ing conditions. For example, general strikes were conducted in solidarity with workers in the sugar industry (Rosario, 1901), and with sales clerks (Buenos Aires, 1902; on a national scale, 1904). There were large strikes of bakery workers in Buenos Aires (1902), and longshoremen (1902 and 1903-1904). Hundreds of thousands of workers took part in national general strikes of solidarity and protest against repressions in 1907, 1909, and 1910. In 1907, on the initiative of the anarchists, a general strike of tenants was organized.

These actions and demonstrations often resulted in violent clashes and street battles with police, and harsh repressions which were answered in turn by protest strikes.20 "One must say that the anarchist movement here – is unlike any other in the world," wrote the correspondent of a European anarchist newspaper in 1907, "since here almost all the workers are anarchists."21 In 1916 supporters of "neutral" syndicalism succeeded in splitting the FORA – the more moderate breakaway organization was known as the "FORA of the 9th Congress."

Under the influence of the FORA the Uruguayan Regional Workers' Federation (FORU) was formed in 1905. It developed more quietly, experiencing a number of ups and downs. Nevertheless, the Uruguayan worker anarchists were able to lead important strikes of street car conductors, bakers, leather workers, construction workers, transport workers, printers, metalworkers, packing plant workers, etc. as well as several general strikes. It was able to compel the government to introduce the 8-hour working day.22 The Argentine FORA also served as a model for the Regional Workers' Central of Paraguay, founded in 1916.

Anarchists from the very beginning exerted a fundamental influence on the workers' movements of such countries as Mexico, Cuba, and Brazil.23 Mexican anarchists were involved in founding the first association of the country's labour unions – the Great Circle of Mexican Workers (GCOM) in 1870. At the beginning of the 20th century, they carried on a tenacious

Anarcho-syndicalism in the 20th Century

Vadim Damier

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anarcho-syndicalists again adopted the slogan of the First International ("The liberation of the workers is the task of the workers themselves").

They stated that syndicalism is not an end in itself but a means of organizing the revolutionary general strike and attaining "the total liberation of the workers by way of the revolutionary expropriation of the bourgeoisie." They also announced it was necesssary to propagandize the new "powerful ideas" among the people – the new formulas of radical social renewal, i.e. anarchism. In 1911 the CNT already had 30,000 members. It was able to organize big strikes in Madrid, Bilbao, Seville, Jerez-de-la-Frontera, Málaga, and Tarrasa; a general strike in Zaragoza; a general revolutionary strike against the war in Morocco (autumn 1911); a strike of 100,000 textile workers; a general strike in Valencia (March 1914), etc. In 1911 the CNT was banned and had to go underground until 1914.19

Anarchists in Latin American countries such as Mexico, Cuba, and Brazil worked in the trade union movement. Anarchism reached its highest development in the workers' movement in Argentina and Uruguay, where groups of adherents of the First International were active already in the 1870's. Ettore Matei, Errico Malatesta and other well known anarchists took part in the creation of the first workers' organizations in Argentina. In 1901 a national workers' federation sprang up (from 1904 it was known as the Argentine Regional Workers' Federation – FORA). A year after its creation the social-democrats withdrew and, at its 1905 congress, the FORA recommended to its members to propagandize "the economic and philosophical principles of anarcho-communism" among the workers. At the same time the Argentine workers' organization rejected not only the concept of the "self-sufficiency" of syndicalism, but also the idea of "neutral" trade unions (which was held by the French revolutionary syndicalists, as well as by Malatesta).

The FORA organized many local and general strikes, achieving a reduction in the work day and the improvement of work-

the anarchist workers' movement in those countries where it had existed since the time of the First International (in Spain), or where it had arisen later (for example, in Latin America).

In Spain the tradition of mass anarchist labour unions could be traced to the Spanish Regional Federation of the First International (1870) and the Federation of the Workers of the Spanish Region (1880's). In spite of the attempt to recreate the latter organization in 1900, the majority of worker's organizations essentially acted independently, under conditions of severe state repression. In 1907 the autonomous workers' societies of Barcelona, which were under the influence of anarchists, created a federation of "Worker's Solidarity" with the stated goal of replacing the capitalist system with a "workers' organization, transformed into a social system of labour." The activity of the federation soon spread to the whole of Catalonia – the most developed industrial region of the country. In 1909 the federation was able to conduct a general strike in Barcelona in protest against the colonial war in Morocco, a strike which was cruelly suppressed by troops (the "Tragic Week"). Analogous organizations began to spring up in other regions. The impetus for the growth of the movement was the example of the French CGT. In October-November 1910 at a congress in Barcelona, a national association of Spanish workers was created – the National Confederation of Labour (CNT). The organizational structure of the CNT was based on the model of the CGT, and the workers' societies were converted into trade unions ("syndicates"). The resolutions and decisions adopted reflected an attempt at an original synthesis of anarchism and revolutionary syndicalism. Along with points which were close to syndicalist positions (such as the necessity of struggle for partial improvements, the 8-hour day, a fixed minimum wage, the application of methods of direct action, and the general revolutionary strike), the resolutions of the CNT congress contained formulas decisively rejecting politics and parties and which continued the traditions of the anarchist movement. The Spanish

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aims." But the most outspoken criticism of Monatte's position came from the Italian anarchist E. Malatesta. He also spoke in favour of anarchists working in the trade unions, but assigned to the unions, and indeed the workers' movement as such, the role of one of the means of revolutionary struggle. Malatesta did not deny trade unions could in the future provide "groups which are capable of taking the management of production in their own hands," however, he considered the main point about unions was that they were created and exist as instruments to defend collective material interests within the framework of existing society. He disputed the idea that solidarity between workers can develop out of common economic class interests, since it was completely possible to satisfy the aspirations of some groups at the expense of others.

But on the other hand, he supposed there was a possibility of "ethical solidarity" of proletarians – based on a common ideal. Malatesta also denied the possibility that the general strike by itself could replace social revolution: a stoppage of work could serve to start a revolution, but could not replace insurrection and expropriation. Finally, he appealed to anarchists to "awaken" the trade unions to the anarchist ideal.

But at the same time he rejected the idea of special, purely revolutionary, trade unions and spoke in favour of single, "absolutely neutral," workers' unions.16 However, already at the Amsterdam congress A. Dunois articulated the concept, closely related to future anarcho-syndicalism, of "workers' anarchism," which would replace the abstract and purely literary "pure anarchism."17 The congress created a bureau of the anarchist International which included syndicalists (the Russian Aleksandr Shapiro and the Englishman John Turner), and also the German anarchist Rudolph Rocker, who was sympathetic to syndicalism. However the bureau had ceased its work already by the end of 1911.18

In spite of the criticism of revolutionary syndicalism in anarchist circles, the new current exerted a significant influence on

production and redistribution, the basis of social reorganization." Concerning political parties, ideological tendencies, religious beliefs, etc., it was proposed that workers belonging to a trade union keep their own individual convictions outside of the union in the name of class unity. However, the right of workers to struggle for their own ideas outside the union was recognized.13

Thus, in comparison with anarcho-communism, revolutionary syndicalism represented only a partial, inconsistent, and contradictory rupture with the industrial-capitalist system. Therefore it was not surprising that in anarchist circles the new movement was often regarded critically. It's true Kropotkin was one of the first to encourage anarchists to work in the trade unions14 and even wrote an introduction to the book by Pataud and Pouget, emphasizing the closeness of the revolutionary syndicalist program to anarchism in the matter of workers' self-organization and self-management.15

But by no means did all the anarchists perceive revolutionary syndicalism in a sympathetic way. Sharp disputes about the relationship between anarchism and syndicalism flared up at the congress of anarchists in Amsterdam in August 1907, which was convened, not surprisingly, through the efforts of the Dutch syndicalist Cornelissen. The French delegate Pierre Monatte, active in the CGT, stressed the shared positions and reciprocal influences of anarchism and syndicalism, insisting that syndicalism, "as defined by the Amiens congress of 1906," was self-sufficient. He presented it as a sort of renewal of anarchist goals and "the way the movement and revolution are conceived." A number of other participants at the congress critiqued the notion of the "self-sufficiency" of syndicalism. Thus, the Czech anarchist K. Vokryzek declared that syndicalism must be only a means, an instrument of anarchist propaganda, but not the goal. Cornelissen argued that anarchists should not support just any kind of syndicalism or any kind of direct action, but only those "which are revolutionary in their

of the human personality. From this the anarcho-communists drew their demand for the liquidation of the division of society into classes. The path to this result they saw in the resistance of oppressed social layers, but they emphasized: "The anarchist revolution which we seek is far from being restricted to the interests of one distinct class. Its goal is the complete liberation of the whole of humanity oppressed at the present time in three senses of the word – economic, political, and ethical."12 On the other hand, revolutionary syndicalism adopted the Marxist concept of the primacy of the economy and the progressive nature of class struggle in social development. It proceeded from the assumptions that the development of industrial capitalism creates the economic and social basis for a free society, and that the struggle of the proletariat for its own class interests necessarily leads to its overthrow of capitalism. These assumptions resulted in the organizational and programmatic views of the revolutionary syndicalists, embodied above all in the "Charter of Amiens" – a document adopted by a congress of the French CGT in Amiens in 1906. Although the Charter represented a compromise between different tendencies present in the French trade union confederation, it exerted a decisive influence on the workers' movement of many countries, namely as a declaration of the principles of revolutionary syndicalism.

According to this document, the CGT was not based on ideology but on class, embracing all workers, "regardless of any political tendencies," who acknowledged the necessity of "struggle for the riddance of wage labour and entrepreneurial activity." The Charter agreed in principle with the class struggle in the economic arena "against any form of exploitation and oppression." It stated that syndicalism has a dual purpose: to lead the struggle for the immediate improvement of the situation of the working class, and simultaneously to prepare for "complete liberation" by means of "expropriation of the capitalists" in the course of a general strike, so that the trade union (syndicate) would in the future be transformed into a "group for

worker's time sheets) for all remaining goods. And Cornelissen, like the social-democrats, asserted that in the contemporary industrial era with the growth of interdependency in the world economy, self-sufficiency was impossible because both prices as well as the compensation of labour were in the form of money and would remain so in a socialist society, at least until a state of affluence prevailed. [37]

A significant number of Marxists at the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th centuries, disenchanted with the "senility" of parliamentary socialism and reformism, saw in revolutionary syndicalism the means to envigorate and save socialism. The syndicalist "neo-Marxist" theoreticians (Georges Sorel, Edouard Berth, and Hubert Lagardelle in France; Arturo Labriola and Enrico Leone in Italy; etc.) tried to return to that aspect of Marxist doctrine which critiqued the State and factory discipline and was oriented towards their liquidation. However their ideas about the mobilizing role of violence, about the vanguardist-elitist function of the "revolutionary minority" in contrast to the "democracy of numbers" and, finally, about the myths in which each participant of the movement must believe even if they were not destined to realize them in full measure (such myths were ascribed by Sorel, for example, to the syndicalist concept of the general strike and the Marxist doctrine about "catastrophic revolution"10) – these ideas were antithetical to libertarian views. Nevertheless, the works of these authors received very wide distribution and in many countries became associated with the revolutionary syndicalist movement, exerting a significant influence on its development.

The theoreticians of anarcho-communism (Petr Kropotkin, Ericco Malatesta, and others) maintained that the roots of social development lie in progress of the ethical concepts of humanity; that capitalism is a regressive system since it undermines the intrinsic social nature of humanity based on mutual aid; and that the division of humanity into warring classes plays a reactionary role, retarding the set11 self-realization

Translator's introduction

In the first decade of the 21st century many labour unions and labour federations worldwide celebrated their 100th anniversaries. This was an occasion for reflecting on the past century of working class history. Mainstream labour organizations typically understand their own histories as never-ending struggles for better working conditions and a higher standard of living for their members – as the wresting of piecemeal concessions from capitalists and the State.

But there is another current of the labour movement which aims somewhat higher. The anarcho-syndicalists set as their goal no less than seizing control of society from Capitalists and the State and instituting worker self-management in the spheres of production, distribution, and consumption.

The standard work in English on anarcho-syndicalism has long been a translation of [URL=/tags/rudolf-rocker] Rudolf Rocker's slim book on the subject,1 written over 70 years ago by a key figure in the movement. Since Rocker's book was written, there have been many limited studies of the movement but nothing much in the way of an attempt to grasp the movement as a whole or cover the entire sweep of its history.

Anarcho-syndicalism has always been a global movement embraced by many different cultures and indeed modes of production. Its appearance in so many different settings has created a daunting task for historians who would do justice to its scope and diversity. The source materials are found in many different languages and in widely scattered archives which have not always been accessible. The Russian historian V. Damier, author of a monumental history of the anarcho- syndicalist International in the 1920's - 1930's,2 has tackled this task with great skill and the mastery of an enormous variety of material. Even in this brief survey of the history of the movement, he has had to refer to archival sources since the secondary literature is inadequate on many vital aspects of the movement.

Anarcho-syndicalism in the 20th Century was first published in Moscow in 2000. For the English edition the au-

trary, many syndicalists aspired to have an influence on the labour process in existing enterprises, rather than liquidating the system of large-scale centralized industry.

Thus, Cornelissen affirmed that the division of labour has "great advantages" for the wage worker and will contribute to his liberation. In the spirit of the industrial Marxism of the Second International, he declared that the liquidation of capitalist ownership in the means of production by no means implies that all the workers in an enterprise must participate in management. Cornelissen also defended the institution of full-time functionaries – the trade union bureaucracy.7

In other words, a section of the anarchists, those working in the trade unions, tended to consider syndicalism as the anarchism appropriate to the new, industrial century. "I am an anarchist, but anarchy does not interest me," declared E. Pouget.8

Some of the anarchists in the revolutionary syndicalist movement recognized the divergence between anarchist social doctrine and the model of a hierarchical, centralized production system, administered by the trade unions. However they stressed that such a "syndicalist system," although not yet dispensing with the State, nevertheless in its subsequent evolution would lead to the "total implementation of communist principles in economic relations" and "to the total disappearance" of the State "as a consequence… of its superfluousness," i.e. it would lead to anarchy.9

The theory of anarcho-communism proceeded from the assumption that immediately after the social revolution, which would eliminate private property and the State, society would switch to a communist system of production and distribution according to the principle "from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs."

The book by Pataud and Pouget proposed an intermediate, "collectivist" variant, similar to that espoused in those days by the Marxists: communist distribution of goods of prime necessity and distribution "according to labour" (by means of

would occupy itself with carrying out the re-organization of production and disribution in its own area of expertise. The trade unions, with their territorial and industrial federations at all levels (up to and including the national congress and its executive) would become the organs of a new society, making decisions and carrying them out in the sphere of economic and social life: gathering statistics and sharing them, coordinating production and distribution on the basis of these statistics, and ensuring the social processes by which administration takes place from bottom to top. In this scheme groups and associations which are engaged in governing inhabitants on a territorial basis are assigned only a subsidiary role in the organization of life at the local level.

In the designs and elaborations of the revolutionary syndicalists one can discover many basic features of anarchist (libertarian) self-managed alternatives to industrial-capitalist society. However, there are differences on some points of principle. First of all, revolutionary syndicalism is much more favourably disposed towards industrial progress and industrial forms of organization than anarcho-communist doctrine. Anarchism rejected not only capitalism, private property, and the State; but also the centralization of social life and the division and specialization of labour. Anarchist theoreticians did not object to professional associations and other groups based on common interests, but they considered that the free society of the future would be based on self-managed, autonomous, territorial communes, joined together by federations. To industrial centralization with its occupational hierarchy and specialization, and to factory tyranny with its strict division of labour and its cult of production and productivity, the anarchists counterpoised a break with the logic of industrialism: the decentralization and breaking up into smaller units of industry; its re-orientation towards local needs; the integration of industrial and agricultural, intellectual, and physical labour; and the maximum possible self-sufficiency of communes and regions.6 On the con-

thor has provided additional material: an historiographic essay, more in-depth coverage of the Spanish Revolution, an update on contemporary Russia, etc. As a result, the English edition is at least twice as long as the original Russian book.

Although addressed primarily to a Russian readership by someone active in the Russian anarcho-syndicalist movement, it is hoped that with this English edition the book will find the global audience it deserves.

To assist the reader in tracking down references, where a footnote refers to previous documentation (by means of "op. cit." or some other device), the number X of the previous note is given in brackets "(nX)."

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Malcolm Archibald
September 2009

1. R. Rocker, Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice (AK Press, 2004). This work is in print in a number of English editions with slightly different titles, including electronic versions. The work was originally written in German.

2. Vadim Damier, Забытый Интернационал. Международное анархо- синдикалистское движение между двумя мировыми войнами. [The Forgotten International. The international anarcho-syndicalist movement between the two world wars.]: Vol. 1. От революционного синдикализма к анархосиндикализму. 1918-1930. [From revolutionary syndicalism to anarchosyndicalism. 1918-1930.] (Moscow, 2006), 904 pp., ill.; Vol. 2. Международный анархосиндикализм в условиях "Великого кризиса" и наступления фашизма. 1930-1939. [International

anarcho-syndicalism faces the "Great Crisis" and fascist aggression. 1930-1939.] (Moscow, 2007), 736 pp., ill.

existing system would develop a frontal assault on Capital and its State. As a result, capitalism would be overthrown, the system of wage labour eliminated, and the workers, organized in labour unions, would take over control of production. In this sense strikes played a very special role for revolutionary syndicalists: they were viewed not as an end in themselves but as a "revolutionary drill," as preparation of the workers for the imminent revolution.

The revolutionary syndicalist movement was not able to formulate a coherent ideological doctrine. At the level of theory revolutionary syndicalism remained a complex of ideas from various sources. Very different tendencies contributed to this complex. The Dutch syndicalist Christiaan Cornelissen, one of the first to study the movement, distinguished three groups among the activists of revolutionary syndicalism: the trade unionists, who considered syndicalism "self-sufficient" and distinct from any ideology and occupied radical positions based on their practice of class struggle; the anarchists, who saw in the trade union movement the possibility of moving from agitation to action; and finally, people from the socialist parties and groups who hoped to extricate socialism from the impasse of parliamentarism.4

The anarchists who were working in the trade unions and trying to draw them closer to libertarian positions considered the unions not just as an organ of the struggle of workers for the direct improvement of their situation, but also as the instrument which by way of the General Strike would carry out the social revolution, seize control of the economy, and plan both production and consumption in the interests of the whole of society. In 1909 two prominent French revolutionary syndicalists, Émile Pataud and Émile Pouget, published the programmatic book "How We Shall Make the Revolution."5 They proceeded from the assumption that the unions in the course of a revolutionary strike would expropriate capitalist property and transform themselves into an association of producers. Each union

Chapter 3: Revolutionary Syndicalism and Anarchism

The revolutionary syndicalism of the early 20th century was not born in the heads of theoreticians. It was the practice of the workers' movement which sought its own doctrine1 – above all, the practice of direct action. What this meant, according to the words of Émile Pouget, one of the leading activists of the French CGT, was that the working class, finding itself in constant conflict with contemporary society, "expects nothing from anyone, any government, or any powers external to themselves, but creates the conditions for its own struggle and draws on its own resources for the means of action."2 "Direct action varies according to the circumstances," pointed out Georges Yvetot, one of the leaders of the CGT, "the workers find new methods depending on their occupations, their imaginations, or their initiatives. In principle direct action excludes any concern about legality…

Direct action consists in forcing the owner to make concessions from considerations of fear or self-interest."3

Such methods include, in the first place, means of economic struggle which are pointed directly at the counter-agent of the workers in production – the entrepreneur or capitalist (the boycott, individual or group sabotage of production, partial or general strike), and also revolutionary syndicalist propaganda and anti-militarist activity. Political struggle as a task of the organized workers' movement was rejected. It was assumed that from the economic struggle of workers for their rights and the improvement of their situation within the framework of the

Preface

Anarcho-syndicalism is a fundamental tendency in the global workers' movement. It is made up of revolutionary unions of workers ("syndicat" in French means "trade union"), acting to bring about a stateless (anarchist), selfmanaged society.

Anarcho-syndicalism, the only mass variant of the anarchist movement in history, arose and acquired strength during a period of profound social, economic, and political changes – the first decades of the 20th century. In the countries which formed the "centre" of the global industrial-capitalist system, a transition to a developed industrial society was taking place, while on the "periphery" and "semi-periphery" the process of industrialization was still only getting started. The furious pace of social change often caused much suffering for the workers, forcing them to abandon traditional occupations and forms of life and pushing them into factories, frequently under onerous conditions. Former agricultural labourers were uprooted from their accustomed mode of life – conditioned by centuries, while skilled craftsmen experienced anguish when they were forced into narrowly specialized or unskilled work. The workers' consciousness was scarred by the growing alienation and atomization of the human personality under the conditions of the rise of "mass society."

The workers' movement arose, to a significant extent, as an alternative force in relation to the industrial-capitalist system. As the Italian sociologist Marco Revelli has noted, "the modern State from the very beginning counterpoised these two forces to each other, as opposing tendencies."1 Of course, this opposition could be regarded in different ways, either more radically (as in the case of the English Luddites who resisted the introduction of the factory system), or less radically (in the form of workers' mutual aid societies, taking upon themselves control of the social sphere). But almost always this "early" workers' movement was based on the spirit of independence, communal life, and collectivism preserved from the pre-industrial era

4. L. Mercier-Vega and V. Griffuelhes, L'Anarcho-syndicalisme et le syndicalisme revolutionnaire (Paris, 1978), p. 14.

5. direkte aktion, 1993, no. 98 (Mai-Juni), p. 7.

6. G. Careri, L'Unione Sindacale Italiana tra sindacalismo di base e trasformazione sociale (n. p., 1997), p. 9.

7. See: Die Internationale,no.5 (Juni 1925), p. 148ff.; C. Da Fonseca, Introduction a l'histoire du mouvement libertaire au Portugal (Lausanne, 1973).

8. H. Rubner, Freiheit und Brot (Berlin / Koln, 994), pp. 23-32.

9. For details, see: L. K. Persson, Syndikalismen I Sverige 1903-1922 (Stockholm, 1975).

10. See: L. Adamic, Dynamit: Geschichte des Klassenkampfs in den U.S.A. (1880-1930), 3. Aufl. (Stuttgart, 1985). About the IWW see also: V. Trautman, D. Ettor, et al., Производственный синдикализм (индустриализм) [Industrial Unionism], coll. of articles (Petersburg-Moscow, 1919).

11. C. Cornelissen, "Die neueste Entwicklung…," p. 138. (n8)

12. Ibid., pp. 144-147.

13. A. Schapiro, preface to P. Besnard, L'Anarcho-syndicalisme et l'anarchisme (Marseille, 1997).

federalism, to observe the autonomy of individual mines and regions. The South Wales Miners' Federation developed a plan of re-organization in which envisaged the introduction of revolutionary syndicalist principles: the autonomy of lodges as the highest instance of decision-making, the rejection of full-time paid union leaders, the taking control of industry by the workers as a goal, etc.12

At the beginning of the 20th century revolutionary syndicalist tendencies spread to a number of other countries: Belgium (the Union of Syndicates of the Province of Liège from 1910, the Belgium Syndical Confederation from 1913), Switzerland, Russia (it was here, according to some sources, that the term "anarcho-syndicalism" was coined13), Austro- Hungary, the Balkans, Canada (the "One Big Union" which arose in 1919), etc.

1. For details, see: F. Pelloutier, Histoire des bourses du travail: origin – institutions – avenir (Paris, 1978).

2. "Direct action," explained Victor Griffuelhes, one of the leading activists of French revolutionary syndicalism, "denotes the actions of the workers themselves, i.e. actions directly carried out by people in their own interests. The worker himself applies his efforts: he personally exerts his influence on the forces which rule over him in order to obtain from them the desired benefit. With the help of direct action the worker himself creates his own struggle; he takes full responsibility for it and does not hand off the matter of his personal liberation to anyone else." (Cited by: G. Aigte, "Uber die Entwicklung der revolutionaren syndikalistischen Arbeiterbewegung Frankreichs und Deutschlands in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit," Die Internationale, 1931, no. 4 (Februar), p. 88.

3. W. Thorpe, "The Workers Themselves...," p. 26. (n7)

of artisan workshops, in opposition to factory despotism. The division of labour had still not reached the level of Taylorist fragmentation.

Skilled workers, with a good understanding of their own work and where it fit in the production process, were quite capable of thinking they could control production on their own. On the other hand, the State mechanisms of social integration had not yet achieved sufficient development; rather the social sphere was almost completely controlled by the institutions and organizations of the workers' movement (associations, syndicates, bourses de travail, etc.), which frequently were regarded as the basis for a possible self-managed alternative.

In the social realities of those times there was undeniably a place for radical tendencies which to some degree aimed at the dismantling, elimination, or radical transformation of the industrial-capitalist system. Although the majority of revolutionary syndicalists and anarchists were by no means immune from certain myths and concepts about the progressiveness of industrialism, still their social goals on the whole were oriented to a rupture with the system and its replacement with a new social structure based on selfmanagement and decision-making by means of agreements arrived at "from the bottom up." Such views were compatible in many respects with the desires of the working masses in that epoch.

It is impossible to regard anarcho-syndicalism as some kind of insignificant, marginal phenomenona – as the extravagant escapades of "extremist grouplets" or the fantasies of salon intellectuals. This is a global movement which spread to countries as different as Spain and Russia, France and Japan, Argentina and Sweden, Italy and China, Portugal and Germany. It possesses strong, healthy social roots and traditions, and was able to attract hundreds of thousands, indeed millions, of wage workers. Anarcho-syndicalists not only took an active part in the most important social upheavals and conflicts of the 20th

century, often leaving their own indelible imprint on these events, but also in many countries they formed the centre of a special, inimitable, working class culture with its own values, norms, customs, and symbols.

The ideas and traditions of anarcho-syndicalism, and the slogans it put forth about workplace and territorial selfmanagement, exerted an influence on many other social movements, including the workers' councils of Budapest (1956), the student and youth uprisings of 1968, Polish "Solidarity" in 1980-81, the Argentine "popular assemblies," etc.

Without knowing the history of anarcho-syndicalism, it is impossible to gain a reliable understanding of the history of many countries of the world; it is impossible to grasp in its fullness the course of development and destiny of humanity throughout the last 120 years.

1. M. Revelli, "Der Sozialstaat in den Brennesseln," Die Aktion (Hamburg), no. 113/119 (March 1994), p. 1932.

ical strikes in the history of the U.S.A.: a general insurgence by workers of various occupations in Goldfield, Nevada and a strike by sawmill workers in Portland, Oregon (1906-1907); strikes of multi-thousands of textile workers in Skowhegan, Maine (1907) and Lawrence, Massachusetts (1909); a steelworkers' strike in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania (1909); and so on. The response to this was repression against the activists of the IWW10

In Australia the organization of the IWW took place as a reaction to the introduction of compulsory state arbitration in labour disputes and the suppression of strikes. Workers' organizations based on the IWW platform were also created in Great Britain, South Africa, in Russia in 1917, and in Germany after the First World War.

The revolutionary syndicalist movement in Britain arose also under the influence of agitation by the IWW and the newspaper The Syndicalist, published by the worker-activists Tom Mann and Guy Bowman. In 1910 the Industrial Syndicalist Education League (ISEL) was formed. The British syndicalists set out not to create their own separate organizations, but to win over the craft unions. They succeeded in taking control over the key unions of miners and railway workers. In the pre-war years a rapid growth of syndicalism took place in Great Britain. The mass actions organized by syndicalists (the 1911 general strike of seamen which gave rise to the first international movement of solidarity, and the strike of one million coal miners in the spring of 1912) were on a scale which exceeded anything previously known to the world in the way of class conflicts.11 The action by British seamen was supported by their colleagues in Belgium, Holland, and the U.S.A.; by longshoremen; and also by other categories of British transport workers. Significantly, during the miners' strike decisions were arrived at by a referendum of the workers, and in the course of negotiations with the owners the workers tried to impose clear-cut and binding instructions on their own representatives and, in the spirit of

fluence of the French CGT. In response the Social Democratic Party of Germany in 1908 prohibited its members from joining the FVdG. In Sweden the "young socialists," in the course of trade union debates in 1908, spoke out in support of methods of struggle and tactics close to the CGT.8 The defeat of a general strike in the following year strengthened the disenchantment with the line of the social-democratic trade union leadership, and in 1910 delegates from a number of unions announced the creation of a "Central Organization of Swedish Workers" (SAC).9 The organization of syndicalist oppositions also took place in Norway (the Norwegian Syndicalist Union) and in Denmark.

The wave of lockouts in the Scandinavian countries in the summer of 1911 and the compromises agreed to under such conditions by the trade union leadership with business owners, served to promote the spreading of the revolutionary syndicalist movement in Scandinavia.

In the Anglo-Saxon countries revolutionary syndicalism arose in the practice of "industrial unionism," i.e. organizing workers not on an occupational, but rather on a sectoral or industrial, basis. In contrast to the French and Italian syndicalist unions, "industrial unionism" regarded as its organizational basis the lowest production unit; and at a higher level – the industry association; and finally – "the one big union" of all the workers, regardless of their occupation.

In the U.S.A. in 1905 the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was created through the initiative of radical unions. The IWW also became more and more revolutionary syndicalist in character. It was oriented towards direct action, striving to combine actions aimed at improving the situation of workers with the struggle for social revolution and a new society, organized on the basis of unions managing production. In contrast to the official trade unions, the IWW included in its membership unskilled workers, immigrants, and women. In 1906-1916 the IWW participated in a number of the bitterest and most rad-

Part 1: Revolutionary Syndicalism

Chapter 1: From the First International to Revolutionary Syndicalism

The prehistory of anarcho-syndicalism has its origin in the anti-authoritarian wing of the First International – the Bakuninists and federalists. The First International was created in 1864 and included adherents of various socialist tendencies. In the course of discussions in this international workers' organization, ideas were formed about labour unions as an instrument of social liberation, about the role of the general strike, about the primacy of economic struggle, about the replacement of organs of the State by organizations of producers, about the self-management of society, and about "direct action," i.e. the workers acting directly in their own interests and not handing over the job to political parties and leaders. After the split of the International in 1872, these views were upheld by anti-authoritarian anarchists. Their Marxist opponents set about creating social-democratic and socialist parties which engaged in the struggle for political power and the "conquest of the State."

The rivalry between the two tendencies (anarchist and Marxist) gripped the workers' movement. It developed unevenly and in different ways in various countries. But by the beginning of the 20th century it seemed the state socialists (social-democrats) had definitely gained the upper hand. Their opponents – the anti-authoritarian socialists (anarchists) – had been driven out of the workers' movement in the majority of coun-

1909 the anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists, brushing aside the socialists, convened a congress of trade union and co-operative associations in Lisbon. The participants put forward the demand for the 8-hour work day and agreed on the creation of a confederation of all workers with the goal of "obtaining an increasing influence over the production of essential goods." In the north of the country in Porto an autonomous General Union of Labour started up in 1911, independent of the Socialist Party. The second syndicalist congress in the same year consolidated its revolutionary syndicalist orientation. In 1910-1912 the country was rocked by a wave of strikes of a radical, insurrectionary character, accompanied by clashes with troops and police and acts of sabotage. In 1912 as a sign of solidarity with the strike of 20,000 agricultural workers of the Evora region, syndicalists declared a general strike. Workers armed themselves and Lisbon literally found itself in the hands of the toilers. The politics of the reformist trade unions helped to supress the revolt to a significant degree. The subsequent repression forced the syndicalists and socialists to seek common ground. At the 1st all-national workers' congress in Tomar in 1914 representatives of both tendencies were present.

The result was the creation of a single National Workers' Union (UON) in which each ideological tendency received full independence. However the ideas and practice of revolutionary syndicalism enjoyed increasing influence and at the national convention in 1917 revolutionary syndicalism was officially recognized.7 In Germany and the Scandinavian countries, the sources of both the anarchist and revolutionary syndicalist movements were found among the left activists and trade union opposition within social-democracy itself. The Free Association of German Trade Unions (FVdG), created in 1897 by "localists" (opponents of the formation of bureaucratic, centralized trade union associations), at the beginning of the 1900's adopted the concept of the general strike and methods of direct action. In 1912 it approved a program put together under the in-

wards the unification of workers. In 1906 the General Confederation of Labour (CGL) was created; its leadership was captured by socialists and the revolutionary syndicalists headed the opposition. Dissatisfaction of the workers with the reformist politics of the socialist leadership of the CGL grew after it refused to support a strike of railway workers in Milan in 1907 and a regional strike in Parma in 1908. The revolutionary syndicalists, on the other hand, during the period 1908-1911 led large-scale actions of agricultural labourers in Apulia, and metal-workers in Turin and Genoa; strikes against Italian intervention in Africa; strikes of foundry workers in Piombino and on the island of Elba; a strike of bricklayers in Carrara, etc. Gradually the synchronized structures of a revolutionary syndicalist movement were formed. Finally, in 1912, the Italian Syndicalist Union (USI) was created, having a federalist and self-governing internal structure. In 1914 it already counted 124,000 members.6 The revolutionary syndicalists organized the largest actions of the Italian workers, such as the general strike of workers of the marble industry; the general strike of the Milan metal-workers; actions of construction workers, sailors, agricultural labourers, and railway workers; the general strike in solidarity with workers in the furniture manufacturing industry in 1913; and the strikes of bricklayers in Carrara in 1914. In June 1914 anti-militarism protests grew into an insurrection ("Red Week") above all in the Marche (Ancona) and Emilia Romagna. The USI actively participated in these actions, while the leaders of the CGL sabotaged them in whatever way they could.

In Portugal, where the anarchists had taken an active part in workers' association from the beginning of the 1890's, the example of French revolutionary syndicalism aided the majority of organized workers to free themselves from the influence of the socialists. An active strike movement grew, which put the methods of direct action into practice. Already in 1907 several unions, emerging from under the control of reformists, had joined together in the General Federation of Labour. In

tries. On the one hand, the anarchists themselves had assisted this development at the end of the 19th century by their mistaken tactic of assuming they could bring forth revolution directly by means of symbolic acts of violence, without the necessity for solid, long-term organizing of working class forces. On the other hand, the rapid economic growth of the 1880's strengthened illusions about the possibility of the peaceful improvement of the situation of the workers within the framework of the industrial-capitalist system.1

Social-democracy originated from the concept that the history of humanity proceeds along an ascending line of progress. Its theoreticians assumed that capitalism by its own development prepares the basis for the future socialist society, a society which in many aspects (technology, industrial and political centralization, division of labour, specialization of productive and social functions) becomes the continuation of capitalist society.2 The fundamental difference between the two social formations was located by the social-democrats in the control of political power: thus it was necessary to wrest power from the capitalists and transfer it to the workers, thereby putting the industrial machine created by capitalism at the service of everyone. In other words, the factory system of organizing production was to be extended to the whole of society. The liberation of the working classes and socialism were understood not as a break with the logic of capitalism and industrialization, but as their consequent development according to their own natural laws.

Towards the beginning of the 20th century the major labour union associations of Europe were controlled by social-democratic parties: the German and Austro-Hungarian Free Trade Unions; a number of French, Dutch, Belgian, and Portuguese workers' associations; the General Workers' Union (UGT) of Spain; the federations of trade unions of the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, etc. The majority of British

trade unions endorsed parliamentary socialism and supported the creation of the Labour Party.

The characteristic tactic of the social-democrats in the trade union movement consisted in subjecting the mass workers' movements to the party line, strengthening the power and influence of the union bureaucracy and its control over the disbursement of union funds, and promoting an orientation towards purely economic struggle while leaving political and social questions entirely to the competence of the party.

