

THE
BASIC
BAKUNIN

WRITINGS
1869–1871

Translated and Edited by
Robert M. Cutler

GREAT BOOKS IN PHILOSOPHY



*au Vénérable Frère
Meuron patriarche
de Lode
In fine et ami
M. Bakounine
1869, Février*


Frontispiece. Photograph of Mikhail Alexandrovich Bakunin by Valerian Mroczowski. "To the venerable brother, Patriarch Meuron of Le Locle. His brother and friend, M. Bakounine. February 1869." Photograph courtesy of International Institute for Social History.

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To the memory of P. E. C.
and
for all those whose freedom does not depend
on others' lack thereof.

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Compagnons - Compagnons

Depuis la Révolution grande Révolution de 1789
- 1793, aucun des événements qui lui ont succédé
en la République n'ont eu l'importance
la grandeur de ceux qui de si vaillant à nos yeux,
et tout Paris est aujourd'hui le théâtre.

Deux faits historiques, deux révolutions ré-
-morales avaient constitué le monde moderne, le
monde de la civilisation bourgeoise. L'une commença
sous le nom de Réformation religieuse, au commen-
-cement du XVIII^{ème} siècle, avait brisé le joug de
l'Église; en détruisant cette puissance, elle pré-
-para le voie à l'indépendance et à l'émancipation
de l'individu, qui brisa le joug de l'Église, et par
là même, changea le monde entier. L'autre, par
la grâce divine, et par la même voie, donna
un essor nouveau à l'émancipation de la
classe bourgeoise, l'autre est l'indépendance, l'autre
est une révolution religieuse, par le développement
de la liberté commerciale et par celui
de la science et de l'industrie, qui en ont
été la conséquence et la conséquence
de celle-ci.

De cette révolution sortit une nouvelle

Three Lectures to Swiss Members of the International

Comrades,

The developments [i.e., the Commune] now unfolding in Paris have the largest scale and are the most important in Europe since the Great [French] Revolution of 1789-1793.

Two historic events, two memorable revolutions created what we call the modern world, the world of bourgeois civilization. One, the Reformation, at the start of the sixteenth century, shattered that keystone of the feudal structure, the omnipotence of the Church. By destroying this empire, the Reformation prepared the overthrow of the independent and nearly absolute power of the feudal lords, who—blessed and protected like kings by the Church, and often so even in opposition to kings—claimed that their rights derived directly from divine grace; and by doing so, the Reformation gave a new push to the emancipation of the bourgeois class, itself slowly prepared over the two centuries preceding this religious Revolution by the gradual development of communal liberties, and of their necessary condition and inevitable result, commerce and industry.

From this Revolution emerged a new power, not yet that of the bourgeoisie but that of the State—an aristocratic constitutional monarchy in England, and a nobiliary, military, and bureaucratic absolute monarchy on the entire continent of Europe, except for two small republics, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Let us leave these two republics aside out of courtesy and concern ourselves with the monarchies. Let us examine the relations of the classes and their political and social situation after the Reformation.

Giving honor where honor is due, let us begin with the priests; and by *priests* I mean not only those of the Catholic Church but also Protestant ministers—in a word, every individual who makes a living from religious worship, selling us God Almighty wholesale and retail. As for the theological differences which divide them, these are so subtle and at the same time so absurd that to concern ourselves with them would be a useless waste of time.

Before the Reformation the Church and the priests, headed by the Pope, were the true lords of the earth. According to the doctrine of the Church, the temporal authorities of every country—Emperors, kings, and the most powerful monarchs—were possessed of rights only insofar as the

Facsimile of the first manuscript page of "Three Lectures to Swiss Members of the International." Source: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Salle des Manuscrits, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises, folio 23690, p. 389.

Church recognized and consecrated those rights. We know that the last two centuries of the Middle Ages saw the increasingly impassioned and victorious battle of crowned sovereigns against the Pope and of the States against the Church. The Reformation put an end to this struggle by proclaiming the States independent. The sovereign's right [to rule] was recognized as proceeding immediately from God, without the interference of the Pope or any other priest; and thanks to this wholly heavenly source, it was naturally declared absolute. In this way the edifice of monarchical despotism was erected on the ruins of the Church's despotism. Having been master of the State, the Church became its servant, an instrument of government in the hands of the monarch.

The Church assumed this attitude not only in the Protestant countries where the monarch was declared the head of the Church, England and the Anglican Church in particular no exception, but also in every Catholic country, even in Spain. Shattered by the terrible blows of the Reformation, the power of the Roman Church could no longer support itself. It needed the help of the States' temporal sovereigns to continue to exist. But we know that sovereigns never give their help for nothing. They have never had any sincere religion and creed other than those of their power and of their treasury, of which the latter is at the same time the end of and the means to the former. As a result the Church, in order to buy the support of the monarchical governments, had to prove to them that it was capable and desirous of serving them. Before the Reformation it had raised the peoples up against the kings many times. After the Reformation it became the ally of the governments against the peoples in every country, even in Switzerland, a sort of black police in the hands of Statesmen and the governing classes, giving itself the mission of preaching patience, obedience, and resignation to the masses of the people. The people, said the Church, should assure themselves of heavenly treasures by abandoning earthly goods and pleasures to the prosperous and the powerful of the earth. You know that all the Christian churches, Catholic and Protestant, continue to preach this way still today. Happily they are less and less listened to, and we can foresee the time when they will be forced to close their establishments for lack of believers, or to put it another way, for lack of dupes.

