

Principles and Organization of the International Revolutionary Society.

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I. *Object of the Society*

1. The object of this society is the triumph of the Principle of the Revolution in the world, and consequently the radical dissolution of all religious, political, economic and social organizations and institutions presently existing, and the reconstitution of first European society, and then the society of the world, on the basis of *liberty, reason, justice and labor*.
2. Such a work could not be of short duration. The association is thus established for an indefinite time and will cease to exist only on the day when the triumph of its principle in the entire world will be its reason to do so.

II. *Revolutionary Catechism.*

1. *Denial of the existence of a real, otherworldly, personal God, and consequently also of all revelation and all divine intervention in the affairs of the world and humanity. Abolition of the service and cult of the Divinity.*
2. Replacing the worship of God with *respect and love for humanity*, we affirm *human reason* as the sole criterion of truth; *human conscience*, as the basis of justice; and *individual and collective liberty*, as the sole creator of order for humanity.
3. *Liberty* is the absolute right of every man or woman, having reached majority, to seek no other sanction for their actions than their own conscience and their own reason, to determine them only by their own will, and consequently to be responsible for them first only with regard to themselves, and then with regard to the society of which they are a part, but only in so far as they freely consent to be a part of it.
4. It is not true that the liberty of one individual is limited by that of all the others. Man is only really free to the extent that his liberty, freely recognized and represented as in a mirror by the free consent of those others, finds confirmation and boundless expansion in their liberty. Man is truly free only among equally free men; and as he is free only by virtue of being human, the slavery of one single human being on earth, being an offense against the very principle of humanity, is a negation of the liberty of all.
5. The *liberty* of each is thus realizable only in the equality of all. The realization of liberty through equality, by right and in fact, is *justice*.
6. There exists only one single dogma, one single law, one single moral basis for me: *it is liberty*. To respect the liberty of one's fellows, *that is duty*; to love, aid, and serve them, *that is virtue*.
7. *Absolute exclusion of every principle of authority and of the Reason of State.—Human society, having been originally a fact of nature, prior to liberty and to the awakening of human thought, later became a religious fact, organized according to the principle of divine and human authority, must today reconstruct itself on the basis of liberty, which must from now on become the sole constitutive principle of political and economic organization. Order in society must be the result of the greatest possible development of all the local, collective and individual liberties.*

8. Consequently, the political and economic organization of social life must begin—no longer as today from high to low, and from the center to the circumference, according to the principle of unity and forced centralization—*but from low to high, and from the circumference to the center*, according to the principle of free association and free federation.
9. *Political organization.* It is impossible to determine a concrete, universal, and obligatory norm for the internal development and political organization of the nations; the existence of each nation being subordinated to a mass of different historical, geographical, and economic conditions, which will never allow us to establish a model of organization equally good and acceptable for all. Furthermore, any such enterprise, absolute devoid of practical utility, would detract from the richness and spontaneity of life which flourishes only in infinite diversity and, what is more, would be contrary to the very principle of liberty. There are, however, some *absolute, essential conditions*, in the absence of which the practical realization and organization of liberty will be forever impossible.

These conditions are:

- A. *The radical abolition of all official religions and of every Church privileged, or simply protected, funded and maintained by the State.* Absolute liberty of conscience and propaganda for each, with the unlimited ability to raise as many temples as they please to whatever Gods they have, and to pay and support the priests of their religion.
- B. The churches, considered as religious corporations, should never enjoy any of the political rights granted to the productive associations; nor could they inherit, nor possess goods in common, except for their houses or places of worship, and could never concern themselves with the education of children;—the only object of their existence being the systematic negation of morality and liberty, and the practice of a lucrative form of witchcraft.
- C. *Abolition of monarchy – Republic.*
- D. *Abolition of classes, ranks, privileges, and all sorts of distinction.—Absolute equality of political rights for all men and women; universal suffrage.*
- E. *Abolition, dissolution, and social, political, judiciary, bureaucratic and financial bankruptcy of the tutelary, transcendental, and centralist State, the double and alter ego of the Church, and as such, a permanent cause of impoverishment, brutalization, and enslavement for the people. As a natural consequence, Abolition of all state universities,—the task of public instruction must belong exclusively to the communes and free associations. Abolition of the State magistracy,—all judges must be elected by the people. Abolition of all criminal and civil codes which are presently in force in Europe,—because all of them, being equally inspired by the worship of God, of the State, of the religiously or politically sanctioned family, and of property, are contrary to human rights, and because the code of liberty can be created only by liberty itself. Abolition of the banks and all the other state institutions of credit. Abolition of all central administration, of the bureaucracy, of the permanent armies and the state police.*