Anarchists and other anti-authoritarian socialists retained influence only in the workers' movements of Spain and Latin America, and also to some extent in workers' organizations in France, Portugal, and Italy.

However, at the beginning of the 20th century the hegemony of social-democracy was challenged. Dissatisfaction with the parliamentary strategy of the workers' parties generated not only intra-party left oppositions, but also resistance in the labour union milieu. A new radical current arose – revolutionary syndicalism. This term began to be applied to a labour union movement "which recommended 'revolutionary direct action' for the transformation of economic and social conditions of the working masses… in contrast to parliamentary reformism."3

Researchers have identified some of the causes of this radicalization of the attitudes and actions of the workers. First of all, it was connected with a change in the position of the workers themselves within the structure of industrial production. Up to the 1890's and the first decade of the 20th century the organization of industrial production on the whole had not reached a level of specialization which would allow the division of the labour process into separate operations.

Labour in industrial enterprises was still characterized by a certain integrity not unlike the labour of craftsmen, from which factory workers inherited the psychology and ethic of autonomy and independence. They possessed complex produc-

free' or '67 more days – and our liberation will begin'). At the same time the bourgeoisie was seized by a collective psychosis. The Great Fear prevailed."5 The government arrested the leaders of the CGT and brought troops into the cities. During the week before May 1 1906, strikes broke out in many sectors for the 8-hour working day, and on May 1 a general strike took place, in which up to 200,000 workers took part in Paris alone.

There were battles in the streets and at the barricades and a full cessation of economic life in many industrial centres. A multi-month wave of rear-guard strikes wrested a number of concessions from the authorities: a reduction in work time and increase in pay in individual enterprises; the legislated introduction of a day off every week and an abbreviated work day on Saturdays; and a reduction in the intensity of work in construction.

In the following years repression against the CGT increased.

The government frequently used troops against strikers and the soldiers opened fire on workers; street battles erupted. The organization could not endure the excessive strain on its resources. By the end of 1908 the leadership of the CGT had passed into the hands of reformers. Nevertheless, right up to 1914 strong revolutionary moments could be observed in the activities of the confederation: the organization continued its active anti-militarist and anti-war campaigns, its struggle against pension legislation which did not meet the workers' needs, and against inflation. [19]

From France revolutionary syndicalism spread to other European countries. After the general strike of 1903 the National Secretariat of Labour of the Netherlands, created in 1893, broke with reformist social-democracy and adopted a position of revolutionary syndicalism.

In Italy, starting in 1891, there arose local "houses of labour" similar to the French bourses de travail. The general strike of 1904, general strikes and clashes in the South in 1905, and the general strike of May 1906, in Turin, increased the tendency to-

also by the practical experience of many French workers of that era.

In 1902 the Federation of bourses de travail joined with another union central – the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) in a unified CGT. The new CGT became the largest workers' organization in France: in 1912 it included 600,000 of the one million organized wage-workers of the country.3 The leadership of the confederation was in the hands of adherents of revolutionary syndicalism. This ideological stance was supported by the following labour federations: longshoremen, metalworkers, and production workers in the industries manufacturing graphite pencils, jewelry, matches, and hats; workers in the printing, construction, paper-manufacturing, and food industries; workers producing means of transportation; municipal service workers, etc.

But the CGT also included unions which were dominated by reformists: railway workers, bookbinders, textile workers, mechanics, workers in the war industry, musicians, workers in the ceramic industry, gas and electric utility workers, tobacco workers, and teamsters.4 The relation of forces was unstable and could change quickly. However, during the period of active struggle revolutionary syndicalism was also embraced by workers belonging to reformist unions.

The radicalism of the CGT found expression not only in leading strikes, but also in organizing campaigns, especially against militarism and colonialism, as well as for the eighthour day. Starting on May 1 1905, the French union central launched a massive agitation for the purpose of having the workers institute the 8-day hour day starting on May 1, 1906, without prior authorization. Throughout the whole country signs and leaflets were distributed, slogans were posted, meetings were held, and reports presented. "… within the working class an almost chiliastic mood took root which had the effect of inhibiting those trade unionists who had a grip on reality (in many factories it was possible to read signs like: '70 more days – and we shall be

tion knowledge: in their own area of expertise, in the sphere of organizing their labour, in the distribution of labour-time, etc. All this favoured the formation of ideas among the workers about the possibility of workers' control of the whole production process, and both production- and social-oriented self-management.4

A systematic revolution in production, beginning at the turn of the century (based on new sources of energy, and the increasing use of electricity and the internal combustion engine) led to changes in the relations of the various branches of industry and the appearance of new ones. The widespread application of technical innovations resulted in advances in production processes and changes in working and living conditions for the workers.5 The working class was more and more concentrated in cities in homogeneous neighbourhoods which strengthened class consciousness and the feeling of solidarity among wage workers. Along with the precipitous rise in the profits of enterprises, almost everywhere stagnation or even a decline in real wages was the rule. Technical and organizational changes in production undermined the professional craft skills of workers. The addition of mechanical and electrical components to machines and operations fragmented the labour process, leading to the downgrading of workers' skills so they were less able to grasp the labour process in its entirety and correspondingly lost the possibility of controlling it.6 New methods of organizing work and management (direct hiring of all workers, piecework, the bonus system, models of internal incentives, and the introduction of intra-factory hierarchies) allowed enterprises and administrations to control and intensify production more rigorously, increasing both the workload and the working time of the labour force. All this reinforced the dissatisfaction of the workers, first of all in such branches of industry as manufacturing, mining, and railway transport.

At the same time, there was a growing number of unskilled temporary and seasonal workers in construction, shipping,

agriculture, and the oil and gas industry. Their situation was insecure and unstable but they were less dependent on specialized labour and specific employers and liable to act quickly to defend their own rights and interests.

Observers noted a rapid growth in the sense of solidarity among workers. Evidence of this can be seen in the huge strikes of transport workers in Britain, the Netherlands, and France of 1911-1912, which acquired an international character. The mutual support of sailors, stevedores, and surface transport workers brought success to the cause of wage labourers. It was characteristic that workers of different countries effectively used similar methods of mutual aid, such organizing free meals and childcare.7 The strike movement was observed to be growing almost everywhere.

In a number of countries general or "political" strikes took place. The workers were less and less satisfied with the traditional politics of social-democratic workers' parties and trade unions. Social-democracy rejected the notion of general strikes as "total nonsense." At a congress of the German Free Trade Unions in Cologne (1905), it was once more affirmed that "the idea of the general strike, which is upheld by the anarchists and other people lacking any experience in the field of economic struggle, is not worth discussing."8 Even in the case of economic struggle for partial demands, trade unions under the influence of social-democracy were more and more inclined towards reformism and compromises with governments and enterprises, having recourse to strikes only in extreme circumstances. In their organizational setup the reformist unions were orientated towards a centralized operation (for example, in Germany strikes had to be sanctioned by the central industrial union association). In these labour unions a ramified and despotic bureaucracy took form. The model of a large organization with a multilevel structure for decision-making, and the assignment of projects to specially selected professionals, was based on the assumption that the rank-and-file members

of the bourses de travail was their dependence on financing from municipal governments, which gave rise to constant conflicts between government bureaucrats and worker-activists.

The French socialists – "Guesdists" – did not wield any influence in the bourses de travail movement. The participants in the bourses were mainly rank-and-file union activists, disillusioned by the lack of social and labour legislation of the 1880's and 1890's; members of socialist groups (especially the "Alemanists") opposed to the Socialist Party of Jules Guesdes; and also a certain number of anarchists who worked in the trade unions in such cities as Paris, Rouen, Toulouse, Algiers, etc. The anarchists hoped that, in the event of revolution, the local bourses and the unions would become "associations of producers" – the embryos of a self-managed, libertarian, and stateless society, a transitional stage on the road to "full" anarchism (if the revolution occurred before an anarchist consciousness had taken root among the workers) or the initial stage of libertarian (anarchist) communism – a society without either the State or money. The anarchist Fernand Pelloutier was elected secretary of the Federation of bourses de travail. He was to play an important role in the formation of revolutionary syndicalism.

Within the confines of the French bourses de travail movement a number of the most important principles of revolutionary syndicalism were formulated. Some of them were similar to those proposed by the anti-authoritarian ("Bakuninist") wing of the First International: independence from political parties, non-participation in political struggles, "direct action" (that is, people standing up directly on behalf of their own interests2), an orientation towards economic struggle in which the workers negotiated directly with business owners for partial improvements in the working conditions of wage-workers, and the preparation of the general strike as the vehicle of social revolution. This similarity can be explained not only by the influence of the anarchists participating in the movement, but

Chapter 2: the Rise of the Revolutionary Syndicalist Movement

The challenge to social-democracy in the workers' movement, and to everything connected with it – parliamentary orientation, reformism, and the dominance of party and union bureaucracies – first appeared in France. It was here the workers began to work out the tactic of revolutionary syndicalism from below. This line was disseminated initially in the bourses de travail. The first of them was created in 1886 in Paris. Originally these places were labour exchanges for the workforce but they soon began to function as workers' clubs and cultural-educational centres. From a local type of inter-occupational organization, the bourses were transformed over a period of time into union centres oriented towards the class struggle. In 1892 they were united in a national federation. The bourses de travail carried on active work creating solidarity among workers at the local level, independent of political parties and individual unions which often turned out to be under party influence. The bourses became a unique kind of centre for the self-organization and mutual aid of workers: they helped the unemployed and people seeking work; they also helped the sick and victims of workplace accidents; they created libraries, social museums, and both specialist and generalist courses; and they carried on propaganda for the creation of unions, backing this up in a systematic way by organizing strikes, setting up strike funds, engaging in general agitation, etc.1 A weak point

should have limited power and restricted access to resources. Full-time officers of labour unions were more interested in preserving and strengthening the structure of their organization than in taking part in a struggle the outcome of which was uncertain.9 Frequently union leaders preferred to avoid conducting strikes in order not to risk the money accumulated in their organization's strike funds. In other cases the leadership of workers' organizations compelled their members to terminate strikes, as happened, for example, in the course of the struggle of the Berlin metalworkers in December 1911. In this connection, the defeat of strike actions by German wage workers in the metallurgical, ceramic, tobacco, shoe-making, textile, and other branches of industry at the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century led many activists throughout Europe to conclude that the performance of the German model of centralized trade unions had reached a dead end.10 Instead of direct strike action, reformist union leaders preferred to follow the practice of central "wage agreements" between enterprises and unions – agreements which were concluded between the unions and the business owners for specific occupations and territories and bound both sides for the duration of a mutually agreed period of time. Among the workers such actions provoked a growing indignation, since they were often saddled with unfavourable conditions and deprived of their right to have a say in decisions about labour questions which affected them in an important way. "On the whole and on all the most important questions, the central administration enjoys supreme authority…," according to a brochure published in 1911 by the British Federation of Miners. "They, the leaders, are becoming 'gentlemen' and Members of Parliament and, as a result of their powerful positions, they have acquired an impressive social standing… . What really should be condemned is this politics of conciliation which finds a use for such leaders… ."11 In the words of the German trade union activist Karl Roche, "Within the workers' movement itself, supposedly struggling

to liquidate all class contradictions… two classes have formed" – the all-powerful "paid officials" and the applauding, voting "ordinary folk."12

1. See: A. Castel, De la Premiere Internationale a l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs (Marseille, 1995), pp. 13-15.

2. See H.-J. Steinberg, "Zukunftsvorstellungen innerhalb der deutschen Sozialdemokratie vor dem 1. Weltkrieg," Soziale Bewegungen. Jahrbuch 2: Auf dem Wege nach Utopia (Frankfurt a.M. / New York, 1985), pp. 48-58.

3. C. Cornelissen, Uber die theoretische und wirtschaftliche Grundlagen des Syndikalismus," in Forschungen zur Volkerpsychologie und Soziologie, Bd.2. Partei und Klasse im Lebensprozess der Gesellschaft (Leipzig, 1926), p. 63.

4. See K. H. Roth (ed.), Die Wiederkehr der Proletaritat. Dokumentation der Debatte (Koln, 1994), p. 271.

5. See M. Van der Linden and W. Thorpe, "Aufstieg und Niedergang des revolutionaren Syndikalismus," in 1999. Zeitschrift fur Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts. 1990, no. 3, p. 15.

6. See W. Thorpe, 'The Workers Themselves', Revolutionary Syndicalism and International Labour, 1913-1923 (Dordrecht / Boston / London / Amsterdam, 1918), p. 24.

7. C. Cornelissen, "Die neueste Entwicklung des Syndikalismus," Archiv fur Sozialwissenchaft und Sozialpolitik, Bd.36, (Tubingen, 1913), p. 135.

8. Cited by N. Luskin-Antonov, Очерки по новейшей истории Германии. 1890-1914 [Essays on the contemporary history of Germany, 1890-1914] (Moscow / Leningrad, 1925), p. 321.

9. See K. Schonhoven, "Lokalismus – Berufsorientierung – Industrieverband: Zur Entwicklung der organisatgorischen Binnenstrukturen der deutschen Gewerkschaften vor 1914," in W. J. Mommsen and H. G. Husung (eds.), Auf dem Wege zur Massengewerkschaft: die Entwicklung der Gewerkschaften in Deutschland und Grossbritannien 1880-1914 (Stuttgart, 1984), pp. 291, 295.

10. C. Cornelissen, "Die neueste Entwicklung des Syndikalismus…," p. 131. (n8)

11. Cited by C. Cornelissen, "Die neueste Entwicklung…," p. 128-129. (n8)

12. K. Roche, Aus dem roten Sumpf oder: Wie es in einem nicht ganz kleinem Zentralverband hergeht (Berlin, 1909); reprint (Hamburg/Altona, 1990), p. 4.

However it categorically rejected the notion that labour unions – organs which arose under capitalism in response to capitalist conditions and fulfilled a service as the best means of worker resistance against the State and Capital – would be transformed in the course of the revolution into the basis and ruling organs of the new society. "With the liquidation of the capitalist production system and rule of the State, the syndicalist economic organs will end their historical role as the fundamental weapon in the struggle with the system of exploitation and tyranny. Consequently, these organs must give way to free associations and free federations of free producers and consumers." FORA took a stand against industrial (sectoral) forms of organization, considering that they imitated Capitalism. Finally, FORA categorically rejected any form of a "united front" with labour unions led by communists.

The final formation of the anarcho-syndicalist International (sometimes also known as the "Berlin International of labour unions") took place at the constitutional congress which took place illegally in Berlin from December 25 1922 to January 2 1923, punctuated by police raids and arrests.

Represented at it were the Argentine FORA, the Italian USI, the German FAUD, the Chilean division of the IWW, the Swedish union central SAC, the Norwegian syndicalist federation, the Union for syndicalist propaganda of Denmark, the Netherlands NAS, and the Mexican General Confederation of Workers. The delegates of the Spanish CNT were arrested before they reached Berlin. The Portuguese CGT sent a written endorsement. Attending with a deliberative vote were representatives of the left-communist German General Workers Union-Unitary Organization (AAUD-E), the German anarcho-syndicalist youth, the French CDS, the French federation of construction workers, the Federation of Youth of the Seine, delegates of the Russian anarcho-syndicalist emigration, the Czechoslovak Free Workers Union, and representatives of the

struggle against the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz; however, during the revolutionary period 1910-1917 their forces split. A section of the activists led by Ricardo Flores Magón organized an insurgent movement which eventually resulted in the overthrow of the dictatorship.

But this section continued to act against the new regime to obtain the goals of social revolution, "land and freedom."

The other section took part in creating a syndicalist labour union central – the House of the World Worker (COM) in 1912. Mexican syndicalists formed an alliance with the leaders of the liberal-constitutional wing of the Revolution, counting on receiving from them the possibility of freedom in the workplace, and helped them defeat the revolutionaries of the North led by F. Villa and the insurgent peasants of the South under E. Zapata. But already in 1916 the syndicalists were smashed by the government.

In Cuba, a colony of Spain up until 1898, the anarchist movement developed originally under the influence of the anarchists of the metropolis. Many trade unionists in Cuba at the beginning of the 20th century were under the influence of the anarchists.

In Brazil the anarchists, overshadowing the socialists, achieved predominance in the labour federations of a number of states, and in 1906 by their initiative a national labour union central was formed – the Brazilian Workers' Confederation (COB). Active strike warfare was carried on in the country.

The anarchist workers' movement also spread to other countries of Latin America. In Chile the anarchists worked in numerous Resistance Societies of skilled workers and in "Mancomunales" (which were simultaneously trade unions, mutual aid societies, and regional workers' associations), and organized a number of powerful strikes. However in 1907 the movement received a heavy blow: the government suppressed a strike of 30,000 nitrate workers organized by the anarchists in which as many as 4,000 people were killed.24

In Peru worker-anarchists headed labour unions of bakers, textile workers, dockers, seafarers, casual labourers, etc.

They acted as the initiators of powerful strikes (including a general strike in Callao in 1913, after which the 8-hour day was introduced for a number of occupations), and developed work among indigenous communalists.25 A number of active trade unions were under anarchist influence as well in Boliva, Ecuador, Panama…

The rapid spread of the revolutionary syndicalist and anarchist workers' movement throughout the whole world soon led to the first contacts between organizations and attempts to create an international association of radical trade unions. In August 1907, during the anarchist congress in Amsterdam, a meeting of syndicalists was held. In accor- dance with a proposal by the Free Association of German Trade Unions (FVdG), it was decided to start publishing an "International bulletin of the syndicalist movement" in four languages, which would further the development of the contacts between the syndicalist organizations of different countries. The bulletin was published in Paris and its editor was C. Cornelissen. The publication was financed by the syndicalists of the Netherland, Germany, Bohemia, Sweden, and France, and also received support periodically from the American IWW26

Rank-and-file activists in the revolutionary syndicalist organizations of the Netherlands, Germany, and France frequently urged the French CGT to convene an international trade union congress with the participation not only of reformists, but also revolutionary unions. Some of the French revolutionary syndicalists spoke out in favour of giving a higher priority to developing connections with other revolutionary trade union and initiatives; however, the leadership of the CGT declined to do so for the sake of preserving unity in the workers' movement. The CGT joined a global association of trade unions under the aegis of social-democrats and reformists – the International Secretariat of the National Centers of Trade Unions (ISNTUC).

the declaration "signified an important advance in syndicalist thought, since it confirmed and made clear what had often only been implied in pre-war European syndicalism." It enunciated "not simply political neutrality, as expressed in the 'Charter of Amiens', but opposition to all political parties, which were regarded as qualitatively different, hostile organizations, inevitably striving to establish their control over labour unions; and also the smashing of the political state… In short, this document, adopted by the delegates in Berlin, elaborated syndicalist principles."

In a last-ditch attempt to draw at least part of the revolutionary syndicalists to their side, the leaders of the Comintern and Profintern agreed to do away with reciprocal representation of both "red" Internationals, although they continued to insist on the "leading role" of communists in the labour unions. This concession seemed sufficient to the leadership of the French CGTU, which announced its affiliation with the Profintern; its libertarian minority formed a "Committee of Syndicalist Defense" (CDS). Satisfied with the measures taken by Moscow, a majority of the leadership of the Netherlands NAS took a position opposed to the creation of a new syndicalist International. The remaining revolutionary syndicalist unions endorsed an organizational demarcation between themselves and Bolshevism. Thus, at the congress of the Portuguese CGT in October 1922, 55 locals supported the creation of a new International and only 22 were for joining the Profintern.

At the same time, the rupture between the ascendant European anarcho-syndicalism and both the pre-war syndicalism and Bolshevism seemed inadequate to some of the revolutionary unions. Thus, the Argentine FORA, in its "Memorandum" addressed to the upcoming constitutional congress of the syndicalist International, expressed complete agreement with the proposed organizational system and methods of struggle, and endorsed the social goal of the new international organization – libertarian communism.

and about non-interference in the internal affairs of individual organizations. "We must take a stand for our positions on these three most important questions and on this basis we are prepared to go all the way to an open rupture…," the instructions went on to say.

The international syndicalist conference convened in Berlin in June 1922 with the participation of delegations from France, Germany, Norway, Spain, and also Russian anarcho-syndicalists and official Russian labour unions, representing the Profintern. The communist fraction in the USI and labour unions which had split from the German FAUD were not allowed to cast deciding votes. This prompted the Soviet delegates to quit the conference. A majority of the delegates were sharply critical of the repression of the anarchists in Soviet Russia. This was the final break between the syndicalists and the communists. And although the French delegates refrained from voting because of internal differences, the remaining delegates resolved to break with the Profintern and create an international congress of revolutionary labour unions. To prepare for this a bureau was set up in Berlin headed by R. Rocker assisted by A. Borghi (USI), A. Pestaña (CNT), Albert Jensen (from the Scandinavian syndicalists), and A. Shapiro (from the Russian anarcho-syndicalists). A declaration of principles was adopted, based on the corresponding declaration of the FAUD.

It rejected political parties, parliamentarism, militarism, nationalism, and centralism. Its positive program included the complete autonomy of economic organizations of both physical and intellectual labour, and direct action with the general strike being its highest expression, the "prelude to the social revolution." The goal of this revolution would be the reconstruction of economic and social life, the liquidation of all State functions in the life of society, and the creation of a system of libertarian communism. The dictatorship of the proletariat and Bolshevik methods were decisively condemned. In the words of researcher [URL=/tags/wayne-thorpe] W. Thorpe,

It boycotted the conferences organized by this secretariat in 1905 and 1907 because the German trade unions would not allow the inclusion on the agenda of resolutions about the general strike and antimilitarism, but from 1909 on the CGT participated in the conferences but was unsuccessful in obtaining their transformation into plenipotentiary congresses of delegates. The banding together of the revolutionary syndicalist forces now continued without the participation of the CGT.27

New proposals about international connections were raised at the 6th convention of the IWW (1911) and by the syndicalist trade union associations of Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands. Finally, the responsibility for holding an international meeting was taken upon itself by the British Industrial Syndicalist Education League (ISEL). Participants at the conference were supposed to be "revolutionary workers, organized in independent trade unions" and rejecting political parties: "activists," not "functionaries." The preparatory committee called the international syndicalist congress for London in September-October 1913.

Sessions of the congress took place at Holborn Town Hall, London. There were delegates representing the Free Association of German Trade Unions; the Argentine FORA and the syndicalist "Regional Workers' Confederation of Argentina" (CORA); the Brazilian workers' confederation; the trade union organizations of Belgium, Cuba, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Britain; the Italian syndicalist union and a number of local trade union organizations of Italy; and the Swedish trade union association SAC which also represented the syndicalists of Norway and Denmark. A representative of the IWW was present as an observer. C. Cornelissen was elected secretary of the congress, and its translator was the Russian anarcho-syndicalist A. Shapiro. Discussed were questions of international collaboration; theory and tactics; anti-militarism and anti-war work; migrant workers, etc.

In the course of the sessions serious differences surfaced between those who, like the Italian delegate Alceste De Ambris, tried to soften the anti-statist and anti-capitalist slant of the proposed resolutions and avoid "splitting the working class" by creating a new trade union International; and adherents of a more consistently revolutionary line. In the end the congress adopted a declaration of principles which included the basic positions of revolutionary syndicalism: "Capitalist slavery and State oppression" were rejected, and the "class struggle" was proclaimed as the inevitable consequence of private property and workers' solidarity. This document contained appeals for the creation of independent industrial unions on the basis of free association, both for the fight for everyday necessities for the workers, as well as for the overthrow of the capitalist system and the State. It was maintained that workers' organizations must overcome the divisions brought about by "political and religious differences."

The declaration expressed the view that trade unions will become organs of the socialization of property and the management of production in the interests of the whole of society. Direct action was recognized the means of struggle. Finally, the congress took a decisive step towards the creating of a new syndicalist International: it called for international solidarity and established an International Syndicalist Information Bureau to coordinate communications and cooperation, make preparations for new congresses, etc. The functions of the Bureau were entrusted to the Netherlands NAS, although De Ambris expressed dissatisfaction with this circumstance and proposed to place it in Paris (effectively under the control of the CGT). The Bureau, composed of Gerrit van Erkel (chair), Thomas Markmann (secretary), A. J. Hooze (treasurer), M. A. van der Hage, and F. Drewes, set to work officially on January 1 1914.

The further unification of worker anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists was prevented by the outbreak several months

efit for our common interests." But the syndicalists preferred the idea of negotiations with Moscow on a broader scale. A congress of the Italian USI in March 1922 approved a proposal of the CGTU to convene an international conference to discuss the conditions of agreement.

It was originally scheduled for June 16-18 in Paris. In connection with this, the Administrative Commission of the CGTU at a meeting on April 28 rejected an invitation from the Profintern to send French delegates to Moscow.

It informed the General Secretary of the Red International Lozovsky about the decision to convene a "preliminary conference" in Paris, the purpose of which was "to make the differences disappear" which were preventing the syndicalists from affiliating with the Moscow International. The CGTU asked the USI, which was organizing the conference, to relocate it to Berlin in order to make it easier for delegations from Russian labour unions to attend.

On May 19 1922 the leaders of the USI A. Borghi and A. Giovannetti informed the "secretary of the Russian labour union central" that on June 16-18 in the capital of Germany would take place an "international syndicalist conference for the purpose of studying the differences in views existing between the revolutionary syndicalist movement of all countries and the Red International of Labour Unions, and to agree on the formation of a Revolutionary Labour Union International if the differences with the Red International could not be resolved." The USI reported that invitations had been extended to labour union associations in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and also to the "syndicalist minorities" of various countries. In the instructions given to delegations of the Profintern to the international syndicalist conference, it was stated that discussions, and even concessions, about contentious issues were possible, with the exclusion of three basic questions – about the independence of labour unions from political parties, about the banning of communist fractions in reformist labour unions,

of interference in practice and tactics in individual countries." <fn>SAPMO: Bestand RY1/I2/708, Aktenband No. 53, Bl. 75-78.</fn>

The search for common ground between the Profintern and the syndicalists was initiated by the French Unitary General Confederation of Labour (CGTU). This organization was formed in 1922 by leftist tendencies which had withdrawn from the CGT. In a letter dated March 8 1922 directed to the Executive Office of the Profintern, its syndicalist leadership demanded the strictest observance of the complete independence of national labour union centrals from communist parties and the Comintern – only in this situation were they ready to join the Profintern. In this connection the CGTU was prepared to allow co-operation with communists within the framework of "coalitions of all the revolutionary forces" by means of specially created "Coordinating Committees." In forwarding this proposal to Moscow, the Spanish communist Hilari Arlandis urged its acceptance, in order "to disarm the libertarians as quickly as possible" since these ideas enjoyed wide popularity among international syndicalist and even partly among communist circles, especially in Latin countries where the Profintern found itself in an "extremely delicate" situation and there was active anti-Bolshevik agitation by Russian anarchists. "If we don't put an end to this opposition movement once and for all by making a declaration in favour of the complete independence of the Profintern," he warned, "We shall be at high risk of never seeing an end to this issue; ... if today the non-negotiable demand of the syndicalist opposition is organizational independence with no strings attached, then tomorrow the libertarians will be raising questions about the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The leadership of the Profintern suggested on March 10 that the CGTU send two representatives to Moscow for negotiations in order to "prepare the ground for a second congress in the interests of all tendencies which would be a great ben-

later of the First World War. The war demonstrated all the contradictions and inconsistencies of the revolutionary.

1. "In the revolutionary syndicalist workers' movement, more than in other movements, one sees the lively instincts of the [working – V. D.] class, searching about and finding its own way...," noted in this connection the German researcher of the 1930's Gerhard Aigte. "That is why this movement did not spring up as a result of some well-defined, polished theory, but arose from the requirements of practical life. The revolutionary syndicalists... always emphasized that syndicalism – is the workers going about their own business, and not the speculative creation of isolated intellectuals." (G. Aigte, Die Internationale, 1930, no. 2 (Dezember), p. 45).

2. E. Pouget, L'Action directe (Marseille, 1997), p. 1.

3. G. Yvetot, A.B.C. syndicaliste + F. Pelloutier, L'Organisation corporative et l'anarchie (Toulouse, n.d.), p. 33.

4. C. Cornelissen, "Uber den internationalen Syndikalismus," Archiv fur Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, Bd. XXX (Tubingen, 1910), pp. 153-154.

5. E. Pataud and E. Pouget, Comment nous ferons revolution (Paris, 1909).

6. See, for example: P. A. Kropotkin, Fields, factories, and workshops (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1996).

7. C. Cornelissen, "Uber den internationalen Syndikalismus...," pp. 158, 161, 165; C. Cornelissen, "Zur internationalen syndikalistischen Bewegung," Archiv fur Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, Bd. XXXII (Tubingen, 1911), p. 842.

8. Cited by V. Garcia, Antologia del anarcosindicalismo (Caracas / Montady, 1988), p. 17.

9. M. Rayevsky, Anarcho-syndicalism and critical syndicalism (New York, 1988), p. 17.

10. See, for example: G. Sorel, Reflections sur la violence (Paris, 1906).

11. Concerning the economic views of Cornelissen, see: C. Cornelissen, Theorie de la valeur (Paris,1903).

12. Cited by E. Malatesta, Anarchie (Berlin, 1995), p. 290.

13. For the text of the "Charter of Amiens" see: H. Dubief (ed.), Le Syndicalisme revolutionnaire, Paris (1969), pp. 95-96.

14. See: Anarchistes en exil. Corresondence inedite de Pierre Kropotkine a Marie Goldsmith 1897-1917 (Paris, 1995), p. 290.

15. P. Kropotkin, preface to E. Pataud and E. Pouget, How we shall bring about the revolution (London / Winchester (Mass.), 1990); P. Kropotkin, Syndikalismus und Anarchismus (reprint) (Meppen, 1981), p. 16.

16. For texts of speeches and the corresponding resolutions of the congress, see: Congres Anarchiste tenu a Amsterdam. Aout 1907. Compte-rendu analytique et resume de rapports sur l'etat du mouvement dans le monde entier, Paris (1908).

17. V. Garcia, Antologia del anarcosindicalismo…, p.18.

18. Brandenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv (eh. Staatsarchiv Potsdam). Pr. Br. Rep. 30, Berlin C Polizeiprasidium, Tit.94, Lit.A, Nr. 24: Die Anarchistische Internationale. 1908-1915. (15644), Bl. 14,16.

Comintern had been thrashed out at a new congress outside Soviet territory. The members of the Swedish trade union central SAC in a referendum turned down an amendment to their declaration of principles which would have envisaged the possibility of joining the Comintern and forming links with communist parties. The Spanish CNT at a plenum in August 1921 re-affirmed its independence from political parties and policy of organizing the social revolution and libertarian communism. Its newly elected National Committee was composed of anarchists.

In June 1922 at a plenum in Zaragoza the CNT adopted a resolution about withdrawing from the Comintern as a matter of principle and sending delegates to the conference of syndicalists.

Basically, the demands the syndicalists made to the Profintern reduced to the following points: "(1) cancellation of reciprocal representation between the Comintern and the Profintern in order to preserve the independence of the revolutionary union movement; (2) the second congress of the Profintern must be held abroad, in order to avoid the anticipated harmful influence of Russia on the gathering; (3) non-admission of separate delegations from the labour unions of Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine, and similar nations under Russian control; (4) relocation of the residence of the executive committee of the Profintern outside of the Soviet Union; (5) independence of the labour union movement from political parties, i.e. from communist parties, at the national and international levels; (6) denial of the right of representation to revolutionary minorities, which was meant to include communist opposition fractions in labour unions affiliated with the Amsterdam International [the international trade union association controlled by socialdemocracy – V. D.]; (7) voting at international congresses of the Profintern to be conducted on the basis of countries, regardless of the number of members of organizations; (8) restriction of the Profintern to the sphere of international affairs – prohibition

new association in Paris. But the organization was not created at this time.

The Bolsheviks succeeded in sundering the united bloc of the syndicalist opposition. The leadership of the Profintern made a deal with the delegation of the Spanish CNT, promising that the communists would facilitate the merger of the socialist trade unions of the UGT with the CNT. The French delegates held meetings with representatives of the Profintern and agreed to join the Red International, but only on condition that the "Charter of Amiens" was observed, namely that the organizational independence of unions from parties would be preserved. In principle none of the syndicalists objected to belonging to the Profintern as long as a number of conditions were met – and only the FORA repudiated its delegate to the Moscow congress.

The situation began to change in an sense unfavourable for Moscow in connection with the repression against the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in Russia and Ukraine (a delegation of foreign syndicalists in Moscow demanded their release) and also because the Bolsheviks continued to insist on the subordination of the unions to the Comintern.

In October 1921 at an international conference of syndicalists from Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and from the IWW, which was held in Düsseldorf on the occasion of the 13th congress of FAUD, a resolution was adopted to consider the founding of an International of trade unions abortive. The participants announced themselves in favour of convening a new international congress in Germany on the basis of the Berlin declaration. The preparation for this meeting was entrusted to an international Information Bureau of revolutionary syndicalists which set about putting out the appropriate international bulletin. The Italian USI also answered the call; at its own 4th congress in March 1922 it turned down a proposal by Nicolo Vecci's group to join the Profintern until questions about the mutual relations of trade unions with the

19. See: "Prefigurando futuro": 75° aniversario de la CNT. 1910-1995, (Madrid, 1985), p. 4-8; Congresos anarcosindicalistas en Espana. 1870-1936 (Toulouse/ Paris, 1977), pp. 35-40; J. Peirats, Les anarchistes espagnols. Revolution de 1936 et luttes de toujours (Toulouse, 1989), pp. 9-13.

20. See: E. Lopez Arango and D. Abad de Santillan, El anarquismo en el movimniento obrero (Barcelona,1925); A. Lopez, La FORA en el movimiento obrero (Buenos Aires, 1987).

21. E. Lopez Arango and D. Abad de Santillan, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

22. F. Pintos, Профсоюзное движение в Уругвае [The Labour Union Movement in Uruguay] (Moscow, 1964); C. Zubillaga and J. Balbis, Historia del movimiento sindical uruguaya (Montevideo, 1984).

23. See: J. M. Hart, Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class, 1860-1931 (Austin, 1987); F. Fernandez, El Anarquismo en Cuba (Madrid, 2000); S. Dolgoff, The Cuban Revolution: a Critical Perspective (Montreal, 1976); E. Rodriques, Socialismo e sindicalismo no Brasil (Rio de Janeiro, 1969); E. Rodrigues, Pequena historia da imprensa social no Brasil (Florianopolis, 1997).

24. J. Godio, Historia del movimiento obrero latinoamericano, Vol. 1., Anarquistas y socialistas 1850-1918 (Mexico, 1980); L. Gambone, "The Libertarian Movement in Chile," Black Flag, 1990, January, No. 196; L. Vitale, Contribucion a una Historia del Anarquismo en America Latina (Santiago, 1998).

25. El anarcosindicalismo en el Peru (Mexico, 1961).

26. See: C. Cornelissen, "Uber den internationalen Syndikalismus…," p. 150 (n31); M. Van der Linden and W.

Thorpe (eds.), Revolutionary syndicalism: an international perspective…, p. 239 (n19).

27. From this point on in the text, only informative footnotes are included. For footnotes including references, please see the full PDF text.

syndicalists who wanted to return to the Amiens program of 1906, and (3) communist syndicalists." Moscow was counting on the third tendency for support and hoped to neutralize the first. Nevertheless the secretary of the Central Committee of the CRS, Pierre Besnard, took a position of opposition to Bolshevism. A group of new leaders of the Spanish CNT (Joaquín Maurín, Andrés Nin, and others) aspired to join with Moscow. They moved to the forefront at a plenum in Barcelona in April 1921 after the arrest of the members of the previous Confederational Committee. "In some sections of our Confederation one finds a certain opposition to joining the Red International of Labour Unions. But it is our firm hope that the CNT will join the Profintern," they wrote to Moscow.