Now let us see how the feudal class, the nobility, changed after the Reformation. It remained the privileged and nearly exclusive proprietor of the land but lost all its political independence. Before the Reformation the nobility had been, like the Church, the rival and enemy of the State. After that revolution it became, like the Church, a privileged servant of the State. All military and civil offices of the State, with the exception of the least important ones, were occupied by nobles. The courts of the great European monarchs, and even those of the not so great, were filled with nobles. The greatest feudal lords, once so bold and independent, became titled footmen

to the sovereigns. They completely lost their boldness and independence, but they retained all their arrogance. It may even be said that this increased, since arrogance is the vice which is a flunkey's privilege. Abject, grovelling and servile in the sovereign's presence, they became more insolent toward the bourgeoisie and the people, whom they continued to plunder no longer in their own name and by divine right but with the permission of their masters and in their service, under the pretext of the greater good of the State.

This position and social station of the nobility are even now preserved nearly in full in Germany, a foreign country which seems to have the privilege of dreaming the most beautiful and noble things, only to realize the most shameful and infamous. The ignoble and atrocious barbarities of the recent Franco-Prussian War demonstrate this, as does the very recent formation of this repulsive Knouto-Germanic Empire,^{1*} an incontestable menace to the liberty of every country in Europe, a challenge hurled at all humanity by the brutal despotism of an Emperor who is simultaneously police and staff sergeant, and by the stupid impudence of his nobiliary rabble.

The Reformation delivered the bourgeoisie from the tyranny and plunder of the feudal lords, acting as independent and private bandits or plunderers. But it delivered the bourgeoisie to a new tyranny and plunder—regularized under the name of ordinary and extraordinary State taxes—by these same lords, who were transformed into servants of the State, that is, brigands and legitimate plunderers. This transition from feudal plunder to a much more regular and systematic State plunder at first seemed to satisfy the middle class. We must conclude that at first it genuinely alleviated their economic and social situation. But, as the saying goes, the more one has the more one wants. State taxes, moderate enough to begin with, increased each year by a disturbing proportion, though not as formidably as they do in monarchical States nowadays. The virtually incessant wars waged by these now absolute States, under the pretext of the international balance of power, between the Reformation and the Revolution of 1789; the necessity of maintaining large standing armies, which thereafter became the principal basis of preserving these States; the growing luxury of the sovereign courts, which were transformed into permanent orgies where the nobiliary rabble, the whole titled and bedecked pack of men-servants, came to ask for pensions from their master; the need to maintain this whole privileged mob which filled the highest offices in the army, the bureaucracy, and the police: it all led to enormous expenses. Naturally, it was at first primarily the people who paid these expenses, but so did the bourgeois class, which until the [French] Revolution was also considered a milk-cow

*[Numbered notes to the texts are the editor's and appear together at the back of the volume. Those marked with an asterisk and appearing at the bottom of page are Bakunin's unless otherwise indicated.—Ed.]

(though the people were considered more of one) which had no destiny other than to support the sovereign and his innumerable throng of privileged functionaries. Moreover, the liberty which the middle class had lost through the Reformation was perhaps twice the security it had gained. Before the Reformation it had cleverly profited from its alliance with the kings, and from the indispensability of its support in their struggle against the Church and the feudal lords, in order to gain a certain degree of independence and liberty. But after the Church and the feudal lords were subordinated to the State, the kings no longer needed the services of the middle class and, little by little, they deprived it of all the freedoms which they had granted it in earlier times.

If this was where the bourgeois class found itself after the Reformation, you can imagine the situation of the popular masses, of the peasants and the workers. We know that during the Reformation, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the peasants of central Europe, in Germany, Holland, and even part of Switzerland, formed a great movement to emancipate themselves, crying, "War on the princes and peace to the people!"² This movement was betrayed by the bourgeois class and cursed by the chiefs of bourgeois Protestantism, Luther and Melancthon; it was drowned in the blood of tens of thousands of insurgent peasants. Since then the peasants have been tied to the soil more than ever, serfs in law but slaves in fact, and so they stayed until the revolution of 1789-1793 in France, until 1807 in Prussia, and until 1848 in all the rest of Germany. Serfdom still exists today in many parts of northern Germany, notably Mecklenburg, but even in Russia it has ceased to exist.

The proletariat in the towns was not much freer than the peasantry. It was divided into two categories: workers who were members of guilds, and those who were not organized at all. The activities of the former, as well as what they produced, were tied down and strangled by a multitude of rules, enslaving them to the guildmasters and the bosses. The latter were deprived of all rights, oppressed and exploited by everybody. As always, the greatest taxes inevitably fell on the people.

This ruination and general oppression of the working masses, and partly of the bourgeois class, had for its pretext and as its acknowledged goal the grandeur, power, and magnificence of the monarchical, nobiliary, bureaucratic, and military State, a State which had usurped the place of the Church and proclaimed itself a divine institution. Accordingly, there was a State morality entirely different from, or rather wholly opposed to, the private morality of men. Private morality has an everlasting basis that is more or less recognized, understood, accepted, and achieved in every human society, insofar as it is not vitiated by religious dogmas. This basis is nothing but human respect, respect for human dignity and for the right and freedom of every human individual. To respect [these principles] is a virtue; to violate them, on the contrary, is a crime. State morality is wholly

opposed to this human morality. The State presents itself to its subjects as the supreme goal. Virtue consists of serving its power and grandeur, by all means possible and impossible, even contrary to all human laws and to the good of humanity. Since everything which contributes to the power and growth of the State is good, everything contrary to them is bad, be it even the noblest and most virtuous action from the human point of view. This is why Statesmen, diplomats, ministers, and all State functionaries have always availed themselves of crimes and lies and infamous treacheries to serve the State. From the moment that a villainy is committed in the service of the State, it becomes a meritorious act. That is the morality of the State. It is the very negation of human morality and of humanity.

