It is difficult to answer this question comprehensively since anarchism does not constitute a complete scientific doctrine or its own, specific philosophical worldview.

What characterises anarchism and is common to all anarchists, whatever their point of departure and way of thinking, is the rejection of government, the rejection of anybody's right to forcibly subjugate others, even if that government consists of a numerical majority.

Diderot expressed this idea in the following way: "Nature created neither masters nor servants; I do not want to make or be given laws".

This is the only common and indisputable position adopted by all anarchists. Everything else is subject to differences in opinion. However, abstract discussions are of no interest to the reader. What is of interest is the origin and ideology of the international anarchist labour movement, since only this aspect has any practical significance at the present time.

The ideology of the anarchist movement, just like the ideology of social democracy, emerged from the theoretical principles established at the first International– the International Union of Workers, founded in London in 1864.

This Union put forward the aim of liberating workers in economic terms, by the workers themselves, from the exploitation of capital. In order to achieve this practical goal, the International gave expression to its battle cries of *class war* and *the international association of waged labourers* (the proletariat).

Nevertheless, when it came to putting words into action, the International faced a significant obstacle: government resistance.

The International split and fell apart into two currents on the question of the relationship with the government: the first– that of the future social democrats– proposed taking power in order to crush the capitalist class with the so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat" at the moment of victory; the second– from which the contemporary anarchist movement emerged– has come to the conclu-

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Selected works on anarchism

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the professional interests of all strata of working people outside of, and in defiance of, the government–all these factors of a real social construction based on new principles would thrive and take the country out of this situation of moral decrepitude if– in the expressive words of Maksim Gorki *the vile poison of government ruling over people* was not ubiquitous.

The Old and the New in Anarchism

In recent times, as marginal parties in Russia took power and found themselves in the centre, various elements of the population became particularly and intensely interested in the "party to the left of the Bolsheviks". This interest has not arisen without reason. The ideas of anarchism are becoming more and more prevalent among the labour movement here in Russia. Remnants of the army and navy have readily accepted those ideas, many calling them the "successors of the Bolsheviks". In the eyes of the working masses, anarchism, it can be said, has acquired the "right of citizenship", as it strives towards even more social justice than what Bolshevism has promised.

An astonishing drive towards integral justice has taken over the mind of the masses at the present time. Anarchism is genuinely capable of captivating the masses with its lofty ideals if only anarchists themselves would rise to the occasion of their historical calling.

However, until now, some anarchists have done everything possible in their addresses to the people to alienate all those with ideological principles, while other anarchists, who have preserved the purity of their doctrine's ethical tenets, are, unfortunately, not particularly active.

In any case, every citizen should get acquainted with anarchism, if not to adopt its indisputable truth in whole, then at least to understand their future opponent in the public arena. What does the essence of anarchism consist of?

ogy that existed before the war– a war which has fundamentally changed the historical context.

The Bolsheviks are openly and blindly implementing this most outdated ideology and an obsolete theory that is in contradiction to the real demands of life– this underlies the whole tragedy of the Bolshevik impulse.

A reassessment of all the theoretical values of socialism has become a pressing requirement for taking the country out of the current storm of history and into the haven of a peaceful, socialist evolution.

"The present war is creating a new history. It is presenting all peoples with new conditions for social construction", predicted Kropotkin at the very beginning of the war.

The point is to understand what these new conditions for social construction are about. Once we understand them, it is possible that socialists of various persuasions would merge into one close-knit family, into a close alliance of workers on the cultivated f ield of socialism.

The first and most fundamental condition for this alliance is the rejection of the government apparatus, of this obsolete empirical system used to influence social development.

The time has come to trust in the fundamental and renewed principle of *Narodism*, to trust in the initiative of the masses and in their creative ingenuity.

This creativity is not an abstraction, nor is it conceptual speculation or a distant utopia. It emerges from the fissures of broken social relations which were formed as a result of the World War.

Food associations, housing and factory committees; the all prevalent cooperative principle; the blossoming of professional unions and the possibility of the resurgence in the country's self-defence– a self-defence that is recognised by everybody; the revival of an army under the leadership of the technical and professional union of officers; and the Soviets of worker representatives, who have been called upon to agree on action and

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Bolshevism is marching ahead without hesitation to meet this yearning for social justice, and herein lies its strength.

However, as it seeks to achieve its lofty goals, it limits itself to giving sermons, but it makes use of an outdated system of governance– an unsuitable instrument for influencing social development in a new phase of civilisation. The classic instrument of oppression cannot turn into an instrument of a free, socialist system. The Bolshevik experience has demonstrated this vividly.

They have contrived to conquer the new world with ill-adapted weapons.

Bolshevism will ruin the undertaking of social construction. If all the socialist parties, from the so-called right to the extreme left, including ideological Bolsheviks and anarchists, do not unite in search of practical ways for the reconstruction of society on new principles, it [Bolshevism] will open the doors wide for reactionary forces.

Are they enemies? Irreconcilable enemies?

What divides us?

Principles? Convictions? Tactics?

Surely we must comprehend, at last, that this destructive war that has been going on for four years has fundamentally changed the economic, legal and ethical relationships between different social strata. That is why it inevitably reflects on the ideology of the labour movement, the theoretical values of socialism and on strategy.

If all the socialist parties– and the parties that are no less close to power than the rest– helplessly flounce about amidst rapidly developing historical developments– and if, having become the governors after the February revolution, the socialist parties have not managed until now to organise a systematic social project, this would mean that they failed not due to ill will or negligence, but simply because of a misinterpretation of the course of history, because of the conservative desire to preserve the old socialist ideol-

gression vis-à-vis a seemingly powerless region due to the fact that it has not developed enough to accept socialism in the industrial centres and refuses to implement it, as the central government employs demoralising methods, and with this we also have the Eastern adulation for the religious fanaticism of Islam around the world. This is, in broad strokes, the level of moral degradation that Russia has tumbled towards in the period of Bolshevik rule.

In any case, Bolshevism is not the ultimate cause of all this although the Bolshevik intelligentsia bears responsibility for its active contribution to the ruination of the most fundamental ethical norms of the cultured individual. The cause is much deeper– it lies in the prolonged World War.

The bleeding and impoverished humankind is drinking the cup of moral decay, brought upon it by the monstrosity of war, to its last drop.

The moral foundations of the peoples of Russia, having lived for centuries under a particular autocratic oppression, turned out to be not so durable. Those foundations disintegrated more quickly and thoroughly than they did in Western Europe, and this led to the rampant moral chaos that we are experiencing today.

The international war that became hushed on the Russian fronts then spread within the country and it turned into a protracted internecine war, which continues to deepen the country's moral decay…

But surely there must be an end to this, there must be a way out of this situation!

Popular consciousness will show the way. If we carefully observe what is happening around us, we would easily notice that the people are looking for a way out of this suffocating moral atmosphere in the form of complete social justice.

Never before, since the first centuries of Christianity, have ideas been so dominant in the minds and the soul of the popular masses as they are in our era.

INTRODUCTION

The preponderance of the state as a political vehicle to manage societies across the globe is ingrained in our political cultures to such an extent that imagining a life without the rules, regulations, directives and, indeed, the ideology of the state seems virtually impossible. Both the command economy-based socialist states as well as the liberal welfare states actively advocate a centralised state that would extend its authority across all of society, providing for, regulating and punishing the citizens under its sovereignty. The neoliberal state, which claims to "minimise" the state, supposedly leaving society to regulate itself in accordance with market forces, has only emboldened the state and multiplied the bureaucratic processes that have been outsourced to private corporations. The period between 1945–1991 saw the division of political power across the globe in the form of so-called capitalist, liberal states and so-called communist states as the accepted logic of political life. Since the end of the Cold War, the capitalist state system has expanded across much of the globe, with few exceptions, leading to a paradigm termed "capitalist realism" by Mark Fisher, wherein imagining an alternative has become excessively difficult.

Despite all of this, if we look back to the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, that lively period, in which several political ideologies began to come to the fore, it did include an alternative that was being propagated in certain parts of the world and was in fact heavily involved in revolutions and political experiments that are today largely neglected. One of these alternative visions, with its various strands, was brought under the umbrella of anarchism, and its main tenet, agreed upon by all stripes of an-

archists, is the rejection of the state and that of allowing people to regulate their lives in accordance with their own will.[1] And Alexander Atabekian, the author of the works that have been translated in this book, was a prominent proponent of anarchist ideology.

Atabekian was born in 1868 in the city of Shusha/Shushi, then part of the Elizavetpol Governorate of the Russian Empire. He was born into a family that hailed from nobility– the House of Atabekian.[2] Little is known about his formative years as a child and adolescent. His political activism is known to have started with the Social Democrat Hnchakian Party (Hnchaks), as he contributed to the typesetting of their journal "Hnchak", which focused largely on the plight of the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire. Information about his personal journey starts to trickle through from the time when he moved in the late 1880s to study medicine in Geneva and Lyon. His stay in Geneva proved to lay the basis for his political and ideological development. The city was at the time a crucial meeting point for anarchists and was the home of the anarcho-communist journal Le Révolté, which was started by Peter Kropotkin and his colleagues. The journal had an immense impact on Atabekian who went on to publish translations of Kropotkin's works and to establish the Anarchist Library of Geneva in the early 1890s. Regarding the library, Paul Avrich writes in his book "The Russian Anarchists" (1967, p. 38): "Led by Aleksandr Atabekian, a young Armenian doctor and disciple of Kropotkin, the new group, which called itself the Anarchist Library (Anarkhicheskaia Biblioteka), printed a few pamphlets by

[1] Some interpretations of anarchism may focus more on the rejection of authority and compulsion in political affairs rather than simply a rejection of the state. For simplicity's sake, we will accept that anarchism is the rejection of the state, while keeping in mind that anarchist philosophy is indeed more complex than that.

[2] In a similar vein, Atabekian's ideological peer, Varlam Cherkezishvili, was born into nobility, in addition to his mentor and teacher, Peter Kropotkin, who was also born into an aristocratic family.

THE OLD AND THE NEW IN ANARCHISM

Prelude

It is difficult to imagine a deeper level of degradation and a more complete moral decay than what Russia is experiencing now.

Not a single pillar that was upholding people's moral and ethical relations has survived: senseless pogroms, brutal lynching, premeditated murders, as well as arresting patients on their hospital beds and administrative executions have become commonplace; violating the most basic human rights (personal freedom and dignity, inviolability of the home, freedom of the spoken and printed word, freedom of assembly, unionising, protesting and striking)is a common method used by those in power against their real or imaginary adversaries; a disgraceful parody of justice, which has left behind it the arbitrary will of the bureaucratic courts in Tsarist times; a complete disregard by previous comrade; a disgraceful parody of justice, which has left the arbitrary will of the bureaucratic court of Tsarist times far behind– the complete disregard of arbitration courts and courts of honour, those valuable corrective adjustments to any state justice, by the comrades of yesterday in prison, penal servitude and in exile; official appeals by the "socialist" authorities to the people calling for denunciations and investigations, with the promise of material rewards; the extortion of money under the guise of judicial and administrative penalties on trumped up charges (the list is endless!)– the kind of culture that is being propagated by the ruling parties; the people's loss of a sense of self-preservation in the face of a powerful external enemy and vile ag-

It is simply waiting for a call to stand up for the people's interests and for the socialist homeland, with all the youthful energy of some and the combat experience of others.

The heart of Russian should set its own example and show how self-defence should be undertaken, without which any sort of individual liberty, economic equality and social brotherhood would be unthinkable.

Bakunin and Kropotkin, and by the noted Italian anarchists, Errico Malatesta and Saverio Merlino. Atabekian's efforts to smuggle the literature into Russia appear to have met with little success, but the work of his Anarchist Library was taken up again towards the end of the 'nineties by another propaganda circle, known simply as the Geneva Group of Anarchists."

A significant moment in Atabekian's trajectory as an anarchist thinker and activist is the establishment of the Armenian-language anarchist newspaper called "Hamaynk" (Commune). He was known to be the editor of the journal, but his name does not appear in any of the articles, allegedly for fear of succumbing to the general persecutions against anarchists at the time. Interestingly, much in contrast to the ideological mood at the time amongst Armenian revolutionaries, one of the articles attributed to Atabekian, entitled "Naming Government" (issue no.2), argues against the creation of an Armenian state on the basis that the call for freedom directly contradicts the aspiration to form a state.

There is precious little known about his life between the years 1896–1917, however he is known to have worked as a doctor in what is today northern Iran. In 1917, in the context of the February and then October revolutions, Atabekian commented on and reacted to these events in a series of articles in the journal "Anarchia" and then the journal "Pochin", from which most of the articles in this book have been taken and translated. His open letter to Kropotkin, published on 23 October 1917 in Anarchia, gives hints as to what Atabekyan was doing during the First World War. He recounts his experiences as a military doctor, mainly on the Ottoman-Russian front, and denounces the deplorable conditions that people in those regions found themselves in. In this letter he criticises the militarism of all the powers involved in the war, an allusion to his pacifist and internationalist stance, which was at odds with the defencist position of his mentor. In general, in his writings he condemns the use of violence aimed at achieving ideological goals (in addition to denouncing state violence). This is not only a ref-

erence to violence between states, but also violent tactics used by certain anarchist groups (although Atabekian does not name them directly, he may be referring to groups such as Chernoe Znamia ("Black Banner") and Beznachalie ("Without Authority").

As mentioned before, the bulk of Atabekian's writings on anarchist ideology and practice are based on the works of Kropotkin and ideas of mutual aid and cooperation. Nevertheless, there are some important nuances in Atabekian's work that distinguish him from his mentor. First of all, Atabekian's experience and professional expertise as a doctor shines through particularly in his unpublished essay "Laziness as a professional disease", which has been translated in this collection. In this essay he outlines the economic conditions and relations that lead to the emergence of laziness as an issue related to the social organisation of work and not one that is simply biological and individual in nature.

Nevertheless, Atabekian employs his medical knowledge to explain how these conditions affect laziness as a biological phenomenon, but one that is also social in nature.

In addition to the disagreement regarding internationalist and defencist positions on the First World War, another point of potential contention between Atabekian and Kropotkin is the significance of class struggle in a social anarchist revolution. Atabekian asserts that class struggle is a ploy that divides working people in competing groups and thus weakens the bonds between them and the potential for unified struggle. For Atabekian, the focus of struggle should be on state power rather than struggle between classes. In his article "Class Struggle" (Pochin, October 1920, no.10), Atabekian complicates and problematises the concept of social class. Again, his professional background as a doctor forms part of his argument as he mentions the persecution against knowledge workers and technicians in the Russian revolution as a point to demonstrate how workers are not in fact united in a homogenous class.

The regular officers, at the invitation of the housing committees of the district unions, will organise constituent district commissions as soon as possible and will speedily train the district companies [military], who will be well clothed by the housing committees' district cash registers. Armed with copious amounts of military equipment that has been left over from the Tsarist army, the district companies will move the marching units to the front to save what can still be saved, to delay or at least hinder the triumphant invasion of the enemy, until an opportunity presents itself to conclude an independent peace and ensure a free socialist government in the future.

Enough demagoguery, enough pseudo-democracy! Professional knowledge can neither be created nor evaluated by general elections and the mechanical counting of votes. Elections make sense only within professional categories of knowledge.

The new army should be strictly disciplined and led by a professional union of military specialists– officers.

We have to get rid of this blind partisanship and these narrow class divisions– these products of theories that have already outlived the rapid development of history.

Here in Russia there is no organised bourgeoisie fighting for its interests: capitalism has been reduced to dust and production has been destroyed.

The time has come for socialist development, the time has come to develop socialist production on the ruins of capitalism, to unite all of society, to end this pointless civil strife and push the civil guard to struggle against its sole and immediate enemy– the military coalition of the central states that have engineered this war in order to impose the supremacy of their powerfully developing capitalism on the global market.

All of the officers' corps will be with the people in Russian socialism's struggle with German militarism.

All the armies' military and material equipment must be brought to the rear while gradually retreating away from the enemy if necessary. In the meantime, the peoples of Russia will manage to organise its military force. It is possible that in 1918 we will have to carry out the covenant of 1812 in a new form and with new methods.

There is no time to waste. This needs to be organised with the speed and orderliness of a military operation.

But where can we find the resources we need when the treasury is empty? Where do we find people when a huge part of the army has returned to their homes?

The starting point for the creation of armies without hope or armies with socialist hopes should be established by the industrial centres– the cities, in particular the heart of Russia– Moscow.

Every urban district should establish its own company[8] that would be maintained by the housing committees' district cash registers. The district companies, once they unite, will form regiments, divisions, corps and a whole Moscow Army.

This is not about fighting for this or that region that has been forcibly annexed to Russia. It is not about preventing the cutting up of new territories. It is rather about the very salvation of socialism, about the transfer of all land in the villages and cities with all its properties to the people, the transfer of factories to the workers.

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Every modern army requires a team of professional executive workers who are trained in theory and experienced in practice. This regular army is already ready: it is the officer corps with ideological principles who, having been scolded, insulted and senselessly taken away from the job of self-defence and the salvation of socialism, so essential for the working people, are doomed to inactivity, or are looking the other way for the means of subsistence in physical and other forms of labour.

[8] Military unit.

Kropotkin's position on this matter is contested. Paul Avrich claims that it was only the syndicalists who merged the concepts of mutual aid and class struggle, going "beyond Kropotkin". Others point to the following quote from "Words of Rebel" in asserting that Kropotkin did in fact support the idea of class struggle: ""What solidarity can exist between the capitalist and the worker he exploits?… Between the governing and the governed?" Atabekian, in "The Old and the New in Anarchism" directly refers to Kropotkin in support of the concept of "association for struggle". Atabekian expounds his opinion on class in the article "Class Struggle". He problematises the socialist doctrine of the division of society into a class of productive workers on the one hand and a class of socially useless parasites on the other. He relativises the concepts of wealth, poverty, labour and laziness. He points to the example of the clergy, which has often been employed as a typical example of a "parasitic class", whereas Atabekian notes that there are substantial cleavages between the impoverished clergy in rural areas and the wealthier clergy in urban centres when it comes to wealth, poverty, labour and laziness. He then refers to the proletariat, which has been lumped together into a single class with common interests, whereas Atabekian points to the significant socio-economic differences that exist between workers, craftsmen and highly qualified technicians. He continues with examples from the supposed capitalist and landlord classes, all of whom, in his opinion, cannot be described as social parasites. In essence, what is commonly called class struggle is, in Atabekian's eyes, a struggle between professional associations. As a solution to the inequalities created by these professional differences, he advocated a balance between those very professional associations rather than having one part of the society dominate over the rest (in reference to the Marxist idea of dictatorship of the proletariat).

The collection of articles presented here reflect Atabekian's theoretical musings on anarchist ideas and their practical and political implications. His positionality as someone from the "peripheries"

of empire, in this case the Russian empire, and his experiences in the Ottoman, Russian and Iranian spheres make for a unique blend within a single individual, who has received little attention in comparison to some of his anarchist comrades. This lack of attention also corresponds to the murky circumstances in which Atabekian passed away, on which there is no clarity. The main hypothesis is that Atabekian was arrested in the 1930s and died in a gulag, according to the Alexander Atabekian papers archived at the International Institute of Social History. In any case, the purpose here is to revive his works and to breathe new life into his ideas.

as the state weakens, the level of discipline falls and the army starts to break apart. This has already happened here and also partly in Italy. It will happen across all of Europe if this war goes on for much longer. The war will destroy states there as it did here, and it may end on the ruins of capitalism due to a lack of people available to fight.

But we have not reached that situation yet and we cannot foresee whether this process will end in the breakdown of statehood in western Europe in the near future or not.

That is why the peoples of Russia are faced with the task of forming the defence of the country based on new principles. But where should we start and how should we accomplish this?

The front has been destroyed, the adversary's advanced reconnaissance "delegations" have already penetrated into the capital city and the military coalition of the central empires are free to do what they wish on the territory of Russia, expected in the near future.

How should we act?

A professor of medicine once taught his students the following: "If a patient is unwell then will you presume that he will inevitably die and then dispassionately start to discuss what you can do to save him?"

Let's assume that all is hopelessly lost for us…

But Russia is not Belgium. You can't go through it in a few hours. Even occupying it without any resistance would require enormous efforts and resources. Will the coalition of central empires quickly find enough of those means when the war continues on the western European fronts? Would it risk spreading its exhausted troops across a spanless Russia?

This means that we will have some time to gather our forces, if not to successfully ward off the adversary's offensive, then to at least save what has remained of technical and material equipment that is now being lost on the front and might be captured by the central empires.

tion, has brought the task of reforming society on new principles to the fore. They rushed from one extreme to the other: they completely subordinated the interests of socialism to the selfdefence of the capitalist state coalitions, or they swung to the opposite extreme and openly expressed an unconditional defeatism. The day after the revolution they should have started organising the self-defence of socialism with the military means used by capitalist states.

The struggle against warring states can only be possible through state means. In other words, in order for socialism to assert itself, it should make use of the technical means, forms of organisation and methods of war employed by militaristic governments.

Socialist centres– the "free cities" of tomorrow– must, above all, engage in self-defence against aggressive capitalism if they are to become established and acquire global influence.

I have outlined above the practical forms that socialism can and strives to take– not the programmed socialism of the political parties, which fight amongst themselves to be in power, but the practical socialism that comes out of the historical innovation of the masses.

Let us now consider in what ways socialism, which is being built in industrial centres, can protect its development from the external invasion of capitalist statehood and establish itself, as a mature epoch of historical development, in a federal alliance with the provinces.

There is no doubt that the socialist centre– the city– is capable of using all technical and living resources of militarist statehood extensively in order to break the military power of capitalism with its own weapons and, having liberated the further development of humanity from the dominant influence of capitalism, to direct civilisation on its socialist course.

The modern army is the offspring of capitalist statehood and it is upheld primarily through violence and fear of punishment. As soon

IS AN ANARCHIST SOCIAL REVOLUTION POSSIBLE?

The lamentable experience of seeing the social democrat Bolsheviks take power and implement a dictatorship of the proletariat, together with the "poorest peasantry", and the foundation of the socialist establishment through statist and legislative means, have shown us that a statist "social revolution" has been made possible. We have now seen the results of this endeavour.

The statist socialists[1] of other parties should refrain from claiming that they would have acted any differently. They would either have accomplished nothing substantial or they would have done nothing more than to eliminate the absurdities found in the superficial elements of Bolshevik strategy. Nevertheless, the crux of the matter is that the utopian statist method of resolving the social question will continue to be the basis of their activities. The theory of scientific anarchism approaches this social question from a completely different perspective. Anarchism sees the possibility, or rather, the necessity of creating new social orders from existing elements of the current system. It sees a natural progression on the basis of those elements, rather than development implemented on the part of the state through violence. Anarchism seeks to implement and facilitate this process of development in a conscious manner, and that is why it is revolutionary rather than utopian,

[1] The term "statist socialist" is used in reference to proponents of the state acquisition of private property and means of production, directed by a centralised planned economy, in contrast to the anti-state and anarchist brand of socialism advocated by figures such as Atabekyan.

unlike state socialism, which strives to "dictate" everything, even the self-consciousness of the masses.

So, what is social revolution?

If by social revolution we mean a direct transition to such social orders wherein private ownership of the means of labour in all forms is completely removed, where any understanding of value and monetary exchange is wholly absent, where labour is a voluntary, healthy and pleasant pastime, where technology is so developed that an excessive amount of wealth is accumulated, where each individual takes everything according to their needs without limits, then such a system of top-down communism would hardly come to be in the near future.

