions.

But, apart from these cases, which are not by far exhausted with the above related ones, *the bolsheviks have another method of securing the majority in the soviet.* The bolsheviks are the ruling state party. The paper is nationalized; the printshops, the houses, in brief, everything belongs to the state and is, therefore, in the hands of the bolshevik party. Thus, only this party is in a position to carry on an election agitation; what wonder then if they receive the most votes and the most seats. And in spite of all that, it happens that the mensheviks or the left social-revolutionaries receive considerable numbers of votes.

From all this it is evident that *in the Russian Soviet Republic the soviets only to a small extent are the expression of the free will of the workers and the peasants.* A peculiar light is thrown on the government soviets of Russia by a resolution adopted by the Russian-Ukrainian anarchists of the "Nabat" in their last congress, held in Charkov 3-8 September. It says, among other things, about the relationship to the soviet power:

"In the beginning of the soviet power we extended to it our great confidence. But after the revolution-born soviet power, in the course of three years, had become a powerful state machine, it has throttled the revolution. It developed into a dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, into a dictatorship of one party, and of a small part of the proletariat over the whole proletariat, over the whole working people, while at the same time this dictatorship throttles the will of the broad working masses. Through this the revolution lost the creative power by which alone it was possible to solve the different problems of the revolution. The soviet power is, therefore, a lesson and a warning to the workers of all countries. This conference proposes to the comrades to boycott the administrations and soviets which are controlled by the government and to devote all their powers of propaganda to this purpose among the lower strata of the workers. We must start with illegal groups and gather all revolutionary material around us."

Besides, in the "*report over the situation in Russia,*" we read:

"At the same time as world imperialism convulsively clings to each opportunity to strangle Soviet Russia, as the home and the source of revolutionary infection, there is taking place in Russia itself a sad decomposition of the revolution. Instead of the united mass of workers which in the October days of 1917 fought in Russia for the conquest of

bread, we now have a division of the working masses into masters and servants, governing and governed, rulers and subjects. The party of the so-called communists, which possesses an unlimited power, forms the centralized soviet government with all its central committees, city, district and gouvernement committees, etc. *The right of the workers and peasants to elect free councils has become a fiction.* From the community soviet up to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, from the congress of the unions to the so-called free, non-partisan peasant conferences there is nothing free, but everything is undermined by the party. *A Gigantic system of espionage has been established.* Under the pretense of a struggle with the counter-revolution, the communist party has laid its hand heavily upon the working population through its "*Partkom*" (party committees which are formed everywhere). The press is strangled. There is no free exchange of opinion, either in the street, or in the house, or in the meetings, or on the job. In the street the "*Tscheka*" (extraordinary commission) is spying; in the house the "*domkom*" (house committee of the communist party, if a party communist lives in the house); on the job in the factory the "*fabkom*" (factory committee of the communist party). Far, far from the lower strata of the workers the "*Sovnarkom*" (Council of People's Commissars) has formed a strong government, which rests upon a strong army. The government has changed into a body whose interests are opposed to those of the revolution."

These descriptions of the situation offer extremely valuable material for the understanding of the present character of the soviets.

From all this we must draw the conclusion that *the soviets and the soviet government are not one and the same thing*, but two different things, of which the first one is the natural expression of the revolutionary people, while the second one is the hard-frozen forms of a clique that has come into power. As a liberty-loving revolutionist one can very well accept the first but must look upon the latter very critically. In view of the circumstance that the bolsheviks and communists always call attention to one side of the soviet power, it is proper for the syndicalists to show up the other side, in order that all workers in the portentous hours which are immediately ahead may be able to draw a lesson therefrom and with Argus eyes guard their own freedom and their elected soviets. *It would mean putting the garden in charge of the goat if the workers of other countries, after adopting the soviet system, were to see a road to the realization of their economic and political freedom in a political government.* Mark that we here only speak of the revolutionary and progressive workers and not of the bourgeoisie. Factory councils for the managing of the factories; peasant and agricultural workers' councils for the management of agriculture; community councils

for regulating the affairs of the community; finally, federations of the single unions as well as of the industrial unions; but also federations of the community councils or labor bureaus. These are the organizations of the revolution; but they *must never be allowed to converge into a state, for only through the absence of the state is freedom guaranteed*, in spite of all well or ill-meant assurances of the bolsheviks about the necessity of state or proletarian dictatorship.

The Red Army

In the Red Army the Communist Party of Russia had a powerful weapon for maintaining its power. And it continues to be such up to the present day. That the creating of such an army from the wreckage of the czarist armies, after the all-destroying world war, was a notable achievement, shall not be denied here. And whether this army could hold its own against an army of Prussian or French militarism, that will remain an open question.

What is more important to us here is *the character of the Red Army*. The Red Army is an army like every other. It can exist and meet with success only by maintaining the strictest war and military morale: discipline, obedience. But that these qualities should be especially suitable to the development of men into socialists and communists, is something that no man, if he wants to be honest, can truthfully state. For the maintenance and the efficiency of an army those slave characteristics are of incalculable worth, as they are an integral part of an army. Without using much circumlocution we can make the statement that militarism is the mortal enemy of the freedom of the individual and thus also the greatest enemy of socialist development. Not only is the statement true that "as long as we have armies, so long will there be war," but also the statement that "as long as there is an army, no socialist development can prosper."

Going out from these idealistic considerations the true socialist and champion of freedom must also be an *anti-militarist*. *But from historic considerations one may take a different position and consider the Red Army as necessary.*

If Trotsky from an historical standpoint seeks, as a Marxian, to establish the necessity of the Red Army through proofs and arguments, it would, of course, be easy for a representative of the opposite standpoint, if he only has the ability and the skill, to present as many or, perhaps, still more proofs for an opposite standpoint. But this would only be a theoretical, speculative discussion, such as we find in Trotsky's anti-Kautsky book "Terrorism and Communism."

Instead of carrying on all this discussion I might point to the fact that in Russia itself not all revolutionaries agree with Trotsky's viewpoint. In the question of defending the revolution

the bolsheviks take the standpoint that without the Red Army the revolution would have been vanquished by the counter-revolution, and that, therefore, the Red Army, as a savior of the revolution, is one of the first revolutionary factors. If it had not been for the Red Army, some reactionary general or a new czar would now be ruling in Russia, that is, in short, the standpoint of the bolsheviks.

The maximalists, a large part of the syndicalists, the anarchists and a part of the left social-revolutionaries take an opposite standpoint. Against the first assertion they put another one, namely, that it is not the Red Army which has saved the revolution and beaten down the counter-revolution, but the revolutionary workers and peasants would have defended the revolution even without the Red Army.

As examples they mention: When general Korniloff marched against Moscow, it was not the Red Army by which he was conquered. At that time there was not yet a Red Army. It was other parts of the same czarist army with him which turned and fought him and proved to be the strongest. For the workers and peasants who fought in the czarist army, but against Korniloff, this Korniloff was a counter-revolutionary, who wanted to force them to continue the war. For that reason it was necessary to fight Korniloff if peace was to come. But this does not speak for the Red Army, which then did not exist, it speaks solely for the urge of liberty among the people.

According to the viewpoint of the mentioned tendencies the bolsheviks make the conscious mistake that they consider the Red Army equal to an armed uprising of the people.

Further, the syndicalists and the related tendencies *point to the fact that it was not the Red Army that drove the Germans and the Austrians out of Ukraine, but the peasants themselves, the partisans, the leaders, the insurgents. By guerilla warfare in small partisan groups they chased the Germans away or blocked them in such a manner that finally they were compelled to retreat from the country.*

Nor was Denekin in the first line conquered by the Red Army but by the peasants themselves, who would not stand for his rule, and, principally under Ataman Batkno Machno, they made rebellion against Denekin. If the peasants had been for Denekin and not against him, then the Red Army would have never succeeded in conquering Denekin. But at the same time we must not forget that the peasants in no manner voluntarily formed the Red Army. The peasants got into the Red Army when compelled to, there being a compulsory military service, just as formerly for the czar's army. The peasants rather organized their own armies, of which the strongest one was Machno's, in order to fight against reaction. And as it went with Denikin, so it went with Kaledin, Petljura and others.

In regard to Ukraine the bolsheviks admit this, more or less,

as facts cannot very well be denied. They seek to support their contention with the statement that *Koltshak and the Czecko-Slovaks* have been conquered by the Red Army. The commandant of the later Red Armies against the *Czecko-Slovaks*, an anarchist by the name of *Gebenjeff*, also called Alexa, has told me how the thing happened. When in May, 1918, the *Czecko-Slovaks* began their advance from Siberia, the workers, anarchists, left social-revolutionaries and bolsheviks, arming themselves, united against the *Czecko-Slovaks*. They elected *Gebenjeff* their commander, and they were the shock troops of the reds against the whites. Now the bolsheviks call this the "red army." But attention should be called to the fact that these troops did not yet in any way have the characteristics of the Red Army, namely, compulsory mobilization, unified centralist command under *Trotsky*, subordination and blind discipline. Nothing of this nature was to be found among the armed peasants. They had met voluntarily to fight against the reactionaries, and it is this that is the most striking difference between them and the Red Army. And, of course, I have later heard these soldiers of the revolution referred to by bolsheviks as the "Red Army." If this is done, then we can call everything by the name of the Red Army which has the slightest resemblance to armed insurrection. But that would mean gross confusion of expressions.

In the struggle against Koltshak it was not the Red Army that should have the credit for his annihilation. And here I must take a stand with the revolutionary groups which are opposed to the Red Army, because the facts related to me by high Soviet officials themselves speak for it. The brother of the deceased president of the Russian Soviet Republic, *Sverdlov*, the second in command after *Trotsky* in the Commissariat, having charge of the whole defense, told me during a trip on the Volga, which we made together, that even before the Red Army advanced, the peasants and the workers rose in rebellion in all places against *Koltshak* and in many cases conquered his troops. The Red Army entered Tomsk on Dec. 26, 1919. But long before this the peasants had rebelled against *Koltshak's* rule. Many of *Koltshak's* soldiers joined them, and *the city of Tomsk was in the hands of the rebels for a long time before the Red Army entered*. As early as the summer of 1918 the peasants had formed guerilla bands against the *Czecko-Slovaks* and *Koltshak*. This was in the provinces *Atscheisk* and *Jenniseisk* and in the *Altei* gouvernement.

The cause of the great rebellions of peasants and workers against *Koltshak* was his reactionary behavior. *Sverdlov*, who was in technical charge of the transportation expedition of the Red Army operating against *Koltshak*, related that terrible epidemics harrowed *Koltshak's* troops. Over 80% of them were sick from typhus. The epidemic spread to the people. At *Novo Nicolajevsk* 10,000 bodies were found. Between *Omsk* and *Nicolajevsk* 15,000 graves were found with crosses. All were victims of typhus. *Koltshak* himself lived in the midst of these terrors

without caring what happened around him. He had a special train with music and women and led a fast life. His generals shot the revolutionary workers of the factories wherever they could get hold of them. In Tomsk all the factory committees were put in jail. Every one suspected of being a bolshevik or of some other revolutionary color was subjected to a Spanish torture and finally shot. In the year of 1919 Koltshak sent a trainload of dead from Asia to Europe.

In view of such conduct it is easy to understand that the peasants and workers would rise against Koltshak and fight him. *It was, in the first place, the peasants and workers rebelling against this ghastly rule who annihilated Koltshak, and not the Red Army.* All that the Red Army had to do, according to Sverdlov's report, was to relieve the peasants and the workers, who, together with the revolting elements of Koltshaks' army, had already conquered the Koltshak officers. Even here it was the federalistically aggregated bands of peasants and workers who performed the greatest work in combatting reaction and not the centralistically organized Red Army, formed through compulsory mobilization.

And even *the liberation of Petrograd from the armies of Judenitsch* is more the merit of the Petrograd workers, who in the hour of danger went, all united, against the threatening army. As commander of Petrograd, Bill Shatoff, a Russian-American I. W. W. and an anarchist, was elected and in the hour of highest danger the workers put Judenitsch to flight, after he had already penetrated into the streets of the Petrograd suburbs.

Moved by all these instances, all revolutionary socialist tendencies in Russia who oppose centralism and in centralism see a reactionary element are against the idea of a Red Army. They declare that the Red Army is not a revolutionary but a counter-revolutionary factor, because, with its system of centralism, the obedience of unfree subjects is again introduced into the ranks of revolutionaries and freedom is suppressed. But they are by no means opponents of the armed uprisings of the people. They point to the fact that they always stood in the first ranks of the revolutionary fighters and stand there still, and when the bolsheviks say the armed uprising of the revolutionary people and the Red Army with its compulsory mobilization, are the same they declare this to be a conscious falsehood.

The defeats that the Red Army suffered in Poland gave birth to grave conflicts within the Communist Party itself. At the beginning of the war against Poland I just arrived in Moscow as the first big army show, a parade on Theatralnaja Square, took place. The next day, May 6, 1920, Karl Radek explained to me how greatly important the taking up of General Brussilov was for the Red Army. "When Lloyd George reads about that," Radek said to me, "he, and with him all English government politicians, will say to themselves, that the bolsheviks cannot be so bad, after all, when a man like Brussilov can work

together with them." I was from the beginning not very much edified by this taking up of the old reactionary generals and officers in the Red Army and said this to Radek. With him it was only a case of making a great effect. They took up all the old czarist officers for service in the Red Army. But with them came the old czarist spirit, the spirit of the blackest reaction in the proletarian army, which was to battle for the liberation of the oppressed. The results of this policy soon became apparent. Proletarian unity and leadership slipped ever more into the hands of the bourgeois and feudal elements of the old czarist officers. Former estate owners and bourgeois hold responsible posts in the Red Army and use their position to make their influence felt. Thus the Red Army became more and more an instrument in the hands of these elements. The soldiers of the Red Army have long ago ceased to feel personal responsibility for the victories and defeats of the whole army as the case is when compulsory mobilization is taken away. They are a blind will-less tool in the hands of the generals commanding them; they no longer recognize the battle they fight as their own battle. The communists of the Red Army are the only volunteers who still fight with enthusiasm. The evil results of taking up so many old officers, the bolsheviks wanted to counteract by establishing officers' schools for communist workers (and under certain conditions also for non-communists, although this occurs more seldom) in which schools the young communists are trained to become officers. Among these I have found true inspiration, an inspiration for the red war and for the victory of the red army. And, too, there are among the old officers some converts who have become honest, inspired revolutionaries. To these belongs *General Nikolajev*, who was hanged on the gallows by Judenitsch in Jamburg because he as an important leader served the Red Army with great devotion. But on the whole these exceptions confirm the rule.