The contradiction lies in the very idea of the State. Because the worldwide State has never been realized, every State is a limited entity comprising a limited territory and a somewhat restricted number of subjects. The vast majority of mankind hence remains outside each State, and humanity altogether remains divided among a multitude of large, medium, and small States, each of which proclaims itself to be and presents itself as the representative of the whole of humanity and as something absolute, despite the fact that it encompasses only a very limited fraction of mankind. That way each State regards everything external to it—every other State, including its subjects and their property—as deprived of all sanction and right, concluding that *it* therefore has the right to attack, conquer, massacre, and plunder so much as its resources and forces permit. You know, dear comrades, that the reason international law has never been successfully established is precisely that from the State's standpoint, everything lying outside the State is deprived of rights. Further, one State need only declare war on another in order to permit—what am I saying?—in order to *command* its subjects to commit every possible crime against the subjects of the enemy State: murder, rape, theft, destruction, arson, and plunder. And these crimes are supposed to be blessed by the God of the Christians, which each of the belligerent States regards as and proclaims to be its exclusive partisan—which naturally must put this poor Almighty God in perfect distress, in Whose name the most horrible crimes on earth have been, and still are, committed. That is why we are the enemies of God Almighty, why we call this fiction, this Divine Phantom, one of the basic sources of the evils which torment mankind.

This is why we are passionate opponents both of the State and of every State. For so long as there exist States, there will be no humanity; and so long as there exist States, war and its horrible crimes and inevitable consequences, the destruction and general misery of the peoples, will never cease.

So long as there are States, the masses of the people will be *de facto* slaves even in the most democratic republics, for they will work not with a view to their own happiness and wealth, but for the power and wealth of the

State. And what is the State? People claim that it is the expression and the realization of the common good, universal rights and freedom. Well, whoever so claims is as good a liar as someone who claims that God Almighty is everyone's protector. Ever since the fantasy of a Divine Being took shape in men's imagination, God—all gods, and among them above all the God of the Christians—has always taken the part of the strong and the rich against the ignorant and impoverished masses. Through His priests, He has blessed the most revolting privileges, the basest oppressions and exploitations.

The State is likewise nothing but the guarantor of all exploitation, to the profit of a small number of prosperous and privileged persons and to the loss of the popular masses. In order to assure the welfare, prosperity, and privileges of some, it uses everyone's collective strength and collective labor, to the detriment of everyone's human rights. In such a set-up the minority plays the role of the hammer and the majority that of the anvil.

Until the Great [French] Revolution, the bourgeois class had been part of the anvil, although less so than the popular masses. And for this reason it became revolutionary.

Yes, it was very revolutionary. It dared to revolt against all divine and human authorities, putting God, the kings, and the Pope into question. The bourgeoisie was especially mad at the nobility, which held a State position that the bourgeoisie burned with impatience to hold in its turn. But no, I don't want to be unjust, and I don't claim in the least that the bourgeoisie was impelled or guided by anything but egoistic thought in its great protests against divine and human tyranny. The force of circumstances and the very nature of its specific structure pushed it instinctively to seize power. But since it was by no means yet aware of the abyss which separates it from the masses of workers whom it exploits, and since the proletariat itself had scarcely awakened to such an awareness, the bourgeoisie, represented by its noblest and greatest personalities in this struggle against Church and State, believed in good faith that it labored impartially to emancipate everybody.

The two centuries between the battles of the religious Reformation and those of the Great [French] Revolution were the heroic age of the bourgeois class. Having acquired power as a result of its wealth and cleverness, it audaciously attacked every institution respected by Church and State. First it undermined everything by literature and philosophic criticism; later it overthrew everything in open rebellion. It was the bourgeoisie that made the revolution of 1789. To be sure, it could do so only by taking advantage of the people's might; but the bourgeoisie organized this might and directed it against the Church, the royalty, and the nobility. It was the bourgeoisie that considered [the situation] and took the initiative in every move that the people carried out. The bourgeoisie had faith in itself. It felt powerful because it knew that the people were behind it and with it.

A comparison of the giants of thought and action who emerged from the bourgeois class in the eighteenth century with the greatest celebrities, the vain and eminent dwarves who represent it now, convincingly demonstrates the decadence and the awful ruination which this class has suffered. In the eighteenth century it was intelligent, bold, and heroic. Now it appears cowardly and stupid. Then full of faith, it dared do everything and could do anything. Now it offers us the sight of the most shameful impotence, consumed by doubt and demoralized by its own injustice, resulting more from its predicament than from its own injustice.

The recent events in France prove this only too well. The bourgeoisie appears entirely incapable of saving France. It prefers the Prussian invasion to the popular revolution which can alone bring about this salvation. It has allowed the banner of human progress, of worldwide emancipation, to fall from its feeble hands. And the proletariat of Paris is today proving that from now on only the workers carry it. I shall attempt to show this at another meeting.

