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- *Syndicalists in the Russian Revolution* ASP — London 1985. 16pp
- *Program of Anarcho-syndicalism* MMP — Sydney 1985, 64pp
- *Constructive Anarchism* MMP — Sydney 1987, 44pp

Long out of print:

- *Bolshevism: Promises & Realities* — In preparation for reprint by MMP
- *The Guillotine at Work* Vol 2

Also much remains to be translated from his voluminous writings in Russian. Of particular interest are the following :

- *Instead of a Program* (1923) An analysis of the resolutions of the two Anarcho-syndicalist Congresses during the Russian Revolution
- *Peter Kropotkin and his Teachings* (1931) An extremely valuable collection of essays on Kropotkin compiled by Maximoff and containing his important long essay 'Kropotkin & Syndicalism'.
- *Conversations with Bakunin about the Revolution* (1934)

A brief biography of Maximoff by Sam Dolgoff is contained in the Cienfuegos edition of 'The Guillotine at Work'. See also 'My Social Credo'.

its revolutionary discipline (which in practice is always straight *military discipline*), finally subordination of the Army to a unified organisation for the entire country. all of which have already been demonstrated by the Bolsheviks. The issue of the Protection of the Revolution is resolved by the "Platform" in a typically Statist manner; to have a free hand towards the people whose guardians they are, maintained with the help of the Army, subordinated to the highest authorities only.

The solution to the problem of the protection of the Revolution lies only in the principle of the general mobilization of the working people. as proposed by the Russian Anarcho-syndicalists.

We have come to the end of our criticism of the "Platform." No conclusions will be drawn. Let the readers, who have studied the "Platform," the "Reply" and the program of the Russian Anarcho-syndicalists propounded here, draw their own conclusions.

Note on text

The program of the Russian Anarcho-syndicalists referred to at the very end of text was published as Part II in the original english edition. This 'Program of Anarcho-syndicalism' has already been published separately as Rebel Worker Pamphlet #4 by Monty Miller Press.

Publications By G. P. Maximoff

- *The Guillotine at Work* Vol 1 Cienfuegos Press — Sandy 1979, 360pp
- *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin* edited selections of Bakunin's writings. Glencoe 1953. 434pp
- *My Social Credo* MMP — Sydney 1983, 20pp

Contents

sia that, both during the Revolution and the Transition Period, the cooperatives provide the most suitable means.

Land. Here the "Platform" is completely bankrupt and satisfied with general phraseology. It rejects the immediate communisation of the agricultural economy and retains the present peasant structure without any changes. It notes correctly that a "private agrarian economy, like private industrial enterprise, leads to trade, to the accumulation of private property and the creation of capital" Well said! But to say this and then consciously leave private farming intact is tantamount to destroying all Anarchist concepts. The "Platformists" state that in this manner they are creating some "X," some "unknown quantity," and the identity of this "X" is not difficult to envisage: it will mean the creation of an Anarcho-communist "NEP." Such a transitory structure is a far cry from the Transition Period envisaged by the Russian Anarcho-syndicalists, and is very close to the structure of Capitalism. And still they claim that they are opposed to a Transition Period!

Protection of the Revolution: All are agreed that the social Revolution will be forced to defend itself. The question is: how should one organise this defence? The authors of the "Platform" pick out their answer from the precepts of the Bolsheviks. The latter organised, in the early days of the Revolution, partisan (Red Guard) detachments, later a volunteer Army, and they finally ended up with a standing army and compulsory military service for the entire population. The "Platform" goes through the same stages.

Anarchist principles bind the authors of the "Platform" to voluntary formations, i.e. Partisan detachments. But, they say, civil war would demand the "unification of plans of operations and unification of the general command." And thus, in the first period of the Revolution, as with the Bolsheviks, there are to be Partisans. In the second period, "when the Bourgeoisie will attack the Revolution with their reorganised forces," there is to be an Army, again as with the Bolsheviks. Apparently it will have all the colours of the Bolshevik rainbow: both its class character and its voluntary service,

plant Committees of innumerable branches of production in any city must unite and establish the machinery for administering the production process in the given city. But let them try to get production into working order, when the industrial undertakings are united in the territorial principle and are thrown together without any connection between them on the industrial level! It will be nothing less than chaos and destruction! And that is the only concrete proposal made by the authors of the "Platform" in the sphere of the organisation of production. Everything else comes down to the usual loud phrases which are meaningless in reality.

At the same time the "Platform" is silent on many concrete issues resulting from the practical organisation of labour and production. Thus, for instance, they declare that the middle classes and the bourgeoisie will have to perform physical labour, but they ignore the question of whether the social Revolution can afford to entrust jobs to the middle classes, and to the proletariat in those institutions and branches of production which will be destroyed by the social Revolution. The Russian Revolution was unable to cope with this problem. How could the kind of Revolution postulated by the authors of the "Platform" cope with it? On that point the "Platform" is silent.

Provisions. Here too there is nothing new or fresh. The "Platform" repeats the old Anarchist and Anarcho-syndicalist views. The only novelty is the principle of expediency in the distribution of food, a principle taken over from the Bolsheviks. Physical labourers are many; those doing highly qualified intellectual work (administrators, organisers, scientists, poets, etc.) are few. In times of need the former can be limited to the necessary minimum of food, and even less; and the latter — get higher rations! This principle is not only immoral, but in practice it is far from being expedient, since it establishes inequality in the most fundamental aspect of life and thus creates discontent and hostility.

As to the organisational aspect of the distribution of food, it has been pointed out repeatedly by the Anarcho-syndicalists of Rus-

The development of anarcho-syndicalist ideas on working class organisation and the revolutionary struggle for the libertarian reconstruction of society, from the 1st International to the 1930's. A defence of Anarcho-syndicalism against 'Platformism' and 'Synthetical' anarchism.

Introduction

Contrary to what one might have expected from the key role of Russians in the early history of the doctrine of revolutionary anarchism, Russian anarchism disappeared from the scene soon after the death of Bakunin and did not reappear until the 1905 revolution. Thus when anarchism did reappear in Russia there were formidable competitors already on the scene: the social democrats of Bolshevik, Menshevik and intermediate tendencies and the socialist revolutionaries. Both of these parties had consolidated themselves some years earlier, out of movements and tendencies which themselves had roots in the revolutionary movement of the 1870's and 1880's. Both of them had natural constituencies — the workers in the one case and the peasants in the other (although these were not completely separate groups) — into which revolutionary anarchism would have to make inroads to succeed. Thus anarchism had an even more unfavourable outlook than that other unsuccessful late starter, Russian liberalism, which at least could look to an influential, if narrow, natural support base amongst the better-off intelligentsia, commercial and industrial middle classes and enlightened nobility. It is no accident then that the two best known anarchist chroniclers of the Russian revolution came to anarchism from other movements after the 1905 revolution — Arshinoff from bolshevism — and Voline from the Socialist Revolutionaries — and it is also no accident that both of them conceived revolution in the most extreme terms possible. With its natural terrain already occupied by other movements, extremism was really all Russian anarchism had to offer. At times of revolutionary excitement this could lead to a rapid growth in the movement but if, as in 1917, the larger

11. The Constructive Program of the "Platform"

The constructive section of the "Platform" is distinguished by its primitiveness. The construction of the new Anarchist society is limited to production and consumption, as if social organisation could be reduced to these functions alone. Such a backward conception, borrowed from the infancy of revolutionary Syndicalism, is an evidence of the inability of the authors of the "Platform" to come to grips with a truly constructive program.

Revolutionary Syndicalism, known today as Anarcho-syndicalism, has long since advanced — primarily under the influence of the experiences in Russia — from such a simplified outlook on the construction of the future society. Yet the Group of Russian Anarchists Abroad, who conceived the "Platform," now expound this primitivism as something new. However, let us see how the "Platform" attempted to solve the main issues arising out of the new structure.

Production: The "Platform" is concerned primarily with the administration of production, rather than its functioning. And even the form of administration is sketched rather childishly: factory and plant Committees as the local subordinate form of administration; unification of these committees on city, provincial and national levels. And that is all.

Such a scheme of administering production in no way resembles the "one workshop" (administration by industry); instead it throws together all the factories, plants and workshops in various branches of production. According to the "Platform" all factory and

from the cloudy heights to the sinful, practical, materialistic earth, they had, willy nilly, to be in favour of the Transitional period. And those who continue to speak and write against it do this only to clear their hardened consciences.

and more established revolutionary groups adapted their own agitation to the mood of the masses their rapid growth would swamp the anarchists.

By themselves these factors would have ensured that the anarchist movement remained small — in 1917/18 it numbered perhaps 10,000 with Syndicalist delegates representing perhaps 75,000 workers at trade union and factory committee conferences — but other factors were also at work to make it weaker yet. From the start there was a division between individualists and communists within anarchism but this division had a rather different meaning under Russian conditions from what it would have today or elsewhere then. The individualists tended towards "terror without motive" whilst the left-wing of the Anarcho-communists endorsed expropriation by armed detachments but the difference was not great and in anti-state insurrectionary propaganda the two could easily run together. The difference between the two was over the organisation (or lack of it) of future society but not necessarily in the understanding of revolution or at least its destructive phase. Since also the Russian anarcho-communists remained at the level of agitation and propaganda amongst the masses rather than rising to the level of organisation of the masses (Russia could only acquire a Syndicalist movement after the February revolution) the organisational forms of Russian anarchism — small groups and circles – did not make for differentiation between individualism and Anarcho-communism.

In this situation the impact of the revolution could only be to further disintegrate a movement that was never integrated or coherent. Once the revolution was underway propaganda for construction would have to take over from demands for destruction if anarchism was to have any influence at all. This necessitated clearly distinguishing between individualism and communism. However at the same time there arose — for non-individualists the question of tactics and strategies in an ongoing revolution. This led to a clear separation between the anarcho-communists with their fo-

cus on the problem of organising the consumption of the "masses," and the Syndicalists with their focus on the problems of the revolutionary fighting and post-revolutionary productive organisation of the "workers." Anarcho-communism, lacking any clear tactical or strategic bases, then split between simple armed opposition to everything "statist" and collaboration with (and subordination to) the bolshevik party. Anarcho-syndicalism, more coherent in its organisational, tactical and post-revolutionary ideas than the other variants, also faced problems with the emergence of the factory committees which had no place in the original syndicalist scheme of things, but these problems were at least surmountable within its own universe of ideas. Despite this syndicalism was born and fated to remain a minority tendency in a trade union movement dominated by Mensheviks and a factory committee movement with strong links to the bolsheviks.

Within the sad chronicle of Russian anarchism only one episode stands out: that of the Makhnovist movement in the Ukraine (1918–1921). The anarchist-led partisans achieved brilliant military successes against the Germans, Ukrainian nationalists and White armies and for a long period withstood the attacks of the Red Army when the latter turned on them. Behind the partisan lines the anarchists tried to spark off an independent social and political organisation of the liberated areas and to re-organise the anarchist movement. (ultimately both these attempts were to fall: the war of movement prevented the consolidation of base areas and the Anarcho-syndicalists remained aloof from the projected unification of the anarchist movement. The insurrectionary army remained the dominant factor in the situation.)

It is hardly surprising that reflection on the complete political failure of Russian anarchism in general and the relative military success of its Ukrainian wing in particular should have led some anarchists towards a demand for tighter and more disciplined organisation. Nor is it surprising that amongst the protagonists of such organisation should be the leader and the chronicler of the

revolutionary process, directed by the organised forces of victorious labour along definite lines." (page 21).

A process is a function of time, and the time during which this process continues "is a transitional time," characterized by a series of concrete tasks designed to help the new society approach its ideal architectural perfection, and to imbue it with Anarchist life. These concrete tasks — even those proposed by the "Platform" — again assert the inevitability of a transitional period, which was proposed by the Russian Anarcho-syndicalists as far back as 1918.

"Only the workshop of producers," the "Platform" says, "belonging in its entirety to all working people and to none individually … The products form a common food fund for the workers, from which each participant in the new industry will receive all his necessities on the basis of full equality. The new system of production will destroy completely the concepts of hiring and exploitation … There will be no bosses … This is the first practical step towards the realisation of Anarchist Communism" (pages 22–23). And they call that the "first step"! The authors of the "Platform" evidently confuse the ninth month of pregnancy with the first. They themselves had already stated that the principle "to each according to his needs" would be preceded by a concept of expediency — once again a transitional measure.