The bolsheviks themselves now see the untenable situation in the Red Army and gave expression to this fact at their party conference in Moscow in October 1920. Zinoviev said:

"Comrade Trotzky told us after his return from the front that there he had seen hundreds of comrades who deny themselves everything, who do not eat themselves satisfied. They live on the small rations, and are thereby reduced to skin and bone, and still they work very hard, in order to save the honor of our party at the front. But there is no doubt that alongside of them among the soldiers there is a different stratum. Yes, a whole stratum. No matter how numerous this stratum is, it is there. The people conceive of their rights and their duties differently; These are the elements who rob the party of their credit which has been won through heavy sacrifices and the hard work of tens of thousands of our first and intermediate party mem-

bers. Certain communists, who have been mobilized and sent to the front, work and live there in such a manner that they with right can complain."

I could mention many other instances which have been told me by people, (communists and non-communists) returning from the Polish front, but I had much rather allow only Comrade Zinoviev speak, because he least of any can be suspected of painting it blacker than it is. At all events, the conditions have to carry part of the blame for the defeats on the Polish front.

Hereby the honest intentions of the communists will in no manner be impugned, but we shall rather demonstrate that the Red Army in itself is no socialist body, as Trotzky falsely designates it, but that it is an army like any other army and can be nothing else, because it cannot disavow its character of militarism.

And the population realizes that such is the Red Army. Outwardly, for combatting capitalist reaction it cannot have such an effect, and as the instances quoted show us, it has no such effect. As I learnt in the gouvernement of Poltava, after the Poles were driven out of Poltava and Kiev, the Red Army was in the first moment greeted with joy. But this joy did not last long. The peasants were oppressed in the extreme by the Polish troops. They made a rebellion against them, and when the Red Army came, it was received as a liberator. But as the war lasted longer, the Soviet government was compelled to take the grain from the peasants, in order to be able to feed the army. Ukraine, which they now again held in their hands and, above all, the gouvernement of Poltava which ranks among the richest grain countries of the earth, was very welcome to the exhausted Soviet government, and it demanded the grain from the peasants. For that reason the peasants are now as enraged against the Soviet government as they formerly were against the Poles.

This is, however, a phenomenon incidental to the war, for even the guerilla bands are compelled to take the grain from the peasants, when they are driven into a region which is strange to them and the peasants refuse them what they need. True, this occurs more seldom with the guerillas, for they are not military idealists, they do not wish to combat world imperialism like the Red Army does and are contented with driving out those who intrude into their own territory. For this reason they are never entirely strange to the region where they are fighting and not compelled to fill their needs by force from the peasants. The peasants, who for a large part themselves participate in the fighting, give it to them most voluntarily. Such is the case with *Machno*, the Ukrainian guerilla leader. But *outside the Red Army there are other military defense organizations of the Russian workers*. In Moscow and Petrograd the workers are subject to obligatory military exercises through their membership

in the unions, which is also obligatory. They form a *militia* which is organized according to districts and mustered according to factories. There you find all categories of workers and artisans, even married women and girls, who work in the factories. These organizations prove more efficient, and it was also these that drove Judenitsch from Petrograd. They are not organizations built according to the pattern of the old state armies. And if we really want to accomplish the abolition of the political state, then we must above everything abolish those organizations which have always been the support, yes, the greatest support of the state, namely the centralist armies, and replace them now, and in the so-called period of transition, with workers' defense organizations formed according to districts or industries. *Of the two instruments of defense organized by the communists; the Red Army and the defense organization built on the trade unions, the latter are to be preferred, because in them the state principle is already replaced by another principle.* It is the one that most indicates progress, and also comes nearer to the abolition of militarism. The workers in the factories are no professional soldiers and form no standing army which must "work" in order to exist. Nevertheless, it is still a militia which also must disappear when socialism or communism shall become a reality. Only in the absence of every kind of militarism is liberty for the individual and for the whole society possible.

Education

The revolutionary people has not been able to accomplish much yet in the field of education. The economic and political situation has been too pressing and important to give the workers and peasants much time to give special attention to the educational question. Furthermore, education is a thing which cannot be greatly benefited by the collapse of the old state and the erection of a new one. It requires much slow detail work and industrious and loving devotion in order to create that which the people can not obtain by sounding the tocsin of the revolution. Nevertheless, individuals as well as the soviet government have done everything in their power in order to restore the destroyed school system upon an altogether new foundation.

At the head of the Commissariat of Education is the commissar Lunatscharsky, an intellectual and tolerant man. According to what I learned in an interview with his nearest assistant and in conversation with himself, the apparatus of the whole school system was destroyed during the war. During the Kerensky period several propositions were advanced, but they never came to the point of realization. When the bolsheviks came into power they found that the old system was entirely unfit for use. But the utmost difficulties stood in the road. Many old teachers sabotaged them. Thus, 70 professors went with Denekin in Odessa, in Ural 67 with Koltshak, because they were political

opponents of the bolsheviks. The Koltschak army did everything in order to hinder the enlightenment of the people; they destroyed the schools, burnt the school books, and drove the teachers away.

During the czarist period the kindergartens were in private hands. When the bolsheviks came into power they nationalized these. A mother is supported for three months after child birth by the state. The child can be sent to a *Home for Children*, to remain there up to its third year. From the third to the seventeenth year the children are under the supervision of the Commissariat of Education and get their maintenance from the schools. At present there are about 3,620 children's homes after the Froebel system for children of 3-6 or 7 years. In these institutions it is principally war orphans that are taken up, and if there is room to spare, proletarian children, and, last of all, children of the bourgeoisie. In Moscow there are about 180 such institutes. In the whole of Russia there are, so far, (1920), 204,917 children in these institutes.

In the 43 gouvernements which are under consideration here, there are 7 million children of school age, so that only an insignificant part has so far been taken charge of by the school. Of teachers there are 11,234. Among them are, naturally, all sorts of teachers. In newly established seminaries young people of 17 years and up are given instruction from 6 weeks up to 3 years, in order to serve as teachers.

For specially refractory children separate children's homes have been established. The children are examined in regard to their natural tendencies, and it is also sought to ascertain whether the child is born with inherited criminal tendencies. If it shows signs of bad tendencies it is put in a bureau of psychic observation. There are also children still in the prisons. But it is sought to remove them from the prisons as far as possible. Persons below 17 years of age are counted as children.

In the public schools one teacher had to instruct 40 children in czarist times, but it is now tried to reduce the number to 25, but so far they have not come down any further than 32. The school period was formerly 2-4 years, but now it is desired to raise it from 4 to 9 years.

From 8 to 12 years children shall go to the middle school, where they are given elementary instruction. In regard to the new methods of teaching we were told that in the czarist schools the connection between geography and mathematics on the one side, and history on the other, was never taught. It is now desired to give the children such an education that they will get a general view of the economic structure of society in the Marxian sense. It is attempted to introduce the intuitive method of instruction on a grand scale. By means of technical apparatus, for instance, a match box, the children shall be taught mathematics, chemistry and physics. In the 43 gouvernements of Soviet Russia there are about 3,600 public elementary schools with 29,000 teachers and

470,000 pupils. But there is a total of 6,801,000 children of school age, so that the largest part of the children do not go to school. This has its cause in several circumstances. 1) There are not sufficient schools. 2) There is not sufficient school equipment. 3) Many parents purposely neglect to send their children to school, because many schools are demoralized. Many children are speculating, and are then picked up and sent to institutions for the bringing up of children.

For children who desire to get a *technical education* the instruction between 12 and 17 years is more vocational. Those who are gifted and want to train further can go to *the university*. *All instruction is free*. The students receive, in addition to food rations and lodgings, a small contribution in money by the state.

Besides these schools there are *technical continuation schools*, some of them organized by the Commissariat of Education, and some by the unions. There are also art industrial schools and a "proletkult" where young workers have produced quite splendid work.

Many private villas and palaces were transformed into *Children's Homes*. Even in the country I have visited many estate mansions where there are now children's homes. The children feel quite happy there. But there is one short-coming that is noticeable about all this, and that is the *lack of equipment*. No books, no lead pencils, no writing paper. The war and the blockade are responsible for this. All over, wherever one goes the complaint is heard about the blockade. Bolsheviks and mensheviks, revolutionaries and reactionaries, all of them complain of the blockade and wish it lifted. Maybe there are Russian counter-revolutionaries outside of Russia who desire a continuation of the blockade, in order to combat the bolsheviks, but in Russia itself all are against the blockade and long for its discontinuance with the greatest impatience.

The bringing up of man to a free personality is one of the most important tasks for a new society. A growing person must be fitted out with the conquest of science and technique, in order that he may be able to build up a new society. But he must also be fitted out with the positive qualities of a socialist world conception, he must learn that the human and socialist ideal must be transplanted into actual life and that he must realize that in his own person. *Education is not only a problem for the young but also for the old*.

According to bolshevik theory, the dictatorship is the period which shall carry the working masses over to socialism or communism. This shall be realized by the fact that the conditions of economic and political life under which people live and which, without doubt, exert a great influence on the thoughts and actions of men—the Marxians say that this influence is absolute—assume other forms, through which men will then experience a change in their actions and will-expressions, a change for the better.

The essential difference between the capitalist and socialist order of society consists in this that in the latter wealth and poverty, mastery and servitude, shall be abolished. In practice the abolition of wealth and poverty means that a few people shall not live very well while others are living very poorly. But we must say that in Russia there are still in existence great differences in the standard of living of the people, and that ruling over people is by no means abolished. Judging from everything one cannot say that in Russia the economic and political conditions, such as they have been in the last three years, have exerted a particularly favorable or a decisive influence on the bringing up of people to socialism and communism. It has become evident that a revolutionary government, or a proletarian-communist state, or a state striving towards communism cannot create the economic and political life forms of freedom and justice, if men do not do it themselves, in each community, in each shop; that the interference of the state, however well-meant it may be, must always appear as forcible dictation from the outside, through which men are prevented from coming nearer their ideal; that each individual must prepare himself, technically and culturally, and that this socialist training is possible not only later, when capitalism shall have been overthrown, but right now and today, just as socialist propaganda has always been more or less possible, whether openly or secretly.

It is my sincere wish that each reader of this book may draw this lesson from it. If we want to liberate the world from capitalism and class rule and state, then *we must remember that this world emancipation is largely also self-emancipation.*

The Revolution in Ukraine

AT the end of 1919 the bolsheviks for the third time got a firm footing in Ukraine. *Ukraine was again declared a Soviet Republic*, and due to the fact that the Ukrainians made a strong demand for independence it was *affiliated as an independent Soviet Republic to the central Russian Soviet Republic*.

Originally the Soviet Republic in Central Russia wanted to include the lands of Ukraine in its own domain. But this proved to be impossible, due to the strong demand for independence. The opposition between North Russia and South Russia, or Ukraine, dates far back. Ukraine comprises all South Russia. Ukraine has its own culture, its own history, its own language, its own national development. The Russian czars have always striven to put Ukraine, rich in natural resources and the most fertile country in Europe, under their dominion. In this they succeeded. But the Ukrainian population was always rebellious against the ruling tendencies of Great-Russia. Great-Russian rule had for result the hatred and the distrust of the Ukrainian peasants towards the Great-Russians. Therefore it was natural that this old antagonism did not disappear after the outbreak of the revolution; on the contrary, the population took a rather frigid stand towards the Central Russian Council or Soviet Republic and demanded independence; a free republic independent of the rest of Russia. This demand the bolsheviks had to comply with if they did not want to live in a permanent war with the Ukrainians.

But even *this new Soviet Republic had not sprung from the ranks of the Ukrainians themselves*, and it still remains a foreign body for the peasants, and that is one of the many reasons why Ukraine continues to be the child of sorrow of the Russian Soviet Republic, and will long remain so. *The president of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic is not an Ukrainian and is not elected by the Ukrainians. He is a Roumanian, and was put in his place by Lenin. His name is Rakovsky.*

The situation in Ukraine as a result of the war and the revolution is so complicated, and will in the next few years be so complicated, that it is necessary to know the history of the development since the outbreak of the war, in order to understand the revolutionary situation.

The war of Russian czarism was not the Ukrainian peasants' business. They were against the war not only because they had

to send their sons to the war but also because they had to supply the provisions for the army. The dissatisfaction of the peasants increased with the duration of the war, and when the revolution broke out in Central Russia, Ukraine was also soon in flames. But as the Ukrainians were against the Kerensky government, the bolsheviks soon gained the upper hand and at the end of 1917 they were in power in Ukraine. *But there was another reason why the bolsheviks found an open ear with the Ukrainian peasants. This was the peace of Brest-Litovsk.* The peasants wanted to have peace at any price. The bolsheviks who concluded this peace were preferred to all other parties by the Ukrainian peasants.

But through this peace *the Germans and the Austrians got a free hand in Ukraine.* They began their imperialistic policy. Particularly Germany, which through the economic blockade of the allies had been precipitated into a food crisis, now saw in Ukraine its savior in their hour of need. Ukraine is the land that flows with milk and honey. Europe's largest sugar factories and its largest grain fields are in Ukraine. These great supplies German militarism felt compelled to acquire for its armies which were then fighting on the battlefields of Western Europe.