Humankind exists in various stages of civilisation, starting from the primaeval condition. There is an enormous difference in the level of cultural development between industrial centres and rural areas even within the same country. This difference acts as a clog in the works acting against the dynamic forces of socialism. However, just as capitalism in the 18th century did not sit and wait for ubiquitous development in order to proclaim new sociopolitical foundations during the Great French Revolution, the social revolution should now come to bring about the universal development of civilisation.

The history of civilisation does not simply jump from one stage to another. It is not revolutions that form and develop a common culture and productive technology. Revolutions simply accelerate change in the legal relations between different classes in a given society, whereas a social revolution also changes the fundamental economic relations between the haves and havenots.

This leads us to another question: at the current level of development of productive technology and culture, is a radical egalitarian change possible in the relations between the haves and havenots, the rich and poor, between the industrial and landed bourgeoisie vis-à-vis the working proletariat and the landless or almost landless peasantry? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to

productive capital. The same fund will receive a corresponding share of the total capital of each person who drops out of the ranks due to an inability to work or death.

The development of old enterprises and the emergence of new ones will take place on the basis of cooperative principles, in accordance with the system of founding enterprises, as was the case when the public services were formed[7].

Such are the general features of a possible new social order in cities, the makings of which are outlined in real life, with a World War coming to a close, but with more and more revolutions and internecine civil wars breaking out.

Only planned public construction can bring organised order to public life and establish a stable and free social order, which cannot emerge from a bitter struggle between political parties, those monstrous creatures of a dying capitalist order.

Housing committees are the pillars that Archimedes would have demanded in order to turn the capitalist order into a socialist one through social revolution and, thereby, fulfilling the first condition for a lasting peace– a social peace– for the fulfilment of a true and economic equality and satisfaction for all.

VII– The organisation of external defence

However, socialism cannot be implemented on a global or even, in the beginning, on a broad international scale. Similar to capitalism, from which socialism is born, socialism will be fully established in large urban centres and, with its cultural and economic influence, will adapt the underdeveloped capitalist rural areas, backward countries and so-called "spheres of influences" of the present capitalist states and their colonies to socialism.

The principal mistake made by socialist parties is that they have not managed to deal on time with the difficult conditions that have been protracted by the World War, which, with its horrific destruc-

[7] "This is the very system that, in essence, lies at the heart of the emergence of capitalist joint-stock companies and modern cooperatives."

If we do away with the state, which is taken and held on to by political parties that sow strife and discord among workers of intellectual and physical labour, by convincing the latter of the superiority of numbers over law and reason, then there is no doubt that such a synthesis of physical labour, technology and managerial experience in the factory committee based on the principle of economic cooperation will become possible. Wouldn't a hired engineer prefer to work with the working people, whence he once came, rather than serve a master? After all, engineers are themselves from the hired proletariat. They were just formerly better paid, just as artisans have been better paid than unskilled workers. But even then, they quit their job if the capitalist owner looked to deride their professional rights and human dignity. This forces them to stay clear of the working class. However, if the workers approach them not with a sense of enmity, encouraged by political demagogues, but with trust and a proposition for social solidarity in cooperative work, then there is no doubt that they would prefer to work with working people for everybody's common benefit, including themselves, rather than serving the private interests of the capitalist.

All those who participate in collective labour will be paid with the revenue from the enterprises. Earning will correspond to the living standards delivered by the professional council of labour delegates from all the public services as well as the productive, commercial and food cooperatives of a given city. The surplus will go to the city bank[6].

Some of this surplus will be allocated to insure enterprises against accidental losses, fires, a temporary decrease in yield (below the amount in expenses), while the rest will go to a special fund that will be used to invest in the younger generation with

[6] "The living standards of workers from all professions should not, in fairness, be quantitatively the same, but rather in proportion to the number of individuals in the family fed by each worker, similar to how rations are distributed to refugees and families with soldiers during the war."

refer not to one's feelings and imagination, nor to socialist and academic literature, but to take a closer look at life around us, to try and understand, think through and evaluate all those phenomena and changes in social life that occur and, one may say, that cross our vision so fast that people would hardly notice them. Such phenomena and historical factors from the past 3–4 years, a period of global disaster– war and Russian Revolution– have pushed the process further.

Above all, the practice of standardising the distribution of basic necessities has developed on a grand scale, not only in the West, but also here. What is important about this is not the technology itself, nor the level of proficiency with which it is used (time and experience will correct its shortcomings), nor the reason that brings this practice about. Rather, it is the equalisation of all segments of the population that is important– the equality of all, both rich and poor.

The promulgation of this principle among the consciousness of the masses has made the formation of a deeply constrained system possible. However, these constraints, that are not inherent to the system, will gradually eliminate the shortcomings in its implementation (the housing committees[2] and other organisations will start to play a significant role in this process), while the principle of equal distribution will remain.

Starting with food products, distribution also includes garments, and it is already in line with the regulation of the distribution of homes. The regulation of the distribution of raw materials in industry is implemented in the same manner. This principle will likely extend to its financing.

As such, the principle of equal distribution takes hold in cultural centres, in cities, in all the main sectors of public and private life.

[2] Housing committees are public and voluntary associations consisting of tenants and homeowners who are interested in assembling together to discuss and solve common problems in their given residential area

Most importantly, this principle of equal distribution, despite the interference of the authorities, strives to become purely organic, economic and non-political. This principle, having developed under the conditions of autocracy, went its own way under the Provisional Government and continued to exist without interruption and almost independently, both during the October Revolution and after it. Over the course of its development, this principle will finally liberate itself from the tutelage of the authorities. It will pervade the economic life of people and cities on an equal basis with other public services, such as the post and telecommunications, or the provision of water, electricity, transport etc.

The second main point is related to the successful strikes that were remarkably frequent after the February Revolution and were direct in their aims. The working masses, taking advantage of the favourable conditions wherein state power was waning, sought to acquire not just the minimum they needed to survive, but the minimum to satisfy their needs. We hear of observations from all sides that working people are now earning a lot, and are eating and dressing better. This improvement in material life is, in general, fleeting, especially for families: financial ruin and ever-increasing prices quickly bring high wages back to their former purchasing power. As a result, workers present new material demands to industries, which are often not in accordance with their profitability, and which disturbs, sabotages and destroys those industries.

Two things are important in this process: consciousness of the right to *minimum contentment* and *the destruction of production.*

The first leads to the establishment of economic equality, combined with the principle of equal distribution, and the second leads to the reorganisation of industry on new foundations, since life is impossible without production.

Increasingly, the workers are repeating attempts to take control of production into their own hands, while capitalists themselves are frequently obliged to make them this offer in the shaky hope of saving their property for the future. Again, the important thing

of the foundational cell of the urban social organism– the housing committees– it is necessary to outline the contours of how their principal economic functions will be organised when it comes to the production, exchange and the distribution of consumer products.

The starting point for socialist production, exchange and distribution must be all the existing plants, factories and commercial enterprises that, with all their property, equipment and livestock, stocks of raw materials and goods, financial capital embodied in gold currency at a liquidation rate set by the state bank, will be transferred to the assets of the city bank distributed among the current accounts of house committees, in proportion to the number of members capable of productive labour. And so, the entire working population of the city will basically have the common inheritance of the labour of preceding generations at their disposal, without it breaking down, and without a distribution that cannot be practically implemented. As actual material equality is designed in this way, the city's population will resort to tried and tested forms of cooperation geared towards the management of production, exchange and the distribution of consumer products– for, in practice, socialism is the extension of cooperation to the whole of society.

The principle of cooperation, widespread among society, will find its practical application in today's system of capitalist production and trade, which are handed over to the factory, commercial and food-related committees. Although not to the factory committees that are in general exclusively consisted of ordinary workers and professionals who are not prepared to independently manage the business of production. Rather, to those committees that include experienced accountants and so-called technical supervision (i.e. representatives working as professional scholars). Even in industries where owners personally take part in the management of production and have acquired suitable experience as managers, it is necessary to try and ensure their participation in the factory committee with a proper and fair remuneration of their work.

modern system), we will need special conciliatory, judicial and rehabilitative institutions.

All disagreements of an individual or material nature can be resolved *on an optional basis* by conciliatory (peaceful) institutions made up of competent individuals with a legal education who would be invited for this work by the district council of housing committees in accordance with reviews made by a trade union of lawyers. In the case where the sides are not in agreement with the decision of the judiciary, the issue will go to a trial at a court of arbitration and court of honour that will be obligatory for the sides. When necessary, the trial will be attended by specialists that include lawyers, as well as teachers, psychologists and doctors, who will play an advisory role.

All binding judicial laws should be completely abolished. Legal thought, freed from the grip of the state, will create scientific works to elucidate and formulate new legal and ethical norms in their place. All courts of conciliation, courts of arbitration and courts of honour will use those works not as imposed, stiff and lifeless legal formulae, but as handbooks, in order to make the correct decision for a given dispute or case, just as doctors do the same in their special cases to find the right cure for a patient.

Such courts will have no need for any executive power as all those who are deviant in their spiritual and moral relations, as well as in how they express their will, will be transferred to the care of doctors and teachers at the relevant special institutions. The rest are unlikely to evade voluntary submission to arbitration courts and courts of honour that have been chosen by them. Otherwise they would end up outside the framework of legal relations in a given society. In other words, they would be "outside of the law", outside of social solidarity in their residential collective.

VI– The production, exchange and distribution of consumer products

In a cursory sketch of the paths towards the imminent development of society, which is intimately connected to the development

is not that these attempts ultimately end in failure, that the "first pancakes come out lumpy", but that the right to acquire production into their own hands enters the consciousness of the working masses, that it is possible to make attempts at using this right in practice.

What is important is the emergence of those factory committees that today claim only to control the profitability of industry, and tomorrow aim to manage it, replacing both the owners and *the factory administration.*

And so, the aim of improving their material well-being will itself compel the workers to raise labour productivity. The interests of production and producers will then coincide, strikes will vanish of their own accord, and anti-social, corrupting expertise in sabotage will be uprooted.

Another important factor in the revolution is the so-called "agrarian unrest". What is important here is not the excesses, pogroms and acts of arson– committed by pathetic but frequent companions of the new social order– but the seizure of land by the peasants, the refusal to pay rent, the actual acquirement of land ownership, even if it is in violation of the programs of the socialist parties.

The standardisation of land use develops with practice in accordance with favourable conditions on the ground, rather than some made-up laws. The concerns of statist socialists on this account are in vain.

The land issue has been put on the agenda in large cities as well. This entails the expropriation of land with profitable real estate that serves the community as part of the urban economy. In carrying out this transformation, housing committees will play a significant and practical role, which, on behalf of the commonly recognized administrative body of the community, will take over the supervision and management of houses, instead of householders.

The Russian Revolution has revealed another essential principle. Along with the former electoral principle, which sees society

as a homogenous whole and solves social issues through the mechanical counting of votes, the Revolution has led to the formation of the Soviets of the workers' deputies in which the whole working population, the basis of any society, is represented by branches of public services and production. The Revolution aims to create an organised order out of socially beneficial productive forces, instead of the abstraction of a supra-class elective power, which is practically limited to the power of the capitalists and landowners.

What is important is not that the state socialists have taken the Soviets away from the revolutionary economic course and have frightened the bourgeoisie with the acquisition of power, which the state socialists cannot even deal with and, fortunately, they only ruin. What is important is that the Soviets strive to liberate themselves from any central power and clear the way for the reorganisation of the economic foundations of the social order, for the transfer of the means of production and their management to the factory committees and workers' trade unions (syndicates). The Soviets, in essence, seek to organise the coordination of activities of the latter outside of the reach of power, in political anarchy.

Where is all of this taking us?

It is clear that in the new social order, all the means of collective labour will be used by workers' trade unions, all profitable real estate in the cities will be transferred to their respective communities under the management of the housing committees, land will no longer bring rent, there will be individual crafts and farming alongside factory production and agricultural economies in the hands of former proletarians and farm labourers, as well as communal land use. The exchanges of goods with money will be preserved temporarily, since coins themselves in our time are a good.

It is in this sense that the anarchist social revolution is possible now.

The historical course of social development itself seeks the practical solution of social issues. It is not the propaganda of socialist parties, which is increasingly being geared towards electoral ag-

If a general and vital trade union of technical workers in a given branch of public services[5] is organised in the city then, most likely, the housing committees will start to finance them en bloc. The administrative body of the trade union will be left to make use of the budget as efficiently as possible and to develop the initiative. However, as soon as a given organisation ceases to satisfy public demands and needs, it will be doomed to a gradual decline and eventual extinction, as financial support from housing committees ends.

There is no doubt that, as the initiative is organised in such a manner, the funds of the housing committees taken from the rent from apartments will not suffice and they will have to move to self-taxation. On the other hand, all state and municipal taxes, both direct and indirect, will be abolished at the same time. Moreover, compared to the benefits of urban development, which the population will benefit from, the population will also be alleviated of the tax burden, which will have become a form of voluntary self-taxation. We see the origin of such voluntary self-taxation geared towards general needs in the current house committees as they collect a monthly fee for organising the delivery of a grain ration or taking a special contribution to cover the general costs of procuring consumer products and so on.

V–Meeting the legal needs of the population

In these difficult conditions, mutual relations between separate individuals, housing committees, trade unions and so on can lead to disagreements and disputes. What is also possible are abuses and violations of public interests, about which each citizen, group of citizens or whole institutions have the right to complain.

In order to solve these conflicts and to take measures geared towards anti-social elements (so-called criminals inherited from the

[5] "Similar to the All-Russian Zemstvo and City Unions, at the beginning of their activities."

amenities, it will nevertheless be necessary to construct residential buildings or perhaps entire blocks.

A group of specialists, who have assembled following a competition announced by the housing committees or upon their own initiative, will develop a detailed construction project under the guidance of architects. They will draw up estimates, a work plan and even a group of experienced managers who will work on the proposed buildings.

Following a detailed discussion on it in the specialised and public press[4], and after making appropriate corrections, the initiators of such a project will provide the housing committees with a survey. In accordance with the results of the survey, if there is a sufficient number of housing committees that agree to provide financial support, the project will go ahead and the city bank will make a corresponding loan available to the organisers.

There is no doubt that the wide ranging enterprises of common benefit will have almost unanimous support from the population, as represented by the housing committees.

Those living in the most unsanitary quarters will be moved to new housing while respecting the order of categories that have been drawn up by the hygiene doctors. If necessary, families of the same category will be sorted among each other.

Let's take another example: let's say that a given city district feels the need for a new hospital. A group of doctors, housekeepers, pharmacists, paramedics and so on, with the participation of architects, would develop a detailed plan of the new institution, they would draw up an estimate of costs and an outline of rules to regulate its operations. Once they receive financial support from the housing committees, they will be able to carry out the initiative.

[4] "One can imagine how the very character of the periodical press will change when, instead of focusing on fruitless, harmful, political struggle and toxic politics filled with hostility and malice, it will focus the discussion on publically useful and practical questions."

itation and the invention of laws, nor the bloody convulsions of Bolshevism, nor the tactical mistakes of anarchists, with their motiveless takeovers, that will create the possibility of a social revolution. It is rather life itself, history itself, which is unfolding at an accelerated pace, pushed by the impetus of the World War.

By working towards the elimination of labour exploitation and the establishment of economic equality, the social revolution will thereby eliminate the root of the emergence and existence of authority, it will destroy territorial statehood and will lead to the commonwealth of peoples, removed from mutual oppression and without state borders.

The process of disintegration of state power, which is now taking place before our eyes, will give scope for the development of independent groupings that come together naturally. Territorial communities will expand the scope of their economic life, seizing the production of wealth, equal distribution and the exchange of goods, under the leadership of a new administrative body, the council of workers' representatives.

The makings of a new social order may develop and come to fruition at a rapid pace in real life, but they may also linger in their development or stall for a lengthy period of time.

The task of the anarchist is to look into the course of history and introduce a conscious element into the construction of a new society by the hands of the working people themselves.

If we are to summarise the above mentioned text, we see that the accelerated development of contemporary social life leads to the fulfilment of the following principles:

1) Equal distribution

2) A baseline of contentment

3) Collective production without owners and landowners

4) Abolition of the private property right to rent for land and residence

5) Disintegration of state power until its complete abolition or political anarchy

6) Socio-economic order organised by councils of workers' representatives

7) Inter-communal solidarity without state borders and, with that,

8) The end of war for good

All of this constitutes the next stage in the development of civilised countries. A social revolution is thereby brewing.

A social revolution is only possible if it is anarchist.

(POCHIN, 1918)

those with incurable mental issues and inherent offenders who suffer from untreatable moral or emotional imbalances); as well as sewerage, water supply, the provision of electrical energy to residential buildings and factories, tram circulation, telephone communication etc.

All current public services of a similar nature must, naturally, be transferred to the trade unions and their respective branches of public services. By eliminating the pernicious aspect of politics that brings about strife among the ranks of workers from various categories of the same enterprise, professional unions will transform into an organic association, geared towards technical oversight, that includes both professional and ordinary workers for the common benefit. They will cease to be spaces rife with violence and quantitative suppression over technical knowledge.

All these public services will exist as long as they are subsidised by interested housing committees. Those services that will be provided universally, such as the tramways, health service, water supply, sewerage, lighting and so on, should be free of charge. This will reduce the unproductive expenses on accounting, monitoring and so on.

Public services that have lost their significance will be condemned in and of themselves to abolishment as a result of an end to subsidising on the part of the housing committees. However, in its place, when it comes to the development of new needs and general progress, new associations and whole branches of public services will emerge thanks to the initiative of technical and professional groups that are financially supported by the housing committees.

Allow me to make it clearer with an example: let's say that a given city is densely populated (like, for instance, Moscow, where families among a population of 400,000 huddle into single rooms) and that after an equitably implemented resettlement of residents in accordance with hygiene norms and the provision of practical

of assistance to neighbours in suffering, a fact that is disgraceful for a civilised society[3].

It will not be difficult for each city to take measures to prevent the insupportable influx of those in need while social care is being organised in the provinces.

Then, the housing committees will have to deal with the fate of those homeowners whose property falls under their supervision. The people's conscience is sensitive to any injustice. The housing committees must provide for those former homeowners who are not fit for work and to help those who have no particular profession or source of income to adjust to the new living conditions by finding them appropriate work even if it is to manage or supervise the houses.

I will not dwell on further details of the house committees' direct functions, which they can perform either on an individual basis or in a direct alliance with their neighbours outside: they are just as varied and multifaceted as life itself. I will only mention that they will receive all the functions related to personal certification, registration, issuance of various documents and the like, which were formerly kept in police stations, and now in commissariats, so that society is kept in a more firm dependence on the state.

IV– The organisation of citywide services by housing committees

Secondly, the public problems and needs of the population that cannot be met through direct agreement among separate housing committees, due to either the logistical impossibility of face-to-face issue-based discussions or the technical and professional incompetence of housing collectives, will be brought to the fore. These include issues of public education and of the health service (which includes hospices for the elderly in need of special care, homes for

[3] "We are told that this principle has been put into practice in Kronstadt and that the disabled receive bespoke assistance from the housing committees according to the established subsistence standard."

QUESTIONS OF THEORY AND PRACTICE: ON ANARCHIST LITERATURE, STRATEGY AND ORGANISATION

—A few words about anarchist literature

Having reviewed pieces of anarchist literature, periodicals and brochures, one would be amazed at the lack of clarity and level of confusion that prevails among many of our comrades. The great majority of articles lack a connection between anarchist thought and the method of analysing social phenomena. This is not about the substantially numerous articles, wherein delirious, almost pathological and incoherent turns of phrase replace common sense. There are also other articles that are consistent in logical form and contain witty statements. However, these articles require the reader to expend particular effort to grasp their connection with anarchist teaching as well as with real life. As a result, our literature loses a significant part of its propagandistic power.

There are two main reasons for this: the first is what Prof. Sombart named the *mechanization* [1] of ideas and slogans by political parties; the second is that many anarchist writers neglect the method

[1] Mechanisation here in its social sense refers to how ideas are readily accepted and regurgitated, if they align with one's preconceived ideological beliefs, without any deep questioning of their essence and meaning.

of learning about social phenomena that lies at the heart of scientific anarchism– *the method of evolutionary thinking*[2].

The political parties of statists strive to recruit as many members to their ranks as possible in the quickest time possible with the aim of swiftly taking power (whether by voting or through violence). That is why they fail to propagandise their ideas in earnest, instead, they are carried away by trying to recruit as many people as possible without concern for their ideological training. In order to achieve the immediate goal of seizing power as soon as possible (both socialist and bourgeois political parties alike), they engage in agitation. This agitation foments an intolerable atmosphere of enmity, reaching the point of misanthropy, where one loses sight of what one stands for and where words lose their direct meaning, are torn away from reality, deprived of real content.

Anarchist literature has not avoided being tainted by this distortion of concepts and of words that express those concepts. Slogans such as "social revolution", "federation from the bottom up", "free commune", "anarchist communism", "elimination of private property" are, in essence, cut off from real life. They are mechanised terms or simply distorted concepts, which either require the insertion of real content or need to be discarded. Anarchist literature is repeating these and other such slogans while rarely attempting to introduce any practical content.

Another omission in anarchist literature is that many of our comrades, newspaper contributors and authors of leaflets and pamphlets, lack any systematic or methodical approach to questions. They take topics that interest them and analyse them in an arbitrary and superficially critical manner, through the lens of prepackaged dogmatic anarchist beliefs, from which they make some kind of practical conclusions. They fail to grasp the linkages between the present topics under consideration and the past, in order

[2] Evolutionary thinking supports the idea that life around us is in a state of constant flux and change rather than static and fixed.

After organising its financial apparatus in this manner, the housing committees, just like individuals, will not lose the full rights to their current accounts.

However, due to the current conditions under the capitalist economy, not all houses produce a yield that is proportional to the number of residents and that is why the city bank must implement an equal per capita breakdown of the sums on current accounts for each housing committee, in proportion to the number of residents. Thus, the current accounts that will be apportioned equally will be at the inherent and unrestricted disposal of each committee.

III– The immediate public functions of house committees: guarantee of public safety, social care etc.

Housing committees will be able to directly make use of their current accounts in order to meet those common needs that they themselves can satisfy– more optimally and expediently than governmental municipalities.

The housing committees organise the external security of the city by hiring reliable agents that are known to them, instead of recruiting, through bureaucratic means, all kinds of urban policemen or red guards who do not fulfil the expectations that are ascribed to them.

The housing committees will immediately take responsibility for social care. Assistance can be properly provided at their place of residence to all those unable to work, the elderly, widows, at the place of residence, those burdened with underage children, the disabled, orphans, the numerous victims and cripples from the war who we see more and more, begging on the streets.

Only in this way can we prevent the abuse of the feeling of compassion towards one's neighbour and the lack or even absence

will also have private banknotes in circulation. What the private banks tried to organise on its own initiative is all the more feasible for the union of city banks.

associations and their number should not be marked by any kind of administrative government, even if it calls itself vanguard revolutionary or democratic. These funds will come to be on their own, under the free initiative of a number of committees in various parts of the city, which will gradually unite the rest of the committees.

These funds can service families and individuals as they act as individual saving and consumption funds supplied by the income from property in the district. As district funds are established to meet real life demands, they are united into either a citywide union of district funds or a city bank.

The city bank will uphold the principle of immunity and full independence of both individual and house current accounts, and will become a durable and reliable component of the city's economic life.

