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# Makhno's Ukraine against Skoropadsky's Ukraine

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building a “Greater Russia”, for which he was overthrown by the Ukrainian nationalists. On the other hand, Makhno, who fought for the right of the people to self-government, returned the land to the peasants and to the last protected our people from all who wanted to profit from it.

Now that you know their biography, can you choose which Ukraine you are fighting for? For Makhno’s Ukraine or Skoropadsky’s Ukraine?

An interesting article was written in one of the right-wing publications, in which Makhno’s Ukraine and Skoropadsky’s Ukraine were contrasted. That all right-wing forces stand for Skoropadsky’s “strong country” and that anarchists want to turn everything into Makhno’s chaos. We believe that this opposition shows very well what the right and the anarchists are fighting for. Let us recall what policy Makhno pursued and which Skoropadsky pursued during his reign.

## **Skoropadsky’s Ukraine**

Pavlo Skoropadsky came to power on April 29, 1918, when the hetman’s coup took place. And German troops helped him come to power. They disbanded the Ukrainian Central Rada. A group of key government ministers was sent to Lukyanovka prison, and Skoropadsky was handed over the presidency. The hetman abolished the Central Council and its institutions, land committees, abolished the republic and all revolutionary reforms. Thus, the UPR became a Ukrainian state with a semi-monarchical authoritarian rule of the hetman — the supreme head of state, army and judiciary in the country. In the economic and social spheres, Skoropadsky’s government abolished all socialist transformations: the length of the working day at industrial enterprises was increased from 8 to 12 hours, and strikes were banned. Mass seizure of land from the peasants in favor of large landowners. Delegates to the Second All-Ukrainian Peasants’ Congress were arrested, and the congress itself was disbanded. The state grain monopoly was maintained. Most of the harvest collected by the peasants was subject to requisition, a tax was introduced. Much of this crop was exported to Germany and Austria-Hungary. German troops, landowners and the bourgeoisie became the mainstay of the hetman’s power. When German troops were defeated in World War I, the hetman began to change his shoes to retain

his power. On November 14, 1918, a few days after the news of the Compiègne Armistice, Hetman Skoropadsky signed the “Charter” — a manifesto in which he stated that he would defend the “ancient power and strength of the All-Russian state” and called for the construction of the All-Russian Federation. the first step towards the reproduction of Greater Russia. The manifesto marked the collapse of all efforts of the Ukrainian national movement to create an independent Ukrainian statehood. This document finally repelled the majority of Ukrainian federalists, the Ukrainian military and the intelligentsia from the hetman. An anti-Hetman uprising led by the Directory of the Ukrainian People’s Republic unfolded in Ukraine. Within a month, under the command of Simon Petliura, the hetman’s regime was overthrown by insurgents and hetman’s troops who sided with the Directory. On December 14, 1918, Skoropadsky signed a manifesto of resignation and fled Kyiv with German troops.

## **Makhno’s Ukraine**

On September 1, 1919, Makhno proclaimed the creation of the “Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine.” On September 15, 1919, the Makhnovists occupied Katerynoslav. On October 20, 1919, at a meeting of the Army Revolutionary Council and the Congress of Peasants, Workers, and Insurgents in Oleksandrivsk, Makhno put forward a program of action to create an independent peasant republic in the rear of Denikin’s troops centered in Ekaterinoslav. The Makhno program abolished the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the Communist Party, and provided for the development of self-government based on non-partisan “free Soviets”, the organization of a “third social revolution” to overthrow the Bolsheviks and establish land for free use of the peasant masses. “Workers’ control” was established at the factories. This meant

that business owners could not make any important decisions, such as the length of the working day, wages, employment and dismissal, labor discipline without the knowledge and consent of elected labor committees and unions. One of the results of this was the almost complete elimination of unemployment. To solve the problem of unemployment, the classic method of anarchism was used: instead of laying off redundant workers, the company reduced the length of the working day. Later, the enterprises came under the control of the Soviets.

“District congresses of peasants, workers and insurgents” were convened to resolve issues concerning the territory as a whole. In total, three such congresses were held during the free existence of the Makhnovist region. On the land issue, the congress ordered local land committees to register all lands, distribute them among small and landless peasants, and provide everyone with seeds. Agricultural inventory was distributed among the peasants of the county council. Peasants could voluntarily unite in communes, or cultivate the land themselves, hired labor was prohibited. At the same time, contrary to the stereotype, the Makhnovists, like the peasants of Russia and Ukraine in general, opposed any private ownership of land, believing that the land should be owned by those who cultivate it and periodically redistributed according to the number of people in the family.

The Republic of Makhno was destroyed during a Bolshevik military operation, and the remnants of the Makhnovists were forced to emigrate.

## **Conclusions**

In the end, on the one hand, we have Skoropadsky, who took bread from Ukrainian peasants, increased the working day of workers, built his dictatorship, and at the end of his reign renounced the idea of “Independent Ukraine” in favor of