General Eichhorn was sent to Ukraine and his armies occupied the country in the beginning of 1918. But in order to hide the foreign rule from the people they put in Skoropadski as hetman over the country. German militarism began to function. They proclaimed that they wanted to "save the land from bolshevism and decay." By the entry of the German and Austrian armies the bolsheviks were crowded out of Ukraine.

Eichhorn received orders from the supreme military command to deliver grain, sugar, etc., to Germany. The peasants also gave up a good deal at the start for payment, but when they could not later buy anything for the money, for lack of industrial products, as the Germans had more important things to do with their war industry than to supply Ukraine with goods, they finally did not want to supply anything. Then the Germans began the *requisition policy*. The peasants still refused. They were threatened with force, and finally force was used.

Thus began *the peasant insurrections against the armies of occupation.* Although all this was officially done under the name of Skoropadski, it was clear that the Germans were the originators. Skoropadski's power in the Ukraine rested on German bayonets and machine guns. It was not Ukrainian soldiers but, principally, German and Austrian soldiers which suppressed the peasants. It was these soldiers who executed the death sentence over those peasants who offended against the proclamations of the state of war. *Military law was declared all over Ukraine, and shooting and hanging was the order of the day.* The traveler who visits Ukraine today has an opportunity to see many photographs where peasants by the hundreds hang on the gallows, in

front of which stand Austrian officers or Ukrainian and Russian priests. The fury of the Central European soldiery was at its height in the summer of 1918. But the exasperation and the despair of the peasants was also at its height. *During the rule of Eichhorn-Skoropadski a total of about 80,000 workers and peasants were killed.*

Now the peasants began to rise against their tormentors everywhere. The party of the left social-revolutionaries remained true to their old terrorist traditions and *one of their members killed general Eichhorn.*

The death of Eichhorn was a signal for the peasants. The West-European soldiers, brutalized through the war, had learnt murder on a grand scale, and the naturally brutal peasants, without the gloss of European culture, continued this handiwork in still more barbarous forms. They started to arm themselves. *Everywhere bands and little troops appeared,* in the beginning primitively armed with pitchforks and flails, they started an insurrection, and killed the Austrian and German soldiers wherever they could get hold of them.

It is easy to understand that morals have suffered terribly through this. A human life had hardly any value any longer. One no longer negotiated with one's enemy, but beat him to death. The peasants finally succeeded in procuring modern fire arms, but, to begin with, in very small quantities. A revolutionary who lived through this state of affairs gives the following account of the terrible situation, and about the desperate courage of the peasants.

"The bolsheviks in Moscow complain about the un-communistic spirit of the Ukrainian peasants. They came to the conclusion that such an un-communistic spirit existed from the fact that the peasants revolt against the Soviet republic. They call the peasants "kulaks." Kulak is in Russia the name for the richer peasants who are against the abolition of private property and oppose the introduction of communism. It is said that the peasants band together and fight and kill communists. The people who talk so have not the slightest idea of the events that took place in Ukraine, to which events the present situation can be traced.

"When the peasants under the leadership of the social-revolutionaries, anarchists, maximalists, bolsheviks, etc., fought against the oppression by Skoropadski, the Germans, the Austrians, Kaledin, etc., they were very inadequately supplied with arms. Thus for instance I was in a battle, in which 500 peasants had only 200 rifles. For each rifle there were two cartridges. The enemy was over 1000 strong. The 500 peasants stood in one troop, the 200 who were armed with rifles stood in the front ranks. The numerically superior enemy was very well supplied with the most modern arms. They had machine guns, we had nothing. All knew that the foremost ranks must fall first and that the turn

thereafter would come to the others. And, still, nobody left his place. On the contrary, each man waited until his front man had fallen, in order that he might then take his rifle.

"Such a blind courage could spring only from extreme despair and from the most mortal hatred, conjured up in the hearts of the peasants through the draconic measures of a most inhuman reaction.

"Those who lived through such things, and who have seen the butchering of the peasants and their desperate struggle, only they can understand the state of the Ukrainian peasant's soul, and shall find it possible then to understand that the peasants now also combat the bolsheviks and reject the bolshevik theories, which are strange to the peasants. But they will never approve of the tactics of the Central Russian bolsheviks towards the Ukrainian peasants, which show an absolute lack of understanding of the life of the peasants; a lack of understanding which brands all the efforts of the peasants as counter-revolutionary risings of "kulaks" who wish to defend their private property."

Thus my informant, a Russian who before the war had spent five years in America, ended his story. This man's name is *Baron*. He is at present one of the most active members of the anarchist federation of Ukraine, which calls itself "Nabat."

These reports place us to some extent in a position to understand the psychology of the Ukrainian peasants. People who have for some time lived in this atmosphere feel as though they were transplanted to a different world when they read column-long articles in humanistic papers on the theory of force and on the use of force, and where force is treated as a problem. *For the people of Eastern Europe, particularly of Ukraine, force is no problem, but a fact, a matter of course, a principle of life.* It may be admitted that matters have reached this point of development only through the war and the revolution, but force would never have spread to such a great extent, if it had been foreign to the life of the people. Not only in world wars and civil wars, not only in class struggles, or in periods of the social revolution, but also in common every-day life, hostilities, yes, even differences of opinion are settled by primitive people principally through resort to the law of might. How can one wonder, then, that under such conditions as existed in Ukraine, force was made the all-powerful principle and the deciding factor, which took the place of every kind of justice, agreement or negotiation.

Not only for the non-partisan peasants, but also for the political parties and organizations, force is the most important means in their struggle. Thus the anarchists and maximalists of Ukraine are daily and hourly facing the alternative whether to use force or to succumb in the struggle against counter-revolutionary generals, as well as against the bolsheviks. It has even

gone so far that it has been spoken of in anarchist circles to conduct the struggle against the bolsheviks by means of terrorism, if the persecutions do not cease.

Machno

At the time when the peasants in all parts of Ukraine rose against Skoropadski, and against the Germans and the Austrians, there was one man who particularly distinguished himself among the leaders. This man later became famous and is still a hard nut to crack for the bolsheviks, a nut on which they time and again break off their teeth. *This man is Machno.*

The reason why the name Machno has acquired such an importance in Ukraine lies less in the prominence of Machno's personality than in the spirit of the Ukrainian peasants which is personified and symbolized in Machno.

Platon Machno was born in the village of Gulai-Pole in the gouvernement Alexandrovs. As a young man he came into the socialist movement. He was a partner publisher of the paper "Buro Vjestnik." Not yet 20 years old he shot a "Pristov," a member of the Russian czarist secret police. He was condemned to death, pardoned to penal servitude for life and banished to Siberia. The revolution of 1917 released him. He was over ten years in exile. Through the sufferings and hardships of prison life he became consumptive. He is a small man, suffering in the highest degree and often afflicted by violent hemorrhages which overwhelm him while walking or speaking. By extraction and in his habits of life he is a peasant. He calls himself an anarchist, but is more of an Ukrainian peasant than a theoretical anarchist. And it is this that connects him with the peasants and makes him so popular and loved among them.

But if Machno has his Ukrainian peasant extraction in common with the peasants, the latter have anarchism in common with Machno. The Ukrainian peasants are attached to the Machno brand of anarchism with the strongest ties. *Machno is, properly speaking, nothing but the theoretical expression of this peasant anarchism.* The anarchism of the Ukrainian peasants is not built on the theories of a Goodwin, a Proudhon or a Kropotkin, but the fact of the matter is that parts of the anarchist theories find expression in the tendencies and manifestations of the Ukrainian peasants.

The anarchist theories contain negative and positive parts. *The negative parts* are antimilitarism, decentralization and the negation of the state. *The positive parts* are the connection of the independent free communes into federative units, federalism, respect for the free personality in the necessary unification on the economic and political field.

The efforts of the Ukrainian peasants are covered by the negative parts of anarchism. The peasants do not want to re-

cognize any government. Theoretically expressed we could say that they deny the state. They combat the functions of the state: they do not want to become soldiers, they hate and abhor officialdom and bureaucracy, do not want to pay any taxes, in short, they take a hostile stand towards all the functions of the state. They are anti-militarists when up against the militarism of the state, but they defend their own freedom with all means. But even if the negative parts of anarchism are the most prominent parts of the anarchism of the Ukrainian peasant movement, this movement is not purely negative as a movement. The peasants are not theoretical but rather sentimental anarchists. They have also showed, on different occasions, that they are capable of regulating their affairs in consonance with their libertarian tendencies, and even in the sense of communism.

If we now ask ourselves wherefrom these comparatively strong anarchist tendencies of the Ukrainian peasantry come, we can say that, besides the natural desire for liberty, the conditions of the last years of revolution and war have exerted a strong influence. Who will not be able to understand that a people will hate all political governments when in the course of six years it has had thirteen different governments, as the case was in some governments, such as Kievsk, Poltava and Berdiansk. But these governments were all war governments and must, consequently, show themselves from the worst side. They requisitioned grain, horses, etc., from the peasants, in short, the peasants were for the governments only the means of carrying on the war.

In regard to the theories of anarchism the revolutionary movement of the peasants has only parts of anarchism in it. But this movement is not identical with the anarchist movement of Ukraine. Although the bolsheviks label the whole peasant movement, (which under Machno causes them so many difficulties) sometimes as anarchistic and sometimes as a common bandit movement, the anarchists in no manner identify themselves with the Machno peasant movement. And still a large part of the anarchists of Ukraine join the Machno peasant movement, in order to work for their ideas. And while they, for the reasons above mentioned, and because of the related character of this movement, found a good field for their ideas and made great progress in these circles, the whole Machno movement was by outsiders designated as an anarchist movement.

When Machno came from the prison in Siberia, he first stopped in Moscow. The rumors of the peasant massacres penetrated to Moscow and he went to Ukraine, and to his home place Gulai-Pole.

The following description of the development of the Machno movement comes not alone from his most intimate friends, his aids and comrades, but also from the bolsheviks, who formerly served him as soldiers but who later entered the Red Army and fought against Machno.

Machno organized the peasants against the Germans and against Skoropadski-Warta. There were in Gulai-Pole, a village of about 30,000 inhabitants, seven men who were good rebels. Among them were Machno, Tschubenko and Gribelenko. They had some rifles and took in the first day 80 Skoropadski soldiers prisoners. Besides they took rifles and collected money for a fighting fund, and for the first 3,000 rubles they bought a machine gun, some bombs and one revolver. Machno is a splendid, fiery orator and understood how to inspire the peasants to fight. Through his successes he became famous among the peasants and was soon known in the whole gouvernement and later in all Ukraine. From all sides the peasants gathered round him and wanted to serve under his flag. His power became stronger from day to day, and towards the end of the year 1918 he had an army of 50,000 or, according to some reports, 70,000 men.

Towards all other generals and adventurers the peasants stood skeptical. But not to Machno. The peasants loved Machno, and for him they voluntarily gave everything that the Germans and Skoropadski as well as all other counter-revolutionary generals could not get from them. Thus Machno was able to send 30 wagon loads of foodstuffs to Moscow in December, 1918. The Moscow paper of the bolsheviks, the "Isvestija" then wrote very approvingly of Machno. Machno's army at that time held a front of over 300 kilometers (about 186 miles).

The Germans and the Austrians, as well as Skoropadski, were thus driven from the Ukraine by the peasants, principally under Machno. It was, consequently, not the Red Army, which came into existence only later, but the peasants themselves who cleaned out Ukraine. This is a historic fact of great importance. It shows us that well organized and great modern armies were conquered by peasants and peasant generals who had no military training whatsoever. Here we see repeated what we before have seen in history; the French peasants, after the revolution of 1789, threw back the invasion of the Prussians and the Austrians. In Russia we have still more instances of this phenomenon. Such historic experiences from the French, Mexican, Russian and Ukrainian revolutions compress themselves into a lesson which can be of great use to us for the future.

But the counter-revolution was not settled through the expulsion of the Germans, Austrians and the Skoropadskis from the Ukraine. Not for a moment. *France and England as well as Roumania,* who thereby got the danger of revolution directly in their neck, were not at all suited by the fact that in Ukraine, it was the peasants, the anarchists and bolsheviks who ruled. The aim of the entente was, and is up to the present time, to break down Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine. *They provoked and supported counter-revolution. They financed the old czarist generals Petljura, Kaledin, Grigorjev, Denekin, and Wrangel and encouraged them to reactionary advances.* As Germany was vanquished, the conquerors of Germany took over the role of watch-

dogs for the reaction, formerly played by Germany in Europe. Germany throttled with iron fist the revolution in Finland through general Goltz. The entente tried to do the same in the Ukraine through the old czarist officers.

From Podolia and from the East Galician frontier came Petljura, from the region of Don came Kaledin, and later Denekin took possession of the Don basin. Besides, a former czarist general, Grigorjev, gathered dissatisfied peasants around him, and he succeeded in drawing to himself great numbers under pretense that he brought the peasants freedom.

The bolsheviks in Moscow saw the danger which threatened them from Ukraine. It was clear that the counter-revolution which raised its head in such manifold shapes, would not content itself with Ukraine but would extend further into Central Russia. In fact, Denekin later came far outside of Ukraine. He occupied Orel and stood before Tula, the last strategically important point before Moscow. But now the aim of the Soviet government was to overthrow all other powers in Central Russia and establish one single soviet power of the Communist Party. The peasant movement under Machno stood in the road of this policy. Economically they were dependent upon Ukraine. Central and North Russia needed Ukraine's grain and sugar. Central and North Russia is higher developed industrially than Ukraine, but through the war and the revolution it was so impoverished that they were not capable of entering into purely economic exchange with an independent Ukraine but had to amalgamate politically with that country. Besides, it would not do to allow Machno to become too strong, for just as well as Denekin the Machno movement could crowd over into Central Russia, and that had to be prevented. The position of the bolsheviks regarding the situation in the Ukraine was also very vacillating. The reaction had to be beaten down. This could not be done without the Ukrainian peasants and workers. But these stood suspicious towards the bolsheviks, although they went together with them in breaking down reaction. The bolsheviks needed the peasants but sought to become masters of their separatist libertarian movement. Denekin they could openly combat with the Red Army. He was a reactionary and the peasants and the workers were also against him. But the Red Army was not strong enough to quash Denekin. For that purpose they needed the peasants and Machno. At the outset, about the end of 1918 and the early part of 1919, the reactionary wave of the czarist generals was not yet so dangerous and not so powerful. The power of the peasants was stronger. But it was not possible to fight them openly without coming to a complete rupture with them, for they needed the peasants badly, in the first place for providing food stuffs, and in the second place to help the Red Army against the counter-revolution.