The city banks of the capital and other large cities, once they form unions, will transform into a powerful financial institution of the country. They will: take charge of issuing banknotes; introduce a metric monetary system and assist the failed state bank that was established by the state for the sake of its own rule; become liquidated with the least possible material shocks for working people. At the same time, the union of city banks will drive out all private capitalist banks that have become redundant in large urban centres[2].

[2] "Following on from this idea, it is interesting to note the following message from Petrograd, which appeared in Russkiye Vedomosti of November 24, 1917, No. 257: Bonds of private banks.– In view of the fact that the State Bank does not issue cash to private banks, the latter came up with the idea of issuing their own bonds, which would be in circulation among bank customers on a par with bank notes. These bonds will represent special obligations, guaranteed by the signatures of members of the board of private banks, at the request of the client, to pay the amount affixed to the obligations with credit notes. For the first time, the idea of issuing such bonds arose in Petrograd, when the issue of moving out the banks was being decided. At present, the issue of bonds issuance is under discussion and development. It is quite possible that, along with state owned banknotes, we

to establish their place in the progressive development of history. Hence the confusion in tactics employed by anarchists: discrepancies in the assessment of tactics used by other political parties, intolerance towards some and enthusiasm for others (like the Bolsheviks). In short, the mistakes that anarchists are currently making.

All this is the result of the fact that we lose sight of the abovementioned method of studying phenomena, which lies at the heart of scientific anarchism– the method of evolutionary thinking.

It is not right to look at social issues only through the lens of benefit and harm. It is necessary to explore them from the perspective of culture, of *evolution*.

The strength of the works of our teacher Kropotkin lies precisely in the fact that he widely uses this method and was the first to apply it, more meaningfully than others, in substantiating the doctrine of anarchism. That is why he is considered one of the main founders of modern anarchism. And since this method is scientific and there is no reason to object to well-founded scientific arguments, almost all of our opponents bow before the conclusions of comrade Kropotkin and only divert the fulfilment of his ideals … into the distant future.

As if scientific anarchism predetermines the fulfilment of its ideals in a given year and does not consciously strive to accelerate the process, which rarely anybody argues against! The distant or near future is an amorphous concept. No one can foresee the pace of the progressive development of history so as to calculate the envisaged duration for the fulfilment of evolution in anarchy.

The application of this evolutionary method by Kropotkin constitutes the main value in his works. Take "The Conquest of Bread": the book begins with a presentation in a few strokes of the history of culture, the history of the development of the means of production, and ends with a detailed study of the level attained by this culture. This is why Kropotkin's exposition acquires such force of persuasiveness.

Any theory must be consistent with the practice of the party that lends credence to it. Let's take the land issue. How many of our comrades are trying to cut it down with one stroke of the pen, just like the statist socialists? But those statists count on the power of coercion and punishment (the question now is not to what extent life can be remodelled by laws). While we anarchists repeat the generic slogans of the socialists, which are based on coercion. And we do not even ask ourselves about the level of culture attained by agriculture in a given province, in the remote outskirts. We even forget that in Russia, or in the country that was once named Russia– given the intensified disintegration of its statehood– there are still almost primitive, nomadic peoples.

Even if we speak of cultural centres, we lose sight of the evolutionary method in scientific anarchism and get carried away by the social experiments of statist parties such as the Bolsheviks. We forget that their decrees from above will not change life as it is, that even the best of laws will only bring about confusion and devastation which, in the end, will affect working people with all their weight.

In general, scientific anarchism, like socialism, envisages the socialisation of the tools of production in the framework of the evolution of production. An anarchist-revolutionary who intends to shift from theory to practice must first find out for themselves, through concrete experience, how to actually put this into practice. Only then can they teach workers to implement this practice with their own hands so as not to disrupt or stop the production that feeds them and their families. All attempts at social revolution are doomed to failure without the fulfilment of this condition. They will degenerate into never-ending plots aimed at ill-conceived and groundless seizure of power or reliance on state power. Some anarchists have got so carried away with these plots that they have even begun to assist the social-democratic Bolshevik Party in seizing power. May the statist socialist parties fight among themselves and wrest power from each other's hands. Every such episode of

When the committee takes care of the delivery of bread rations to each inhabitant, when it provides its services to every family in order to supply them with a given consumer product, when it organises the security of each tenant, then there remains no room for politics, no room for discord and enmity among the people.

The housing committees are gradually developing and expanding the scope of their activities. They enter into agreements and alliances with neighbours on the street, in the district and in the whole city. These natural groupings are what constitute the development of the initiative of the masses. This is the guarantee and the starting point for the development of the optimal and just social system, based on actual equality and real solidarity and freedom.

There is no point in looking for real justice in the deceitful programmes of the political parties that fought to seize power and, once they take hold of it, they trample on all the freedoms, the solidarity and equality in the name of which they involved the masses in fierce and often bloody struggle.

Let us dwell in more detail on the creative social role that housing committees can and should play at this point in history. Indeed if the state, which always actively wastes the creative forces of the people, is not to put them to death or stifle their development for a long period of time.

II– Housing committees' district funds and the city bank

We can separate the needs of urban life into two categories: those that can be met directly by separate housing committees and those that require the cooperation of numerous committees which would expand across the city as a mutual association.

Special housing funds have to be at the basis of satisfying both types of needs. Such funds are currently held by the treasurers of housing committees. As the scope of activities of the committees expands, especially as they have at their disposal relatively significant revenue from rent, the question of forming local and grouped district funds for the housing committees, with separate current accounts for each one, naturally arises. Moreover, regions with fund

the modern, civilised person, the level of which would not seem so low if it were not for distorted by those in power and the political parties seeking power (as in, the rule of a handful of people over everyone else).

The political parties, which are fighting to hold onto power or are trying to take hold of it, inevitably sow discord and enmity in society and even in the ranks of various workers' groups.

Away from all the party struggles and fruitless political strife, the housing committees are creating that sturdy cement of solidarity in equality and of common benefit in mutuality, without which socialism would be unthinkable.

In this regard, the housing committees represent a durable foundation on which it would be possible to confidently build a new system, soldering the entirety of society into an organic whole and corresponding to a the people's powerful impulse for social justice– an impulse that was so masterfully capitalised on by the Bolsheviks for their party aspirations.

Having practically become the owners of all urban properties for rent, thanks to the Bolshevik government's attempt to seize their revenues, the housing committees should themselves, or under their direct supervision, make use of the resources that have been freed up in order to satisfy all those needs of public life and the urban economy that need to be met equally no matter what a given city dweller thinks.

Only on this basis of the satisfaction of all of everyone's basic needs, with everyone's unanimous participation, will that social mould become possible, without which the practical implementation of socialism would be unimaginable.

The housing committees represent those foundational cells of the social organism, where all strata of the population, who until now lived separately under the same roof, converge in a close circle in order to meet the common needs in an optimal manner.

All disunited efforts in the pursuit of equality and solidarity will merge into one stream in line with the housing committees.

strife between them may add an additional clog in the foundation of statehood, which will help us in our endeavour. But this will come at the cost of unnecessary and unavoidable sacrifices by the people!

The main obstacle in our context of disintegrating power lies not only in statehood, but also in the inability and ill-preparation of the workers to take production into their own hands. The main impediment is that all socialists, in their passion for propaganda of the theory of class struggle, have even divided the working people into two, now almost hostile, camps: technically trained intellectual workers and ordinary craftsmen and workers.

A struggle among the latter group– between the so-called qualified skilled artisans and ordinary workers– is now unfolding.

Without universally shared ethical principles on general enmity and the struggle of all against all, in relation to both friends and foes, it is impossible to build a new order of social life.

It is not only the power of statehood that is delaying the evolution of production towards its socialisation, but also the absence of a conscious awareness of evolution that has already taken place, as well as a lack of preparation on the part of the workers to implement it.

As we lose the evolutionary thread in our thinking, we deviate away from practice in our truly revolutionary strategy and our tasks of direct action. Instead, we take part in the statist parties' struggle to seize power, albeit with reservations. *But people are not aware of our reservations; they see and judge us by our actions.* In this way, we indirectly reinforce the workers' faith in the possibility of a state-driven renewal of the social system, confusing our slogans with theirs. And thereby, we assume part of the responsibility for their mistakes, for the disastrous economic consequences of their tactics and for the bloodshed.

As if the anarchists would not have to answer for the sins of the statist Bolsheviks before the people!

We need to dissociate ourselves from the social utopias of all the statists and from their tactics that involve unbridled violence and arbitrary use of power before it is too late.

—On the revolutionary methods of some anarchists

Fascinated by the ephemeral success of the statist socialists (Bolsheviks) among the workers and soldiers, some anarchists have followed in their footsteps even in their methods of struggle, in their revolutionary tactics. They have done anarchism a disservice by mixing their overarching party doctrine with the practical elements of state socialism. They have forgotten that from the point of view of statist socialists, oppression and abuse of power are permissible, including: arrests, personal inquiries and inspections in private lodging, censorship in its crudest form (ravaging and shutting down others' press houses), the seizure of printing houses against the will of those working there etc. All these methods of struggle by statist parties in power or vying for power represent an infringement of the most foundational principles of anarchist doctrine. They ruin the fruits of propaganda, created at the cost of prolonged and stubborn efforts: they dissuade the conscious parts of society from our teaching because their tactics are too obviously at odds with the ethics of our teaching. After all, anarchy is not a doctrine of fanatical sectarians, of narrow dogmatists who pillage all those who disagree, all those who think differently. Anarchy is, first and foremost, about the freedom of the individual, bordering on the *equal freedom* of another individual, whoever they are according to their convictions, and on natural morality without sanction and coercion.

An anarchist who raises their hand to search another person, even to look for a weapon, is no longer a proud ideological anarchist; they are shorter than the last standing policeman; the latter, at least, does not hide behind the banner of freedom. An anarchist who has crossed the threshold of someone else's home to search them, even, again, if only in search of weapons, is a criminal against

in the streets. They would have likely dealt well with this task if it were not for the interference of the government, which is already spitefully suspicious, fearful of rivalry and manifestations of independent public initiative, and therefore always counter-revolutionary, even when it hides behind the social revolution.

From its very inception, the housing committees have also sought to regulate relations between tenants and homeowners. They advocated for the common interests of tenants against those of private homeowners, insisting on making repairs where necessary and on regulating the heating in houses with central heating and so on.

The idea of alienation of land in large cities with real estate in common use hovers over the public consciousness, similar to the idea of transferring all rural land to the working peasantry. This idea became practically feasible solely thanks to the organisation of housing committees.

The government that was established in Moscow after the October Revolution has not proposed a single new and productive idea geared towards the solution of this overdue task. All it does is try to use the enormous source of income from property for its own purposes, for the domination of one party over the others. It is a party that, with the help of brute force at its disposal and the arrogance of an ignoramus, manages over everybody's accumulated wealth, on which the masses have to work on their initiative. Its aim is to create a durable and renewed social order and not the mirage of socialism in the imagination of a bunch of fanatics and their list of "degrees".

The centres of culture and moral direction in the country, the industrial cities of Russia, must oppose the despotism of the authorities without any regrets about the past. There should be at least an alternation of the so-called "legal order", without a desire for "hard" government", and instead based on the initiative of the masses. This would entail an initiative based on the ethics of customary law of

In this essay, I intend to outline the principles of a social order that can appear in large, urban centres from the living nucleus of the social system being created– the housing committees which is actively operating at the present time. It can succeed if inductive reasoning based on knowledge, experience and observation, in other words, applied social science, is embedded in its practice.

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I– The emergence and expansion of the housing committees' original functions and prospects for the further development of their activities

The idea of the housing committees arose among the close circle of the indefatigable toiler, veteran and inspiration of the international labour movement– Peter Alekseevich Kropotkin. Thanks to its inherent vitality, it took root and spread at an unusually fast rate.

The principle that underlies the social scientific worldview of our teacher concerning the initiative of the masses has found a wide-ranging practical application in this initiative. It acts as a counterweight to the government that rules over everyone and "looks after" everything.

This initiative of the masses has outgrown its initial objective, having brought about the development of the housing committees, and it is now striving to transform into a productive and broad entity.

The housing committees initially set the task of facilitating the distribution of basic necessities– a task in the face of which the government, both as an autocracy and after the revolution, turned out to be ineffective in accomplishing satisfactorily. The housing committees gradually expanded their range of activities and set the aim of supplying the population in its remit with consumer products on cooperative principles.

During and after the October Revolution, the housing committees then organised the maintenance of public security in the houses themselves and also attempted to implement this

a lofty and pure doctrine, which our ideological opponents consider unattainable.

An anarchist who pillages another's, whether it be an enemy's, editorial office is not better than any crowned despot. They have also repressed freedom of speech in the name of imaginary public interests. Such anarchists often ascribe their inability to organise their own press, their mediocrity and helplessness, solely to the material power of their opponents.

Why, then, are the works of our most esteemed teachers so easily disseminated that even weak anarchist groups publish them and still break even (but, unfortunately, they do not always present a public report on the proceeds from publications, as is customary among our Western European comrades)?

Why is it that commercial enterprises, both here and abroad, willingly publish the foundational works of our doctrine in different languages?

Why is it that durable bodies of anarchist thought are being formed in Europe and America?

Ruining other people's media, even the bourgeois one, with any weapon other than the pen, suits only statists, and represents a crime against anarchism.

For some of our Russian comrades, "occupations" have become a peculiar form of activism: the seizure of printing houses and of property.

When it comes to the seizure of printing houses… what ethics and principles give you the right to break into a workspace, whether good or bad, that feeds dozens, maybe hundreds of workers and their families? And this without any guarantee that you would manage to feed them?

As for the seizure of property, of the summer houses of Durnovo… there was a time when, perhaps sincere, but narrow sighted ideologues thought of teaching theft as a means of struggle against private property, as a form of partial expropriation. However, it turned out that it was possible to apply this means

of struggle to objects of personal use, rather than to tools of collective production.

As a result, all professional thieves started hiding behind this "theory", and only then did those peculiar theoreticians fall silent and begin to dissociate themselves from them.

The theoreticians of "occupations" raised their heads again and only when hooligan gangs and rioters enter their camp will they begin to dissociate themselves from them.

Expropriation is the main task of the social revolution. The hurry in which many of our young comrades are in to move from words to action is understandable. However, it is necessary to make sure that we fulfil our goals, rather than to reach the opposite outcome.

Expropriation of the capitalist's private property (which, of course, does not include their objects of personal use, to which they have as much right as anybody), signifies its transfer to public use.

This act of social justice must be undertaken thoughtfully, otherwise it might yield the opposite result– appropriation.

The present war has taught us how to accomplish this; it has led to the formation of special professional bodies, a whole new branch of the public service, which can carry out the goal of the social revolution with the utmost guarantees. These include food agencies, which are designed to evenly distribute edible products, clothing and dwellings. If these agencies turn out to not always be perfect then anarchists should strive with all their might to improve the way things are done, to perfect their method of working.

As far as the poor, the disabled and the unemployed are concerned, organised social mutual assistance is also necessary in these cases, and not the method of "appropriation" and giving out goods to everyone, a method that in its essence resembles bourgeois charity. Our comrades in Kronstadt have already put this into practice; the disabled receive assistance from their housing committees in line living standards, from the yield of houses.

The social collapse brought about by the World War has manifested itself even quicker and with greater force in Russia than in other countries. Russia has faced the practical issue of establishing new social orders earlier than other countries. This is why many believe that Russia stands at the forefront of the international socialist movement.

The development of a new life might not succeed and so, again due to the backwardness of Russia in its ethical, judicial, technical and economic relations, the reaction will be just as violent and unstoppable as the revolution itself.

In order to prevent this kind of reaction, all cultural strata of the population, all supporters of progressive doctrines, all conscious workers of physical and mental labour must make the effort to find common ground for their practices and to lay a durable foundation for a renewed life.

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Conscious and inductive human reasoning, embodied in science, has conquered the elemental forces of nature, subjugated the laws of life and biological development to serve its own practical purposes. It must use conscious and planned calculation to contribute to social development by eliminating the empirical impact of government's crude power and its corresponding state apparatus, unfit for the future phases of civilisation.

Let the one-sided and dogmatic followers of the ageing and long disputed scientific theory of socialism speak again of a new "utopia". The ideas developed in this essay are based on those real factors that have been outlined and have already found a well known practical application in life.

I noted in another article[1] some of those new factors, caused under the influence of the World War, the Russian revolution and those striving to rebuild the mode of public life on new principles.

[1] Is an anarchist social revolution possible? (Atabekyan, Pochin, 1918)

been called up for self-organisation and unification for the sake of self-defence.

Isn't this where the roots of the people's militia should develop?

After returning fighters home group by group, won't the army be able to reorganise itself territorially into district or local groups with its direct command staff– groups that are prepared to move the march battalions into the acting army, while fairly observing taking turns, in order to partially replace and replenish it?

For such a passionate defence of the homeland, we would need a fervent and active solidarity movement, as it exists in the life of ants, and a close-knit union of free workers, rather than a struggle between capital and labour, exploitation of man by man and greedy profit at the expense of the disadvantaged.

Help us to clarify our vague thoughts, dear teacher.

Moscow, 28/29 October 1917

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The experience of finding ways to turn the current social order into a harmonious anthill of equal and free workers, capable of both creating and defending themselves from external invasion, represents the crux of this essay.

Essay on an urban social system without government and coercion

This World War, which is unprecedented in its scale– from the number of people involved to the number of casualties, from technological tensions to material destruction– has shattered the economic and moral foundations of people's lives.

The former social mould of the capitalist economy and elective, so-called "democratic" government is cracking at its foundation.

The less developed a country is, the weaker the bonds of common legal and economic relations between different strata of society, the more violently this breakdown manifests itself.

The downfall of the old foundations naturally brings forth the practical task of establishing a new order.

We should all take them as an example. The days of fruitless sentimental speeches and lamenting about the fate of the poor are over. The time has come to move to an organised betterment of their condition. Through expropriations and seizures, from time to time we will give some people the opportunity to gain benefits, while almost always giving those in need that opportunity.

But the worst scenario would be if through personal and group expropriations, we ourselves may bring about moral decay in our environment, legitimising abuse of power and personal discretion, in the absence of public control. At the same time, we would open up space for all sorts of unsound and criminal elements, including those monstrous and unfortunate products of the moribund capitalist system.

We are opposed to a war of conquest, we no longer want a slaughter of people, and some of us, with a light heart, have joined the fratricidal civil war started by one party of statist socialists in order to wrest power from the hands of another.

They naively believed their determined edicts, they succumbed to their ability to take advantage of social disasters, the darkness that people inhabit, their destitution, for party purposes. They imagined that there is a social revolution happening wherever shots are fired; they forgot that the true revolution is the school of freedom, and not rampant abuse of power and the oppression at the hands of the authorities.

Our predecessors on the revolutionary path could not even allow the thought of such deviations from revolutionary ethics. But that was under an autocracy, and now the leaders of the revolution in power have themselves become autocrats!

The overall moral savagery caused by this protracted World War has affected uncultured Russia more than any other country, and its impact on a certain section of Russian anarchists has been no less than on the rest of society.

It is high time for all of us anarchists to apply the weapon of criticism also to ourselves, to strictly coordinate our actions and

our tactics with the ethical principles of anarchism, with our ideals. Bleeding, impoverished mankind is suffocating in an atmosphere of moral decay. It is rushing after the extreme parties to quench the thirst for social justice.

The Russian people have started becoming disillusioned with their latest infatuation– state socialism– and are now demonstrably inclining towards anarchism.

In our current time, it is not the one with nerves of steel (i.e. *morally more unintelligent*), but the one who is *morally higher and stronger* who will be victorious in the universal thirst for justice.

Will the anarchists rise to the occasion of their historical call? Will they implement the moral foundations of their doctrine in real life, and above all in their tactics? Or will the people, disillusioned with them, turn to the old reactionary, but extant, foundations?

—On organisation: federation or aggregation?

The question of organisation is a pitfall that anarchist doctrine has hardly managed to cross over on its way from the realm of theoretical constructs to real-life propaganda. Faced with the difficulties associated with this task, people impatient by nature sometimes completely refuse to solve it and delve into a misanthropic individualism, or they hasten to agree to compromise practical solutions.

One of these compromise solutions is the organisation of so called *federations of anarchist groups*.

The word "federation" is far from being a newcomer to the anarchist movement. With the collapse of the First International in the early 1870s, the anarchist current in the "Jura Federation" was covered for the first time since it had broken away. However, it was a "federation" at the time, inherited from the International, which somehow recognised the guiding elective principle within the system of its organisation.

As a result of this fundamental contradiction between anarchist theory and the practical element of its organisation, the Jura Federation soon disintegrated, and the movement took the form of sep-

You suggest that we cover our eyes and join the ranks of the army, such as it is.

But under whose direction? How should it be organised? Organised by whom? In the name of protecting which real values?

These are the questions that have been reflected upon and have caused even more disarray in the army than Bolshevik propaganda.

We cannot silently circumvent these issues. We cannot demand that people sacrifice the most valuable thing that they have, and that which is most dear to their loved ones– their lives without answering these questions.

We can agree on self-defence against the invasion of a foreign conqueror. But how should this be organised?

A people's militia is on my mind.

But these words need to be inculcated with concrete substance.

A people's militia implies, above all, a voluntary impulse. This existed during the overthrow of the autocracy, of the archetypal form of political oppression over the masses. It seems to me that a secondary upsurge in the people's spirit will come to be only when economic oppression is overthrown, when the exploitation of labour is abolished.

Is this now possible and how? To what extent?

The organisation of self-defence from foreign militarism should be possible even now, before, or more probably, during the uprooting of the old economic order.

How and where should we find that starting point, that fulcrum that will open the way to a transition from the simple to the complex, from the local to the universal, from a weak unit to a strong union?

The current civil war in Moscow has brought the practical issue of that very self-defence against possible pogroms to the fore. Having lost faith in the warring state, the police and the red guards, public opinion has sought recourse to the housing committees for the organisation of self-defence. The housing committees have

gleaming hope of creating a free social order on ethical principles without exploitation of labour? Will you not save them from their many mistakes, their waste of energy and, at times, pointless sacrifices? People who are keen on your ideas– I'm talking about simple, sincere workers– will they not take heed of your voice of reason, experience and love for humanity?

A struggle is taking place now: the roar of heavy vehicles rushing around, shots being heard, barricades being erected, trenches being dug up. In the search for a better future, brothers are raising their hands against one another and your voice is not ringing out amidst all this awful disorder. At least to keep your numerous students– who are more numerous than you might surmise– away from this fratricidal war.

The bubbling revolution will not end in a flash. Help us to look around and understand the past so that we do not make more mistakes in the future and to find a guiding thread for today. Regarding the burning practical issues of life now, you once told me: "Search for it yourself, I am also searching…"

We are searching, dear teacher, but you should help us and be closer to us.

Let's start with the question of the war, the most pressing and severe issue.

I have spoken about it with many comrades. These are sincere and committed comrades who are now, perhaps, sacrificing their lives as they consider it necessary for the cause.

Absolutely all of them assume the moral duty of struggling against militarism, no less against German militarism than against others. In this sense, they accept the war not only as a form of self-defence but also a struggle against the odious enemy of the working people– a struggle that has to be taken to its triumphant end.

But how should this struggle be organised? How should we wage a war within the ranks of the state-organised army of today? We are all lost when it comes to this question.

arate, quite often very unstable, independent groupings, usually rallying around one or more comrades with a more developed personal initiative.