2

Dear Comrades,

I told you that two great historical events laid the foundation of the bourgeoisie's influence: the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, known as the Reformation, and the great political revolution [in France] of the eighteenth century. I added that the latter, accomplished of course by the people, was initiated and directed exclusively by the middle class. I want now to show you that it also benefited the middle class exclusively.

And yet, the program of this Revolution appears vast at first glance. After all, wasn't it made in the name of the Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity of humankind, three words which seem to include everything that humanity could wish for and achieve not only now but in the future as well? How is it, then, that a Revolution which had appeared to be so extensive could have resulted in the exclusive, limited, and privileged emancipation of a single class, to the detriment of the millions of workers who are today crushed by that class's impudent and unjust prosperity?

Ah! This Revolution was only a political Revolution. It audaciously overturned every obstacle and every political tyranny, but it left intact, even proclaiming sacred and inviolable, the economic bases of society which have been the eternal source and chief cause of all political and social injustices, all past and present religious absurdities. It proclaimed the freedom of each and every individual, or rather it proclaimed for each and every individual the right to be free. But really, it gave the means of realizing and enjoying this freedom only to the property-owners, the capitalists, and the rich.

"Poverty is slavery!" These are the terrible words which, in the few days I have the good fortune to spend among you, dear comrades and friends, our friend [Sylvain] Clément, in his sympathetic voice emanating from his experience and his heart, has repeated again and again.³

Yes, poverty is slavery—it is the need to sell one's labor, and with one's labor one's person, to the capitalist who gives you the means barely to survive. One's mind must indeed be affected by Bourgeois Gentlemen's lies to dare speak of the political freedom of the working masses. Fine freedom is this, that subjects them to the whims of capital and that shackles them through hunger to the capitalist's will! Dear friends, I surely do not have to prove to you, who have come to understand the agonies of labor through long and hard experience, that so long as capital and labor are mutually isolated, labor will be the slave of capital and workers the subjects of Bourgeois Gentlemen, who out of ridicule give you every political right and every semblance of freedom, so as to preserve its reality exclusively for themselves.

The right to freedom, without the means of achieving it, is only a ghost. And do we not love freedom too much to be satisfied with its ghost? We want its reality. But what constitutes the real basis and the positive condition of freedom? It is, for each individual, the all-round development and full enjoyment of all physical, intellectual, and moral faculties; consequently, it is all the material means necessary for each individual's human existence. It is, then, upbringing and education. A person who is dying from starvation, who is crushed by poverty, who every day is on the point of death from cold and hunger, and who sees everyone he loves suffering likewise but is unable to come to their aid, is not free; that person is a slave. A man condemned to remain a brutish creature all his life for want of a humane education, a man deprived of learning, an ignoramus, is necessarily a slave; and if he exercises any political rights, you can be sure, one way or another, that he will always exercise them against himself, for his exploiters' and masters' benefit.

The negative condition of freedom is that no person owe obedience to another; the individual is free only if his will and his own convictions, and not those of others, determine his acts. But a man compelled by hunger to sell his labor, and with his labor his own self, at the lowest possible price to the capitalist who condescends to exploit him, a man whose own brutishness and ignorance put him at the mercy of his learned exploiters, will inevitably and forever be a slave.

That is not all. The freedom of individuals is by no means an individual matter. It is a collective matter, a collective product. No individual can be free outside of human society or without its cooperation. In every Congress of the [International] Working-Men [s Association] we have fought the individualists or false-brother socialists who say that society was founded by a free contract of originally free men and who

claim, along with the moralists and bourgeois economists, that man can be free, that he can be a man, outside of society.

This theory revealed by J.-J. Rousseau—the most malevolent writer of the past century, the sophist who inspired all the bourgeois revolutionaries—betokens a complete ignorance of both nature and history. It is not in the past, nor even in the present, that we should seek the freedom of the masses. It is in the future, in a future close at hand. We should seek the freedom of the masses in that historic tomorrow which we ourselves must create not only by the force of our thought and will, but also by the force of our actions. In the past there has never been a free contract. There has only been brutality, stupidity, injustice, and violence—and today still, you know only too well, this so-called free contract is a compact of hunger and of slavery for the masses, and the exploitation of hunger for the minority who oppress and destroy us.

The theory of the free contract is just as false from the standpoint of nature. Man does not voluntarily create society, he is involuntarily born into it. He is above all a social animal. Only in society can he become a human being, that is, a thinking, speaking, loving, and willful animal. Imagine a man endowed with the most inspired powers by nature, cast out from all human society into a desert since infancy. If he does not miserably perish, which is the most probable result, he will become nothing but a boor, an ape, lacking speech and thought. For thought is inseparable from speech; no one can think without words. Even if you are alone with yourself, perfectly isolated, you must use words to think. To be sure, you can have conceptions which represent things, but as soon as you want to consider something you must use words, for words alone determine thought, giving the character of thought to fleeting representations and instincts. Thought hardly exists before speech, nor does speech exist before thought. These two forms of the same activity of the human brain are born together. Thought is therefore impossible without speech. But what is speech? It is communication. It is the conversation of one human individual with many other individuals. Only through this conversation and in it can animalistic man transform himself into a human being, that is, a thinking being. His individuality as a man, his freedom, is thus the product of the collectivity.