The "Platform" failed completely in the question of solving the agrarian problem. In industry it proposed Communism, and in agriculture an individual economy with rights of ownership to the products of the economy; in other words, the need for an exchange of goods with the city would continue until the great masses of the peasantry embraced Communism in production and distribution.

Again, this process is perforce lengthy; a number of measures will have to be taken to speed the process. The objections of the "Platform" and other Anarchists to the Transitional period are a tribute which our comrades pay to the relics of those days when Anarchists thought little, if at all, about the nature, meaning and process of social upheavals. But as soon as Anarchists descended

10. The Transition Period

One of the painful questions among Anarchists is that of the "Transition Period." The authors of the "Platform" also considered it and declared that it is a "definite phase in the life of a people characterized by the breakup of the old structure and the establishment of a new economic and political system which, however, does not yet involve the full liberation of the working people" (p. 17). In view of this attitude, the "Platform" passes over this Transition Period as a non-Anarchist phenomenon. It is non-Anarchist because it is "not the Anarchist society which will emerge as a result of the social Revolution, but some 'X', still containing elements and remnants of the old Capitalist system." (page 17). What elements are these? "The principle of State enforcement; private property in tools and means of production, the hiring of labour, etc." Instead of all these evils, the "Platform" insists on a perfect social Revolution which would establish with one blow a social order containing no sign of the survival of elements from the old society.

Are there actually people in our ranks who regard such a vision as practical? We, for one, consider it entirely impossible.

The authors of the "Platform" themselves continue, with their habit of saying one thing and meaning another, that "the Anarcho-communist society in its final stage will not be established by the force of a social upheaval alone" (page 21). The logical assumption from this statement would be that, for the final formation of the Anarcho-communist society, a certain period of time is needed, i.e. a Transition Period. And the "Platform" declares this directly: "Its realisation (society's) will present a more or less lengthy social-

Ukrainian movement. The unfortunate thing was that faced with two successful examples — the bolshevik party and the anarchist army — Arshinoff, Makhno and their group produced an organisational platform and politics incorporating the main features of both. This alienated the anarcho-syndicalists, who were organisationally serious but with totally different organisational and political conceptions, and who in any case had their own international organisation, the I.W.A. (International Workers Association) and it failed to attract the anarcho-communists who could not fail to perceive the bolshevism implicit in the organisational and political prescriptions. The drafters of the platform had fallen into the error of believing that organisational forms were merely a technical matter and that the politics of an organisation were governed by its explicit aims, often their opponents fell into the obverse error of believing that all organisational forms (i.e. all formal organisation) were politically statist.

The major focus of criticism of the "Platform" was directed against what was labeled "Syntheticism." The "Synthesis" or "Synthetical Declaration of Principles" was commissioned from Voline by the Nabat (Tocsin) Anarchist Confederation of the Ukraine (1918–1920). It was an attempt to provide a framework within which the different types of anarchist (syndicalists, communists, individualists) could co-operate.

In answer to the publication of the "Platform," Voline, along with other "Nabat" militants who survived the Bolshevik terror, by going into exile, published in 1927 what became known as "The Reply." This document remains as the major attack on "Platformism" by the "Synthesis" anarchists.

Meanwhile the anarcho-syndicalists who went into exile, did not remain aloof from this "debate." The most detailed criticism of the "Platform" as well as the deficiencies in the "Reply" were made by G. P. Maximoff in the pages of 'Golos Truzhenika'. It was later collectively published with the title "Constructive Anarchism." This thorough analysis by Maximoff (besides clearly stating the clear dif-

ferences between anarcho-syndicalism and platformism is of value also for its elaboration of the development of the constructive program of anarcho-syndicalism from within the 1st International up till the reformation of the I.W.A. in 1922.

The main purpose of this pamphlet is to republish the ideas expressed in Maximoff's long article. However, so that a new generation can examine all sides of this critical debate in the history of revolutionary anarchism, we have decided to include the other primary documents: "The Platform" itself and "The Reply." To indicate how the debate extended beyond the Russian exiles. also included is Malatesta's important analysis of anarchist organisation and his subsequent exchange of views with Makhno.

The debate on the Platform was not restricted to these primary documents published together here for the first time in English. Other writings of importance were:-

1. The subsequent theoretical writings of Arshinoff "*La Réponse aux Confusionistes de l'Anarchisme*" (Paris, 1927), "*Anarklizm i Diktatura Proletariata*" (Paris, 1931)

2. The series of articles published in the organ of the Spanish CNT "*Solidaridad Obrera*" in 1932 by Alexander Schapiro, the then general secretary of the IWA, his position against the Platform was very similar to that of Maximoff.

3. Other writings of Voline: "*Le sens de La Destruction*," "*De La Synthese*" and "*Le Vertable Revolution Sociale*."

4. Besides Malatesta, others outside the circles of exiled Russian anarchists wrote important and influential articles. Particularly worthy of republishing would be those of Luigi Fabbri, Camillo Berneri, Max Nettlau and Sebastien Faure. In France, Faure became after Voline the most important theoretician of "Synthetical" anarchism.

ing environment," i.e. the "masses," in free, natural, ideological and moral leadership.

The question is not the rejection of *leadership*, but making certain that it is free and natural. Even in an Anarchist society, the "masses" will always be led by "one or other political ideological group." But this does not mean, as the authors of the"Reply" believe, that the masses might he unable to act freely and creatively under favourable conditions.

regarded as some kind of monolithic body, and the individual are established in such a way that he who stands out, whoever he may be, commits a crime.

"We do not charge the Anarchists with the mission of guiding the masses, but believe that their calling is to *help* the masses, *insofar as the latter are in need of such help*," say the authors of the "Reply" (page 13). These are empty words, pleasing to all those who have never been able to show any sign of initiative. For it is clear, after all, that the "'masses" will never ask anyone for help. One must go into the masses oneself, work with them, struggle for their soul, and attempt to win it ideologically and give it guidance.

Indeed, the authors of the "Reply" themselves involuntarily reach the conclusion of the necessity for Anarchist work among the masses without waiting for their call to help. "In mass organisations of a socio-economic character, the Anarchists — as part of the masses — will work, build and create together with the latter. A tremendous field of direct ideological and social creative activity opens up for them here and they must do this work in comradely fashion, without placing themselves into positions above other members of the free masses."

All this is said so kindly that one must search with tenderness for the unknown and non-existent "masses" painted by the authors of the "Reply." Obviously accustomed to viewing Anarchism in an abstract manner, they continue to look at everything else in the same way. To them the "masses" are of some uniform, chemically pure and benevolent substance. Such masses are nowhere to be found. The "masses" are too varied and different to be assessed according to some easy and superficial formula. While working in their midst, it is inevitable that some men will rise above them; in fact, the "masses" themselves elevate their leaders, and not because of their passivity. The Anarchists, however, must limit themselves to "free and natural ideological and moral influence on their environment." But if they did that, they would inevitably — if they were successful in their work — become the leaders of the "surround-

A useful follow up volume to the documents published here would contain the best of the above. Regrettably none have as yet been translated into English. Also useful would be a history of organisations founded on "Platformist" principles.

1. Introduction

Before we examine the principles of Anarcho-syndicalism, it is necessary to summarise briefly the development of international Anarchism since the war,[1] and to consider its present situation.

The Imperialist war, the rise and decline of the Great Russian revolution, the uprisings in Central European countries, and the intensification of the class struggle in other lands, obliged Anarchists to investigate more thoroughly the true character of social revolution and the practical means needed for its realisation. In the pages of Anarchist and Revolutionary Syndicalist publications in all countries the problems of construction, tactics and organisation were discussed with increasing frequency. Unfortunately, these problems were only stated; they were not resolved. And only relatively few of the fundamental questions were actually answered.

The first practical attempt to deal with the question of organisational forms in the social revolution must be found in the formation of the International Workingmen's Association of 1921 — the International of Revolutionary Syndicalist Trade Unions. From that moment, Anarcho-syndicalism became an organised international factor. The International Workingmen's Association adopted the philosophy of Anarchist Communism, and, in addition to devoting itself to day to-day efforts in the interests of the world proletariat, it strove, from the first day of its existence, to find solutions to all those questions which face, both now and in the future, the exploited masses in their struggle for full liberation.

[1] The First World War of 1914–18.

In other words, Anarchists are to join the Trade Unions with readymade recipes and are to carry out their plans, if necessary, against the will of the Unions themselves. Once again, this is a faithful copy of Bolshevik tactics; the Party is a hegemony, the Trade Union is subordinated to the organisation. As for the contention that the future Anarcho-syndicalist Party would limit itself to ideological guidance, we must never forget that behind ideas there stands a living reality — the men who represent these ideas. Thus, ideological guidance will always develop a *physical and concrete* form. There are several such forms; we will point out the main ones. The *Party* form, which can vary, like states, from monarchy and unlimited dictatorship to a broad representative democracy. The Federative Form, adopted fully by the second International Working Men's Association, i.e. the International of revolutionary Anarcho-syndicalists: this form is the sketch of the future society which, from the first day of the social Revolution, would be filled in with solid detail. The "Platformists" chose the first form. They went in a direction which, after our experience of the Bolshevik Party, should have been rejected by all.

The authors of the "Reply," on the other hand, went to the opposite extreme: they ignored completely the question of guidance and thus put themselves in an unnatural position, in which no-one can remain for any length of time. "Anarchists everywhere must be fellow workers and comrades to the masses and the Revolution, but nothing more." (*Reply*, page 16). This, in its turn, is too naive and childish an interpretation of the role of Anarchism. If one shies away from all guidance in action and struggle, for fear of standing out from the general mass of the people, and is satisfied always with equality on the level of mediocrity, then logically it would be better not to mingle with the masses at all, but to wait until these masses — all together, as a "mass" — ask for help. And nothing less than the "all together" will do, for, according to the authors of the "Reply," an impassable gulf exists between the masses and the individual; the relations between the masses, which seem to be

tic, but will always remain revolutionary. The "Platformists" have evidently not yet learned that the fate of all political parties is to become opportunistic.

The Bolsheviks and the "Platformists" both advocate identical methods for conquering the Trade Unions; i.e. cells within the Trade Unions, whose activities are subordinated to an outside organisation of the party. "Anarchist groups in industrial plants, attempting the creation of Anarchist syndicates, struggling in the revolutionary syndicates for the preponderance and ideological [only ideological?] guidance of Anarchist thought, directed in their activities by the general Anarchist Association [read Party] to which they belong — that is the real meaning and form of Anarchist relations with revolutionary syndicalism and the Trade Union movement" (page 20). It is not clear why this meaning and "form" should be called Anarchist, when every worker, even today, knows full well that they are really Bolshevik! In confirmation, one has only to add the following extract:

> *"We must come into the Trade Union movement as an organized force [i.e. Party], be responsible to the general Anarchist organisation* [*i.e. to the Party,* NOT THE TRADE UNION] *for the work done in the syndicates, and be controlled by this organisation"* (page 20).

The reader will have little difficulty in perceiving that all this was copied from the Bolshevik program. And in raising the question of the relationship between the Anarchist Association and the Syndicates,[1] the authors of the "Platform" replied in no less Bolshevik strains: "To join the Unions in an organised way means to join them with a definite ideology, with a definite plan of action, which all Anarchists, working in the Syndicates, must strictly conform to."

[1] See article by M. Korn, "Dielo Truda," No. 18.

Nevertheless, despite these considerations and despite the fact that the International Workingmen's Association was a direct heir of the First International, continuing the work of the Jura Federation and of Michael Bakunin, its emergence was not welcomed unanimously in Anarchist circles. A group of Russian anarchist emigres, for instance, decided to establish, along similar lines to the International Workingmen's Association, a new organisation called the General Association of Anarchists. And three years ago, in 1927, the "Group of Russian Anarchists Abroad" submitted to the international Anarchist movement a "Project for an Organisational Platform of a General Association of Anarchists," which attempted to resolve the various problems on a different level from the International Workingmen's Association. This attempt aroused natural interest in Anarchist circles, and it is still being propagated in the publications of that group.

Before reviewing the fundamental principles of our own program, it is necessary to discuss this "Platform" in greater detail, as well as the "Reply" which was made to it by "several Russian Anarchists." We shall scrutinise these two pronouncements of Anarchist thought, not from love of controversy, but only in order to render more precise our attitude towards those positive organisational and tactical issues which today or any day might arise in their full magnitude in Russia itself and in other countries as well. In addition, the "Platform" and the "Reply" to it are both filled with every kind of distortion of Anarchist concepts, and to ignore these distortions would amount to moral transgression against the Anarchist movement. It is hoped that the considerable space which will be devoted in this study to a criticism of these matters will be found justified by the above considerations.