At the congress of the Profintern held in July 1921, the communists succeeded, thanks to a system of representation which favoured them, in assuring themselves a sizeable majority. All the revolutionary syndicalist organizations which took part in the 1920 Berlin conference sent representatives (with the exception of FAUD). But a motion proposed by Albert Lemoine that the Profintern not be subordinate to the Comintern failed, despite being supported by the French syndicalists, FORA, IWW, NAS, SAC, and the German leftcommunist workers' unions. Also defeated was a proposal by the CNT, USI, NAS, IWW, FORA, the French and Canadian syndicalists, the Uruguayan regional workers federation, and the German unions opposing work in reformist unions.

After this the oppositionist syndicalists, getting together in Moscow, adopted a "Manifesto of the revolutionary syndicalists of the world" and agreed to create an "Association of revolutionary syndicalists elements of the world." This association would include the CNT, USI, CSR, IWW, SAC, NAS, FORA, the German workers' organizations, and unions from Denmark, Norway, Canada, and Uruguay giving a total membership of almost 2.8 million. It was proposed to locate the bureau of the

demands for the form to be taken by an international association of revolutionary unions. These demands, approved by all the delegates with the exception of the Russians and French, became known as the "Berlin Declaration." According to it, the Profintern would have to base itself on class struggle, aiming at the liquidation of the rule of the capitalist system and the creation of a free communist society. In this connection it was noted that the liberation of the working class must be carried out only with the help of economic means of struggle, and that the regulation of production and distribution must become the task of economic organizations of the proletariat. The complete independence of the trade union International from any political party was emphasized, although co-operation with parties and other political organizations was to be allowed.

All the revolutionary syndicalist organizations of the world were urged to take part in the Moscow congress of the Profitern. An international syndicalist information bureau was created in Amsterdam (its secretary was the Dutchman Bernard Lansink and the other members were R. Rocker from Germany and J. Tanner from Great Britain).

The Bolsheviks, the Western European communist parties loyal to them, and the Moscow organizing committee, tried to persuade the revolutionary syndicalists to take part in the new international trade union association under the aegis of the communists. The chief opposition to this was considered to come from the German FAUD. Thus, the section of the Communist Party of Germany which dealt with trade union work in the mining industry issued a directive to district secretaries and party fractions in the unions, ordering them to "struggle and defeat" this organization.

The communists encouraged breakaways from the FAUD in every way possible. The German anarcho-syndicalists did not send delegates to the Moscow congress. In France, where an internal opposition in the CGT existed, the communists distinguished "three tendencies: (1) anarcho-syndicalists, (2) old

Chapter 4: Revolutionary Syndicalism during the First World War

The First World War was a serious test for the internationalist and anti-militarist position proclaimed by the syndicalists. Some of them (Alexander Berkman, Antonio Bernardo, V. García, A. Shapiro, Bill Shatov) together with E. Malatesta and Emma Goldman signed a manifesto against the war, denouncing it as a war of aggression by both sides.

They declared their intention to "incite insurrection and organize revolution." Others (like Christiaan Cornelissen) supported the position of P. Kropotkin, Jean Grave, Charles Malato, and a number of other prominent anarchists who rallied to the side of the Entente since they considered German imperialism the "greater evil."

The decline of revolutionary syndicalism in France could be noted even before the war. The progress of industralization brought with it a temporary stabilization in standards of living and some increase in wages; strikes acquired a more peaceful character, and among the workers and labour unions there arose a inclination to solve problems through negotiations. The leaders of the CGT (its general secretary Léon Jouhaux, P. Monatte and others) were compelled more and more to take into account the reality of industrial development. "After 1910 the ideological pretensions of the revolutionary syndicalists and the actual behaviour of workers in the CGT itself began to diverge more and more… The Amiens compromise, which

pointed to the future, had nothing to offer." The outbreak of the war deepened the crisis of French revolutionary syndicalism. The federal bureau of the CGT did not proclaim a general strike against the war, but issued a call "to defend the nation." During the war years, representatives of the CGT collaborated in various "mixed commissions" created by the State. At the same time, an antiwar opposition surfaced within the organization in 1915, led by Alphonse Merrheim and P. Monatte, and grouped around the newspaper La Vie ouvriere. During the next year the left revolutionary syndicalists formed a Committee of Syndicalist Defense (CDS) which, despite taking an extreme anti-war position which referred to the "Charter of Amiens," achieved a large measure of independence from the left socialist opponents of the war. In 1917 the Committee supported strike action by the workers, and spoke out against the worsening of living conditions and the intensification of labour.

In Italy the question of what stance to take regarding the war lead to a split in the USI. The group led by the general secretary A. De Ambris endorsed participation in the war on the grounds that this would facilitate the "revolutionization" of the country (a position which was labelled "revolutionary interventionism"). However this group did not enjoy the support of the majority of members and organizations of the USI. A new general secretary was elected – Armando Borghi.

In 1915 the USI endorsed the idea of a general strike against the war, although lacking the practical possibility of carrying it out. Adherents of "interventionism" were expelled from a number of unions.

The American syndicalists of the IWW launched an active struggle against entry into the war, which provoked furious persecution on the part of the government and nationalists.

In 1915 the well known IWW activist Joe Hill was executed, in 1916 five union members were shot by police in an atmosphere of nationalist hysteria, and in 1917 1,200 members of the

would also involve acceptance of the dictatorship of the proletariat. A. Pestaña, A. Souchy, and J. Tanner rejected the Bolshevist ideas about the necessity of working in reformist trade unions, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the conquest of political power, and the subordination of unions to communist parties. The Spanish delegate, bound by the decision of the CNT about joining the Comintern, agreed to sign the draft plan, but only after the Bolsheviks promised to exclude from it any mention of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the seizure of political power. However it turned out Pestaña was deceived: the text was published in the original form, but with his signature.

During the Congress itself the same disagreements were on display.

Now the revolutionary unions were faced with the decision whether or not to join to the newly created "Red International of Trade Unions" (Profintern). Declarations about affiliating were made by the British shop stewards and the French revolutionary syndicalists (at a conference in September 1920 in Orléans, accompanying this with an affirmation of loyalty to the Charter of Amiens). In December 1920 in Berlin the long-awaited international syndicalist conference convened with the participation of delegates from the FAUD (Germany, but also representing Czechoslovakia), FORA (Argentina), IWW (U.S.A.), CRS (France), NAS (Netherlands), shop stewards' and workers' committees (Britain), and SAC (Sweden). Declarations of support for the conference were made by syndicalists from Norway and Denmark, and by the Portuguese CGT. A delegation from Russian trade unions also arrived and urged the participants to endorse the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Profintern, which they insisted was a structure separate from the Comintern. The Swedish and German delegates took the floor with a critique of Moscow and the persecution of anarchists in Russia; the French representatives showed themselves to be solid supporters of the Bolsheviks; the Dutch delegation was split; and other delegates called for spelling out concrete

weapons production) and their tactics, as well as treating participants as equals. But these conditions were unacceptable to State-communists. In 1921 FAUD announced that membership in political parties was incompatible with being in a syndicalist organization.

However in 1920 the possibility of co-operation in practice was still conceivable. At the invitation the Soviets, revolutionary trade union organizations of various countries sent their own representatives to the 2nd Congress of the Comintern in Moscow in the summer of 1920. The FAUD sent its own delegates – the Australian Paul Freeman and the German Augustin Souchy – with a mandate "to study the economic Soviet system in Russia so we have a clear picture of what's going on and can evaluate the experience of the Russian comrades for our own country." Freeman later became a supporter of Bolshevism, while A. Souchy returned from Moscow a fervent opponent. The latter described his impressions of the Russian Revolution in a timely book.

Subjecting to a sharp critique the Bolshevist modus operandi of seizing political power, centralization, and dictatorial state socialism, the German syndicalist made this recommendation: "[the Bolshevik method] should not be followed if a revolution should begin in our own country."

At the 2nd Congress of the Comintern there were also syndicalist delegates or observers from other countries: Spain (Ángel Pestaña), France (Marcel Verge and Berto Lepti), a delegation of British shop stewards led by John Tanner, and representatives of the IWW. Immediately after the Congress the leading activist of the Italian USI, Armando Borghi, arrived in Moscow. In the course of meetings before the Congress, organized by the Executive Committee of the Comintern, the Bolsheviks proposed to create a new revolutionary International of Trade Unions so that in each country trade unions would have to act under the leadership of the Communist Party affiliated with the Comintern. It was envisaged that this project

IWW were deported to the New Mexico desert in connection with a miners' strike in Arizona. Meanwhile, the IWW was successful in helping large strikes in Wheatland (California, 1915) and the Mesabi Range (Minnesota, 1916).

In the spring of 1917, job actions and sabotage organized by the IWW inflicted significant losses on branches of industry – woodworking and copper mining – vitally important for the prosecution of war. Between 1916 and 1917 the number of members of the IWW grew from 40,000 to 75,000, and by the end of the summer of 1917 had swollen, according to various sources, to between 125,000 and 250,000.

In Germany the syndicalist movement was virtually paralyzed soon after the start of the war, and the FVdG and its press were banned. In Great Britain as well nothing in the way of active work occurred.

The longer the war continued, the worse the lives of the workers became. In many countries strikes flared up as well as hunger riots. Anarchists and syndicalists took an active part in them. In France in May 1918, a congress of revolutionary syndicalists came out in favour of a general revolutionary strike against the war. In protest demonstrations an especially active role was played by the metalworkers of the Loire and Paris region, resulting in substantial losses to the war industry. The movement was suppressed, activists were dispatched to the front, and the leader of the Committee of Syndicalist Defense Raymond Péricat was convicted of treason against the State.

In Spain (neutral, but economically sucked into the war) in 1916 workers all over the country protested against the rise in the cost of living; the country was paralyzed. The CNT signed a "revolutionary alliance" with the socialist General Workers' Union (UGT). In May-June 1917 Spain stood on the threshold of revolution. In August a general strike broke out, on a scale unseen up to that time, accompanied by armed struggle. The outbreak was suppressed after a battle lasting many days.

In Portugal protests against increases in the cost of living and the number of unemployed workers constantly developed into acts of resistance which often were spontaneous in character. In September 1914 unrest flared up in Lisbon, and the first fatalities occurred. In the spring of 1915 unemployed workers seized the ministry of agriculture and destroyed it. Riots and mayhem gave way to strikes, organized by the trade unions. By 1917 the revolutionary syndicalists had achieved dominance in the National Workers' Union (UON), completely overshadowing the socialists.

Regaining their composure after the first shock, the anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists tried to re-establish regular international contacts. In 1915 an international antimilitarist congress was organized in the Spanish region of Galicia. It assembled not only many prominent Spanish working class anarchists (such as Ángel Pestaña, M. Andreu, F. Miranda, L. Bouza, Eusebio Carb_, Eleuterio Quintanilla, and others), but also delegates from Portugal (notably M. J. de Sousa), France, England, Italy, Brazil, Argentina, and Cuba. At the meeting the question of an international general strike was discussed. The meeting also played an important role in renewing the Spanish CNT. In December 1916 the NAS of neutral Holland called on workers' organizations of all countries to gather at a world congress of revolutionary syndicalism, but this idea was not carried out until the end of the war.

The inability of workers' organizations to prevent World War I, the impotence of "neutral" syndicalism, and the increase in revolutionary sentiments among the labouring masses made changes in the syndicalist movement itself all the more urgent. "The Great War swept away neutral syndicalism," noted A. Shapiro later. To many activists it became clear that syndicalism by itself was insufficient, that it was necessary to combine the self-organized workers' movement with direct action animated by clear revolutionary ideas.

of consumption by workers' exchanges" (i.e. industrial associations of workers at the local level) – he proclaimed.

According to the notion of the German anarcho-syndicalists, in the course of a victorious general strike it was appropriate to carry out the expropriation of private property, enterprises, food stores, real estate, etc. The management of enterprises was to be transferred into the hands of Councils of workers and employees [office workers]; the management of dwellings into the hands of Councils of tenants. Delegates from enterprises and districts would constitute a Commune.

Money and the system of commodity production (for sale) was slated to be abolished: the regulation of consumption (fixed levels in the beginning, later driven by demand) was to be entrusted to "labour exchanges" and tenants' councils.

The fundamental difference between anarcho-syndicalism and revolutionary syndicalism lay in the fact that syndicalism did not consider direct action to be "selfsufficient" as a means of achieving anarchist communism.

"… Anarcho-syndicalism exists as the organizational force of the social revolution on a libertarian-communist basis; anarcho-communists must be anarcho-syndicalists in order to organize the revolution, and every anarchist who is able to become a member of a trade union should be a member of the anarcho-syndicalist Confederation of Labour," the general secretary of the anarcho-syndicalist International, A. Shapiro, declared later.

In spite of the openly anti-Bolshevik orientation of the new doctrine, the German anarcho-syndicalists in the beginning still permitted limited co-operation with Communist Party members. Thus, in January 1921, the executive committee of FAUD stated in a letter to the Central Committee of the United Communist Party of Germany that the syndicalists were agreeable to joint actions under the condition that the participating organizations harmonize their demands in advance (including the 6-hour workday, abolition of piece-work, rejection of

pain there would be in carrying it through. Following the revolutionary syndicalists, he considered the unions (syndicates) to be the organs and elements of preparation for the revolution. The unions, in Rocker's opinion, struggling not only for momentary improvements, but also for revolution, are "not a transitory product of capitalist society, but the cells of the future socialist economic organization."

Rejecting private property as a "monopoly of possessions" and government as a "monopoly of decision-making," the syndicalists should strive "for collectivization of land, work tools, raw materials, and all social wealth; for the reorganization of the whole of economic life on the basis of libertarian, i.e. stateless, communism, which finds its expression in the slogan: 'From each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs!'" Rocker criticized not only the bourgeois State, State boundaries, parliamentarism and political parties; but also Bolshevism (party communism) since centralization, preservation of State power, and nationalization (government ownership) of the economy can "lead only to the worst form of exploitation – State capitalism, rather than socialism." The syndicalists should act not to win political power, but for the eradication of political power generally. As for socialism – in the final analysis this is a question of culture – it cannot be established by any kind of decisions from above. It is only possible in the form of an association of self-managed groups of producers, of workers performing both mental and physical labour. By this means "groups, enterprises, and branches of production" would work as "autonomous members of a general economic organism, which on the basis of mutual and free agreements would systematically carry out production and distribution in the common interest." As the instruments for such "planning from below" Rocker considered statistics and voluntary agreements. "The organization of enterprises and workshops by economic councils, the organization of the whole of production by industrial and agricultural associations, and the organization

Part 2: Anarcho-syndicalism

Chapter 5: The Revolutionary Years

The global revolutionary wave which started in 1917 in Russia gradually enveloped other countries. Anarchists and syndicalists took an active part in events and were frequently found in the front ranks of revolutionary actions.

The general enthusiasm and mass self-organization of the workers imparted a new impulse to the libertarian workers' movement.

The Russian anarcho-syndicalists in 1917-1918 were grouped around the newspapers Golos truda and Novy golos truda, and in 1918 they held two All-Russian conferences (in August-September and November-December). In 1920 the Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists (RKAS) was created. In Ukraine the anarcho-syndicalists took part in creating the Confederation of Anarchists of Ukraine – Nabat, which exerted a substantial influence on the Makhnovist movement.

The libertarians enjoyed appreciable support in the factory committees and independent labour unions. At the end of 1917 and beginning of 1918 they were successful in organizing 25-30 thousand miners of Debaltsevo (in the Donbass) on the basis of the platform of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). They were recognized by the miners of Cheremkhovo in Siberia, stevedores and workers in the cement industry in the Kuban and Novorossiysk, railway workers, workers in the perfume industry, and workers in other fields.

the Bolsheviks' break with the centralism of social-democracy was expressed by the Swedish revolutionary syndicalists (SAC). <fn>In 1922 SAC declared that affiliating to the International being created in Moscow was incompatible with the syndicalist principle of independence from political parties (RGASPI: F.532, Op. 7, D. 624, L. 23, 36, 65-66).</fn> But the centre of resistance to the influence of Bolshevism became the German revolutionary trade union association FAUD.

In December 1918 FAUD called for co-operation with revolutionary socialists. Within its organization there were supporters and even members of the Communist Party.

In the spring of 1919 the prevailing view within its ranks was support for a non-party "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the form of Councils, in contrast to parliamentary activity, although it was maintained that socialization could only be carried out by revolutionary unions. In December 1919 at the 12th congress of the FVdG, which morphed into the FAUD, solidarity was expressed with Soviet Russia. But at this same congress R. Rocker took the floor with a report on the principles of syndicalism. His speech and the resulting "Declaration concerning the Principles of Syndicalism" set forth a synthesis of anarchism and revolutionary syndicalism on which the ideology of the anarcho-syndicalist movement was based. An adherent of the anarcho-communism of P. Kropotkin, Rocker combined the traditional goals of anarchism (doing away with the State, private property, and the system of the division of labour; creation of a federation of free communes and a diversified economy aimed at the satisfaction of the real needs of people – the ethical basis of socialism) with ideas developed by the German anarchist G. Landauer about a new culture and the creation of the elements of a future free society without waiting for a general social upheaval. Rocker was convinced the social revolution could not be carried through spontaneously, that it must be prepared still within the framework of existing capitalist society and that the better it was prepared, the less trouble and

and syndicalists grasped that behind the "power of the soviets" was hidden a new party-state dictatorship.

The revolutionary syndicalists were faced with the necessity of choosing between anarchism and Bolshevism. The question of the orientation and goals of the movement was central to the process of its unification on a global scale. At the end of 1918 the Dutch and German syndicalists renewed their appeal for the convening of an international congress, but at a conference in February 1919 in Copenhagen, only the Scandinavian delegates were able to be present. Attempts during 1919-1920 to assemble a congress in the Netherlands and Sweden were unsuccessful. Meanwhile the Bolsheviks, along with Communist parties and groups in a number of European countries, announced the creation of the Communist International. To many anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists it seemed that this new international association could be the centre of attraction not only for the left-radical wing of social-democracy but also for libertarians, as a sort of historical compromise between Marx and Bakunin on the basis of revolutionary principles. Announcements about joining the Comintern were made by the French "Committee of Syndicalist Defense" of R. Péricat (renamed the Communist Party in the spring of 1919, and later – the Communist Federation of Soviets), by the Italian USI (in July 1919 and confirmed at a USI congress in December), and even by – "temporarily" in anticipation of the holding of a congress in Spain to organize a "genuine workers' International" – the Spanish CNT (at a congress in December 1919). A number of prominent leaders of Anglo-Saxon syndicalism joined communist parties: Bill Haywood (American IWW), T. Mann (the leading British revolutionary syndicalist), and others.

There were some anarchists who spoke out early on with a sharp critique of the Bolsheviks and their dictatorship.

Among them were the Italian Luigi Fabbri and the German Rudolph Rocker. Already in 1919 skepticism regarding

In 1918 the anarcho-syndicalists supported bakery workers in Moscow, Kharkov, and Kiev; postal-telegraph workers in Petrograd; river transport workers in the Volga region; etc. Some of these organizations were destroyed by the Whites, others were neutralized by the Bolshevik authorities by means of mergers and outright oppression of activists. As a result, while at the First All-Russia Congress of Trade Unions (1918) the syndicalist and Maximalist delegates represented around 88,000 workers, at the Second Congress (1919) they represented 53,000, and at the Third (1920) 35,000 at most. An attempt by some of the syndicalists to organize a General Confederation of Labour independent of the Bolshevik government was suppressed. By 1922 the unions created by the anarcho-syndicalists had been disbanded, and their publishing operations shut down. The leading activists of the movement were arrested: Vsevolod Volin, Aron Baron, Mark Mrachny, and other anarchists and syndicalists who took part in the Makhnovist movement – in November and December 1920; Grigory Maksimov – in March 1921, etc. After a ten day hunger strike in Tagansk Prison in 1921, and protests by foreign delegations arriving in Moscow in connection with the First Congress of the Profintern, Volin, Maksimov, Mrachny, and several of their comrades were deported from Soviet Russia in January 1922. Another prominent Russian anarcho-syndicalist, Aleksandr Shapiro, was arrested by the Bolshevik authorities after his return from a syndicalist conference in Berlin in the summer of 1922. After numerous protests from abroad he was also deported.

In Germany the anarchists were part of the Council movement; two prominent anarchists (Gustav Landauer and Erich Mühsam) took part in the executive organs of the Bavarian Soviet Republic. The FVdG resumed its activity soon after the November revolution of 1918 and began to publish its newspaper Der Sindikalist. The FVdG "presented itself as the only organizational alternative at the time for those workers disillu-

sioned with the politics of the official parties and identifying with radical unionism." Considering themselves the left wing of the Council movement, the syndicalists took the position that these organs were not like political parties, but should take the economic functions of management into their own hands. "Workers Councils must have control over all the revenues and expenditures of enterprises, and actively participate in accepting orders and ordering raw materials. In doing so they are acting in the interests not only of the workers but of the whole of society. In the final analysis, the workers become the sole masters of the means of labour, thereby completing their humanity," emphasized the FVdG newspaper. The German syndicalists were influential in the Workers' Council at the Thyssen machine-building plant in Mülheim, in the Workers' and Soldiers' Council in the same city, played a decisive role in the strike movement in Hamborn, and were represented in the Munich Soviet.

To the extent the Council movement went into decline and was integrated into the system of the Weimar republic (law about Councils of enterprises of February 4, 1920), the FVdG regarded the possibility of the spread and development of Councils within capitalist society as an illusion.

The influence of the syndicalists rose quickly after the armed suppression of a general strike in the Ruhr in April 1919. In December of that year the FVdG was transformed into the Free Workers' Union of Germany (FAUD); almost 112,000 workers were represented at its founding congress.

This organization called for a general strike to turn back the counterrevolution, but its initiative did not find a response.

In 1919-1920 during the course of radical strikes in the Ruhr, syndicalist methods of direct action were often used. In March 1920 during a general strike against the Kapp putsch, which evolved into armed revolts in a number of regions, branches of the FAUD in many cities led the struggle, despite the cautious stance of the central executive committee of the union

Chapter 6: From Revolutionary Syndicalism to Anarcho-syndicalism

The Russian Revolution, it seemed, offered the workers' movement a revolutionary alternative to social-reformism.

The idea of soviets – not as state organs staffed by party officials but as instruments of non-party self-organization and workers' self-management of production and of local living arrangements – played an important part in the belief systems of many anarchists and syndicalists.The majority of libertarians were enthralled by events in Russia, seeing in them what they wished to see rather than what was actually transpiring. In the words of Malatesta, they interpreted the dictatorship of the proletariat not as a system of government, but as "a revolutionary action with the help of which the workers would take possession of the land and the means of production, and would attempt to build a society in which there was no place for class, no place for exploitative and oppressive owners. In this case the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' would denote the dictatorship of everyone and therefore would not be a dictatorship at all, the same as a government of everyone is no longer a government in the authoritarian, historical, and practical sense of the word," the old anarchist noted. A section of the libertarians became convinced that the Bolshevik system of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" is some kind of intermediate stage on the road to the anarchist organization of society (the phenomenon of "anarcho-bolshevism"). It was years before the anarchists

much in evidence. In the U.S.A. members of the IWW suffered greatly from government repression in 1917-1920. Another industrial unionist labour central – the One Big Union (OBU) – arose in 1919 in Canada and headed a powerful general strike in the western part of the country. The North American IWW and OBU did not develop along the lines of anarcho-syndicalism. In Australia and New Zealand, the initial groups of the IWW carried on work in the existing labour unions, trying to encourage them to associate on an industrial basis and adopt the principles of the IWW. They suffered greatly from repression during the First World War, and then many of their leading activists joined communist parties. In South Africa industrial unionists were grouped around the IWW (1910-1914), the International Socialist League (1915-1921), and the Industrial Socialist League (1918-1921). They acted as organizers of major strikes (including a general strike of miners in 1921-1922) and a number of active unions of "whites," "blacks," and Indian workers. But after 1921 the majority of the South African unionists joined communist parties.

1. In Columbia and Venezuela the anarcho-syndicalists tendencies began to have an impact only towards the middle and end of the 1920's.

which condemned "putschism." The FAUD took part in Workers' Councils in Essen, Mülheim, Oberhausen, Duisberg, and Dortmund. In Mülheim and Hamborn Factory Councils followed the advice of the FAUD and took control ("socialized") the gigantic Thyssen plants. Forty-five percent of the soldiers of the "Red Army of the Ruhr" were members of FAUD. In the Thuringian industrial city of Sömmerda the syndicalists and left communists declared a Soviet republic. Although the movement was harshly suppressed, the popularity of the FAUD in these revolutionary years continued to grow. In 1921 it counted 150,000 members.

In March of that year, despite the negative attitude of the executive committee in Berlin, Thuringian members of the FAUD together with left communists again took part in an armed revolt.

The ebb of the revolutionary wave and government repressions led to a rapid decrease in the membership of the organization. At its congress in 1922, only about 70,000 members were represented. However the FAUD still remained a significant force, especially at the local level (among the miners and metalworkers of the Ruhr and Rhineland, construction workers in Berlin, and workers of Central Germany). In 1923, under conditions of crisis and revolutionary fervour after the occupation of the Ruhr by Franco-Belgian troops, the anarcho-syndicalists supported many strikes and demonstrations by the unemployed, calling for a general strike and social revolution. However the economic catastrophe and mass unemployment undermined the strength of FAUD and its ranks fell to 30,000.

In Italy the revolutionary syndicalist trade union USI already in the summer of 1919, in spite of repression, unleashed a strike movement in La Spezia and a 48-hour general strike in Bologna. The USI endorsed the seizure of factories by the workers. At its third congress in Parma (December 1919), the USI proposed a system of "autonomous and free" Councils "antithetical to the State." These Councils were seen as organs both for the

defense of the workers and for the administration of the future society. The USI supported the initiatives of workers to create Factory Councils and urged that they not be allowed to fall into reformist "degeneration." In February 1920 metalworkers belonging to the USI seized factories in Sestri-Ponente and neighbouring cities and set up Councils to manage them. In March workers' unrest spread to Turin, and in April convulsed the whole of Piedmont and Napoli. In Pombino workers organized in the USI rose in revolt to protest the dismissal of 1,500 workers of the Ilva firm and took over the city. The syndicalists were also active as organizers of strikes of farm labourers and anti-militarist demonstrations. In July 1920 the USI called on metalworkers to carry out a wholesale seizure of factories in response to the intransigence of the owners and lockouts. In August – September armed workers created a "Red Guard" which seized around 300 enterprises in Milan; the movement then spread throughout the whole country. Factories were taken over by Councils. However the numerically dominant CGL, controlled by socialists, was content with promises of minimal concessions and, not desiring revolution, put the brakes on the movement, while the USI, with its 500,000 members (several times smaller than the CGL) did not risk continuing the struggle alone. After this the revolutionary wave in Italy went into decline, although in March of the following year the USI was able to conduct a general strike in Milan and a shutdown of the USI-controlled "houses of labour" [labour exchanges] in support of imprisoned members of the organization.

From the winter – spring of 1921 the syndicalists, along with other leftists, became the objects of armed attacks on the part of the fascists, who destroyed the "houses of labour" and interfered with the activities of left-wing trade unionists and parties throughout the whole country. "Faced with attacks by fascist gangs, the USI organized itself on various levels in order to resist the wave of reaction – both by radicalizing the social struggle and by having recourse to arms. In contrast to the in-

destroyed by the provincial authorities and its leaders executed. In the 1920's the centre of the anarchist and syndicalist movement shifted to Shanghai, where the anarchists and other non-communist workers' unions formed a Federation of Labour Unions in March 1924. It participated actively in a strike movement. But in 1927 control of the federation passed into the hands of members of the Guomindang. In 1926 anarchists and anarchosyndicalists formed a Federation of People's Struggle, which affiliated to the IWA; this organization ceased its existence under conditions of civil war towards the end of the 1920's.

In the majority of colonial countries of the Far East, where the social struggle was centred on the acquisition of independence for a national state, the anti-statist slogans of the anarchists were not widely disseminated. A group of revolutionary emigrants from India led by M. P. T. Acharya adopted anarchosyndicalist positions. The group tried to carry on work in Indian labour unions, but its propaganda was suppressed by the British colonial authorities. In Korea and Taiwan the anarchists, strongly influenced by their Japanese comrades, acted in the 1920's to create a number of unions and underground groups which were soon wiped out. Anarchist unions of Chinese workers were active in the 1920's in Malaya and in other countries of Southeast Asia.

In the postwar years the activity of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) increased – this was a special variety of the syndicalist movement. Like European syndicalists, its members embraced the idea of unions carrying out the revolution and running things themselves, and they applied the tactics of direct action and were critical of parliamentarism and political parties. However they rejected federalism and were in favour of creating "one big union" of all the workers with divisions according to various branches of industry.

Anarchists did not play a decisive role in the unions of the IWW, in fact activists of various leftist Marxists parties were

workers. In the most important union central of the country, Yu-Ai-Kai, the influence of the anarchists, revolutionary syndicalists, and adherents of Russian Bolshevism gained strength. At their insistence the congress of Yu-Ai-Kai in 1920 approved the principles of class struggle and direct action; in 1921 the union central was renamed the Japanese Federation of Labour (Sodomei). But already by 1922 a regroupment of forces in the workers' movement of the country took place. Reformist leaders of the union central and the communists came out in favour of a re-organization of the union movement on a sectoral basis, while the anarchists and the syndicalists who were close to them upheld federalist principles and the autonomy of labour unions. The libertarians left Sodomei, but a number of unions remained under their influence, including the printers, mechanics, metalworkers, electrical workers, and the regional association of unions of Tokyo. [

The association of anarchist unions of Japan was able to impede the repressions after the "great earthquake" of September 1923, in the course of which the leading anarcho- syndicalist Ōsugi Sakae was killed. Only in 1926 did a labour union central appear which approved the principles of anarchist communism – the All-Japanese Libertarian Federation of Trade Unions (Zenkoku Jiren). This federation existed until the mid-1930's, when it was annihilated by government persecutions.

In China the anarchists were the organizers of the first labour unions of the modern type in Guangzhou in the 1910's, and also organized the first strikes. At the beginning of the 1920's the workers' organizations of this city, being under the influence of anarchists (especially the dockers and service workers), were united in a Workers' Mutual Aid Society; however, in 1923-1924 it fell apart. In November 1920, on the initiative of anarchists a Society of Workers of the Province of Hunan was formed, uniting the workers of the most varied branches of heavy and light industry. It organized important demonstrations of textile workers, but in January 1922 it was

decisiveness of other parties and unions, the USI chose direct action… In order to put an end to the fascist strategy of systematic attacks in areas where level of antifascist and class struggle was high…, the USI encouraged the creation of armed volunteer groups of 'people's heroes'… and transformed their main 'houses of labour' into small fortresses, capable of withstanding attacks by fascist gangs." The syndicalists and anarchists responded to the fascist assault with proletarian class action – with strikes – but did not succeed in vanquishing the fascists, who were, for all intents and purposes, supported by the country's rightwing circles. It's true the struggle against the "blackshirts" led to an agreement between the Italian trade unions to create an "Alliance of Labour" which, in July 1922, declared a general antifascist strike. In a few cities (Parma, Bari, and others) this developed into an armed revolt. But the reformists also retreated on this occasion. "The fact remains that fascism… was able to become an irresistible force and, with the support of the tried and tested repressive apparatus of the monarchist State, it was able to sweep aside all obstacles in its path. The equivocal actions of the reformist Left, the sectarianism of the Communist Party, and the military and political unpreparedness of the revolutionary forces hastened the defeat of the workers' movement." Several months later (in October 1922) a government came to power headed by the fascist leader B. Mussolini. After the new regime was established, naked repression led to a destruction of all the local sections of the USI, and the mass arrest or emigration of the most energetic members of the organization, which was forced to restrict its activities to the underground.

The revolutionary workers' movement in Spain grew rapidly. New syndicates of the CNT sprang up everywhere.

By a decision taken at a Catalonian regional congress in July 1918, these syndicates were "integrated" at the local level, i.e. they were industrial rather than craft unions. The CNT already had more than one million members. A national conference

of anarchists in November 1918 urged all libertarians to join the CNT. In February 1919 as a sign of solidarity with striking workers at the "La Canadiense" company, the anarchist syndicalists launched a general strike – one of the largest and most successful in the history of the Spanish labour movement. It induced panic among the ruling classes. Even the declaration of martial law did not save the owners. The action ended with the complete triumph of the workers. The centre of the workers' struggle was Barcelona.

Large-scale events included a struggle against a lockout at the end of 1919, a general strike against repression in November 1920, and a strike of transport workers in 1923. The CNT had already started to collect statistical data which would allow it to run the economy smoothly after the forthcoming social revolution.

Then the ruling classes had recourse to a different tactic: they began to create "yellow" trade unions and terrorist gangs of "pistoleros," murdering activists of the workers' movement.

In December 1919 in an atmosphere of revolutionary enthusiasm, a congress of the CNT in Madrid announced as its goal the liquidation of the State and the establishing of libertarian (anarchist) communism, in other words, finally and officially rejecting the concept of "neutral syndicalism" and declaring the correctness of the tradition of the Bakuninist wing of the First International. In response to the unceasing wave of strikes the government unleashed systematic repression. The leading activists of the CNT were arrested, including the members of the Confederation's executive (in March 1921). The organization was deprived of its leadership and forced to go underground. In the spring of 1923 the prominent working class leaders Salvador Segui and F. Comas were murdered. The anarchists and syndicalists answered counterrevolutionary terror with strikes and armed actions. The stand-off continued until the dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera was installed in

living. In the midst of a wave of general strikes in 1919, which took on a revolutionary character, a Peruvian regional workers' federation sprang up; the government was compelled to agree with the demanded reduction in the length of the workday. The movement was destroyed by a military dictatorship in the middle 1930's, and influence in the trade unions shifted to communist party members and national-reformists. In Ecuador under the influence of anarchists a regional federation of workers appeared in 1922. In October – November of the same year, it organized the largest general strike in the history of the country in Guayaquil, in the course of which the city was for a time under the control of the workers. The harsh suppression of the strike dealt the movement a heavy blow from which it recovered somewhat only in the second half of the 1920's, when the anarcho-syndicalists were able to revive a number of labour unions.

In Cuba the anarchists and syndicalists predominated in the leadership of the Workers' Federation of Havana (1921) and the National Federation of Workers of Cuba (1925), up to the point when they were destroyed by the dictatorship of J. Machado in 1925-1927. It was this disaster, as the Cuban communists themselves have admitted, which allowed them to establish their control of the workers' movement of the country.

In the countries of Central America the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists for a time enjoyed an appreciable influence in organizations of the labour movement, including: the General Confederation of Labour of Costa Rica (1913- 1923), the Workers' Federation of Panama (1921-1923), the General Labour Union of the Workers of Panama (mid 1920's), the Regional Federation of Workers of Salvador, the Committee for Trade Union Activity of Guatemala (end of the 1920's), etc.1

The workers' movement in Japan became radicalized in a hurry in the first postwar years under the influence of the food riots of 1918 and the wave of strikes of 1919-1921, in the course of which methods of direct action were widely used by the

1920. The destruction of the anarchist workers' movement happened only after the army mutinies of 1924.

In Mexico the anarchists criticized the collaboration of working class leaders with government authorities, and also the pro-government policies of the trade union activists headed by Luis Morones, who founded the Mexican Regional Workers' Confederation (CROM) in May 1918. Anarchist and syndicalist groups convened a congress in 1921 in Mexico; at it the creation of the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) was announced. It was based on the unions of textile workers, streetcar conductors, telephone operators, oil field workers, etc. During the 1920's the anarcho-syndicalists led the strike struggle of these categories of wage workers. The confederation, which had a membership of about 60,000 workers, endorsed "libertarian communism." In Chile the anarchists and syndicalists worked in the Federation of Chilean Workers until 1921, making up its extreme left wing, but then the centre of attraction of anarchists became the Chilean section of the Industrial Workers of the World, formed in 1918-1919, which had a membership of over 25,000 members in 1920 – including dockers, seafarers, construction workers, shoemakers, etc. The Chilean IWW took an active part in actions against the high cost of living and shortages in food supplies. It also supported the student movement and was active until the installation of the military dictatorship of Carlos Ibáñez in 1927.