Only through collective labor does man emancipate himself from the tyrannical pressure which the natural world exerts on each person; individual labor, impotent and sterile, can never subdue nature. Productive labor, which has created all wealth and our entire civilization, has always been social, collective labor. But until now it has been unjustly exploited by some individuals, to the detriment of the working masses. Likewise, the upbringing and education of which Bourgeois Gentlemen are so proud and which they so parsimoniously distribute to the popular masses—these are also products of the whole of society. The labor, nay, the

instinctive thought of the people produced them, but up to now only some members of the bourgeoisie have benefited. It is still an exploitation of collective labor by individuals who have no right to it at all.

Everything human in man—and freedom above all—is the product of a social, collective labor. To be free in absolute isolation is an absurdity invented by theologians and metaphysicians who have replaced the society of humans by that of God, their phantom. They say that each person feels free in the presence of God, that is, in the presence of absolute emptiness, Nothingness. Freedom in isolation, then, is the freedom of Nothingness, or indeed the Nothingness of freedom: slavery. God, the figment of God, has been historically the moral source, or rather the immoral source, of all slaveries.

As for us, we want neither phantoms nor Nothingness but living human reality, and we recognize that man can feel free, be free, and therefore can achieve freedom, only among men. In order to be free, I need to see myself surrounded by free men and be recognized as such by them. I am free only when my individuality, reflected in the mirror of the equally free consciousness of every individual around me, comes back to me strengthened by everyone's recognition. The freedom of every other individual does not limit my own, as the individualists claim; on the contrary, it is the confirmation, realization, and infinite extension of my freedom. To desire the freedom and human dignity of all persons, to see and feel my freedom confirmed, sanctioned, and boundlessly expanded by universal agreement, is happiness; it is human paradise on earth.

But this freedom is possible only through equality. If there be a human being freer than I, then I inevitably become his slave. If I be freer than he, then he will be mine. Therefore, equality is an absolutely necessary condition for freedom.

The bourgeois revolutionaries of 1793 understood this logical necessity very well. The word *Equality* appears as the second term in their revolutionary formula: *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*. But what sort of equality? Equality before the law, equality of political rights, equality of citizens within the State. Make note of this expression—the equality of citizens, not that of men—for the State does not recognize men; it recognizes only citizens. Man exists for the State only insofar as he exercises political rights—or, by pure fiction, is supposed to exercise them.⁴ The man who is crushed by forced labor, by poverty and hunger, the man who is socially oppressed, economically exploited and ruined: suffering man does not exist for the State, which is ignorant of his sufferings and of his economic and social slavery, ignorant of his real servitude which hides under the cloak of a counterfeit political freedom. This is political equality, not social equality.

But, dear friends, you all know from experience how misleading is this sham political equality, which is not based on social and economic

equality. For example, in a fully democratic State all men who reach the age of majority and do not find themselves criminally condemned, have the right and even the duty to exercise all their political rights and to fill every office to which they are called by the trust of their fellow-citizens. The lowest, the poorest, the most ignorant man of the people can and should exercise all these rights and fill all those offices. Can you think of a greater equality than this? He ought to do it, and he legally can do it, but in reality it is impossible for him. This power is only optional for those who make up the popular masses. It does not become real for them, and it never can, unless the economic bases of society are radically transformed—let us say it, unless there is a social revolution. These alleged political rights exercised by the people are nothing but an empty fable.

We are tired of all fables, religious and political. The people are tired of living on phantoms and fables. This diet stunts growth. Today they demand reality. Therefore, let us see whether there is anything real for them in the exercise of political rights.

To fill conscientiously the offices of the State, and above all the highest offices, it is first necessary to possess an equally large amount of education. The people totally lack this education. Is it their fault? No, the fault is institutional. The great work of all truly democratic States is to spread education plentifully among the people. Is there a single State which has done this? Let us not discuss monarchical States, which are clearly interested in spreading among the masses not education but the poison of Christian catechism. Let us discuss republican and democratic States like the United States of America and Switzerland. Certainly, it must be acknowledged that these two States have done more than all others for popular education. But have they succeeded, despite all their good will? Have they been able to give every child born in their midst an equal education? No, this is impossible. For the children of the members of the bourgeoisie, superior education; for those of the people, only primary education, and in rare occasions a little secondary education. Why this difference? For the simple reason that men of the people, workers in the fields and cities, do not have the means to support their children, that is, to feed, clothe, and lodge them for the entire duration of their studies. To obtain a scientific education, one must study until the age of twenty-one, sometimes twenty-five. I ask you, what workers are able to support their children for so long a time? This sacrifice is beyond all their means, for they have neither the funds nor the property necessary, and they live from day to day on a salary which scarcely suffices to support a large family.

And yet it must be said, dear comrades, that you workers from the mountains, in a trade which capitalist production, big capital, has not yet succeeded in absorbing—you are comparatively very prosperous. Working in small groups in your workshops, and often even working in your home, you earn much more than [you would] in large industrial

establishments which employ hundreds of workers. Your [watchmaking] work is clever and artistic; it is not stupefying like the work of machines. Your competence and your skill count for something. Moreover, you have much more spare time and relative freedom; this is why you are freer, better informed, and more prosperous than others.

In the vast factories established, directed, and exploited by big capital, where not men but machines play the principal role, the workers inevitably become miserable drudges, so destitute that most often they are obliged to doom their poor small children, hardly six years old, to work twelve, fourteen, sixteen hours each day for a few miserable pennies. And they do this not out of avarice but out of need. Without it they would be wholly unable to support their families.