- F. Immediate and direct election of all public functionaries, judicial and civil, as well as all the national, provincial, and communal representatives or counselors by the people, that is by universal suffrage of all adult individuals, male and female.
- G. *Internal reorganization* of each country, taking for its point of departure and basis the *absolute liberty of individuals, productive associations, and communes*.
- H. *Individual rights*.
1. The right of each individual, male or female, from the hour of their birth to the age of majority, to be completely supported, watched over, protected, raised, instructed in all the public schools (primary, secondary, post-secondary, artistic, industrial, and scientific) at the expense of society.
 2. The equal right of everyone to be advised and supported by that society, to the extent it is possible, at the beginning of the career, that each individual upon reaching majority should choose freely; after which society, having declared them absolutely free, will no longer exercise no surveillance or authority over the, and declining with regard to them all other responsibility, will no longer owe them anything more than respect and, when necessary, the protection of their liberty.
 3. The liberty of each adult individual, man and woman, must be absolute and complete: liberty to come and go, to openly express every possible opinion, to be idle or active, immoral or moral, in short, to dispose of one's person or possessions as one pleases, without being accountable to anyone; liberty to live, be it honestly, by one's own labor, or by shamefully exploiting private charity or trust, provided that charity and trust are voluntary and are only lavished on them by adults.
 4. Unlimited liberty for every sort of propaganda, through speech, the press, and public or private assemblies, with no other curb to that liberty than the natural, salutary power of public opinion. Absolute liberty of associations, including those whose object makes them, or makes them appear, immoral, including even those whose aim is the corruption and distraction of individual and public liberty.
 5. Liberty can and must be defended only by liberty, and it is a dangerous misunderstanding to want to detract from it under the serious pretext of defending it, and as morality has no other source, no other stimulant, no other weapon and no other object than liberty, and as it is itself nothing but liberty, all the restrictions that we have imposed on that liberty, with the aim of protecting morals, have always been to the detriment of morality. Psychology, statistics, and all of history prove that individual and social immorality have always been the inevitable consequences of a poor private and public education, of the absence and degradation of public opinion, which only ever exists, develops and moralizes by liberty alone, and the consequence above all of a vicious organization of society. Experience teaches us, says the eminent French statistician Quetelet, that society always prepares the way for crime, and that the malefactors are only the necessary instruments that accomplish it. It is thus useless to oppose to social immorality

the rigors of a legislation that will encroach on individual liberty. Attempts to combat social immorality by rigorous legislation that violates individual liberty must fail. Experience teaches us, on the contrary, that a repressive and authoritarian system, far from preventing its excesses, has always developed them most deeply and most widely in the countries which find themselves affected by it; and that public and private morals have always risen and fallen to the degree that the liberty of individuals expands or contracts. And that, consequently, in order to moralize the present society, we must begin by first destroying from top to bottom this whole political and social organization founded on inequality, on privilege, on divine authority and scorn for humanity, and after having reconstructed it on the basis of the most complete equality, of justice, of labor, and of a rational education uniquely inspired by human respect, we should give it public opinion for a guard, and for a soul, the most absolute liberty.

6. Society must not, however, remain completely disarmed against parasitic, harmful, and destructive individuals. Labor being necessarily the basis of all political rights, society, the communes, the provinces, or the nation, each within its respective jurisdiction, can deprive all adult individuals of them who being neither disabled, sick or old, live at the cost of public or private charity with the obligation to restore them as soon as they begin to again live by their own labor.
7. The liberty of every human individual being inalienable, society will never permit any individual to legally alienate their liberty, or to engage by contract with another individual except on the footing of the most complete equality and reciprocity. It could not, however, prevent a man or woman, devoid of all sentiment of personal dignity, from entering, without contract, a relation of voluntary servitude with regard to another individual; but it will consider them as individuals living on private charity and consequently deprived of the enjoyment of political rights, *but only for the duration of that servitude*
8. All persons who have lost their political rights will also be deprived of the right of raising and protecting their children. In cases of infidelity to a freely contracted agreement or in cases of overt and proven attacks on the property, the person, or especially against the liberty of a citizen, whether native or foreign, society will inflict on the delinquent, native or foreign, the punishment determined by the laws.
9. [...]
10. Absolute abolition of all degrading and cruel punishments, of corporal punishments and the death penalty, as sanctioned and executed by the law. Abolition of all punishments of an indefinite duration, or those which are too long and leave no hope, no real possibility of rehabilitation;—crime should be considered as a sickness, and punishment rather as a cure than as a demand of society.
11. Every individual condemned by the laws of any society, province or nation, preserves the right to not submit to the punishment that would have been imposed on them, by declaring that they no longer wish to take part in that society. But

in this case, the society will have in turn the right to expel him and declare him outside its guarantee and protection.

12. Thus fallen back on natural law—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth—at least on the terrain occupied by that society, the refractory could be plundered, abused, even killed without the society being troubled by it. Each could rid themselves of them as they would a destructive animal; they could never, however, subjugate them, nor use them as a slave.
- I. *Rights of association.*—The cooperative workers' associations are a new fact in history; today we witness their birth, and we can only foresee, but not determine, the immense development that they will doubtlessly exhibit, and the new political and social conditions which will emerge from them the future. It is possible and even very probable that, surpassing one day the limits of the communes, the provinces, and even the present states, they will give an entirely new constitution to society, dividing it not into nations but into different industrial groups, organized not according to the needs of politics but to those of production. This is for the future. As for ourselves, we can already today posit this fundamental principle: *Whatever their objects, all associations, like all individuals, must enjoy absolute liberty.* Neither society, nor any part of society – commune, province, or nation – has the right to prevent free individuals from associating freely for any aim whatsoever: religious, political, scientific, artistic, or even for mutual corruption and the exploitation the naive or foolish, provided that they *are not minors*. To combat charlatans and pernicious associations is solely the business of public opinion. But society has the right and the duty to refuse social guarantee, legal recognition, and political and civil rights to any association, as collective body, whose aims, regulations or statutes will be contrary to the fundamental principles of its constitution, and in which all the members are not united on a footing of equality and perfect reciprocity; without however, being able to deprive the members themselves of those rights, simply because of the fact of their participation in some associations not regulated by the social guarantee. The difference between the legitimate and illegitimate associations will be the following: the associations legally recognized as collective bodies will have by this title the right to pursue before the social justice all the individuals, members or non-members, as well as all the other legitimate associations which have failed in their commitments to them. The associations not legally recognized will not have this right as collective bodies; but they cannot also not be subject in this regard to any legal responsibility, all their commitments necessarily being null in the eyes of a society will not have sanctioned their collective existence, which however could not free any of their members from commitments that they have made individually.
 - J. The division of a country into regions, provinces, districts, departments, and communes, as in France, will naturally depend on the dispositions, the historic customs, the present necessities, and the particular nature of each country. We can only point out here the two common principles, indispensable, for each country which seriously wishes to organize a free society. *First: every organization must proceed from bottom to top, from the commune to the central unity of the country to the state, by way of*