Anarcho-syndicalist union centrals occupied a leading position in the workers' movement in a number of other countries of Latin America. The regional workers' centre of Paraguay headed a strike movement, including a strike of electrical workers and a general strike in Ascención in 1923-1924. In Bolivia the Local Labour Federation of La Paz (founded in 1918) and the syndicalist miners' union launched a desperate strike struggle. Peruvian anarcho-syndicalists (in particular, stevedores, bakers, textile workers, etc.) continued a stubborn struggle for the inauguration of the 8-hour day and against the rising cost of

September 1923 and independent trade union activity was prohibited.

In Portugal the UON, in which the revolutionary syndicalists now predominated, organized a successful general strike in the Lisbon region in support of construction workers, offering armed resistance to the police and the national guard. The federation of construction workers called for an armed revolt in the course of a new general strike planned for November 1918 which had been announced by the UON.

The failure of this revolt did not discourage the workers. In 1919 protests of workers against the rising cost of living and unemployment continued. In some sectors of the economy there were breakthroughs in gaining the 8-hour workday. A workers' congress in September 1919 transformed the UON into a united organization of the Portuguese workers – the General Confederation of Labour (CGT). The principles of revolutionary syndicalism were enshrined in its articles.

All the tendencies in the Confederation were in agreement that pure trade unionism was insufficient. The Portuguese CGT included not only trade unions but, starting from 1922, also students and artists, tenants' associations, consumer cooperatives, and "groups of syndicalist solidarity." The number of members of the CGT, which reached 120,000 – 150,000 in 1919, had fallen somewhat by 1922 but the organization as before still united the majority of organized workers in the country. However its activities to a significant degree were spontaneous in character. They consisted usually in the organization of a sudden tide of protest which soon ebbed without being channeled into building a strong organization and solidarity between workers (although many strikes were carried out successfully, and in February 1924 the largest workers' demonstration in Portuguese history took place with more than 100,000 participants).

A rebirth of the revolutionary workers' movement began also in France. The dampening of the strike movement by the

reformist leadership of the French CGT ignited the trade union opposition grouped around P. Monatte and the newspaper Vie ouvriere. This opposition was strengthened at the congress of the CGT in September 1919, and it formed its own coordinating body and it started setting up "Revolutionary Syndicalist Committees" (CRS), trying to establish its influence in individual unions and "bourses de travail."

It succeeded in consolidating its position in the union of railway workers. At the beginning of 1920 the country was paralyzed by railroad strikes. The revolutionary syndicalists organized a general strike for May 1, which was joined by metalworkers, construction workers, dockers, and miners.

But the hopes this insurgency would grow into revolution were not realized. In September 1921 at a conference of the opposition in Lyon a Central Committee of the CRS was created, headed by P. Monatte. In December 1921 at a congress in Paris the revolutionary syndicalists announced their split from the CGT and in July 1922 at a congress in Saint-Étienne they created the new "Unitarian CGT" (CGTU).

Anarchists and syndicalists were active in the workers' movements of some other European countries. The membership of SAC in Sweden reached 32,000 workers in 1920, chiefly bricklayers, construction workers, workers in the forestry and paper industries, and metalworkers. Although it remained small in comparison with the social-democratic union movement, it participated in a broad range of post- war strikes. The syndicalist federation of Norway and Danish syndicalists had close connections with SAC. The Netherlands Labour Secretariat (NAS) strengthened its own position during the war years, thanks to its energetic support of the movement against military service and the high cost of living, and engaged in a wave of strikes and protests in the first post-war years. Its membership grew to 49,000 in 1918 but as before it was smaller than unions of a socialdemocratic or clerical persuasion. The failure of strike actions in 1920-1922 led to a shrinkage in the membership (by the autumn of 1922 the NAS was down to 26,000 members) and favoured the intensification of internal disagreements.

In other regions of Europe, despite the presence of a strong anarchist movement (Bulgaria) or a definite syndicalist tendency in the union movement (Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Belgium), in the postwar years it did not prove possible to create an anarcho-syndicalist union central.

The revolutionary wave which began in Russia, coupled with the postwar economic difficulties, inspired a powerful expansion in working class actions in Argentina, in which the FORA and its member unions played a leading role. The most important of these actions were the general strike in Buenos Aires in January 1919, which was accompanied by battles at the barricades and harsh repressions ("the tragic week"), a general strike in the capital in May 1920, and a strike and revolt of agricultural labourers in Patagonia (1921) which was suppressed by government troops with great cruelty. The Uruguayan FORU in 1917-1921 virtually headed the strike movement in the country, organizing a series of stubborn general and local strikes. In Brazil the anarchists even during the war period were at the epicentre of the movement against militarism and increases in food prices due to profiteering. Massive general strikes took place in 1917 in São Paulo, Santos, and Rio de Janeiro. In the course of the struggle the workers were able to achieve significant concessions and the adoption of labour legislation. In November 1918 the anarchists of Rio de Janeiro rose in revolt, intending to overthrow the government and proclaim a "communist republic." The uprising was suppressed, and the government smashed the pro-anarchist workers' federation of the state, which included as many as 150,000 workers.

However the anarchists still maintained their position in the workers' movement which was confirmed by the outcome of the 3rd congress of the Brazilian workers' confederation in

the hands of the fascists. The enemy was established in Aragon, at the very gates of Catalonia. The real state of our foes was unknown to us – whether on the national or the international level." The activists of the CNT did not risk taking the path of independent revolutionary action, dreading the prospect of war on three fronts: against the fascists, the government, and possibly foreign interventionists. In other words, the majority of the activists believed it was premature to talk about social revolution on a country-wide scale, while libertarian communism in Catalonia alone was inevitably doomed.

Nevertheless, the real situation of things was far from being as hopeless as it seemed to the Catalan anarchosyndicalists, who were probably still living in the shadow of the defeat of the insurrections of 1932-1933. This time it was not a case of an isolated local outbreak. The socialrevolutionary movement spread throughout Catalonia and parts of Aragon and Valencia, and the way to Andalusia was open. In other words, the economically pivotal industrial and agrarian regions of the Iberian peninsula had fallen into the hands of the revolutionaries. In such a situation it was possible to risk "going to the end." "In the given case," wrote the contemporary Spanish anarchosyndicalist Abel Paz, "we believe the question of power was decided in too much of a hurry, and this haste prevented taking into account "the whole significance of the Revolution," as the report [of the CNT] made clear. If the proposals of García Oliver had been accepted, then the problem of Revolution would undoubtedly have been cleared up at the grass roots level." But now the anarcho-syndicalists lost valuable time and conceded the initiative to their enemies.

Finally, there was still one factor which García Oliver mentions casually in his memoirs: the delegates gathered hurriedly, not previously being aware about what they were to discuss. In other words, they adopted a decision at the plenum without having instructions from the unions and other organizations they were representing. This was the first serious violation of

international syndicalist bureaus created in 1920 and 1922 in the Netherlands and Germany.

Altogether these organizations accounted for roughly two million members. The 14th annual convention of the American IWW declared it did not intend to affiliate with either the Profintern or the syndicalist International, since neither one were suitable for it.

All the delegates, except the representatives of the Netherlands NAS, rejected the "concessions" of the Bolsheviks and participation in the Profintern. The creation of a new, anarchosyndicalist International was announced. By way of a motion proposed by the Italian Alibrando Giovanetti, as a symbol of continuity the new organization took the historical name of the First International – the "International Workers' Association" (IWA). The declaration of principles of the IWA ("Principles of revolutionary syndicalism") in essence repeated the basic positions of the Berlin declaration of June 1922. Elected to the Secretariat of the IWA in Berlin were R. Rocker, A. Souchy, and A. Shapiro.

The records of the congress contain harsh condemnations not only of capitalism and the reformism of social-democracy, but also of the Bolshevist "State socialism." The delegates accused Bolshevism of suppressing revolution in Russia and creating a new state-capitalist system, in which the workers of the USSR remained exploited as wage workers. "Forcibly destroying with relentless consistency all institutions which arose out of the people's initiative, namely soviets, co-operatives, etc., in order to subject the masses to a newly created class of commissar-rulers, [Bolshevism] paralyzed the creative activity of the masses and gave birth to a new despotism, stifling any kind of free thought and confining the spiritual life of the country to the banal party mold," according to the appeal "To Working People of All Countries and Nationalities." The so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat – a fig leaf for Bolshevist reaction – had proven itself able to stabilize the rule of a new upper

stratum over the broad masses of the people and condemn to death revolutionaries of all tendencies, but was incapable of guiding the economic and social life of the country on a new path and carrying out really constructive work in the spirit of socialism."

As R. Rocker explained later, for anarcho-syndicalists the Bolsheviks were the heirs of "the absolutist trend of thought in socialism," a special kind of "socialist Jacobins," i.e. essentially they were revolutionaries who were political rather than social, and bourgeois rather than proletarian.

In spite of this harsh critique of Bolshevism, some syndicalists still believed in the possibility of coming to an arrangement with the Profitern about a "united front" of the revolutionary proletariat. A corresponding draft resolution was introduced at the Berlin congress by the French delegation.

A majority of the other participants did not exhibit any great enthusiasm for this project, but went along with this idea so as not to complicate the situation of the French comrades. The FORA emphatically objected to such a compromise and abstained from voting on the resolution.

The creation of the IWA was officially confirmed at congresses or referenda of its sections. In Europe affiliation to the IWA was speedily approved by the FAUD, USI, SAC, and CNT. At a referendum in Norway the creation of the International was approved unanimously, and in Portugal (October 1924) 104 syndicates declared for the IWA, six for the Profintern. In the Netherlands, the communists and other supporters of the Profintern were able to gain a slight majority in a referendum of syndicates, and IWA members organized a new trade union central – the Netherlands Syndicalist Trade Union Federation (NSV). Also declaring its affiliation to the IWA was the Revolutionary-Syndicalist CGT (CGT-SR), finally splitting from the French CGTU.

demonstrate that we can build libertarian socialism, the future will belong, just like before, to the sort of politics which came out of the French Revolution – starting with a bunch of political parties and ending with one." García Oliver also criticized attempts to "sow fear," emphasizing that the Revolution could deal with interventionists as well as the mutiny. García Oliver repeated his call to declare libertarian communism and "carry things through to the end."

After everyone had spoken, Abad de Santillan officially stated the alternatives: endorse membership in the CCMA or declare libertarian communism. The question was put to a vote; only the delegation from Baja Llobregat voted for declaring libertarian communism; the rest of the delegates were in favour of "anti-fascist co-operation." The decision adopted took the view that the Revolution was going through an "antifascist stage," that libertarian communism was inappropriate, and that at the present time it was necessary to consolidate the "antifascist front which was taking shape in the street."

What had caused such a major volte-face on the part of the CNT, essentially discarding the program of action which it had adopted just two months before these events?

The decision upheld by the Catalan CNT not to declare libertarian communism and to enter into collaboration with other antifascist forces (socialists, communists, and republicans) was, as many anarcho-syndicalists recognized later, the result of a hasty evaluation of a complex situation.

Victorious only in Catalonia, the libertarians did not feel sure of themselves in other regions of the country. "We agreed to cooperate," said the CNT's report to the IWA Congress in 1937, "Why? The Levant [Valencia] was defenseless and vacillating – its barracks were full of putschists. In Madrid our forces were in the minority. Andalusia was in a confused state, with groups of workers, badly armed with hunting rifles, carrying on the struggle in the mountains. The situation in the North remained uncertain, and the rest of Spain was presumably in

The Nosotros member García Oliver, speaking for his group, supported the demand from Baja Llobregat. He called for the errors which had been committed to be rectified and for the social revolution to be carried through to the end: the CCMA should be dissolved and libertarian communism established throughout the whole country. Speaking against these proposals were the well known FAI activists Federica Montseny, Abad de Santillan, and the secretary of the Catalan CNT Mariano Vasquez. Montseny urged that events not be forced since, in her opinion, this would lead to the establishment of an anarchist dictatorship which would be in contradiction to the essence of anarchism. She proposed to have recourse to concessions: to take part in the CCMA, and then – after the final defeat of the military mutineers – withdraw from this organ and return to the work of creating an anarchist society. Abad de Santillan pronounced in favour of participation in the "Committee of Militias," and stressed that global capitalism would not permit libertarian communism in Spain and would have recourse to military intervention. He warned against war on two fronts and called for "deferring" libertarian communism to the future.

Vasquez, speaking at the second session of the plenum, argued that even by not "carrying things through to the end," the CNT could still rule from the street, depending on its own real strength. Consequently he considered it worthwhile to remain in the CCMA and avoid a dictatorship.

In the course of subsequent discussions, the delegation from Baja Llobregat stood firm on their proposals, and García Oliver attempted to refute the arguments of his opponents. He denied accusations of wanting a "trade unionist" or "anarchist" dictatorship and urged that a decision be made right away so as not to leave a vacuum which could be used by the enemies of the Revolution, as had happened in Russian in 1917. "I am convinced that syndicalism, both in Spain and in the rest of the world, finds itself faced with the act of proclaiming its values openly to humanity and to history," he insisted. "If we don't

During the 1920's and 1930's sections and groups of adherents of the IWA also appeared in Austria, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Poland, and Rumania.

In America, affiliation with the IWA was also confirmed by a congress of the Mexican General Confederation of Labour (CGT) in December 1923. A congress of the FORA, extremely unhappy with the resolution adopted in Berlin about "revolutionary unity," decided in March 1923 to join the anarcho-syndicalist International conditionally and to hold a referendum on this matter. But then, after the contentious resolution was repealed, the objection against participation in the IWA was removed. Also joining the IWA were anarcho-syndicalists from Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Columbia, Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador, Cuba, Costa Rica, and El Salvador (in May 1929 an American continental association of workers was created as a section of the IWA). Sections also sprang up in Japan and China. In the U.S.A. the Marine Transport Workers Industrial Union of the IWW affiliated with the IWA.

Chapter 7: The World Anarcho-Syndicalist Movement in the 1920's and 1930's

The International Association of Workers was reconstituted at a moment when the global revolutionary wave had already begun to subside. Many of its sections were soon subjected to harsh repression and were crushed. In Italy after the regime of Mussolini took power, the activity of local branches of the USI was paralyzed already by April 1924.

Going underground, the labour federation re-organized and was able to lead a number of significant strikes (miners in Valdarno and on Elba), marble workers in Carrara, and metalworkers).

But by 1927 the USI had finally been destroyed, its leading activists either arrested or forced to emigrate.

In Portugal after the installation of a military dictatorship, the CGT tried to organize a general strike in February 1927. The strike was suppressed, nearly 100 people were killed, many activists were arrested, and the CGT was outlawed. It succeeded in re-organizing its forces underground and re-established a number of unions and branches of the federation. In 1929-1930 the organization had 32 unions with 15,000-20,000 members, and by 1934 it included seven federations. The Portuguese anarcho-syndicalists continued a tenacious struggle against unemployment and the high cost of living, for the 8-hour day, and the right for unions to exist. In January 1934 decrees of the Salazar government about replacing unions with corporations

delegation of anarcho-syndicalists from the working class area of Baja Llobregat led by José Xena objected strongly to collaborating with the government, but did not want to support García Oliver and was inclined to support Escorza's point of view. The debate was turbulent, at times bitter. In the end a decision was arrived at which was provisional in nature: to send an armed delegation to meet with Companys for the purpose of exchanging information.

Receiving the delegation of the CNT and FAI, Companys congratulated the anarchists on their victory and expressed his willingness to resign. But he then tried to convince them they would not be able to manage without traditional political forces. He reminded the libertarians that the battle with fascism was far from won and required a broad coalition of antifascist forces. Companys proposed to form a coalition organ with the participation of the anarcho-syndicalists – a "Committee of Militias" with the mission of organizing the final defeat of the rebels. The anarchist delegation explained it lacked the authority to make an agreement with him, but would transmit his proposal to their own organizations. Without waiting for the agreement of the CNT, Companys issued a declaration about the creation of popular militias and the corresponding chief organ made up of people close to him. The Regional Committee of the CNT, after listening to the reports of García Oliver and Durruti about the meeting, resolved to contact Companys and let him know the CNT could offer provisional support for the creation of such an organ, but that the final decision would have to come from a regional plenum of the Catalan CNT.

At the regional conference (plenum of local organizations) of the Catalan CNT on July 21 1936, the delegation from Baja Llobregat proposed to withdraw from the newlycreated Central Committee of Antifascist Militias (CCMA) and proclaim libertarian communism, as stipulated in the decisions, principles, and ideological goals of the organization.

reformist group, the "Treintistas." A significant part of this fraction quit the CNT, but returned to it in 1936.

However, besides the "Treintistas" there remained a substantial number of "pure" syndicalists in the union federation as well as members who were simply pragmatically inclined. To a certain extent, this was a consequence of the contradictory organizational vision of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism, which tried to combine anarchist goals and social ideals with the revolutionary syndicalist principle of trade unions being open "to all workers," independently of their convictions.

The membership of the CNT were far from being made up entirely of conscious anarchists; this was particularly true of those who had joined during the period of the Republic (from 1931 on). These partisans of a pragmatic approach could be relied upon by those activists and members of the executive organs of the CNT who preferred to avoid risky, "extremist" decisions.

On July 20 1936 the president of the Generalitat, Companys, made contact with the Catalan Regional Committee of the CNT and invited its representatives to a meeting to discuss the situation emerging after the suppression of the "fascist mutiny" of the military. A plenary assembly of delegates of the CNT unions, committees, and FAI groups was convened to analyze this proposal. The opinions of the participants diverged right from the start. Their spectrum extended from the proposal of García Oliver, a member of the Nosotros group, to declare libertarian communism; to the position of Abad de Santillan, who spoke in favour of uniting with other antifascist forces. An intermediate position was maintained by those who, like Manuel Escorza, proposed for the time being a "hands off" policy towards the government of Companys, not making any agreements with him, but setting about carrying out the socialization of the economy and thereby depriving him of any real power. Escorza declared real power was found in the hands of the CNT; consequently, political power could be ignored. The

of the fascist type were greeted by the CGT with a "general revolutionary strike" and an uprising. The revolt suffered defeat. The heroic resistance of the Portuguese workers could not avert the destruction of the CGT.

In Argentina the FORA towards the end of the 1920's had a membership, according to various sources, somewhere between 40,000 and 100,000 and conducted successful general and localized strikes, achieving the implementation of the 6-hour work day. However a military coup in 1930 and the subsequent persecution dealt a heavy blow to the organization, from which it was unable to recover.

In Germany, after the downturn of the revolutionary movement in 1923, the membership of the FAUD began to fall sharply: in 1929 it still had 9,500 members, but under conditions of catastrophic mass unemployment this number decreased to 6,600 in 1931 and 4,300 in 1932. This small organization was no longer able to conduct strikes independently.

It carried on active cultural work and campaigns for the boycotting of elections, and participated in strikes organized by the reformist labour unions in order to impart to them a more radical character. Emphasizing direct action and strikes of solidarity, it tried to oppose the onslaught of Nazism. After Hitler took power, the FAUD continued to resist underground until the second half of the 1930's.

The headquarters of the IWA in Berlin was seized by the Nazis and the members of the Secretariat barely succeeded in fleeing Germany.

As a result of massive government repression anarchosyndicalist unions were destroyed in Peru, Brazil (after 1930), Columbia, Japan (in the mid 1930's), Cuba (after 1925-1927), Bulgaria (the Confederation of Labour which appeared at the beginning of the 1930's had been wiped out by the end of the decade), and the countries of Central America. In Paraguay and Bolivia activities of the anarcho-syndicalist workers' organizations were banned during the Chaco War (1932- 1935) and

subsequently were not able to attain their previous level. The French section was also unable to acquire a mass character. The great crisis of 1929-1933, accompanied by the growth of nationalist and statist sentiments, significantly weakened the movement in the majority of other countries.

In Mexico the leadership of the CGT collaborated with the national-reformist government, accepting the principle of arbitration of labour disputes by the State; the Confederation quit the anarcho-syndicalist International. By the end of the 1930's legal anarcho-syndicalist trade union associations existed only in Chile (General Confederation of Workers, 1931), Bolivia (Local Federation of La Paz), and Uruguay (FORU); the FORA operated in the underground.

The main stronghold of anarcho-syndicalism remained Spain where, following the fall of the monarchy in 1931, a vigorous growth of the strength and influence of the CNT took place. "From all sides, from Germany, Poland, France, and other countries where there are IWA sections, the Secretariat receives communications about the existing state of mind, which … it is possible to express in the following form: 'International fascism has destroyed our revolutionary movement in most countries… Only in one country do we entertain hope that the social revolution can overcome it [fascist reaction, – V. D.] – in Spain'," – wrote members of the IWA Secretariat in a message to the CNT in June 1934.

At the first legal congress of the labour federation in 1931, more than 500,000 members were represented and a few years later the number of members exceeded one million.

During the first year and a half of the republic's existence, 30 general and 3,600 localized strikes were organized, mainly by the CNT. The peasantry, organized by the anarcho-syndicalists, seized land from the estate owners, demanding socialization, on a massive scale. In 1932-1933 a wave of local revolutionary uprisings rolled across the country: members of the CNT seized control of population centres and proclaimed libertarian

be possible only when the CNT represented an overwhelming majority of the workers in the whole of Spain, or when the CNT had created an all-embracing union structure which was prepared to take over the management of the whole economy in the course of a social revolution. There were radical anarchists in the CNT (the Nosotros group and others who shared its views) who took a different position. They considered that the readiness of the masses for revolution was first and foremost a matter of psychology, and that this readiness would develop under the conditions of an ongoing revolutionary situation. They also did not make much of an effort to theorize and explain the moment of qualitative change. Moreover, the CNT frequently emphasized that in Spain the alternatives were clear: fascism or libertarian communism – and the appropriate response to a fascist putsch was social revolution.1 There was also a lack of clarity concerning relations with the other large union federation – the UGT, which was controlled by the Socialist Party. On the one hand, the anarcho-syndicalists expressed their desire for an "alliance" with the UGT; but on the other hand, at the Zaragoza congress they approved the conditions for such a pact which would require the UGT to repudiate the Socialist Party and adopt a position of social revolution.

All this created uncertainty. That is why at the very moment when events in Barcelona, in practically the whole of Catalonia, and partly in other regions of the country, "gifted" the anarchists with that for which they had struggled and dreamed for decades, they found themselves unprepared to make use of this "gift."

One must also take note of the fact that the CNT had always harboured reformist tendencies which from time to time took control of the organization. Thus, Pestaña and Piero, who headed the CNT at the end of the 1920's and the beginning of the 1930's, supported close contacts with republican political organizations, and in 1931-1932 became the leaders of a

Chapter 10: Libertarian Communism or Anti-Fascist Unity?

Theoretically the relationship of the Spanish anarchosyndicalists to the question of power was determined long before July 1936. The Spanish anarchist (libertarian) movement from its very beginning in the 1870's preached the simultaneous annihilation of Capitalism and the State by means of social revolution, and the transition to a stateless system – a federation of free communes and workers' unions. A plan of action in a situation of social revolution had been outlined by the end of 1933, just before a planned uprising against a right-wing government which had just acceded to power. Guidelines for building a new society were enshrined in the Zaragoza Program ("The Conception of Libertarian Communism") of 1936.

In spite of having a more or less clear idea about what had to be done at the moment of revolution, the Spanish anarchosyndicalist movement paradoxically was unable to pin down the criteria for determining the "ripeness" of a society for social transformation. In other words: how does one establish if the time is right to start implementing a blueprint for building a new society? The CNT in July 1936 was not able to find an unambiguous answer to this question. "The Conception of Libertarian Communism" talked about the revolutionary character of the epoch as a whole, but was rather vague when it came to the moment of revolution itself. Within the CNT there had long existed a belief that a genuine social revolution would

communism. The authorities were able to suppress the movement only with difficulty. Thousands of people were killed or arrested, but the influence of anarchosyndicalism in Spain continued to grow.

Confronted with aggressive reaction, the anarchosyndicalists had to deal with a series of tactical questions. First of all, an IWA plenum at Innsbruck (December 1923) once and for all condemned the actions of the Bolsheviks, repealed the concessions made to the French syndicalists at the constitutional congress, and rejected the possibility of a united front with the communist parties. The second congress of the IWA (1925) confirmed its negative attitude towards all political parties which were regarded as tools in the struggle for power, rather than for freedom. Any long-term alliance with political parties was impossible, for this would contradict the goals of the IWA. Participants at the congress perceived fascism and Bolshevism as "reaction of a new type," resorting to naked tyranny and massive repression. The congress expressed the conviction that it was necessary to defend civil and union freedoms as conquests of the workers, but not as part of a democratic system which was liable to be overthrown along with capitalism.

Anarcho-syndicalists should act independently and not make official alliances with anyone else even if, in the course of struggling with fascist and military dictatorships, they happened to "cross paths with other political forces."

In the struggle with Bolshevism any kind of collaboration with other forces was impermissible. It was noted that the liberal bourgeoisie, when confronted with a threat to their own rule, was always prepared to transfer power to dictators.

Therefore the struggle with dictatorship must not be carried on in such way as to strengthen democracy as a system of government. The best means of struggle with dictatorship, according to a resolution of the congress, is the class struggle of the workers. More or less the same tone was displayed in a resolution adopted at the 4th Congress (1931). The IWA

was oriented, in the first instance, to working together with other groups with similar views (anarchist federations and groups, anti-militarists, etc.), but also permitted practical co-operation for concrete goals with other labour unions, supporting strikes and conducting solidarity campaigns. The IWA frequently made approaches to Internationals of socialdemocratic and communist labour unions about mutually organizing boycotts of fascist and dictatorial states and the goods produced in them, and trying to stop the delivery of raw materials from other countries in the case of strikes, etc. At the beginning of the 1930's the struggle with fascist reaction became even more urgent for anarcho-syndicalists, but they endeavoured in dealing with the problem to adhere to their social-revolutionary line. In the appeal issued by the IWA for May 1 1932 it was said that "in a number of countries in the immediate future the question will arise: revolution or fascism?" [158] In 1933 the anarcho-syndicalist International called for a global boycott of Nazi Germany.

The Spanish and Swedish sections worked out plans to avoid handling German goods and vessels, accompanied by consumer boycotts – this idea was also supported in Holland.

But the French section expressed opposition, fearing such actions could be exploited by Hitlerian propaganda. Repression against the CNT at the end of 1933 finally put an end to these plans. In their attempts to oppose international reaction, the anarcho-syndicalists did not put their faith in social-democrats and communists and boycotted their "antifascist" and "anti-militarist" congresses. After the proposal by the communists about the creation of a "United Front," the Secretariat of the IWA queried the sections, but ended up sharply rejecting the idea (only the FAUD, already being in emigration, supported the notion of a "united front against fascism"). In May 1934, the Secretariat issued a declaration once more rejecting any possibility of organizing a "united front." A corresponding res-

this power: whether to destroy it, take it into their own hands, or hand it over to others.

In Barcelona the revolutionary committees, which grew out of the neighbourhood committees of defense of the CNT and "barricade committees," occupied themselves with street-level organizing – arranging food and other services, and maintaining order. In many villages, immediately after the failure of the military mutiny, the inhabitants removed the local administration, and a revolutionary committee, elected at a general meeting, took over administrative as well as economic functions. Often the revolutionary com- mittees immediately applied themselves to such revolutionary measures as the burning of all documents about private ownership; the confiscation of the land, buldings, crops, and inventory of big landowners; the conversion of churches into storage facilities; the collectivization of land, and the organization of a volunteer militia.

Of course it was not only the anarcho-syndicalists who took part in the formation of popular organs. There were also other workers, mainly rank-and-file members of the other trade union central – the General Union of Workers (UGT) – which was oriented towards the Socialist Party Consequently, the composition of these organs reflected the correlation of forces between the CNT, the UGT, and other forces.

In any case, the power of the State ceased to function over a significant part of the territory of Spain. The central government of the Republic in Madrid was completely discredited by its inability to oppose the military mutiny and lost all its authority. The regional government of Catalonia (the Generalitat) headed by Luis Companys controlled only its own building. Local administrations were either removed or neutralized. The army and police were either disbanded or destroyed. Barcelona was controlled by workers' militias, primarily anarcho-syndicalist in composition. "… power was lying in the street, and it was embodied by the people armed," noted the contemporary researcher Abel Paz. The anarcho-syndicalists, who now enjoyed a dominant influence among the workers of Catalonia, were confronted by a decision about what to do with

olution, proposed by the French section, was passed at the 5th Congress of the IWA in Paris (1935).

Chapter 8: Ideological-Theoretical Discussions in Anarcho-syndicalism in the 1920's-1930's

In spite of heavy defeats in a majority of countries, the repressions of dictators, and the politics of communists aimed at subverting the anarcho-syndicalist movement, the period of the 1920's and 1930's was a time of lively ideological-theoretical discussions among anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists. The participants in these discussions not only put forth a penetrating analysis of contemporary capitalist society, but also described the contours of a social alternative with great insight.

In all the documents and decisions of the IWA there is emphasis on the basis of unity of anarcho-syndicalists: their common goal (libertarian communism, free socialism) and their common principles and methods of struggle (direct action up to and including social revolution). However within this framework there existed significant divergences within the world anarcho-syndicalist movement. "We are well aware that within organizations and, even more so, within an international association of various national organizations, it is impossible to arrange complete harmony," said R. Rocker at the 2nd Congress of the IWA in Amsterdam in 1925. "On the other hand, we even

ants seized the land from its owners. In many regions they agreed to carry on agricultural work on a group basis – by forming "collectives." In regions such as Aragon and Andalusia, the anarchists had carried on agitation among the village population over a period of many decades. "In those most backward regions to which they were sent," according to [URL=/tags/gaston-leval] Gaston Leval, an eye-witness, participant, and researcher of these events, "our comrades joined in working in the fields and were able to communicate more advanced technical ideas, and teach the children to read. The result was that the Good News [anarchism] penetrated into the socially most backward areas of the countryside." The German anarchosyndicalist Augustin Souchy told the story of an anarchist from the Aragonese village of Munesa, who worked for a long time in Barcelona, and then went back to his native village and acquainted the peasants with libertarian ideas. Under his influence his fellow-villagers organized a collective – a free commune. "A Spanish edition of Kropotkin's book The Conquest of Bread lay on the table. In the evenings members of the collective would gather, and one of them would read the book out loud. This was the new Gospel."

During the first days of the Revolution, new structures of social self-management appeared, spontaneously formed by revolutionary workers and peasants in enterprises, village communes, and urban neighbourhoods. At the base of these structures one always found general meetings ("assemblies") of the residents or of the labour collective. They elected revolutionary committees, committees or councils of enterprises, councils of soldiers and sailors, etc. to carry out routine, coordinating, technical, and executive functions. The members of the committees acted within a framework where they were obligated to carry out the orders of the assembly which elected them, and could be recalled at any moment. All important decisions of the committees were adopted only in accordance with the wishes of the collective of the commune.

banks and monasteries and burned the money confiscated as a symbol of the hated Capitalism. Items from pawn shops were returned to the people who had been compelled to pawn them. The labour unions (syndicates) confiscated large government and privately-owned buildings and set up their headquarters in them. At the majority of industrial enterprises, in transportation, and in social services, general meetings of worker collectives took place which elected management committees, most of the members of which were representatives of the CNT. Such a seizure of production units by a collective received the name "collectivization." In several sectors (woodworking in Barcelona, bakeries, railway transport, and others the collectivization of industry went on to the next stage of socialization: the whole production process from start to finish was subject to the self-management of workers, who created the appropriate organs. Within a few days life in Barcelona had already normalized: transport was running, enterprises were working, shops were open, and communications systems were operating. Researchers concur that all the revolutionary measures and the normalization of daily living were, basically, the spontaneous actions of workers belong to the CNT; the corresponding orders had not been issued by some higher committee of the union federation. Initiatives most often came from rank-and-file members of the unions (syndicates) of the CNT or from front-line anarcho-syndicalist and anarchist activists.

"… the proletariat of Catalonia," according to Andre Capdevilla, a member of a CNT syndicate of textile workers, "was saturated with anarcho-syndicalist revolutionary propaganda. Over a period of many decades the notion had taken root among the workers that they should make the most of any opportunity to carry out the Revolution. So they acted as soon as the possibility presented itself."

The Revolution also took hold in other cities (above all, in Catalonia), and also rural areas (in Catalonia, parts of Aragon, Andalusia, and Valencia). In regions with large estates the peas-

consider that different opinions on certain questions within one and the same organization can serve a useful purpose by assisting spiritual development and encouraging independent judgement. We have seen this occurring in the IWA."

The experience of the Russian Revolution and the outbreaks of revolution after World War I had made a deep impression on the views of libertarians about contemporary society and the alternative to it. It was in this period that so-called "anarchist revisionism" developed. In Italy E. Malatesta and [URL=/tags/camillo-berneri] Camillo Berneri acted as its propagandists.

The former, long known as one of the leading theoreticians of anarcho-communism, while not renouncing his basic ideological principles, now believed as a result of the Russian experience that "for the organization on a broad scale of a communist society one must radically transform the whole of economic life – the means of production, exchange, and consumption – and this can only be done one step at a time." He believed that during the course of a revolution, anarchists would find themselves in a minority at first and ought not to impose their own ideas and concepts on the whole of society. Revolutions, in his opinion, were liable to lead to the emergence of a pluralistic society, composed of a multitude of communes bound together by communistic, but also commercial, relations.1 Berneri advanced the notion of the coexistence of different economic forms in an anarchist society. "All anarchists are atheists, but I'm an agnostic," he wrote, "All anarchists are communists, but I'm a liberal, that is, I'm for free competition between co-operative and individual labour and trade."2

Some anarchists, trying to figure out why the Bolsheviks gained victory in the Russian Revolution, came to the conclusion there was something to be learned from the Bolsheviks in the field of tactics and organization. Thus, the "Platformists" (a group led by [URL=/tags/nestor-makhno] Nestor Makhno and Petr Arshinov) took a position for the acknowledgement

of the principle of class struggle in history, and for the creation of a strong organization of anarchists (in fact – a type of party) which could take part as a unitary force in Soviets and in the trade union movement, and play a leading ideological and constructive role in the revolution. Essentially, the "platformists" allowed for stages in the revolutionary process and the fulfilment of governmental functions by soviets. They maintained that in the productive system of the future society decentralization and integration of labour would be technical questions, subject to needs of a unified economy, rather than questions of principle. In fact they adopted the industrial form of organizing production, proposing only to get rid of private ownership and hand over control of production to Factory Committees. A significant number of anarchists (Vsevolod Volin and other Russian emigrants, E. Malatesta, Sebastien Faure) subjected such positions to criticism, considering them a departure from anti-authoritarian principles and the values of libertarian communism.