That is the education they can give their children. I do not believe I have to waste more words to prove to you, dear comrades, you who know so well from experience and who are already so profoundly convinced, that *so long as the people work not for themselves but to enrich those who hold property and capital*, the education which they can give their children will always be infinitely inferior to that of the children of the bourgeois class.

And so there is a considerable and disastrous social inequality which you will always find at the very foundation of the structure of every State: an inevitably ignorant mass and a privileged minority which is at least comparatively better educated, if not always more intelligent. The conclusion is easy to draw. The educated minority will rule the ignorant masses.

What is involved is not only the natural inequality of individuals; it is an inequality to which we are compelled to resign ourselves. One person's situation is more fortunate than the other's; one is born with a greater natural power of intellect and will than the other. But I hasten to add: these differences are by no means so great as may be claimed. Even from the standpoint of nature, talents and shortcomings pretty much balance out in everyone, so that [most] persons are nearly equal. There are only two exceptions to this law of natural equality: geniuses and idiots. But exceptions are not the rule; and in general it may be said that one human individual is as worthy as another; and if in present-day society enormous differences exist between individuals, their origin is not nature but the monstrous inequality in upbringing and education.

The child endowed with the greatest talents, but born into a poor family, a family of workers living from day to day on their hard labor, is doomed to an ignorance which, instead of developing his natural talents, kills them all: he will become the worker, the unskilled laborer, forced to be the bourgeoisie's man-servant and field-worker. The child of bourgeois parents, on the other hand, the child of the rich, however stupid by nature, will receive both the upbringing and the education necessary to develop his scanty talents as much as possible. He will become the

exploiter of labor, the master, the property-owner, the legislator, the governor—a Gentleman. However stupid he may be, he will make laws on behalf of the people and against them, and he will rule over the popular masses.

In a democratic State, it will be said, the people will choose only the good men. But how will they recognize them? They have neither the education necessary for judging the good and the bad, nor the spare time necessary for learning the differences among those who run for election. These men, moreover, live in a society different from their own; they doff their hat to Their Majesty the sovereign people only at election-time, and once elected they turn their backs. Moreover, however excellent they may be as members of their family and their society, they will always be bad for the people, because, belonging to the privileged and exploiting class, they will quite naturally wish to preserve those privileges which constitute the very basis of their social existence and condemn the people to eternal slavery.

But why haven't the people been sending men of their own, men of the people, to the legislative assemblies and the government? First, because men of the people, who have to live by their physical labor, do not have the time to devote themselves exclusively to politics. [Second, b]eing unable to do so, being more often ignorant of the political and economic questions which are discussed in these lofty regions, they will nearly always be the dupes of lawyers and bourgeois politicians. Also, [third,] it is usually enough for these men of the people to enter the government for them to become members of the bourgeoisie in their turn, sometimes hating and scorning the people from whom they came more than do the natural-born members of the bourgeoisie.

So you see that political equality, even in the most democratic States, is an illusion. It is the same with juridical equality, equality before the law. The bourgeoisie make the law for themselves, and they practice it against the people. The State, and the law which expresses it, exist only to perpetuate the slavery of the people for the benefit of the bourgeois.

Moreover, you know, if you wish to file suit when you find your interests, your honor, or your rights wronged, you must first prove that you are able to pay the costs, that is, that you can lay aside an impossible sum; and if you cannot do so, then you cannot file suit. But do the people, the majority of the workers, have the resources to put on deposit in a court of law? Most of the time, no. Hence the rich man will be able to attack you and insult you with impunity. There is no justice at all for the people.

Political equality will be an illusion so long as economic and social equality do not exist, so long as any minority can become rich, property-owning, and capitalist through inheritance. Do you know the true definition of hereditary property? It is the hereditary ability to exploit the collective labor of the people and to enslave the masses.

That is what the greatest heroes of the Revolution of 1793 did not understand, neither Danton, Robespierre, nor Saint-Just. They wanted freedom and equality to be only political, not economic and social. And that is why the freedom and equality which they instituted merely established the domination of the people by the members of the bourgeoisie, placing it on a new foundation.

They thought they concealed this contradiction by inserting *Fraternity* as the third term of their revolutionary formula. This was again a lie! I ask you whether fraternity is possible between the exploiters and the exploited, between the oppressors and the oppressed? What is this! I make you sweat and suffer all day, and at night when I have reaped the fruit of your sufferings and your sweat, leaving you only a small portion of it so that you may survive, that is, so that you may sweat and suffer anew for my benefit again tomorrow—at night I will say to you: Let us embrace, we are brothers!

Such is the fraternity of the Bourgeois Revolution.

My dear friends, we too desire noble Liberty, wholesome Equality, blessed Fraternity. But we want these great and noble things to cease being fables and lies, we want them to become the true essence of reality!

That is the meaning and the goal of what we call Social Revolution.

The Social Revolution can be summarized in a few words: It wishes, and we wish, every individual born on this earth to be able to become human in the fullest sense of the word, to have not just the right to develop natural talents, but also the means necessary for this, to be free and prosperous in equality and through fraternity! That is what we all wish, and we are all ready to die to realize this goal.

I ask you, friends, for a third and last session in order to explain completely my thoughts to you.