The bolshevik plans were that the peasant army of 50,000 to 70,000 men should be kept in Ukraine and, as far as possible,

held in inactivity. This could be accomplished quite painlessly. The lack of arms and ammunition, which already in the beginning of the risings developed such tragic effects, made itself again noticeable. That was one of the weakest points of the peasant army. This the bolsheviks knew. Machno asked the Soviet government for arms and ammunition. He turned to Debenko, the highest commander of the Red Army of Crimea. Debenko delayed the munitions shipment and gave him first in February, 1919, a single wagon load of cartridges.

In order to discuss the situation Machno called a conference of the peasants, which took place in Machno's birthplace, Gulai-Pole. This was a conference of revolting peasants. They are in Ukraine called "Povstanzi." These povstanzi are guerilla soldiers, rebellious peasants who fight in armed groups. The anarchists, left social-revolutionaries and maximalists, in a resolution condemned the conduct of the bolsheviks. But the peasants still had confidence in the bolsheviks and demanded the striking out of those paragraphs of the resolution which were directed against them. Still, the situation did not improve. The munition shipments became smaller and smaller. The leaders of the Machno army called a second conference in Gulai-Pole about the end of March. This conference was dissolved by the bolsheviks.

The bolsheviks now sent the anarchist Roschtschin-Grossman, professor of philology and philosophy at the Moscow University, to Machno, in order to prevail upon him to join with the Red Army. Machno was to remain supreme commander of his army but place his force under the supreme commander of the Red Army, Trotzky. Machno, who was embittered by the conduct of the bolsheviks refused this on the ground that he did not want to work under those whose desire was to conquer power. And no change could be made in this position of his by the bolsheviks sending him a wagon load of paper.

From that moment began the *war between the bolsheviks and the Machno warriors*. That it had to come to an open break between these two powers, lay in the very nature of these two armies. Here were two hostile principles which stood against one another. The principle of an army which was formed through compulsory mobilization and naturally stood on centralistic ground, and on the other side peasants who had sprung together voluntarily, guerilla bands which were held together only for the moment through the hour of danger and through common suffering. With the former, iron discipline was a matter of fact; with the latter enforced discipline was a matter of taste. Machno, as the leader of the rebellious peasants, could never submit to the superior command of a high army commander. Even if he had personally desired to do so, the very nature of the army he commanded would not have permitted it. To demand this bears witness of complete ignorance of the essential difference between these two bodies. The Red Army is militarism; the Machno army consisted of rebellious peasants, militants, but not military.

It is, therefore, absolutely false and unjust to brand Machno as a bandit and a traitor, as the bolsheviks did. Only the defenders of Roman law can designate rebellious peasants as bandits, but the bolsheviks who themselves are revolutionaries have no right to do so.

Not only in principle, but also as a matter of tactics, was it impossible for the Machno army to co-operate with the Red Army, at least for any length of time. The Machno army which consists of revolting peasants, is no army in the military sense of the word. When the work in the fields begins, then the peasants go to tend to that work, and when the harvest begins they go out harvesting. Machno's army is, thus, anything but stable, and its strength varies extremely, according to circumstances and seasons. Also the mode of fighting used by this army is fundamentally different from the methods used by the Red Army, drilled around the barracks. The rebellious peasants principally carried on a guerilla warfare. However successful a guerilla war may be, still it can never be the tactics used by a centralistically organized, militaristic national army. It is and remains the tactics of insurgents in a revolution, no more and no less.

Although the Red Army of Trotzky and the peasant army of Machno, due to their nature, stood completely strange to one another, still they struggled on a common platform and, for the time being had a common aim. It was therefore clear that Trotzky should want to make use of this considerable power of the peasants. But the impossibility of getting rid of Denekin without Machno made Trotzky blind to the unbridgeable cleft which existed between him and Machno.

Trotzky was really in an extremely difficult situation. The Red Army stood in the North, Denekin in the South, and Machno with his army was in the middle between the two. Trotzky was compelled to force Machno to recognize his superior command, in order to be able to conduct uniform operations, that could have given the victory to the Red Army, which was not any too strong. This could be done only with the aid of Machno. But from the above mentioned causes of fundamental nature it was impossible for Machno to recognize Trotzky's supremacy. And Machno himself was in a very critical situation, between two fires. Munitions he had none. Trotzky wanted to give him munitions only if he completely accepted all the conditions of the Red Army. This was impossible for Machno. Then Trotzky conceived the idea of annihilating Machno.

Machno needed 5 million cartridges. He had then about 50,000 men. According to Riefkin, the leader of the maximalists, even 70,000 men. They sent him only half a million cartridges, and instead of 5,000 rifles, only 300. They prolonged the negotiations, in order to gain time, and thereby 3 to 4 days were lost. In the meantime Denekin kept advancing. Machno had no munitions and had to retreat under terrible losses. Through the pres-

sure the Red Army also was compelled to draw back. Machno's war committee wished to call a peasant conference, in order that they might take counsel in the situation. Even the second conference in Gulai-Pole was dissolved by the bolsheviks. One must not think that there were unified, distinctly marked fronts, but one front ran into the other. Thus it came that a part of the riding messengers, who were to announce the conference to the peasants in the villages, were picked up and arrested in the region where the Red Army had a firm footing. The conference thus came to naught, and seven of these messengers were shot in Charkov as members of the revolutionary war committee.

Trotsky was in Charkov and spoke on April 29, 1919 in a meeting against Machno. He called Machno a bandit and a robber and said that it would be better if the white guards took possession of Ukraine than to have it in the hands of Machno. For when the whites have come back, the peasants will call the bolsheviks back. But if Machno remains in power, then the middle peasants will retain the upper hand.

On the ground of these theories the bolsheviks decided to open the front at Josufka. At this place the Red Army was directly facing Denekin. The result was that Denekin's armies attacked Machno in the back. Machno, without munitions, attacked in the front as well as from the rear, had to retreat, but was completely defeated and lost the largest part of his army. With a few thousand men he succeeded in saving himself by fleeing. He retreated to the Dnieper region in the Southwest.

But on this account the Red Army was also forced to retreat, and Denekin advanced still further. He took Charkov, penetrated into Central Russia, took Kursk and Orel, and even got as far as Tula.

The bolsheviks said that Machno had committed treason and they declared him outlawed. He was placed outside the law. His brother was discovered in a hospital, was taken for Machno and murdered. Machno, who was accused of treason against the Red Army, should have thus acted to the advantage of Denekin!

These were the hardest days, not so much for Machno as for the Red Army. The peasants again gathered around him. Gulai-Pole and the capitals Jekaterinoslav, Mariopol and Poltava fell into Machno's hands.

This was in the late summer and the fall of 1919. Machno became a danger to Denekin. Denekin's main army stood already in Russia; his rear guard was still in Ukraine. Machno cut the rear guard off from the main army and bound Denekin's transports of munitions and provisions up tightly in the South. Denekin was thus forced to retreat and the Red Army took to the offensive. Most experts and participants in these struggles were of the firm conviction that Denekin then would have come to Moscow had Machno not frustrated his plans.

Through this decisive blow in a critical situation *Machno*

again found favor with the bolsheviks. The sentence hanging over his head was revoked, and he was no longer labeled a "counter-revolutionary."

While the Red Army was pressed back by Denekin's victorious army, a new, reactionary czarist general made his appearance in Ukraine: Grigorjev. He fought against the bolsheviks and promised the peasants freedom and the soviet system, and he succeeded in gathering quite a large following.

Machno desired to know whose spiritual child Grigorjev was. He began negotiating with him. At one of these negotiations Machno killed him after he had learnt that Grigorjev was a reactionary. This also was counted in his favor by the bolsheviks.

Between October 30 and November 1, 1919, Jekaterinoslav fell from Denekin's into Machno's hands. As Denekin's main army, on account of Machno's exploits, was then compelled to retreat, it came from Central Russia down into Ukraine. What formerly had happened to Machno, now happened to Denekin: he had no ammunition. *Machno held Jekaterinoslav for a month.* During this whole month, parts of the Denekin army stood only 10 versts from Jekaterinoslav on the other side of the Dnieper. Machno could not get over, but neither could Denekin. He bombarded the city but could not take it. Both of them, Machno and Denekin, bombarded the bridge across Dnieper, in order to prevent the other from coming over. In December Denekin's North army, driven back by the Red Army, advanced upon Jekaterinoslav from the North side.

Machno was thus forced to turn back and retreat to Alexandrovsk. In the meantime Denekin retreated still further, and the Red Army followed upon his heels. On January 10 and 11 the Red Army also arrived at Alexandrovsk. *Trotzky now demanded that the peasants under Machno disarm.* This they refused to do. It came again to conflicts, and Machno was once more outlawed. Part of his people were disarmed. He himself drew back his troops in the night and fled. From that time his power weakened. At the time the agricultural work had to be performed, in the spring and the summer of 1920, he did not have more than a few thousand men. The bolsheviks became more powerful in Ukraine and pursued him. He retreated to the woods and kept himself between Poltava, Berdiansk and Alexandrovsk.

The entente, particularly France, saw itself deceived in the hopes it had placed on the Denekin undertaking. But *France did not yet surrender its hopes of making Ukraine the starting point for its attack upon the bolsheviks.* It looked around for other hirelings and found one in *Baron Wrangel*, "the white baron," as he is called in Ukraine and in Russia.

Through French support Wrangel became stronger. Especially after the war that broke out between Russia and Poland, Russia was compelled to concentrate its power against Poland and could not occupy itself very much with Ukraine. The defeats

of the Red Army on the Polish front weakened the position of the bolsheviks in the Ukraine also. About the end of September the danger of the advance of the Polish army was so great that the bolsheviks again evacuated Kiev. Wrangel threatened the Don basin. Ukraine was not unlike a boiling kettle. Everywhere the peasants congregated and formed bands. *These bands fought against the Poles, against the bolsheviks, and also against Wrangel.* Machno also became stronger again. As a few months before, the bolsheviks had liberated West Ukraine from the Poles, who had taken Kiev and penetrated into the gouvernement of Poltava, the peasants looked upon the bolsheviks as their liberators. To begin with, they got along quite well with the Soviet government. But as the bolsheviks later, through the protraction of the war, were forced to requisition provisions for the Red Army which fought against Poland, the harmony came to an end. The peasants began to fight also against the bolsheviks, as before against the Poles. They became dissatisfied and rebelled, and, naturally, Machno was again their man.

Machno operated once more against Wrangel. But the bolsheviks wrote that he co-operated with Wrangel. The fact was that the peasants fought against both Wrangel and the bolsheviks. The bolsheviks, in their turn, fought against Wrangel and Machno, but did not meet with any success. The peasants, including those who fought under Machno's banner, fought against all foreign troops that entered their territory. It was immaterial to them whether it was the Poles, Wrangel or bolsheviks. If they only succeeded in driving away the enemy they were satisfied. They were not strategists sufficiently to take advantage of their successes. They did not pursue the beaten foe. They were satisfied when he had left their territory. In this respect the peasants are no imperialists, who wish to conquer other domains, but neither are they idealists who, for higher purposes or for the sake of an ideal, pursue the counter-revolution. In their innermost soul they are conservative and do not want to be annoyed or disturbed from the outside. But if this happens, then they rise and start a rebellion, slay their oppressor, and return to their work in the fields. That is all.

About this time Machno sent a note to the President of the Soviet Republic of the Ukraine in which he laid claim to the gouvernements of Jekaterinoslav and Cherson for himself and his followers, in order that the peasants might organize themselves as they desired. Besides he demanded the release of his friends from prison. To this note Rakovsky did not give any answer. But the bolsheviks spread the information: Machno works together with Wrangel.

About the end of September, 1920, Machno's forces became considerably stronger. At this time the position of the bolsheviks on the political front was most critical. *Machno succeeded in carrying out some favorable operations against Wrangel.* He took possession of Gulai-Pole, his native city, and soon also occupied

Mariopol and Alexandrovsk. The Soviet government, which only shortly before wrote in its papers that Machno co-operated with Wrangel, was compelled to report that Machno "now" again was operating against Wrangel. Machno again sent a note to the Soviet government, in which he once more demanded the freedom of Wollin and the rest of his friends. As Machno this time had power behind his words, the bolsheviks were compelled to give in. On Friday, October 1, 1920, Machno's friends, the theoretical anarchist W. M. Eichenbaum (Wollin), and Machno's aids, Tschubenko and Gabrilenko, were released from prison, where they had up to that time been held as hostages for Machno. Both the first mentioned were in the Butirky prison in Moscow, the latter in the prison of Charkov. At the same time Machno, who had been outlawed since January 13, 1920, was pardoned. But on October 2 and 3, 1920, there appeared in the Moscow "Isvestija" a report that the Red Army was making progress against Wrangel. From Mariopol and Alexandrovsk, Wrangel had been driven away. Further it also said that Machno again had united with the Red Army. Those on the inside had to laugh over this ridiculous and absolutely unnecessary disfigurement of the truth. The truth was, as appears from the "Isvestija" itself, that it was Machno who defeated Wrangel! But we must admit that, as Machno, after his demands had been conceded to, declared himself prepared to fight with the Red Army against Wrangel, they had some reason for declaring Machno as part of the operating Red Army, and so they did, through their announcement that "the Red Army had taken Mariopol, Gulai-Pole and Alexandrovsk."!!