2. Positive and Negative Aspects of Anarchism

It is not within the scope of this study to examine the development of Anarchist thought. My task is practical. After analysing the living and concrete Anarchist movement from the moment of its inception to the present day, I shall attempt to determine its shortcomings, errors and ambiguities in theory and tactics. And further, on the basis of historical experience, I shall propose for consideration methods which, in my view, could help our movement in the struggle towards the realisation of its program.

Thought precedes movement. Every act and every movement of the individual, unless it is either mechanical or instinctive, is the result of premeditation, of thought. Before he acts, man thinks about the act — no matter whether the period of thought is brief or long — and only after this labour of the mind does he take steps to transform thought into reality. The same process can be observed in the intricate organism of human society.

In this complex social organisation, as well, the idea precedes the action. And for that reason the history of ideas does not coincide in time with the history of the movements which serve these ideas. Thus, the history of Anarchist and Socialist ideas can be traced back to antiquity, but the history of the Anarchist and Socialist movements begins only in the sixties of the last century, with the organisation of the International Association of Workers, or, as it is now commonly called, the First International. To that time I ascribe the beginning of the mass movement of Anarchist workers, and with

9. The Party and the Trade Unions

The new Anarchist evangelists begin history with themselves. Until they appeared in the arena, there was only chaos and no solid ground. "We consider the entire period previous to our own day, when Anarchists joined in the movement of revolutionary Syndicalism as individual workers and preachers, as a time of primitive attitudes to the Trade Union Movement" (page 19). This is seriously stated when the second International Working Men's Association is already in existence, uniting hundreds of thousands of revolutionary and Anarcho-syndicalist workers in all the countries of Europe and America.

But how does the "Platform" itself express its non-primitive relationship to the Trade Union movement? The answer is simple; it is a typically Bolshevik attitude, of the kind which has been fought by the entire international Syndicalist and Anarcho-syndicalist movement ever since the establishment of the Comintern.

The Bolsheviks strive for the Bolshevization of the Trade Union movement. The "Platformists" strive for its Anarchization. Both consider this possible through the inevitable connection between the Trade Union movement and the organisation of the Anarchist (for the Bolsheviks — the Bolshevik) forces outside that movement, i.e. the Party. Both are convinced that "only by the existence of this connection is it possible to prevent in it [i.e. in revolutionary Syndicalism] a development of tendencies towards opportunism." They thus believe that the Trade Unions must be under the guardianship of the Party, which itself can apparently never become opportunis-

and live by profoundly Anarchist tendencies and slogans," because "these tendencies and slogans are fragmentary, unassembled into a specific system and lacking in an organised directive force … This directive force can be found only in an ideological collective, specifically identified as such by the masses [too much emphasis, it seems, is put on ideology and organisation!]. Such a collective will be the organised Anarchist groups [why not the groups of the masses themselves who, according to this theory, live by 'profoundly Anarchist tendencies and slogans?'] and the organised Anarchist movement [i.e. the Party]." The Anarcho-communist Association (i.e. the Party) "will have to provide initiative and participate fully in every phase of the social revolution … "

The Anarchists (i.e. Party) will have to give precise answers to all questions, to link the solution of these questions to the general ideas of Anarchism, and to use all their energy in realising them. In this way, the General Association of Anarchists (i.e. the Party) and the Anarchist movement "would be fulfilling their complete ideological guiding role in the Social Revolution" (page 16).

It is inevitable that he who accepts the principle of full participation in all phases of the social Revolution, and who is bent on the fulfillment of this ideal, cannot — and will not — limit himself to *ideological* guidance. By the force of circumstances he will be obliged to administer every kind of practical activity as well. It is useless to blind oneself or other people to this fact: the "Platform" places its Party on the same height as the Bolsheviks do, i.e. it places the interests of the Party above the interests of the masses, since the Party has the monopoly of understanding these interests. This Bolshevik-type attitude is revealed even more clearly in the relationship of the "Platform" to Syndicalism.

it I begin the examination and analysis of the movement which we all serve according to our understanding and ability.

A study of the mistakes of the past will help us to avoid repeating them in the present and the future. The courage to admit mistakes, and the ability to discover their real causes are signs of a living spirit and a clear, open mind. If a movement shows evidence of these vital qualities, it is indeed healthy and strong, and it has a role to play in the future. Let us try then, within the limits of our ability, to serve the movement in this way. Inspired by this purpose, let us begin the examination of our movement which grew, as already indicated, out of the International Association of Working Men (First International).

What manner of Association was that? When, how and why did it emerge? The First International itself is not my subject, and I shall sketch its history only to the extent needed for the consideration of the Anarchist movement, whose early development was inextricably linked with it. For this reason I shall limit my examination to one fraction of the International, the group known as the "Federalists" or the "Bakuninists."

The cornerstone of the International was laid during the International Exhibition of 1862 in London, and the Association itself was actually founded at the famous meeting in St. Martin's Hall in London on September 23, 1864. That meeting elected a provisional committee of organisation, which in time became the General Council of the International. The Committee elaborated the Declaration of the International and its provisional statutes. These statutes were edited by Karl Marx who, though a member of the committee, played a very passive part in the formation of the International.

Under the influence of propaganda, sections of the International were formed in several Western European countries. Many of their members had only the vaguest and most confused notions of the aims and purposes of the Association. And, because they included considerable numbers of the radical intelligentsia, these sections

frequently cooperated with the radical political parties. Thus, the first adherent of the International in Switzerland, Dr. Coullery, pursued a program of neo-Christianity and his newspaper had a fairly extensive readership. A similar situation arose in France. In short, the sections of the International were, ideologically speaking, a motley and mutually contradictory collection, and only in time were they moulded into a conscious and active social force.

The First Congress of the International was scheduled to take place during 1865, in Brussels, but it was called off because of a new Belgian law which discriminated against foreigners. In its place, a conference was called in London for the 25th to 29th of September of the same year. At this conference the delegates from France were all Proudhonists — Tolain, Fribourg, Limousin and Varlin — later a member of the Paris Commune. Caesar de Paepe came from Belgium, Dupleix and J. P. Becker, one-time participant in the Dresden uprising, from the French and German speaking parts of Switzerland respectively. Among the emigrants, who represented no specific sections, there were Dupont, Le Lubez, Herman Jung and Karl Marx. This conference considered labour problems primarily, but it also touched on questions concerning international politics, and it decided to call the first Congress of the International in Geneva for the fall of 1866.

This Congress took place from September 3rd to the 8th, and was attended by 65 delegates — sixty of them representing national sections and five from the General Council. Most of these delegates were Swiss and French. Since this Congress is of the greatest importance in the history of the Anarchist and Socialist movements, I shall review its agenda and resolutions.

The agenda is most interesting, and to this day the issues placed before the consideration of the Congress have not lost their concrete significance, not only for the modern labour movement in general, but for the Anarchist movement in particular, whose attitudes on these issues were responsible for the division of the In-

"for the co-ordination of the activities of all organisations," (i.e. all the secretariats), "a special organ known as the *Executive Committee of the Organisation*," is to be established.

What is the task of this Committee? "The ideological and organisational guidance of the activities of the associations in accordance with the common ideology and common tactics of the Association" (page 31). Where, in this plan, does autonomy appear? Many Western European patriotic Parties are based on a far greater freedom for their component sections than the projected Anarcho-communist Party, which seems to rely exclusively on the activities of a bureaucratic secretariat.

In his oppositionist program, the Bolshevik Sapronov, while speaking of the structure of the Communist Party, described it as follows: "The cell is subordinate to the secretary; the secretaries of the cells are subordinate to the secretary of the Party Committee, in whose hands is the control of the Committee. The secretaries of local Committees are subordinated to the General Secretary to whom, in fact, the Central Committee is responsible."

The reader will have little difficulty in perceiving that the Party structure of the Russian Bolsheviks and that of the small handful of Russian Anarchist-communists abroad are in fact the same. There is no doubt that the results would also be the same. If, according to the statements of the "Sapronovites," the Russian Communist Party "is at present more than ever divided into the 'leaders' who are intimately linked with the apparatus, and the 'ranks' who have been deprived of all Party rights," then the same development would inevitably take place in any other Party, including the Russian Anarcho-communist Party, if it were constructed on the principle of the "apparatus."

What, then, will be the relationship of this Anarcho-communist Party, which grants personal freedom to its members, to mass manifestations? The authors of the "Platform" believe, firstly, that the masses are *incapable* of "maintaining the direction of the Revolution," despite the fact that they have "joined in social movements

out, "the authors of the 'Platform' too frequently resort to Parliamentary interpretations for a number of fundamental Anarchist principles which, as a result of these interpretations, retain only the external shell, hiding an entirely different content." And these parliamentary interpretations emphasize the centralized character of the "Platform's" Federalism. Nothing, indeed, remains of Federalism but the title in this democratic centralism which would be characteristic of any other political Party.[1]

The "Platform" states the generally known fact that "Anarchism has always advanced and defended Federalism, which combines the independence of persons and organisations with their initiative and service in the common cause" (page 30). However, when the "Platform" is obliged to determine the "federalist character of the Anarchist organisation," it transpires that it is demonstrated not by the autonomy of groups and group associations, but only by an "assurance for each member of the organisation … of independence, the right to vote, personal freedom and initiative" (page 31).

It seems, then, that the Anarcho-communist Party would desist from jailing anyone who joined it! The prerogatives, obviously, are very enticing. And, in fact, the members of the Organisation are given a chance at initiative — but apparently only members, not groups or associations. Yet even this initiative has a special character — the "Platformist" character. Each organisation (i.e. association of members with the right to individual initiative) has its secretariat which fulfils and *directs* the ideological, political and technical activities of the organisation ("Platform," page 31). In what, then, consist the self reliant activities of the rank and-file members? Apparently in one thing: initiative to obey the Secretariat and to carry out its directives. Moving up the ‚hierarchical ladder,

[1] See, concerning these "Interpretations," the answers of the "Platformists" to the questions put them by M. Korn ("Dielo Truda" No. 18). the article by G. Graf ("Dielo Truda, No's 22–24) and the "Reply" ("Dielo Truda") No. 28) professing amazement on the part of the authors of the "Platform" that no-one understands them.

ternational into divergent factions. This agenda consisted of the following items:

1. Unification of the workingmen's efforts in their struggle against Capitalism by the organisation of unions.
2. The shortening of the working day.
3. Female and child labour in industry.
4. Labour unions, their past. present and future.
5. Co-operatives.
6. Direct and indirect taxation.
7. Organisation of international credit.
8. The need for the destruction of the reactionary influence of Russia in Europe by means of the establishment of a series of separate states based on self-determination. (The reconstruction of Poland on democratic foundations).
9. The existence of standing armies.
10. Religion and its influence on the social, political and intellectual evolution of nations.
11. Mutual Aid societies.

The most important achievement of the Congress was, of course, the final ratification of the statutes of the International, which will be examined below. First, however, I shall examine the resolutions on several issues which, in my opinion, continue to be vital for the Anarchist movement as a whole.

There is no unanimity among Anarchists on the question of labour's struggle against capital. They differ in particular on the issue of unifying the efforts of the working men and their fight

against the exploiters. And this variation in attitudes towards labour unions is the main issue dividing the Anarcho-communist camp into two major fractions — the Anarcho-communists pure and simple and the Anarcho-syndicalists Those present-day Anarchists who are Syndicalist do not believe that labour associations could be the nucleus of a future society by developing into federations of producers and stateless communes. The Anarcho-syndicalists, on the other hand, hold that only rank-and-file labour organisations are capable of providing the initial element in the structure of new society, in which a federal International of producers' associations will take the place of government.

Further, many Anarchists consider the Trade Union fight for everyday interests to be petty, worthless and even harmful; they call it a negligible, penny-wise policy which only serves to deflect the attention of the workers from their main task, the destruction of capital and the state. The Anarcho-syndicalists, on the other hand, view the everyday struggle of the working classes as of tremendous importance. They believe that the reduction of hours of work is a great blessing since, after a long working day, the worker is so weary that he had no time or energy for social problems or communal issues; he knows only one need — physical rest. A long working day, indeed, transforms him into a toiling animal. The same importance is attached by the Anarcho-syndicalists to the increase of wages. Wherever wages are low, there is destitution; where there is destitution, there is ignorance, and an ignorant pauperised worker cannot be a Revolutionist, because he has no opportunity to realise or appreciate his human dignity, and because he cannot understand the structure of exploitation that oppresses him.