3

Dear Comrades,

Last time I told you how the bourgeoisie, not completely conscious of what it was doing but at least one-quarter so, used the physical strength of the people, during the Great [French] Revolution of 1789-1793, to assert its own influence on the ruins of the feudal world. It thus became the dominant class. It is entirely incorrect to think that Robespierre and Saint-Just were overthrown and slain, their partisans guillotined or deported, by priests and *émigré* nobility who may have staged the reactionary *coup d'état* of Thermidor. Many members of these two downfallen groups doubtless took an active part in the intrigue, and they were pleased at the fall of those who had terrified them and mercilessly cut off their heads. But they were unable to do anything by themselves. Having lost their goods, they were reduced to impotence.

The principal instigators of the Thermidorean reaction were the virtuous representatives of public morality and public order who belonged to that part of the bourgeois class which had enriched itself through the purchase of national wealth, through war materiel, through the handling of public funds: those who had profited from public poverty and even bankruptcy to stuff their own pockets. They were warmly and forcefully supported by the majority of the shopkeepers, an eternally spiteful and cowardly breed which cheats the people in retail fashion, little by little corrupts them, sells them fraudulent merchandise, and has all the people's ignorance without their greatheartedness, all the vanity of the bourgeois aristocracy without their full pockets; cowards during revolutions, they turn savage under reaction. For the shopkeepers, all the ideas that make the hearts of the masses beat—the grand principles and the great concerns of humanity—do not exist. They don't even understand patriotism, seeing in it only vanity or bluster. No feelings at all can distract them from commercial preoccupations and worthless day-to-day anxieties. Everyone saw, and all sides confirm, that during that terrible siege of Paris—while the people fought and the class of the rich intrigued, preparing the treachery that delivered Paris to the Prussians, while the courageous proletariat and the women and children of the people were half-starved—the shopkeepers had but a single concern: to sell their wares, their produce, and the goods most essential to the people's survival, at the highest possible price.

The shopkeepers of all France's cities did the same thing. In towns invaded by Prussians, they opened their doors to the Prussians; in towns not invaded, they prepared to open them. They paralyzed the national defense, opposing wherever they could the insurrection and the arming of the people that alone could have saved France. The cities' shopkeepers and the countryside's peasants today compose the army of reaction. The peasants can be converted to revolution, and they must be, but the shopkeepers—never.

During the Great [French] Revolution the bourgeoisie was divided into two categories. One, forming the tiny minority, was the revolutionary bourgeoisie, known generically as the Jacobins. The Jacobins of today must not be confused with those of 1793. Those of today are only pale ghosts, ridiculously miserable specimens, caricatures of the past century's heroes. The Jacobins of 1793 were great men, they possessed the sacred fire and the creed of justice, liberty, and equality. It was not their mistake not to understand better certain words which still express all our aspirations. They considered only political appearance, not economic and social context. But I repeat, it was not their mistake, just as it is not our merit that we understand them today. The mistake and the merit are of the times. Humanity develops slowly—too slowly, alas!—and it is only by a succession of errors, mistakes, and above all the bitter experiences that

inevitably result from them, that mankind gains the truth. The Jacobins of 1793 were men of good faith, men inspired by the idea, devoted to the idea. They were heroes! Had they not been so, and had they not had this sacred and great sincerity, by no means could they have accomplished the great deeds of the Revolution. We can combat the theoretical errors of the Dantons, Robespierres, and Saint-Justs, and we must do so, but while combating their false and narrow ideas, which are exclusively bourgeois in social economy, we should acknowledge their revolutionary influence. These were the last heroes of the bourgeois class, a class that used to teem with heroes.

This heroic minority aside, the other category of the bourgeoisie was the great majority of physical exploiters, for whom the ideas and the great principles of the Revolution were but words, having value and meaning only to the extent that these words could be used to stuff their large and respectable bourgeois pockets. Once the richest and accordingly the most influential of these bourgeois individuals had sufficiently used the Revolution, stuffing their pockets in its tumult, they discovered that it had gone on for too long, that the time had come to end it and to reestablish the reign of law and of public order.

They overthrew the Committee of Public Safety, killed Robespierre, Saint-Just, and their friends, and established the Directory, a true incarnation of bourgeois depravity at the end of the [eighteenth] century which marked the triumph and the reign of the wealth that a few thousand individuals had acquired by theft and collected into their pockets.

But France had not yet had time to be corrupted, it was still all throbbing with the great deeds of the Revolution, and it could not long endure this regime. There were two protests, one abortive and one victorious. The first, had it succeeded, had it been able to succeed, would have saved France and the world. The triumph of the second ushered in the kings' despotism and the peoples' slavery. I am referring to Babeuf's insurrection and the first Bonaparte's usurpation.

Babeuf's insurrection was the final revolutionary attempt of the [eighteenth] century. Babeuf and his friends had been more or less friends of Robespierre and Saint-Just. They were socialist Jacobins. They had known the creed of equality, even to the detriment of freedom. Their plan was very simple: to expropriate all holders of property and of the instruments of labor and other capital, for the benefit of the republican, democratic, and social State; the State, becoming the sole owner of all wealth, personal property as well as real estate, would as a result become society's sole employer and boss. At the same time, armed with political omnipotence, the State would make itself exclusive master of the upbringing and equal education of all children, and it would compel all adult individuals to work and live according to equality and justice. All

communal autonomy and individual initiative—all freedom, in a word—would disappear, annihilated by this formidable power. Society would totally cease to exhibit anything but monotonous and forced uniformity. The government would be elected by universal suffrage, but once elected it would exercise an absolute power over all members of society so long as it remained active.