The number of groups multiplied and they were, in outward appearance, unrelated to one another, except for their common ideological background.

From time to time, attempts were made to coordinate the activities of individual groups by convening "conferences" (congresses), but their practical results turned out to be negligible as no binding decrees were passed.

Scientific congresses contribute little to science, in terms of the impossibility of reaching binding decisions, science itself develops through painstaking laboratory and desk work Similarly, anarchist congresses have given those comrades who have gathered together the opportunity to communicate with one another and exchange opinions, but that is all. They played no organisational role. The modern anarchist movement has grown out of and strengthened in those initial groups.

The "federations of anarchist groups" that have recently popped up in Russia with their "councils of federations" in essence replicate the obsolete past of the anarchist movement and represent a complete and fundamental failure of strategy. In their appearance, these federations imitate the organisations linked to statist political parties with their "council of federations" and their federation seal etc. However, considering their external form along with the ideological content of anarchist doctrine, they are practically reduced to fiction, to the mere appearance of an organisation that in reality does not exist.

Only this fiction can explain the appearance of a document such as the "Manifesto" released on behalf of the "Moscow Federation of Anarchist Groups", published in the ninth issue of Anarchy. In addition to the plethora of dangerous ideas, the Manifesto, in essence, preaches a state-socialist mode of organisation on a pan-Russian scale. It simply tries to mask this statist principle by the mention

of "unification from the bottom up on a federal basis". The statist principle (despite its federal name) is mentioned in the Manifesto as the organisation of an "external" exchange by the All-Russian Union of Labour, and the concept of "external" is inherent only in territorial statehood.

There is no doubt that this Manifesto, posturing as the expression of the idea of a whole "federation of anarchist groups", reflects nothing more than some person's own ideas, and not the programme of a whole organisation, which is more or less anarchist in nature.

Where there are no common binding decrees, there can be no political organisation in the conventional sense of the word.

The anarchist movement in civilised countries developed thanks to the efforts of certain individuals and groups, without claiming to seize power through the ballot box or through plots and physical violence. Such individuals and groups are, essentially, organised. They represent an ideological association, a practical intermingling of efforts made on the part of separate and homogeneous elements within a common structure, but without a centre. They do not constitute a federation, but rather an aggregation of sorts, to use a scientific term.

There is no doubt that in order to further reinforce the existing ties among anarchist groups, they should increase the ideological and practical threads that connect them. However, for this, it is enough to have physical gathering places where comrades could meet more often, exchange opinions and coordinate their actions. This requires anarchist clubs and, in fact, organisations incorrectly called "federations of anarchist groups" play this role.

Recently, as the anarchist movement has developed and expanded, the publishing means of individual groups are no longer able to disseminate ideas widely among people who are ready to accept them. There is no need for anarchists to unite in a federation, which would violate their principles and plunge them into the world of fiction, in order to meet this urgent need. They need

THE SOCIAL TASKS OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEES (ESSAY ON AN URBAN AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE WITHOUT GOVERNMENT ANDCOERCION)

"You did not want socialism, so you will have a seven-year war, a thirty-year war"– Herzen, 1848

"We can now see, in fact, its beginning. We will have a war of thirty years if everyone with a heart, mind and knowledge does not put their energy into preventing it through the restructuring of society"– P. Kropotkin in an open letter to workers in Western Europe

"There is no poison more vile than a government ruling people..."– M. Gorky ("New Life, no. 205, 19 December 1917)

In lieu of a prelude (extract from a letter to our teacher)

...More and more urgent practical demands are daily being brought to the fore by the ferment of life that is bubbling up all around us.

Our working comrades are looking for a path in the darkness towards those high ideals of ethical and cultural possibilities that you have so charmingly outlined in your works. Tens of thousands of Russian workers are reading your works and being influenced by the labour movement more and more. Is it not everyone's duty to help workers who are in search of practical ways to fulfil their

socialism– hasn't it failed? We did not see the development of the international labour movement. Meanwhile, the course of historical events have not given us any time to wait, as the blossoming of capitalism will take over all countries in equal measure and will embrace the agricultural areas of each country, for the sake of making the fulfilment of socialism, according to "scientific theory", a possibility. The construction of society on new principles is now an urgent task. Industrial centres, where socialism has taken root (the only place where this is possible), should not impose their socialism on undeveloped rural areas, which is what they are doing here, spreading the horrors of internecine war everywhere. They should instead develop mutual relations with them on new, federative principles.

This federation is necessary above all to ensure the military defence of our free development from militant, foreign capitalism.

The World War, having shattered all foundations of contemporary society, has given us the task of reassessing all our ideological values, especially class struggle, the International and antimilitarism.

Our teacher understood this thanks to his genius from the very beginning of the war. He has courageously taken on this difficult, torturous, but necessary work.

Most anarchists, who are stuck in their ways, are lacking in the sensitivity of understanding and independence of thought needed to keep up with him.

Our teacher lays down only a practical foundation for our common ideals. A living matter is dearer to him than a frozen doctrine.

Anarchists are not the ones who, in different ways, exclaim "communist anarchism, communist anarchism!". Anarchists include Kropotkin and all those who ascribe to his foundational ideas to the last.

(POHCHIN, 2018)

to make use of the tried and tested methods of cooperation and to create cooperative anarchist printing and publishing houses.

Foundations of the financial organisation of the Zemstvo[3] without the state and coercion (2 April 1918)

Report on the financial organisation of the Zemstvo on a free and federal basis, presented by Comrade. Al. Atabekyan on April 2, 1918 to the Klinsky Uyezd Conference of the Volost Soviets' Land Offices

Before going on to outline the current report, I consider it necessary to say a few words about the conditions and deep-seated social and political changes brought about by the ongoing World War. In these circumstances, the ideology of the narodniks[4], which combines the scientific knowledge of the professional intelligentsia with the untethered creativity of the masses, has found wider and more productive application.

The World War, which has torn productive labour away from tens of millions of workers, which has led to an enormous waste of untold wealth and has taken away innumerable human lives, has shaken the entire economic and social life of humankind. In Russia, it has led to the sensational collapse of the autocratic Empire, which was created through three centuries of war, violence and oppression. The war then destroyed Russian imperialism– the very elements of the Russian state as great power.

Admirers of the memory of its old statehood lament the collapse of Russia as a great power. They are keen on seeing a Great Russia (to use P.A.Kropotkin's term) "in the role of Prussia in relation to the periphery of the empire". I have no doubt that after

[3] Zemstvo was a form of local self-government introduced by Emperor Alexander II in the 1860s as part of the Emancipation Reform. Different strands of socialists in principle supported this idea of local self-government but considered that this reform did not go far enough for various reasons.

[4] The ideology of the narodniks (whose name comes from the Russian word narod, meaning "the people") represented a form of socialism that focused on the rural population and rural life, in contrast to other strands of socialism that emphasised the revolutionary power of the urban working class.

the disintegration of its old statehood, there will soon come a time when the former subjects of the Russian Empire will want to unite, not under conditions of state oppression, but on free and federative principles, with full independence of self-determined territories. Let German imperialism now triumph, first against Russia and then against France and Italy. In any case, it will not be able to subdue the physical force of a free spirit. Peoples who have felt even for a moment how close they are to their cherished dreams freedom from the bureaucratic oppression of state power and the possibility of material satisfaction for all– cannot be kept under the yoke of brute mechanical force for a long time.

In order to nullify the victory of German imperialism, we need extensive, solidary and public initiative, as well as persistent productive work on free socialist principles. With these principles, the great Russian people would rather force its way towards the sea, towards the unification of mutual interests with neighbouring peoples, than with the bayonets of great-power statehood.

All living things are born, they grow and they change form. This is the rule for nature and human societies. The Soviet Federative Republic must take this path. At the latest Congress of Soviets, Lenin called the Soviet Republic the highest form of political structure, cleansed of the "oppressive apparatus of the state". Now is the time to realise this ideal state without oppression. Surely it is clear to everyone that any form of state power, in its essence, is oppressive, even if it is called Soviet. We must instil new elements into today's forms of statehood. We must reject any form of enforced measures. The concepts of "Soviet"[5] and "State Power" are mutually exclusive and we must unconditionally recognise the former and reject the latter.

[5] Soviet refers to the concept of an elected council (the literal meaning of "soviet") that operates on socialist principles and does not, as in this case, refer to the Soviet Union state.

The theory of class struggle, slim in its simplicity– the struggle of an international proletariat, united in its interests, against the bourgeoisie– has been shattered to dust in its first encounter with historical reality. It is already the fourth year that the *conscious* proletariat of two groups of warring states, in a coalition that includes all strata of society, have been fiercely at war with one another. What do we see in the Russian industrial centres, where capitalism has finally been defeated as an organised force and finds itself under the unbridled power of a dictatorship that is running in the name of the proletariat? The proletariat is powerless to organise a new social order because both its international and its internal unity turned out to be fictitious. Unskilled workers are waging a bitter struggle against skilled professionals over equal earnings. Elements of the proletariat that possess technical skills, suffering hardships and having been subject to an attack on their professional rights, have shied from both cohorts. Meanwhile, production is gradually dying away and everyone is precipitously being drawn towards an economic catastrophe. Theorists of socialism in power have not yet woken up to reality. They see the struggle of various professional categories among the proletariat as class struggle, according to their doctrine. They are exacerbating that struggle, inciting more hatred between them and making this civil war increasingly fierce and bloody.

Was Kropotkin not right in putting his hopes on the fact that "the unification of all strata of society for a common cause, brought about by the war, will not pass by without a trace, but it will lay the foundations for a more united life"?

We see the emergence of this unity in more developed countries. The internal struggle in those countries has not assumed disagreeable forms as it has in backward and dark Russia. The foundations of this unity involves a guarantee of a swift and less painful transition to new and fair social orders.

The main idea of the International– the international unity of the proletariat, which, in a united effort, was meant to bring about

Are there many people who have remained faithful to their principles like Kropotkin, who was not intoxicated by proximity to enormous power and rejected the position of Minister-Chairman offered to him by Kerensky? The generous half of the "anarchist ringleaders", who are attacking him for his supposed betrayal of his ideals, are themselves entwined closely with the "revolutionary government", in pursuit of paid positions. While the other half indulges in that in silence. Let's move on…

In the words of our teacher, anarchism is "not a sterile formula", it is not an abstract idea that is detached from life. No matter how we dream of the distant and near future, looking to create a better social life in the present, the practical issue of the World War hangs over our heads. Its outcome will affect the fate of the social question in our country. On the one hand, we see a powerful, capitalist and militarist statehood, while on the other, a spanless and backward agricultural country with a shattered industry dispersed all over the place. Isn't it clear that we have to unite the socialist, industrial centres, the future "free cities" of Russia, with the backward provinces on federative principles in order to oppose the military invasion of foreign capitalism with a united force, to ensure the further free development of socialism and anarchism in our country?

And now the Russian anarchists, who unanimously turned their backs on Kropotkin, have come round to the same idea "on their own". Recently, our teacher, when he showed me an article entitled "The Free City of Petrograd", bitterly told me the following: "It's a wonderful article… They've thought of this only now, when the German hordes could flood Petrograd any day now". This article outlines the programme of the federal make-up of Russia, long advocated by Kropotkin, which gives each constituent part the chance to develop freely and to be part of a system of mutual defence.

The theories that we painstakingly created during peacetime have been devastated by this war.

Perhaps none of you has thought of the fact that one cannot simultaneously counsel and govern. This contradictory combination of two mutually exclusive concepts arose from the preconception that the state, i.e. a large society, cannot exist without governmental power. Whereas the federative principle of the Soviet Republic, when understood correctly, actually excludes the concept of "state power", i.e. coercion. Pyotr Alekseevich Kropotkin, a veteran of the international liberation movement, is the most staunch champion of federalism. A federation equates to a free union that recognises the right of anybody who enters that union to be able to leave it once that federation no longer meets their needs and aspirations. We must put this free, federative principle into practice in all aspects of social organisation: in social services, in the production, exchange and distribution of consumer goods. The new financial system I propose for the organisation of the *Zemstvo* treasury and free public credit is based on this very principle.

I propose to call this envisaged institution the *Zemstvo People's Bank*.

The new zemstvo financial apparatus should be responsible for the supply of funds for public services and crediting of public commodity exchange, as well as of collective and individual labour, within the boundaries of a given zemstvo.

Let us first of all take a look at the issue of public services.

Public services such as public education, medical assistance, communications etc. require spending and, in reality, should not generate any income. The railways and highways should also be free to use. We will achieve this sooner than many people suspect. The expansion of this principle to consumer products entails the very essence of communism. In order to develop public services in the aforementioned direction, we need a financial system based on new principles.

Up until now, to cover the costs of maintaining public services, the state has diverted direct and indirect taxes into its treasury in order to cover the costs of maintaining public services. Officials, in

addition to payers, have disposed of these amounts at their discretion. It is true that various electoral institutions have been invented in order to pacify the awakened consciousness of the people: parliaments, state dumas, constituent assemblies. However, for anybody with common sense, it has become clear that all of this tedious business of popular representation has been reduced to a comedy. All these affairs, in essence, are controlled by officials who themselves compile lists of state revenues and expenditures. All officials and the whole bureaucracy have to be done away with for the logical development and enhancement of the Soviet federative structure. Professional labour unions should calculate their own estimates themselves for a given Zemstvo unit. They should distribute those funds per capita to the villages and ask the people– the mir– to discuss whether they want to accept or reject a given expense. In order to prevent the people from falling under the new tutelage of the bureaucracy, at least under the flag of the Soviets, and in order to actually abolish the "oppressive apparatus of the state", the working people must not let go of the funds collected through tax self-taxation for public needs.

However, on the other hand, there is no need to start collecting voluntary taxes in the villages at a time of making public expenses. That is why I suggest the Volost Soviets discuss a new system of finances. Thereafter, the population should be made aware of the new system and a programme should be proposed for approval by the very people paying the taxes– the rural communities. The new system is based on the cooperative principle. However, in contrast to current cooperative banks, this system is special in how its founders and main contributors are the rural communities themselves. The rural communities have to collect sums of money through self-taxation. The sums should approximately correspond to all previous taxes and fees, increasing them in proportion to the devaluation of the ruble and combining these fees in the common basket, in the Regional Zemstvo Bank, where the contributions will be kept separately, on the current account of every rural commu-

war, Kropotkin in no way supports the idea that the army should be taken from that construction process.

But what did our statist socialists do with the army after the revolution? They have completely ruined their "democratisation". The army is a technical organisation that requires extensive professional knowledge. They should not have "democratised" it through general elections, according to the principles of social-democratic statehood. They should have turned it into a professional organisation, analogous to syndicates, led by the same officers with ideological principles who, in their vast masses, during the overthrow of the autocracy, followed the people in unison with its soldiers.

For what purpose did Kropotkin call for defence and preach about strengthening the combative power of the army?

Definitely not for the reinforcement of national capitalism and imperialism, since he was the first to talk about the new history being created by the current war and the new conditions of social construction.

Was it not this idea that he developed when he said: "The immense work of social construction has begun. There is no longer any talk of utopia. We have to build the foundations that have already been outlined and planned without delay. It has long been time for workers to take the matter of reconstruction in their own hands, without hesitation and without the expectation that the State will do this for them".

"The crucial elements of social reconstruction have already been outlined by life itself: all the production of necessities, along with the distribution of wealth that has been produced, must be organised in view of meeting everybody's direct needs".

Isn't this what the whole programme of anarchist development, to be carried out without delay, all about?

These are the aims for which sake Kropotkin called for an army to defend them against aggressive, external militarism.

How has Kropotkin betrayed his ideals?

have drawn them into a senseless undertaking that can neither be accomplished nor can it yield any results".

While our Russian zimmerwaldists, with their call for a "holy war", did not call for a struggle with the German people, but they facilitated the strengthening of German militarism.

A dark and backward Russia had to go through a bitter experience in order to realise the necessity of self-defence. We too, as Russian anarchists, remained deaf to the warnings and appeals of our shrewd teacher and followed the "defeatists" in a gullible manner.

Since self-defence is necessary, we have to ask the following practical question: how do we achieve it?

The fight against a warring state can only be possible through state means. In other words, the attacking army of a capitalist state must be resisted by an army that is just as organised and, even, more equipped. We are stubbornly putting all our hopes on the internationalist, socialist revolution, on a universal, international rebellion.

We are now witnessing the fourth year of the World War, but no global rebellion. It is clear that the territorial economic union of all strata of society in various states has turned out to be more powerful than the spiritual union of the international proletariat.

However, the same causes can simultaneously lead to identical consequences: if the social revolution is not possible on a global scale, since not all peoples have achieved the necessary level of development, then, nevertheless, it can flare up straight away in several countries.

Even in this case, an emerging socialism cannot get by without an organised army, at least to protect itself from peoples that stand at lower levels of civilisation.

This, of course, does not mean that our army should be inherited from autocracy by the revolution and remain the same. Having asserted the new conditions for social construction at the start of the

nity that has made contributions. Without the approval and permission of the mirs, not a single penny will be spent of the money from the people's labour. Under this system, rural communities can safely collect more than is necessary for their current expenses. Nobody will have the right to spend in excess. Meanwhile, the trade unions and collectives of existing workers in the public services of the uyezd– teachers, medical and veterinary doctors, agronomists, foresters, etc.– together with the unions of the so-called "lower" and middle-level employees, will draw up agreed estimates for the entire uyezd, as well as for per-capita redistribution for villages. They will every now and then present them to mir assemblies or, in the spirit of our time, to Village Councils. The villages that approve proposed budgets allocate their respective share of the costs in full. They will then make use of all the envisaged public services free of charge. Those villages that reject the local budget, for a given part of it, will pay a comparatively higher fee for the use of the improved zemstvo public services.

There is no doubt that the estimates for public services that have been universally recognised, such as public education, medical assistance, communications, will be unanimously accepted. On the other hand, unproductive and unnecessary expenses cannot be imposed on the people. This is the essence of the financial system being proposed. Instead of being based on a centralised, state treasury, it would be based on a federative financial association of rural communities. It is a system of free cooperation.

The task at hand is not as complicated as it seems at first glance. There is a need for some more free initiative and creative will. Efforts will be required to obtain an initial set of relevant skills.

Nevertheless, the newly formed financial apparatus of the zemstvo– the People's Bank of the Zemstvo Uyezd– will provide the opportunity to take into account all the natural and cultural riches of the uyezd, all the tools of collective labour, agricultural economies, expropriated lands, factories and plants. *The Zemstvo People's Bank will thus make it possible to determine the extent of*

the use of the entire public good, just as food committees distribute consumer products.

Thereafter, the Zemstvo People's Bank, which takes into account all public wealth, will be able to finance industry and public trade (i.e. exchange of food and products).

The bank, with an ethical pledge from the rural communities and after a review by specialist experts, will provide a free loan for the unemployed, who are united in labour productive collectives, or even for individual artisans. It will serve as a powerful lever for the economic prosperity of the uyezd.

When our production will reach the required level, then rest assured, taking no heed of German reproval, that we will not remain without bread.

My comrades, the establishment of the Zemstvo People's Bank on sincerely federative principles without any coercion is what will facilitate the people's fulfilment of a free socialism that will take us to an even more complete ideal– *communist anarchism.*

Allow me to conclude shortly. Let's lend an ear to the wise advice of an experienced friend of the working people– Peter Alekseevich Kropotkin– who has entered the final quarter of a century of his life and still feeds himself by means of his own labour.

He prophetically predicted the following at the start of the war: "The current war is creating a new history. The war is creating new social conditions for the people. The unification of all strata of society under a common cause will not go by without leaving any trace, rather, it will lay the foundations of a more unified life". What does that mean?

It means that now that the foundations of the old political and economic system have been razed to the ground, we should remind ourselves of the uplifted spirits of the people in the first years of the war and create a new history by unifying all strata of society, but now without class and even without labour and professional privileges.

bouring lands and peoples, for the purpose of national enrichment, or under the pretext of historical destiny".

Without the unification of all strata of different peoples, including, of course, the proletariat, for the purpose of self-defence and attack, would this monstrous war, which is already entering its fourth year, be possible to such an extent and with so much horror?

Internationalists, based on their theoretical considerations, have throughout this long war kept telling us about international class solidarity.

And what of it?

After the triumph of the zimmerwaldists[1] in Russia and their seizure of power, what did they achieve? Didn't it lead to the declaration of a new war– a "holy war"? This is after they themselves destroyed the entire system of self-defence and the very possibility of self-defence!

Is it not clear that Kropotkin was right all along, as he preached about the struggle to wreck aggressive militarism?

We should not forget the following: there are times in the development of capitalist states when they try to clear the way for further industrial prosperity through military violence against other countries and peoples.

Isn't "the swift development of Germany's growing industry over the past 40 years" the crucial stimulus behind the aggressive nature of Teutonic militarism, which has been soldered into a single and whole nation?

Was Kroportkin not right in saying the following: "We all yearn for peace. None of us wants more bloodshed. However, desire is not enough. We need to have the power to force those who started it to put an end to the bloodshed. The German people are still not showing any signs that they have grasped the fact that their rulers

[1] 1 This is a reference to a group of international socialists representing more revolutionary, rather than reformist, elements, who participated in the anti-war Zimmerwald internationalist conference of 1915. Vladimir Lenin was one of the delegates representing this cohort in the conference.

us. Kropotkin is not a fixed representation of anarchism, but a living one.

Despite that, Kropotkin has been a fighter all his life, enthusiastic about the propagandisation of his convictions. It is incumbent upon us, his students, that we try to delve into the general development of his thought and not to judge him in a superficial manner based on fragments of his new and emerging ideas that are part of his propaganda. It is not yet time to sum up the teacher's views on the social question related to the World War because the results of the war itself have not yet been summed up. One thing is clear for now: the period that we are living through is not a repetition of past times– history is not repeating itself this time. Our generation has had the difficult and sometimes onerous task of reassessing all the socialist and anarchist values in accordance with the new historical context.

Anarchism needs to renew and reorient itself, otherwise history will outgrow it and discard it to the world of the past, just as it is doing with the fastened theory of so-called "scientific socialism".

In this regard, Kropotkin, the first to provide anarchist doctrine with the scientific basis of evolutionary thinking, remains the same scientific beacon of which we have lost sight amidst the fog of all the events we are living through. Now we have to seek it out again because it is all we have.

It is he who at the start of the war (21September1914) prophetically predicted that "the current war is creating a new history". "It is setting new conditions of social construction for all peoples".

Can't we now see that this war, over three years later, is forcing us to create a new life? Isn't this what makes it different from past wars, that had no social benefits, which Kropotkin saw in a negative light?

On the other hand, is Kropotkin not right when he says that "we underestimated the fact that entire peoples could be lured by their governments and their spiritual leaders into the conquest of neigh-

My comrades, we must do away with the strategy of class war. We should now realise that practically all class privileges have been eliminated.

We must not create a new history and unified life (i.e. socialism) on the basis of discord and enmity.

The first necessary condition for unification is the rejection of the state, and the fulfilment, not in words but in deeds, of the essence of the Soviet Federal Republic, which should be based not on state power and coercion, but on public counsel and a free federation.

The author made the following additional points during the discussion on the report:

—Financial unification on the above mentioned principles should not be restricted to the uyezd. It must spread to the whole governorate. For the new international system, envisaged by President Wilson as an outcome of the World War, to be truly new, should manifest itself for civilised peoples in territorial self-determination of industrial and cultural centres with the surroundings zemstva[6] in economically autonomous regions, without political and cultural borders.