Another argument against the immediate implementation of anarchist communism is that the notion of a free commune is in contradiction to "the real spirit and tendencies" of the industrial stage of development of society with its striving for universality and increasing specialization. For example, the well known historian of anarchism, Max Nettlau, criticized the "rural-industrial atomization of humanity in anarcho-communism and declared: "Decentralization … creates something just the opposite to solidarity and multiplies the sources of friction and stress. Our hopes for improvement are based on building solidarity, in federating larger units, and breaking down local barriers and boundaries, and in the collective control of the natural resources and other forms of wealth of our planet." At the same time, he assumed that the principles of "collectivism" (distribution according to labour) and monetary compensation for labour were more compatible with the industrial form of organizing production.

Chapter 9: The Uprising of July 19th 1936

The uprising was prepared and organized by "committees of defense" which were created in Barcelona's working class neighbourhoods from members of the CNT, the Federation of Anarchists of Iberia (FAI), and Libertarian Youth. The most active role in the uprising was played by members of one of the anarchist groups – Nosotros (Buenaventura Durruti, Francisco Ascaso, Juan García Oliver, Ricardo Sanz, Aurelio Fernandez, and others), which constituted something like a Central Revolutionary Committee of Defense.

The army mutiny in Barcelona was suppressed. But the workers did not limit themselves to simple clashes with army units. They spontaneously began to carry out the social revolution: they seized enterprises and introduced workers' selfmanagement; they took supply, transport, and social services into their own hands; they organized a new life. The CNT union of food industry workers opened communal cafeterias where people could eat for free. Even during the fighting, in each working class quarter of the city food committees were organized to arrange the requisition of food products from warehouses and to set up the exchange of manufactured goods for food with the peasantry. Market commerce and the money system were replaced to a significant extent by non-monetary exchange. The food supplies acquired in these exchanges was distributed according to norms established by the committees. Clothing and other consumer goods were distributed through shops and stores. There were instances where workers raided

Part 3: The Spanish Revolution

The heated discussions and quarrels about the trajectories of social revolution which were carried on in the IWA to some extent served as a continuation of the polemics between anarcho-communists and syndicalists at the beginning of the century. One group were in favour not only of the elimination of Capitalism and the State, but also for the demolition of the industrial system itself with its factory despotism, rigid division of labour, and dehumanizing technology. A second group welcomed industrial-technological progress and hoped to construct a socialist society using it as a base.

Their quarrel was closely connected with the analysis of the latest trends in the development of Capitalism itself – its rationalization of production in its Fordist-Taylorist phase.

This stage of industrial development was accompanied by the introduction of mechanization and conveyor technology on a massive scale, dividing the labour process into a series of operations and severely undermining control on the part of the worker, who lost the sense of the integrity and meaning of their own labour, but in exchange acquired the possibility of mass consumption.

The problems of "capitalist rationalization" were first dealt with at the 3rd Congress of the IWA in Liège in 1928.

The delegates declared themselves in favour of "progress in all fields of endeavour," but considered its manifestations in the sphere of capitalist production to be negative as far as the workers were concerned. The resolution passed by the Congress appraised the ongoing process as the direct result of a new phase of development of society, which was reflected in the transition from the "old private capitalism" to "contemporary collective capitalism" (trusts, cartels), from untrammeled competition to the exploitation of the whole world by a unified system. It was emphasized that rationalization was being carried out in the interest of capitalists, and its implications for workers involved the undermining of their physical and mental health, along with their subordination to the mechanisms of "industrial slav-

ery." Rationalization condemned working people to the loss of jobs, unemployment, and, consequently, a worsening of living conditions. The Congress declared that it considered such a transformation of the capitalist economy as a precondition not of socialism, but rather of a future state capitalism. The path to socialism, it was noted in the resolution, is defined not by the constant growth of production, but, in the first instance, by clear thinking and firm will on the part of the people. Socialism is not just an economic problem, it is also cultural and psychological; it assumes people believe in their own capabilities and that work is complex and absorbing – and that all this is incompatible with the ongoing rationalization.

The resolution spoke in favour of decentralization rather than centralization of the economy, for the unity rather than specialization and division of labour, and for the integral formation and development of all the abilities of people. In response to the creation of gigantic national and international structures of capital, the workers should strengthen their own international economic organization, enabling them to struggle for everyday demands as well as for the re-organization of society, for the shortening of the work day to six hours, to resist unemployment, organize international strikes and boycott campaigns, etc.

However such a critical stance towards the process of development of the industrial-capitalist system and the demands for a radical break with it encountered objections from a substantial number of anarcho-syndicalists who, following the Marxists, associated socialism with advances in technology and an increase in the productivity of labour.

They did not consider the new forms of technology and the organization of production as incompatible with socialism.

Such an approach logically entailed the centralization of production and the economy as a whole, and the rejection of the notion of federations of decentralized and largely self-sufficient communes, and therefore rejection of the communist

that a machine cannot create vital forces but rather depletes them, and in this sense we are creating a mentality which contradicts everything that speaks to the initiative of the individual… We need an ideal, and in the final analysis this capitalist machine will sooner or later destroy our ideal." In the end the draft resolution was adopted by 302,000 votes to 91,000, but in fact was never applied in practice. See: A. Paz, op. cit., pp. 219-222 (n64); J. Peirats, Les anarchistes espagnols…, pp. 63-64 (n46).

ing. “Once the violent phase of the Revolution is finished, private property, the State, the principle of authority and, consequently, classes, will be abolished… Wealth will be socialized, organizations of free producers will take the direct management of production and consumption in their own hands. In each locality a Free Commune will be established, which will initiate a new social mechanism. Producers united in labour unions in each industry and profession will freely determine the form of their organizations in their own work places.” It was proposed to entrust the coordination of economic and social life, functions of defense, etc. to communes, syndicates, and their federations. The program emphasized the communist principle of distribution, transformation in relations between the sexes, and education – especially the free development of art and science. The State and permanent army were slated to be abolished and replaced by federations of communes and workers’ militias.

1. E. Malatesta, “Quelques considerations sur le regime de la propriete apres la revolution” in Articles politiques (Paris, 1979), pp. 379-390.

2. Cited by: P. Adamo, “Anarchismo tra ethos e progetto,” A – Rivista anarchica, 1997, no. 1 (233), Febbraio, p. 36.

3. This position was by no means shared by all members of the CNT. At the 3__ Congress of CNT in June 1931 a bitter dispute flared up regarding the plan for rebuilding the organization on the basis of industrial unions, as proposed by the syndicalist wing led by Juan Peiro. The anarchists spoke out against this plan. “Supporters of industrial federations have arrived at this position because they have lost faith in … the goal, and are pinning their hopes on the efficacy of machines,” declared, for example, the prominent anarchist Jose Alberola. “But I say

principle of distribution. The old ideas of collectivism were considered much more appropriate for the industrial century. Even Rocker began stating at the end of the 1920’s that, although remaining in principle an adherent of anarchist communism, he considered the collectivist principle “to each the full product of his/her labour” to be more realistic in a period of revolutionary transformations and during the first phases of the creation of a new society. He referred to the inevitable economic difficulties accompanying revolution, to the growth of selfish attitudes in contemporary society, and – like the Marxists – he associated the implementation of communist distribution with material “abundance.”

Souchy, debating these problems with Cornelissen, proposed that only “in a pre-industrial society would it be possible, and then only in small communities, to introduce a pure distributive economy. In a contemporary industrial society and with the current interdependence of global economies, from which an individual country cannot withdraw, the exchange of products inevitably determines values. Speaking more precisely, exchange determines prices which in turn determines wages.” The alternative would be to introduce centralized planning, which is contrary to the principles of anarchism. Such a situation, in his opinion, would obtain at least until the epoch of universal abundance.

Lively discussions about the question of industrial development and the nature of the future free society were carried on in the pages of the journal Die Internationale – the de facto organ of the IWA, published by its German section.

If previously FAUD had unequivocally declared itself as the “bearer of communist anarchism” , now many of its leading activists began to oppose the anarcho-communist principle of distribution “according to demand” as a “crazy idea,” calling instead for the study of existing economic categories (Helmut Rüdiger) and adjusting distribution in accordance with the real “productivity” of labour (Gerhard Wartenberg – “Gerhard”). It

was even asserted that "rationing" by means of monetary regulation was "fairer" than communist anarchism (Fritz Dettmer). The opinion was expressed that in a "socialist-federative system" there must exist an "industrial interlocking of the productive forces," a regulated and planned economy, and economic democracy (Fritz Linov). Finally, some found it conceivable that the social functions of the State "should be kept intact" even after revolution (Wartenberg), and a federative system of Councils should be introduced only after a transitional stage, as soon as the revolution managed to put together a "united front" in which the anarcho-syndicalists would be in a minority (Reinhold Busch). On the other hand, a section of the German anarcho-syndicalists continued to insist on the classical anti-industrial principles of anarchocommunism.

Thus, Heinrich Drewes condemned such innovations as "capitalistic thinking" and supported the complete transformation of the existing profit-based economy.

He supported the creation of a non-monetary communist economic system, in which associations of workers would organize planning from below, based on the determination of the people's real needs. He rejected "gigantomania" and centralization the borrowed from Marxism and was in favour of the reorganization of the economic life based on "agrarianization" as opposed to "industrialization." In 1932 the leadership of FAUD was almost paralyzed by bitter ideological and theoretical disputes.

The industrialist tendency was strongest in the French section of the IWA – the Revolutionary-Syndicalist CGT. The theoretician and practitioner of French anarcho-syndicalism Pierre Besnard, like many of the syndicalists before the First World War, started from the assumption of the progressiveness of the industrial development of humanity. According to Besnard, technological changes (associated with the production-line, "Fordist-Taylorist" era) opened new, broad perspectives for the social liberation of workers. Workers' organizations, while car-

the whole of society, similar to the ideas of Besnard. Moreover, like many of the other industrialists, he interpreted libertarian communism as a sort of transitional society on the way to complete anarchy (communism), in which in the beginning a departure from communist principles of distribution ("according to needs") was permitted.

These theoretical and tactical differences led to splits, the most important of which was the withdrawal from the organization of supporters of a more reformist and pragmatic syndicalist approach, formulated in 1931 in the "Manifesto of the Thirty" (Juan Peiró, Ángel Pestaña, and others). In the middle of the 1930's it became clear that Spain was on the verge of a social revolution, and that the CNT was faced with the urgent problem of converting the generalized positions of the anarchist "program" into a real plan for the transformation of society on the bases of free communism.

The congress of the CNT in Zaragoza in May 1936 approved a document which was one of the first in history to set out an anarchist program of concrete measures for social revolution – "The Conception of Libertarian Communism." It combined the ideas and approaches of both currents, but was heavily dependent on the scheme of Puente. Libertarian communism (principle: from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs within the framework of economic possibility) must be established without any kind of "transition period" immediately after the victory of the social revolution. At the basis of the future free society must lie a dual organization: territorial (free communes and their federations) and industrial (syndicates as association of producers and economic organs of the communes).

The program endorsed decentralized planning from below on the basis of the statistical determination of needs and production possibilities. Money was liable to be abolished and replaced by cards for producers/consumers – the only function of such a card was to show that its possessor was actually work-

He believed that the communitarian movement was in tune with the social instincts of mankind. The author proceeded from the assumption that libertarian communism could be established in Spain which would then withstand the capitalist world. Puente conceded that the commune as a popular organ (general assembly of all inhabitants) could exist only in villages and small cities, and that in large population centres its functions would be carried out by the organs of syndicates (associations of producers). But, in the anarchocommunist tradition, he emphasized the voluntary nature and social-economic self-sufficiency of the communes. He was skeptical of "the architects of the new world," to managerial planning and industrial development. Social wealth, the means of production, and the products produced with the help of these means, would become the property of everyone; each member of society had an obligation to work to the extent of their own powers and in exchange would receive the possibility to satisfy their own needs. Money in any form whatsoever was not required; wealth would be distributed "in proportion to the demands for it." Finally, the economy of the country "would be the result of coordination between various localities," which would make arrangements between themselves at the lowest level about combining their efforts at plenums, congresses, and through industrial federations. [193] The book enjoyed a huge popularity in anarchist circles; it was reprinted and widely discussed. One of the main theoreticians of the industrialists was Diego Abad de Santillan, who arrived in Spain from Argentina and renounced the views of the FORA. His work The Economic Organism of the Revolution embraced contemporary industry and emphasized the necessity of planning and economic coordination. He criticized Kropotkin for economic localism and declared free communes an anachronism, a "reactionary utopia." Abad de Santillan ascribed great significance to free experimentation, allowing for various forms of a future society. But in principle he favoured a comparatively rigid syndicalist structure for

rying on the struggle with capitalism, should arrange their internal structure in imitation of capitalist economic formations, so that immediately after the victorious general revolutionary strike they could take over management of the economy. In other words, the syndicates and their federations emerging within the capitalist structure were destined to become the nervous system of the new society, the organs of economic coordination, planning, etc. The first stage, which Besnard called "libertarian communism," would involve the preservation of elements of the monetary system and distribution "according to labour."

Only at the second stage (Besnard named it "free communism") would it be possible to carry to completion the ideal of a self-managed communist society.

This departure from the principles of anarcho-communism provoked a sharp rejoinder from anarchists in Latin America, above all from those in the Argentine FORA. Its theoreticians set themselves the task of providing a sound basis for their own traditional critique of revolutionary syndicalism (as being semi-Marxist in essence) and European anarcho-syndicalism (as an attempt to synthesize anarchism and revolutionary syndicalism). They raised questions about the conceptions of a syndicalist structure of the postrevolutionary society and about a united class front of the proletariat. Simultaneously they also criticized the notion of "ideological-political" organizations of anarchists separate from the workers' movement (as proposed by Malatesta, on the one hand, and by the Platformists on the other). FORA countered this by advancing a model of an "anarchist organization of workers," structured like a syndicate but not limiting itself to strictly economic problems but also taking up issues of solidarity, mutual aid, and anarchist communism.

The theoreticians of the FORA presented a thorough critique of the Marxist-industrial viewpoint on history, contemporary capitalism, and social revolution, one of the first such critiques in the 20th century. Above all, they criticized the theory of

linear progress and Marxist historical materialism, affirming (following Kropotkin) that the development of humanity is impelled not just by economic laws, but also by the evolution of ethical concepts and compelling ideas. According, the FORA sharply criticized economic and historical determinism and denied that capitalism and its economic organization were progressive by nature. The theoreticians of the FORA perceived the economic structure of industrial capitalist society (the factory system, sectoral specialization, extreme division of labour, etc.) as an "economic state" – in tandem with the "political state," i.e. the government. The new, free society should not develop according to the laws of the old society, according to their logic, but represent a decisive, radical break with it. The base of the new society should be the free commune and the free association; their slogan should not be "All Power to the Syndicates!," but rather "No Power to Anyone!" An anarchist communist system must not under any circumstances be built "within the bowels" of the old social organism, or else it could expect the fate of the Russian Revolution – warned the leading ideologue of the FORA Emilio López Arango. The proletariat was "destined to become the wall which would stem the tide of industrial imperialism. Only by creating ethical values which would enable the proletariat to understand social problems independently from bourgeois civilization would it be possible to arrive at an indestructible basis for an anti-capitalist and anti-Marxist revolution – a revolution which would do away with the regime of large-scale industry and financial, industrial, and commercial trusts." The purely economic interests of the proletarians within capitalism could be completely fulfilled within the framework of the existing system, mainly at the expense of other proletarians, which was why a united front of the proletariat was an impossibility.

It was important to spread the habits and notions of solidarity and freedom; it was possible to accomplish this in the course of economic direct action, but in doing so the ultimate goal

spondingly, they ascribed less significance to problems of economic linkages and the management of coordinated activities between such communes, assuming that any surpluses could be exchanged on an unpaid basis. The industrialists were partial to the revolutionary syndicalist scheme, according to which after the Revolution centralized factory management structures and forms of organization of the economy would be preserved and transferred from private or State control into the hands of the associated syndicates (labour unions). Their strong point was working out solutions to economic problems according to libertarian planning principles. The best known theoreticians of the communitarians were the writer and publicist Federico Urales (editor of the theoretical and literary magazine La Revista blanca) and the physician Isaac Puente. Urales combined Kropotkin's reasoning with the traditions of the Spanish village communes, which he considered the most suitable base for realizing the collective principles of solidarity.

He maintained that the Revolution would break out after a phase of capitalist crisis, and result in the regeneration of the communal traditions in the free villages. At the same time, Urales and his supporters counted on the presence of revolutionary spontaneity.

Other anarchists considered it essential to formulate ideas about a free society which could provide guidelines for experiments in workers' insurgency. (Such was the viewpoint of the activists of the Nosotros group, which was behind many of the anarcho-syndicalist uprisings of 1932-1933.) These ideas were popularized by Puente, one of the leaders of the uprisings, in his book The Goal of the CNT – Libertarian Communism. It contained a plan for the creation of a system of libertarian communism in Spain and arguments in favour of its being put into practice. Similar to Urales, Puente followed Kropotkin's understanding of the social inclinations of humanity. He rejected the idea of a revolutionary or post-revolutionary elite and a transition period.

the main path to the new society is propaganda: "Victory can only be gained as the result of a general effort which, moreover, will be contingent on the support of a majority of the people. And this combined action, this support of the majority of the people, can be achieved only in the course of a prolonged period of ideological propaganda, but propaganda which is competent, serious, deliberate, and responsible…" J. Masgomieri, another author of La Revista blanca indicated it was not a matter of an interminable process of waiting until all the people became anarchists: "In order for the anarchist social revolution to become … an invincible and triumphant force which embraces the whole population, it is first necessary that everyone knows and understands without any kind of intellectual effort the organizational mechanism of the new order of things. And this clear understanding, this material knowledge of the new system, to a much greater degree than abstract and philosophical studies, will give rise to revolutionary consciousness which will become the surest guarantee of development of the Revolution." The Spanish anarchists categorically rejected the notion advanced by some syndicalists about the difference between an anarchist society and libertarian communism: vague ideas about Anarchy as the simple removal of any sort of restrictions can only give rise to some kind of "sad state of affairs" which amounts to "unconscious sabotage of one's own ideal and paves the way for the schemes of newly minted politicians."

In the Spanish CNT there existed tendencies close both to revolutionary syndicalism with its notion of the "syndicalist construction of society," and to the conception of "libertarian communism." The debate was ongoing about what to do after the Revolution triumphed by means of a general strike and insurrection. The communitarians, following the anarcho-communist tradition, believed the basis of the future society should be the libertarian commune ("free municipality"), autonomous and self-sufficient to the maximum degree. Corre-

should never be lost sight of. Therefore the anarchist workers' organization should be not simply "for all the workers," but, above all for those who share the ideal of anarchist communism.

The most lively debates about tendencies in the development of capitalism and the concomitant changes in the tactics of anarcho-syndicalism unfolded at the 4th Congress of the IWA in Madrid in 1931. This congress took place at the height of the world economic crisis, which the anarchosyndicalist theoreticians understood as a consequence of capitalist rationalization. This rationalization led, on the one hand, to a runaway growth in production but, on the other hand, to a reduction of positions in the workplace and a reduction in the buying power of workers. Two approaches – one industrial and the other anti-industrial, clashed at the congress in a most acrimonious manner. According to Muños Congost, author of historical notes to the publication of materials of the congresses of the IWA, the essence of the discussion reduced to the following. "On one side, the draft of the document about rationalization, prepared by Shapiro and serving as the basis for final editing according to the wishes of the Congress, insisted on the advantages of the new methods of organizing production connected with increasing mechanization. These methods were regarded as fundamental in preparing the consciousness of the working masses, and as the starting point for the future organization of the economic content of the revolution. On the other side, a more anarchist conception was put forward [by Rocker, – V. D.] about the direct responsibility of the producers, who cannot and must not divorce their own productive activities from all the other forms of activity of conscious individuals…

This approach did not oppose rationalization as such, but rather required a balance between the participation of the individuals in social production and the preservation of their own individuality, their personalities." Rocker "declared that the revolution must transform the slave conception of labour-

as-exploitation, as an obligation sanctified by tradition and the church over many centuries, … into a different form, more compatible with an harmonious organization of human relationships," on the basis of the integrity of labour. The German anarcho-syndicalist conceded that technical development can humanize life, but not in a capitalist setting, where human beings exist for production. Long before people began talking about alienation and ecological problems, he noted that the production of goods which are harmful to health is "social suicide." Working according to the monotonous rhythm of a machine destroys a person's personality. It follows that people must be placed at the centre of the economy, and production – oriented according to the needs of real consumers. He warned: "If the rationalization of labour is preserved in its present form for another 50 years, any hope for socialism will be lost."

Basing himself on an industrial analysis of the changes which were occurring, although also not agreeing with Shapiro's proposal about sanctioning the creation of Factory Councils which would take control over the financial management of enterprises, Besnard proposed a "Plan for Reorganizing International Syndicalism." Since capitalism was now in the throes of "simultaneously carrying out two rationalizations – economic and social," the syndicalist movement should "position itself on the same level as its opponent" and carry through a "rationalization on a global scale" on its own. He called for a reorganization of the international organization using a model for industrial unions which would be applied in all countries from bottom to top: union Factory Councils joined together in networks up to the national level, and then affiliation to the corresponding international organs. The various structures must be completely independent of enterprises and the State, being the embryo of the economic system of the future. Their task would be the collection of managerial and technical information, the implementation of workers' control over enterprises, the relocation of work forces, and the preparation of workers

make any sense to wish to improvise everything," argued the Swedish delegate Albert Jensen at the 4th IWA Congress, "Such a position can be exploited by political demagogues in order to get control of the Revolution, restore political power, and establish a dictatorship." At this moment special attention was focused on the anarcho-syndicalists of Spain – a country where social revolution was soon to become a reality. That is why the delegates of the CNT at the 4th Congress of the IWA supported Besnard's proposal.3 "It is necessary to nourish the constructive capabilities of the workers. Capitalism won't die by itself. Constructive action is more important than barricades," declared Victor Orobón Fernández. "Destruction by itself is not at all creative. The most important day of the Revolution is the second day, when new construction begins." He referred to the example of Russia, where "the anarchists fought, while the Bolsheviks started building on their own." The more people are prepared for revolution, the better they will know what to do after the overthrow and expropriation of Capital and the State, the easier and less painful it will be to carry out the Revolution, and the less danger there will be of usurpation by an avant-garde. The significance of the arguments of the European anarcho-syndicalists lay in their insistence on the insufficiency of just spreading libertarian values and ideas.

They maintained it was necessary to prepare people technically and organizationally so their grasp of production was such that they could take over management of production after the Revolution. "It's quite indisputable: in order for a certain ideal to triumph, it must be ingrained in the heads of those who will defend it. Insufficient preparation of the people leads to vacillations, always fatal for the matter being defended. That's why we recognize that before proceeding to the anarchist organization of society, it is quite essential that the people be prepared beforehand," emphasized V. Márquez Sicilia in the theoretical journal of the Spanish anarchists La Revista blanca. He maintained that, although the Revolution will be violent,

tions of the IWA occupied an intermediate position between these extreme positions. The 1931 congress decided to submit the question about "international re-organization" to a referendum of the sections. In 1935 the regular IWA congress in Paris, meeting at a time when the Latin American organizations had been shattered by government terror, approved the proposal of the French Revolutionary-Syndicalist CGT. But this decision about re-organizing the IWA was not in fact implemented.

The conceptions of the FORA contained a critique of the alien and destructive character of the industrial-capitalist system which was brilliant for its time – the FORA's proposals anticipated by half a century the recommendations and prescriptions of the contemporary ecological movement.

Nevertheless their critique had a point of vulnerability – a categorical refusal to elaborate more concrete notions about the future society, how to get to it and how to prepare for it.

According to the thinking of the Argentine theoreticians, to do so would be to infringe on revolutionary spontaneity and the improvisations of the masses themselves. The achievement of socialism was not a matter of technical and organizational preparation, but rather the dissemination of feelings of freedom, equality, and solidarity – insisted the Argentine worker-anarchists. Nevertheless, objected the European anarcho-syndicalists, such an approach provides no protection from authoritarianism, and could be conducive to the appropriation of the gains of the Revolution by some kind of elitist "vanguard." Thus from the Marxist reluctance to imagine the forms and mechanisms of functioning of a socialist society logically ensued the rule of "scientific socialists" over immature and ignorant masses. At the moment of Revolution these masses already know what they don't want, but don't yet have an understanding of what is required for a new, liberated life. Instead they end up with the Enlightenment or Jacobin concept of an "educational dictatorship." "The Social Revolution must be prepared in detail, in order to be crowned with success. It doesn't

for managing production at all levels, including the international level.

Besnard's conception was the subject of a sharp attack by the Argentine FORA, which went much farther than Rocker in its critique of rationalization. One of the Argentine delegates declared at the congress: "Not only political fascism, but also capitalist industrialism is the most dangerous form of tyranny. Comrades are assuming the economic question alone has decisive significance. However the capitalist apparatus, if it remains as is, even in our hands will never be an instrument for the liberation of humanity, a humanity crushed by a gigantic mechanism. The economic crisis has triggered an enormous growth in machines and rationalization, and this growth is by no means limited to urban industry but has also spread to the rural economy. This is a universal crisis which can only be resolved through social revolution." Consequently, the Latin American delegates at the congress rejected the plan proposed by the French syndicalists to reorganize the international anarcho-syndicalist movement as a global structure of industrial syndicates, capable of taking over the existing system of industrial production in the case of revolution. "Industrialization is not necessary," they asserted, "People lived without it for thousands of years; happy lives and well-being do not depend on industrialization." "It must not be assumed that the impending revolution will decide everything once and for all. The next revolution will not be the last. In the revolutionary upheaval all preparations will be thrown overboard, and the revolution will create for itself its own forms of living." According to one of the Argentine delegates, the French syndicalists "have committed an error in trying to mechanize the IWA. One should not think exclusively about production, but more about people; the main problem is not the organization of the economic system, but the propagation of anarchist ideology." He spoke against rationalization, since "the people don't exist for society, but society for the people" and called for "a pure syn-

dicalism: a return to nature, to agriculture, to communes. Only by following these principles can we surmount production for the market and switch to a system of free distribution."

The objections of the FORA to the plans of Besnard were supported also by the Uruguayan FORU.

The theoreticians of the Japanese labour federation Zenkoku Jiren criticized syndicalist industrialism even more severely than the Latin American worker-anarchists. Their conception of anarchist revolution, which they expounded in detail, implied a cardinal break with the logic of industrial capitalism. The current system, they said, was based on the division of labour and the consequent hierarchy; this division and its attendant mechanization deprived the workers of any responsibility and required coordinating and administrative authorities which were incompatible with the principles of libertarian communism. Therefore the structure of the future free society could not be compatible with the existing authoritarian and capitalist structure. The new society must surmount industrialism with its soul-destroying division of labour and base itself on a different conception of the interrelation of production and consumption, but with the emphasis on consumption. The fundamental unit of this new society must be the self-sufficient, autonomous commune, uniting industry and agriculture.

The Japanese anarchists acknowledged the class struggle as an historical fact, but refused to see in it the basis for libertarian revolution which, in their opinion, would emerge not from the contradictions of capitalism and not from the material interests of classes, but rather from the desire of humanity for freedom and the liquidation of classes generally.

Since "class struggle and revolution are different things," "it was a great mistake to claim…, that revolution takes place by means of class struggle," emphasized the Japanese theoretician of anarchism Hatta Shûzô.

Zenkoku Jiren rejected traditional syndicalism, seeing in it elements of the reproduction of the industrial-capitalist model.

The continuation of the division of society into groups according to occupation, the preservation of the factory system and centralization, and the organization of society throughout on the basis of professional and industrial unions, would perpetuate the division of labour and the hierarchy of management. "Syndicalism," wrote Hatta, "will adopt the capitalist means of production, and will also preserve the system of big factories, and first and foremost it will also retain the division of labour and the mode of economic organization which go together with capitalist means of production." The structure of the syndicates grows out of the capitalist means of production and creates an organization which serves as a mirror image of industrial-capitalist structures. If the capitalist bosses are simply removed and the mines handed over to the miners, the foundries to the foundry workers, etc., then the contradictions between different branches of production and the inequality between individual groups of workers will be preserved. Consequently some kind of arbitrage or organ for resolving disputes between different sectors and groups is required. This creates a real danger of regenerating classes and leads to the appearance of a new state or government in the form of a union bureaucracy. The Japanese anarchists also considered totally wrong any plans of organizing a new society on the basis of a system of Workers' Councils. Because they originated in production, such councils also reproduced the capitalist division of labour. Moreover, they would also inevitably be power bases and would discriminate against those who did not take part directly in the production of material wealth or who worked in "secondary" branches of the economy. "No matter how the councils were oriented economically," emphasized Hatta, "it remains clear that their creation would always be accompanied by the emergence of authoritarian rule."

Thus a choice was posed: the commune or the industrial union? industrial rationalization or integration of decentralized industrial and rural economies? The majority of the sec-

Chapter 15: The Spanish Revolution and World Anarcho-syndicalism

The international anarcho-syndicalist movement in 1936-1939 was torn between all out practical solidarity with the Spanish Revolution and criticism of the policies of the leading activists of the CNT. Besnard, the General Secretary of the IWA from 1936, visited revolutionary Spain three times in the autumn of that year and ultimately found a deep departure from the principles of anarcho-syndicalism which he associated with the regression of the Revolution.

He sharply criticized the entry into the government, collaboration with political parties, militarization, the refusal to allow the syndicates to take control of the economy, the refusal to criticize the Stalinist USSR, and the refusal to work on establishing libertarian communism. But at the same time, as shown by the plenums of the International in 1936 and 1937 as well as the Extraordinary Congress of 1937, the IWA did not possess any real possibility of exerting influence on the line being pursued by the CNT. The Secretariat of the International itself was split: its members Helmut Rüdiger and Nemesio Galve differed with P. Besnard and defended the "forced" tactics of the CNT. The anarchist workers' organizations of Argentina and Uruguay (the FORA and FORU) denounced the Spanish CNT in very strong terms, viewing its policies as the logical result of the errors of revolutionary syndicalism. The French CGT-SR also condemned the CNT. These organizations called on the

federalist procedure within the CNT – a tendency which was to become prevalent subsequently. "The first error," notes Paz, "was committed already on July 19 and 20, when a group of activists substituted themselves for the members themselves and made decisions for them. From this moment on a gap manifested itself between the base and the upper levels: the base wanted to broaden the Revolution, the superstructure tried to control and limit it..."

Other members of Nosotros did not speak at the plenum. One of its prominent members, Ricardo Sanz, subsequently recalled: "As a group, we did not exert pressure on the results [of the discussion]. We knew our organization was against dictatorship. And that's what would have happened if our position had been adopted... But in any case, we did not try to force a decision, since there was other urgent business:

Companys had agreed that Durruti would lead the militia forces, which must occupy Zaragoza which had fallen into the hands of the enemy..." In the evening after the conclusion of the CNT plenum, a meeting of Nosotros and its supporters (Marcos Alcon, García Vivancos, Domingo, Joaquín Ascasco, and others) was held. All were agreed it was necessary to move beyond alliances with political parties and form new organs of popular self-government, based on the revolutionary committees and labour unions of the CNT. However differences arose about the time-table for such actions. García Oliver urged the group "to finish the work begun on July 18" by having the forces of the anarchosyndicalist militia occupy the government buildings and key installations of Barcelona. Durruti called this plan "excellent," but considered the moment "inauspicious" when the mood of the CNT activists was taken into account. He proposed to wait ten days, until the libertarian militia had taken Zaragoza – the capital of Aragon – thereby saving Catalonia itself from a possible economic and political blockade. García Oliver objected, arguing that the capture of the city could wait, but his arguments did not find support.

At the first meeting of the CCMA, the anarcho-syndicalists rejected the plan of Companys, which attempted to reduce the role of the new organ to carrying out military and technical tasks. They insisted on its transformation into an institution for the economic, political, and military administration of Catalonia, so that the functions of Companys as President of the Generalitat would become purely nominal. The CCMA became a semi-governmental, semi-grassroots organ. Besides the anarchists, who held key posts in it, there were also representatives of the UGT, the Catalan left nationalists, Communists (controlled by the Comintern and formed in July into the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia – closely linked with the Communist Party of Spain), anti-Stalinist Communists from the Workers' Party of Marxist Unity (POUM), and others. The Committee made decisions on fundamental social-political questions, but at the same time it was impossible to view it as an organ of a purely governmental type since its members were responsible primarily to the committees at the head of their organizations, to which they owed their positions as delegates. So in fact these organizations made decisions, and the CCMA only ratified them. Up until August 10 1936 its official documents were valid only if they bore the imprint of the Catalan Regional Committee of the FAI.

The maintenance of order in Catalonia was carried out by patrols organized by the militias of the various organizations and movements belonging to the CCMA. The most powerful of these was the militia of the CNT. The members of the CNT, the FAI, and FIJL also constituted the basis of those volunteer forces which fought with the insurgents at the front of the unfolding Civil War. On July 24 1936 the first of such columns with a complement of 2,000 led by Durruti set out for Aragon. So it happened that volunteer units, formed by various organizations and movements, were able successfully to oppose the insurgent armed forces for the whole first period of the Civil War and achieve significant successes.

against the stated possibility of participation of the Federation in politics. However the opposition did not succeed in getting the changes they sought. It remained fragmented and organizationally inchoate. As usual the activists were encumbered with their faith in "their own organization" and any sort of appeal to the masses outside of its framework seemed inconceivable. Moreover, in Spanish anarcho-syndicalism there was no experience of systematic, coordinated fractional struggle, which could have helped the oppositionists to remove the leadership of the CNT and FAI committees.

1. One of the first to make this assertion was the Trotskyist writer F. Morrow in 1938. See: F. Morrow, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain (Atlanta, 1974).

olution, and coordination of the activities of local committees of defense.

But the Friends of Durruti did not become a centre of attraction for other oppositional groups in the anarchist movement, which criticized them for having an inclination for authoritarian methods. These groups, active in the FAI and CNT (Ideas and The Incorrigibles from Baja Llobregat, Los Quijotes del Ideal in Barcelona, Acracia in Lerida, etc.), advocated a return to the traditional principles and ideals of anarcho-syndicalism, resisting plans to transform the organizations into a political party and attempts at unifying and centralizing the libertarian movement. Thus, at the end of 1937 the prominent anarchists Santana Calero, Severino Campos, and Peirats published a brochure on behalf of "the main oppositional current of the conscious part of the libertarian movement." Accusing the "leaders" of betraying the "ideological principles of anarchism," violating the "essence of anarchism" in the name of "the demands of circumstances," and "poisoning the lungs and brain of the body of the CNT-FAI with their stinking abomination of a policy," they called for deliverance from being "strangled by statification and centralization."

Like the Friends of Durruti, the supporters of a return to orthodox anarcho-syndicalism did not envisage any field of action for themselves other than the mass libertarian organizations – the CNT and FAI. Working among rank-and-file activists, they tried to alter the official line of the movement by speaking out at plenums and conferences. At the national plenum of regional committees of the CNT, FAI, and FIJL in October 1938, the opponents of "collaboration" tried to give battle one last time to the policy of taking part in government. A delegate of the Catalan "Libertarian Youth" declared: "Trying to insinuate yourself inside the State in order to destroy it, is like sending your wife and sister to a brothel in order to liquidate prostitution," and Xena, a representative of the Catalan FAI, stormed out of the meeting hall as a sign of protest

Durruti's column, which liberated a large part of Aragon from the enemy, was organized on the basis of libertarian principles: all the commanders were elected and lived in the same manner as the rank-and-filers, there was no penal code, and everyone observed voluntary self-discipline. The CNT columns which fought in Aragon were 16,000 strong.

The anarcho-syndicalists rejected the decree concerning mobilization of reservists issued by the central republican government at the beginning of August. However in Catalonia on August 6 1936 the CNT gave consent to partial conscription by the Generalitat and the CCMA, which was already a fundamental departure from principles. Nevertheless, the anarcho-syndicalist militias continued to be based on the principle of voluntary popular armed forces.