federation. Second: there must be at least one autonomous intermediate body between the commune and the state: the department, the region, or the province. Without which, the commune, in the strict sense of the term, would always be too weak to resist the uniformly and despotically centralistic pressure of the State; which will inevitably bring each country back to the despotic regime of the French monarchy, as we have seen the example twice in France; despotism having always had its root much more in the centralized organization of the State, than in the disposition, naturally always despotic, of the kings.

- K. *The basis of all political organization of a country must be the completely autonomous commune, represented by the majority vote of all the adults—men and women by equal title.* No power has the right to meddle in its life, in its acts, and in its internal administration. It names and deposes by election all the functionaries: administrators and judges, and administer without any control the communal goods and its finances. Each commune would have the incontestable right to create independent of any higher sanction its own legislation and its own constitution – But to enter into the provincial federation and to make an integral part of a province, it should absolutely conform its individual charter to the fundamental principles of the provincial constitution and to make it recognized by the parliament of that province. It should also submit to the judgments of the provincial tribunal, and to the measures, which after having been sanctioned by the vote of the provincial parliament, would be ordained by the government of the province. Otherwise it would be excluded from the solidarity, guarantee and community, outside of the provincial law.
- L. *The province must be nothing but a free federation of autonomous communes.* The *provincial parliament* consisting either of a single chamber composed of representatives of all the communes, or two chambers, one consisting of the representatives of the communes, the other the representatives of the entire population of the province, independent of the communes.—The *provincial parliament*, without interfering in any way with the internal administration of the communes, should establish the fundamental principles which should constitute the *provincial charter* and which should be obligatory for all the communes, who wish to participate in the provincial party. This principles which form the very object of this catechism are found recapitulated in article II.—Taking these principles for a basis, the parliament will standardize according to the provincial legislation, in relation to the respective rights and duties of the individuals, associations, and communes, as well as the punishments which should be imposed on each in case of infractions of the laws established by it, leaving, however, to the communal legislations the right to diverge from the provincial legislation on secondary points, but never on the basis; tending to real, living unity, not to uniformity, and trusting in one another to form a still more intimate unity, in experience, in times, in the development of life in common, in the proper convictions and necessities of the communes, in a word, in liberty, never in the pressure nor the violence of the provincial powers, for truth and justice themselves, when violently imposed, become iniquity and lies. The provincial parliament will establish the constitutive *charter* and the *federation of communes*, their respective rights and duties, as well as rights and duties with respect to the provincial parliament, tribunal

and government. It will vote all the laws, dispositions, and measures which will be commanded either by the needs of the entire province or by some resolutions of the national parliament, without ever losing sight of provincial autonomy, nor of the autonomy of the communes. Without ever interfering in the internal administration of the communes, it will establish the share of each, either in the national taxes, or in the provincial taxes. That share will be divided by the commune itself between all of the able, adult inhabitants.—Finally, it will control all the acts, sanction or reject all the propositions of the *provincial government* which will naturally always be elective. The *provincial tribune*, equally elective, will judge without appeal all the cases between individuals and communes, between associations and communes, between commune and commune, and, as trial court, all the cases between the commune and the government or parliament of the province.

- M. *The Nation must be nothing but a federation of autonomous provinces.* The National Parliament consisting either of a single chamber, composed of the representatives of all the provinces, or of two chambers, one consisting of the representatives of the provinces, the other of the entire national population, independent of the provinces,—the *National Parliament*, without meddling in any way in the administration and the internal political life of the provinces, should establish the *fundamental principles* which should constitute the *National Charter* and which will be obligatory for all the provinces which want to participate in the *National Treaty*, the principles are recapitulated in article II. Taking them for a basis, the *National Parliament* will establish the *National Code*, leaving to the provincial codes the right to diverge on secondary point, but never on the bases. It will establish the *Constitutive Charter* of the *federation of provinces*; will vote on all the laws, dispositions and measures which will be required by the needs of the entire nation; to establish the national taxes and divide them among the provinces, leaving to the latter the task of dividing them among the respective communes, finally will control all the acts, adopt or regulated the propositions of the *national executive government*, which will always be elective and over time, will form the national alliances, will make peace and war and alone will have the right to order for a period, always specified, the formation of a national army.—The government will only be the executor of its will. The *national tribunal* will judge without appeal all the cases of individuals, associations, and communes against the province, as well as in all the disputes between provinces. In cases between the provinces and the State, which will be equally subject to its judgment, the provinces could appeal to the *International Tribunal*, if it is established some day.
- N. *The International Federation* consists of all the nations comprising all the nations which will be united on the bases developed above and below. It is probable, it is very desirable that when the hour of the great revolution will have sounded anew, all the nations which follow the banner of popular emancipation, will join hands for a steadfast and close alliance against the coalition of countries which will put themselves under the orders of the reaction. This alliance should form a limited federation at first, as the germ of the *universal federation of peoples* which in the future should embrace the whole world. The *international federation* of revolutionary peoples, with a parliament, a tribunal, and an international executive committee, will naturally be

based on the principles of the revolution. Applied to international polity these principles are:

1. Every land, every nation, every people, small or large, weak or strong, every region, province, and commune has the absolute right to arrange their own fate, to determine their own existence, to choose their alliances, unite or separate, according to their wishes and needs, without any regard for so-called historic rights and for the political, commercial, or strategic necessities of the states. The unity of the parties in a whole, in order to be true, fruitful, and strong, must be absolutely free. It must only emerge from the local, internal necessities and mutual attractions of the parties—attractions and necessities of which the parties alone will be the judges.
2. Absolute abolition of alleged historic rights and the horrible right of conquest, as contrary to the principle of liberty.
3. Absolute negation of the politics of aggrandizement, of the glory and the power of the state-politics which, making each country into fortress, which excludes the rest of humanity, forces it, so to speak, to consider itself as the whole of humanity, to be absolutely self-sufficient, to organize itself as a world independent of all human solidarity, and to put its prosperity and glory into the evil it can do to other countries. A conquering country is necessarily a country internally enslaved.
4. The glory and grandeur of a nation consists only in the development of its humanity. Its strength, unity, and the power of its inner vitality are measured solely by the degree of its liberty. by taking liberty for a basis, we necessarily arrive at union; but from unity we arrive with difficulty, if ever, at liberty. And if we arrive there, it is only by destroying a unity which has been made outside of liberty.
5. The prosperity and the liberty of nations, like the individuals, are absolutely connected—consequently absolute freedom of commerce, exchange, and communication among all federated countries. Abolition of borders, passports, and customs duties. Every citizen of a federated country must enjoy all the political rights in all the other countries belonging to the same federation.
6. The liberty of all, individuals and collective bodies, being connected, no nation, no province, no commune or association could be oppressed, without all the others also being [oppressed] and feeling their liberty threatened. Each for all, and all for each,—such must be the sacred and fundamental rule of the *international federation*.
7. None of the federated countries should maintain a permanent army or any institution which would separate the soldier from the civilian.—causes of ruin, corruption, brutalization and domestic tyranny, permanent armies and the profession of the soldier are yet another **reserve** against the prosperity and independence of all the other countries. Each able-bodied citizen must become a soldier if necessary for the defense of their homes or of liberty. The national armament must be organized in each country by the communes and provinces, somewhat like it is in the United States and in Switzerland.

8. The *International Parliament*, composed either of a single chamber consisting of the representatives of all the nations, or of two chambers, one consisting of these same representatives, and the direct representatives of all the population comprised by the international federations, without distinction of nationality. The *federal parliament*, thus composed, will establish the international pact and the *federal legislation* which it alone will still have the mission to develop and modify according to the needs of the times.
The *international tribunal* will have no other mission than to judge, without appeal, disputes between the states and their respective provinces. As for differences that may be between two federated states, they will be judge in first and last instance only by the *international parliament*, which will decide **encore** without appeal, all questions of common policy and war, in the name of the entire revolutionary federation, against the reactionary coalition.
 9. No federated state shall ever make war against another federated country. The *international parliament* having pronounced its judgment, the condemned state must submit. If not, all the other states of the federation should interrupt their communications with it, put it outside of federal law, federal solidarity and communion, and, in case of attack, to do their part to arm in solidarity against them.
 10. All the states making part of the revolutionary federation must take an active part in any war that one of them makes against a unfederated state—each federated country before declaring war must advise the international parliament, and only declare it if it has a sufficient reason for the war. If it is found, the federal executive directoire will take the cause of the offended state and demand a prompt reparation of the foreign aggressor, in the name of all the revolutionary federation. If, on the contrary, the parliament judges there has not been real aggression or offense, they will advise the state which complains not to begin the war, warning it that if it begins, it will make it all alone.
 11. It must be hoped that over time the federated states, renouncing the ruinous luxury of separate representatives, will be content with a federal diplomatic representation.
 12. The Limited International Revolutionary Federation, will always be open to the peoples who wish to enter later, on the basis of the principles and the militant, active solidarity of the revolution explained above and below, — but without ever making the least concession of principles to any. Consequently, only those people who have accepted all the principles in article II can be welcomed into the federation.
10. Social organization. Without political equality, no real political liberty, but political equality will only become possible when there is economic and social equality. —
- a. Equality does not imply the leveling of individual differences, nor the intellectual, moral and physique identity of individuals. That diversity of capacities and strengths, those differences of races, nations, sexes, ages and individuals, far from being a social evil, constitutes on the contrary the wealth of humanity. Economic and social equal-

ity no more implies the leveling of individual fortunes as products of the capacity, productive energy and economy of each.