In the middle of November, 1920, Wrangel was almost completely beaten. It could be foreseen that the Red Army, which through the peace with Poland in Riga, had become free, would throw itself upon Wrangel and crush him. But the beginning of the end for Wrangel should be credited to Machno.

In consideration of this state of affairs it was a signal lack of good taste for the bolshevik papers, who should not have fought against other revolutionaries, that they, nevertheless, did that. How wrong they had been, they themselves saw some time later. Thus one of their papers which is published in English at Moscow ("Russian Press Review," edition of October 29, 1920) says, in an article under the heading "Machno and Wrangel," as follows:

"The War Commissariat has published the following correction: The French press has, as is probably known, written a good deal about Machno joining Wrangel. The Soviet press, in its turn, has also published documents which have shown that a formal alliance existed between Wrangel and Machno. But it has now been ascertained that this information was not correct. Without doubt, Machno has de facto helped Wrangel as well as the Polish army, by fighting against the Red Army. But a formal alliance has not

existed between them. *All documents published about a formal alliance between Machno and Wrangel were forged by Wrangel.* A bandit chief from the Crimea, who called himself chief Voldin, who was under the command of Machno, received his instructions from the Wrangel staff. But in reality there was no connection between them. The whole forgery was undertaken by Wrangel, in order to deceive the French and other imperialists.

“For some weeks Wrangel was really trying to get into contact with the Machno forces and sent two delegates to Machno’s headquarters, in order to begin negotiations. But the Machno troops showed that they did not want to have anything to do with Wrangel, that they saw their error in fighting against the Soviet army by the fact that Wrangel wanted to get in contact with them. And united with the Soviet army of the South and jointly fought against Wrangel. Soon thereafter they proposed to the commander of the army of the South to undertake common action against Wrangel. This proposition was accepted under certain conditions. At the present time Machno is carrying on his operations of war under the direct supervision and orders of the commander of the army of the South, Comrade Frunze.”

This document shows conclusively that all reports, stating that Machno fought on the side of Wrangel, were false. The bolsheviks excuse themselves by saying that they learnt only later that these documents were forged. In the first place it is quite peculiar that they had not found out sooner, as they otherwise do not put any faith in the capitalist press, but on the contrary always emphasize their lying tendencies. Second, one would think that the bolsheviks would not first go to foreign countries like France, to get the news of what takes place in their own land. Because the French press wrote so and so (the French knew, consequently, better what took place in Russia) the bolshevik press took it up as the truth. But as the bolsheviks are not as naive as all that, there is good cause for asserting that it was not lack of correct information but evil intention that put the pen in the hand of their paper and their high command, when they spoke of co-operation between Machno and Wrangel.

In regard to the other statement, which is to be found in the article quoted above, that the Machno forces *de facto*, (that is, indirectly) had helped Wrangel when they fought against the Red Army, we have also to do with a conscious distortion of the facts, a conscious lie, for it was not the peasants under Machno which fought against the revolution. *It was these peasants who made the revolution.* It was when the centralistic Red Army wanted to rob the peasants of their freedom that the peasants rose against this new rulership also. Thus, it was not Machno who fought against the Red Army but it was the Red Army who wanted to strike down the peasants under Machno who were insurgents. When the peasants then defended themselves by

fighting against the Red Army, it naturally appeared to the uninitiated as if the peasants under Machno fought against the Red Army.

Although we today stand in the midst of the struggle and dispassionate objectivity does not yet prevail, still, the writer of the history of the revolution in Ukraine will be able to sum up these battles of the peasants and the Red Army from the following points of view: The Red Army battled against the capitalist world imperialism of the entente and against all the Russian czarist generals sent forth by this imperialism, as well as against the smaller states, like Poland, Roumania, etc., which were economically and politically dependent upon the entente. But the Ukrainian peasants fought against all, and even against the Russian Soviet Republic. The word "imperialism" coupled to the word "red" has, of course, only a symbolic meaning.

It further says in this article that the Machno troops have united with the Red Army. This only means that the peasants prefer the Red Army to the Wrangel army, not, however, that they consider the Red Army the savior of liberty, for *they will also fight the Red Army if it tries to circumscribe their liberty*. As long as the Soviet government of the bolsheviks does not annoy them, they take no exception to it. But if it demands their subjection, then they fight against it.

It is quite sure, however, that the bolsheviks, who now cooperate with Machno, will fight him again at their first opportunity and then, perhaps, will annihilate him. But with Machno's person they have not killed the rebellious spirit of the peasants. Of course, it might happen that a general exhaustion of the peasants, a relaxing of the revolutionary tension sets in, and that then the peasant movement comes to an end. Therefore later historians of the revolution could, chronologically, connect these things, but between Machno's person and his eventual separation from the movement, and the revolutionary movement of the peasants on the other side, there is no causal connection.

In Russia there are strong differences of opinion in regard to the character of the Machno movement. The Russians and the Russian revolutionaries do not allow themselves to be guided by the facts in passing judgment on this movement. Appreciations of this movement are almost altogether colored by preconceived theoretical views and opinions. Thus, the bolsheviks condemn the Machno movement, and so do the counter-revolutionaries. Both of them see in the peasants who flock around Machno, as well as in himself, only bands and bandits, which must be fought and exterminated, because they stand in the way of any government. The mensheviks, as well as the right social-revolutionaries, yes, even part of the left, condemn the base tactics of the bolshevik government in dealing with Machno, but they also turn against Machno, because they are for a unified and centralistic state army and against the Povstanzy. The maximalists, the social revolutionaries of the left, the largest part of the syn-

dicalists and the anarchists defend the Machno movement, because they themselves desire no party rule and combat centralism. Thus one learns, when Machno is under discussion, less truth about Machno than truth about the standpoint of the disputants. An objective opinion of this movement one can only get by doing like the writer of this story, that is, by listening to all opinions in the matter without being a member of any of the Russian parties.

If we now free ourselves from all party opinions and hold fast to the objective facts of the case, *the following historic facts are undeniable*. The Machno movement in Ukraine was originally a movement of the peasants against hostile invasion. The rebellious peasants did not content themselves with fighting against the Germans and Austrians, but in the course of their battle they turned against every government. As in the course of events all governments through the war came into Ukraine from the outside, the peasants, who in some localities had had 13 governments, conceived of each one of them as a tyranny coming from the outside.

Their fight is a struggle for their own independence. Whether they are in a position to regulate their own affairs according to libertarian principles, that is a question of the greatest historic significance. But this question cannot be answered, solved or decided through the different governments who wished, and still wish, to get a footing in Ukraine. It exclusively depends on the peasants.

The position of the Russian Soviet Government towards Ukraine and the rebellious peasants is conditioned by the character of the Soviet government in itself. Although the bolshevik party is a revolutionary party, it still is the representative of the Russian state. That it calls that state a proletarian state changes nothing in the fact that they judge everything from the point of view of the interest of this state, and must act in the interest of that state. The maintenance of that state requires a central control of all territory, and the subordination of all groups, unions and organizations under the central body which in Russia is the Council of the Peoples Commissars; in bourgeois democracies the parliaments. The Russian Soviet government must insist on the subordination of the Machno peasant movement if it does not want to sacrifice the fundamental principle of its being.

As the main thing is the maintenance of that principle, the question as to the means for that end is of a subordinate nature. I submit it to the conviction of each individual to approve of or reject the tactics of the bolsheviks against Machno. The defenders of the state idea cannot in principle reject any means which serve to support and keep up the state. They may reject the special tactics of the bolsheviks but, unless they are anti-state opponents of the bolsheviks, they reject these tactics only because it is the bolsheviks. But they have always proven to do the very same thing when they themselves have the power. Partic-

ularly the defenders of the bourgeois order of society, who precipitated the people of the earth into the valley of sorrow through the war, have no right to condemn the bolsheviks. For they have proven whither their world order leads: to the greatest misery that has ever come over man.

One of the things which runs against our taste and which is constantly being used by the defenders of the state, not only by the proverbial diplomat but also by all politicians, is lying. As a matter of fact, the bolsheviks can no more get along without this means than the capitalist state can. As an example, the bolshevik papers write that Gabrilenko, who was taken captive by the bolsheviks and imprisoned in Charkov, as well as Tschubenko, and other Machno men, had said that Machno was a bandit and that they did not want to have anything more to do with him. This was done for the purpose of discrediting Machno with the population. When later, in October 1920, Gabrilenko was let out of prison and heard of this, he was terribly agitated and challenged them rather to kill him, for when he came to Machno, his men would do it anyhow, as they would consider him a traitor.

A second example. When the bolshevik papers in Ukraine wrote, in July, 1920, that Machno fought against the bolsheviks and worked together with Wrangel, then two Charkov anarchists, Joseph, the Emigrant, and Makrousov went to Rakovsky, president of the republic, and said that they held this untrue. They asked the permission of the government to send an anarchist delegation to Machno, in order to investigate the case. Rakovsky promised to do so. Makrousov was a brigade commander of the Red Army, and it was his division which drove the Poles out of Kiev. But when Makrousov, whom they respected for his military achievements (although he was an anarchist) was away, about twenty anarchists were arrested by the extra-ordinary commission of Charkov, because it was assumed that the anarchists who wished to go to Machno had connection with him. They were accused of conspiracy. Most of them had to be released for lack of evidence. But one of them, Josef, the Emigrant, was kept in prison. He went on a hunger strike and after eight days was released.

If it had been as the bolsheviks wrote, they would have had no reason to arrest these people. This proves rather that they feared to be convicted of lying.

In spite of all these means which the Soviet government used in the struggle against Machno, they did not succeed in discrediting Machno before the population. The peasants honor and love Machno as one of their own, and there is hardly another man in all Ukraine who is so popular as Machno. The peasants gave him the surname *Batkno*, meaning Little Father. They have woven a wreath of stories about his head and relate the most incredible tales among themselves about *Batkno*. Machno is to them not a "Mister" (Gospodin) but their "Little Father" (*Batkno*). No matter what dangers *Batkno* throws himself into, he al-

ways comes out of them whole, as by a wonder. Because Machno had such great armies that were always dissolved again, only in order to rise up anew; because he had to flee so often, but always came back again, the peasants said that Batkno could not be defeated. There is a tale that Batkno was in Denekin's camp and in his tent. He was disguised and talked with Denekin. Suddenly he said: "I am Machno," and disappeared. As a sample of Machno's tactics it is said that, when he has taken a place, he orders one or several houses vacated and then pretends that he is to live there. When evening comes he goes disguised into some other village and sleeps there without being known. Another tale about Machno is: in some village a small, insignificant peasant (that is how Machno looks) sells a dish of butter. The buyer, who gets the dish also, can, when he gets home, find the following words on the plate: "He who bought this butter has seen Batkno-Machno."

Such a figure of story and myth is Machno in the mind of the peasants. For that reason it is plain that the Machno movement finds better response and reception than all the government troops coming from the outside. When Machno needs horses, provisions, or rather material of war, the peasants generally give to him voluntarily what others cannot get with force. It needs only to be said that "Batkno needs it," and it is given without question.

It is also said that Machno, who as an anarchist rejects every compulsory mobilization, once sent out a call for a voluntary mobilization. At the end of this call the following words are said to have been added: "Who does not come voluntarily will be shot." Naturally, a peasant movement such as Machno's cannot escape such humorous contradictions. It also happens that the peasants, when the bolsheviks want to mobilize them, declare that they already are mobilized by Machno. Nor is the Machno movement free from coarse, brutal and savage traits. Thus, an officer of the Red Army relates that the Machno troops had made an attack upon a railroad train in which traveled a Wrangel deputation, of whom some are said to have been Frenchmen. The leader of the delegation is said to have been a very stout gentleman. The Machno soldiers in the struggle killed the whole delegation. But the thick leader they opened up, after he was dead, and then buttoned the coat again. When the leader later was discovered, he could not be recognized, because it was a corpulent man they sought. But among the dead were only thin ones.

For such horrors Machno should not, of course, be held responsible. The peasants are so brutalized through the incessant wars, revolutions and struggles, during which they had to suffer terribly. When, for instance, the Poles staged their entry into the Poltava gouvernement, the peasants looked with avaricious eyes at their well fed horses and decided in advance on how they should be divided when they had chased the Poles away. A noisy quarrel arose in the presence of a Polish officer. When he asked

them what they were fighting about, they answered him bluntly: "About who will own your horse." The logic of the peasants is very simple: We want to live for ourselves and not be disturbed. Who comes to us and wants to rule over us will be slain and his property will be distributed.

To have thrown the peasants upon this primitive, savage, uncultivated level, through which the cultural development not only was stopped but set back, that is the work of those who lit the flame of the world war. The blame for this brutalizing of men falls upon them.

The conditions under which the Machno army declared itself prepared to fight together with the Red Army against Wrangel were laid down in the form of a pact on October 16, 1920, which was signed by the former Hungarian People's Commissar Bela Kun and by a representative of the Machno army. It reads as follows:

AGREEMENT.

in regard to provisional co-operation in the military operations between the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and the revolutionary guerilla army of Ukraine, called "Machnovtzi":

(1) The revolutionary guerilla army of the Machnovtzi joins the forces of the republican army as a guerilla army, which in its operations is subordinated to the supreme command of the Red Army. But it retains its previous organization, without adopting the principles and the fundamentals of the regular Red Army.

(2) The revolutionary guerilla army of the Machnovtzi, which is located on the territory of the Soviets along or across the front, shall not take up in its ranks such parts of the Red Army as wish to desert to it.

Note: The parts of the Red Army or the isolated red soldiers who in Wrangel's rear come together with the revolutionary guerilla army, shall again unite with the Red Army when they meet with it.

The guerilla Machnovtzi who are still in Wrangel's rear, as well as the population which in those parts of the country have entered the guerilla army, remain in the ranks of the latter, even if they have before been mobilized by the Red Army.

(3) The purpose of the agreement between the command of the Red Army and the revolutionary guerilla army "Machnovtzi," is to annihilate the common enemy, the white army. The Machnovtzi declare themselves in agreement with the request of the command of the Red Army to discontinue the hostilities of the population against the Red Army. At

the same time the Soviet Government announces the agreements entered into, in order to obtain the greatest possible results in the tasks designated.