1. "Only by carrying through the social revolution is it possible to smash fascism," wrote, for example, the newspaper of the Catalan CNT Solidaridad Obrera just before July 19 [Solidaridad Obrera, 17.07.1936].

Chapter 11: Under the Pressure of Circumstances

Thus, the CNT made a principled decision (and one which, as became clear later, had fatal consequences) to renounce "total revolution," to set aside libertarian communism until victory was gained over the coalition of military, fascist Falangists and Monarchists opposing the Republic. The official position of the anarcho-syndicalists on the question of State power in this period was expressed in the article "The Uselessness of Government," published in the "Information Bulletin of Propaganda of the CNT-FAI" and in the Catalan CNT's newspaper Solidaridad Obrera.

This position boiled down to the notion of the necessity of continuing the Revolution in the social-economic sphere, not paying any attention to the State, and preserving the Popular Anti-fascist Front "from below." In the article it was emphasized that the central and Catalan republican governments had not undertaken any measures to prevent or suppress the mutiny and that their existence was inessential for the antifascist struggle. The anarcho-syndicalists believed the "social struggle" was unfolding throughout the country.

"The coordination of the forces of the Popular Front and the organization of the food supply by means of the simultaneous collectivization of enterprises is vitally important for the achievement of our goals…," they noted. "However up until now this has been carried out not under the control of the State, but rather in a decentralized, demilitarized fashion," based on the CNT and UGT labour unions. The existing government is

In the same place in December 1936 manifestos were frequently distributed signed by the Iconoclasta group. They contained harsh criticism of the persons representing the CNT in the government and other organs of the State. It is likely these manifestos received a favourable response from members of the CNT, since the National Committee of the CNT considered it necessary to react in a brusque manner, denouncing its "undisciplined and irresponsible" critics which "do not represent anyone."

The most important of the regional federations of libertarian youth – the Libertarian Youth of Catalonia – openly took a position against participation in the government, turning away from anarchist ideas, giving in to "circumstances," and the collaboration of the "leaders." After taking an active part in the events of May 1937, Libertarian Youth passed over into open opposition, refusing to submit to the decisions of the leadership of the CNT and FAI and concluding an agreement with the youth organizations of the antifascist parties. In response the leaders of the anarcho-syndicalist movement threatened sanctions against the "undisciplined" organ of Libertarian Youth – the newspaper Ruta.

In the spring of 1937 a section of the anarcho-syndicalists, dissatisfied with policies of the committees of the CNT and FAI, along with former soldiers of the militias, created the "Friends of Durruti" group, which included as many as four or five thousand members. They condemned the refusal to proclaim libertarian communism, participation in the government, and collaboration with socialists, communists, and bourgeois republicans. The members of the group also criticized both "orthodox" and reformist notions of anarchism, and called for a further development of anarchist theory and tactics, which would be based on the following fundamental positions: "the free city" (commune), management of the economy by syndicates, creation of a revolutionary committee for the defense of the Rev-

army. As a result of the resultant crisis, the Catalan Regional Committee of the CNT was compelled to consent to allowing soldiers unwilling to submit to army orders to quit the Front. In the second place, a whole series of anarcho-syndicalist publications appeared which openly and quite severely criticized the "collaborationist" and "concessionist" course of the CNT and FAI committees. These publications denounced the winding down of the Revolution on the pretext of "antifascist unity" and collaboration with the government. The most important of these was the newspaper Ideas, which started coming out on December 29 1936. It was published by the local organizations of the CNT and FAI of Bajo Llobregat, and its editor was Liberto Calejas, formerly director of the Catalan CNT's organ Solidaridad Obrera, but forced to vacate this post because of disagreements with the progovernment policies of the leadership of the CNT and FAI. Ideas became the centre of attraction of the whole revolutionary opposition inside the anarcho-syndicalist movement.

Among the writers who contributed blistering critiques were such well known anarchists as José Alberola, Felipe Alaiz, José Peirats, Severino Campos, Floreal Ocaña, Francisco Carreño, Jaime Balius, etc. Among the other oppositional anarchist publications it is possible to name Acracia in Lerida (editor – Peirats), Ciudad i Campo in Tortosa, Nosotros in Valencia; and also the organs of the Catalan Libertarian Youth (FIJL) – Ruta and Esfuerzo; and the newspapers of the Friends of Durruti (La Noche, and after May 1937 – El Amigo del Pueblo). All these publications were read with interest by the rank-and-file activists of the anarcho-syndicalist movement and enjoyed their support.

Finally, there also existed opposition groups. Thus, in Valencia some sections of the FAI and Libertarian Youth were grouped around the publication Nosotros which took a strong position against participation in the government.

"basically only a weak preserver of the 'status quo' in tending to the property rights of international financial interests." In such a situation a government of the Popular Front was unnecessary and even harmful, since it would either serve as a means of compromise and paralyze the decision-making process with its coalition politics and internal struggles, or prepare the way for a new dictatorship in the form of a "workers' state."

The leaders of the CNT and the FAI compromised with the antifascist parties and movement and made concessions to them, justifying this by reference to "developing circumstances," namely the necessity of victory in the Civil War. They agreed (in order to avoid foreign intervention) not to expropriate enterprises belonging to foreign capital; such enterprises would only be subject to workers' control.

New organs (revolutionary committees, committees of the antifascist militias, etc.) were now quite often put together not at general meetings, but – like the CCMA – on the basis of agreements between the CNT, UGT, and other organizations. Frequently revolutionary organs existed in parallel to the surviving pre-revolutionary structures at the local level, which sometimes gave rise to sharp conflicts between them.

The anarcho-syndicalist masses paid little attention during the first months to the compromises agreed to "above." They carried out the social revolution on their own "from below," impelled by their own libertarian "idée-force." The scale of self-management by workers during this period of the Spanish Revolution has no equal in history. Thus, in Barcelona 70% of enterprises were taken from their owners and transferred to the control of the CNT and UGT; in Valencia – 50%. Collectivization was also widely embraced in the rural economy. A regional plenum of the peasant syndicates of Catalonia, belonging to the CNT, resolved on September 5-7 1936 to collectivize large estates and any land which was being worked with the help of a hired workforce. All expropriated land passed under the control and management of a syndicate and was cultivated di-

rectly in the interests of its members, namely "the workers as a whole." Subsequently in Catalonia, Valencia, and other regions a wide-ranging process evolved of peasants coming together in self-managed collectives. This phenomenon was particularly widespread in the territory of Aragon which had been liberated by the anarcho-syndicalist militias, where such peasant collectives controlled up to 60% of all the land of the region and transformed themselves essentially into free, self-managed communes in the anarcho-syndicalist spirit.

However very soon the political compromises became an obstacle in the path of the grassroots initiatives. Thus, since libertarian communism had not been proclaimed, the notion of abolishing money and carrying out distribution according to needs had to be renounced. In the cities the circulation of money was fully retained; the most that was accomplished was the introduction in a number of cases of the so-called "family allowance" system, namely equal pay for each worker with a supplement for members of the worker's family. More typically, there was a significant increase in the wage rates for the lowest paid workers, which reduced the gap between the earnings of different groups of workers. In the villages, at first there were attempts to experiment with unfettered consumption, rationing, introduction of local currency, the "family allowance," etc. However all these measures were characterized by a lack of coordination. There was an absence of any sort of coordination of the activities of local revolutionary organs; in spite of the anarcho-syndicalist "program," these organs were not united in a federation, but operated exclusively at the local level.

In their efforts above all to advance beyond "collectivization" (transition stage of management by workers' collectives) to complete socialization of the economy, the anarcho-syndicalists initiated the creation on August 11 1936 of the Economic Council of Catalonia, which was to carry out the overall coordination and planning of the economy and establishing

Clashes between the republican authorities, on the one hand, and the unions and "collectives" on the other, were constantly flaring up. At the beginning of 1937 the Minister of Agriculture of Catalonia opposed plans for the socialization of distribution as proposed by the CNT syndicates in Barcelona. A sharp crisis was provoked by the efforts of the government to take over control of the economic activity of the workerp easant collectives of the orange plantations of the Valencia region. The Minister of Commerce Juan López, a member of the CNT, in support of the Minister of Agriculture – the communist Uribe, issued a decree at the beginning of 1937 about government control over the exports of agricultural collectives. However, a number of Valencian co-operatives refused to recognize his decree. The government sent military-police units with artillery and tanks against the strategic villages of Tulluera and Alfara, but the peasants, armed with hunting rifles and two old cannons, offered stubborn resistance. They were supported by the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts of Jativa, Carcagente, Gandia, and Sueca, forming the "Gandia Front." The peasants of the villages of Catarroja, Liria, Moncada. Paterna, and Burriana formed the "Vilanesa Front." To the aid of the collectives rush two battalions of the libertarian "Iron Column" and two battalions of the CNT columns, vacating the Teruel – Segorbe sector of the Front. Fighting in the region of Cullera continued for four days, after which the government forces attempted a flanking manoeuvre. After the intervention of the CNT an agreement was reached for a cease-fire and the mutual release of prisoners. The collectives of the Levant retained control over the production and export of oranges. Information exists about the strike launched by the union of workers in the entertainment industry of Barcelona early in 1938 (despite pressure from the leadership of the CNTFAI), in opposition to the introduction of State control of their sector. In the same category it is possible to include the protests of soldiers of the anarchist militias against their militarization and absorption into the regular

ented to establishing State control over economic activity or even direct nationalization of industries, especially industries producing essential military goods. Correspondingly, the notion spread among some of the activists of forming a separate syndicalist managerial sector, run by the CNT, with autonomous structures of coordination and planning, to provide overall direction for the industrial federations and economic councils, with its own bank, etc. This concept was approved at the National Economic Congress of the CNT in Valencia in January 1938. In spite of all its suspended and incomplete projects, the significance of the social transformations brought about by the anarcho-syndicalist workers of Spain can scarcely be overestimated. These transformations have no equal in history on such a scale. Anarcho-syndicalism put into practice much of what had been "envisaged at all its congresses: workers' control of factory and field, the planned development of production, equality in economic relations and in the possibility of adopting constructive decisions… All this took place outside the framework of the Republican government…"

In Aragon especially the possibility of implementing libertarian communism was demonstrated in principle.

The retreat of the leaders of the CNT and the FAI from the idea of "total revolution" and their concessions to the governments and parties of the Popular Front provoked bitter resistance and direct insubordination among the rank-and-file anarcho-syndicalists. Information about such happenings are fragmentary, and systematic investigations of organized opposition in the CNT, FAI, and Federation of Libertarian Youth do not exist up to this time. Therefore it is very difficult to gauge the real scale of opposition. Briefly summarizing the scattered information available, it is possible to distinguish three basic forms of such resistance. In the first place, this was resistance on the part of the lowest level unions of the CNT to the politics of nationalization (statification) of economic and social life, and a defense of gains in the area of workers' self-management.

pricing policy. However this organ also bore the stamp of compromise both as to its make-up (it included members of CNT, UGT, and political parties) and as to the tasks it undertook to carry out. Its goals included such diverse measures as the regulation of production guided by the needs of consumption; the monopoly of external trade; the development of collectivization in industry, commerce, in the rural economy, and in transport; the fostering of cooperation between the peasantry and consumers; job placement for the unemployed; reform of the tax system, etc.

Abad de Santillan, who played a key role in the Economic Council, was convinced this organ would be able to bring about the creation of a new economic system. On the other hand, the radical wing of the anarcho-syndicalists (Durruti and others) feared such a "legalization" of the conquests of the Revolution would only tend to strengthen the power of the Generalitat and could lead to "State Capitalism" or "State Socialism."

The unstable equilibrium of forces could not be preserved for long. State power – not liquidated by the anarchists – as well as the political parties and social strata which supported them, made use of the breathing space granted them to pass over to an offensive against the Revolution. In the hands of the unabolished State remained powerful levers, above all currency and other financial resources. Collectivized industry lacked raw materials. "The Marxists and Republicans formed a bloc and, possessing money and armaments, they pursued a politics of patronage in relation to their supporters, distributing to them food, weapons, administrative jobs, means of communication and transport…," it was acknowledged in the report of the CNT to the congress of the anarcho-syndicalist International in 1937. "Catalonia had to organize its own foreign trade, competing abroad with other parts of the country, in order to feed its own citizens and satisfy the needs of the Aragon Front… The government, taking advantage of our efforts to avoid causing harm to antifascist unity and to not provoke a rupture of official re-

lations with foreign nations, used its privileged diplomatic situation and ruthlessly sabotaged our actions in all fields. [222]

The governments in Madrid and Catalonia began to exert increasing pressure on the anarcho-syndicalists in three directions at once: impeding the supply of weapons and ammunition to the badly armed militias, trying to limit the scope and course of collectivizations in industry and in the rural economy, and attempting to impose the replacement of the militias by the regular army. In September 1936 a massive campaign was begun in the Catalan press directed against "out-of-control" anarchists, who were accused of concealing weapons instead of sending them to the Front (it was the committees of defense which were being targeted here), and also against "utopian experiments" in the economy.

Having embedded itself in the power system, the leadership of the CNT was forced to change itself. It had reconstructed itself in order to conform to the demands of the moment, justifying the mushrooming bureaucratic apparatus by the real requirements of coordinating economic and social life. Taking advantage of the fact that the activist members of the CNT and FAI were either fighting at the Front or completely weighed down with the work of workers' self-management at the local level, many labour federation officers (members of the national, regional, or district committees; aides to the various union commissions, the Committee of Militias, the Economic Council, etc.) began to take into account the needs and desires of the anarcho-syndicalist masses less and less . The rank-and-file activists simply could not keep track of the endless chain of conferences, plenums, and meetings and look into the matters discussed in detail.

As noted by José Peirats , the historiographer of the CNT, there was essentially a breakdown of the federalist norms of the organization (transformation of the National Committee into a "machine for issuing orders" to individual unions, the convening of plenums by means of announcements from

and productivity, number of workers, raw materials on hand, markets for sales, and possibilities for economic development. On January 1 1937 a national congress of the transport industry discussed the question of nationalization or socialization of its sector.

In the Levant the regional federation of peasants and the united syndicate of workers in the fruit export business issued an appeal to the peasants growing oranges and other fruits, which constituted one of the basic sources of foreign currency. The existing state of affairs, in which each population centre or syndicate engaged independently in the export business and disposed of the monies earned, and which resulted in rivalries, was termed "unfortunate."

The syndicates called for the creation of a "central organ" with a common reserve of products and a mutual aid fund, controlled by the peasants themselves. Subsequently the peasant federations of the Levant succeeded in unifying about one half of the production of oranges; up to 70% of the harvest was routed through its trade organization to the European markets. [281]

In February 1937 a congress of the Catalan CNT approved a plan for re-structuring the industrial syndicates, which would embrace and control the whole cycle of production – from the cultivation of crops or extraction of raw materials to the distribution of the finished products. In Catalonia an economic survey of local syndicates and associations was organized. In this way information was gathered to serve for the creation of "revolutionary economics" with a system of "planning from below." These statistics included, specifically, data about the geographical location and climate, traditions of the social-revolutionary movement, the economic situation and economic links of the locality, the housing situation, possibilities for the future, etc.

The gradual reversal of the Revolution from 1937 on did not allow plans for wide-scale socialization to be implemented. Under wartime conditions, the government was always more ori-

resemble co-operatives, trying to compete at their own risk, which gave rise to "two classes: the new rich and ever-present poor."

The anarcho-syndicalists hoped to wrest economic activity from under the control of the estate. They were convinced "the petty bourgeoisie, represented in the government and similar official bodies," bureaucrats, functionaries, and "useless agents and middlemen" were incapable of ensuring the normal operation and development of the economy. The unions and their organizations had an obligation "to control the whole of production and manage it." As, for example, one of the syndicates of the woodworking sector explained, the anarcho-syndicalists recognized the Generalitat's decree about collectivization, but in practice tried to impute to it a different orientation. "We agreed with the collectivization of all branches of industry, but with a single financial centre, switching to an egalitarian distribution system. We did not agree that some collectives should be rich and others poor… ."

The syndicates and federations of the CNT actively discussed plans for socialization of the economy. The federation which included the unions of workers of water, gas, and electrical utilities worked out a plan for collectivizing the supply of electrical power. Representatives of the textile federations of the CNT and the UGT, holding a joint meeting, resolved "to go over to full collectivization of the textile sector in Catalonia" and approved a system of self- management for it. The participants of a local plenum of syndicates of the CNT in Barcelona declared the necessity of "implementing the socialization of branches of industry on a nation-wide scale." They proposed a scheme of organizing self-management at all levels, including councils for factories, sections, and branches as well as an overall Economic Council. Each section of an industrial branch would have to make a complete and detailed study of the situation in its branch and provide the Economic Council with a plan for socialization with a precise data on current capacity

above, the adoption of important decisions by committees at all levels or at meetings of picked activists with subsequent approval at general assemblies). All these practices were in contradiction to the principles of anarcho-syndicalism, corresponding to which initiatives in the organizations ought to advance not "from the top down," but "from the bottom up," and committees and commissions were to be convened not to adopt independent decisions on fundamental questions, but to carry out the orders of the "ordinary members" at general assemblies.

Many anarcho-syndicalists spoke out against the nascent bureaucratization of the CNT and against the policy of more and more concessions into it after 490 to the State and political parties on the part of the CNT leaders. Durruti frequently expressed his concern and indignation on this score. The radical wing tried to turn the course of events at the regional plenum of the Catalan CNT at the beginning of August 1936. García Oliver and Durruti demanded an end to the collaboration with political forces, which was causing the Revolution to lose its bearings and depriving it of its strength. They called for further progress in the Revolution. But the majority feared above all civil war in the "antifascist camp." The course pursued since July 20 remained without significant changes.

A decision was adopted about the necessity of a "revolutionary alliance" with the UGT and the creation of a National Committee of Defense for military-political leadership. The radical minority, noted the historian Paz, submitted this time around, obeying organizational discipline. "The only way out of this impasse would have been to break with 'the activist's sense of responsibility' and, without the consent of their own organization, take the revolutionary problem into the streets. But none of the activists felt capable of doing this…" In the middle of August the CNT attempted to put into practice the idea of an alliance with the UGT by entering into negotiations with its leader, the socialist Largo Caballero. The possibility was discussed that both union federations could combine to topple

the central republican government and replace it with a revolutionary junta of defense. At the last moment Largo Caballero renounced this plan, since he did not want to destroy the legitimacy of the republican government. On September 4 1936, he was appointed prime minister of the Spanish Republic.

Tensions between the anarcho-syndicalists and the antifascist parties and movements continued to grow. In response to the accusation that the anarchists were "hiding weapons," the "committees of defense" of Barcelona declared that it intended to store weapons "as long as the Revolution has not resolved the problem of political power, and as long as there exist armed forces submitting to the orders of the government in Madrid," since they considered weapons "the guarantee of our revolutionary conquests." The newspaper Solidaridad obrera defended the collectives in industry and in the rural economy, and reminded its readers about "the revolutionary character" of the war. In a radio broadcast from the Front, Durruti emphasized that "fascism and capitalism – are one and the same," and the company committees and the military committee of the "Durruti column" threatened to march on Barcelona if weapons allegedly concealed in the Barcelona barracks of the Communists were not immediately sent to the Front. Eight machine guns, discovered in the office of the Communists in Sabadella, were sent to the front-line soldiers.

Workers continued to receive wages. In a number of cases it was possible to inaugurate the so-called "family allowance," namely equal pay for each worker with supplements for the members of his family (for example, in Barcelona). But more often matters were limited to reducing gaps in the scale of wages and a significant increase in the rates for the lowest-paid categories.

Nevertheless, in a number of places and branches of industry, syndicalization moved beyond the level of individual enterprises and spread to whole sectors. So-called "groups" of enterprises began to operate in a coordinated way like a single enterprise (in this manner were organized, for example, all the branches of industry in Alcoy; the supply of gas, water, and electricity in Catalonia; the streetcars in Barcelona; in various places – transport and public health facilities).

The anarcho-syndicalist unions strived to continue and deepen the revolutionary transformations, in spite of the war situation and the concessions of the "leaders." Thus, one syndicate of the woodworking sector stressed that anarchists from the very beginning could realize their own will: "to replace the regime which died on July 19 with another which is more humane and equal – libertarian communism." In Barcelona and in Catalonia "this transformation has begun."

However "other organizations exploited the enthusiasm of the members of the CNT and FAI" to divert the "popular trend" in the direction of new defeats. As a result, "instead of proceeding to genuine expropriation, which would have satisfied the widespread desires of the people, the owners were forced to pay wages on a weekly basis and the daily pay increased but the hourly pay decreased – and this at the height of the war!" In enterprises which had already been confiscated, a large number of "parasitical bureaucrats" and control committees made their appearance – which were not involved in production as such. Moreover the collectives which sprang up in industry found themselves in an unequal situation. They tended to

shop, the machines, and the raw materials and, taking advantage of the preservation of the monetary system and normal capitalist commercial relations, they organized production on their own account, selling the products of their labour for their own benefit."

The pressure to compromise with the government did not allow the workers "to do more, and this distorted everything right from the start. This was … not real socialization, but a workers' neo-capitalism, a self-management vacillating between capitalism and socialism, which would not have happened – it should be emphasized – if the Revolution could have been carried out to completion under the direction of our Syndicates." "We did not organize the economic body which did the planning. We were satisfied to chase the owners out of the factories and set up committees for control. We did not undertake any attempt to establish links between ourselves or coordinate the economy in a practical way. We worked without any plan, really not knowing what we were doing," admitted Abad de Santillan, who dealt with economic questions in the CNT.

The socialization of distribution was not implemented in the cities, which soon had repercussions. In Barcelona, after the formation of the Catalan Central Committee of Militias, a Central Committee for Food Supply was created which included representatives of various political forces. It organized the supply of provisions for the Front and for hospitals, opened stores, and maintained a network of "people's cafeterias." But the system of private commerce was retained and towards the end of the year in Barcelona there such phenomena appeared as a shortage of food items, a speculative rise in prices, and other abuses. Already in December 1936 one syndicate of workers of the distribution sector of the CNT called on the workers of stores and shops to fight against speculation, by keeping a close watch on the owners to make sure they were not selling goods "to the wrong customers," and also by not allowing arbitrary increases in prices.

Chapter 12: The CNT Enters the Government

Meanwhile, the logic of "circumstances" induced the leadership of the CNT to take the following step: it began to seek ways to participate in the direction of military-political affairs, hoping this would help to consolidate the revolutionary conquests. On September 15 1936, at a plenum of the regional federations of the CNT, the National Committee was able to get adoption of a resolution about the necessity of a National Council of Defense as a "national organ, empowered to carry out executive functions in the area of military planning, and functions of coordination in the area of political and economic planning." The Council, headed by Largo Caballero, was to include "delegates" from all three political tendencies (anarcho-syndicalist, Marxist, and republican), and the army and police were to be replaced by popular militias. The economic program of the Council was to include the socialization of banks and church property, estates, big industry, and commerce; the socialized means of production would be handed over to management by syndicates, and provision would be made for the freedom to carry out revolutionary economic experiments.

Similar councils would be formed at the regional and local level. The plenum resolved to submit this draft to the UGT along with a proposal about an alliance. As Peirats justly remarked, such a Council of Defense would have been the government, but under another name. Nevertheless, the "non-governmental" form of this organ was important to the anarchists. Understanding perfectly the contradictions built into

this proposal, Largo Caballero rejected it as violating constitutional principles. However, according to Paz who has made a detailed study of the events of those days, both sides – Largo Caballero and the National Committee of the CNT (headed by a new General Secretary and proponent of the reformist line Horacio Martínez Prieto), had a good grasp of what the other side wanted, and from this moment on carried on interminable haggling during which they had recourse to various kinds of pressure tactics. The trump card of the prime minister was the question about money and weapons for the anarchist militias at the Front, which carried on fighting in the hopes that by taking Zaragoza and Huesca they could compel the CNT committees to put an end to concessions and proclaim libertarian communism.

The volunteer units at the Front were becoming weaker and weaker due to lack of weapons and ammunition. The situation became so critical that Durruti and Abad de Santillan came up with a scheme for an anarchist column to attack the National Bank in Madrid in order to expropriate its resources and use them to purchase weapons. However the frightened members of the National Committee vetoed this. Meanwhile, in Catalonia the Regional Committee of the CNT, under constant pressure from the government of Largo Caballero to put an end to "dual power," announced its consent to the dissolution of the CCMA; in exchange, three representatives of CNT joined the Generalitat. Thus, for the first time anarcho-syndicalists openly became part of a government organ. Prominent activists of the Catalan CNT such as García Oliver, A. Fernandez, Xena, and Marcos Alcon, gritting their teeth, reconciled themselves to this decision.

The reaction of the rank-and-file activists of the CNT to the continual concessions of the leadership of the Catalan organization was different. Marcus Alcon, one of the key figures of the CNT (first with the glassworkers' union, then with the union of workers in the entertainment industry), who en-

ship were also abolished. The federated collectives decided to coordinate exchanges with the external world, creating for this purpose a common stock of products intended for exchange rather than the internal consumption of the communes, and also started the gathering of statistics about possible exchange products. Finally, it was proposed to completely do away with any form of money circulation inside the collectives and their federation and the introduction of a universal consumer booklet (normally upon the presentation of this booklet, items of consumption were given out free of charge). These booklets were to help to establish the real requirements of each of the inhabitants of the region, in order that production could be geared to the concrete needs of people, thereby moving to the anarchocommunist practice of "planning from below."

The activity of the Aragonese collectives was very successful. Even according to official data, the harvest in the region in 1937 grew by 20% at a time when there was a decrease in many other areas of the country. In Aragon roads, schools, hospitals, farms, and cultural institutions were built – in many settlements for the first time; the mechanization of labour was also applied. The inhabitants received access to medical services and free, anti-authoritarian education (physicians and teachers became full-fledged members of the collectives). Many collectives did not pay taxes. They preferred to support the Front directly and voluntarily.

Social transformations in the Spanish cities took place in a more uncoordinated fashion. On the one hand, the majority of industrial enterprises were occupied by the workers and passed under their control. On the other hand, the transition from the expropriation of enterprises by unions and collectives to full-scale socialization of industry did not take place, since commodity-money relations had not been done away with and money remained in the hands of the capitalists and the State. According to the eye-witness Gaston Leval, "very often workers in Barcelona and Valencia took over the factory, the work-

each additional member of the family). These allowances were intended only for the purchase of food and objects of consumption and were not to be put into savings. In many communes coupons were introduced in place of the national currency. In others there were cards or tokens. Under war conditions, certain types of food products were rationed almost everywhere, while others (wine, butter, etc.) were available in virtually unlimited supply in many places. Until a final decision about abolishing money "in a third of the 510 villages and towns adopting collectivization in Aragon, money was abolished and goods were available free of charge from the collective's store upon presentation of a consumer's booklet," and "in two thirds a replacement currency was put to use: bonds, coupons, tokens, etc. which were valid only within the confines of the communes issuing them."

The first occasion in the activity of individual communes in which a certain parochial tendency displayed itself had to do with the initial inequality of collectives: some of them started off being more prosperous, others poorer. As confirmed by an eye-witness – the German syndicalist Souchy – in the beginning some collectives opposed the idea of economic planning under the slogan of "self-sufficiency."

The complete independence of collectives from one another, and differences in the distribution systems of the communes, made it difficult to coordinate their economic activity. The anarchists – proponents of intensifying the social revolution – applied themselves to solving this problem, including Durruti, who personally campaigned for "collectives." In February 1937 in the town of Caspe a congress of the Aragon collectives was held with the participation of hundreds of delegates. The participants agreed to step up propaganda on behalf of "collectivization," to create experimental farms and technical schools, and to organize mutual aid between collectives so that machines and labour power could be shared. The boundaries between settlements were eliminated and limits on communal owner-

joyed great popularity in Barcelona, recalled that soon after the CCMA was dissolved and the CNT joined the Catalan government, he was confronted by representatives of a commission of Committees of Defense of Barcelona – Daniel Sanchez, Ángel Carbalera, Trapota, and others. They informed him that at a meeting of the Committees of Defense a resolution was passed empowering them to go to the headquarters of the CNT and the FAI and dismiss the Regional Committees of those organizations, which were "stifling the Revolution." The delegates proposed that Marcos Alcon become the new secretary of the Catalan Regional Committee of the CNT. Alcon was in agreement with the activists in their evaluation of the situation and the concessions which had been made. But he was resolutely against the proposed measures, considering them "irresponsible" and harmful for the organization. With difficulty he persuaded the Committees of Defense to refrain from taking action, urging them instead to "build up their strength in the unions" and, basing themselves on the unions, compel the CNT committees to carry out the will of the members of the organization.

Thus one of the last chances to continue the development of the social revolution in Catalonia was lost.

At this critical juncture a plenum of the regional federations of the CNT was convened on September 28, at which there was an expression of regret in connection with the negative reaction of other unions and political organizations to the proposal about creating a National Council of Defense.

The CNT complained that the exclusion of its representatives from the leadership of the struggle was undermining the authority of that leadership, and once more called upon the UGT to join in a "revolutionary alliance," threatening to "decline all responsibility" for the consequences in the case of refusal.

The problem of the lack of weaponry, it appeared, made some headway after a meeting of the General Secretary of the

anarcho-syndicalist International, Pierre Besnard, and Durruti with Prime Minister Caballero in Madrid on October 1 1936. Durruti warned the Prime Minister that if the government did not allocate sufficient financial resources for the purchases of arms for the CNT-FAI columns, then the front-line soldiers would march on Madrid. After this, the Spanish government agreed to spend 1.6 million pesetas on the purchase of armaments, of which a third would be spent on material earmarked for Catalonia and Aragon. But just a few days later the proposed deal with an armaments firm was cancelled, since the Soviet Union had interfered in the matter, offering its own assistance to the Republican government.1 Aid from the USSR led to a dramatic increase in the influence of the enemies of the anarcho-syndicalists – the Communists of the PCE, who opposed socialist revolution in Spain.

As a counterbalance to the conciliatory course of the leaders of the CNT in Madrid and Catalonia, the front-line and Aragonese anarcho-syndicalists formed their own central. They began to hurl open challenges at their own organization and preferred to create something along the lines of a "rallying point" for the Spanish Revolution. After the return of Durruti from Madrid to the Aragon Front, a regional conference of delegates from the villages and anarcho-syndicalist columns was held on October 6 1936 in Bujaraloz. At this conference a Council for the Defense of Aragaon was formed, composed exclusively of anarchists. It was empowered to coordinate all activities in the military, economic, and social spheres. The Council was made up of sections assigned to various fields of activity and thus it resembled a governmental organ. However the originators of this organ envisaged federalist rather than hierarchical mutual relations between it and the grassroots general assemblies: "The sections will develop a plan which will be presented to the representatives of the organizations and requires their consent. But once approved, it will become generally obligatory and will be carried out in all its aspects." In

Inside the collectives there was an absence of any kind of hierarchy and all members possessed equal rights. The main decision-making body was the regular general meeting of the members, which convened usually once a month. For the ongoing coordination of communal and economic life, committees were elected, often based on the former revolutionary committees. Their members – generally delegates from the various sections – did not enjoy any special privileges and did not receive any special reward for this work. All of them, except secretaries and bookkeepers, had to continue their normal work activity. Each adult member of the collective (with the exception of pregnant women) worked. Labour was organized on the basis of self-management. Brigades, composed of from five to ten people, made decisions about all basic work-related questions at meetings held every evening.

Delegates elected at these meetings also carried out functions of coordination and exchange of information with other brigades. In many collectives the principle of rotation of jobs was put into practice, and workers moved from one section to another according to the requirements of the moment. Industrial enterprises were included in the communal structure, which facilitated the integration of industry and the rural economy. Collectives were joined together through regional federations.

The circulation of currency was gradually liquidated. In the first weeks after their creation, many collectives abolished the remuneration of labour and introduced unlimited free consumption of all goods from the common stores. But under conditions of war and shortages, this turned out not to be an easy matter, especially since currency still circulated outside the collectives. In September 1936 the majority of communes converted to the so-called "family allowance" system. Each family in the collective received an equal sum of money (depending on the collective, this was approximately 7 – 10 pesetas for the head of the family, 50% more for his wife, and 15% more for

confiscated. But war-induced food shortages prompted the setting up of communal councils to take measures to limit private trade and to promote socialization.

This was followed by the creation of complete collectives, although these did not enjoy as much support from the local population as the Aragon collectives. Some of these collectives were very large and prosperous, but in the majority of them monetary relations were still retained.

In Aragon around 400 to 500 agricultural collectives were formed, in the regions of Valencia – 900, in Castile – 300, in Catalonia – 40, and in Estremadura – 30 collectives.

In Aragon at the end of 1936 and the beginning of 1937 between 300,000 and 400,000 people lived in agrarian collectives belonging to the Federation (until its destruction by republican troops, and then – also by the triumphant Francoists). Here to the maximum extent an anarchist social structure was put into effect – "without proprietors, casiques [local bosses], priests, and exploiters."

The Aragonese collectives included up to 70% of the population of the region; approximately 60% of cultivated land was at their disposal. In February 1937 a congress of collectives in Caspe officially confirmed that persons who wished to farm individually, without joining a group and without using hired labour, had the right to do so, as long as they did not benefit from services provided by the collectives. Such individuals could only retain as much land as they could cultivate by their own efforts.

Handicraft workshops and other types of local industry in the Aragonese villages, as well as shops and institutions of education and culture, were also socialized. In these villages there were strong, ancient, communal traditions, and their preservation made it easier to bring people together in free territorial and economic communities, appropriate for an anarcho-communist society.

citing this document A. Paz notes: "For the first time in the history of society, an entire region initiated revolutionary activity independently of any political parties, having as its exclusive basis the General Assembly, which was declared sovereign. In actual fact, the organization of society which was developed in Aragon is about as close as you can get to libertarian communism."

The central and Catalan governments did not recognize the Aragonese Councils.2 With the help of Durruti and the soldiers of his column, federations of self-managed villager collectives began to form in the region, which finally took shape at a congress in Caspe in February 1937.

But while the Revolution was in the ascendant in Aragon, in other parts of the Republic its development was slowing down. State power intensified its efforts to control revolutionary spontaneity, and the leadership of the CNT did nothing to prevent this from happening.

On October 9 the Catalan government issued a decree about the dissolution of all local committees and various administrative, cultural, and other organs created after July 20 1936. In their place, the Generalitat instituted new communal councils, the members of which were not elected, but delegated by the movements and parties which were taking part in the regional government. Failure to observe this decree was equated with treason with regard to the State. However in practice many revolutionary committees ignored the decree and were unwilling to give up their power to the new organs. A "dual power" system persisted for several months at the local level, until the revolutionary organs gave up, mainly because of constant pressure from the CNT which appealed to its own members to observe the government decree.

The central government of Largo Caballero issued a whole series of decrees which stipulated the restoration of military discipline, a command hierarchy, codes of punishment for their violation, and also aimed at assimilating the militias into the

regular army. On September 30 a decree was issued according to which on October 10 militia detachments of the Central Front were to be converted to regular military units; the conversion was to take place on October 20 on the remaining fronts. On October 21 the government published a decree about the creation of a regular army. The government's decision ignited a storm of indignation in the anarcho-syndicalist columns and militias. "If we deprive the war of all its revolutionary content, its ideas of social transformation…, then there is nothing left except a war for independence [of Spain], which … is no longer … a revolutionary war for a new society," was stated in a declaration of internationalist soldiers of the anarchist "Ascaso" column.