- b. Equality and justice simply demand: an organization of society such that every human individual finds there at birth, insofar as that depends not on nature but on society, equal means for the development of their childhood and adolescence until the age of their **virility**, for their education and training first of all, and later for the exercise of the different strengths that nature has given each for labor. — That equality of starting point that justice demands for each will be impossible as long as the right of inheritance exists. —
- c. Justice, as much as human dignity, demands that each be solely the child of their own works. We reject with indignation of hereditary sin, shame and responsibility. By the same reasoning we must reject the fictive heredity of virtue, honors and rights, and that of fortune as well. The inheritor of any fortune is no longer entirely the child of their works and with regard to their starting point they are privileged. —
- d. Abolition of the right of inheritance. As long as this right exists, the hereditary difference of classes, positions and fortunes, social inequality, in short, and privilege will persist, if not by right, at least in fact. — But inequality in fact, by a law inherent in society, always produces the inequality of rights; social inequality inevitably becomes political inequality. And without political equality, we have said, there is no liberty, in the universal, human, truly democratic sense of that word; society will always remained divided into two unequal part, of which the immense one, including the whole mass of the people, will be oppressed and exploited by the other. — Thus the right of inheritance is opposed to the triumph of liberty and if society wants to be free, it must abolish it. —
- e. It must abolish it because, resting on a fiction, this right is contrary to the very principle of liberty. — All the individual rights, political and social, are attached to the real, living individual. — Once dead, there is only the fictitious will of an individual who is no more, which oppresses the living in the name of the dead. — If the dead individual insists on the execution of their will, let them come and execute it themselves if they can, — but they have no right to demand that society put all its power and right in the service of their non-existence. —
- f. The legitimate and serious aim of the right of inheritance has always been to insure to future generations the means of developing and becoming men. consequently, only the Fund for public education instruction with have the right to inherit, with the obligation of providing the upkeep, education and training for all children, from birth until the age of majority and their complete emancipation. — In that manner all parents will be equally reassured about the fate of their children; and as the equality of all is a fundamental condition of the morality of each, and since all privilege is a source of immorality, all the parents, whose love for their children is reasonable and aspires not to their vanity, but to their human dignity, if they had even the possibility of leaving them an inheritance that would place them in a privileged position, would prefer for them the regime of the most complete equality.

- g. The inequality resulting from the right of inheritance once abolished, there will always remain, although considerably diminished, that which results from the difference in the capacities, strengths and productive energy of individuals, — a difference that will, in its turn, without ever disappearing entirely, will always decrease more and more under the influence of an egalitarian education and system of social organization; and which, moreover, will never weigh on future generations, once the right of inheritance is abolished. —
- h. Labor being the sole producer of wealth, each is doubtless free to die of hunger, or to go live in the wastelands or forests among the savage beasts, — but those who wish to live in society must earn their living by their own labor, at the risk of being considered a parasite, an exploiter of the goods, that is of the labor of others, as a thief. —
- i. Labor is the fundamental basis of human dignity and right. For it is only by free and intelligent labor that man, becoming in his turn creator and winning, over the external world and his own bestiality, his humanity and his rights, creates the civilized world.

The dishonor that was attached to labor in the ancient world, as well as in feudal society, and that to a great extent still remains attached to it today, despite all the phrases that we hear repeated every day about its dignity, — this stupid scorn of labor has two sources: the first is that conviction—so characteristic of the ancients and that today still counts some secret partisans—that to give any portion of human society the means of humanizing themselves through science, by the arts, through knowledge and the exercise of right, another portion, naturally more numerous, is doomed to labor as slaves. This fundamental principle of ancient civilization was the cause of its ruin. Society—corrupted and disorganized by the privileged idleness of the citizens, undermined from another side by the imperceptible and slow but constant action of this disinherited world of slaves, moralized despite the slavery and maintained in their primitive strength by the salutary action of even forced labor—fell under the blows of the barbarian peoples, to which, by birth, a great portion of these slaves had belonged. — Christianity, that religion of slaves, had later destroyed the ancient inequality, only to create a new one: The privilege of divine grace and election over the inequality produced naturally by the right of conquest, separated human society once again into two camps, the rabble and the nobility, the serfs and the masters, assigning to these last the noble trade of arms and government; and leaving to the serfs labor, not only degraded, but still cursed. The same cause necessarily produces the same effects; the world of the nobility, drained and demoralized by the privilege of idleness, fell in 1789 under the blows of the serfs, rebellious laborers, united and powerful. Then the liberty of labor was proclaimed, its rightful rehabilitation. But only by right, for in fact labor still remains dishonored, enslaved. The first source of that subjugation, — nominally that which consisted of the dogma of the political inequality of men, — having been formed by the great revolution, we must attribute the present scorn for labor to the second, which is nothing other than the separation that was made, and that still exists in all its force, between intellectual and manual labor, and which, reproducing the ancient inequality in a new form, divides the so-