(4) The families of the soldiers of the revolutionary guerilla army "Machnovtzi," who live on the territory of the Soviet republic, are entitled to the same rights as the soldiers of the Red Army and shall receive from the Ukrainian Soviet Government the relief agreed upon.

AGREEMENTS

in regard to provisional co-operation in political questions between the Soviet Government of Ukraine and the revolutionary guerilla army of the Machnovtzi:

(1) The immediate liberation of all those persecuted and the discontinuance of all further persecution in the domain of the Soviet Republic against all Machnovtzi and anarchists, with the exception of those who have carried on an armed fight against the Soviet Government.

(2) Complete free agitation and propaganda in words as well as through the press for all Machnovtzi and anarchists and their ideas and principles, with observance of military censorship in military matters. For the issuing of all anarchist and Machnovtzi publications (books, magazines, papers, etc.), which are recognized by the Soviet Government as revolutionary organizations, the Soviet State places all the technical material at their disposition on the basis of the general rules which apply to publications.

(3) Free participation in the election to the soviets, as well as right for Machnovtzi and anarchists to become members of the soviets, and besides, free participation in the preparations for the next V. Soviet Congress of Ukraine, which will take place in December, 1920, is guaranteed.

Accepted by the representatives of both parties to the agreement at the conference on October 16, 1920.

Signed by

BELA KUN,
POPOFF.

After these agreements were entered into, it became possible to conquer Wrangel's white armies, due to the co-operation between the Red Army and the Machnovtzi. *But after the victory of the Red Army, the Soviet Government broke these agreements and started a merciless battle against the Machno detachment. And all anarchists of Ukraine were again put in prison.*

The Soviet government used the same methods against the anarchists and the Machnovtzi as the German government used

at the outbreak of the world war when marching into Belgium; all agreements are nothing but a scrap of paper. This is apt to mean the end of the Machno movement.

How rapidly the Soviet government forgot its agreement, their conduct toward the Machno people shows. Wollin and Tschubenko, mentioned above, who were 9 months in a Moscow prison and released in October, were again arrested in the house of their friend N. Pavlov, Bolschoi Tschernitschewski No. 18. When, on October 24, a membership meeting of the anarchists took place in that house, the Tscheka (Extra-ordinary Commission) broke in and wanted to arrest Tschubenko. But as he could not be found, all of those present—about 50 men—were taken along, and to-day, January, 1921, some of them are still in prison. But Wollin was arrested on December 1 at a conference of the anarcho-syndicalists in Charkov—the conference was entirely legal and permitted by the Tscheka—together with all the other participants, among whom was also the above mentioned Pavlov.

The forecast I made in regard to *Machno's early annihilation* by the bolsheviks proved to be correct. Fourteen days after I had the manuscript of this book ready, and before it was yet in print, the telegraph brought the information (a Rosta notice) that Machno's troops were being disarmed by the bolsheviks. The Rosta bureau in Stockholm, which has the most direct connection with Russia over Reval, sent out a telegram in these words:

“Moscow, December 7, 1920 (Rosta).—The Soviet commander at the Southern front has started a merciless fight on all the robber bands under Machno, which still operate in the Ukraine. The operations have been very successful. The largest part of the Machno detachments are already split up or disarmed.”

But now the “Rothe Fahne” (Red Flag) of Vienna also prints a news item coming from Christiania, in which it says:

“In the struggle with Wrangel the Machno troops have, without obeying the orders of the Red Army command, continued to plunder peaceful inhabitants and to irresponsibly take up various robber bands in their army. The revolutionary War Council of the Southern front has, after the liquidation of the Wrangel army, sent out an order to change the Machno troops into common disciplined parts of the Red Army. The order was caused by the fact that the Machno troops had undertaken regular plunderings of cities and villages, plundering not only the population but the store of ammunition, and had attacked red soldiers, in order to get hold of weapons. In the villages the Machno troops have aided the rich peasants, who sabotaged the grain deliveries to the hungry governments. After a partial change of the Machno troops into a regular army, they were given orders to immediately start off for the Caucasus. Instead of obeying this order, Machno started hostilities against the Red

Army on November 23. Machno's traitorous plan was not successful, and at present his main forces are already beaten, thanks to the prompt and energetic steps of the commander of the South-front. The Machno artillery has fallen into our hands. *Our troops have received order to mercilessly exterminate the Machno bandits, who traitorously disturb the building up of Soviet Ukraine.*"

That the bolsheviks, after the victory over Wrangel, would annihilate Machno was plain—after they had used them as their instrument in the struggle against Wrangel. But it is also clear that they had to try to surround this act with an appearance of righteousness and to justify their actions. For that reason it need not surprise anybody that *the bolsheviks again take recourse to lies*. Having previously read how they before took back their own lies, calling it all a mistake and blaming it all on the reports of the French capitalist papers, we will also properly appreciate the news now before us. It is really quite remarkable that "the peaceful inhabitants" of Ukraine themselves never have anything against Machno, but only against the foreign Red Army. But what is correct in this report is, that "the peaceful building up of the Soviet government of Moscow" was being sabotaged by the Ukrainian peasants who fought under Machno, for that is a government the peasants do not want. They would rather be "plundered" by Machno than by the requisition detachments of the Red Army.

The Socialist Movement in Ukraine

The socialist movement of Ukraine has a more or less anarchist character. This character is to be traced back less to theories and doctrines than to the influence which the political and economic conditions of the country exerted upon the mind of the peasants.

Marxism, which in Russia came to expression in the form of bolshevism and menshevism, has less of a footing in Ukraine. On the other hand, the Russian Peasant and People's Socialism of the Narodnik Social-Revolutionaries is more strongly represented. This "people's socialism," which is penetrated with strong anarchist tendencies, has been able, so far, to hold back Marxian and West-European socialism. In Ukraine, Bakunin lives stronger than Marx.

In Ukraine all socialist tendencies are represented. The mensheviks, the bolsheviks, the right and the left social-revolutionaries, the maximalists, the barbists, the syndicalists and the anarchists. The bolsheviks and the mensheviks are both Marxians. In consonance with their theories they, principally, sought their following among the industrial proletarians of the cities. All other tendencies mentioned here paid their principal attention to the peasant question, as was natural in an agrarian country

like Russia, and for this reason these parties enjoy a greater following among the peasants than the former. *With the exception of the right social-revolutionaries, who, like the mensheviks, were in favor of the national assembly,* the other parties and organizations stand close to one another, especially in their agrarian program. *They are all in favor of the soviet system, but not in favor of party soviets.* In this they differ from the bolsheviks, who by soviets mean the soviets of their own party. Thus, there are in Kiev and Poltava, in the cities as well as in whole gouvernements, no soviets at all, but only revolutionary committees. *The revolutionary committees are put in by the bolshevik party, and are not elected by the people.* In Poltava the soviets have never been called together. After the Poles had been driven away, the Executive Committee of the Communist Party (bolsheviks) took over the power and organized everything themselves. Not even the communists were called in to the meetings of the Executive Committee, nor called in for meetings of their own. For these communists were workers. The party of communists consists, for the present, largely of *non-workers*. After Kiev went over from the hands of the Poles into the hands of the Red Army, no soviets were elected during the whole summer of 1920, only revolutionary committees being installed. When later, in September, the elections took place, *there were over 100 non-workers out of the 125 communists* who were elected to the soviet from the district of Kiev. It was principally Soviet officials, specialists, etc.

These figures speak a plain language. They show us that the *Ukrainian Soviet government carries this name, partly without right*, as there are important and significant gouvernements which have no soviets. They show us further that the Communist Party of the bolsheviks is no absolute soviet party, properly speaking, but only an opportunist soviet party. For when it pleases the party it calls in the soviets, and when the soviets do not suit them, they send them home.

The other parties and movements are in favor of the soviets, as the idea of the soviets came to light through the revolution itself and all revolutionary parties, naturally, had to accept that system. The peasants themselves are in favor of the soviets. Although the largest part of them do not belong to any party, they still are all for the soviets. They write on their banners: "Long live the soviets." The Maximalist Union, who stands for a maximum program, the left social-revolutionaries, the internationalists and the barbists, the syndicalists and the anarchists are for the slogan: *All power to the soviets. No power to the parties.*

Against these slogans the bolshevik party stands in opposition. They declare that these paroles are counter-revolutionary and therefore they combat all these parties as counter-revolutionary. Thus it is that the business offices of these parties, their

propaganda bureaus and their book stores were closed by the Soviet government. They now continue their work illegally.

We cannot deny that there is a certain justification for the opinion of the bolsheviks, that the parole, "All power to the soviets; no power to the party," is useful to the counter-revolution. In some cases it has been shown that in the soviet elections the bourgeoisie got the majority through election frauds, trickery, or other manipulations, yes, many times through pure slipshodness, or that they, when in the minority, had prevented the workers from coming to the soviets, through obstruction or sabotage, so that there was no quorum. The counter-revolutionaries pointed to this, and it was easy for them to show that the revolution did not bring what they had hoped for. The road was smoothed for the counter-revolution.

But these are only a few cases against which we can bring in a great number of other cases which show the opposite. The fault of which the bolsheviks here are guilty is, that they are drawing general conclusions and thus wish to handle everything according to one recipe. By this route they themselves come to the position of contra-revolution. In order to arrive at one-sided party rule there is, naturally, no revolution necessary. The revolution is supposed to create the freest political forms, and even a social revolution has to take note of that. Although in a social revolution the change in economic conditions, the abolition of private property, just forms of possessions, equal rights of consumption, rational production of the necessities, are the most important points, such a revolution must mean progress even on the political field and not retrogression or stagnation. But the rule of one party is not to be considered a revolutionary conquest, for such a party rule we had in the pre-revolutionary epochs and have in countries where the revolution has not yet taken place. Even if we in Marxian fashion call this class rule, this rule in politics always manifests itself as the rule of one or more parties. And it is exactly against this rule that the revolution turns.

As will be seen, the slogan, "All power to the soviets, no power to the party," is originally and practically a revolutionary parole and one cannot on account of a few cases permit a wholesale condemnation of the soviets as counter-revolutionary. For we can also present *examples from the revolution in the Ukraine, which show the exact opposite.*

When in October, 1919, Machno captured Alexandrovsk, he called a congress of the peasants and the rest of the population of the whole gouvernement of Alexandrovsk. The organizer of this was Wollin. As an anarchist, Wollin was against all party politics. On that account it was impossible for him, for reasons mentioned above, to be active under bolshevik rule. He, consequently, called this congress for the benefit of the followers of Machno. Machno needed for his army the support of the peasants. They sent messengers to the villages in order to invite the peasants to elect delegates to this congress and send them to the

city of Alexandrovsk. The representatives of different parties came to Wollin and pleaded with him not to do anything foolish and for God's and the revolution's sake to put up party lists, in order to enable the peasants to send delegates to the congress according to party lines. They held that the rich peasants, the Kulaks, were in the majority and would dominate the congress. The whole thing would be a great disappointment, they prophesied. Wollin answered that the people had had enough of parties and that they now, once and for all, must cut out all party nonsense. The congress met, without any party delegates. The peasants themselves did not want to have any parties. When the congress opened they asked if any parties were represented. Yes, from the city of Alexandrovsk there were seven mensheviks present who had been sent by the unions. The peasants did not want to have anything to do with the politicians. They did not want to start their deliberations before the politicians had left the hall. The mensheviks had to leave, and only then did they start with business. According to the reports of some of those present, they had never before taken part in such a fine, harmonious congress. All party political squabbling and all party hatreds were eliminated. The peasants discussed only the practical questions. It was a question of helping Machno to continue the war against Denekin. It was decided that everybody must help. Those who had four horses would have to give up two; those who had three would have to give one. Those who had only two horses would not have to give any horses, but only hay, feed and other things. Thus the congress progressed without any party politics, to the satisfaction of all the participants and without any domination of the kulaks.

This example does not only show the emptiness of the phrase that party-less soviets or councils of workers and peasants had to be counter-revolutionary. It also shows positively that it is the party-less soviets which are best able to order the economic and political affairs of the revolutionary population.

A further difference in tactics between the bolsheviks and the others, which can be traced back to the theoretical differences, showed itself in Jekaterinoslav. When the city was captured by Machno, he insisted that all socialist movements should have absolute freedom to carry on their propaganda. As is well known, the bolsheviks reject this freedom as "bourgeois superstition." Particularly does Trotzky go on the warpath against it in his anti-Kautski book "Terrorism and Communism." As you know, in the places where the bolsheviks rule, they allow no opposing party to issue a daily paper or more than one paper. Under Machno's regime it was possible for all socialist movements to issue their papers and to hold their meetings, in short, to propagate their ideas. In Jekaterinoslav 7 daily papers were issued, two anarchist, two communist, right and left social revolutionary, and menshevik papers. All socialist tendencies were represented. Only the bourgeois had no publicity organ. They were, naturally, so terrified

because it was the Machnovtzi who ruled, that they did not dare to.

The proportional strength of the different parties in Ukraine is at present difficult to indicate, as all parties, with the exception of the ruling Communist Party of the bolsheviks, are illegal. At the elections to the National Assembly, November, 1917, the social-revolutionaries obtained 62.77% of the total number of votes. The anarchists and the maximalists, being anti-parliamentarians, did not take part in the elections. The maximalists have a union. They do not call themselves a party, being as they are opposed to parties. The left social-revolutionaries, the barbists and the left social-revolutionary internationalists are also strongly represented. The anarchists have in Ukraine a special federation separated from the anarchists of Central Russia, which calls itself "Nabat," that is, "Alarm." In numbers this federation is hardly larger than the maximalists and the left social-revolutionaries. Still, the anarchists had a greater influence for the reason that they stood under the protectorate of their Little Father (Batkno) Machno, who gave more support to them than to any other parties. The anarchists have never identified themselves with the Machno movement, but make use of the Machno movement to the greatest possible extent and wanted to make it serve their purposes.