—The Union of Zemstvo People's Banks, after uniting with analogous city banks of self-determined regions of Russia, should take charge of all the functions of the state treasury and national bank of the fragmented Russian Empire. It should eliminate the prior financial chaos and lay the foundations of a new and free union without state oppression.

—The envisaged Zemstvo People's Bank, which will take responsibility for all public wealth (land, subsoil, forests, factories etc.), will have to delegate management in the public domain, in

[6] Plural of zemstvo

accordance with the size and type of land and enterprises, to local zemstvo Soviets (villages, volost, uyezd) and works councils with equal technical and administrative oversight. The bank itself must establish a specialised accounting and statistics department for equal distribution among the local population of the use of free credit and, with universal mutual insurance, of general profits and losses.

—In cases where it turns out that free credit provided to collectives or individuals leads to losses, it will be necessary to establish the reason for it. If the losses were suffered due to an unfortunate set of circumstances then the credit must be restored at public expense; if the reason turns out to be negligence, ineptitude, or even criminal intent (like malicious bankruptcy under the capitalist system), then the further labour activity of such individuals will have to be placed under guardianship.

—Payment for work in collective production (at plants, factories, mines etc.) must be made in accordance with living standards that are established at council sessions by delegates from all the professional associations of a given zemstvo unit. Earnings of individuals using free credit as an individual or as a family (artisans, farmers) can be exempt from accounts. The possibility of accumulating social wealth in private hands will be eliminated with the absence of wage labour.

— The following ruling was unanimously accepted (with one exemption) by the Uyezd Meeting after discussing the report:

This meeting, in principle, accepts the principal provisions of the report. An elected commission of three persons is instructed to develop this issue with knowledgeable experts, to present it in an accessible format and to publish it for the general information of, and as an issue to discuss for, the public.

(POCHIN, 1918)

A TURNING POINT IN ANARCHIST DOCTRINE

The Great War, which is already in its fourth year and has shattered all the foundations of social relations in the civilised world, could not avoid being reflected in the ideology of the labour movement.

The war has created a schism among the majority of socialist parties in various countries, as well as among followers of anarchist doctrine. Some anarchists, who we could call conservative if it were not so contradictory to the overall spirit of the doctrine, have remained faithful to all the tenets of the old doctrine. Other anarchists (let's call them progressive of renovationist), along with P.A Kropotkin, have started to reassess their ideological values in accordance with the new historical context.

This new current was in the minority, as is always the case in the beginning. This is why large parts of society, and people within the working environment of anarchists, have the impression that the founder of scientific anarchism, Kropotkin, has himself shied away from and even renounced the tenets of his doctrine.

In this regard, Kropotkin has faced harsh attacks from his ill informed students in writings and at meetings, withdrawn remorse from his friends and, occasionally, jubilation from opponents of anarchist doctrine.

It is much easier and more convenient to judge a person in simplistic terms, to criticise them in a cursory manner through pitiful comparisons of fragments of their thought, than to delve deep into the development of anarchist doctrine, to understand what it gives

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sion that victory over the government will defeat and disarm capitalism, and so it is necessary to strive towards the wholesale abolition of the government, which represents a dangerous weapon of class oppression and a situation in which socialism, as a harmonious system void of class contradictions, will be of no use even if it triumphs.

In brief, this is the ideological essence of the international socialist movement and its two main branches: the statist (social-democratic) and anarchist branches.

The entire socialist movement has been imbued with this ideology since the end of the 1860s till the present day.

The International only had the unification of waged workers, mainly the industrial proletariat, in mind. Capitalism, as it was developing more and more, was meant to do away with individual artisans and small-scale ateliers, and to spread to agriculture. As a result of the full blossoming of capitalism, both in its industrial and agricultural form, the intermediary classes were meant to disappear, and the ownership of the means of production would have been concentrated in a small number of hands of an independent class of capitalists. Hence, the transfer of the means of production to collective ownership by the workers themselves would have been facilitated. And thus, this would have put an end to the exploitation of labour.

The entire anarchist labour movement and some of the anarchists (Russian syndicalists), imbued with this ideology from the first International, continue to work entirely from this ideological base.

However, in the space of over 50 years, since the establishment of the first International, life has not stopped, it has not frozen with anarchist thought. The further development of science and life, in particular the experience of the last war and the Russian revolutions, has revealed the shortcomings of the theoretical premises of socialism and, consequently, it is altering the form of anarchist ideology.

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The main factor in the concentration of capital until now has been considered to be the technology of mechanical production.

The steam engine has centralised productive technology and has united waged labourers in the factories. Mechanical production has reduced the cost of manufactured goods and competition has ruthlessly devastated small-scale industry, having made use of manual labour. According to this roadmap, capitalist production was meant to develop further until the point where it ends up as socialism.

However, over the course of time, a new driving force emerged, one that had not yet been used in the production process at the time of the inception of the International. This force is electricity. Electricity has quickly reached a level playing f ield with steam and it is even making strides to go beyond steam.

This new driving force, in contrast to steam, can be distributed with ease and transferred across long distances from its original source. Whatever steam has managed to unite is now being crushed by electricity.

Thereafter, with the further refinement of technology, a new and special type of engine was developed– the internal combustion engine, which is less bulky than the steam engine and more portable than the electric one.

These new engines, powerful and free, are already flying above the clouds in flocks, submissive and obedient to the will of the brave human pilot.

They scurry about across the face of the earth, without using rails, carrying around goods and people.

They will soon be ploughing, sowing seeds and harvesting on strips of land of all sorts.

This fragmented and refined engine has halted the centralisation of industry in many spheres of production and even in agriculture. It even aspires to decentralise industry. Kropotkin studied and pointed out this new phase in the development of production

long ago. However, socialists of all schools, and even anarchists, do not adequately appreciate this immense change, which is introducing a new aspect in the development of productive technology to the ideology of economic development that has been inherited from the old International.

There is another theoretical premise of the International's programme– about the concentration of capital in fewer and fewer hands– that has not materialised, with the separation of society into two distinct classes: on the one hand we have the owners of capital– the bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand– the proletariat, united in their interests.

The extraordinary blossoming of joint-stock companies and partnerships over the past 50 years has provided small-scale capitalists, who themselves often continued to engage in productive labour, with the opportunity to team up and compete, in order to keep up with the development of productive technology without losing ownership of their share of the capital invested in the enterprise.

Large-scale capital, with its competition, has not swallowed up small-scale capital, but it has united it. Moreover, large-scale capital has itself adopted that very system of shares that made it possible for production or enterprises to expand even more. This, however, did not reduce, but rather increased the number of coowners of enterprises and, in addition, made it easier for them to inherit without loss to production. Furthermore, in case the production cannot be divided, it does not have to be sold to a larger capitalist.

Joint-stock companies and partnerships allowed small-scale proprietors to preserve their productive capital. However, they clearly did not prevent the accumulation of more or less largescale capital in the hands of the few. Only the number of largescale capitalists, in comparison with the mass of small-scale holders of stocks and shares, is comparatively negligible.

On the other hand, the principle of cooperation, which is penetrating and permeating the fabric of society more and more, aims to

unite small-scale capital in the hands of the small-scale consumers and those involved in production.

Thus, capital, from the largest to the smallest in scale, is intimately intertwined in the process of production, exchange and the distribution of products. The class of capitalists blends into the rest of society and it becomes impossible to single them out as a separate class.

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These theoretical considerations would be of limited practical interest if the parties that established the principles of the International had not acquired such an enormous influence over the course of history and had not applied the theory of class struggle so adamantly, without any critical thought and even with the fanaticism of religious belief.

Class struggle is the stagnant and dogmatic faith shared by all socialists and even many anarchists. We have been witnessing and living through the awful consequences of the expansive spread and application of this scientifically untenable theory amongst the ignorant masses of Russia since the February Revolution, especially after the celebrations of the direct inheritors of the Internationalthe social democrats (Bolsheviks), who were in close contact (for the first time in history) with its other inheritors– the anarchists.

After the October Revolution, which became ever so bloody thanks to the ecstasy that was stirred up by this theory, they started looking for people of the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, they were searching in vain. The crimes of capitalism were in front of their eyes, but the actual criminal was elusive. It turned out that the bourgeoisie, as a class of people, were sucked into the middle and even, in part, to the lower echelons of the population. They could have identified individual rich people, but then again, their traces have long since disappeared…

They carried on searching out the bourgeoisie. They came across the bourgeoisie in Moscow in the form of [Osip] Minor, who had grown old, having struggled for socialism in the prisons

and labour camps. They also found his party comrades, in the form of the revolutionary officers and some of the young students who rallied around the party of socialist revolutionaries, while the others sided with the Bolsheviks.

Terrible incidents took place as brotherly blood was spilled for the sake of a new dogmatic belief among the ignorant massesthat of class struggle. This dogma aroused a spirit of fanaticism within every ignorant individual. And the darkest times of religious persecution were resurrected…

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Capitalism, as a system of production, which was already disturbed under the Provisional Government, has been destroyed. The basis of this system– private property– is practically invalidated. However, it turned out that ordinary workers were not prepared and were incapable of taking ownership over the complex system of production. Then they again went off to look for the enemy – the elusive bourgeoisie.

Following painstaking efforts, they finally found even more enemies from among their own ranks. People from different sectors of the proletariat took up arms against one another: unskilled workers against artisans, and both of them together against workers in the field of science and technology. One group of knowledge workers pounced on another group and they started contending against one another. And then, knowledge workers, artisans and unskilled labourers from the same profession descended into corruption and started openly preaching and extensively engaging in strike-breaking. This is how a deadly blow was struck against another foundation of the International– the theory of the wholesale unification of all waged labourers, of the proletariat.

Then they ushered the workers to look for the "class enemy" in the provinces. Blood was spilled and destruction ensued across the country for the sake of a theory advocated by the ruling parties of statist socialists.

In the midst of an internecine war, driven by the phantom of class struggle, the people did not understand that the only unmistakable enemy, both internal and external, sowing discord and hindering the people's internal and international unification, is *state power*.

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Exhausted by the harsh and prolonged war, and lulled by the other, novel, dogmatic belief– the international unification of the proletariat, the people laid down their arms against the merciless, external enemy, which organised itself into a powerful, military state. Similarly to the Christians of the first centuries of our era, having lost the instinct of self-preservation, the people stood helplessly before the conqueror, expecting a miracle from the international solidarity of the proletariat to save them.

This belief in international class solidarity is so deep among the intelligentsia who are seeing it through and so blind among the masses who have accepted it, that they do not realise that if this solidarity was a essential driving force of civilisation in our times and of widespread enlightenment in Western Europe and America, then the war could not have broken out, let alone last so long. Clearly the fate of mankind is governed by other laws.

What is the reason behind the false nature of the International's ideology, which has put its imprint on the contemporary socialist and anarchist movement? What is the scientific path towards the fulfilment of the ideal of social justice? We can find the answers to these questions through: 1) a historical overview of the conception of the theoretical tenets of the International; 2) the exposition of a renewed development of anarchist thought.

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When the theoretical foundations of the International were being developed, Darwin's scientific work "On the Origin of Species" came to light, and it immediately acquired far-reaching renown, occupying a prominent place in the field of science and capturing the minds of contemporaries.

By analogy, and in accordance with, one of the guiding ideas underlying Darwin's scientific research, namely the role of the *struggle for existence* in the processes of evolution, the hypothesis of *class struggle* has also gained the sanctity of scientificity.

It is worth noting, above all, that Darwin's theory is not great for the fact that it saw the struggle for existence as one of the factors involved in the evolution of the biological world, but rather for the fact that it is the first to prove, with detailed, concrete and scientific observations, the *changeability of species*, which, until then, was considered to be constant, reproducing in a series of successive generations. In other words, Darwin scientifically established the theory of evolution.

The hypotheses related to class struggle have not been backed by any scientific research similar to that of Darwin's. Research that came later– the works of de Lanessan and especially those of Kropotkin– established the predominant role of association for struggle, both in the evolution of species and in the development of societies. Darwin himself did not overlook the role of this form of association. We can indeed see how the structure of societies is subdivided into classes, or, more precisely, professional associations. And struggles between those at the same professional level occur frequently. However, friendly relations and mutual aid are much more frequently manifested between different strata of society that are joined together in a more or less expansive society, or state, for the sake of self-defence against the encroachments of external enemies into the independent life and development of the country.

The entire history of humankind is a continuous sequence of such a struggle between different countries. The most striking example of a staunchly stubborn association of classes geared towards an aggressive and defensive struggle is the current, prolonged war, which is enormous in scale.

It is not the interests of two antagonistic classes here– capitalists and the proletariat– that have coincided, but rather the inter-

ests of whole countries that unify the benefits of all segments of their respective populations.

Germany, a country that has only recently become powerful in terms of its development of capitalist production, has selected allies and chosen to strive for the subordination of more traditionally capitalist countries to its economic hegemony, and it was met with a friendly, inadequately premeditated rejection from almost all of the rest of the world. The German working people are materially interested in the outcome of this struggle, along with their ruling estates. That is why they are deaf to the repeated romantic appeals of the Russian socialists that were addressed to those people after the February Revolution.

"The German nation does not yet realise that the plan to enrich the German people, by means of a surprise attack on neighbours and swift conquests to the West and the East, has failed", says Kropotkin.

When it [the German nation] understands that then it will reject the aspiration of global economic domination. Only then will it withdraw from the logic of its capitalistic structure and, in accordance with all the peoples of the civilised world, will look for new ways and new principles that will underlie its prosperity at the domestic and international levels.

In order for the German nation to understand this, it requires self-defence and struggle, for it is through struggle that we will acquire our right to independent, socialist development. The success of such a struggle depends on [trade] association.

"The association between all sectors of society, driven by the war, geared towards a common cause, will not pass by without consequences, but rather it will sow the seeds for a more unified life", said Kropotkin at the very beginning of the war.

This association between all sectors of society in Western Europe has already started to bear fruit. It is reconstructing the social order on the basis of new principles in a more methodical and steady manner than here in Russia. Kropotkin points to this recon-

When opponents of the social revolution claim that people are lazy and that they would not work without being forced to, meaning that a free communism is not possible, they are without a doubt revealing their own ignorance.

Laziness is a consequence of abnormal conditions in labour. I have attempted to outline the most significant of these conditions. Uprooting them completely will be possible through a radical transformation of society. This transformation cannot be accomplished abruptly. Valuable measures can be taken here to protect mental health at work. By studying laziness we can f ind out which measures will be possible to implement and in what direction they should be implemented.

This short outline does not claim to have exhausted all aspects of this matter, but the aim was simply to underline the need for a deeper and more detailed study.

struction of the social order in the West in his "Letters on current events". It is only due to a lack of awareness, linked to war-time conditions, that we are unable to take a closer look at the constructive aspect of life in Europe that has come to the fore as a result of the current war.

Here in Russia, this form of association, with a view to social construction, came about and flourished in a remarkable manner in the first years of the war. This form of association has found a broad application, rich material and useful experience in the activities of the All-Russian Zemstvo Union and other public organisations. The matter of organising help for millions of refugees whole peoples– has become the philosophy of practical socialism. The function of public organisations then spread to the indigenous population as well. It is their productive work that has led to the establishment of our food organisations and the creation of the original technology to supply and distribute products.

War, which causes strife, oppression and destruction, has, this time, been a productive and constructive force. This is the case because its unprecedented scale and duration has shattered the economic life of the planet. It has literally become a war between peoples and has subordinated all strata of society to its egalitarian requirements.

The war has hardly masked the widespread expropriation of private property under the name of requisitions. It has eliminated free trade with fixed prices. It is aspiring to make all strata of the population equal by distributing basic necessities through food organisations. In short, the foundations of the capitalist system have been dealt several blows, and not only here, but also, to an even greater extent, in Central and Western Europe. The bastion of class divisions still remains– the government– although it has been penetrated to a great extent.

The destruction brought about by the war has given rise to the broad scope of public initiative and the moral association of the whole of society. The extent of destruction caused by the way has

stimulated public initiative to the same degree. The autocracy has collapsed in the struggle against this close-knit public initiative.

Having become rulers after the February Revolution, the socialist parties attempted in vain to reinforce the remnants of public association, which was already shattered during the old regime, and to direct it along the socialist course. Their own ideology of class struggle itself brought about the destruction of this natural desire to save all of society by uniting for the sake of defence.

The ideas of the International, which have been sown among the masses by socialists of all stripes, have prevailed over the instinct for self-preservation and have led to the logical conclusion of the October Revolution and the complete weakening of Russia at the international level.

The World War has destroyed the foundations of the capitalist economy. The October Revolution is continuing on the same course and is already destroying the very form of the capitalist system.

Similarly to the war, the October Revolution, with its destruction, is also bringing the creative forces of the masses to life in various, new forms of associations and mutual aid– that powerful agent of progress that has been studied scientifically by Kropotkin.

However, the new government has already managed to create its corporate interests and professional privileges. It realises that such associations and manifestations of public initiative will bring about its end. That is why it supports and stirs up, in every possible way, the common enmity and discord that is ready to be snuffed out.

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Counting on the fact that the natural course of history will in and of itself necessarily lead us to the world of socialism will not work. We mentioned above that the ideology of the International, built on the involuntary development of historical factors that lead to the process of the concentration of capital and the division of society into two isolated classes, has in no way materialised. The same would be the case with any theory that bases itself on the

is possible among workers. We cannot speak of such an ethical harmony in large, modern, capitalist enterprises, which employ thousands of people at a time, all assembled in enormous barracks-workshops by an entrepreneur who is unfamiliar to them. For people's ethical outlook is just as limited as their attention span. Perhaps the former is largely dependent on the latter.

We can conclude that the most favourable form of production for eliminating or reducing laziness should be a slightly decentralised form of production. It is also more economically durable. The sustainability of agriculture, despite its technical backwardness, is a case in point. The same can be said of handicraft, which was of help to Russia during the blockade and economic devastation. Is handicraft capable of technical development? Of combining and developing in the form of productive artels? This is a question of the application of ethics to the organisation of labour, or of technology ethics. I will not dwell on that here. I will simply mention here that Marxists, who have made technology– the tools of work– the basis of social relations, should have become advocates of the decentralisation of industry, because the emergence of large, capitalist factories and plants was a result of the bulky, expensive and stationary steam engine. Nowadays, thanks to electricity and the internal combustion engine, even the lone craftsman has access to mechanical propulsion energy– that nerve of all industrial labour. In the near future, the technical decentralisation of industry should gradually take precedence over its consolidation as electricity replaces steam. The current economic system is the most conducive to the manifestation of the ethical motive to work. In any case, the decentralisation of industry is one of the most important conditions for the prevention of laziness. This does not mean, however, that industry should be scattered all over the place. Technical decentralisation does not rule out economic association on cooperative principles.

In conclusion, it is clear that the problem of preventing laziness is not only psychophysical, but also social.

fortunately, the heads of our industrial sector, instead of seeking practical ways to involve peasants in factory work without estranging them from agriculture, are doing everything but. I know a red director (probably not an exception) who avoids recruiting local peasants on principle because when they go on summer holiday, they stay a few days longer to do field work.

Besides the concerns regarding aesthetic conditions, in the literal sense of the word, the combination of industrial and agricultural labour in addition to that of mental and physical labour during work will represent the most favourable aspect when it comes to protecting the aesthetic needs of workers in the production process.

Having diversity in work is just as necessary for the mental health of aworkerasdiversity in food is for their physical health.

Finally, the fourth, and perhaps the most important factor in the prevention of laziness is the moral urges behind work.

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that the intensity of this stimulus is, so to speak, inversely proportional to its size.

People doubtless love their family, close friends, their class, the totality of the working classes of a given country or their people, other peoples and races, all of humanity and they are even sympathetic towards animals. However, the more expansive the object, the weaker this feeling gets. People are prepared to take the most extreme stress from work for the sake of the needs of their loved ones. They are not prepared to work to death for people they do not know personally. We have observed this in highly insightful sociological experiments conducted after the October Revolution when the state policy of a "common pot" debilitated the urge to work not only among the peasants but also the workers.

Communication between people in the production process also has a significant effect on the productivity of labour. Economists established that collective labour is significantly more productive than purely individual labour. But again, we have to make reservations. There are known limits to this, insofar as ethical harmony

game of more or less correctly catching hold of the drivers of social development.

The ideologue of scientific anarchism, Kropotkin, does not limit himself to a simple analysis of the structure of society and the study of the factors of evolution. He calls on "all people with a heart, brain and knowledge" to put all their efforts into the *reconstruction of society*.

In other words, the anarchist labour movement should not stand as a simple political party seeking only to abolish state power, but it should rather translate the organisational aspect of conscious influence on the course of history into a fruitful process of construction.

Theoretical anarchism is a science. Its practice should become an applied science.

(POCHIN, 1918)

COOPERATION AND ANARCHISM

"Cooperation is the scientific practice of mutual aid"– Élisée Reclus

Different forms of cooperation, like everything in society, in organic life and in the universe, are subject to changes, to evolution. The contemporary understanding of cooperation constitutes the latest form in a whole series of manifestations of cooperation, the genesis and development of which can be traced back across the history of human and even animal societies.

Theorists of cooperation, such as Tugan-Baranovsky, who ascribe the emergence of cooperation to a given historical figure and assert that cooperation was something that was "invented" and that it had founding fathers, are reminiscent of the naive biblical account of the creation of the world: at first there was chaos and darkness until God decided to get creative. This, of course, does not diminish the historical role of prominent cooperators as pioneers of cooperative progress.

If we look into those organisations that are regarded as based on cooperation– consumer cooperation (trade), productive cooperation (artels)[1], credit (mutual aid based on trust), insurance, which starts to develop cooperation through the organisation of public services (for example cooperative educational institutions: artel

[1] *Artels* were free and cooperative associations in Tsarist Russia wherein its members would normally work and live in the same area, often in a commune, and would generally share responsibilities and payment on a more or less equal basis.

The rhythm of movements is also taken into consideration.

However, what is being completely ignored is the dynamics of aesthetics, the diversity in work.

For modern capitalist industry, both private and state, the division of labour has become, one might say, a kind of obsession, despite the resulting monstrous monotony of labour. There is no mention of alterations between different types of work, where narrow specialisation is unavoidable. The colossal resources of nature and the magnificent achievements of technology and organisation are not enough for capital. It also requires the complete dehumanisation of the worker and the disfigurement of their mental state. In the best case scenario, after a monotonous and tedious 8-hour work shift, once the worker's nerves have been numbed from fatigue, the worker can enjoy themselves in clubs, cinemas and theatres. It is not surprising that many are seeking more vigorous stimulation of their senses in alcohol.

The worker should be provided with aesthetics not as a sweet or dessert, but in the very process of production. While all our focus is on the differentiation of labour, emulating the West and America.

Whether routine and capitalist tradition play a significant role in this fascination with the division of labour, or whether there are real benefits, is a separate question. But the fact is that the monotony of labour unavoidably reflects harmfully on the health of workers, just like the one-dimensional functioning of organs.

The fact that there is no economic inevitability in this excessive one-dimensional nature of labour is demonstrated by the experience of Ford, a dedicated advocate of the mechanisation of living humans. Apparently, in a sudden moment of sanity and humanity, Ford established a valve plant in an agricultural area where neighbouring farmers worked for him. They came in their own cars, driving several hours to reach the plant, while they continued with their agricultural labour on their farms.

Here in Russia we have the most favourable conditions for such a combination of agricultural labour and industry. However, un-

on by technical and administrative supervision. The prevention of laziness in this regard overlaps with the general task of educating the people.