cial world again into two camps: the minority, privileged from now on not by the law, but by capital, and the majority of the workers forced, no longer by the iniquitous right of legal privilege, but by hunger. In fact, today, the dignity of labor is already theoretically recognized and public opinion admits that it is shameful to live without laboring. Only, as human labor, considered in its totality, was divided into two parts, of which one, entirely intellectual and declared exclusively noble, includes the sciences, arts and, in industry, the application of the sciences and arts, the idea, conception, invention, calculation, the government and direction, general or subordinate, of the working forces; and the other only the manual execution, reduced to a purely mechanical action, without intelligence, without any idea, by that economic and social law of the division of labor, — the privileged of capital, not excluding those who are the least authorized by the measure of their individual capacities, seize the first, and leave the second to the people. Three great evils resulted from it: one for the privileged of capital; the other for the masses of the people; and the third proceeding from one to the other, for the production of wealth, for well-being, for justice and for the intellectual and moral development of all of society. The evil that the privileged classes suffer is this: by giving themselves prominence in the division of social functions, they make themselves more and more petty in the intellectual and moral world. It is perfectly true that a certain degree of leisure is absolutely necessary for the development of the mind, of the sciences and arts; but this must be a leisure earned, following the wholesome weariness of daily labors, a legitimate leisure, the possibility of which, depending solely on the greater or lesser energy, capacity and good will in the individual, would be socially equal for everyone. Every privileged sort of leisure, on the contrary, far from fortifying the mind, — drains, demoralizes and kills it. All of history proves that, with some rare exceptions, the privileged classes with regard to fortune and rank, have always been the least productive with regard to the mind, and the greatest discoveries in the sciences, in the arts and in industry, have been made most of the time by men who had been forced in their youth to earn their living by hard labor. Human nature is made so that the possibility of evil inevitably and always produces its reality, and so the morality of the individual depends much more on the conditions of an individual's existence and the environment in which they live, than on their own will. In this regard as in all others, the law of social solidarity is inexorable, so that in order to moralize individuals it is not necessary so much to concern ourselves with their conscience as with the nature of their social existence, and there is no other moralizing force, for society or for individuals, that liberty in the most perfect equality. Take the most sincere democrat and put them on any throne; if they do not descend soon, they will inevitably become a scoundrel. A man born into the aristocracy, if by some happy chance he is not gripped by shame and hatred of his rank, and if he is not ashamed of the aristocracy, will necessarily be a man as hopeless as he is vain, pining for the past, useless in the present and a passionate adversary of the future. Just so the bourgeois child, darling of capital and privileged leisure, will turn his leisure into idleness, corruption, debauchery, or else he will use it as a terrible weapon to enslave the working classes still more, and will end up raising up against himself a revolution more terrible than that of 1793. The evil suffered by the people is even easier to ascertain: they labor for others, and

their work [is] deprived of liberty, leisure and intelligence, and in this way debases, degrades, crushes and kills them. They are forced to work for others, because, born into poverty and deprived of all training and rational education, morally enslaved thanks to religious influences, they find themselves cast into life disarmed, discredited, without initiative and proper will. Forced by hunger, from their tenderest youth, to earn their meager living, they must sell their physical strength, their labor, in the harshest conditions, without having either the thought, or the material ability to demand others. Reduced to despair by poverty, sometimes they rebel – but lacking the unity and strength that thought gives, badly lead, most often betrayed and sold out by their leaders, and almost never knowing who to lash out at for the evils that they endure, – most often striking unjustly, they have until now at least failed in their rebellions and, exhausted by a fruitless struggle, they have always fallen back into the old slavery. That slavery will endure as long as capital remains apart from the collective action of the workers' forces, exploitation, and as long as the training, which in a well organized society, should be equally distributed among everyone, developing only the intelligence of one privileged class, will assign to that privileged class the whole intellectual part of labor, and will leave to the people only the brutal application of their physical strength, enslaved and always condemned to execute ideas that are not their own. Through that injustice and that dreadful division, the labor of the people, becoming a purely mechanical labor, like that of a beast of burden, is dishonored, scorned and, by a natural consequence, disinherited of all rights. There results from this for society an immense evil in political, intellectual and moral respects. The minority, in full possession of monopoly and science, are by the effects of this very privilege struck in the intelligence and in the heart, to the point of becoming stupid by dint of training – for nothing is as pernicious and sterile as patented and privileged intelligence. On the other hand the people, absolutely deprived of science, crushed by a daily mechanical labor, capable wearing down rather than developing their natural intelligence, deprived of the light that could show them the path of their deliverance, struggles vainly in their forced **bange**, and as it always has the strength that numbers give it, it always puts in danger the very existence of society. So it is necessary that the unjust division established between intellectual and manual labor be otherwise established. The economic production of the society, which itself suffers considerably from it, – intelligence separated from bodily action is drained, withered, debased, while the bodily strength of man, separated from the intelligence is stupefied and in that state of artificial separation, none will produce half of what they must, what they shall produce when united in a new social synthesis they will no longer form but a single productive action. When the man of science will labor and the man of labor will think, free and intelligent labor will be considered the finest title to glory for a man, the basis of his dignity, of his rights, and the manifestation of his human power over the earth; – and humanity will be established.

- k. Intelligent and free labor will necessarily be an associated labor. Each will be free to associate or not associate for labor; but there is no doubt that, with the exception labors of the imagination and those whose nature demands the centralization of individual intelligence in itself, in all the individual enterprises, and even scientific and

artistic enterprises, that demand by their nature associated labor, association will be preferred by everyone, for the simple reason that association multiplies the productive forces of each in a marvelous manner, and each becoming a member and cooperator in a productive association, they will earn much more with less time and less effort. When the free productive associations cease to be slaves and become in their turn the masters and proprietors of the capital necessary to them, including among them, as cooperating members alongside the laboring forces, emancipated by general instruction, all the specialized knowledges demanded by each enterprise, when combining among themselves, always freely, according to their needs and nature nature, passing sooner or later all the national boundaries, they will form an immense economic federation, with a parliament informed by the facts, as extensive as they are precise and detailed, of a worldwide statistics, such as cannot yet exist in the world today, and which combining supply with demand – could govern, determine and respect between different countries the production of industry worldwide, so that there would no longer be economic or commercial crises, forced stagnation, disasters, no more struggles, nor capital lost. Then human labor, the emancipation of each and all, will regenerate the world.