The CNT militias in central Spain accused the government of trying to fetter the proletariat with "new chains," and described the restoration of the army as a "typical tactic of authoritarianism" and the entrenchment of militarism as "an integral part of fascism." They called the restoration of the army "a return to the past" and threatened the working class would not stand for the loss of that for which it had shed its blood. Durruti himself made it clear in an interview he had no objection to bolstering conscious discipline nor instituting a unified command (referring to the ongoing opposition of the communist columns to attempts at unification), but at the same time he did not intend to observe any military ranks, salutes, drills, or code of punishment. He continued to insist that in a revolutionary war, volunteer corps, made up of people who understood what they were fighting for, were extremely effective. In September – October 1936 soldiers of the anarchist "Iron Column" took part in sensational incidents in Valencia. They withdrew from the Front and made their way to the rear areas, where they demanded the break up and disarming of the State's reserve formations and the dispatch of their members to the Front. Meanwhile the CNT leadership confirmed its commitment to militias in princi-

Although anarcho-syndicalism was, first and foremost, an urban rather than a rural movement, the Revolution in the Spanish village on the whole went further than in the cities, where government pressure and concessions were more effective. Here the associations which were created (collectives) embraced not only the realm of production, but other spheres of life as well. Members of the collectives voluntarily combined their own land with the land seized from the estate owners and often pooled their own financial resources. Each family preserved a small garden exclusively for their own needs. The rights of those who wished to continue to work their land on an individual basis were usually respected, so long as they promised to do so only with their own efforts, without using hired labour. It's difficult to exclude the possibility of moral pressure on "individuals" by fellow-villagers, but cases of direct physical compulsion were virtually unknown in the saga of Spanish "collectivization."

The collectives often included all the inhabitants of a village or at least the overwhelming majority of them. In many collectives "family allowances" were introduced.

Monetary wealth was expropriated by revolutionary committees and deposited in banks. Some places issued their own money or coupons. Committees took over distribution, and prices were established collectively and controlled. Collective warehouses and stores were organized; frequently they were accommodated in former churches.

Social transformations were uncoordinated and took various forms. Often this was connected with peculiarities of the structure of land ownership. If in Aragon 80% of cultivated land belonged to large landowners, then in the Levant (Valencia region) and Catalonia small land-holdings predominated. And although there were a good many anarchists among these small owners, who also began to create collectives, there were greater obstacles in their path in the Levant and Catalonia. In these regions only the lands of the large estate owners were

Chapter 14: Notwithstanding "Circumstances"

Many researchers who belong to the Marxist tendency have attempted to lay all the blame for the defeat of the Spanish Revolution on the anarcho-syndicalist movement, maintaining that the governmental collaboration of leaders of the CNT and FAI was a consequence of anarchist ideology which rejects the taking of political power by the workers.1 However such a viewpoint is untenable. First of all, anarchist conceptions not only repudiate the creation of new, "proletarian" political authorities, but also envisage the liquidation of the old – a process which the leaders of the CNT acted to prevent. In any event, they acted in the way they did not "because of " libertarian theory, but in spite of it.

Besides, it is incorrect to assert that the anarcho-syndicalist masses of Spain refused to carry out the social revolution only because their "leaders" called on them to put an end to the revolutionary process. The facts show that the hundreds of thousands of rank-and-file members of the CNT and FAI, who played an outstanding role in the organization of workers' and peasants' self-management, "did not consider themselves constrained by political maneuvering," but took action independently at the level of the enterprise, the syndicate, or the commune without waiting for any orders or appeals. Namely, this autonomous creativity "from below" did not depend on the "leaders" and often took place in spite of them, thereby proving the power of the anarchist "ideé-force."

ple, but tried to get its fighters to comply with the government decision.

The Republican authorities began to ratchet up the pressure on self-management in industry and in the rural economy. The government of Largo Caballero ordered the nationalization of the war industry, placing it under control of the State bureaucracy. She The anarcho-syndicalist Fabregas, becoming minister of the economy in the Generalitat, on October 2 appealed to the workers to refrain from further expropriations of enterprises; his appeal was not heeded, at least in the beginning. However on October 24 in Catalonia a decree was approved which, on the one hand, legalized industrial collectivizations but, on the other hand, exempted small businesses with hired labour and a portion of medium sized businesses. The decree introduced the position of director (elected by the workers' committee, it's true) as well as State control over self-managed enterprises, especially in large-scale industry. Here a compromise with the State had already been effected through the direct participation of the leadership of the CNT, which was pursuing a policy of "legalizing the Revolution." As far as the rural economy was concerned, a decree of October 7 1936, signed by the communist Uribe, minister of agriculture in the Largo Caballero government, recognized as legal only the confiscation of land belonging to estate owners who were considered mutineers. Thus many agrarian collectives which had seized large estates now found themselves outside the law.

In October 1936 H. Prieto, the General Secretary of the CNT, carried on negotiations about the entry of the union federation into the Republican government. He demanded six positions for the CNT, but Largo Caballero would agree to allocate only four to the anarcho-syndicalists. As a precursor to the agreement, on October 25 1936 a pact was signed about unity of action between the Catalan regional organizations of the CNT and the UGT, and also between the FAI and the pro-Soviet Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC). This pact

stipulated that the collectivization of the economy must be directed and coordinated by the Generalitat. It also specified the municipalization of housing, the introduction of a unified military command, compulsory mobilization into the militias (with the intention of transforming them subsequently into a "people's army"), the introduction of workers' control, the nationalization of banks, and the establishment of State control over banking operations. There was special emphasis on the necessity of struggle with "undisciplined groups," i.e. with independent initiatives from below.

In order to put pressure on the government of Largo Caballero, the leaders of the CNT had recourse to threats.

On October 23 1936 a plenum of the regional CNT federations of Central Spain, Valencia, Aragon, Catalonia, and Andalusia discussed the National Committee's report about confronting the government "concerning our participation in the leadership of the struggle against fascism and in the structure of the political-economic life of the Revolution."

The resolution adopted reflected the inconsistency and vacillation of the anarcho-syndicalist activists: for them it was not a matter about the "cost" of taking power (as it was, probably, for H. Prieto himself and a number of the other "leaders"), but rather was about an attempt to alter the correlation of forces in their favour. The resolution represented essentially an ultimatum to the government of the Republic.

The plenum decided to create a commission of representatives of the regional organizations of Valencia, Central Spain, and Catalonia to engage in talks with President M. _____, "in order to explain to the crisis-ridden government the necessity … of having the CNT join it … under the conditions approved by the plenum of regional organizations of September 15." The commission was instructed to wait up to 48 hours for an answer. In the case of a negative response, the CNT threatened to undertake "measures of a military character, in order to secure communication between Madrid, Valencia, Aragon, Andalusia,

authorities, the leading circles of the movement until the end of the Civil War remained hostages to the notions of "antifascist unity" and "the lesser evil." In April 1938 the CNT again occupied a second tier government post – the Ministry of Education and Public Health.

The whole tactic of "postponing" or "restraining" the social revolution for the sake of victory in the Civil War between the bourgeois-republican and fascist camps turned out to be unfavourable even for the outcome of the war itself.

Events showed it was impossible to win by fighting a normal or even "antifascist" war, by means of a regular army and a militarized State, following all the rules of military expertise.

Only the Spanish workers could defeat Francoism, workers who were full of hope in July 1936 and had, as Durruti said, "a new world in our hearts" while defending their revolutionary conquests. "We knew," acknowledged D. Abad de Santillan after the defeat, "that our cause could not triumph without winning the war. We sacrificed the Revolution, not understanding that this sacrifice entailed renouncing the real goals of the war." With nothing to fight for, the masses had already lost their revolutionary enthusiasm. It's no accident that by the beginning of 1939 desertion from the republican army had reach massive proportions, and there were even cases of fraternization between soldiers of the republican and Francoist troops.

1. In connection with the re-constitution of local organs of power in Aragon, the agrarian collectives of the region passed a resolution at their conference in February 1937 that these organs must not interfere in the economy of the Federation of collectives.

of the CNT and FAI, fearing the collapse of "antifascist unity," convinced the workers to abandon the barricades. After this the "republican counterrevolution" went on the counterattack: Largo Caballero – the supporter of compromise – was dismissed from the post of Premier, the representatives of the CNT and FAI were removed from their posts in the central and Catalan governments, the Council of Defense of Aragon was dissolved by a government decree in August 1937, and republican troops under the command of a member of the Communist Party, Enrique Lister, destroyed a large part of the rural communes of the region. In the course of the second half of 1937-1938, the government of Juan Negrín approved a number of decrees which dissolved unregistered agrarian collectives, placed the remaining ones under State control, and also (under the pretext of wartime necessity) gradually reduced the sphere of workers' self-management in industry – to the point where a large part of industry was either nationalized or militarized. Thousands of anarcho-syndicalists were arrested as "undisciplined elements." The leaders of the CNT and FAI offered virtually no resistance to this assault on the workers' movement, continuing to proclaim the necessity of "first of all, winning the war with fascism." But discord was growing in the leadership of these organizations. By and large, while the majority of the leading figures of the Peninsular Committee of the FAI continued to affirm they had not retreated one step from traditional anarcho-syndicalist ideas and would revert to their implementation after the victorious end of the war, at the same time people around the National Committee of the CNT, starting with the general secretary Vasquez and the éminence gris H. Prieto, increased their efforts to review a number of fundamental conceptions of anarcho-syndicalism from the social-democratic perspective of "workers' democracy" with a "mixed economy." They favoured the transformation of the FAI into a political party, controlling the CNT. In spite of internal disputes about the scale and extent of concessions to the political

and Catalonia and to control the passage of people and supplies from these regions to Madrid." To carry out this decision the National Committee was to appoint a National War Council to unify the fronts in Catalonia, Aragon, the Levant, and Andalusia. The CNT, together with the regional committees, proposed to mobilize 100,000 of its members for this Council. The confederation intended "to organize together with all our regional forces an action which would allow us to obtain control over the economy and the coordination of reserves." At the same time, it was decided "to consult with diplomatic representatives of Russia, in the event this is necessary to achieve the carrying out of the decisions adopted at this plenum."

The threats of the CNT were a bluff, as Largo Caballero understood perfectly, not to mention the USSR which was supporting his plans. As Abad de Santillan later acknowledged, in an article published in the newspaper Tierra y Libertad, at this time he was already convinced of the necessity of a "disciplined army" for the struggle with fascism and a "transitional State."

In the final account, an agreement was reached according to which the CNT received four positions in the government with the proviso that it could appoint its own candidates. Their selection was made behind closed doors by H. Prieto himself, without even informing the National Committee. Juan López and Juan Peiró, representatives of the moderate wing of the CNT, were simply told over the phone by Prieto that they were appointed ministers of trade and industry, respectively. The FAI members Montseny and García Oliver had to be persuaded, and for this purpose Prieto travelled to Barcelona. Montseny at first refused to take up a ministerial post, however Prieto and the secretary of the Catalan regional organization of the CNT, Mariano Vasquez, insisted.

Then she asked for 24 hours to think it over and sought the advice of her father – the old anarchist Federico Urales. He told her that this meant "the liquidation of anarchism and the CNT,"

but that if the organization demanded it, then, taking account of the circumstances, it was necessary to agree.

When the discussion with Prieto was taken up again, the General Secretary reminded her about her responsibility to the organization, and Montseny gave her consent although, in her own words, it was painful for her to take this step which represented "a break with the whole course of her life." García Oliver also did not immediately agree to join the government. Up to now he had been considered one of the radicals. He was more swayed by tactical considerations: he did not wish to leave Barcelona where he was playing a key role in organizing the war effort. But in the end he gave in and agreed, although he insisted on the responsibility of the National Committee of the CNT for his action. Although subsequently García Oliver maintained he had only obeyed the decision of his organization, in reality from this moment on he became a fervent partisan of collaboration with political parties and tendencies.

Returning to Madrid, Prieto settled the last details with Largo Caballero. On November 4 1936 rank-and-file members of the CNT and FAI were amazed to learn from the newspapers of the appearance in the Largo Caballero government of four new members from their organizations: minister of justice García Oliver, minister of industry J. Peiró, minister of trade López Sánchez, and minister of public health Montseny. The CNT leadership assured the members of the organization that these ministers would be expressing not their own personal views, but the positions of their organization, the "collective will of the majority of the united toiling masses, previously formulated at general assemblies."3

This line of argument was in stark contradiction to the anti-statist ideals of anarchism, which always considered the State as an instrument of oppression and class rule. In an article it was maintained that "circumstances had altered the essence of the government and the Spanish State": "The government in the current situation has ceased to be the main instrument

Some of the decrees he came up with (for example, prison terms of up to 20 years for hiding weapons or explosives) were used against the anarchists themselves in Barcelona after May 1937.

Under the cover of "sharing responsibilities" with the CNT and FAI, the Spanish and Catalan republican authorities were able, during the period when the labour federations were represented in the government, to proceed to carry out counter-revolutionary measures such as liquidation of the popular militias and their complete replacement by the regular army (January 29 1937) – which, as the subsequent course of the war proved, was much less battle-worthy; the dissolution of revolutionary committees and local councils through the whole country, replacing them with appointed organs (January 4 1937);1 and the elimination of workers' detachments for the maintenance of order in Catalonia (in favour of "disciplined patrols") (March 1937). The basic problem for the authorities in this period was the disarming of the workers. Efforts to relieve anarcho-syndicalist workers' organizations of frontier control in April 1937 led to fierce fighting in the Catalan border zone with France. Attacks by communists, right-wing socialists, and republicans on collectivization in the economy became more frequent; violent conflicts erupted between the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and the workers' collectives of the orange tree plantations of Valencia, created by the CNT and UGT; between the Catalan Ministry of Food Rationing and the Barcelona union of the CNT which was trying to socialize distribution; etc.

Finally in May 1937 a crisis, provoked by a police attack on the Barcelona telephone exchange (under workers' control), set off a mass uprising of the city's anarcho-syndicalist workers: the basic units of self-organization of the workers, just as in July 1936, were the block committees of defense. The anarcho-syndicalist masses succeeded in taking control of a large part of the city and the real possibility arose that the social revolution could become more profound. However the leadership

Chapter 13: The CNT in Government - Results and Lessons

The representatives of the CNT remained in the government until May 1937. The result of this "passage into power" turned out to be catastrophic for Spanish anarchosyndicalism. Its ministers were able neither to bring about an improvement in the military situation, nor stop the assault on the revolutionary conquests. Montseny publicly acknowledged the failure of participation in the government, and López stressed the impossibility of any kind of achievement in a situation where the other economic posts were in the hands of communists and right-wing socialists. The syndicalists were not able to obtain labour union control over "the monopoly of foreign trade" nor the adoption of their proposed drafts of decrees about collectivization in industry and financial assistance to collectives. A government decree of February 22 1937 envisaged the possibility of State control and ownership in industry.

Moreover, the activities of the "comrade-ministers," as the CNT-FAI members of the government were known in libertarian circles, not only represented a break with the fundamental principles and traditions of the movement, but also caused trouble for the anarchists. Thus, the judicial reforms of García Oliver included not only the awarding of equal rights to women and the abrogation of punishment for crimes committed before July 19 1936, but also eliminated such "libertarian" projects as the organization of "labour camps" for criminals.

of State rule, a force of oppression directed against the working class; just as the State is no longer an organ which divides society into classes. And both the government and the State, now that the CNT has entered into them, are still farther from oppressing the people." That last thought was entirely compatible with the thesis of supporters of state socialism according to which that it was "merely" necessary to place the State at the service "of the people as a whole" by staffing it with the representatives of the people themselves. "The CNT's entry into the central government," announced the article, "is one of the most important events in the political history of our country." Now "the functions of the State, with the concurrence of workers' organizations, will be restricted to directing the course of the economic and social life of the country. And the government will only have the task of conducting the war properly and coordinating revolutionary work according to a common plan." In a manifesto of the CNT National Committee, it was explained that consent to join the government was given in view of "the delicate situation of our military fronts." The confederation was striving for "the triumph of the Iberian proletarian revolution," "has never renounced and will never renounce its own tenets," and remained apolitical; but in view of the serious situation was compelled "to demand a position of responsibility in the government." The same tone was maintained in a manifesto of the CNT organization of the Central region: "The CNT in no way is renouncing its own program and its own principles. It agreed to enter the government only and exclusively in order to win the war."

On the day the CNT joined the government, Durruti made an address on the radio. Its text has not been preserved and the versions published in the press, according to the testimony of some witnesses, were subjected to heavy censorship and distorted. Marcos Alcon recalled that Durruti "made them [the responsible figures of the CNT and FAI] tremble with fear, declaring to them in an extraordinarily harsh way that they had not

succeeded in stifling the Revolution under the pretext of their insipid antifascism…" . This was the last speech by the leader of the anarchist radicals. Madrid was on the point of being captured by fascist troops, and the Republican government abandoned the city in a panic on November 6. Giving in to numerous entreaties, Durruti's column went to the aid of besieged Madrid and, in stubborn battles, helped to save it from falling. However Durruti himself was killed on November 19 1936 under mysterious circumstances. The opponents of concessions and governmental collaboration lost their most outstanding, iconic, and popular with the anarcho-syndicalist masses figure.

1. Details of these negotiations about the purchase of weapons are recounted in the report of the General Secretary to the IWA Congress of 1937, which is preserved in the archives of the International in the International Institute of Social History. See: IISG: IWMA Archive: Nr. 21, Extraordinary Congress, Paris, 1937, Rapport moral par P. Besnard, membre du Secretariat.

2. The Council of Defense for Aragon received official recognition by the central authorities at the end of December 1936 after the anarchists agreed to include representatives of other tendencies in its make-up.

3. V. Richards, op. cit., p. 69 (n219). It must be acknowledged that the members of the government from the CNT – FAI were able to carry out a number of transformations. Thus, on the initiative of F. Montseny, a free medical service was introduced throughout the whole Republican zone, new medical clinics were built, abortions were legalized, etc. Garcia Oliver achieved the legalization of "free" marriages, softened the regimen for prisons and concentration camps, etc. (For details, see: A. V. Shubin, Анархосиндакалисты в испанской гражданской войне 1936-1939 гг. [Anarcho-syndicalists in the Spanish civil war 1936-1939], (Moscow, 1997), pp. 17-18. Nevertheless, these measures had no connection with the anarcho-syndicalists' own program and did not correspond to their "identity."

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Spanish comrades to review their decisions and tactics and confirm their adherence to the principles of the IWA.

The "Francophone Anarchist Federation" (FAF), in which the Russian emigrant-anarchist Volin played a prominent role, declared its solidarity with the oppositional tendencies of the Spanish anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists which were struggling against the participation of the CNT in the government and the collaborationist line of its leadership. The FAF addressed itself to "the genuine CNT-FAI," to those Spanish anarchists who condemned "spinelessness" and "ideological betrayal," and declared that it considered "as inevitable a split in the ranks of the CNT and FAI themselves, as well as in the entire international anarchist movement."

Before the Extraordinary Congress of the IWA in 1937 there were even discussions about expelling the CNT from the International.

But the leadership of the CNT was able to paralyze the waves of critics by referring to the "extraordinary circumstances" in which the Spanish Revolution found itself, to the weakness of the anarcho-syndicalist movement in other countries, and the absence elsewhere of revolutionary outbreaks.

It succeeded in obtaining the removal of Besnard from the post of General Secretary of the IWA. Moreover, the CNT leadership demanded changes in the declaration of principles and statutes of the IWA so as to exclude "obsolete" points and add provisions concerning the armed defense of the Revolution and "sweeping autonomy" for the sections, which would allow them to pursue whatever tactical line they considered necessary. The anarcho-syndicalist groups of German emigrants, led by Rüdiger, went even further in this direction. They called for a fundamental revision of the ideas and tactics of anarcho-syndicalism, for a review of the declaration of principles in order to have it register the possibility of collaboration with other antifascist forces, as well as taking an anti-imperialist stance and expressing support for revolutionary wars. Rüdiger

spoke in favour of "elastic" tactics and a "clearer conception" which would include the necessity of political activities, "revolutionary" government, collaboration with statist and party organs, the creation of a disciplined "revolutionary army" and apparatus of repression, as well as retention of the bourgeoisie and safeguarding private property. However there was also no unity in the ranks of the critics of the CNT. The Swedish SAC condemned participation in government, but defended the policy of "antifascist co-operation" and also proposed to include in IWA documents a policy about the tactical autonomy of the sections. The French CGT-SR and Besnard sharply denounced "participation in democratic Capitalism," collaboration with the State, with parties, and with armies, and the rejection of basic principles of anarcho-syndicalism.

But these critics could not offer any clear alternatives and agreed to a certain "modification of tactics," and the inclusion in the declaration of principles of clauses about the possibility of revolutionary and anti-colonial wars. From another perspective, the Argentine and Uruguayan FORA and FORU took a resolute stance against changing the principles and tactics of the IWA, which were grounded in the struggle with the State and direct action, as well as the rejection of politics and collaboration with political forces. They called for the re-affirmation of opposition to all wars, since wars were inevitably tied to the struggle for power between different groups of capitalists, and for opposing war with revolution.

Finally, the Latin American anarchists made a clear statement that they saw no distinction in principle between fascism and non-class-based antifascism, i.e. the defense of democracy, since either one were "enemies of proletarian liberation."

This ideological and tactical confusion impeded the work of the IWA and allowed the leaders of the Spanish CNT to obtain approval of their course of action from the international organization. Although the Extraordinary Congress in December 1937 turned down the proposal of the Spanish delegation about

Archives:

SAPMO Stiftung Archive der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der

DDR (Berlin)

IISG International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam)

RGASPI Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (Moscow)

holding a meeting of "the three Internationals" and the creation of a permanent committee of representatives of all "three socialist schools" (anarchists, party communists, and social-democrats) for the struggle with fascism and imperialism, the participants adopted a resolution introduced by the CGT-SR which gave the right to the CNT to continue the "experiment" it had started "under its own responsibility." An appeal to the international association of social-democratic unions (the Amsterdam International) was drafted, with a proposal to organize a global boycott of ships and goods from fascist countries. However the leaders of this International rejected this overture.

Finally, at the 6th Congress in 1938, in the absence of Latin American delegates and representatives of the French CGT-SR, the delegates of Spain, Sweden, and Portugal succeeded, despite the opposition of the Dutch delegates, in revising the charter of the IWA. These alterations envisaged, among other things, the "broad tactical autonomy" of sections and control of the syndicates over workers' militias during revolutionary periods. The actions of the CGT-SR were officially condemned. The opinions of the FORA and FORU, expressed in written form in the absence of their delegates, were generally not taken into account.

The victory of the leaders of the CNT over their critics in the international arena could change nothing in the general situation and did not help to strengthen their position inside Spain. The war was lost. Early in 1939 the whole territory of the Spanish republic was under the control of the troops of the rebel generals. The bloody regime of terror was firmly established in the country, the CNT was annihilated, and hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee across the border. Individual armed groups of anarcho-syndicalists continued partisan struggle in Spain until the beginning of the 1960's.

In emigration, the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist movement found within itself the strength to give a self-critical evalua-

tion of its experience of "participation in government" during the Civil War and to draw the appropriate lessons.

The intercontinental conference of the "Spanish Libertarian Movement (CNT – FAI – Federation of Libertarian Youth), held in April 1947 in Toulouse, considered the "consequences of collaboration in government" "catastrophic" and announced the return to traditional anarchist concepts about the necessity of liquidating State power and its replacement by universal self-management by the workers.

IREAN Initsiativa revolyutsionnykh anarkhistov
Initiative of Revolutionary Anarchists
ISEL Industrial Syndicalist Education League
IWW Industrial Workers of the World
KAS Konfederatsiya anarkho-sindikalistov
Confederation of Anarcho-syndicalists
KPSS Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Sovetskogo Soyuza
Communist Party of the Soviet Union
KRAS Konfederatsiya revolyutsionnykh anarkho-sindikalistov
Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists
NAS Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat
National Labour Secretariat
NSV Nederlands Syndicalistisch Vakverbond
Netherlands Syndicalist Trade Union Federation
OBU One Big Union
PCE Partido Comunista de Espana
Communist Party of Spain
POUM Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista
Workers' Party of Marxist Unification
PSUC Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya
Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia
RKAS Rossiyskaya confederatsia anarcho-sindikalistov
Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists
RILU Red International of Labour Unions (Profintern)
SAC Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation
Central Organisation of the Workers of Sweden
UGT Union General de Trabajadores
General Workers' Union
UON Uniao Operaria Nacional
National Workers' Union
USI Unione Sindacale Italiana
Italian Syndicalist Union
VKPD Vereinigte Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
United Communist Party of Germany

National Confederation of Labour (French section of AIT)
CNT-f Confederation nationale du travail
National Confederation of Labour (CNT-Vignoles)
COB Confederacao Operaria Brasileira
Brazilian Workers Confederation
COM Casa del Obrero Mundial
House of the World Worker
CORA Confederacion Obrera Regional Argentina
Regional Workers' Confederation of Argentina
CPSU See "KPSS"
CROM Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana
Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers
CSR Comites syndicalistes revolutionnaires
Revolutionary Syndicalist Committees
FAF Federation anarchiste francophone
Francophone Anarchist Federation
FAI Federacion Anarquista Iberica
Iberian Anarchist Federation
FAUD Freie Arbeiter Union Deutschlands
Free Workers' Union of Germany
FIJL Federacion Iberica de Juventudes Libertarias
Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth
FOCH Federacion de Obreros de Chile
Federation of Chilean Workers
FORA Federacion Obrera Regional Argentina
Regional Workers' Federation of Argentina
FORU Federacion Obrera Regional Uruguayo
Regional Workers' Federation of Uruguay
FVdG Freie Vereinigung deutscher Gewerkschaften
Free Association of German Trade Unions
GCOM Gran Circulo de Obreros de Mexico
Great Circle of Mexican Workers
ISNTUC International Secretariat of the National Centers of Trade
Unions

Part 4: Decline and Possible Regeneration

Chapter 16: Anarcho-Syndicalism during the Second World War

Several months after the defeat in Spain, the Second World War broke out – completely paralyzing the activity of the IWA. The FORA, disturbed by the decisions of the 1938 congress, resolved to "temporarily cease to have relations with the IWA," until the next congress re-examined these decisions.

The Argentine and Uruguayan anarchists continued to insist the functions of syndicates must cease as soon as revolution took place and, as a consequence, they rejected the notion of syndicalist control over working class militias.

They objected to cooperation with the State and political parties under the pretext of "tactical autonomy," to the decisions of the 1938 congress about introducing proportional representation of sections at IWA congresses (instead of the previous equality), and to the creation of a special world federation of syndicalist youth.

As far as World War II was concerned, both FORA and FORU confirmed their previous anti-war and anti-militarist position: the war was taking place between different groups of States and capitalists which were fighting for their own rule and privileges. In no way did the war correspond to the interests and hopes of people struggling for freedom and justice. Antifascism, according to the anarchists of Latin America, serves only as a screen for the interests of Capital of one of the groups of warring States. Therefore they called upon workers not to

The anarcho-syndicalist International is commonly referred to by one of

several acronyms:

IWA International Workers' Association (English, used in this book)

AIT Association Internationale des Travailleurs (French)

Asociacion Internacional de los Trabajadores (Spanish)

IAA Internationale Arbeiter-Assoziation (German)

MAT Mezhdunarodnaya Assotsiatsiya Trudyashchikhsya (Russian)

AAUD-E Allgemeine Arbeiter-Union Deutschlands-Einheits-organisation

General Workers Union of Germany – Unitary Organization

CCMA Comite Central de las Milicias Antifascistas de Cataluna

Central Committee of Antifascist Militias of Catalonia

CDS Comite de defense syndicaliste

Committee of Syndicalist Defense

CGL Confederazione Generale del Lavoro

General Confederation of Labor

CGT Confederation generale du travail

General Confederation of Labour

CGT Confederacao Geral do Trabalho

General Confederation of Labour (Portguese)

CGT Confederacion General de Trabajadores

General Confederation of Workers (Mexican)

CGT-SR Confederation generale du travail - syndicaliste revolutionnaire

General Confederation of Labour - Revolutionary Syndicalist

CGTU Confederation generale du travail unitaire - Unitary General Confederation of Labour

CNT Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo

National Confederation of Labour

CNT-AIT Confederation nationale du travail

Acronyms

support the war under the banner and pretext of antifascism. Instead they advanced the slogan: "Neither Fascism, nor Antifascism." Appealing for intensified antiwar and antimilitarist activity, they announced: "The unique solution to the war, in fact to all wars – is the revolutionary union of peoples."

In Europe itself during the Second World War the anarchosyndicalists on the whole were too weak to exert themselves as an independent force. In France the CGT-SR, with 6,000 members at the end of the 1930's, was dissolved, while the syndicalist and anarchist organizations of Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, and Denmark were outlawed following the occupation of these countries by the Nazis. The IWA Secretariat was located in Sweden and was deprived of almost all contact with libertarians in the belligerent nations.

The majority of the libertarian organizations at the very beginning of the war took a position which they termed "internationalist," by analogy with the traditional slogans of revolutionary leftists about the transformation of imperialist war into social revolution. A declaration of the IWA Secretariat pointed out that "the war is the result of the capitalist system," an "expression of the cruel competition between groups of capitalists for raw materials, colonies, and markets," and the "struggle of imperialist States to ensure their influence and control over the world and its riches in the interests of their own group of States." The IWA perceived fascism as "the cruelest form of capitalism" and "Enemy No. 1 of humanity," but also called upon workers not to trust thedemocracies, since "they are soft on reaction, soft on bloody wars," and "cannot guarantee peace." "… If humanity wants to live a free life and liberate itself from constant wars, it must get rid of Capitalism…," said the IWA in its declaration.

"The war between nations must be transformed into a war between classes. The international working class must act with all its energy to liquidate Capitalism." Declarations in the same spirit were issued by anarchist and anarchosyndicalist organi-

zations in France, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Belgium.1 But in reality a significant number of anarchists soon abandoned this position and began to orient themselves towards the struggle with Fascism as "the greatest evil." Many German anarcho-syndicalists in emigration, using the Swedish syndicalists as a go-between, co-operated with the intelligence services of the Western powers. French anarchists participated in the Résistance. In Poland syndicalists and anarchists called for the "defense of the country" (although "not jointly with the bourgeoisie"), and created their own partisan detachments, which were then merged with the partisan detachments of the socialists in the "Polish People's Army" and took an active part in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. In Italy and Bulgaria the anarchists formed their own partisan detachments which engaged in battles with the armed forces of the Fascist regimes. While participating in the creation of underground territorial and workplace organs, the Italian anarchists at the same time tried to preserve their organizational independence from political parties and groups. They took part in the Resistance and assisted in preparing and conducting strikes which were directed not only against the fascists and the German authorities, but also against Italian entrepreneurs.

"Active operations were accompanied by ongoing efforts to work out the appropriate strategy for the current phase of events (the struggle against Nazism-Fascism) which could broaden the situation into a possible revolution," noted one researcher. "The proposal for a 'United Front of Working People'..., addressed to worker activists and rank-and-file members of left-wing parties, was... part of a project which regarded the original underground organs of the Resistance as elements of a counter-power in the spirit of anarchism and Workers' Councils. The participation... of anarchists in Factory Committees must be viewed in this light, rather than as a concession to the democratic program of the liberation struggle as a second Risorgimento."

almost no attention to the internal development and activity of syndicalist organizations in individual countries, their participation in revolutionary events and strikes, and their accomplishments in the elaboration of ideological-theoretical ideas. Moreover, Thorpe makes almost no use of material from Soviet archives and archives of Communist parties.

In attempting to compensate to some extent for these deficiencies, Thorpe and the Dutch historian M. van der Linden published in 1990 the collection Revolutionary Syndicalism: an International Perspective, which was the first attempt to pull together articles about the development of revolutionary syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism in France, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Great Britain, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Argentina, Mexico, the U.S.A., and Canada.

This collection includes Thorpe's article: "Syndicalist Internationalism before World War II" with a brief survey of the history of the IWA up to 1939. The obvious value of the book consists in the fact that its editors invited the participation of the leading specialists in the history of syndicalist movements in individual countries. At the same time, the story of the anarcho-syndicalist International is covered in a very general way, and scarcely delves into the concrete moments in its work and activity; the analysis of ideological discussions is virtually absent. The articles on individual countries are relatively brief, and vary substantially in the level with which various aspects are dealt with; in some cases essential moments of the movement are covered in insufficient depth or not even mentioned at all.

Thus it can be said that a general history of the rise of the international anarcho-syndicalist movement – treated as an integral, global phenomenon and taking into account the mutual influence of international and national factors and social-revolutionary processes in individual countries – has yet to be written.

Little work has been done on the history of the anarchosyndicalist International – the International Workers' Association (IWA). Mainly there are some small pamphlets written by members of either the Secretariat of the International or anarchosyndicalist organizations. In them one finds a demonstration of the origins of the IWA in the First International (at least its antiauthoritarian wing), and the continuity in positions between the two organizations. Much attention is devoted to the confrontation with Bolshevism in the 1920's, and brief overviews of the congresses of the anarcho-syndicalist International and their resolutions are given. In these condensed outlines there is simply no room for detailed analyses of the course of events and their causes.

There are also some articles of greater scientific value by researchers who are sympathetic to anarchist attitudes. But such works are few in number and only deal with isolated moments in the history of the movement.

The Canadian historian W. Thorpe has made a noteworthy contribution to the history of the creation of the Berlin International. In collaboration with the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, he published an article about the London conference of syndicalists in 1913, followed by a fundamental investigation of the international contacts of revolutionary syndicalists before the First World War, their differentiation from Bolshevism, and the processes which led ultimately to the creation of the Berlin International. Thorpe's work includes a general survey of syndicalism in the world prior to the First World War and an analysis of the discussions among syndicalists about setting up an international strategy. In a convincing manner he describes the dilemma which confronted syndicalism in connection with the attempts of Communist parties to subordinate trade unions to their party line. Finally, Thorpe traces the establishment of an international association of anarcho-syndicalists using materials from their meetings, conferences, and congresses. Unfortunately, his work devotes

We have knowledge about at least one attempt at organizing armed struggle undertaken by anarchists in Ukraine. A former participant in the Makhnovist movement, Osip Tsebry, returned to the country illegally in 1942 and organized a partisan detachment in the Kiev region. In the tradition of its predecessors, it acted against both Germany and the USSR, until it was defeated by German forces in 1943.

In Hungary small groups of anarchist student youth took part in partisan detachments and organized acts of sabotage in Budapest at the end of 1944. Anarchists and anarchosyndicalists of the Netherlands and Belgium put forward a position for a "Third Front," that is, against both warring sides; they agitated for civil disobedience and the organization of a workers' movement independent of political parties.

The Spanish anarchists after losing the war with the Francoists remained in a state of disunity, split between supporters of continued collaboration with antifascist forces and those who were favour of a return to traditional anarchist positions and against participation in any kind of coalition with antifascist or republican statist structures. The traditionalists considered the Second World War as a purely inter- Capitalist conflict and proposed that "in the case of open conflict between the French Resistance and the Germans, activists of the Confederation should seek shelter among the civilian population." Those who advised continuing the alliance with the republican forces called upon Spanish anarchist-emigrants to join the French Resistance. The Spanish libertarians continued an underground struggle on the Iberian peninsula and tried to organize the assassinations of Franco and Hitler.

The French anarchists occupied an internationalist position. A particularly active role was played by a group in Marseille, gathered around Vsevolod Volin and André Arru. It distributed leaflets with an appeal to workers to act not only against German and Italian Fascism, but also against Soviet Stalinism and the democratic Capitalism of the West as well as against the

slogan "national liberation," seen as an attempt to unify the ruling and oppressed classes. The Marseilles group, agitating for social revolution and known under the name "International Revolutionary-syndicalist Federation," became a centre of attraction for other anarchist groups throughout the whole country. The British anarchists also spoke out against the imperialist war which was being sold as a struggle between fascism and democracy.