However, there is one more aspect that should be mentioned. The prevention of laziness requires the worker to not only know what they are doing and how, but it is also important for their work to correspond to their own views and convictions. For instance, if a Tolstoyan is forced to cast cannons and manufacture ammunition for the military then they will hardly do a good job. Or, if, for example, an ideological atheist is forced to manufacture religious icons then they will need to gather plenty of energy to avoid the effects of laziness. In contrast, ask underground revolutionaries what lengths they went to in order to collect literature in secret printing houses precisely because this endeavour corresponded to their convictions and opinions.

In terms of the military, there is already recognition here in the Soviet Union regarding the fact that a conscientious objector cannot be forced to serve in the name of defence. And now it's the turn of industry. It needs to be adapted to take into account the mental specificities of each worker if we are to eliminate one of the causes of laziness. We would also, of course, have to make changes to our economic system.

The prevention of laziness through aesthetic means deserves special attention. Combining work with the demands of aesthetics is not always easy and possible. The very setup at work, basically the premises– even if beautifully built and artistically decorated– will no longer leave any impression (it may even leave a conversely displeasing impact) if the same, monotonous work is conducted within its four walls every day and for years on end.

It would be appropriate to note here that something is being done to protect the aesthetics of work.

Measures against repulsive substances in some professions or against acute and unpleasant smells are being taken at this moment.

schools or a cooperative organisation of public security, which already exists in some cities in the United States of North America, along with state security)– then we can be convinced that all of them pursue practically beneficial aims for their members in economic and immaterial terms. They strive to satisfy the immediate needs of all their members through the unity of individual efforts.

In this sense, the word "cooperation", brought into use by Robert Owen, warrants its literal meaning– collaboration or coaction.

Various forms of collaboration between individuals have existed across the stages of social development. People have united for economic and other purposes, aimed at meeting the needs of those who participate in associations, in patriarchal times, in the time of slavery, during serfdom, as well as in the capitalist system. However, not all forms of collaboration can be called cooperation as many of those forms lack the main facet of cooperation– the free choice to participate or refuse to participate in a given collective organisation.

Capitalist forms of production and commodity exchange satisfy this demand for freedom of choice to a certain extent: workers and owners; traders and buyers are not tied to one another. The worker can leave their owners just as the owner can fire the worker; the consumer can purchase a good from a shop one day and then another day buy from their competitor who provides a cheaper or better product. Nevertheless, there is nothing cooperative about any of this because of the absence of equality between the parties in the distribution of gains and losses that are generated by a combination of mutual economic needs and activity.

Freedom of choice and equality in the use of benefits and in bearing obligations and losses within associations composed of individuals constitute the main features of cooperation. There is a long list of associations observed among animal and human societies that deserve the term cooperation, in the broad and direct sense of the word. Such associations pursue the satisfaction of material and

immaterial needs for all members on an equal basis. Kropotkin explored these phenomena under the title "Mutual Aid" and asserts their importance in progressive evolution.

Élisée Reclus, who also views the negative aspects of contemporary cooperation through a critical lens, regards cooperation as the "practice of mutual aid".

"Nevertheless, serious and earnest anarchists can learn a lot from such cooperative unions that are propping up everywhere and are uniting with one another, forming an ever growing organism that is taking over diverse sectors: industry, transport, agriculture, science, arts, entertainment. They even strive to mould the organism covering the production, consumption and development of aesthetic life. The scientific practice of mutual aid is spreading and opening up. All that remains is to ascribe its real meaning and ethical significance, simplifying the exchange of services, preserving only the simple statistics of production and consumption…", writes Reclus (*Evolution, revolution and the ideal of anarchism, Moscow, published 1917, p. 110*).

Apart from the satisfaction of immediate material and immaterial needs, mutual aid is also characterised by the moral principle of justice– the equitable distribution of benefits through united efforts among all who participate.

Is this not the ethical task that represents the stumbling block for modern cooperation in its search for more ideal forms, free from the distorting effects of capitalist principles?

On the other hand, cooperative thought has influenced the development of capitalism. Joint-stock companies, with their small investments, equitable distribution of gains (dividends) and equal rights of members, have much in common with the idea of cooperation. The main difference is that joint-stock companies make use of wage labour, and the economic exploitation of some people by others that arises from this situation ends up violating the condition of equality among the members of the company.

With regards to the physical conditions of labour, aside from the detection of unrecognised, organic diseases and the application of appropriate treatment, there is a need for a work pay and, consequently, an appropriate diet that meet the real needs of people.

Employers do not have the right to brush aside the issue of the number of individuals who are unable to work and are dependent on a given worker. Apart from their personal wage, every worker should receive additional remuneration based on the number of dependents under their case, otherwise they themselves will not eat enough and will not be able to be as productive as they can.

This issue is not as fanciful or even new as it seems at first sight. The basis of this system can be found in the allowance distributed here in the Soviet Union for newborns of up to 9 months old. True, its aim is more so to protect infants than workers, but the heart of the matter is no different.

It is simply necessary to extend the allowance period up to the working age and to renew it when one loses the ability to work as a result of old age. The rental allowances that are provided to large families are also aimed at the implementation of this principle.

A complete and practical solution to this problem should be sought in insurance cooperation. We are not going to dwell on it here. There is one thing that we can foresee in advance: the amount of personal wages will, understandably, be reduced, but there will be a more rational distribution of earnings that better correspond to everyone's needs.

If we are genuinely looking to fulfil communism then this arrangement will undoubtedly be a significant step in the right direction and it would be one of the more rational ways of preventing laziness.

Another important aspect of the prevention of laziness is mental development. A worker without educational and academic preparation cannot show interest in and enjoy their work due to a lack of understanding. For that reason they will not reach maximum productivity and they will work only on demand, urged

reflexes that come about as a result of the violation of the main properties of labour, from the highest level of intensity all the way to a complete halt in work.

In cases of a gross violation of the main properties of labour- which clearly makes it impossible to work– nobody speaks of laziness. Nobody blames a famished person for refusing to work. Labourers are not deemed to be lazy if they do not do work that they do not understand, despite having the physical ability. Refusal to do work that is repulsive in its appearance and smell is also not considered a manifestation of laziness. Lastly, nobody expects active work from a person afflicted by a great misfortune or one suffering from moral apathy.

In all these cases where the main properties of labour– physical, mental, aesthetic and moral– have been clearly violated, the reason for the absence of labour reflexes and the impossibility of their manifestation becomes evident to everybody, and so there is no mention there about laziness.

However, when those factors are not made bluntly clear and when they elude the scrutiny of people who are ill-disposed to understanding the complexities of labour reflexes– which, unfortunately, science has not delved into deeply enough– then the idea of "laziness" emerges.

The very fact that laziness has always and everywhere been considered a vice, imbued with some kind of evil spirit, demonstrates the extent to which it represents a social scourge. The idea that we are not dealing with a devilish delusion but rather with a complicated psychopathological problem is still not widespread to a sufficient degree.

Having established the reasons for laziness– i.e. its aetiology– we can easily outline the broad means of prevention against this social illness.

Prevention of laziness must take four forms that correspond to the main properties of labour: physical, mental, aesthetic and ethical.

The contemporary form of cooperation is also not free from this evil. Not without reason, Bakunin comments negatively about the "bourgeois cooperative system". This is what he says about consumer cooperatives: "The well-known association of Rochdale workers in England, who have made plenty of noise and stimulated several attempts in other countries at imitating them, have ended up creating a new, collective bourgeoisie who calmly exploit the mass of workers that are not part of the association" (*A. Karelin, Life and work of M.A. Bakunin, p. 31*).

This capitalist element, inherent in contemporary consumer cooperation, also exists partly in producers', artel cooperation, which also permits wage labour, with certain limitations.

Cooperation that allows for wage labour thereby violates the ethical principle that underlies mutual aid– equality. It also denies the mutuality of rights and responsibilities of those who participate in it.

By eliminating wage labour– the main and immediate task of cooperation, towards which the further development of modern cooperation is leading– cooperation will eventually merge with the essence of mutual aid.

Wage labour in producers', *artel* cooperation, is normally reduced to an extremely small scale or is completely absent. Consumer cooperation should follow in the footsteps of productive cooperation and base itself exclusively on the principle of free agreements between consumer associations and producer *artels*.

In recent times, producers' cooperation, especially in Russian, attempts to atone for its capitalistic sin through various forms of philanthropy, socially beneficials appropriations from their profits (which is exactly what joint-stock companies and private capitalists used to do and continue to do now). However, this is not a solution to this issue. Cooperation has to once and for all cleanse itself of wage labour, and only then will it dissociate itself from capitalist ways and will acquire its own ethical character of mutual aid– this mighty engine of social development.

In its ethical character, its striving to liberate itself from wage labour and eliminate the exploitation of man by man, cooperation is socialistic and it cannot be any other way unless it betrays its nature.

In keeping with its other main characteristic– the free association of individuals with the right to leave at any time– cooperation excludes coercion. Cooperation is hostile to external violence– which is innate to state power– thanks to the free and voluntary essence of its composition. In political terms, cooperation can be neither monarchic, nor republican, nor democratic (asserts V. Kilchevsky), nor soviet, since coercion is inherent in the state. Even in the most ideal state system, wherein people are equal in terms of property under public law, the majority ends up subjugating the minority. Cooperation entails the free association of individuals, their federation, in the whole and pure meaning of the word, wherein the minority, as well as separate individuals, have the right to leave a given association as soon as it ceases to meet their material and immaterial needs. On this basis, cooperation, in political terms, corresponds to an anarchist federation (accepted by Tugan-Baranovsky, Totomiants and other theorists of cooperation).

Cooperation cannot remain politically neutral, otherwise its development and even existence would be jeopardized.

Under the autocracy in Russia, the state looked to provide its institutions with the right to impose sanctions on elections held in cooperative organisations. The Soviet government went further and appointed officials to participate in the boards of cooperative associations. The Soviet government destroyed the freedom and independence of credit unions, shrunk and ruined consumer unions, and paralysed emerging educational unions.

Cooperation should always be ready to defend itself from encroachments by the state in order to preserve their independence. This is the only guarantee of its prosperity and even of its existence.

moral significance could obviously useless and clearly nonsensical work have?

On the other hand, moral goals are a powerful stimulus when it comes to work. We mentioned above that harvest time forces peasants to work beyond their limits and to transgress their physiological balance. The same can often be observed among underpaid workers and artisans with large families.

The moral stimulus to feed one's family forces the worker to take up any kind of work, under the direction of taskmasters, without being aware of what they are working on and for.

There is no need to prove how aesthetics are violated by the moral stimulus. Any kind of repellent and tedious work can find a person who will do it as long as it can materially provide for them and their family. Miners have been rummaging around in their underground mines for years, involving work that makes it hard to achieve any kind of rhythmic movement, let alone a more refined aesthetic.

The worker's moral impulse manifests itself even vis-à-vis their own antagonist– the employer– if they pay well and treat them ethically. In that case, they work hard for the employer and they are reluctant to "get something for nothing". In cases where the pay is meagre and, especially, when it is not proportionate to the boss' profits, the workers deliberately resort to a deliberate laziness called sabotage[2]. "Work according to the pay", they say.

Employers, on their part, take advantage of people's moral instincts and their attachment to family in order to force them to work to maximum levels of productivity, even to the detriment of their health, through a system of piecework wages.

Having familiarised ourselves with the main properties of labour, it is then easy to define the essence of, and reasons for, laziness. Laziness here entails all the levels of reduction in labour

[2] "The word 'sabotage' has taken a broad and somewhat distorted meaning during the revolution here.

It is easy to find ethical qualities that are manifest not only in work that involves risk and self-sacrifice, but also in work that is mundane.

Isn't it a moral feeling that impels a person to toil all their life and frequently endure hardships in order to feed their family and bring up children?

Even mandatory work is less burdensome when it is meaningful and benefits other people. Useless work perturbs moral feelings and it has the potential to push even the most obedient people to protest. To illustrate this point we could point to a number of examples from the recent past, from the period of so-called "war communism". It would be best to limit ourselves to referring to the no less characteristic "potato riots" recounted by Herzen.

These events took place at the start of the previous centuries when people only just learnt to plant potatoes in Russia.

"The peasants of Kazan and part of the Vyatka Governorate planted the fields with potatoes", tells A.I. Herzen. "When the potatoes were gathered, the ministry came up with the idea to create central pits in the volosts. The pits have been approved, ordained and they are being dug up. At the start of winter, the peasants reluctantly took the potatoes to the central pits. However, when they wanted to force them to plant frozen potatoes the next spring, the peasants refused. There is really nothing more insulting for the worker than to be ordered to do something so blatantly absurd. This objection was branded as a riot."

In conclusion, "suffice to say that this matter led to cannon balls and rifle shots. The peasants left their homes, scattered through the forests, the Cossacks drove them out of thickets like wild animals; they were captured here, hammered into chains and sent to the military commission in Kosmodemyansk."

The very possibility of protest on the part of meek peasant serfs eloquently demonstrates the great extent to which moral stimulus is important in arousing the reflexes to work. Otherwise what

Furthermore, cooperation directly contradicts state power in its inclination to organise public services through voluntary associations. It contends not only with private capital but also with the government.

This organic antagonism between cooperation and state power is not recognised to a sufficient degree by the cooperative movement. Cooperation, until recently, has opposed only the capitalist economic system. During the World War, state power broadened its interference into the economic lives of people to such a degree that it turned the satisfaction of material needs into a monopolistic kind of public services. The insanity of Bolshevism, which is logically coherent but devoid of practical common sense in its presuppositions, has more clearly demonstrated the incompatibility between the free existence and development of innately voluntary cooperation on the one hand and state power on the other.

The further development of cooperation should lead to an open rejection of the state's exclusive right to organise public services: the right to compulsory taxation, the collection of taxation, the monopoly on producing coins and issuing token money; the right to sanction charter agreements (in the government register); the right to provide public education; the right to administer justice and provide internal and external security of territories, the population of which will be united into a single whole by a dense network of cooperatives that satisfy all the economic and immaterial needs of human society.

In short, cooperation represents a practical system in which economic exploitation and the political oppression of man by man are abolished. Cooperation clears the way for the severance of public services from the state and leads to its abolition.

Cooperation is one of the theoretical foundations of and practical ways towards free anarchist socialism.

(POCHIN, 1919)

MONEY

Among all the public services appropriated by the state, the so-called right to issue money (i.e. the exclusive right to issue banknotes) is not of the least importance. Meanwhile, anarchists normally neglect this significant issue in silence or they simply put forward the naive solution of "abolishing money".

Ingots of precious metals– the prototype of the circulation coin– already existed at very remote stages of civilisations, and they replaced the natural form of barter. People were then convinced that there was no further need for hard currency and that written commitments based on trust (i.e. bills and checks) were sufficient.

"Money is a myth", says Kropotkin, as he jokes in friendly conversation. He lived in England for many years and rarely ever saw money, except for small coins. His work was rewarded with checks, with which he paid food suppliers for an apartment.

Promissory notes and transfer bills (blank cheques) have been used since ancient times. The state has acquired a monopoly both over the minting of small coins as well as the issuance of particular and favoured promissory notes– banknotes– in order to exploit the people in the most shameless manner, amounting to outright falsification.

In Persia, where silver and gold coins representing various dynasties have been in use, the value of coins are determined not by their denomination, but by the actual value of the metal.

Did the silver coin of the Tsarist regime– silver only in name– hold any kind of commercial value?

Do the Western European nickel and even silver coins correspond to their actual cost price?

auditory harmonies, which have only been regarded in terms of their potential to increase the productivity of labour. Labour protection should raise the issue of full compliance to the demands of aesthetics as one of the conditions of workers' mental health. In effect, capital normally neglects the fact that the worker has requirements, including, of course, aesthetic demands, the fulf ilment of which forces him to work for others. Capitals are least concerned about the latter in the production process. Not only that, they intentionally and systematically violate the most fundamental condition of aesthetics– its dynamics. Beauty does not include only forms, colours, sounds, smells or tastes, but it also involves the alternation between them. Meanwhile, modern industry tramples on this basis of aesthetics at its very root, with an undue division of labour and the monotony that results from it. It is debatable whether this really increases productivity, but there can be no doubt that this overdone division of labour kills any joy in working life and leads to nervous system disorders. Professor Rybakov states that neurasthenia "is most particularly observed among people who are burdened with heavy and, moreover, monotonous work".

Is it really surprising that when work is deprived of aesthetics it becomes unpleasant, even repulsive, it naturally slows down and, ultimately again leads to what we call laziness.

Here is another category of qualities that brings to light another characteristic of labour: how should we regard the work of a person who throws themselves into the water, risking their life, to save somebody from drowning? What about a doctor who rushes to the help of an infected patient, consciously putting themselves at risk of catching the same dangerous disease? What of the work of a propagandist and engaged in social advocacy, who subjects themselves to all kinds of hardships, risking their freedom and even their life in order to spread "their truth", to plant the seeds of goodness and justice in society for people they do not even know?

Consequently, aside from its physical, mental and aesthetic qualities, labour also has ethical qualities.

thinking in order to adapt to the surrounding environment. In such cases, it is enough for thinking to slow down– either from a natural lack of talent or insufficient practicability– so this feature of the thinking process is reflected in the pace of physical reflexes and the person is, for that reason, branded as "lazy".

However, it is not only the speed of thought that influences the success of work. Clarity of thought also plays an important role.

Similar to how children sluggishly get involved in a new game when they have not yet fully mastered its strategies and rules, a worker who does not clearly imagine what they are meant to do and does not grasp what the work is about, cannot enjoy that work and they are seen as lazy if they do not mask the absence of clarity of thought with restlessness.

The main qualities of labour are not limited to physical and mental qualities. How should we define the labour of a musician, artist, sculptor, dancer or actor?

Although physical movements and mental exertion are manifest in these cases to a certain extent, there is another characteristic when it comes to the reproduction of harmonies by musicians, the combination of colours reproduced by painters, the forms reproduced by sculptors, the movements and expressions of emotions reproduced by dancers and actors. These qualities include rhythm, harmony, beauty, authenticity and everything that can be considered aesthetics.

It is easy to see that any kind of labour, even labour that requires the most hefty and onerous strain, is decorated with aesthetics.

The hauler pulls the strap under plaintive singing, reflecting their spiritual mood; the mower seems to reproduce the qualities of dances with their fluid and rhythmic movements; the handicraftsman, as they produce their wooden tools, they paint it and infuse it with elegant forms even if they are manufacturing it for their own use.

Psychotechnology has already partially focused on the aesthetics of labour, namely the rhythm of movements and the affect of

The population is subject to a startling degree of deceit and deception in "civilised" states when state banknotes get issued.

Credit confidence in the state is relative among all peoples. That is why the exchange rate of credit cards in all countries fluctuates. We are now experiencing an extreme drop in confidence in the state across the various territories of a dismembered Russia, regardless of the political regime.

The drop in the exchange rate reflects heavily on broad sections of the population, especially when it comes to paying for work. High prices do not mean a general increase in the value of products and consumer goods, but rather a reduction in the value of money. On this basis, judging by incomplete official accounts, unrest is brewing in Western Europe.

But Russia endures everything. A "tough government", desired by many, has taught Russia to endure everything.

The state has proven to everyone that money is a fiction.

But a fiction only in material terms. In reality, it is a necessary and very useful value in moral terms, as representations of mutual trust.

It is interesting to mention a practical example to refute the preconception that the state should be trusted in issuing money. The issuance of banknotes in Persia is managed by a private English joint-stock company under the pompous and deceitful name "Imperial Bank of Persia".

Would it be misplaced to ask the following question: if the private joint-stock company can make use of privileges on issuing banknotes in a large country with millions of people, then would it not be right to take away that right to issue money from both party governments as well as private employers and to give this right to broad, economic associations in the population– to cooperatives?

Doesn't the cooperative deserve more trust than the state that unmasked criminal, which systematically falsifies commodity money and trust money?

people who suffer from chronic gastrointestinal diseases are more lethargic and less capable of work, especially physical work. In other words, they are more lazy.

In other cases, laziness is simply a symptom of an unrecognised organic disease like anaemia.

Those are the main physiological factors that cause laziness.

Mental factors play no less of a role, perhaps even a predominant role, in determining laziness. Among them, primarily, is thinking.

It is not difficult to notice that even the simplest muscle activity cannot be managed without using one's mental abilities. Thought is a necessary element in coordinating voluntary muscle movements in the harshest type of physical labour as well as in the nimble motions of a thinker's plume. People who are severely mentally ill from birth, such as cretins and idiots, are incapable of any heavy physical labour, despite the fact that they have sufficient muscular strength, since they basically lack the ability to think in a coherent manner and, in particular, the ability to orient themselves in a changing environment.

And so, the ability to coordinate physical reflexes in animals is passed down hereditarily and is enhanced through practice (birds inherit the ability to build nests, bees form honeycombs, ants build underground passages etc.), while humans have to learn how to work over the course of their lives. It is evident that, due to the variability of tools and production techniques, people's conditioned physical reflexes do not manage to become hereditarily fixed in the form of unconditioned reflexes, known as instincts. True, high mental capacity is more than enough to fill this gap, however, the preservation of this capacity assumes even more importance when it comes to adapting to the changing conditions of industrial labour. Although, with professional training, after some time, humans also learn to undertake many particular labour processes automatically with instinctive movements. Nevertheless, there are still several instances where even the most mechanised forms of labour require

intensive the labour and the more mechanical energy expended by the worker, the more enhanced the diet has to be. When the level of nutrition does not correspond to the energy spent, the intensity of the physical reflexes is reduced. People then start to gradually work "half-heartedly". This is one of the causes of the decline in labour productivity that is usually attributed to laziness. It is not without reason that insightful folk wisdom came up with the proverb "the horse need not be beaten with a whip, but with oats".

That which is recognised as commonplace and a truism regarding working animals is not always taken into account to a sufficient degree when it comes to people. When it comes to labour productivity, it is rarely discussed how much the wages of a given place and time correspond to the necessary minimum for proper nutrition, as well as supplements for more intensive work. The issue of the individual characteristics of each and every family– the number of mouths that a given worker has to feed on their salary and to also to eat well for themselves– is not raised at all. A work inspector once openly told me: "we do not give the worker enough to subsist on". This did not prevent him from being a zealous supporter of raising labour productivity at all costs.

We must recognise that one of the main reasons for laziness is insufficient nutrition along with low wages. Under these conditions, laziness is the organism's defence mechanism for self-preservation. If people continue to expend a surplus of energy under the influence of incentives to work (for example peasants during harvest season)– more on that later– then that occurs at the expense of the worker's health. The worker loses weight and becomes weaker. Years of overwork leads to the premature deterioration of the organism and to early ageing. This is frequently seen among industrial workers who are badly paid, do piecework and are burdened by large families.

A person's working capacity is not only dependent on the amount of food. The quality of food and its digestibility by the organism are also significant. It does not come as a surprise that

TAXES

Where did taxes come from– these compulsory fees generated by state power?

There exists a specific branch of political economy that deals with taxes. It is called the "science of finance".

It is not clear what kind of science we are talking about when this is a matter of violence, of direct or indirect coercion.

Unless it is a study of the emergence of this violence and the forms it has taken.

Professor Haney proposes that during the collapse of the feudal system and the development of the centralisation of the state, "the income from royal estates and religious institutions could no longer cover the ever-increasing expenses of the state, and so the need to impose taxes emerged". Such an altruistic theory of taxes– which makes the assumption that the royal state initially spent its revenue, which it had already appropriated by force and the misuse of superstition, on the public needs of the people– is hardly plausible.