How did the Anarchists of the First International react to these issues? The First Congress of the International passed a resolution saying that "at the present stage of production workers must be supported in their fight for pay increases." Further, the Congress noted that the ultimate aim of the labour movement is "destruction of the system of hired labour" and it therefore recommended

8. The Party, The Individual and the Masses

The "General Association of Anarchists," the "Ideological Collective" whose need is stressed by the "Platform," appears in the final analysis, and particularly in view of supplementary explanations which were published in the pages of "Dielo Truda," to be nothing else than an Anarchist Party — and quite a centralized Party at that. The role of this Anarchist Party, which incidentally does not differ greatly in the question of leadership from the Bolshevik Party, is disguised in the "Platform" under the concept of "ideological leadership."

There is nothing anti-Anarchist in a "Party" organisation as such. Both Bakunin and Kropotkin spoke frequently of the need for organising an Anarchist Party, and to this day the organisation of the Scandinavian Anarchists is known as a Party. Party does not necessarily mean power, or the ambition to run the State. The issue is not in the name, but in its content, in the organisational structure of the Party, in the principles on which it is founded.

What goal does the "Platform" place before the Russian Anarcho-communist Party? The realisation of an Anarcho-communist society. And that, without a doubt, is Anarchism to the full. But what organisational principles are laid down to determine the relationship between individual members and the Party as a whole, between the Party and the masses, and mass organisations in particular?

The "Platform" declares unequivocally that the main principle is that of *Federalism* (page 30). But, as the "Reply" correctly points

nism," "Rejection of Democracy," "Rejection of State and Authority," "which are no more than extremely concise summaries of Anarchist concepts that have long been established and clarified, do not arouse any substantial objections on our part."

We take cognizance of this frank admission by the authors of the "Reply." The level of ignorance in our ranks is evidently lower than we had assumed!

a serious "study of economic ways and means to achieve this goal, founded on justice and mutual aid."

The second Congress of the International, held in Lausanne in 1867; accepted the same resolution. The third Congress, meeting in Brussels, from September 6th to 13th, 1868, debated the question of strikes, of federation between labour associations and of the establishment of special Coordination Councils whose task it would be to determine whether a given strike was either legal or useful. The Congress then passed a resolution saying:

> *"This Congress declares that the strike is not a weapon for the full liberation of the worker, but that it is frequently rendered necessary in the struggle between labour and capital in modern society; it is essential therefore to subject strikes to certain rules so that they be called at propitious times only, and with the assurance of competent organisation.*
>
> *"As to the organisation of strikes, it is essential that labour unions of resistance exist in all trades, and that these unions be federated with all other labour unions in all countries …*
>
> *"To determine the timeliness and legality of strikes, a special commission composed of Trade Union delegates should be established in every locality."*

On the issue of the reduction of working hours, the Congress declared that "the reduction of working hours is a primary condition for every improvement in the position of the workers, and for that reason this Congress has decided to begin agitation in all countries for the realisation of this aim by constitutional means."

At the fourth Congress of the International in Basel during September 1869 — it was the penultimate Congress — the French delegate, the carpenter Pindy, read a paper on the issue of labour unions of resistance (as Trade Unions were called in those days)

in which he incidentally expressed thoughts which later became basic to French Revolutionary Syndicalism, and which have since been stressed continually by those Anarchists who now call themselves Anarcho-syndicalists. Pindy said that, in his view, labour unions must join with each other in local, national and, finally, international federations. In the future society, too, the Trade Unions would have to unite in free communes, headed by Councils of deputies from the Unions. These Councils would regulate relations between the various trades and would take the place of contemporary political institutions. The Congress carried a resolution proposed by Pindy, which stated that the unions must, "in the interests of their branch of industry, gather all essential information, consider common problems, conduct strikes and concern themselves with their successful conclusion until such time as the system of hired labour is replaced by the association of free producers." Such, according to the records of all the Congresses, was the ideological viewpoint on the labour issue of the Anarchists who participated in the First International.

But the International was not an organisation dominated by Anarchists. It included Marxists, Blanquists and Proudhonist-mutualists, plain Socialists and even radical Democrats. How then can one ascribe the program of the International to the Anarchists of those days? The mere fact of their membership in the International is not sufficient, since they could have been in the minority and have dissented from the viewpoint of the resolutions which were adopted. The question is justified, although not completely so, since, had the Anarchists not agreed with resolutions. there would have been some evidence of their protest at the Congresses themselves and later in their press, a method used by them whenever they differed from the opinion of the General Council in London. However, there exists a great deal of additional material which shows that, until the Hague Congress, the Anarchists accepted the program of the International in full.

society they would erect on the principles they propose, it would in reality be neither Anarchist nor Communist.

To be sure, they conclude the above-mentioned chapter with the elementary truth that the goal of Anarchist Communism is actually "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." But they interpret this truth "in their own way," meaning, assurance to the working man of "the fruits of his labour." To equate these two propositions — that again is proof of ignorance of the fundamental tenets of Anarchism.

But to continue. The chapter "*Rejection of Democracy*" opens with the following categorical imperative: "Democracy is one of the forms of bourgeois capitalist society" (page 11). It is obvious that the authors of the "Platform" have lumped together contemporary parliamentary democracy and democracy as such. Anarchism is, in the final analysis, nothing but democracy in its purest and most extreme form. Yet the Platformists categorically reject democracy, without understanding either its nature or its substance. They state, for instance, that "democracy leaves untouched the principle of private property." Present day democracy? Yes. Anarchist democracy? Of course not. It is essential to determine the true character of democracy in contrast to its perversions — a process which is completely ignored by the authors of the "Platform," as a result, once again, of their chronic ignorance.

We shall not dwell on the less important "revisions" of these confused "theoreticians." There are too many, and it would be boring to list them all. Let us turn instead to the process by which the authors of the "Platform" claim to put into practice their fundamental theoretical principles. But, before doing so, it might be useful to point out that the comrades who wrote and signed the "Reply of some Russian Anarchists to the Organisational Platform" believed that their own attitude towards Social Revolution "does not differ from the brief expression of viewpoint in the "Platform" , and that such chapters of the "Platform" as "Anarchism and Anarchist Commu-

Kropotkin viewed the connection between progress and the struggle for liberation in an entirely different light. Analysing the life of society, he found that, with progress-technical, spiritual and otherwise — communistic habits arise among men and liberty is therefore brought nearer. But it would apparently be wrong to seek in Kropotkin an explanation of the contradictions and absurdities of the "Platformists," who appear to believe that the realisation of Anarchism is closely bound with a return to the most primitive social economy. We should like to suggest to these authors that they write off the technically developed countries and move — with their "Platform" as baggage — to Abyssinia and Baluchistan.

The theoretical lapses of these half-baked philosophers of Anarchism are not absent from their other chapters. When they define Anarchism itself (chapter entitled "Anarchism and Anarchist Communism"), the authors of the "Platform" see in it the aspiration to "transform the present bourgeois capitalist society into one which would assure to the working people their freedom, independence, social and political equality and the fruits of their labour" (page 9). Here the authors introduce another "revision" into the fundamental concepts of Anarchist Communism, replacing the principle "to each according to his needs" by a new slogan — "to each according to his labour." Why this substitution? For, if society assures the working man only the fruits of his labour and not the satisfaction of his needs, then inequality will remain. One man may produce more than he needs and hoard his surplus, while another may not be capable of producing enough for his maintenance. Once again there would be the rich, owning capital, and the poor who have less than the minimum required for life. The result would be the same economic inequality as we know today. And, wherever there is inequality, there can be no talk of freedom, of independence, of social and political equality. Indeed, none of these can possibly result from the slogan "to each according to his labour." And even though the authors of the "Platform" call Anarcho-communist the

One has only to refer to the works and letters of Bakunin. His pamphlets, "*The Policy of the International*," "*The Organisation of the International*," "*Universal Revolutionary Union*," as well as a number of others, prove this contention clearly and convincingly. But, to make the matter more certain, one should not rely on Bakunin's pamphlets alone, but should also consider the following quotations from the documents of the Jura Federation, which then headed the theoretical and practical Anarchist movement, as well as several quotations from the program which Bakunin drew up for the "Social-Democratic Alliance."

How is the program of the Alliance related to the issue of the labour movement under discussion here? Paragraph 11 states that land, like all other capital, is a tool of production which must become the collective property of society as a whole, to be utilised only by the working people, i.e. the industrial and agricultural associations of the workers." Paragraph V contains a thesis which is still a part of the fundamental principles of modern Anarcho-syndicalism, but which is denied by many Anarcho-communists It takes up the question — what is to replace the existing State? — and makes the following declaration: "The Alliance recognises that all modern political and authoritarian states, limited increasingly to the simple administrative functions essential to society, must dissolve into an international union of free agricultural and industrial associations."

The Congress of the Romance Federation at Chaux-Le-Fonds in 1870 passed a resolution which has remained valid to this day, at least for the Syndicalist fraction of Anarchist Communists, and which deserves to be quoted in full:

> *"Considering the fact that the full liberation of labour is possible only in conditions of the transformation of the existing political structure, which is sustained by privilege and power, into an economic society founded in equality and freedom, and that every government or po-*

litical state represents only the organisation of bourgeois exploitation whose expression is juridical law, and that any participation of the working class in bourgeois governmental politics can result only in the strengthening of the existing structure which in turn would paralyse the revolutionary activities of the proletariat, the Congress of the Romance Federation recommends to every section of the International the repudiation of all activities seeking social reorganisation by means of political reforms. It suggests instead the concentration of all efforts on the creation of federated trade unions as the only weapon capable of assuring the success of the social revolution. Such a federation would be labour's true representative, its parliament, but it would be independent and completely outside the influence of political government."

As to the forms of a future society, the Jura sections of the International visualized them in the same light as did Bakunin and as the present-day Anarcho-syndicalists still do. In the newspaper, "Solidarity" of August 20, 1870, in an article entitled "Geographical Unification," we read: "In the future Europe will not consist of a federation of different nations, politically organised in republics, but of a simple federation of labour union without any distinction according to nationality." This, then, was the labour program of the Anarchist movement from the formation of the International until the disintegration of the Jura Federation in 1880 when, at its last Congress, its sections accepted the title of Anarchist-Communism.

An analysis of the labour program of the International and its practical application leads inevitably to one fundamental flaw which fatally affected the development of the Labour movement. This flaw was the discrepancy between theory and practice. We have seen that the International had declared the economic liberation of the workers to be the goal of the labour movement, and the labour unions to be its basis. The natural and logical

If, in actual fact, the class struggle were universal, then it would undoubtedly have been not merely the most vital, but the only factor in the evolution of society. Anarchism does not admit such a monistic principle. The class struggle influences many aspects of life in contemporary society, but this does not mean that it has the universal significance ascribed to it by the "Platform."

The authors of the "Platform," indeed, juggle rather foolishly with this phrase, "the class struggle." Thus, on page 9, they declare triumphantly that "the class struggle, springing out of serfdom and the age-old desire of the working people for liberty, imbued the ranks of the oppressed with the ideal of Anarchism." Previously it had always been understood that the class struggle was the result of the unequal distribution of material wealth which arose from the capitalist economic system; serfdom and the desire for liberty are certainly not responsible for a phenomenon of such comparatively recent appearance as the class struggle. But the authors of the "Platform" do not take into consideration either the historical facts of social evolution or the anarchist theory as stated by Bakunin, Kropotkin and their followers.

Furthermore, the "revisions" which the Platform proposes are difficult to reconcile with logic. Thus, under the heading "*The necessity for Violent Revolution*," we find the following statement: "Progress in modern society, namely, the technical development of capital and the perfection of its political system, strengthens the position of the ruling classes and makes the struggle against them more difficult. Thus progress postpones the decisive moment for the liberation of labour" (page 8). Such an obviously foolish statement should logically have forced the authors of these original thoughts to change the heading of this chapter to: "The Necessity for the Violent Halt of Progress in Modern Society." For their contention is that, if progress continues, the time for the liberation of labour is automatically pushed farther and farther away. And since the liberation of labour is our goal, we must do away with progress.

7. The Theory

The theoretical section of the "Platform" contains nothing original. Despite the "incessant vacillations" and the "distortions of an ideological nature," the authors of the "Platform" present the same theory of Anarchism with the single difference that a number of "distortions of an ideological nature" are introduced by the authors themselves.