- l. The earth, with all its natural riches, is the property of everyone, but it will be possessed only by those who cultivate it.
- m. Woman, different from man, but not inferior to him, intelligent, hardworking and free like him, is declared his equal in rights as in all functions and duties, both political and social.
- n. Abolition not of the natural family, but of the legal family, based on civil law and property. religious and civil marriage is replaced by free marriage. Two adult individuals of different sexes have the right to join and separate, as they wish, their mutual interests and the needs of their hearts, without society having the right, either of preventing their union, or of keeping them in it despite their wishes. The right of inheritance being abolished and the education of all children being assured by society, all the reasons that have been previously alleged for the political and civil consecration of the de irrevocability of the marriage would disappear, and the union of the two sexes must be returned to its full freedom, which here, as everywhere and always the condition sine qua non of sincere morality. – In the free marriage, the man and the woman must equally enjoy a complete liberty. Neither the violence of passion, nor the rights freely accorded in the past could serve as an excuse for any attack on the part of one against the liberty of the other – and each such attack would be considered a crime.
- o. From the moment that a woman bears a child in her womb, until she has delivered it, she has a right to a subsidy from society, paid not on account of the woman but on that of the child. Every mother who wants to feed and raise her children will also receive from society the full cost of their upkeep and the effort devoted to the children.
- p. The parents will have the right to keep close to their children and occupy themselves with their education, under the supervision and ultimate control of society, which

will always retain the right and duty of separating children from the parents, any time that the latter, either through their example, or through their brutal, inhuman precepts or punishments, could demoralize or even hinder the development of their children.

- q. The children belong neither to their parents, nor to society. They belong to themselves and to their future liberty. As children, until the age of emancipation, they are only potentially free, and must consequently find themselves under the regime of authority. The parents are their natural guardians, it is true – but the ultimate, legal guardian is society, which has the right and the duty concern itself, because its own future depends on the intellectual and more direction that will be given to children, and which can old give liberty to adults on the condition or overseeing the education of minors.
- r. The school must replace the church with the immense difference that the latter, in distributing its religious education, has no other aim but to perpetuate the regime of human minority and of so-called divine authority, while the education and training of the school, having, on the contrary, no other aim but the real emancipation of the children when they have arrived at the age of majority, will be nothing other than their gradual and progressive initiation into liberty, by the triple development of their physical strengths, their mind and their will. Reason, truth, justice, human respect, consciousness of human dignity, solidary and inseparable from human dignity in others, the love of liberty for themselves and for all the others, the cult of labor as basis and condition of all rights; scorn for folly, lies, injustice, the cowardice of slavery and idleness, such should be the fundamental bases of public education. It should make men, first of all – then specialized workers and citizens, and as it advances, with the age of the children, authority will naturally give way more and more to liberty, so that the adolescents, arriving at the age of majority, emancipated by the law, may have forgotten how, in their childhood, they were governed and directed otherwise than by liberty. – Human respect, that germ of liberty, must be present even in the strictest and most absolute acts of authority. The whole of moral education is contained there; instill that respect in the children and you will have made men.
- s. Primary and secondary instruction once completed, the children, according to their capacities and sympathies, advised, enlightened but not brutalized by their superiors, will choose some advanced or special school. At the same time, each should apply themselves to the theoretical and practical study of the brance of industry that will most please them, and the sum that they will have earned by their work during that apprenticeship will be presented to them a the age of majority.
Once the age of majority has been reached, the adolescent will be proclaimed free and absolute master of their acts. In exchange for the care that society has lavished on them during their childhood, it will demand three things: that they remain free, that they live by their own labor, and that they respect the liberty of others. And as the crimes and vices from which the present society suffers are only the product of a bad social organization, we can be certain that, with an organization and education of society based on reason, justice, liberty, human respect and the most complete

equality, good will become the rule, and evil an isolated illness, which will diminish more and more under the all-powerful influence of moralized public opinion.

- t. The old, the disabled, the sick, surrounded by care and respect, and enjoying all their rights, both political and social, will be treated and abundantly provided for at society's expense.
11. Revolutionary politics. – It is our fundamental that, all national liberties being connected, the individual revolutions in all the countries must also be connected; that from now on in Europe, as in all the civilized world, there will no longer be revolutions, but only the universal revolution, as there is no longer but a single European and worldwide reaction; that, consequently, all the individual interests, all the vanities, pretensions, jealousies and hostilities of the nations, must merge today in the single common and universal interest of the revolution, which will ensure the liberty and independence of each nation, through the solidarity of all. That the holy alliance of the worldwide reaction and the conspiracy of the kings, of the clergy, of the nobility and of the bourgeois feudalism, supported by enormous budgets, permanent armies and a formidable bureaucracy, and armed with all the terrible means that modern centralization gives them, with the habit and, as it were, with the routine of action and the right to conspire and to do it all by legal title, are an immense, threatening, crushing fact, and that, in order to combat it, to oppose to it an equally powerful fact, in order to defeat and destroy it, nothing less is required than the alliance and the simultaneous revolutionary action of all the peoples of the civilized world. Against that worldwide reaction, the isolated revolution of any people would not succeed, it would consequently be a folly, an error for itself and a treason, a crime, against all the other actions. From now on, the uprising of each people must be made, not with an eye to itself, but with an eye to the whole world. But, in order for one nation to rise up with an eye to and in the name of all the world, it must have the program of the whole world, large enough, deep enough, true enough and, in a word, human enough to embrace the interests of the whole world, and to electrify the passions of all the popular masses of Europe, without national differences. This program can only be that of the democratic and social revolution.
- a. The object of the democratic and social revolution, can be defined in a few words:
 - Politically, it is the abolition of the historical rights, the right of conquest and diplomatic right. It is the complete emancipation of individuals and associations from the yoke of divine and human authority, – it is the absolute destruction of all the forced unions and agglomerations of communes in the provinces, of provinces and conquered countries in the State. Finally, it is the radical dissolution of the centralist, tutelary, authoritarian State, with all its military, bureaucratic, governmental, administrative, legal and civil institutions. It is, in a word, liberty restored to everyone, to individuals and to all the collective bodies, associations, communes, provinces, regions and nations, and the mutual guarantee of that liberty through federation.
 - Socially: it is the confirmation of political equality by economic equality. It is a beginning to the career of each, equality of the point of departure, an equality

that is not natural, but social, for each, equality of the means of upkeep, education, and training for each child, boy or girl, until they reach the age of majority.