The bolsheviks arrested Wollin in Alexandrovsk in the beginning of January, 1920, after Machno had fled. As reason for his arrest they gave out that he was called the father of the Machno movement. But this was impossible. The Machno movement existed since the summer of 1918. But Wollin came first a year later to Machno, namely in the summer of 1919. The truth is that through Wollin the movement received a more distinct anarchistic character and won in depth and purity. Wollin himself is a deep, pure and noble man, and he succeeded in exerting a strong cultural influence on the Machno troops. But this was, of course, dangerous to the bolsheviks, because it made the movement more threatening to them.

Communism and the Peasantry

Through the preceding discussion we have elucidated the reasons why the peasants of Ukraine only with much difficulty can be brought under the common scepter of a central government. These reasons are less of an economic nature than of a political and national character. If we want to classify the refusal of the peasants to supply the government with provisions as an economic reason, then we have to concede that economic reasons play their part. But in addition there are racial peculiarities, which also exert some influence. Among an agricultural people in a fertile country there develops, as a result of the relative economic independence, in the people or in the race a certain

sense of independence with which a centralist government is always bound to get into collision. A powerful state can never develop in such a country. The "free-from-Rome" tendencies will always give the government plenty to worry over. We need only remember the permanent anarchist tendencies in Spain and Italy.

The bolsheviks asserted that these instincts constituted anti-communist tendencies among the peasants. They pointed to the fact that the Ukrainian peasants did not have such a wide-spread mir-organization as the Russian peasants, that they did not have common forests, common pasture, and common fields to the same extent, and declare that the peasants are for private property and against the introduction of communism. They further say that the peasants who fight under Machno are Kulaks and fight for private property against the introduction of communism. But as quite large masses of the peasants, yes, the majority, are of that mind, even if it is only the most active part of them who flock to the *Povstanzy*, *it would be foolish to force the ideas of bolshevik-communism on them against their will.* That would mean anything else but freedom. And it is freedom that the peasants want; that is what they have been fighting for during half a decade. One can force people to everything but not to freedom, even if one were the most powerful on earth.

But the assertion of the bolsheviks is wrong. On the contrary, *the Ukrainian peasants take at least a sympathetic stand towards the social revolution and the new-construction of Ukraine,* even more so than the peasants in Russia, where the great mass of the peasants became conservative as soon as they had taken the land away from the estate owners. The peasants are in no way unfriendly to socialism, but even show quite outspoken communist tendencies.

The whole peasantry is *opposed to the "pomeschtschiks"* (large land owners). They do not want the estate owner back under any conditions. They fight desperately against all counter-revolutionary generals, who defended the system of large estates. They chased away Petljura, Kaledin, Denekin, Grigorjev and Wrangel. And still *Wrangel* had drawn a lesson from the fate of his predecessors and *came before the peasants with an agrarian program,* in order to gain them over to his side. No land owner was to be allowed to own more than 200 Dessiatins of land. (1 Dessiatin equal to 2.7 acres.) *Wrangel* expected to gain greater sympathies with this than had come to the share of Denekin and his predecessors. He believed that they would succeed in pulling the peasants over to his side, just as the Roumanian government had pacified the peasants and understood how to keep them from revolution through a similar agrarian policy. But while the Roumanian bojars (land owners) succeeded in saving themselves with a few sacrifices of land, the Ukrainian peasants, who had become more far-sighted through their long struggle, could see through *Wrangel's* purposes, and, although *Wrangel* was able to fool part of the peasants, he had the progressive part of them against him.

In the long run Wrangel could not have held out even if he had not been annihilated by the Red Army and Machno.

The peasants were opposed to the 200 Dessiatin program of Wrangel's. But they are also opposed to the 50 Dessiatin program of the bolsheviks. The bolsheviks do not want to come into conflict with the better situated peasants. They need the peasants and cannot afford to have them against them. Hence, they have established the rule that no peasant can have more than 50 Des-siatins of land. But the peasants have in their congresses taken a stand against this norm. Particularly in this regard we note the above mentioned congress, which was called by Machno and Wollin (in Alexandrovsk, October, 1919). *They said that this maximum is too high; it is a bourgeois norm. By that method they would again create pomeschtschiks.*

The Marxian theorists of bolshevism-communism, from their theoretical viewpoint, brand the Ukrainian peasants as anti-communists and as defenders of private property; particularly those of them who fight against Machno. But my investigations in the Ukraine have given the result that almost the opposite is the case. *The bolshevik-communists decree a more extensive private ownership in land than the peasants themselves.* The bolshevik-communists, who pretend to be the only representatives of communism, are less communistic than the peasants, whom they designate as non-communists.

But the peasants would not by far be communists if they only stood for a smaller maximum parcel of land than the bolshevik-communists. This would at most prove that they are more communistic than the communist bolsheviks. But this is only speaking comparatively. About the positive communism of the peasants it would give us no information.

Although the abolition of private property in land is one of the most important parts of communism, there are other things also, which belong under that head, such as the regulation of the working conditions of collective labor according to principles of equality, the organizing of the exchange of the products of labor on the basis of justice, the regulating of mutual relations on a libertarian basis. All this a state cannot give; not even a bolshevik state. It can at most counsel, decree and order. If a sound social instinct and a strong sense of fairness is lacking, a people can never arrive at socialism and communism. Communism will not come by order. Have the Ukrainian peasants preserved that instinct through the terrible years of the civil war? If they have, then they will be ripe for communism; if not, then even the Soviet government cannot introduce traits in their ranks which do not live within them.

My trip through Ukraine, as well as conversations with those who know Ukraine best, have shown to me that there is reason for harboring good hopes. The Ukrainian peasants are coarse, but they are good-natured and helpful and generally have a strong

sense of justice. One instance does not, of course, prove very much, but still it might be used as an illustration. Eichenbaum-Wollin listened to a conversation between a peasant and a bolshevik-communist. The bolshevik wanted to explain to him what communism was. But the peasant did not understand him. The explanations were unintelligible to him. Then the peasant began to give his own ideas, how he would order everything in his village as he had thought it out. And when he was through with his explanations the bolshevik-communist said to him: "But you are a communist."

"What? I, a communist?" the peasant answered in anger. "I am no communist."

This peasant showed that he knew well how to regulate his affairs in his village, if nobody disturbs his own communist experiments through interference from the outside and by checking his private initiative. Numerous examples can be quoted where the peasants independently arrive at communistic husbandry and regulation of their mutual relations.

A visit to a soviet farm, 30 verst from Charkov, which formerly belonged to an estate owner, gave me the opportunity to study the common husbandry of the peasants of that estate. There were about 100 peasants with women and children, a total of 160 persons. Not one of them was a communist, and still they had regulated everything nicely in justice and equality. To many individual and joint households the same thing applies.

The peculiar refusal of the peasants to be called communists may be traced to the fact that the peasants heard the name communists only from the government, which calls itself by that name. But the same government sends its soldiers into the village, in order to requisition provisions, which the peasants are unwilling to give. Communists are, consequently, to the peasant's mind, requisitioning soldiers or those who send them. And as there are, besides, a great number of commissars, who also call themselves "communist" but are actually swindlers (a condition for which the bolsheviks are not to blame but against which they can fight only with difficulty in the large country), who fleece the peasants, there has in Ukraine arisen a play upon words among the peasants by which they want to ridicule communism.

While thus the communists are not well liked among the peasants, the bolsheviks have with them a better reputation. For it was the bolsheviks who brought them peace. Through the peace of Brest-Litovsk Lenin has won great popularity for his party. For that reason the peasants love the bolsheviks but hate the communists. They do not understand that it is one and the same party.

With the help of some intelligent elements among them the peasants regulate their larger common affairs. They called in the larger congresses, formed co-operatives, etc. It is true that they have not the right understanding in all things, nor a strong initia-

tive. They still partly believe in the ability of the intelligentsia. Thus they believed that Machno, who was such a good leader for them in battle, should also be able to tell them what they should do in other matters. For that reason they would ask Machno what to do in most any matter of business. Machno is said to have answered them to do what they themselves considered best to do. But the peasants were not helped with that. They wanted advice. And he who can give them disinterested counsel, is naturally welcome among them.

Communism, with the Ukrainian peasant, is not a theory but their practical life. The large estate owners, the pomeschtschiks proved to them the disadvantages of private ownership in land, and the injustice that springs from it. And this injustice nourished their envy. Marxism may eternally proclaim that socialism is not a matter of privilege, but the peasants feel the injustice which has come into their life with unequal distribution of the land and want to abolish it. The others shall not have any more than we. By the enemies of socialism this has always been branded as the envy of the property-less. *But this envy of the property-less is for the peasants a regulative principle. It carries within itself equality in the ownership of land, and this leads the peasants to communism.*

The Economic Situation in the Ukraine

If the land of the estate owners had come into the hands of the peasants before the war, it would without question have meant an improvement of the lot of the peasants and therewith an uplift of their economic position. Even as it was, the change brought with it an improvement in the position of the poor peasants, that is, an improvement in the position of the peasants who had become impoverished through the war. By this we wish to say that without these measures of the revolution the peasants would have been in a worse position than they now are, but not in a better position than before the war. It is with the peasants as it was with the population in Germany. They complain and wish pre-war times back. Before the war the peasants had boots, clothes and petroleum—things that they lack to-day. They have few agricultural implements and fewer agricultural machines. Industry is very poorly developed, and during the war there was practically only war industry. They obtain very few industrial products and had to give up their agricultural products for the war.

When the bolsheviks had taken possession of the Ukraine, they *prohibited free trade*, so that the inhabitants of the cities found themselves in great straits for the necessities of life. *The purpose of the bolsheviks was a double one.*

First, they wanted to prevent the provisions and use-objects from becoming objects of trade and speculation. Theoretically,

from the standpoint of socialism, the matter presents itself this way: that through free trading the goods produced are not directly distributed, but serve for profit mongering, personal enrichment or to maintain the life of those who occupy themselves therewith. Instead of turning to productive work, they "trade." But in practice this is often not the case. Especially is the Russian market the place where the peasants sell their home products, which they have in no manner acquired by purchase or speculation. But as it was very difficult under the given circumstances to define who was a peasant and who was a trader, this measure has quite often hit the wrong person, and particularly in the small cities. The so-called speculators are often the poorest.

In the second place this measure was calculated to force the bourgeoisie to go to work. For if there was nothing for them to buy and if they got nothing to eat, it was thought that they would be compelled to work. But in this calculation they certainly were mistaken, for most of them found other ways and means of evading this rule. In the long run it would not be possible for the bourgeoisie to dodge work. The soviet government gradually discovers the tricks of the bourgeoisie and resorts to other measures. Work-books are introduced, the inhabitants are registered, no food stuffs are delivered to non-workers, etc., so that they cannot find any way out except to perform some sort of work. Then they receive food rations like everybody else.

They have, consequently, not attained what they aimed at. *It has been tried on a great scale to introduce production for use. But on a small scale so-called speculation flourishes,* namely the trade with food stuffs and other use-objects, stronger than formerly. All larger factories and farms are nationalized and work for the account of the state. *But the smaller establishments* (and in the Ukraine small industry prevails everywhere, with the exception of the large sugar industry and the metal industry) *are still all in private hands and work for private interests,* just as before the revolution. The economic life, consequently, continues in this respect to move on private capitalist lines, even if the individual employers are no Stinnes or Thyssen (the two largest German capitalists). In Kiev, for instance, 2 or 3 months after the occupation by the bolsheviks, everything remained as in other capitalists countries. Many new shops were opened, and only those were compelled to close which had no more goods. But as they receive no goods from the bolsheviks, one after the other is compelled to give up his business. After that the shop keepers enter the service of the soviet government, in some commissariat or bureau. They become officials, state officials. But on the salary that they now receive they cannot live, and they continue to *smuggle and speculate.* Others had already started to speculate, contrary to the law, of course. *They cannot stop that any more than the cat can stop catching mice.*

Even *the peasants,* who by nature are against the system of commercialism, as they derive no benefits therefrom, *have*

now also taken to speculation, as it is called in bolshevik language. This speculation consists in this, that instead of delivering their products to the state, they sell them at the highest possible prices. This is not done out of lust for speculation, but because they cannot do anything else. They would willingly turn it all over to the state, if they could only obtain the goods that they need. But the state has nothing and can give them nothing. Thus *they are compelled to buy in free trade the objects they require*. For one pud of flour (34 lbs.) they receive in free trade about 21,000 rubles, but from the state they receive about 100-200 rubles. It is therefore easily explainable that they would rather sell their goods at speculation prices, although they might get punished for it, than turn them over to the state. But, in spite of receiving so much for their products in free trade, they are not anxious for the money. They are willing to forego the money. They do not want money at all but would give up everything to the state if they only could get what they need. *Money has no value for them*. They have so much money that they paper their walls and their wedding carriages with them. *What they want is articles that they can use*. The traveler who comes to a village can frequently buy nothing, even if he has ever so much money, but he can get anything for a piece of cloth, a glass of salt, or something similar.

But there is no doubt that this speculation evil will immediately stop at the moment when the peasants receive what they need from the state. Then the government will also receive from the peasants, voluntarily, all that it needs and cannot take even with force. Then the requisitions and the resulting hostility between the peasants and the government will cease and the greatest obstacle separating the peasant and the soviet government would be removed, and it would be much easier for the latter to become reconciled with the peasants. The peasants would then no longer need to be "counter-revolutionary", the revolution would get a firm footing in the country districts and would have a chance to build up and develop freely.