Thus, under the heading *The Class Struggle, its Role and Significance*, they say that "in the history of human societies the class struggle has always proved the main factor in determining their form and structure." (page 7). This is a generally accepted truth — only the other way round! It is not the class struggle which determines the form of a society, but the economic structure of a society which determines the form of its class struggle. Society is not the result of a class struggle, but the opposite: the class struggle is the result of the economic structure of society. Accordingly, the other assertion by the authors of the "Platform" that the "socio-political structure of every country is first of all the product of the class struggle" (page 8) sounds rather ridiculous, since — even though the class struggle influences the structure of society — it certainly does not determine it. This theoretical folly, besides misrepresenting Anarchist philosophy, brings the authors of the "Platform" to a new absurdity when they talk of the "universal significance of the class struggle in the life of class societies" (page 8) — a statement doubtless motivated by a desire to define their opposition to those tendencies in Anarchism which reject or minimize the class struggle.

conclusion would have been for the International to be constituted on the principle of the federation of Labour Unions organised according to trades. Instead, it was founded on the association of sections composed of all kinds of different elements. The entire blame for this cannot of course be placed on the International; the absence of historical experience, and the specific conditions in which the association was forced to exist and develop, are clearly understandable reasons. Yet the fact remains that the sectional organisation of the International was undoubtedly one of the main reasons for the downfall and disintegration of that magnificent organisation. The modem Anarchist movement has benefited from its historic experience, and the second International Workingmen's Association, founded in Berlin in 1922, was built on the principle of the unification, not of sections, but of the industrial associations in various countries.

The sectional structure of the International and of its federations fatally reacted on the Anarchist movement in its pure form. What happened was that, when the Anarchists, after the split in the International, organised themselves into a Federalist International, they exchanged the sections for groups, and, because of the decline of the organisation, they did not realise that in this way they exchanged a mass labour movement, permeated with the Anarchist spirit, for a simple movement of Anarchist groups which had little organic contact with the labour movement.

In time the estrangement became increasingly more evident. Anarchism began to lose its practical foothold and turned more and more towards theory. As a result the movement was joined by people who were little, or not at all, connected with the working classes. They were idealists who sincerely sought the liberation of the proletariat but, not having been seasoned in the revolutionary struggle, and seeing the desired liberation unfulfilled during the expected period, they became disillusioned with group efforts, using weapons which might more effectively hasten the desired results. It is in this psychology that we must seek the roots of the Syndical-

ist attitudes which, I am deeply convinced, have done Anarchism a great deal of harm and have hindered its progressive growth as a mass labour movement.

I will continue now the discussion of other problems which were under constant consideration in the International in general, and its federalist sections in particular. I have not available the resolutions of the first Congress on all the items of its agenda. But, since the majority of these issues were also discussed during subsequent Congresses, it is possible, by reference to their records, to outline the program of the International concerning these questions.

Before, however, beginning our exposition of the program, one very important question on the agenda of the second Congress should he dealt with, particularly since it amplifies and clarifies the Labour program already discussed. It is the question which has not only retained its urgency for our own days, but which also forms the basic obstacle to unity in the Anarcho-communist movement, as well as a target for socialist attacks in the dispute over the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The question was formulated in this manner:

> *"Would not the efforts of the Labour associations for the liberation of the fourth estate (the proletariat) lead to the creation of a new class — the fifth estate — whose position under Socialism might be even more terrible than the position of the proletariat under Capitalism?."*

The fact that such a question was raised at all is in itself significant. It shows, firstly, the great maturity in socialist thought of the members of the International and, secondly, it points to their sense of responsibility and caution concerning the solution of complex social problems. This question, I believe, arose within the International partly because some members were propagating the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with which a majority did not agree. The prophets of dictatorship thus made the Internationalists aware of the possibility that the new society, constructed on

into dialectics, into the constant repetition of formulae, or else into apathy, disillusionment and, finally, defection.

Man requires contact with reality; he cannot exist long in mid air. This natural need for activity drives dynamic men to all kinds of deformed "practical" activities; to bomb-throwing in France or unmotivated terror and expropriation in Russia. And how does the rank-and-file Anarchist keep active? He rejects the Parliamentary struggle; he rejects participation in municipal affairs. For many comrades the Trade Unions are not sufficiently revolutionary since they concern themselves with petty fights, and are therefore a danger to Anarchist "purity," while in the Co-operatives these comrades see a bourgeois institution with exploitative tendencies. And all the time the Anarchist groups remain small. The Anarchist must perforce act within a "Torricellian vacuum"; he must be satisfied with voluble debates, with the distribution of pamphlets, newspapers and leaflets; he must keep silent on daily issues — and keep his eyes, while rejecting the world about him, on the final goal towards which the path is still only an abstract concept. Indeed, wherever the larger masses think in concrete terms, Anarchists seem bent on instilling abstractions into them.

What is missing in our movement is a basis of realism, the ability to adjust theory to the practical needs of the workers. That lack, however, is being met by the Syndicalist fractions of Anarchism. Anarcho-syndicalism has expanded the sphere of activity of its members; it has established institutions concerned with the material struggle and with everyday activities. That is the explanation for its success in comparison with Anarcho-communism, in all the countries where it has taken root. And if Anarcho-syndicalism will continue to extend the horizons of public activity for its members, to create more of its own institutions, then its success will grow in the same measure.

evolution of Socialism as a real force in the practical realisation of its ideals.

It is our deep conviction that Anarchism, too, must undergo a similar evolution. The uniformity for which both the "Platform" and the "Reply" strive, each in its own way, is not possible. The result would not be Anarchism, but Anachronism.

The process of the division of Anarchism into factions has been slow. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed for the various sections to crystallize into large and well-defined collective units. Such is the case with Anarcho-communism, which has already split into Anarcho-communism and Anarcho-syndicalism. We exclude discussion here of Anarcho-individualism, which is a typically bourgeois philosophy and is therefore beyond our purview.

An example of logical unification is the *International Workingmen's Association* — the Anarcho-syndicalist International which became possible after the formation in individual countries of homogenous national organisations based on the fundamental theoretical and tactical concepts of Anarchism. All organisations, on joining the International Working Men's Association, accepted the program and the principles of the Anarcho-Syndicalist International, but at the same time its federalist concept gave each individual organisation the opportunity to develop its own program, in conformity with the situation in the country concerned. For the Anarchist movement to live and grow this must remain the guiding principle of organisation.

One of the reasons for the weakness of the Anarchist movement is to be found, therefore, in the still *uncompleted* process of the division of Anarchism into *clearly* defined fractions, groups or "parties." If this seems paradoxical, it is nevertheless a reality.

The second reason for the weakness of the Anarchist movement is its *inability to adapt itself to the realities of life*, which limits its activities exclusively to propaganda. Such an activity can occupy only a few people, for the majority, particularly the rank-and-file members, soon lose interest in pure propaganda. It degenerates

the thesis of the replacement of the State by Labour Unions, might create conditions in which the proletariat would become the ruling class suppressing other classes — for instance, the peasantry. The Congress did not deny such a possibility; it seemed actually to admit it, but, having no alternative, it could only recommend methods which might more or less counteract the possibility of results so undesirable from the viewpoint of true socialism. The Congress passed a resolution in which it stated that, to avoid the formation of a new exploiting hierarchy, it would be necessary for labour unions to be permeated with the ideals of mutual aid and solidarity and for the proletariat to be convinced that a social upheaval must lead to justice and not the creation of new privileges, even for their own class.

At a time when Anarchist thought was being moulded by living experience as a movement of the working masses, such doubts were normal and fully justified, and the decision of the Congress was perfectly natural. When Capitalism had not yet entirely matured and the labour organisations had only begun to function on a revolutionary basis, the members of the Congress could have come to no other decision than to attempt to raise the level of consciousness in the working masses. The need for this remains, today, as strong as ever. But it is no longer the only need.

Now Anarchist thought has become mature and it must, moreover, operate in conditions utterly different from the economic circumstances of those days. Today the question outlined above can arise only for the State Socialists, who strive to establish a class dictatorship in the form of a class State. For Anarchists, who aim at the destruction of the State and its replacement by the federations of productive associations, the question is ridiculous. It is ridiculous because Anarchism, organising society in this manner, involves the entire adult working population in the productive associations, independent of their former social positions, i.e. the classes are destroyed at once and hence there can be no question of class rule. However, a different problem could be raised now: would not the

Communist organisation of society result in the suppression of the individual in a more severe form than under Capitalist individualism?

The question is justified and we cannot deny such a possibility entirely. But society will discover, I believe, sufficiently effective means to prevent the materialization of this possibility. As to the problem of class rule, the Anarcho-communists and the Anarcho-syndicalists differ sharply on this issue. The former insist, obviously in error, that syndicalization would lead to class rule, i.e. to dictatorship. Yet they themselves have nothing to offer in place of the danger they foresee.

To turn to the remaining issues, apart from the labour unions, co-operation in all its forms was a burning issue in the days of the First International, and at the various Congresses a good deal of attention was paid to this movement. The agenda of every Congress contained items either on co-operatives in general or on specific aspects of the movement. At the first Congress, for instance, the following items were discussed: co-operatives, organisation of international credit, mutual aid societies. At the second Congress: how the working classes could utilise, for the purpose of their liberation, the savings deposited in bourgeois and governmental financial institutions. At the third Congress — credit.

Such insistence shows the extent to which the international proletariat of those days was interested in the issue of co-operatives. In our times because of Anarchist efforts to develop positive and practical programs, this question is once again on the agenda. For that reason it is important to learn how it was resolved by our illustrious predecessors.

The decisions of the first Congress concerning this question are not available. At the second Congress, on the question of workers' savings, Charles Longuet reported in favour of organising a Proudhonian-Mutualist system of credit with national labour banks which would provide interest-free loans to the workers. Eccarius suggested that the working co-operatives of artisans and

the Social Revolution." Bakunin also wrote at great length on the question of "The Creativity of Masses and of Organisations."[1]

The only aspect of the problem that remained unclarified was how to proceed during the "Transition Period." It is true that this question has not yet been settled in Anarchist thought, even though Bakunin himself had recognised its importance. But it is not part of the *theoretical program* of Anarchism. It is, rather, a technical, methodological question connected with the practical procedures to be utilised in the establishment of Anarchist Communism.

Thus, we are forced to conclude that the reasons for the weakness of the Anarchist movement and for its disorganised condition are neither the "obscurity in a number of our fundamental ideas" on which the "Reply" insists, nor the "incessant vacillations in the most important questions of theory and tactics," nor the "distortions of an ideological nature" as the "Platform" maintains.

The weakness of the movement, in short, is not the result of the theoretical ambiguity of Anarchism as a socio-political and philosophical theory. The causes have to be sought on another level altogether; they have nothing in common with the fundamental concepts of Anarchism.

Socialism, like Anarchism, passed through a phase of uncertainty, division and formlessness. That was during a period when its protagonists strove, as the authors of the "Platform" now do, for complete unity and uniformity in program and tactics. When such general uniformity proved impossible and even dangerous, there began a process of disintegration and a breakup of Socialism into different factions. Separate parties emerged, with divergent theories, tactics and activities. And that moment ushered in the

[1] Collection of essays by Bakunin published by the Anarcho-syndicalist Publishing House, "Golos Truda," Moscow (five volumes).

6. On the Weakness of the Movement

To maintain, after Bakunin and Kropotkin, that Anarchist ideas are obscure is, to say the least, naive. If the authors of the "Platform" and the "Reply" had chastised the vacillations of individual Anarchists or individual obscure Anarchist minds, one could have agreed with them. But it is impossible — by the expedient process of shifting the burden from sick on to healthy shoulders — to claim obscurity for fundamental Anarchist ideas.

What ideas does the "Reply" consider obscure?

Firstly there is the Conception of Social Revolution. Yet we need only turn to Bakunin to find in his writings a perfectly *clear and definitive* exposition of the meaning of Social Revolution, its manifestations and the road it must travel. Whoever has read his formulations, can no longer speak of obscurity in the Anarchist "conception of the Social Revolution." Similarly, Bakunin provided us with a terse interpretation of the problem of violence, the forms it can take, its use and its limitations.