Summary of the Fundamental Principles of this Catechism.

- a. Negation of God.
- b. Respect for humanity must replace the worship of the divinity. Human reasons recognized as sole criterion of truth; human conscience as basis of justice and liberty, both individual and collective, as source and sole basis of order in humanity.
- c. The liberty of each can only be realized in the equality of all. The realization of liberty in equality is justice.
- d. Absolute exclusion of the principle of authority and the reason of state. Liberty must be the sole constitutive principle of every social, political or economic organization. Order in society must be the result of the greatest possible development of all the local, collective and individual liberties. Every organization, whether political or economic, must consequently not longer work, as they do today, from the top down and from the center to the circumference, according to the principles of unity, but from the bottom up and from the circumference to the center, according to the principle of free association and federation.
- e. Political organization. Abolition of every official church, protected and paid for by the State. Absolute liberty of conscience and worship, with the unlimited right of each to raise temples to their gods and pay their priests. Absolute liberty of the religious organizations, which will enjoy no political or civil rights, and cannot concern themselves with the education of children. Abolition and bankruptcy of the centralized, tutelary State. – Absolute liberty of the individual, recognizing the political rights only of those who live by their own labor on the condition that they respect the liberty of others. Universal suffrage, unlimited freedom of the press, of propaganda, of public speech, and of public and private meetings. Absolute freedom of association, according, however, legal recognition only to those [associations] that in their aims and prior constitution do not put themselves at odds with the fundamental principles of the society. Absolute autonomy of the commune with the right of administration and even of internal legislation, provided it conforms to the fundamental principles that will serve as the basis of the provincial constitution, if the commune wants to be part of the federation enjoying the provincial guarantee. The Province must be nothing but the federation of the communes. – Autonomy of the province with regard to the nation, with the right of administration and even of internal legislation, – provided it conforms to the fundamental principles that will serve as the basis of the national constitution, if the province wants to be part of the federations and enjoy the national guarantee. – The nation must be nothing but the federation of the provinces that freely wish to take part, with the duty of respecting the autonomy of each, but having the right to demand that the constitution and the individual legislation of each province that desires to be part of the federation and enjoy the national guarantee, conform in the essential points to the national constitution and legislation, that in all the affairs that concern either the mutual relations of the provinces, or the general interests of the entire nation. Each province executes the

decrees approved by the national parliament and of which they have been notified by the national government, and each must submit to the judgments of the national court, unless appealing to the international courts, when those exist. In the case of a refusal to obey in one of these three cases, the province will be considered outside the law, and outside of national solidarity, and in the case of an attack on its part against one of the federated provinces, it will be set right [remise à la raison] by the national army. Abolition of the so-called historical rights, of conquest and of all politics of **arrondissement**, of expansion, of glory and the external power of the State. The prosperity, like the liberty of all the nations are connected and each must seek its power in liberty. National independence is a national right, inalienable like that of the individual, as such, it must be sacred, but not as a historical right. The fact that a country has been united with another for centuries, even voluntarily, it does not follow that it must suffer that union if it no longer wishes to; for the past generations never had the right to alienate the liberty of the present generations or those to come. Thus, each nation, each province, each commune, would have the absolute right to manage themselves, to ally with others and to break their past and present alliances and form new ones, without it being within the right or in the interest of any other country to prevent them from it. Any violence in this regard should be suppressed by the entire national federation, for every attack on the liberty of a single country is an insult, a threat, an indirect attack against the liberty of all the nations. — Finally, International Federation and revolutionary solidarity of the free peoples, against the reactionary coalition of the countries that are still enslaved.

- f. Social Organization. — Political equality is impossible without economic equality. — Economic equality and social justice are impossible as long as, in the organization of society, there is not for each human individual, at birth, a perfect equality at the point of departure, consisting of equality in the means of upkeep, education, instruction and later of application of the different capacities and strengths that nature has given to each. Abolition of the right of inheritance. The fund for public education will alone be responsible for the complete upkeep, supervision, education and instruction of children, from birth to the age of majority. — Labor being the sole protector of wealth, every man must work to live; otherwise, he will be considered a thief. Intelligent and free work, basis of human dignity and of all politics rights, and individual labor, based each day more in associated labor. The land, property of everyone, will only be possessed by those who cultivated it. Equality of men and women in all political and social rights. Abolition of the legal family based on civil law and on property. — Free marriage. Children belong neither to their parents, nor to society. — The ultimate guardianship of children, their education and their instruction are the responsibility of society. — The school will replace the church. It's aim: the creation of free men. Abolition of prisons and executioners. — Respect and care for the aged, disabled and sick.

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Mikhail Bakunin
Principles and Organization of the International Revolutionary Society.
March 1866

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Working translation by Shawn P. Wilbur. This working draft contains the full text of the “Catechism,” but some issues with the text, such as missing or repeated section numbering remain. Formatting (bold, italic, underlining) is inconsistent and in some places probably missing, as a comparison with the manuscript will be necessary to fix some issues with the available texts.

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