Taxes, or, more precisely, what has over time become tax enforcement, has prior origins. They came out of voluntary fees during the emergence of public services. As those public services developed, the representatives of the state– those very kings that professor Haney mentioned– acquired a monopoly over public services in order to increase their personal revenue by turning voluntary fees into compulsory taxes, imposed at their discretion.

Taxes are based not on state or public benefit, but on caste and class interests.

The royal family, by taking off a sliver of the tax collections, gave their intermediaries, the former feudal lords, the opportunity to make profits, granting them the right to collect taxes (a practice that still exists in some Asian states) or continuously turning them into obedient bureaucrats.

The fact that periodic fee collections are still completely voluntary and that there exists one very modest type of public service that is, nevertheless, beneficial for the national economy, and which has been neglected by the state and has not been subjugated to its rule, serves to confirm what we have said about the origin of taxes. This is in reference to public livestock grazing, which still preserves its voluntary character to this day in the villages and provincial cities of many countries. This simple public service is undertaken by one or more shepherds who are organised in an artel. Everyone pays for their labour on a voluntary basis partly in kind, partly with money.

The system of payment, preserved to this day, for the labour of night guards in Persian cities, demonstrates the initially voluntary origin of the collection of fees, which then, over time, turned into compulsory taxing. They are appointed by the police authorities and they themselves collect their salary from the population on a monthly basis at a given rate.

During his stay in England, P.A. Kropotkin was surprised to see one of his acquaintances on a Sunday dressed in a peculiar manner. That acquaintance explained to him that he was the head of the fire brigade and he dressed up to go around collecting voluntary contributions from the local population for the maintenance of the fire brigade.

Ultimately, the recent emergence in a highly cultured country such as Northern America of a public service such as public security– specifically considered a state prerogative– independent of the state and based on the principle of voluntary contributions, further affirms our hypothesis.

Along with stimuli that induce pain and other methods of causing pain, imitation plays an exceptional role in inducing coordinated reflex movements that are called training for work.

These two techniques correspond to two methods of professional training: 1) old, coercive, authoritarian; 2) new, imitative, free.

In all fairness, Robert Owen should be recognised as the founder of the second method, and his followers, the French [Paul] Robin and the Spanish [Francisco] Ferrer– who tragically died for his free thought– should be mentioned as having developed and enhanced the method of free labour education. In practice, these two methods are normally combined to varying degrees.

Regardless of the method that is employed, vocational training must lead to the formation of a whole web of conditioned reflexes necessary for undertaking work. If, by analysing labour processes, we unveil their main properties (i.e. the set of conditions that are necessary for undertaking productive work, then we will find the key to understanding the essence of laziness. Laziness must be nothing more than the lapsing of certain links from a series of ref lexes inherent in any form of work.

What are the main characteristics of labour?

In general, labour is divided into two recognised categories- physical and mental– depending on the predominance of the former or the latter. Moreover, authors are quick to stipulate that there is absolutely no distinction between the two and that both of these properties are combined in any kind of work. The principal characteristics of labour are, of course, not limited to these two qualities. Let us for now review the role of the physical aspect in labour processes and clarify the conditions of muscle contractions which can slow down normal physical reflexes when they do not comply and which thus leads to laziness.

It is well known that any kind of labour, especially the physical kind, demands a higher level of nutrition than what is normally required for the body to sustain its biological processes. The more

Contemporary wage labour is essentially a modified labour ref lex of slavery. The only difference is that the direct physical pain in wage labour is replaced by the misery of deprivation in terms of limiting earnings, cuts in earnings (even as a result of involuntary mistakes) and the threat of recalculating earnings with all the related consequences of unemployment.

However, it is not only pain sensations and other types of suffering that determine the coordinated muscle contractions that are intrinsic to labour. All the other peripheral endings of sensory nerves in the sensory receptors participate, in varying degrees, in the stimulation and directing of physical activity, transmitting external stimuli to the brain centres, where they are refracted in the form of sensations, ideas, consciousness and thoughts.

Science has not yet explained how physical stimuli bring about or turn into mental phenomena. The link between them is nevertheless unquestionable. Contemporary scientific psychophysiology is all based on this link. Physical reflexes are specifically related to such psychophysiological phenomena. Among the unconditioned reflexes that most frequently take part in generating labour-conditioned reflexes, in addition to pain stimuli, we must also mention the ability of imitation– or the imitative reflex. It is sufficient for any external stimulus to be refracted in the nerve centres in the brain as sensations, images and thoughts so that it can be objectively manifested in the form of movements that, in the most complete combinations, reproduce what is seen and heard, like the reflection in a mirror or the echo of a stone. Charles Féré expended particular effort on this question under the heading "Sensations and movements". It is remarkable that 150 years ago Adam Smith paid attention to the role of imitative reflexes in human behaviour. "The mob, when they are gazing at a dancer on the slack rope, naturally writhe and twist and balance their own bodies, as they see him do, and as they feel that they themselves must do if in his situation."

Along with the state police, there exists a kind of cooperative police in New York. They emerged on the initiative of jewellers who together hired special night guards to protect their shops. This type of police then spread across the city and developed into a well-organised and independent public service.

Instructive attempts in this regard have been made by the housing committees in Russian cities over the course of the current revolution, not only to organise public security, but also other public services (healthcare, public education etc.). These attempts have unfortunately been nipped in the bud by the state.

It is high time we do away with the presumption that the state plays an indispensable and beneficial role in the organisation of public services, and to stop making justifications for taxes on this basis. The "theory of finance"– a theory that justifies violence– does not stand up to scrutiny. Having taken over the public services, rather than enhancing how they are organised, the state reduces their efficacy. The state hinders the free development and enhancement of the provision of people's common needs.

The free and cooperative organisation of public services is capable of, and should, remove the state from this spheres, snatching away its monopoly on public services from its hands.

The separation of public services from the state should be wholesale. Not only should the organisational aspect of public services be included, but also the financial aspect. There is no other way to make this feasible.

Just as in fairytales, everyone will be convinced that there is no longer any point of pretending as if the king is not naked. State f inances will lose their "theory" and taxes will appear before everyone's eyes in their natural form– as naked violence.

Developing and promulgating this understanding of the essence of taxes in the consciousness of the masses is the best way to lay the ground for their abolition. A thought that is clearly grasped is a force that waits for the opportune moment to come to life.

This is how revolutions are set up.
(POCHIN, 1920, MAY)

an attempt to touch on this issue in a special report entitled "Ethotechnology", as in the application of ethical instincts to the organisation of work. In this article, I would like to focus on an issue that is closely connected to both the basic reflexes of work and also humans' higher psyche– the issue of laziness.

Since science did away with the evil "spirit of laziness" from everyday life, we must look at laziness as a disorder of a complex set of conditioned reflexes, the aggregation of which leads to the creation of useful values, otherwise known as labour.

In order to understand the reasons behind laziness, in other words, the holding back of work reflexes, inherent in normal people and even higher animal species, it is necessary to first of all study how these reflexes are created and what the basic properties of work are, which, when disturbed, lead to the weakening or cessation of work reflexes.

If the reasons that disturb the normal manifestation of work reflexes are found in the very conditions of the application of professional work– which I hope to prove later– then we must regard laziness as a consequence of harmful professional conditions. In other words, to regard laziness as a professional illness.

I will now give a simple example to explain the root and essence of work as a conditioned reflex.

Every animal that experiences pain from, for example, a hit, runs away in order to escape pain. This is an unconditional reflex. If a harnessed horse is hit with a whip then it runs and does what we know it does. Later on, it rushes ahead, as if to try and avoid being hit, when subjected to one type of whip or from the sound of the crack of the whip. This conditioned reflex gradually weakens or, in scientific terms, ebbs away. The resumption of strikes with the whip will reawaken the reflex. In this case, the work of the horse is nothing more than a conditioned reflex. This was obviously and literally the case at the initial stages of civilisation and when it comes to the work of slaves. It is no wonder that both of these words have the same etymological root.

Granted, psychotechnology[1]1 has taken up the study of the mental aspects of work in earnest. However, its conclusions, which science makes from research, are not intended to protect the psychological health of workers, but rather to use their abilities in a more rational manner or, frankly speaking, to exploit their labour more efficiently. This is the case because the interests of those who employ workers do not always coincide with the demands of protecting labour, especially when it comes to more or less remote types. For example, through the professional selection of multiple telephone operators and the establishment of norms regarding the duration of their work, psychotechnology simply shows how, with proper training, the staff can be utilised better and for as long as possible. But how will this monotonous and stressful job reflect on the mental statement of the workers over the course of many years? Psychotechnology pays little attention to this question, at least at the current stage of its development.

All of this is understandable. Psychotechnology emerged in capitalist countries where the worker is regarded as an instrument in the process of production, which must be used and worn out in the most rational manner, like other parts of machinery. It is not production for the benefit of the worker, who creates value for themselves, but the worker for the benefit of production.

Unfortunately capitalist social relations have not become obsolete in our country of state socialism, and so Soviet psychotechnology has preserved the defects of its original form.

Apart from this significant shortcoming, contemporary psychology has not yet undertaken the systematic study of higher, more complex elements of psychology when it comes to its application to work, such as, for instance, our instincts. When the anarchist section existed at the Kropotkin Museum, I made

[1] Psychotechnology is a historical term for the study of the workplace, akin to organisational or occupational psychology as it is more commonly known nowadays.

CLASS STRUGGLE

Class struggle represents the cornerstone of the socialist parties' programmes and, in particular, that of anarchist propaganda. At the same time, there is no concept more vague than that of *social class.* This fact cannot but reflect on the practical aspects of the activism driven by those who advocate the reconditioning of society based on principles of justice. If they made any effort to delve deeper into the essence of the class stratifications that exist in society, then how many barbaric, meaningless and bloody incidents– such as mass shootings of opponents and hostages or throwing bombs into crowded cafes and museums– would not have discredited the great doctrine of universal solidarity and mutual aid?

According to the fundamental law of history– of class struggle– contemporary advocates and activists of socialist doctrines conclude that there are working and productive classes on the one hand, and, on the other hand, parasitic classes that produce nothing socially useful and simply enjoy the fruits of labour of the former.

Is it really that simple?

In order to comprehend the essence of class struggle and, consequently, to draw the correct, practical conclusions from the general rule, it is necessary to clarify where classes have come from and how they change in form.

"The necessities of daily life," says Elisée Reclus in his historical work on "The Earth and Its Inhabitants" (p. 72 of the Russian translation), "required a diverse range of labour, and this variety in labour has created a variety of types of people."

Diversity in labour has created not only ethnic but also social types or classes. The very origin of classes points to their work-related and socially beneficial nature.

The classification of people based on social differences, which supposedly underlies the hard work of some and the indolence of others, is primarily lacking in the fact that it does not include the huge, predominant mass of intermediary strata of society.

Affluence and poverty are relative concepts. For the beggar, the modest position of a rural teacher would also seem enviable. How many parish priests exist, especially in remote villages, whose families eke out a miserable existence. But the clergy as a whole is considered to be the most typical exploitative class.

Didn't the deplorable experience of the Russian Jacobin social revolution produce a new class of "rural poor", which is contraposed to the working peasant, even if the latter has not and does not make use of wage labour?

The concepts of labour and laziness are also relative.

Urban atheists, who have access to art theatres, might not need the church. However, common people have their own aesthetic and spiritual needs. If the priests satisfies those needs with his shining attire, his musical singing, his recitations about the tragic life of Jesus Christ, other prophets and holy figures (those revolutionary pioneers of yesteryear), then can we call that artist, who is too vulgar for developed people, an idle parasite?

It is no wonder that modern theatre arose from religion. Till this very day, in the Muslim East, following the model of the ancient theatre, stages are erected in the middle of the squares and religious mystery-plays are played out on them in certain seasons (like our theatre seasons).

What fault is it of the rural priest that, along with bast shoes, the primitive theatre is serviced and preserved by him as an artist.

If we take a thoughtful look at the role of the lower clergy in the life of the people, then it would turn out that this class even if it is uprooted by a higher culture– is not as parasitic as it might seem at

ence silently circumvents this fundamental issue, instead excelling at minor and palliative measures.

As I did not have the material means, and was not sure that I would at some point manage to complete the work I had in mind, I attempted to publish the current excerpt, which is itself sufficiently thorough, as a small brochure. And so I submitted the text to the Main Press Directorate (as we shamefully call the old censorship). I received the decision 40 days later that they would not publish it.

Upon reading this excerpt, the reader will look for the real reason for the ban to no avail. It is in fact very simple.

During my previous ordeals with censorship, I mentioned the following to the head of one of the press subdivisions under the Central Committee of the ruling Communist Party:

"How could you put such a narrow-minded person as Lebedev-Polyansky at the head of Glavlit [General Directorate for the Protection of State Secrets in the Press]?"

He replied in the following manner:

"What did you expect? For us to appoint an intelligent person to that position?"

From the very inception of the new system, the "unintelligent" person has continuously been leading the development of the social and even scientific thought of millions of people… Defending state and even private capital from critical analysis is how this pseudo-worker understands the notorious idea of "dictatorship of the proletariat".

—

Professional hygiene mainly focuses on the physical and chemical aspects of occupational hazards, and partly on biological factors, such as macro- and micro-parasitism. It however almost completely ignores an extremely important aspect of occupational hazard– the mental aspect.

LAZINESS AS A PROFESSIONAL DISEASE

Its essence, causes and prevention

This essay contains one of the chapters of a popular guide on professional hygiene, conceived by the author (who has partly started with its compilation), in which labour protection issues will be reviewed not from the point of view of adapting hygiene requirements to the technical and organisational conditions of production, but rather from the opposite perspective– that of the subordination of technology and organisation to the rules of professional hygiene.

As the interests of owners in capitalist production prevail over the interests of workers, the very development of technology and organisation is also subordinate to the interests of the former. It is only through constant struggle that working people manage to gradually win back limited improvements in working conditions. This is because they do not abruptly contradict the immediate interests of the possessors of capital. When it comes to a radical restructuring of the entirety of public production with the aim of combining industrial with agricultural labour and intellectual with manual labour– without which, as Kropotkin has already remarked, we cannot speak of any genuine improvement in labour– contemporary treatises on professional hygiene are out of the question. It is a worn-out truth that only an allround and proportionate functioning of all the psycho-physiological properties of the human body can provide workers with genuine health. Meanwhile, formal sci-

first sight, while the higher aesthetic spectacles are not accessible for the rural popular masses.

If one differentiates the stratification of the clergy into a prosperous cohort on the one hand and an often impoverished cohort on the other, and if one weighs the obscure antagonism between them– an antagonism that has been drowned out by discipline and the fear of losing a piece of bread– then the following question is bound to arise: where is the class here that is united in its interests?

Common interests are not a distinguishing feature of class.

A similar stratification and set of contradictions in interests exist in other ostensibly homogenous classes.

Let's take the proletariat, for instance. If by proletarian we mean somebody who sells their labour, skill and knowledge, then there is an enormous difference between the positions of an unskilled labourer, the artisan and the technician with a higher education. All three sell their labour perhaps to the same private owner or state!

This difference is not an objective fact that will forever prevent the class unification of the proletariat. It entails a real struggle between the various strata within it. The Russian revolution, with the rough and unbridled actions of the masses, revealed this antagonism alongside brutish violence against technicians, often leading to monstrous killings. Indiscriminate persecution against knowledge workers proves that this did not happen by accident and it was not a singular incident that took place unconsciously. Is it not telling that the All-Russian Council of Professional Unions stubbornly refuses to register medical and dental trade unions? Moreover, can you imagine a job that is more difficult and involves more responsibility than that of a doctor?

Where is the class of workers here, united in their interests, opposed to the class of exploiters? Is class struggle, as understood by conventional wisdom, possible without class unity?

Similar differences exist in other classes. Let's take landowners, for instance. What a huge difference there is between a landowner

who has personally managed the household, made all kinds of improvements, introduced new types of fruit-bearing trees and beneficial plants, the best breeds of livestock, horses and so on– with all of these having been gradually adopted by the population and spread in the area and far beyond its borders– and another landowner who has simply received rent and spent their life in the city or somewhere in foreign resorts.

In order to evaluate the socially beneficial role of the landowners, it would suffice to compare the breeds of livestock that belong to Swiss peasants, or even those that belong to peasants in central Russia, with the miserable and degenerating breeds of cows and horses of peasants in Transcaucasia, where exemplary farm landlords are few and far between. After all, the contemporary discourse of class struggle lumps all landlords together into a single bunch of useless exploiters.

Let's now take the example of the capitalists. There is an enormous difference between a capitalist– who directly manages their plant or factory, tirelessly oversees the progress of the work, comes up with and introduces various improvements in the technical set-up of production, takes care of the timely procurement of raw materials and fuel (sometimes also food supplies for the workers)– and another capitalist who simply cuts off the coupons from their shares with scissors! And the common man in capitalist countries cut off and still cuts off the coupons, somehow making ends meet along with their main source of income.

We can again ask the question– where is the uniform class of capitalists here? Does it make sense to call the knowledge, experience and managerial role of a proprietor useless and exclusively parasitic? Didn't the Bolsheviks themselves– those vandals who have no regard for the economic life of the country– openly or secretly put in charge the Prokhorovs, Brokars, Sytins and their "bourgeois" managers who set this system up?

Social parasitism, in the literal sense of the word, is a relatively rare phenomenon and one that is hardly related to class. Parasitic

sourcefulness that M. Kovalevsky ascribes to state power. The tendency to hold on to the old, if not in form then in essence, is no less characteristic of government bodies than it is of the masses. Progress is made by individual initiative among the masses of people and not thanks to bureaucratic officials. An evident proof of this is the preservation of the rule of murder for murder in the law– capital punishment– even though it was replaced in the distant past by *vira*[1], whereas nowadays it is manifestly contrary to contemporary ethics.

Moreover, the state violates the norms of even primitive lawretribution by an eye for an eye– and it enforces capital punishment even in cases that have nothing to do with murder. In former times, slave owners would slay their slaves for simply attempting to escape. Similarly to slave owners, the state often replaces the law with, in the characteristic words of M. Kovalevsky, "legal lynching".

And so a cursory critique of the ethnographic and historical arguments made in favour of the state demonstrates that the state is, in essence, theory and practice, an abnegation of the law.

Whoever recognises the state also approves of slavery, for state power is nothing more than a special kind of slave ownership– a *monopoly of slavery.*

(POCHIN, 1922)

[1] A law in the times of Kievan Rus stipulating that an individual accused of murder had the right to provide monetary compensation in exchange for absolvement of their crime.

The domestication of man by man is not achieved with the same ease at all ages– it is easier in youth. When primitive tribes would raid weaker ones they would kill adults and elders, while taking the young, predominantly teenagers, children and mothers, into captivity and slavery. The tender age of children is more conducive to domestication. Ant slave owners even kidnap their future slaves when they are larvae. Do these reasons not explain why the more or less organised state power takes charge of public education in order to educate the younger generation into submission and obedience?

However, the most powerful and effective way to domesticate the masses and subjugate them to a ruling minority is, and has been, *intimidation*. It is surprising that such a thoughtful observer such as Maksim Kovalevsky did not pay sufficient attention to the role of the penal system in the development of the alleged voluntary submission of the individual to state power.

The state is just as harsh and cruel in this matter as private slave owners. The cruelest punishments are enjoyed by those who disobey or oppose the authorities. The individual does not have the right to give up one's citizenship of a given state without its agreement, just as a slave was unable to leave their owner. The state takes away part of the property of its subjects at its discretion by imposing taxes, just as the slave owner has at their disposal the fruits of their slave's labour. Even human life itself is not always beyond the reach of the state's discretion: the legislation of most countries continues to include the death penalty, and not as a hypothetical possibility.

All of these methods of slave ownership to maintain the obedience of slaves are employed by the state in relation to its subjects under the guide of the law, which, as we have seen above, is reduced to the ideology of statehood, to the "supremacy of the will", put simply, the abuse of power against people.

It would be a futile endeavour to search within state power for that reasonable "expenditure of mental energy that is required for any kind of productive act"– that special kind of initiative and re-

elements exist at all levels of society, no less at the socalled lower levels than at the higher ones. Greed, avarice, idleness, crime, alcoholism, revelry and pathological gambling do not constitute a privilege only of the privileged classes. The productive capitalist looks at the parasitic elements of their own class with disdain, just as a worker treats the drunkard of their class with disregard, just as any mentally healthy person behaves towards a no-good freeloader. All classes are intimately intertwined and you can see both productive qualities and parasitic inclinations within the same class, whether among the higher classes (i.e. the privileged) or the lower ones– the labourers, as socially beneficial. A strict division of society into productive and idle classes or exploitative and exploited is practically impossible. The attempt to implement this division gives rise to a stagnant state of affairs and to economic and moral ruin, which we are currently experiencing. This leads to the general decline of culture at an alarming speed.

But if there are no parasitic classes at all, then what is the point of making social distinctions?

The point is that not all socially useful professional categories receive equal benefits from their work.

Owners or managers of large capital, big landowners, highlevel officials of yesteryear and "senior officials" of today, people with a higher scientific-technical or artistic education– they were and are in a relatively more privileged position than the middle layers of artisans, handicraftsmen, peasants, mid-level bureaucrats, teachers etc. The middle layers constitute their own kind of aristocracy compared to workers who own neither means nor any special professional knowledge or education.

And so, social inequality arises from the inequality between the professional strata of the population. What is called class struggle is in fact a struggle between professional associations and strata for the preservation of their advantages or their expansion at the expense of others.

We should understand class struggle primarily in a figurative sense, just as Darwin understood the struggle for existence, as indicated by Kropotkin. The unification of classes or the *search for equilibrium between them* is just as much a rule for social development as mutual aid is for biological evolution. In a state of social equilibrium, classes that are mentally more developed and morally more united enjoy advantages and privileges. Even in "socialist" Russia, according to the official rates, workers are divided into more than 30 categories. The "skilled labour" of senior officials in the bureaucratic hierarchy is paid twice as much as the work of unskilled workers (not to mention the more significant indirect benefits they enjoy).

The advantages of certain professional strata or classes could not turn into parasitism and exploitation. On the contrary, as the manifestation of a successful social division of labour, the advantages would serve the general good, if not for one facet of human society, which unfavourably distinguishes it from animal societies.

The more developed classes try to perpetuate their advantages through a special school of training and the subjugation of the rest of the classes– a school called the state or governmental authority.

It is only thanks to the state system that the progressive rule of class struggle degenerates into destructive civil and international wars.

The practical conclusion to be made from all of this is that the struggle to eliminate inequality and abolish privileges requires us to look for a just balance between professional associations and strata, rather than striving towards the domination of one part of the population– the proletariat of physical labour– over the whole of society.

All forms of domination inevitably lead to the formation of new privileges and a new parasitism. The domination of the proletariat cannot generate a different outcome. The current order in Russia vividly proves that this is the case.

priests, wizards, witch-doctors etc.– as claimed by M. Kovalevsky. We would instead look to another particularity of human societies, to the institution of slavery, which has been prevalent across the various stages of development of human societies. Slavery was established not by some kind of irresistible inclination of human nature to submit to another's will, but due to other psychological properties of human nature.

"Man," says Élisée Reclus, "is an animal that can be easily domesticated, like, for instance, a dog and various other species. He was domesticated at first through flattery, then he was threatened, and then kept in slavery by force of habit. Whoever takes over the will of a person, disposes of his energy and his life".