Even more conclusive is the existing evidence that there was no obscurity in the Anarchist conception of Dictatorship, as claimed by the "Reply." In fact this issue was clarified particularly by the debates between Bakunin and Marx: and the reader might do well to take up the works of Bakunin, particularly his essays on "The State and Anarchy," as well as "The Knouto-Germanic Empire and

the labour unions should use their capital for the organisation of productive associations. The third Congress accepted these proposals in resolutions recommending the establishment of people's banks which would provide the labour organisations with capital.

The English section reported on co-operatives. Without denying the usefulness of co-operative organisations, it indicated a dangerous tendency noticeable in a majority of such bodies in England, which were beginning to develop into purely commercial and capitalist institutions, thus creating the opportunity for the birth of a new class — the working bourgeoisie. Following this report the Congress passed a resolution recommending that the main purpose of the co-operatives should be kept constantly alive — "to wrench from the hands of private capitalists the means of production and to return them to their lawful owners, the productive workers."[1] This, then, was the viewpoint of the International. It paid due respect in this matter to the Proudhonian and Owenite utopias, which to this day are advocated by the social-cooperators and by some Anarchists.

There is no doubt, of course, that co-operatives are most useful institutions. For Anarchists to work in mass co-operatives is as necessary and as useful as to work in trade unions. But this does not mean that co-operation is the magic wand by which the Capitalist structure can be changed into Anarchist Communism. Many Internationalists actually believed that, and hence arose their enthusiastic attitude towards co-operation. Others, like Bakunin, were more far-sighted, realising the great positive part that co-operatives would play in the future structure of the new society, but looking upon them at the present stage with indifference, "The experience of the past twenty years," Bakunin wrote, "a unique experience which reached its widest scope in England, Germany

[1] The Fourth Congress, because of a lack of time, did not consider the question of credit

and France, has proved conclusively that the co-operative system, while undoubtedly containing the essence of the future economic structure, cannot, at the present time under present conditions, liberate or even improve to any considerable extent the living standards of the working people." The latter part of Bakunin's statement has been verified by experience, while the first is just beginning to be confirmed.

Many Anarchists in Spain to this day, if not the majority here, take an uncompromisingly hostile attitude towards co-operatives, and they thus commit the same unpardonable error as did the Russian Anarchists in the period of 1905–6. It is not possible to propose some kind of Anarcho-Cooperativism, but one cannot deny the usefulness of co-operatives to the working population. And apart from all this, one must not forget that co-operatives, e.g. the Christian or workers' co-operatives, are mass organisations, and hence provide a tremendous field for Anarchist propaganda and cultural activity. We should also remember the viewpoint of Bakunin, quoted above, that co-operatives contain the essence of the future economic structure. That is undoubtedly so and, in view of that fact alone, it is not advisable to repeat the errors of the past.

The problem of education, too, was often on the agenda of the Congresses of the First International. The third Congress adopted a resolution on this issue, while the fourth left the discussion of the problem to the following session. Recognising that at the present time the organisation of rational education was impossible, the Congress "invited its sections to organise public courses with a program of scientific, professional and integral education, so as to complement at least partially the totally inadequate education available to workers at present." The Congress considered the reduction of working hours a preliminary and essential condition. In one of his later articles, "Comprehensive Education," Bakunin agreed fully with this resolution. This article, as well as various other papers on this subject, and particularly the works of Robin, laid the foundation for the theory of free labour education which

conclusive enough. And even in the Anarchist movement itself, the "conscious rejection of demagoguery" has not always been predominant. The Gordin manifestoes in the years 1917–18 are an interesting example of demagoguery. The article "Social Democracy in the Viennese Events" (Dielo Truda No. 28) also confutes the statement of the "Reply."

And as for the last cause of the weakness of the movement suggested by the "Reply," namely, the "refusal by Anarchists to use artificially erected organisations and to impose artificial discipline," surely the authors of the "Reply" could not have realised what they were saying. Did they not themselves maintain that all artificial methods resulted only "in the temporary strength of political parties," a force "futile in substance?" Should the Anarchist movement, then, deny its own rejection, based on principle, and try to become strong in this manner? But if such artificial means are only "temporary" and "futile in substance," then their rejection should not be considered a source of weakness. Whence all this confusion?

Thus the conclusion is inevitable that, of all the causes advanced by the "Reply," only one remains intact — the same as that suggested by the "Platform" — "obscurity in a number of our fundamental ideas."

use artificially-erected organisations and to impose artificial discipline."

We agree that the deficiencies in the Anarchist movement may be caused by the above-mentioned "fundamental" causes. The first three, however, are external factors; they function outside the movement and can only temporarily retard its growth. But it seems hardly possible that there are greater difficulties today in the path of disseminating our ideas than, say, fifty years ago. It is equally difficult to believe that the "intellectual level of the present-day masses" can be lower than in "pre-war" time; on the contrary, it seems certain that the intellectual level of the masses has risen considerably in comparison with the past. Or can it be that the authors of the "Reply" believe Anarchism to be more easily acceptable by the backward masses? Generally speaking, in any case, all these factors react equally on other Socialist ideologies, and yet among them the picture is different from that in our movement.

The same can be said about "repression." There were repressions in earlier days as well, and they were used not only against the Anarchists. The German Anarcho-syndicalists always walked a path of thorns, particularly during the war, yet today they are incomparably stronger than they were before the war. It is strange to maintain that a struggle fought by a conscious revolutionary movement and necessarily evoking repression should now be considered a reason for the weakness of the movement.

To consider the "rejection of demagoguery" a cause of weakness is to admit indirectly, that demagoguery is a real source of power. And if the "Reply" considers the "conscious rejection of demagoguery" a source of weakness, then indeed there can be only one conclusion: to turn to demagoguery and thus become strong. It is now however known generally that, though demagoguery may assure temporary successes, it has never yet assured permanent power for those who use it. On the contrary, the final result has always been tragic. The Bolshevik experience on this score should be

is today accepted by all cultured people. And for that the International deserves much credit. A resolution of the second Congress excluded the State from the sphere of education and assured full freedom to education, and instruction. The interference of the State was to be permitted only when the father of the child could not provide the funds needed for its education.

As to Statehood itself, the International began to repudiate it definitively only after the seceding sections had organised themselves into the Federalist International. Until that secession, it could not decide finally to dissociate itself from this pernicious concept; this irresolution, of course, would not have been maintained without the influence of Marx, although the Anarchists themselves were at first none too clear on the subject, if not in principle, at least in form.

As for the political struggle, the International — right up to the split at the Hague Congress in 1872 — stood against activity on parliamentary and political party lines. At the Lausanne Congress it adopted a resolution which said that "since the absence of political freedom in a country presents an obstacle to the social enlightenment of the people and the liberation of the proletariat, the Congress declares: (1) that the social liberation of the workers is indivisible from their political liberation and (2) that the establishment of political freedom is the first, and unconditional necessity in each country."

While it carried such a resolution, the Congress nevertheless reacted negatively to participation in the political struggle; instead it continued to function on an economic plane alone. And when Marx and his followers at the Hague Congress decided to add to the statutes a resolution concerning the political activities of the working classes, the split occurred. The Anarchists and their followers preferred to stand on their old position, and to advocate gaining political freedom by means of the economic struggle.

One further question remains to be discussed — that of land ownership. Thereafter, we shall be able to turn to an analysis of

the fundamental theses of the International and its statements of principle as expressed in the Preamble to the Statutes, as well as to an examination of its organisational concepts. The question of land ownership was considered at the Basel Congress in 1869, the fourth Congress — the only one at which Bakunin was present. In face of opposition by the Marxists, this Congress carried a resolution on the socialisation of land and the abolition of the right of inheritance. As to the first question, the International voted for the abolition of private ownership and the establishment of collective ownership in land. When, however, it came to considering the methods of organising agriculture, the Congress had no unified views. On this second question a majority of thirty-two, against twenty-three Marxists, voted for Bakunin's resolution whose concluding sentence read: "The Congress votes for the complete and radical abolition of the right of inheritance, considering this to be one of the essential conditions for the liberation of labour." This was the first collision of the two trends in the International, which were represented by the personalities of Bakunin and Marx.

Now let us examine the statutes of the International. Its entire philosophy and all its fundamental principles, accepted as articles of faith by all convinced Socialists of the world to this day, are expressed in the Preamble to these Statutes. The declarations are indisputable and their formulation is concise, admirable and expressive. They are:

1. The liberation of the working classes must be the task of the working classes themselves.

2. The struggle for the liberation of the workers must in no case be a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but for the establishment of equal rights and obligations for all and for the abolition of all class rule

3. The economic subjugation of workers to the owners of the means of production, which are the source of life, is the cause

sible when the vacillations have ceased or, at least, when they have ceased to act on a large (or even "incessant") scale.

Unraveling further the theses of the "Platform," we come to the logical conclusion that the real cause of "the general chronic disorganisation" is indeed the "vacillations in the most important questions of theory and tactics," and that all other failings are no more than consequences of this cause. It may be that the authors of the "Platform" had intended somewhat different results. But, having been caught in the labyrinth of contradictions where cause and effect become confused, they concluded with a hotchpotch of words that can inspire little serious attention.

And if, in turn, the "several Russian Anarchists" had attempted in their "Reply" to conduct a really serious analysis of the causes of the deficiencies in the Anarchist movement, then they would not have rushed in with their declaration of "disagreement" with the conclusions of the "Platform." For, in the final analysis, we find that the fundamental failing indicated by the "Platform," namely "the incessant vacillations in the most important questions of theory and tactics," is also brought forward by the "Reply," "Obscurity in a number of our fundamental ideas," is the way the authors of the "Reply" express it. The difference is in formulation, not in essence. For, if in Anarchism there are indeed "vacillations" or "obscurity," then surely neither program, tactics nor organisation can be erected on such insecure foundations. Yet, while the "Platform" simply ignores the vacillations and attempts to build on the shaky foundations, the "Reply" believes more logically that the "establishment of a serious program and organisation is impossible without first achieving the liquidation of theoretical vacillations." (Page 5).

In addition to the "obscurity of our fundamental ideas," the "Reply" lists a number of other reasons for the deficiencies in the Anarchist movement, "Difficulty of gaining acceptance for Anarchist ideas in contemporary society," "the intellectual level of the present-day masses," "cruelty and total repression," "conscious Anarchist rejection of demagoguery," "refusal by Anarchists to

5. Diagnosis and Treatment

The "Group of Russian Anarchists Abroad" emerged in the role of physician to the ailing Anarchist movement. None would dispute the fact that the movement was indeed suffering from "general chronic disorganisation." All were agreed on the symptoms; but there were considerable disagreements as to the fundamental causes of the ailment, as well as the cures which would logically follow a determination of these causes.

The authors of "Platform," for instance, considered a number of causes, the most important of which was the "absence in the Anarchist world of organisational principles and organisational relationships." Yet, in the introduction to the "Platform," they pointed out that this absence was not itself a cause, but merely the result of another cause! They maintained that "disorganisation itself is rooted in distortions of an ideological nature, in the falsified concept of the personal element in Anarchism and its identification [whose — Anarchism's or that of the concept of the personal element?] with irresponsibility." When one attempts to unravel the unruly mass of syllogisms on cause and effect, the conclusion is inevitable, deriving as it does from the position of the "Platform" itself, that the most important reasons for the disorganisation in the Anarchist movement are the "distortions of an ideological nature."

This conclusion, however, turns out to be quite inconclusive, for the "Platform" also maintains that in Anarchism there are "incessant vacillations in the most important questions of theory and tactics." If that is true, how then can any kind of "organisation" or "organisational relationship" be expected? They only become pos-

of serfdom in all its forms, of social misery, spiritual degeneration and political dependency.

4. The economic liberation of the workers is the great goal to which all political movements must be subordinated.

5. All efforts up to the present to realise this great task have remained unsuccessful because of a lack of solidarity among the workers of various trades in each country, and because of the absence of brotherly unity and organisation among the working classes of different countries.

6. The liberation of labour is not a local or national task, but a social problem involving all countries where the modern structure exists, and its solution depends on practical and theoretical co-operation among the more progressive countries.

7. The working class, which is arousing new hopes in its true regeneration in the more industrialised countries of Europe, issues a solemn warning against a falling back into the old errors and calls immediately for the unification of all movements which, so far, have been divided.

8. All organisations and individuals, who are members of the International, recognise truth, justice and morality as the basic principles for their behaviour towards each other and towards all peoples without difference of race, creed or nationality.

9. They consider it their duty to demand the rights of man and citizen not only for themselves but for all who fulfil their obligations. There are no rights without obligations; there are no obligations without rights.