But that can only take place if Soviet Russia has peace, if the entente at once ceases to inflict war upon that unhappy country, if the blockade is called off and if goods come into the country. That the Russian revolution in the form of bolshevism should have become such a regime of terror with its requisition policy, that fact has its causes principally in the war and in the blockade. The originator of this blockade and this war, the enemies of the revolution in France, England and America, the defenders of the capitalist states are the ones upon whom the blame should be placed for the stagnation of the Russian revolution. *If with bolshevism we mean the liberty crushing policy of the Russian Soviet government, principally against the peasants, then bolshevism is best combatted with the slogan: Peace with Russia; Lifting of the blockade; Hands off Russia.*

As free commerce was tied up by the government, it was forced to create some organs by means of which the population could be supplied with food stuffs. This is, of course, extremely difficult for a political party, even if it has the governmental power. Its character is political and not economic; it is not able to do it. *The Food Stuff Commissariat stood helpless before the situation. It threw itself upon the co-operation of the Consumers' Societies.* In Russia, as well as in Ukraine, these societies were well developed. The government took over these societies and *made them as before stated, into state organs. Membership became obligatory for the whole population.* The bourgeoisie, which also nominally belongs to these societies, has no rights inside them. The proletariat alone has any right to elect officials. Nevertheless, most of the officials spring from the bourgeoisie, because the workers are uneducated and for the largest part illiterates.

Here we are speaking of the workers and the bourgeoisie but not of the peasants. The peasants are to a large extent not included in the consumers' societies. They do not need it. They need not obtain any food stuffs; on the contrary, they can spare them for others. This is therefore intended merely for the cities which are dependent upon the country.

The consumers' co-operatives receive the food stuffs from the government. They distribute them among the workers of the cities and factories. The co-operatives have their branches in the factories, and the workers receive their bread in the factories. But due to the shortage of food stuffs the workers are not sufficiently supplied. The workers cannot possibly live on their rations. They are to receive 1 lb bread daily. (1 Russian lb. equal to .88 lb. American weight or 400 gram).

But it happens often that they get no bread for days at a time. In a chocolate and confectionery factory in Charkov, the seat of the present Ukrainian Soviet government, the workers, in September 1920, received no bread ration for 4 days in succession. This is state factory No. 22, for chocolate and confectionery manufacture.

As the workers do not receive sufficient bread in the factories through the government, they are *compelled to procure their bread themselves, privately.* In Russia, bread is the principal food stuff. Most people subsist almost exclusively on bread and Kascha (a kind of millet mush). But the workers *can not pay the market price of bread.* We should remember that the wages in this chocolate factory are 2,400 rubles per month. But the price of a lb. of bread amounted at the same time (Sept. 12, 1920), in the fish market of Charkov, to 500 rubles for white bread and 340 rubles for black bread. The monthly wage will, consequently, buy barely 5 lbs white bread and a good 7 lbs. of black bread.

Irresistibly the question arises; how can the workers live that way. But it is to be noted that in many factories the

noonday meal is delivered to the workers. This *lunch* is certainly not very good, but on the contrary, of a very inferior quality. Only in one factory have I found the lunch really nourishing, even if simple. This was in the 4th government factory for the textile industry. But this is still only in the initial stage. In this factory there are 1,500 workers. Only 500 can get their lunch delivered. It still remains necessary to fix up things for the rest of them also. But this meets with great difficulties. There must be space for serving the meals, and there must be food stuffs. For this lunch the workers pay only 20-30 rubles.

What do those workers do who get no lunch? They try to procure it themselves. But how? Of the 1500 workers employed there, 10% do not come to work. They remain away from work, although heavy penalties are inflicted for such conduct. Those who remain away from work three days in succession, without being sick, or without some other urgent cause, are legally condemned to a concentration camp. In practice this is not sternly enforced. Even if the government would like to do it, the workers do not want it done. The first court passing sentence on workers for staying away from work is in many places the factory committee. And as these are workers themselves, few of them being communists, they are naturally inclined to be lenient with their fellows and do not sentence them. In this factory of 1,500 workers there is a relatively high percentage of communists, namely 200, about 13.3%. But in a locomotive factory in the same city there are among 3,350 workers only 100 communists, or 2.9%. It frequently happens that the communists in each factory form a communist group, the principal function of which is spying. Of these some are at the same time in the *tscheka* (extra-ordinary commission or secret police). At the end of August, 1920, 172 workers were arrested in the locomotive factory because they, under the influence of anarchists and left social-revolutionaries, wanted to organize the food stuffs distribution among themselves and remained away from the job.

The workers also stay away from the job, in order to procure, in a different manner, the necessaries of life which they can not get in the factory. Part of them are only "*semi-proletarians*"; part of the workers are peasants who still have a piece of land which they work and which supports them a little bit better. *Another part* strolls out in the country, in order to "*rustle*". The workers organize themselves for this purpose. They send some of their number out in the country for provisions. These buy provisions for the whole factory or for a group of 20 men, according to how many take part in it. In all Ukraine and in all Russia this kind of *workers' co-operatives* at the place of work are very common. This shows us also a new form of distribution and of supplying the factory workers with food stuffs and which has sprung up spontaneously among the workers as a result of the economic conditions. The consumers'

co-operatives were formerly free, that is, independent of the state. They were not then constructed in socialist fashion, but like everything else in the capitalist system, in capitalist fashion. After they were nationalized, they were, of course, state socialistic but had lost their efficiency. As organs of the state they are not independent but tied up, dependent upon the state to deliver the food stuffs to them. But the state can do this only to such a small extent that these societies are not able to properly perform their duties. The procuring of food stuffs the state could accomplish only by means of the requisition policy through the military. It could not follow a different policy due to the bad economic situation. Again we are confronted with the blockade. We are always turning round in a circle which we cannot get out of as long as the blockade is not lifted.

If, on the other hand, the state had not nationalized the consumers' co-operatives, the independent consumers' co-operatives would have served the peasants better. *But the nationalization of the consumers' co-operatives was a necessary result of the strangling of free trade among the producers.* The abolition of the Russian markets of the peasants and the workers proved to be a *very disastrous error* which revenged itself heavily in the paralyzing of the food stuff supply system, through which again industry and the whole of production was badly injured. After the abolition of private property the economic life should have moved in a socialist direction without further interference by the state.

All these phenomena are extremely instructive and show us that it is impossible to regulate the economic life of a country through political organizations, yes, even that the political rule over economic life must have far-reaching destructive effects. Independent of the state the workers themselves create their own economic organs for the regulation of economic life, for their own maintenance and for their bare existence. *The state could not carry it through with the best will in the world. It has not the intelligence necessary for this purpose. It is strange to economic life. This duty devolves upon the working people themselves.*

The supplying of the cities with *fuel and building material*, principally wood, the soviets of the cities are taking in hand. The soviet of Charkov, has for its duty to supply the city with wood for the winter. The executive committee of this soviet puts itself in connection with the executive committees of the soviets of the districts. Each commune, each village is ordered to deliver a certain quantity, according to its size and number of inhabitants. The soviets are responsible for compliance with orders. In the year of 1920 Ukraine received a total of 6,000 saws and 4,000 axes. These were distributed to the various communes, which in their turn were bound to deliver wood. But the peasants are not very willing to deliver cut wood for the government because they are not sufficiently paid for it. Even

here the military has to interfere once in a while, which again creates bad blood among the peasants.

The Unions of Ukraine are organized exactly as the unions in Russia and have the same functions, and for that reason a special treatment of this subject at this time is unnecessary. In Ukraine there are a total of 1,173,000 workers organized in the unions. These numbers fall on 13 gouvernements. Of these 280,000 are railroad workers, 162,000 are soviet employees, 134,000 mine workers, 113,000 metal workers, 72,000 workers in the food stuffs industry, 58,000 in the sugar industry, 58,700 telegraph and postal employees, 49,660 agricultural laborers on the soviet estates, 42,135 employees of the hospitals and asylums, 38,000 educational workers (teachers, party agitators, journalists), 31,500 clothing workers, 23,800 chemical and glass workers, 22,900 leather workers, 20,600 building construction workers, 18,800 wood workers, 18,000 tobacco workers, 13,000 textile workers, 11,000 graphical workers and 3,000 paper workers.

Membership in the unions is obligatory for the workers. They elect factory councils. These factory councils elect a soviet in their industry for a whole gouvernement. This gouvernement soviet elects an executive committee consisting of 9-14 men. In this soviet are also the representatives of the Commissariat of labor and of the Supreme Council of National Economy. These commissariats carry on their activities through the unions. Or, expressing it differently, the Supreme Council of National Economy organizes production through its representatives in the unions, whose orders must be carried out unconditionally: they decide what the workers shall do and how they shall work. The Commissariat of Labor controls the workers through its representatives in the unions, whose orders must also be strictly carried out over the workers: where and how long they must work. The workers in their unions have no influence over production, nor over the conditions of work.

The executive committee of the gouvernement soviets has 5 departments: 1) The economic department, 2) Wage tariffs, 3) Education, 4) Organization and Instruction, 5) General Business. Each department has further its sub-departments. The Economic Department is subdivided into two sub-departments: 1) For organization of Industry, 2) For distribution of provisions and working clothes. But the workers have not the right to control the labors of the departments, but only have the right to decide over such work as is assigned to them by the department.

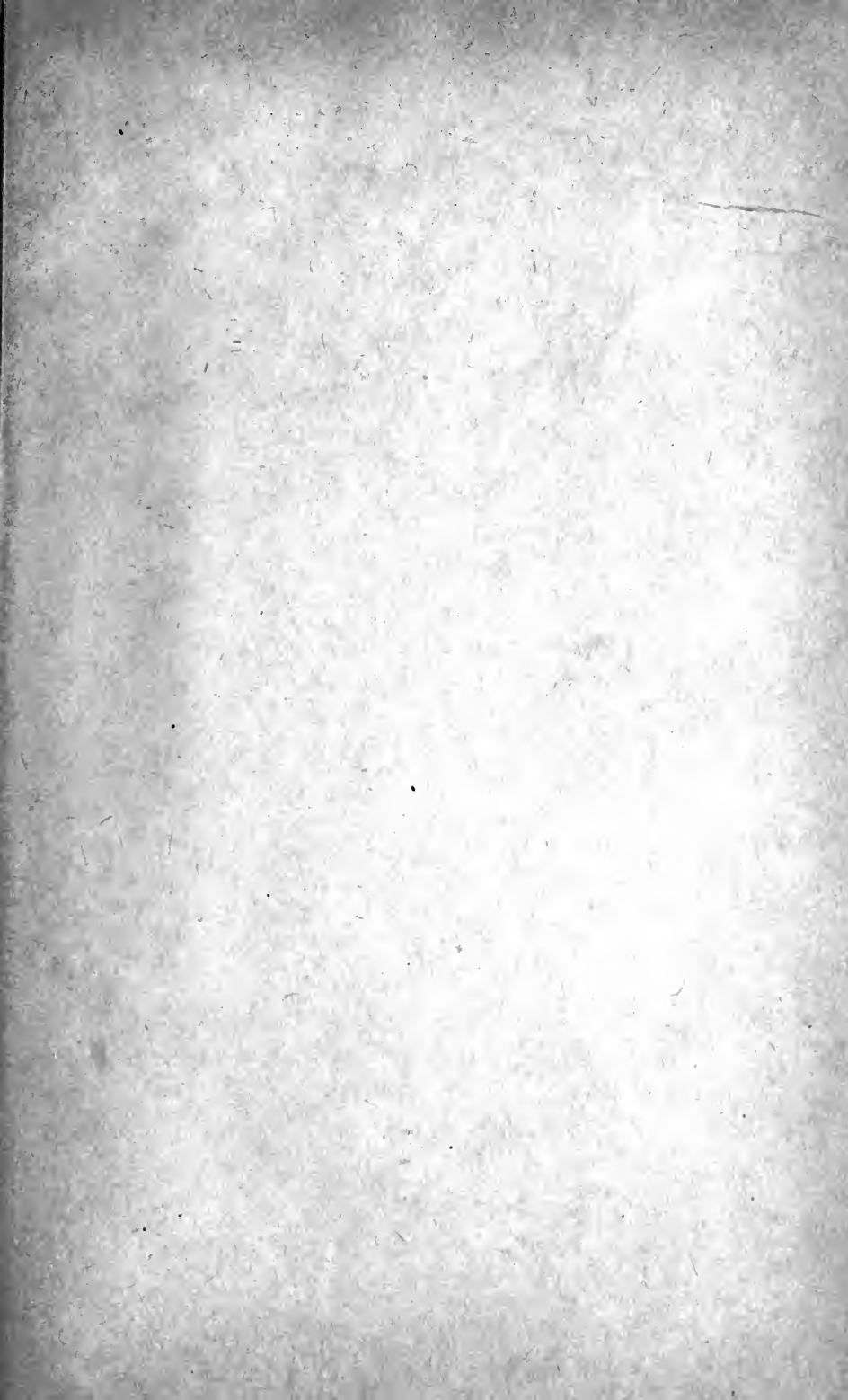
Industry in Ukraine may be divided in three parts: The largest industry, the metal industry, is under the direct control of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the industries of the second and third class stand under the provisional council of the Supreme Council of National Economy. There are in Ukraine 42 larger and 14 smaller textile factories. The large metal works of the country, 16 in number, are combined into one great trust. The mines of the Don basin are divided into 16

districts, which are subject to the central executive committee of the unions of the whole of Ukraine, subdivided in the manner described above.

The working hours are legally determined to 8 hours daily, but during the war there was overtime work in all those industries which were connected with the war. The remuneration for overtime consists principally of natural products. The workers receive more bread.

Bread and Freedom! That is what workers and peasants all struggle for. In how far they have come into possession of them through the revolution, the investigations described above will show. In how far they shall be able to advance further in that direction, the future will show. But in any case this depends upon the politics of the entente towards Russia and Ukraine. Just as Russia will be capable of further development generally, in the direction of socialism, if it unmolested and unhindered can develop the powers that lie within the people, just so will the workers and the peasants be able to gain bread and freedom in the same measure as they are left unmolested by the governments and can bring their inherent powers to free development. Not the soviet government, but only the peasants and the workers can create socialism for themselves. This has been proven to us by the development of the Russian and Ukrainian revolution. The bolsheviks as state socialists have showed to us that they cannot bring socialism about.

— THE END —



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