They carried on active anti-war agitation, supported the strike movement, and tried to organize Soldiers' Councils in the British Army.

1. Delo truda – Probyzhdeniye, 1940, no.1, Yanvar – Fevral, pp. 7-12. Characteristically, a "group of Belgium, Spanish, Italian, French, and German anarchists" expressed its disagreement with the fact that the IWA manifesto considered fascism to be "Enemy No. 1." In their declaration they said: "The enemy today, like yesterday and even more so tomorrow, is our bosses. And our Enemy No. 1 is the State – the Government, its organs of suppression, the official and semi-official institutions which support it, the Army, the Bureaucracy, the Church – all the perpetual accomplices in the oppression of freedom and individuality." (cited in: Service de presse. AIT., 1939, no.14).

The decline of mass radicalism in the workers' movement (including anarcho-syndicalism) facilitated, in the opinion of a number of scholars, the rise of the "Social State" which took shape in the second third of the 20th century; thanks to this political development, the centre of social conflicts shifted from the sphere of production (and the battle for control over it) to the sphere of distribution and consumption. Workers relied more and more on the social and distributive role of the State and were less inclined to concur with the stateless alternative of the anarchists. Looked at from this point of view, the decrease in popularity of anarcho-syndicalism in the second half of the 20th century cannot be seen as "irreversible," especially in light of the current crises of the "Social State" and the "Fordist model."

In analyzing the "common" factors favouring the rise of revolutionary syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism as a global movement in the first decades of the 20th century, historians can not forget the special features of individual countries and regions. These include the forms and models of organization, social basis, ideological tendency, emergent themes and problems, relationship to political parties, and, above all, the focus of labour union or social-cultural work.

On the whole one can say that the international anarchosyndicalist and revolutionary syndicalist movement has been studied in a very uneven manner. Along with a large number of monographs on the history of syndicalism in Memories of Class (London, 1982); et al. a few countries, there are only a few articles or pamphlets dealing with other countries. Of the various themes which have been studied in only a cursory fashion, one can mention ideological discussions, the organizational life of anarchosyndicalist unions and federations, and their international connections and relationships with the anarcho-syndicalist International. Issues concerning the social basis and historical place of anarcho-syndicalism in the history of the workers' movement continue to be contentious.

G. Haupt, L. Peterson, P. Lösche, W. Thorpe, M. van der Linden, and others) tend to interpret it in the context of the general transition from liberal to "organized" capitalism which was characterized by a high degree of State intervention. Radical protest, in their opinion, was directed not so much against the concentration of workers in large enterprises, as against the deskilling of labour. At the same time they try to take into consideration the appearance of new strata of workers who are not satisfied with the previous relations and forms of organization of the working class, originating in the 19th century. These discontented categories believe that centralized trade unions and the political, parliamentary activities of the socialists are insufficient in themselves to defend their interests and needs. But these historians have failed to show a direct dependency between the scale of enterprises and the spread of syndicalist attitudes. The syndicalist movement pulled together very different strata of workers who rejected the authoritarian structures taking shape in the workplace.

Finally, some authors are inclined to view the rise of the revolutionary syndicalist and anarcho-syndicalist movement in the first decades of the 20th century in the context of the history of the establishment and development of industrialcapitalist civilization itself – as a form of resistance against it and an effort to counterpoise to it a different, alternative model of society, based on self-management and a distinctive working-class culture. The introduction in the 20th century of the "Fordist-Taylorist" model of mass production, based on the division of labour into a series of discrete operations and the severe limiting of initiative, undermined the sense of wholeness of the production process and, consequently, any conception of the possibility of controlling it. This led to, among other things, the collapse of working class radicalism and then a decline in the workers' movement as such and the "dissolution" of working-class culture.

Chapter 17: Anarcho-syndicalism After World War II

Despite the hopes of the anarchists, World War II did not develop into social revolution; on the contrary, it led to the strengthening of national States and the establishment in Western Europe of a system of social partnership within the framework of "democratic corporatism" – collaboration between government, corporations, and trade unions. In Eastern Europe there were dictatorial regimes led by communist parties.

The East European governments suppressed all attempts to revive the libertarian movement. In Bulgaria in 1944 the Federation of Anarchist-Communists was re-established and in 1946 – a National Confederation of Labour. By 1947 there were 11,000 anarchists in the country (including 1,000 anarcho-syndicalists). But soon the libertarian organizations were banned and broken up, and their leading activists arrested.

In East Germany hundreds of members of anarchist and libertarian-socialist groups were arrested in 1948-1949, and the leader of the movement Willi Jelinek was murdered in prison in March 1952. The Polish syndicalist organizations which sprang up during the war years ceased to function after 1944, and in Hungary the anarchists were completely crushed after the strike of the "Csepel" workers, which was partially under their influence.

The anarcho-syndicalists of Spain and Portugal continued to struggle in the deep underground. The CNT tried to re-

establish illegal syndicates while some activists preferred armed struggle with the Franco regime. Heavy repressions prevented the organization from rebuilding and it was set back again and again. The situation was complicated by a split in the CNT after 1946: one part of the organization rejected the mistakes committed during the period of revolution, while the other part insisted on a united front with other anti-Francoist forces; as a result the organization lapsed into a deep crisis. Unity was re-established only in 1960. Under these conditions the main burden of work was placed on the Spanish anarchist emigration in France where in the 1940's there were no fewer than 30,000 members of the Confederation, issuing various newspapers and journals.

Under the conditions of the Salazar dictatorship the activity of the Portuguese CGT gradually died down; the activity of underground syndicates and issuing of illegal publications came to an end in the 1960's.

The anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists of South America found themselves under heavy pressure from State power.

In 1946 the Argentine FORA could still come up with 3,000 people for a May 1 demonstration. It offered stubborn resistance to the regime of General J. Perón, organizing, despite restrictions and prohibitions, strikes of bakers and dockers in 1946-1948 and demonstrating against interference by the State in labour conflicts. However in the following years the shutting down of independent labour unions and libertarian publications struck the movement with new blows. The influx of new members into the organization almost stopped, and contact with the new generation of social activists did not come about. The veterans faded away but there was no one to replace them. In neighbouring Uruguay the FORU shrank to small groups. At the beginning of the 1950's the Chilean CGT and the Local Labour Federation of La Paz in Bolivia ceased to exist: they were forced to join unified national labour union centrals.

workers is not confirmed by the facts. The characterization of anarchism as a utopian, petty-bourgeois movement cannot explain why it enjoyed popularity among significant strata of workers in very different countries of the world. A concrete-historical investigation shows that syndicalism attracted not only skilled and handicraft workers (in the construction and metalworking trades) who were afraid of losing the value of their skill as a result of the introduction of new technologies and methods of organizing labour, but also workers who had received industrial training, and young, unskilled migrant-workers who had been drawn into production as a result of an industrial boom or a restructuring of production for military ends and who were ignored by "traditional" unions.

A number of authors have raised doubts about the legitimacy of the linear conception of the development of the workers' movement, which associates radical activities and decentralized forms of organization with "backwardness."

They note that handicraft and communal traditions of the "early" workers' movement facilitated the formation of attitudes which could lead to and in fact led to more class-conscious, independent activity on the part of the workers. This class-consciousness included such elements as a conception of the social significance of labour, a striving for more independence and responsibility in the production process, and the desire to control the production process and its results.

The thesis about the "Romance" character of anarchosyndicalism as such also denied the facts. Researchers have shown that revolutionary syndicalism and working class anarchism propagated to very different countries and regions of the world – not only to Romanic, but also to Englishspeaking, Germanic, Slavic, and Asiatic. This forces the assumption that at the basis of the given phenomenon there must lie certain common causal factors.

Historians who have attempted a comparative analysis of the syndicalist movement in different countries (P. Schöttler,

countries where, at the beginning of the 20th century, handicraft or semi-handicraft production still predominated (in France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Latin America, etc.). The presence of certain customs and traditions supposedly led to "weak" self-discipline and the spread of insurrectionary methods of "direct action," instead of the practice of collective bargaining between the enterprises and the workers. Correspondingly, the development of large-scale industry was viewed as a factor which led to the spread of Marxist ideas within the working class. As a result, a new type of trade union was established, based not on resolute opposition to enterprises and the contesting of their powers as such, but on negotiations and the pursuit of coordinated efforts to assure the functioning of production.

A contrast to this point of view, based to a significant extent on technical-economic determinism, emphasized in the first instance the particularism of individual countries, differences in culture and mentality, forms and functions of the State, and traditions of class resistance. In connection with this, a thesis was put forward according to which syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism were perceived as above all "Romance" phenomena, peculiar to Romanic peoples (French, Spaniards, Latin Americans, etc.). It's interesting that such a position has traditionally been upheld by many syndicalists, as well as a number of social-democratic authors (M. Adler, W. Sombart). Some historians to this day are inclined to make a comparison between the pragmatic (Anglo-Saxon) and social-democratic (continental) tendency in the trade union movement with the Romance-syndicalist tendency, which is characterized as having a lower level of self-discipline, less responsibility in the handling of the members' dues, and a weakness for radical forms of action.

The majority of researchers nowadays eschew "extreme" points of view and call for the study of various factors and circumstances. The thesis about anarcho-syndicalism as a manifestation of "lack of consciousness" and "backwardness" of

In the majority of countries of Western Europe anarchosyndicalists after the war had the possibility of legal activity.

But the revival of the anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist movements on a massive scale did not occur. Only in France for a brief moment did things take off: the National Confederation of Labour (CNT) united several tens of thousands of workers (mainly in Paris, Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Toulouse). But the organization soon began to experience great material difficulties and a dearth of staunch activists. The majority of workers who joined it soon left for other, more moderate labour unions, and the French anarchists regarded anarchosyndicalism as a factor which was splitting the workers' movement. Soon the French CNT shrank to the scale of small labour union initiatives. The anarchist movement of Italy also took a position for trade union unity and against a special anarcho-syndicalist union movement. The re-organization of the formerly powerful USI was announced only in 1950, but it remained an insignificant organization. The ranks of the Swedish SAC remained relatively numerous, but the numbers also fell from 22,000 in 1945 to 16,000 in 1957.

"The most profound explanation of the disappearance of syndicalism as a mass movement must take into consideration not only transitory factors, such as government repression, but also changes in capitalist society," justly noted the historians M. Van der Linden and W. Thorpe. First of all, one should note carefully R. Rocker's warning about the negative influence on working class radicalism of the rationalization of capitalist production. Actually, as researchers have noted, beginning from the 1920's and really taking off after the Second World War, the automation of production processes, the symbol of which was the introduction of the conveyor belt, favoured the extreme specialization and division of labour into partial operations. The new social type of "mass specialized worker" had no sense of production as a whole and therefore did not press demands to take full control over it. The axis of social contra-

diction was displaced from the sphere of production with its problems of the content of labour and the independence of the producer to the sphere of distribution of the produced surplus product and consumption. This corresponded to a decline in the radical workers' movement, which had arisen as an alternative to the industrial-Capitalist system and was oriented to the struggle for control by the workers over production.

Parallel to these developments was the growing tendency towards State interference in the economic and social sphere, which after the Second World War led to the formation of a model of the "Social State" or "Welfare State." The Keynsian policy of stimulating purchasing power led to an increase in prosperity of workers in the developed Capitalist countries and gave the workers a vested interest in the functioning of the system as a whole and expectations of satisfying their growing consumer needs within the framework of a "social partnership" model.1 The new realities, as researchers have noted, confronted the syndicalist organizations with "only three possibilities, each of which would have disastrous consequences for them.

The movement could: (1) continue to maintain its own principles – in which case it would be subject to inevitable marginalization; (2) completely change course to accommodate themselves to the new conditions – in which case they would have to renounce syndicalist principles; (3) if the first two possibilities were rejected, either dissolve themselves or, what amounts to the same thing, join a non-syndicalist labour union."

The IWA went the first way, waiting for the moment when conditions for the anarcho-syndicalist movement would become more favourable again, and its ideas would again find resonance in society. Taking up its work anew after the Second World War, it provided a home for Spanish revolutionary-emigrants, small labour unions, and action groups in a number of European and Latin American countries. After the Spanish CNT in exile adopted a decision about a return to the anar-

Great Britain before the First World War was an isolated, temporary episode which did not play an important role in the history of the British workers' movement. However, in recent decades historians have begun to direct more attention to such phenomena as the ongoing tradition of the struggle for workers' control, the movement for merger ("amalgamation") of trade unions, the opposition movements of rank-and- file members, and other examples of the influence of syndicalism. Researchers have come to the conclusion that British syndicalism was not an alien phenomenon, but a natural and appropriate response to the existing historical situation, a manifestation of the drive to overcome shop-level and professional particularism in favour of the community of interests of workers in one or other industries.

To the study of the syndicalist movement in other English-speaking countries (the Industrial Workers of the World and the One Big Union) contributions have been made by such authors as F. Thompson, P. Renshaw, M. Dubofsky, P. Carlson, and M. Hargis (U.S.A.) ; G. Jewel and D. Bercuson (Canada) ; L. van der Walt (South Africa) et al. But the whole story of this "industrial" tendency in syndicalism has not yet been written.

In global historiography a discussion about the historical place and role of anarcho-syndicalism in the workers' movement is ongoing.

The Marxist tradition is inclined to view it as a product of the "underdevelopment" of the workers' movement, the evolution of which is understood as a linear-progressive process. Syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism are associated with economic backwardness, a manifestation of the pre-industrial, "primitive" rebellion of people from a peasant and handicraft milieu ("first generation workers") who are unable to adjust to the realities of industrial-capitalist society. This phase was completed with the onset of the period of contemporary large-scale industry, mass production, and mass consumption. Anarcho-syndicalism "lingered on" for some time only in "backward"

Bilsky, A. López, S. Marotta, I. Oved, J. Solomonoff, and others). Unfortunately, the emphasis in these works is on the period up to 1920-1921, and the presence of a new surge of working class anarchism in Argentina in the 1920's is frequently ignored. The ideological-theoretical positions of the FORA, which it defended in the course of debates in the international anarcho-syndicalist movement, also deserve a more substantial analysis.

In Latin America the best studied anarcho-syndicalist movements are those of Chile, Brazil, Mexico, and Cuba. But even here there more than a few neglected moments and details so that the reader, instead of a systematic and thorough picture of the development of organizations, is more often than not presented with sketches describing events with varying degrees of detail. There are also individual works on the history of anarchism and syndicalism in other countries of the region.

The study of Chinese anarchism has been taken up by R. Scalapino, J.-J. Gandini, A. Dirlik, Nohara Shiro, et al.

Unfortunately, the anarcho-syndicalist movement receives significantly less attention in these works; thus, the history of libertarian ideas in China after the mid 1920's remains basically a "white patch." The study of Japanese anarchism and syndicalism in the period between the two world wars has received valuable contributions from the European and North American researchers J. Crump, P. Pelletier, S. Large, et al. Works have been published in the Japanese language by Kiyoshi Akiyama, Akinobu Gotô, Ryuji Komatsu, and Yasuyuki Suzuki. The book by Yoshikharu Hashimoto was translated into English; the rest, unfortunately, are inaccessible to the European reader. The history of Korean anarchism is the subject only one substantial, but far from exhaustive, investigation – the work of Ha Ki-Rak.

A special place in the international syndicalist movement is occupied by syndicalism and revolutionary unionism in the English-speaking countries. For a long time the predominant point of view was that the rise of syndicalist tendencies in

chist principles of rejection of collaboration with statist political forces and an orientation to social revolution, it proposed at the 7th Congress of the IWA (1951) to repeal the amendment about "tactical autonomy" introduced in 1938. After a long and animated discussion, accompanied by a split in the International, such a resolution was finally adopted at the 9th Congress (1956). This allowed the FORA to return to the international organization. Delegates at the next , 10th Congress (1958), acting on a motion by the Argentinans, announced that "only those groups can belong to the IWA which recognize as their goal libertarian (anarchist) communism and federalism." In connection with these ideological discussions, the Swedish SAC and the Dutch Syndicalists left the IWA in 1958.

SAC continued to consider itself a "libertarian-syndicalist" labour union, but in practice it followed the second path – a revision of anarchist principles under the guise of "modernization."

A strong influence on the ideological views of the "revisionists" was exerted by the German emigrant-syndicalist Rüdiger, who had settled in Sweden at the end of the 1930's.

Already during the period of the Spanish Revolution he had called for a revision of a number of traditional tenets of anarcho-syndicalism, in essence proposing to renounce the struggle for the establishment of an anarcho-communist society, acknowledge the notion of a "transition period," etc.

Now Rüdiger proposed to repudiate anarchist "orthodoxy" and instead of liquidating the State, try to reform it. "… As a result of changes undergone by the State since the time of Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin, and also Marx and Landauer, one can assert that *the destruction of the State would not only mean the destruction of the apparatus of oppression, but also of a whole complex of social functions which are vitally important. It is impossible to arouse the people for such an action. Under the conditions of social relations today, more than previously we are faced with the question about transforming social functions which are*

today being carried out by the State into genuinely social functions . In this struggle one often has recourse to the path of reform." Rüdiger declared that it followed that one should not wait for "social revolution," but "should act now inside the existing State and economic structure for the renewal of the (democratic) system of representation," joining for this purpose in alliances with other political forces and tendencies and even allowing for thepossibility of participation in local elections.

As practical way of getting involved in carrying out functions of the Welfare State and simultaneously increasing the popularity of their labour union central, the "revisionists" in SAC advocated participating in the administration of unemployment insurance funds. Such funds were financed by enterprises and the State, but also by contributions from trade union members. The operation of the fund bureaus was entrusted to the unions. Syndicalists had traditionally fought against State interference in labour questions and refused to participate in organs of social partnership which were subsided by the State. But now the "revisionist" wing of SAC sought to have the union central join in carrying out reforms of the social insurance system.

In the course of an internally organized referendum in 1952, the members of SAC voted to approve a change in their statement of principles and create an unemployment insurance fund run by the syndicalist union central. According to a 1952 declaration, the goal of the syndicalists was stated to be the implementation of "industrial democracy." Radical means of direct action (such as violent opposition and sabotage of production) were perceived as senseless. SAC proposed to hand over the administration of enterprises to worker collectives and expressed its intention to undertake efforts to "introduce workers' control in private, municipal, and State enterprises." As Evert Arvidsson, editor of the trade union central's press organ Arbetaren, explained, "We have completely renounced the 'magic wand' of revolution." The Swedish syndicalists now

battles between supporters and opponents of the Profintern in the CNT, to the development of the "worker anarchism" tendency in the CNT, and the internal struggle in the anarchist movement after the coup of Primo de Rivera in 1923.

One special theme, to which a multitude of books and articles is devoted, is the activity and role of the anarchosyndicalists in the period of the Spanish Revolution and Civil War 1936-1939.

As for other European countries, the greatest interest of researchers has been drawn to French revolutionary syndicalism, frequently regarded as the prototype of all other syndicalist movements. The most important contributions to its study have been made by E. Dolléans, G. Lefranc, J. Maitron, J. Julliard, et al. But still insufficiently studied is the problem of the social base and some concrete moments of the history of the syndicalist movement in France (composition, membership, relationship to social legislation). The least studied aspect remains the activity of the small union central of French anarchosyndicalists in the inter-war period. In works by German historians since the end of the 1960's (H. M. Bock, A. Vogel, U. Klan, D. Nelles, H. Rübner, et al.) there is sufficient detail on the founding and development of the Free Association of German Trade Unions (the German section of the anarcho-syndicalist International) and the social organizations connected with it. Comparatively less attention has been devoted to the internal ideological discussions within the ranks of the German movement.

Italian syndicalism has been the subject of investigations by M. Antonioli, C. Venza, E. Falco, G. Careri, et al. The history of anarcho-syndicalism in Portugal is reflected in the workers of the libertarian authors E. Rodrigues, J. Freire, and P. F. Zarcone. Concerning the syndicalist movement in other European countries only investigations limited in scope have been published.

There are a number of monographs and articles about the history of the anarchist workers' movement in Argentina (E.

On the whole, despite significant progress in the study of anarcho-syndicalism, in Russian historiography up to now there have been no investigations devoted to the history of the anarcho-syndicalism International and its sections in a majority of the countries of the world.

Elsewhere a number of works have been published about anarcho-syndicalist organizations and unions in individual countries of the world. The most investigated has been the most powerful movement – the Spanish; indeed the majority of authors were part of it themselves (M. Buenacasa, M. Iñigez, J. Gómez Casas, G. Leval, S. Lorenzo, A. Paz, J. Peirats, and others). Of course, this circumstance has left its imprint on their works: in their pages one finds the continuation of polemics around questions which have long divided the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists, such as the role of the anarchist federation FAI, the struggle with reformism, and tactics in the period of Revolution and Civil War 1936-1939. The study of the Spanish movement has also been taken up by authors far removed from it – A. Balcells, A. Bar, B. Bolloten, J. Brademas, A. Elorza, J. Garner, et al. Historians have been able to show the unique character of syndicalism in Spain, which drew on a tradition which can be traced back directly to the anarchism of the Bakuninist wing of the First International, and formed an original "symbiosis" of both tendencies. Simultaneously the Spanish movement to some extent also felt the influence of French revolutionary syndicalism. In investigations up to the present there exist varying analyses of the activity of the anarchist groups which were formed inside the anarcho-syndicalist unions of Spain: some authors consider them harmful (S. Lorenzo); others – understandable in the light of efforts to oppose reformist and communist tendencies, but useless; and a third group inclined to interpret the actions of at least some of these groups in a positive way (A. Paz, J. Gómez Casas). However, in studies of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism there remain issues and episodes which have been less studied. This applies, in particular, to the

considered partial reforms to be "the practical means of influencing development in the desired direction… . SAC regards the progressive democratization of the economy as its primary task… . The basic idea consists in gradually transferring economic power from the shareholders to the producers." In this connection, SAC endorsed the participation of worker representatives in the management of private enterprises. At the same time, Swedish syndicalism renounced the role of alternative to the industrial-capitalist system and occupied a position on the left, oppositionist flank of the Welfare State system.

The creation by SAC of unemployment insurance funds as an element of the "Swedish model of the Welfare State" encouraged the involvement of workers in the syndicalist ranks for a time and slowed the decline of Swedish syndicalism. But on the other hand, the re-orientation of SAC led to a breakdown of relations between the trade union central and the international anarcho-syndicalist movement, which subjected the Swedish syndicalists to harsh criticism for their reformism and collaboration with the State.2

The influence of the anarcho-syndicalist International reached its lowest point in the 1960's. During this period anarcho-syndicalists were compelled to occupy themselves mainly with theoretical work: the analysis of contemporary social development, the evolution of Capitalism and the State, and the situations in the countries of so-called "actually existing socialism" (which the IWA identified as State Capitalism) and in the developing countries; an assessment of the potential of the co-operative movement, and proposals about the agrarian question and about counteraction to the threat of war. After the global wave of student and worker protests in 1968-69 and the liquidation of the Spanish Francoist regime (1975-77), it was possible to observe a growth in the interest in anarcho-syndicalism in Europe and North America. There was a rebirth of the CNT in Spain and structures of the Italian Syndicalist

Union (USI). Anarchosyndicalist groups revived in a number of other countries.

The IWA was busy in these years with an analysis of global problems and new social movements, trying to evaluate them from a social-revolutionary point of view. In the 1980's the processes of globalization of the economy, transition to neoliberalism, and dismantling of the model of the "Welfare State" throughout the whole world was accompanied by a crisis of the statist left-wing (social-democratic and communist) parties and the trade unions under their influence.

The collapse of communist party regimes in the USSR and East European countries took place, social-democratic parties adopted a number of the tenets of neoliberalism, and labour unions found themselves helpless to prevent real cutbacks in pay for many categories of workers, as well as reductions in social benefits and other gains made by wage workers over the previous several decades. There evolved a process of "precarization" – the introduction of an unstable, unprotected by legally enforceable labour relations, system of casual employment and worsening working conditions, as well as a model of "flexible" organization of working hours which were arranged according to the interests of the enterprise rather than its workers. Anarcho-syndicalists perceived these new developments at the end of the century as a sort of "challenge of the times" to which the "traditional left" was unable to respond. From their point of view, the breakup of the USSR, the collapse of communist party regimes, and the advent of the free market model with its "neoliberal totalitarianism" – all this indicated that "the notion of State control, which was the basis of the politics of both the revolutionary and the social-democratic left, had suffered defeat…

A fundamental re-thinking was necessary," to a significant extent a return to the discussions between the libertarian and authoritarian socialists in the First International. "The core of any socialist re-examination must be an alternative to Capital-

Latin America (B. I. Koval, and others). In general these works were not devoted particularly to the history of anarchism (as a rare exception one can mention Ye. Yu. Staburova's investigation of anarchism in China). Without deviating from official conceptions, these historians adduced information and facts which broadened the understanding of revolutionary syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism as components of the global workers' movement. Nevertheless, here also one finds the predominance of an ideologized assessment of the role of anarchists and syndicalists and their "influence on the masses."

The elimination of the ideological monopoly of the CPSU in 1990-1991 and the opening of the archives allowed native historians to study social movements at a higher level. Researchers began to write more objectively about the role of the anarchists. A two-volume collection of documents about the Russian anarchists was published, and works appeared about the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in Russia. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that an in-depth study of the role of the anarcho-syndicalists in the Russian Revolution still does not exist.

The study of the international anarcho-syndicalist movement was also initiated. A. V. Shubin published several works which covered the role not only of the anarchists in the Makhnovist movement in Ukraine, but also Spanish anarcho-syndicalism in the period of the Spanish Revolution of the 1930's and the discussions in the Russian emigration and in the global anarchist movement during the inter-war period. Above all he discussed in detail the social transformations carried out by anarcho-syndicalist workers in Spain and the political practice of the National Confederation of Labour (CNT), and demonstrated the baselessness of many of the myths about anarchism and the accusations directed at the CNT. At the same time, one must regard as unproven his ideas about a transition of anarcho-syndicalism in the 1920's and 1930's to a position of "market socialism" and about its "reversion" from Kropotkin to Bakunin.

The history of anarcho-syndicalism has been little studied. Social historians have been attracted in the first instance to social-democratic and communist trends in the workers' movement; less frequently they have studied Christian and other "mainstream" trade unions. In the Soviet Union, under the conditions of the ideological monopoly of the CPSU, anarcho-syndicalism was perceived as an ideological enemy with which one must carry on an uncompromising struggle. In the books and brochures of V. Yagov, B. M. Leibzon, V. V. Komin, F. Ya. Polyansky, N. V. Ponomarev, S. N. Kanev, E. M. Kornoukhov, I. S. Rozental, et al, this tendency was considered a variety of "petty-bourgeois revolutionism" (along with Trotskyism and Maoism). These authors acknowledged that anarcho-syndicalism had involved significant masses of workers in various countries and in different periods of time; however, this fact was interpreted as a manifestation of the "weakness" and immaturity of the workers' movement. The fundamental ideas and viewpoints of anarchists and syndicalists were reduced to a simplistic level or, as often happened – just falsified; the intention of these works did not consist in analyzing the content of the positions being criticized, but rather in exposing "ultra-leftists." The anarcho-syndicalist International was hardly mentioned, and lumped under the rubric "anarcho-syndicalism" without any distinction were the revolutionary syndicalism of the early 20th century, the syndicalist "neo-Marxists" G. Sorel and A. Labriola, such very different union centrals as the Industrial Workers of the World and the Spanish National Confederation of Labour, and even the "Workers' Opposition" inside the Bolshevik Party at the beginning of the 1920's.

To some degree or other problems connected with the revolutionary syndicalist and anarcho-syndicalist movement were touched upon by the authors of studies of the history of specific countries: France (S. N. Gurvich, V. M. Dalin, G. Morozov, R. Sabsovich, and others) , Spain (S. P. Pozharskaya, L. V. Ponomareva, and others) , Italy (Z. P. Yakhimovich), and the states of

ism… Capitalism cannot be reformed, it must be abolished. We must learn the most important lesson of the history of the 20th century: there is no State which can guarantee freedom to the workers, quite the opposite."

In the 1990's a revival of the world anarcho-syndicalist movement took place. New sections and groups of supporters of the IWA appeared, including ones in Russia, Eastern Europe, and America; after the start Argentine revolution of 2001 a re-birth of the FORA began. Sections in Spain, Italy, and France succeeded in becoming active, although small, labour unions. Now, rather than trying to absorb the whole workers' movement, they are oriented towards the development and radicalization of self-managed and self-organized workers' initiatives, independent of reformist unions and parties – initiatives in the course of which all decisions are made at general meetings (assemblies) of workers and methods of direct action are implemented.

At the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century, anarcho-syndicalists of many countries took an active role in social and labour conflicts. The Spanish CNT, with a membership of 10,000, is the most noteworthy in this respect. The toughest strikes in Spain are associated with the CNT.

Thus, in 1985-1986 on the initiative of the members of the CNT, the movement by workers against the planned closing of shipyards in Puerto Real grew into a broad social protest which was accompanied by the occupation of enterprises by workers and mass demonstration by the inhabitants of the city. The leadership of the struggle was not concentrated in trade union committees and other representative organs. All basic decisions were adopted directly by workers at their general meetings. Characteristically, these assemblies of workers took place without the sanction of the bureaucrats of the official unions; the proposals of the CNT were always adopted, despite the attempts of other unions which failed to obtain the adoption of their own resolutions. In such a way it was established

that every Thursday the workers would occupy the shipyards and hold general meetings in them.

During the strike general assemblies of the inhabitants of the towns and villages of the region were held on a weekly basis. Anyone who was interested in the goings-on, regardless of whether they worked in the shipyards, could come to these assemblies, vote, and participate in the process of adopting decisions on questions which interested them. At the general meetings decisions were adopted about concrete measures and forms of struggle, as well as about the carrying out of acts of sabotage and direct action.

Shock troops were hurled against the rebellious city. More then 1,000 police were drawn from all corners of the country to Puerto Real in an attempt to halt the revolt. In response, people began to put up barricades on the outskirts of the city, not wishing to allow access to the police. People threw rocks, furniture, any kind of junk from rooftops at police vehicles. They engaged in street battles with the cops. Frequently barricades were set up on the railway, the highway, and a strategic bridge, telephone poles were cut down, etc. The struggle of the workers and other city residents brought them victory.

The new activization of the anarcho-syndicalist strike movement in Spain carried over into the beginning of the 21st century. The CNT organized or supported such actions as the strike of garbage collectors in the Andalusian city of Tomares (it lasted 134 days), "indefinite-term" strikes of railway cleaners and crane operators in Seville, municipal workers in Adra, workers at the "Mercadona" department store near Barcelona (lasting 180 days), protest marches with many thousands of participants against the social-economic policies of the government, etc. The Italian syndicalists of the USI took part in a series of General Strikes, led by "alternative" labour unions (including some anti-militarism strikes)…

Despite the fact that in Spain, France, and Italy new splits took place with breakaway groups trying to achieve a mass

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tively carry on anti-militarism agitation, and took part in actions against the war in Chechnya (1994-1996 and from 1999 on) and the Trans-Caucasus (2008), and other anti-war actions; in ecological campaigns, demonstrations against pension "reforms" for seniors (2005), in the movement against ZhKR (Housing and Communal Services Reform) and elite home construction in Moscow (in 2007 until the issue was taken over by political parties), against the rising cost of rail transport, etc.

base at the expense of jettisoning a number of anarchosyndicalist principles (rejection of political parties, nonparticipation in organs of social partnership in production, etc.) ,3 the IWA is striving to preserve its traditional role as an alternative to the industrial-capitalist system as a whole. Playing the role of "catalyst" for self-organization, the anarcho-syndicalists hope that as people stand up for their own rights and interests on a day-to-day basis, they will acquire the skills and structures of social self-management.

1. One of the first to analyze this phenomonen was the philosopher Herbert Marcuse, cf.: H. Marcuse, Одномерный человек [One-Dimensional Man] (Moscow, 1994), pp. 38-44.

2. The new course did not save SAC. The organization failed to find a common language with the 1960's generation of "youth rebellion." Changes in the structure of Swedish industry and the crisis in the "Swedish model" at the end of the 20th century inflicted more damage on syndicalism in Sweden. In 2002 only about 7,000 members remained in SAC.

3. Thus, the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) which united syndicates splitting from the Spanish CNT in 1984; and the French CNT with headquarters on "la rue des Vignoles" in Paris, which in 1995 separated from CNT-AIT France; along with other reformist labour union centrals take part in elections to committees – organs of "social partnership" – formed for the purpose of carrying on negotiations with business owners. Like other "official" unions, the CGT receives subsidies from the State and has full-time officials.

Chapter 18: Anarcho-syndicalism in contemporary Russia

The panorama of world anarcho-syndicalism at the beginning of 21st century would be incomplete without a brief mention of analogous initiatives in contemporary Russia. The revival of the libertarian movement in the Soviet Union began in the era of perestroika at the end of the 1980's. However the views of the first activists were often quite muddled, which can be explained to a large extent by the decades of isolation of self-educated oppositionists from the rest of the world. In 1989 the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists (KAS) was formed, which for a short time united almost all the existing libertarian groups with the participation of several hundred activists. But, despite its name, Proudhonist views and notions of "stateless market socialism" predominated in KAS, quite far removed from the world anarcho-syndicalist tradition. Changes in the social-political situation, the break-up of the USSR, and the transition to market capitalism deepened the ideological and tactical contradictions in the organization, and in the beginning of the 1990's KAS, in essence, disintegrated. Some of its individual members tried to put into practice a model of syndicalist labour unions within the framework of an independent regional union central – the Siberian Confederation of Labour.

The first libertarian group to return to the classical ideas of anarcho-communism and anarcho-syndicalism was the Moscow-based Initiative of Revolutionary Anarchists (IREAN),

which sprang up in March 1991. In 1995 its activists, together with representatives of a number of other anarcho-communist groups, created the Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-syndicalists (KRAS), which at the 20th Congress of the IWA (1996) was accepted into the anarcho-syndicalist International as its Russian section. KRAS regarded itself as a labour union initiative (profinitsiativa), a transitional stage on the road to creating anarcho-syndicalist labour unions. Its development over the past few years has been an up-and-down process, usually in sync with the general dynamic of social movements and protests in Russia. At various times groups or members of KRAS-IWA have acted in Moscow, Baikalsk, Gomel, Yaroslavl, Rostov-on-Don, St. Petersburg, and other cities; in Moscow it created, besides intersectoral initiatives, also groups of workers in education, science, and techology. An important part of the activities of the Russian anarchosyndicalists continues to be agitational work in the form of holding meetings and publishing (the newspaper Прямое действие [Direct Action], the magazineЛибертарная мысль[Libertarian Thought], brochures, etc.). In Baikal members of KRAS were involved in founding the Industrial Labour Union which, in the middle of the 1990's, organized a strike in a cellulose-paper complex which was smashed by government repression. Activists of KRAS rendered support and technical assistance to participants of strikes and worker demonstrations: to teachers of the Moscow suburbs (1995), workers at the "Rostselmash" plant in Rostov-on-Don (1998), workers of the Yasnogorsky machine tool plant (1999: a strike directed by a general assembly of workers and accompanied by a plant occupation), imported construction workers in Moscow (1999), workers at the Ford plant in Vsevolozhsk (2007), etc. In rendering assistance to strikers, they have tried to disseminate in the workers' movement anarchosyndicalist methods of self-organization, direct action, and independence from political parties and the structures of bureaucratic labour unions. The members of KRAS ac-