Such was the program of the International — the philosophy of the mass labour movement which has not been rejected to this day

by a single Anarchist, and which lies at the root of the teachings of Bakunin, of the Jura Federation and of Kropotkin. The same is not true of the Marxists, who soon departed from certain concepts of the International. The first to do so was Marx himself, and in that way he was responsible for the split in the International.

What were the organisational principles of the International? Their examination will conclude this outline of its program, and of the program of the Anarchist-Collectivists, i.e. the Bakuninists. The statutes of the International, accepted at the first Congress, assigned no administrative rights to the General Council. The only right assigned to it was that to change the location of the following Congress, but not its schedule. The Council, therefore, was not the central administrative organ but only a liaison and correspondence bureau and its members were elected by the Congress. The individual sections were independent of the Council and had the right to their own programs and constitutions, as long as these were not in contradiction with the general principles of the adopted statutes. Each section had the right to elect, from among its members, correspondents to the General Council of the organisation, and it paid dues according to its membership to cover the expenses of the Council. Finally, each section had the right to send one delegate to the Congress, irrespective of the number of its members, but sections counting more than 500 had the right to send additional delegates for each 500 members. Each delegate to the Congress, however many sections he might represent, had one vote.

It is interesting to note that, at the fourth Congress, there was evidence, on the one hand, of a tendency to adapt the structure of the International to the imagined structure of the future society, while, on the other hand, the Congress, under Bakunin's leadership, assigned administrative authority to the General Council. Ironically, it was by using this new authority at the following Congress that Marx managed to settle accounts with Bakunin himself and his friends.

the labour movements in a number of countries, was only a "trivial fact," an accidental episode. Anarchism in the Latin countries, where for long years the Anarchist viewpoint prevailed, was but an incident, without any significance. Anarchism in those countries where the revolutionary Syndicalist organisations are well developed, directly or indirectly under the influence of Anarchist ideas, is not considered by the authors of the "Platform" a worthwhile factor in the growth of the labour movement … again, it is only a "trivial fact, an episode."

This type of evaluation of all pre-"Platform" Anarchism is too narrow and ludicrous to be discussed at length. However painful it may be for the authors of the "Platform," the Anarchist movement existed long before they had made their appearance.

been just a "trivial fact," as the "Platform" insists, but a powerful factor!

3. *Solidity of Anarchism.* If the truth of Anarchism has been demonstrated, its concepts must perforce be definitive and clear. Is it not then time to stop chastising Anarchism for "incessant vacillations in the sphere of the most elementary questions of theory and tactics"? If, however, these vacillations are a fact, then Anarchism is as yet ambiguous and not distinguished either by logic or clarity. Logic and vacillations are not consistent with each other.

4. *Integrity of Anarchist Positions in the Social Revolution.* Again this would contradict the supposedly existing vacillations. If Anarchist positions in the social Revolution are marked by both integrity and solidity, then why all this hue and cry? And, on the other hand. how could "solidity and integrity" call forth not one, but several programs in which the Anarchist theses of social Revolution are not identical and, in fact, often differ sharply? But if the authors of the "Platform" express such deep anxiety over the need for an organisation which might "determine a political and tactical course for Anarchism," it shows, indeed, their conviction that there does not yet exist full "solidarity and integrity" in the Anarchist program. Why, then, do they state the opposite?

The repudiation of logic and common sense in the "Platform" is no less significant than the pseudo truths proclaimed by its authors, But all, contradictions and repudiations have one common origin: ignorance of the history of our movement, or, more correctly, the notion that the history of our movement was ushered in by the "Platform" … and that chaos and ignorance reigned before its proclamation. To these self-proclaimed "pioneers," Anarchism in the days of the First International, when it had captured

On the question of permitting the existence of chairmen in labour institutions and organisations, the Congress adopted the following resolution:

> *"Whereas it is unworthy for a labour organisation to retain in its midst a monarchist and authoritarian principle by permitting the existence of a chairman (even if the latter has no powers), the Congress invites all sections and labour organisations who are members of the International to abolish the concept of chairmanship in their midst."*

At the same time another resolution, for which Bakunin and his friends voted, assigned to the General Council great administrative powers. The illogicality of the Anarchists on this point can be explained by the fact that Bakunin believed the Council to be more revolutionary than many of the sections. The powers granted by this resolution were as follows:

> *"The General Council has the right to accept sections into the International, or to refuse acceptance until the next general Congress. The General Council has also the right to close down or to dissolve old sections.*
>
> *"In case of conflict between individual sections of whatever country, the General Council is appointed arbiter until the next Congress which alone has authority to make a final decision."*

In the course of three years, the Council abused these rights to such an extent that it aroused strong protest on the part of many sections which were prepared to abolish the General Council altogether. Some of them went even further; they denied the need for any statutes in the organisation as a whole. Bakunin's reaction to this tendency is rather interesting. In a letter to Albert Richard, he remarked:

"You write, my dear friend, that you are an enemy of all constitutions and you maintain that they are good for nothing but the diversion of children. I do not fully share your views on this point. Superfluous regimentation is loathsome indeed, and I believe, as you do, that 'responsible people' must themselves mark out a course for their behaviour and must not deviate from it.

"However, let us agree on one thing. To assure some unity of action, in my view essential even among the most responsible of men who strive for one and the same goal, certain conditions and certain specific rules, equally binding on all, are required. There must be agreements and understandings, frequently renewed. Otherwise, if everyone were to act only according to his own judgment, even the most earnest men could, and surely would, come to a point when, with the best of intentions, they would actually hinder and paralyze each other. The result would be disharmony instead of the harmony and calm to which we all aspire. We must know how, when and where to find each other, and to whom to turn so that we may get the co-operation of all. A small unit, well organised, has greater value than one that is larger, but disorganised and ill-adapted."

Thus, on the issue of organisation, Bakunin and the Anarchists committed, and tolerated, an unforgivable mistake — a retreat from fundamental federalist principles. And the sad results were not slow in making their appearance. This experience proves that one must not sacrifice fundamental principles even in the interests of realising the best intentions.

If we add to the exposition already given the declaration adopted by the Bakuninists when they established the Federalist International at the Congress of St. Imier, a full account will have been

determine the relationship which must, of necessity arise between socialised industry and private-capitalist land management. Yet a good many problems concerning trade, finance, banks, etc. would develop from this admitted co-existence.

This confusion becomes even more apparent when the authors of the "Platform" declare: "It is significant that, despite the power, logic and irrefutability of the Anarchist idea, despite the solidity and integrity of Anarchist positions in the social revolution … despite all this the Anarchist movement has remained weak, and in the history of the working class struggle it has been but a trivial fact, an incident, never a dominant factor."

It is interesting to note that the incredible confusion and absurdity of this collection of principles and arguments went unnoticed by those Anarchist publications which were primarily concerned with the problems and arguments presented by the "Platform." Yet, even on first reading, the "truths" proclaimed by the "Platform" are transparent in their folly and their almost comical inconsistencies. Let us classify these "truths" under their most important headings.

1. *The Power of Anarchism.* The symbol of power of a socio-political idea is the number of its adherents, the depth and extent of sympathy it commands. Accordingly, the power of an idea is indissolubly bound with the strength of the movement serving this idea. Where there is strength — there can be no weakness. If Anarchism is strong, then it is not weak. The authors of the "Platform." however, managed to maintain that Anarchism is both strong and weak, that water can at once be hot and cold! They confused vitality with power.

2. *The Irrefutability of Anarchism.* No-one will deny that two and two make four. It is an accepted truth. Hence, the acceptance of an axiom implies general agreement. Since, in the opinion of the "Platform," Anarchism is irrefutable, it is thus automatically generally accepted. If so, it could never have

4. The General Situation

The "Platform" was thus one of many products in the Anarchist world of the process of intellectual fermentation after the first World War, and in particular after the Russian Revolution. It is, however, possible to state at once that the crystallization of this process into a "Platform" was of a rather formless kind. Both by its manner of stating the questions, and by its method of solving them, the "Platform" was incapable of providing a unifying leadership either for the Anarchist movement in general or for the Anarcho-communist groups in particular. Even if one were to admit that the Anarcho-communists could have become united on such a program, the unity would have been broken on the very first attempt to deal with the omissions in which the "Platform" abounds. For its constructive part is so primitive that it attacks only such problems as production, food supply, land and the protection of the Revolution, and it ignores the problems of transportation (particularly the free movement of people), statistics, living conditions, religion, education, family, marriage, sanitary and hygienic services, forestry, roads and highways, shipping, crime and punishment, labour and health insurance, and many others, including questions arising out of the general situation of a revolutionary country encircled by international capitalism.

The "Platform" suffered from yet another important failing: confusion. To take one instance, the authors, realising the impossibility of the simultaneous communisations of industry and agriculture, and the retardedness of the latter in comparison with the former, drew no conclusions from this realisation and made no attempt to

given of the Anarchist movement in the days of the First International, both before and after the cleavage in that organisation.

The text of this declaration will be quoted below. First, however, we should discuss the resolutions of the Congress. This is essential because the resolutions and declaration together form the program on which the Anarchists conducted their activities after the rift in the International and until the decline of its Federalist section, i.e. until 1879 and a little beyond.

The first resolution was concerned with organisational principles. It stated that the autonomy and independence of labour federations and sections was a fundamental condition for the liberation of the workers. Further, the resolution granted the Congress no lawgiving and executive rights, conceding an advisory role only. The resolution also rejected the idea that a minority must submit to the views of the majority. The second resolution maintained that, in case of an attempt upon the freedom of a federation or section by the majority of any Congress, or by a General Council established by that majority, all other federations and sections must declare themselves in solidarity with the attacked organisation.

The fourth resolution dealt with the framework for "the resistance of labour," i.e. the economic struggle of the proletariat. This resolution postulated the impossibility of achieving any substantial improvement in the living standards of the workers under Capitalism; it considered strikes important weapons in the struggle, but had no illusions about their economic results.

Strikes, to the Federalists, were a means of intensifying the cleavage between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The third resolution, which I regard as the Declaration. really represents the program of the organisation, and for that reason it will be quoted in full.

> *"Whereas the attempt to force on the proletariat a uniform political program and tactic, a single way to full social liberation, is as absurd as the claims of*

reaction; whereas no one has the authority to deny the autonomous federations and sections their unquestionable right to decide independently and to employ the political tactics they consider most suitable. and believing that any such attempts at denial would lead tragically to the most outrageous dogmatism; whereas the aspirations of the proletariat can have no purpose but the construction of unconditionally free economic organisations and federations, based on equality and the labour of all and entirely independent of all political government; whereas these organisations and federations can be the result only of the unflinching action of the proletariat itself, the trade unions of artisans and the autonomous communes; whereas every political organisation can be the organ of domination for the benefit of one class only, rather than for the masses as a whole, and whereas the proletariat, if it decided to seize power, might itself become the ruling and exploiting class, the Congress, meeting at St. Imier, declares:

1. That the destruction of all political power is the first obligation of the proletariat;

2. That the creation of ostensibly temporary, revolutionary political power for the realisation of such destruction can be only a new betrayal and would prove as dangerous for the proletariat as all other governments existing at the present time;

3. That, rejecting all compromise in the realisation of the social revolution, proletarians of all lands must establish the solidarity of revolutionary action free from all bourgeois politics."

With this resolution I am concluding my examination and analysis of the Anarchist movement in its first period. I trust that I have

dicalist organisation of Sweden, under the editorship of the Anarchist Albert Jensen, "Die Internationale," publication of the German Anarcho-syndicalists, edited by Augustin Souchy, the weekly, "La Protesta," of the Argentine Anarchists, and others, while it is of course impossible to enumerate the many individual articles covering these problems.

Such, then, was the temper of the times. The very air was filled with ideas of an organisational and constructive nature. And the "Platform" issued by "A Group of Russian Anarchists Abroad" in 1927 was therefore not a cause, but a result of the agitated state of Anarchist minds. It is thus all the more surprising that this "Platform" should have been credited with all kinds of achievements for which it was not responsible.[11]

[11] Particularly interesting in this connection is an article by M. Korn in "Dielo Truda" (No. 29, 1928) extravagantly praising the achievements of the "Platform." In the opinion of Comrade Korn, "the program has inspired our groups ..." In reality, of course, it was the inspiration in our groups which called forth the "Platform." Further, Comrade Korn believes that the "Platform": "raised a number of fundamental questions..." Yet it was obvious that all the questions — as well as many others — had been formulated long before the "Platform's" proclamation. Continuing his extraordinary series of discoveries, Comrade Korn considers that the "Platform": "placed squarely before every Anarchist the issue of responsibility for the fate of the movement in the sense of its practical influence on the future path of events ..." It is not, of course, very difficult to raise questions without answering them. And even these questions had already been raised by Anarcho-syndicalists in Russia and abroad at a time when the most imminent authors of the "Platform" were either indifferent to the issues involved or had only begun to learn, after their arrival abroad, the first lessons of personal and collective responsibility to the movement.