The existence of state power would be an impossibility without this compliance to the domestication of man by man. The voluntary submission of the individual to the state, accepted by M. Kovalevsky, along with Montaigne, as an indisputable and generally recognised fact, is far from being a natural need of the human soul. This voluntary submission is achieved and preserved by the same methods as the domestication of animals: mainly by *punishments and intimidation.*

Charles Letourneau gives an example of how Catholic monks in the 17th century subjugated a particular primitive tribe, with almost black skin but different from redskins, who lived in parts of California. These "savages" turned out to not be so fierce as the "Catholic clergy managed to organise them, without great effort, into a settlement similar to the ones in Paraguay, and to subject them to slave labour under the whip of overseers, while forcing them into monogamy". Isn't what the Catholic clergy carried out, based, so to speak, on successive experience, the natural way of developing state power?

The similarity between private slave ownership and state power, which regulates freedom, property and even the lives of its subjects, is total not only in its essence but also in its methods of consolidation.

and privileges of sorcerers and healers in primitive societies to the birth of state power is as little justified as it would be to identify contemporary academics, doctors and all kinds of experts with state power. This is despite the fact that they either end up serving the state or enjoy considerable influence in society.

The best proof of the late origin of state power in the history of human development, namely during the collapse of the clan-tribe, is given by M. Kovalevsky. "The state", he writes, "was not at first a social union that embraced all of human life. It simply supplemented the functions of earlier forms of community among totemic clans and then clan-tribes, within which the maternal and then paternal family developed. It is thus no surprise that the functions of the state, the police, legislative and judiciary bodies are, at first, extremely limited. We cannot say that the state, from the very outset, fully assumed the role of preserving internal order and peace as well as external security and justice, which are now considered to be the exclusive monopoly of the state. Clans and tribes that grew out of them continued to carry out blood feuds and independent mediation took the place of judicial reprisals executed by the state. Temporary alliances between clans and tribes under the leadership of a provisionally chosen military leader assumed the task of protecting their occupied territory, whether independently or along with their royal guard, which, over time, turns into a people's militia…

…In the initial period, the state does not have the final word over judicial matters– this only happens when the state mediates between different parties and when the parties express their consent to the judgement made by the prince or an authorised judge who represents the prince".

If we were to ask ourselves how state power was born and how it gradually took over all aspects of our lives, then the first reason we would look to would not be the alleged innate inclination of humans to submit to the will of others who have acquired specialised professional knowledge– such as military leaders, scientist

Finding a solution to this social question does not lie in the impractical elimination of classes and in competition between them– this guarantee of material progress– but rather in the elimination of the organisation that obstructs free development and establishes the domination of certain classes over others– i.e. the destruction of state power.

The question of finance in the social revolution (Pochin, 1922, June-July)

Some people work towards social revolution not only in thought but in deeds. Some people are aware that things were "not always as they are" and "will not always be so". Some believe that a better future will come to be through our personal efforts, and not thanks to any doubtful wisdom and gracious will of the authorities in power. In short, every genuine revolutionary cannot help but pay attention to the issue of finances. And they will eventually stumble upon it when they move from words to action.

One recalls how 4–5 days before the October Revolution, the preparation of which was known beforehand, anarchist activists were gathered at the premises of the Moscow Union of Anarchist Groups at the Maronovski alley and were discussing their stance regarding imminent events. The anarchists decided to take part in the revolution with the aim of gracing it not only with a deeply social character, but also an economic one. One recalls how an enthusiast such as K. Kovalevich, who tragically passed away three years thereafter, developed a project for anarchists to organise trade with villages and equip trains with manufactured goods and iron-made products– scythes, pitchforks, shovels etc., in exchange for bread. However, it seems that the mission will not be accomplished with this, as Kovalevich himself asks: "Well, what about money?" Unable to find an answer to this question, he vigorously slaps his knee with his hand and exclaims: "Money… we will have to save money for two or three months!"

He circumvented this question so naively, despite proving his willingness to die for his ideas.

The question of finance is relevant not only to the flourishing of capitalism, but also to the success of the social revolution.

"It is one of the most difficult and pressing issues for states at war", said Professor A. Maniulov in his lectures during the World War. "Once the war ends, the circulation of money, which has been disrupted by the printing of large quantities of paper banknotes, will be corrected. The solution of this problem is ultimately linked to the life of the whole economy".

The disruption of money circulation in Russia, thanks to the state forms adopted by the revolution, has manifested itself to a particularly severe degree. This is the main reason why the Soviet authorities were so ready to agree to participate in the Genoa Conference. The foreign loan, which the Soviets sought to obtain, was meant to serve the facilitation of monetary circulation and not novel state economic schemes that were always doomed to fail.

If we were to do away with the vulgar and stale diplomatic game between representatives of "great and small predators" (expressed in a Russian manner), who recently gathered in Genoaa game that is hardly animated by the participation of "Eastern barbarians" (expressed in the language of civilisation)– then it would turn out that the Genoa conference was called to resolve the "difficult and pressing issue" regarding which Professor Maniulov had discussed a few years before.

The so-called "solution to the Russian question" was a de facto recognition of Soviet Russia– not simply on a "piece of paper", but a de jure recognition– and it took place much earlier, from the time of the Soviet government's transition to a new economic policy. It is true that this transition brought with it another kind of recognition– that of the collapse of the old economic policybut it would be better to remain silent about that so as not to cause trouble to those who are obliged to read this text and especially to our voluntary readers– especially since nobody regrets the old policy, neither its former proponents nor, even more so, its opponents.

we could then say that any kind of brawl would be a manifestation of state power.

Brehm, in his description, explicitly outlines the phenomenon of sexual selection, which, in human societies, is characterised as love and jealousy; equating violence with the rudiments of state power is just as unjustified as likening it to family feuds and romantic dramas among people.

The reference to the words of Topinard, who stated that among elephants the "most prudent and vigilant becomes the leader" is even less convincing. If we extrapolate that logic to modern societies then we could attribute the heads of meteorological observatories to powerful leaders who through their tireless and vigilant observations warn farmers and sailors of treacherous weather conditions that threaten their well-being or lives. In much the same way many of the aspects of the lives of backward peoples, as mentioned by Kovalevsky, point to the birth of specialised branches of art and knowledge in a primitive environment, rather than to state power in its literal sense. Can we liken, for instance, the rudimentary forms of modern state power to the custom among the Redskins of America of preparing capable and tough candidates as military leaders or chieftains (or "experts" in today's language) who would be subject to "such brutal trials that many would be unable to endure them"?

The same can be said about the "leadership" of elders, widespread among primitive tribes (i.e. experienced individuals who are knowledgeable about common law and economic issues). The fact that in other circumstances, for instance during war, when leadership is assumed by a person who is "mentally and physically more qualified", as is practised by the Australian Kurnai tribe, demonstrates that we are not dealing here with state power, in the usual sense of the term, but with the emergence of various social functions. Does this not relate to a similar function performed by the art of sorcerers or the "ability to call upon rain or disease, to cure illnesses or to cause them and so on"? To liken the influence

Attempts to scientifically validate the origins of state power and, in particular, to establish a consistent set of reasons that give rise to it, in order to justify its contemporary existence, are so rare that it is worth dwelling on arguments made by such an outstanding thinker and scholar such as Maxim Kovalevsky, as he takes his arguments for "sociological doctrine"– i.e. to scientifically refute anarchist teachings.

Kovalevsky primarily refers to Brehm, who writes that among monkeys, "the most capable and strong male is elected as leader, but only this honour is not entrusted to him by a general vote, but as a result of a stubborn struggle with his rivals (i.e. with other older males). The dispute is settled with teeth and fists. Those who do not fall in line voluntarily are humbled by kicks and cuffs. The strongest doubtless reigns supreme. The leader does not approach the weaker sex with chivalrous courtesy. Instead, he attains love by force. Females do not dare to start love affairs with young males: the ruler vigilantly watches over them and severely punishes any offenders. He never jokes when it comes to love. He so mercilessly beats and breaks the females who allow themselves any liberties that they lose any desire for such transgressions. The guilty young male gets it even rougher…

…For his part, he (the leader) is constantly concerned about the safety of his subjects and so he is on his toes more so than anybody else. He is on the lookout everywhere, trusts nothing, and, consequently, almost always foresees danger in time".

We used this descriptive excerpt regarding the social life of monkeys in even more detail than M. Kovalevsky himself because he refers to it as an example to explain the origins of state power. However, if we do not accept Brehm's figurative terms of "leader", "ruler" and "subject" in their literal senses then we would be hard pressed to find anything in those descriptions that resembles anything close to public state power, except perhaps for attributes of violence. Although there is no state power without violence, not every manifestation of violence can be equated with it, otherwise

But before we bury the old policy in the ground, we should give it some credit: it was never and nowhere regarded as an attempt to replace money circulation in a vast country with the state management of the national economy. The failure of this grand attempt should serve as a sobering lesson not only to statist socialists but also to many anarchists affected by economic illusions. The reason for its failure is rooted not in the blockade, nor in the civil war, nor in the territorial dismemberment of Russia– when the blockade was removed, internal strife had ended, and coal and oil regions were reunited, even the most staunch statist communists realised that it was impossible to establish not only an external but also an internal exchange of goods without a measure of value and without hard money.

If the state system of a "common pot" came crashing down then what can you expect from an idealistic system of trade without money, without accounts, measures and weights, which Kropotkin himself called a utopia and which many anarchists adopted in its literal sense?

This system has one undeniable advantage over state communism: nobody would impose it on the people through emergency measures or the common methods used by the state. However, this is the very condition that leaves theory in the realm of speculation. Anarchists, who do not limit themselves to dreams, should stand on the road of practicality, mentioned in the sermons of Bakunin and Kropotkin by the common sense of the French peasant turned worker– P.J. Proudhon. This path, called "mutualism" (from the word *mutuel*) essentially represents a theory of cooperation. The latter, as has been established more than once by ideologues, totally coincides with the theory of modern anarchism.

Proudhon's merit lies in the fact that he appreciated the role of cooperative (mutual) credit long before modern cooperation in the renewal of the social order, and he established the main condition for the emergence of mutual trust– interest-free credit (with the exception of minor organisational costs). This should be the fi-

nancial basis of the social order, renewed by the social revolution. The meaning and role of free credit becomes clearer when we pay attention to the historical origins of interest. In those distant primaeval times, when the main form of property owned by pastoral peoples was livestock, when pets represented a sort of money and served as a medium for the exchange of goods, credit came in the form of livestock and it came back along with natural offspring. But can modern money, modern and inanimate golden capital, lay claim to offspring, or interest, without itself becoming a means for the exploitation of labour? Genuine credit cooperation should differ from capitalist credit by its interest-free nature. It is similar to how consumer cooperation trades not for profit but to deliver consumer goods to its members at a cost. And so credit cooperation must bring about mutual confidence without deriving special benefits from credit, which is necessary for labour production or commodity exchange.

No form of cooperation, in the contemporary sense of the word, exists without a stable monetary system. Unfortunately, in the eyes of many anarchists, their understanding of money is inextricably linked to the exploitation of human labour. They see in it a tested tool used to more precisely measure value in the exchange of goods– one of the main causes of all social evils. In backwards countries, with the introduction of more efficient machines, craftsmen see the cause of their ruin in those very machines and they frequently attempt to eliminate those highly productive tools, which would otherwise be the source of their wealth if they were to own them. It is time for us anarchists to reject such simplistic views on money circulation.

Chased gold is a commodity, fit for the exchange of goods, like any other product of human labour, which deserves the full attention of revolutionaries for its use in the radical economic renewal of society, as the whole financial system is based on metallic money.

The fact that the state has appropriated money and the right to issue it, turning finance into a monstrous instrument for the ex-

"Montaigne explained the subordination of the individual to the state as voluntary servitude in an anonymous essay, long attributed to La Boétie", writes M. Kovalevsky. "No matter how in significant the ruler was, if, in the words of Montaigne, he were not a husband, but a little man (*homeau*), people would still follow the decrees issued in his name that restrict their freedom of self-determination. No matter how senseless the orders, no matter to what extent they contradicted the convictions and conscience of those who are subject to those orders– obedience is still the general rule. What conclusion should we draw from this indisputable and generally recognised fact? Either the conclusion reached by a contemporary (Montaigne) of the religious wars and the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre who said that "once we stop obeying, our long-standing condition of slavery will collapse by itself". Or that the psychology of all beings with a social life is rooted in the compelling need for leadership.

Those who advocate the former are known nowadays as anarchists. The sociological doctrine regarding the origins of state power and governments does not sit well with their [anarchist] doctrine since it links the question of the origins of state power to a more general question– that of the nature of any kind of leadership. This doctrine seeks answers in the psychology of human, and even of animal, groups".

M. Kovalevsky goes on to outline a series of examples from the life of animals and primitive peoples. Based on those examples, he asserts that "those who stand out from the crowd and become the leader of the pack possess not only physical strength, but also mental and spiritual strength. The need to obey other people's instructions and commands is determined not only by the superior ability of certain individuals to direct social processes in a desired manner, but also by the natural, innate proclivity of the majority to refrain from expending mental energy, which is required for any kind of productive act".

forces between the litigating parties, nor the unbridled dominance of the powerful over the weak.

The idea of justice is, by nature, related to the concept of law. The use of force can transcend and violate the law, but it cannot replace it. Meanwhile, what do contemporary lawyers teach us? "*The formal school defines the law as the supremacy of the will in a given domain of relations*", writes F. Kokoshkin. According to another classic definition, "the law constitutes a set of rules of conduct established by a sovereign power". Others, who think of themselves as "academic" socialists, assert that "the law is the result of a struggle for the fruits of life, the public protection of interests that have triumphed in that struggle". They proclaim a dictatorship (i.e. an unbridled abuse of power in order to carry out certain goals for the sake of the law).

The relationship between the law and ethics is clear and it is inseparable.

Although Professor P.G. Vinogradov considers that "it would be short-sighted to see the law as, at the very least, a set of moral prescriptions", there is no doubt that on the other hand there is no conceivable law without adherence to moral norms.

Meanwhile, lawyers, who identify the law with that of state power, blindly ascribe some kind of supernatural qualities to the latter (contrary to historical evidence and contemporary reality) in addition to all sorts of violence, abuses of power and fervour, often nourished by the sick spiritual and mental state of the rulers (especially when they are inspired by religious sentiments and ambitions of social reconditioning).

State power has appropriated the monopoly on the administration of justice; not to protect the law, which is inseparable from justice, but to consolidate its supremacy, regardless of the moral or immoral content of its decrees.

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How does state power achieve that? How is it born and consolidated?

ploitation of the masses, should only further induce us to wrest this powerful tool from its hands, which is indispensable for the national economy even after the social revolution.

Let's clarify more precisely what is meant by finance.

Formal academics normally define it as "the science of state revenues and their use" (Leroy-Beaulieu) or "the study of how best to satisfy the material needs of the state" (Yanzhul). However, such definitions, especially about the October revolution, are hardly accurate. Leroy-Beaulieu himself admits that defining "the boundaries of the state's main tasks is extremely difficult: since all these tasks were performed in some countries and at a particular period of time by private individuals in tandem with the state." Thus, the boundaries between state and private revenues and needs are blurred. It would be more accurate to limit the scope of the concept of finance to the existing monetary system in a given country, which is used equally by state institutions and individuals. What has up until now been called "the science of finance" should instead be called "the science of taxes". It sounds less attractive, but it is more accurate.

If we are to understand the real reason for today's financial devastation then it would be enough to do away with this cursory perspective on the history of financial matters. The World War and the Russian Revolution have exacerbated circumstances that have always existed. One reads in the works of established academics that the proper coinage of money, which is undoubtedly important for the economic interests of a country, "can only be achieved if this task is taken upon by the state with its full attention" (Yanzhul), or that "money, in its contemporary form, constitutes a product… regulated by the state" (Maniulov). Then, following such commentaries, you find in their own writings, as simple illustrations, a historical overview of the continuous abuses of money committed by state power and its right to print money up until the modern era. And so, one cannot help but ask the following question: weren't these academics mocking their audience and readers?

There was a time when the coinage of money in various countries was a free craft. In ancient [Kievian] Rus, money chasers were called silversmiths. According to Professor Maniulov, "they coined money, but they were obliged to obey the rules and were subject to oversight by the government". Since state oversight in Russia has always meant taxes, extortion and incitement to abuse, then it appeared that "oversight was not, however, so vigilant and that is why the silversmiths veered away from the norms established by the law; they started coining the ruble not from 216 units but from a larger amount, which led to the reduction of the weight of money. In Novgorod, they soon started coining 230, 235 or even 240 units to the ruble instead of 216. This led to significant discontent among the population, which led to the 1447 rebellion". And this is why the coinage of money was declared a state item.

And so, the reduction of the ruble's value by silversmiths from between 6–10% (even if we assume that they did this out of self interest and were not instead obliged to do so due to state taxes or bureaucratic extortion), led to the rebellion and the state took it upon itself to "regulate" the coinage of money.

The negative consequences of the state's right to coinage began to appear after these developments, against which the popular riots were powerless.

"When monetary coinage was established", says Professor Maniulov, "a certain phenomenon can be observed in all states in similar conditions and at a corresponding period of time: the government starts to attempt at not only the regulation of monetary circulation but also at benefitting from it financially". However, he forgot to mention in which state and in which period the government stopped trying to extract "financial benefits" from coinage (to put it simply– to stop robbing the people). The "regulation" of monetary circulation, as is made clear from further statements, boils down to the technical enhancement of coinage (which, doubtless, would be better achieved by the silversmiths). However, this has never manifested itself in financial integrity, free from self-interest. Dur-

LAW AND THE STATE

I dedicate this small work on a big question to the dear memory of Yekaterina Nikolayevna Sokolova. Having read this text in its original handwritten form, she found it beneficial for the following reason: the presentation of such an abstract topic was made simple and accessible to everyone.

There are two forces that are active in directing the development of life: the struggle for existence and mutual aid. Whatever relative importance we attach to this or that factor, there is no doubt that the struggle for existence in its developed form takes place not between separate individuals, but between their associations, i.e. it assumes the character of mutual aid for the struggle for existence.

However, associations formed in order to engage in the struggle do not completely eliminate the clashes of interests that exist within those very associations; that is why the social instinct has developed to such a high degree that it has introduced new ways of resolving opposing ambitions, besides the use of brute force.

"The primitive form of justice, manifested in the rule of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" is, clearly, nothing more than imitation", says Élisée Reclus. Retribution and making the punishment fit the crime used to be perceived as something completely fair. Even the accused might have seen it as an act of repentance. The repenting sinner should, of course, see it as fair that they must bear a punishment as severe as the crime they committed".

Thus, we see that the measure of justice– equality– lay at the foundation of the law once it was born, and not the interaction of

We must rush to move ahead with this plan before various interstate conferences make impositions on us under the guise of foreign loans or, put differently, of the will of capitalist banks' "consortiums".

Revolutions are not carried out only from behind barricades. Healthy finances are no less necessary for the success of social revolution than armed struggle.

(POCHIN, 1920, OCTOBER)

ing the reign of Tsar Michael Fedorovich, the weight of the silver rouble was reduced from 16 to 12 units (i.e. by 25%).

During the reign of Aleksei Mikhailovich the rouble was reduced further to 6¾ units of silver (i.e. the level of reduction increased to 80%). "And see here what an enormous change the weight of the ruble experienced, starting from its emergence in ancient Rus when it was equivalent to 48 units", exclaims Professor Maniulov, who keeps silent regarding the fact that the full-weighted rouble was coined in ancient Rus by free artisans.

Nevertheless, the reduction in weight was too little for the government. In that period, the Tsarist government decided to "issue a low-grade coin". Instead of silver coins (which have been used since the reign of Ivan the Terrible), copper coins were issued at the nominal price of silver. The issuance of copper coins was made a number of times and, at first, nothing out of the ordinary occurred as a consequence: the people, still unaware, trustingly accepted the new money as equal to the previous currency" (Yanzhul). As a consequence of these issuances, an extraordinary development of forged coins emerged, despite the frightening punishments: "more than 7,000 people were sentenced to death over this period, almost 14,000 people's legs and arms were cut off, and a mass of people were exiled to Siberia" (Yanzhul). This is how the state dealt with those who interfered with its monopoly on false money. Nothing has essentially changed since then.

After the failure to "make the population forget about the difference between copper and silver", Peter I, having learnt from the experience of his father, was more moderate in his extraction of "benefit for the treasury by lowering the quality of alloy for coinage, setting the standard at 70 rather than the pre-existing standard of 88–92".

Peter's successors also sought to "extract whatever they could from money by receiving the maximum amount of revenue from coinage", states Professor Maniulov. However, the greatest degree of unbridledness regarding the business of money in the hands of

the government came with the introduction of paper money during the reign of Catherine II.

From then on, the state, using an astonishingly consistent set of methods, has abused the right of coinage until the present day.

The same has been the case in all states. One of the kings of France, Philip V, even got the name "counterfeit coin".

What conclusion should we make from this history of the question of finance?

The conclusion is clear. Even socialist doctrines are not in a position to keep the state authorities from abusing its predecessors. It is necessary to take the work and right of coinage away from the hands of the state.

Is this a utopian idea?

Is it not noteworthy that this separation of money circulation from the state is close to becoming implemented in the United States of North America– the only country that participated in the World War and managed to maintain stable finances?

In European states "the right to issue bank notes is officially or practically employed by one credit institution (in some countries public, in others private) and in those countries (for example England and Germany) where the right to issue is not granted to just one, but to several banks, the plurality of issuing banks exists more so on paper than in reality: one of the banks is so dominant that the rest are relatively insignificant.

"Things are quite a bit different in America. In contrast, a system of wide-ranging decentralisation is prevalent there. Besides, banking in the United States is exclusively based on private initiative… The right to issue (bank notes) is enjoyed by 7,300 banks that are deemed to be 'national'. These banks are all private, established by shareholder capital. The law that regulates the amount of capital establishes a minimum level of capital depending on the number of inhabitants of a given city where the bank is located. In cities where the population is less than 3,000, the national bank's capital should be greater than 25,000 dollars (around 50,000,000 rubles), in

cities with up to 6,000 inhabitants the minimum is 50,000 dollars and so on. The small size of the national banks is evident from the fact that 30% of them have capital of less than 50,000 dollars. Every national bank has the right to issue bank notes, however, the maximum amount of notes that the bank puts into circulation is limited by the amount of its capital share" (A. Maniulov, "The Money Doctrine", page 157).

It would seem that the American bourgeoisie has adopted Proudhon's thinking, adapting it to their interests and substituting the "bank of the people", as suggested by Proudhon, with the "national bank".

If the American system were to conform to anarchist financial demands, it would require the following:

1) Both the freedom to coin money and the right to coinage would be fulfilled by multi-member primary cooperatives or local cooperative unions;

2) Cooperative congresses would establish the monetary system, norms and guarantees of money circulation and the Council of Cooperative Congresses would dictate how those tasks are carried out;

3) The moral weight of the Congresses and their Councils will be enough to establish a uniform currency throughout the country and to curb, if not completely and immediately do away with, private-capitalist banking enterprises;

4) Cooperative "banks of the people" can provide for the issuance of money (analogous to the process in the United States) not only by means of metallic cash but also by means of various valuable documents;

5) The technical implementation of the free minting of coins and the assignment of popular (formerly state) paper money would be put under the practical management of the Council of Cooperative Congresses' financial department.

This is the only *independent* way for revolutionary Russia to experience a real financial recovery.