The German Anarcho-syndicalists paid and continue to pay a great deal of attention to the problems of construction. Their publication "Der Syndikalist" carried many articles discussing the creative tasks of the Revolutionary proletariat.[9] The conferences and meetings of the International Workingmen's Association concerned themselves particularly with organisational and structural problems. And at almost all the national conferences of the Anarcho-syndicalists, or Revolutionary Syndicalist organisations in Western Europe, these questions were continually on the agenda. For instance, at the Berne conference called on September 16, 1922, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Congress at St. Imier, the following questions were debated:

1. How to defeat and destroy the old order.
2. How to prevent the downfall of the Revolution as a result of the creation of new authority.
3. How to assure the continuance and reconstruction of economic life. Bertoni, Malatesta, Fabbri and many other comrades participated in this discussion.

Then there were the efforts of the Russian Anarcho-syndicalists and Anarchists abroad. The "Rabotchi Put," published in Berlin, was devoted almost exclusively to the issues of construction. In the pages of "Golos Truzhenika" (Voice of the Working Man), publication of the IRM, these issues were discussed both editorially and by contributing Anarchist comrades. The same is true of the "Arbeiterfreund" (Friend of Labour), published in Paris.

Many other publications were almost entirely concerned with finding solutions to the problems of building a new society after the social revolution. There were the journal "La Voix du Travail" (The Voice of Labour) in Paris,[10] "Syndicalisme," organ of the Syn-

[9] See also the pamphlet by Rudolph Rocker and Barvota.

[10] Organ of the MlR, later organ of the Revolutionary Syndicalist Confederation of labour in France.

succeeded in emphasizing, not all, but the most significant positive and negative features, achievements and failures of the movement in the days of the First International. It is apparent that the general character of the movement is very similar to that current in contemporary Anarchism which has developed under the name of Anarcho-syndicalism. Many of its basic principles lay at the root of the so-called Romance Syndicalism, which is undoubtedly the immediate heir of the First International, although, of course, it grew in different historic and economic conditions, which resulted in some inevitable differences between these two tendencies in the labour movement.

Almost simultaneously with the development in the West of the International, an analogous movement emerged and unfolded at the opposite end of Europe, in Russia. It differed from the International in the same way as the historical and economic conditions varied. In Europe, owing to the evolution of Capitalism, the proletariat was already an established fact. In Russia, however, the proletariat was then only in its infancy, and many observers doubted whether Russia would develop a proletarian class at all, since they saw the path of economic development there as entirely different from that of Western Europe.

Russia in those days was an enormous peasant ocean, and for that reason the revolutionary elements based their activities primarily on the peasantry. They gave the proletariat little thought. Similarly, political conditions differed sharply from those of Western Europe. There political liberties already existed. Whereas in Russia, after the short lived "liberalism" of Alexander II had come a dark, oppressive era of Asiatic despotism. In addition, the peasants themselves had only a few years previously ceased to be actual serfs.

In such circumstances, a revolutionary organisation emerged among young people who had originally banded together in small cultural groups, and it was they who were responsible for the most magnificent and heroic epoch of the Russian rev-

olutionary movement. This movement is known by the name of "Populism" (Narodichestvo — the movement of "going to the people" or "Zemlovolchistvo" — combining the words "Zemlya" (Land) and "Volya" (Liberty), the name of their organisation and publication, Land and Liberty. Later, the movement was also called "Narodnovolchistvo" (Populist Socialism).

The history of this movement is complex and colourful, but we unfortunately cannot dwell on it, since it would take us too far afield from the main theme. For that reason we shall restrict ourselves only to an examination of the program and the tactical bases of the movement. In the beginning, two tendencies fought each other within this movement — the Lavrovists and the Bakuninists. But the struggle did not last long. The Bakuninists soon became the dominant element, and Anarchism became the program. It is this Anarchism that we shall examine. This is not an easy task since, so far, there exist no general reviews, no historical researches or summaries on this question. It is therefore necessary to utilise scattered and fragmentary facts, memoirs and newspapers of that period.

The first Anarchist organ in the Russian language was published in 1868, not in Russia, but abroad. Its name was "Dielo Truda," and its editor was Bakunin. From its second issue, however, it fell into the hands of Nicholas Utin, and ceased henceforth to be Anarchist. Since this publication was not particularly important for the Russian movement, which began its development several years later, we shall not discuss it. The first Russian anarchist organ on Russian territory was the magazine "Natchalo" (Beginning) which ceased publication with its fourth issue. It was followed by the publication "Zemlya i Volya" (Land and Liberty), which played a tremendously important part in the Russian revolutionary movement, and this we shall discuss.

All revolutionary activity in the seventies of the last century was based on one — in my view — mistaken view of the Russian people — an idea still held to this day by many Anarchists. This idea was that Anarchist tendencies were natural to the Russian people. In

own program on that subject.[3] And, the first conference of "Anarchist Organisations in the Ukraine" (NABAT), which met in the interval between the first and second conferences of the Anarcho-syndicalists, considered all the points postulated almost ten years later in the "Platform' of 1927.[4] And in the same year of 1918, "The First Central Soviet Technical School" issued a declaration covering the ground of the question's which are now still under discussion. The conference of NABAT in 1919 again undertook the elaboration of organisational and structural questions.[5] And a proclamation of the "Anarcho-universalists" in 1921 suggested answers to all fundamental problems of construction and activities in the first structural period.[6]

Apart from these collective efforts to solve the problems of construction, individuals like Peter Kropotkin attempted to visualize the future society. During 1918, in "Bread and freedom." Kropotkin described the character of a future city Commune, and, as a result of the experiences of the Russian Revolution, he raised a number of vital questions and theses new to Anarchists.[7] His statement "We are not so rich as we thought" takes Anarchism into the field of a "complementary idea," since the issue is no longer that "in destroying I shall create," but "in creating I shall destroy." Moreover, Kropotkin's "Modern Anarchism,"[8] was of equally great importance and provided a stimulus to thought in the direction of constructive planning.

This work of constructive planning, begun in Russia. soon spread over the frontiers and flooded the entire Anarchist world.

[3] See "Resolutions," 1918, Publications of the Secretariat.

[4] See "Declaration and Resolutions', 1922; Argentina. "Resolutions of the first Congress 1919. publications NABAT.

[5] See Declaration, 1918, publication of First Central Sovtech School.

[6] See Declaration of the Moscow organisation of Anarcho-universalists, to the 8th Session of the Soviets, Moscow, 1921.

[7] See Kropotkin's foreword to "Bread and Freedom," 1919, Moscow, Publication "Golos truda."

[8] See Labour's Path (Rabotchi Put).

number of Anarchists, who had been active in the Syndicalist movement, welded together the futures of the two movements, and under their influence Syndicalism absorbed increasingly the ideas of Anarchist Communism and Federalism, so that it could no longer be called anything but Anarcho-syndicalism. For instance, the book by Pataud and Pouget, "How to Achieve the Social Revolution," was written from the Anarchist viewpoint — an opinion, incidentally, verified by Peter Kropotkin's account of book.[1]

From the beginning of the twentieth century, most Russian Anarchist publications issued abroad — like "Bread and Freedom" (Khlieb i Volya) and the pamphlets connected with it; like "The Stormy Petrel" (Burevestnik), "The World of Labour" (Rabotchi Mir), "The Voice of Labour" (Golos Truda) , paid a good deal of attention to constructive Anarchism.

With the Russian Revolution of 1917, problems of construction began to dominate thought in Anarchist circles not only in Russia, but everywhere else in the world. The first among them to pursue the line of constructive Anarchism were the Anarcho-syndicalists. The pages of their publications ("Voice of Labour," "Free Voice of Labour," "World of Labour" and others) were filled with articles on this subject. They carried a bold campaign against the chaotic, formless, disorganised and indifferent attitude then rampant among the Anarchists — a standpoint which aroused a great deal of hostility towards them.

The first two conferences of the Anarcho-syndicalists in 1918 set forth clearly and in considerable detail the political and economic characteristics of the first stages of the new social structure.[2] The "Northern Regional Congress of Anarchists which met soon after the first conference of the Anarcho-syndicalists, formulated its

[1] Foreword to "Bread and Freedom" by Peter Kropotkin.

[2] See "Instead of a Program," 1922, Berlin, Publications of the Foreign Bureau.

the first issue of "Natchalo" we read: *"The Russian people, because of specific historic conditions, are Anarchist-minded, they have not yet, as have other nations, adopted statist ideas and bourgeois instincts. Despite the principle of private property, which is sanctified by law, they demand a general redistribution of land and, notwithstanding their age old Tartar yoke of state and feudalism, they still dream of a life free and unfettered. Their philosophy of life is expressed and represented by the formula 'Land and Liberty' — a formula that is fundamentally socialist."*

It was on this premise that the movement based its entire program and its tactical efforts. Since the people could expect nothing from the government, *"they had only one escape from their serf-like destitute existence, violent overthrow of the existing order in the form of a social revolution."* The struggle of the Russian people would expand into a whole series of revolts, both now and in the future, and the Revolutionaries would decide their own attitude towards the revolts. There could, of course, be no other attitude than, that of approval. And the logical conclusion was — to go among the people and arouse and prepare them for rebellion. Local outbreaks, multiplying and spreading, would grow into one tremendous rebellion — the social revolution which would make possible the realisation of the following program:

1. The State based on privilege would be replaced by federations established by means of the free association of autonomous communes without any coercion by a central authority.

2. Land and the means of production are the property of the entire people.

3. The workman is the only owner of the fruits of his labour.

4. The exchange of the latter to ensure equal distribution is the duty of the federated village communes and the Trade Unions.

5. Complete social and political equality, unconditional freedom of conscience, speech, scientific research, association and meetings.

The Revolutionaries believed that the realisation of this program was within sight; events were moving quickly and Socialists must prepare themselves for the future. Like the Internationalist in Europe, which considered the Trade Unions to be the economic organisations which would take the place of government, the Russian populists put forward the village commune, the 'Obschtchina'. "The village commune," they said, "which, is a form of economic association evolved in the process of Russian history, contains within itself the seeds of the destruction of the State and the bourgeois world." Hence the demand for a federation of village communes.

Revolutionary reality soon led to armed resistance to the government, to terrorism; and the going to the people to disillusionment with the economic struggle and the peasantry. Some revolutionaries, indeed, began to push the social revolution into the background, while they emphasized constitutional demands.

The same thing that had happened in the International was happening in Russia. The proposition of a political program and a tactic of political struggle led to a cleavage, which destroyed the entire movement despite the brilliant and fascinating political fireworks to which the party of "Narodnaya Volya" (The People's Will) gave expression in its titanic terrorist struggle. The split occurred in the middle of 1879, and by 1882 the movement was already crushed and strangled.

3. The Constructive Period of Anarchism

The first two periods in the development of Socialism and Anarchism — periods of "utopian" and "scientific" Socialism — were followed at the end of the Nineteenth Century by the era of constructive Socialism. Until that time all attempts to consider the form of the future society, and all questions related to its structure, had been branded sarcastically as premature and Utopian.

It is, however, worth noting that Bakunin himself had been concerned with the problem of construction, in the belief that one must not destroy the Old without having at least a basic plan for the New. The principal factors in the process of construction, in Bakunin's view, would be the International of industrial communes, supplemented by agricultural associations.

The advent of the Paris Commune forced people to pay even more attention to the constructive aspects of Socialism. And, during the entire period of its existence, the first International was at work clarifying the tasks of the future society. At its Brussels Congress in 1874, the delegates discussed reports by the Jura Federation and by César De Paepe on "public services in the future society." The report of César De Paepe embraced not only all the issues formulated in the "Platform" — fifty years later — but also a number of others which are missing in the "Platform," yet which should not be ignored.

Revolutionary Syndicalism was born at the end of the Nineteenth Century. Its appearance in, the arena of history marks a great victory for the constructive tendencies of Anarchism. A