Babeuf did not invent the theory of forcibly establishing equality by the power of the State. Its first foundations were laid several centuries before Christ by Plato in his *Republic*, a work in which this great thinker of antiquity attempted to sketch the design of an egalitarian society. The first Christians undeniably fostered communism in the practice in their associations, which were persecuted by all of official society. Later, during the first quarter of the sixteenth century in Germany, at the very beginning of the religious Revolution, Thomas Münzer and his disciples made a first attempt to establish social equality on a very broad footing. The Conspiracy of Babeuf was the second practical manifestation of the egalitarian idea among the masses. All these attempts, including the last, failed for two reasons: first, because the masses were hardly sufficiently advanced to make possible the realization [of the egalitarian idea]; and second, especially, because in all these systems [Plato's, Münzer's, and Babeuf's], equality joins forces with the power and authority of the State, and the result is incompatible with freedom. For we know, dear friends, that equality is possible only with freedom and only by means of it: not by means of this freedom which is enjoyed exclusively by the Bourgeois, which is founded on the slavery of the masses, which is not freedom but privilege; but by means of a worldwide freedom of human beings, which raises each one of them to human dignity. But we also know that this freedom is possible only within [the context of] equality. Not just revolt in theory but revolt in practice, against all institutions and against all social relations created by inequality; then the establishment of economic and social equality through the freedom of everyone: that is our present program, which will succeed despite the Bismarcks, the Napoleons, the Thiers, and all the Cossacks of my august Emperor, the Tsar of All the Russias.

The Conspiracy of Babeuf brought together every citizen in Paris devoted to the Revolution who still remained after the executions and deportations of the reactionary *coup d'état* of Thermidor; of course, it included many workers. It failed; many were guillotined, but several had the good fortune to escape. Among the latter was the citizen Buonarroti, a man of iron who had an old-fashioned spirit, who so deserved respect that he knew how to make his most acute opponents respect him. For a long time he lived in Belgium, where he became the principal founder of the secret society of Carbonari-communists; and in a book which has become very rare today but which I will try to send to our friend Adhémar

[Schwitzguébel], he tells the doleful story of this last heroic protest of the Revolution against the Reaction, the Conspiracy of Babeuf.³

As I said, society's other protest against the bourgeois corruption which seized power under the name of the Directory was the usurpation of the first Bonaparte.

This story, a thousand times again as dismal, is known to you all. It was the first inauguration of the infamous and brutal regime of the sword, the first slap in humanity's face, imparted by an impudent upstart at the beginning of this century. Napoleon I became the hero of all the despots, whom he terrified militarily at the same time. Once he was conquered, they were left with his disastrous estate and his infamous principle: contempt for humanity and its oppression by the sword.

I will not speak to you of the Restoration. This was a ridiculous attempt to revive and return to political power two downfallen and decayed social groups: the nobility and the priests. Only under the Restoration did the bourgeoisie, threatened and attacked by the power which it thought it had conquered for all time, again, remarkably, become quasi-revolutionary. Enemy of the public order as soon as this public order is not its own, that is, as soon as it establishes and guarantees interests other than its own, the bourgeoisie conspired anew. Messrs. Guizot, Périer, Thiers and so many others, the most fanatic partisans and conspicuous defenders of an oppressive and corrupting government under Louis-Philippe, but one which was bourgeois and therefore perfect in their eyes—all these damned souls of the bourgeois reaction conspired under the Restoration. They were victorious in July 1830, and the reign of *bourgeois liberalism* was begun.

The year 1830 truly marks the exclusive domination of bourgeois politics and interests in Europe, above all in France, England, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland. In the other countries, such as Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, bourgeois interests entirely outweighed all others, but [there was no] political government of the Bourgeois. I do not refer to the great and unhappy Empire of All the Russias, which remains still subject to the absolute despotism of the Tsars and does not properly have any intermediary political class, no bourgeois political body at all; where in effect there is only, on the one side, the official world, an organization of military police and bureaucracy to satisfy the whims of the Tsar, and on the other side, the people, tens of millions of them destroyed by the Tsar and his functionaries. In Russia, the Revolution will come directly from the people, as I fully explained in a rather long speech which I gave a few years ago in Berne, and which I shall send to you.⁶ Nor do I speak of unhappy, heroic Poland, which struggles in the talons of three infamous eagles—the Empire of Russia, the Empire of Austria, and the new Empire of Germany, represented by Prussia—always to be stifled anew but never dead. In Poland as in Russia, there is no middle

class properly speaking; on the one hand there is the nobility, which in Russia is a hereditary bureaucracy and slave to the Tsar, formerly dominant but today disorganized and downfallen; on the other hand there is the enslaved peasant, overwhelmed no longer by the nobility, which has lost its power, but by the State, by its innumerable functionaries, and by the Tsar. I shall not again mention the small countries of Sweden and Denmark, which did not become really constitutional until 1848 and which have remained more or less behind the general development of Europe; nor Spain and Portugal, where the industrial movement and bourgeois politics were paralyzed for so long by the dual power of the clergy and the army. However, I ought to point out that Spain, which appeared so poorly developed to us, today offers us one of the most magnificent organizations of the International Working-Men's Association existing in the world.

I will pause for a moment on Germany. Since 1830, Germany has offered us—and still offers us—the strange sight of a country where the interests of the bourgeoisie predominate yet where political influence is not theirs, belonging rather to the absolute monarchy, under a mask of militarily and bureaucratically organized Constitutionalism which is administered exclusively by nobles.

It is in France, England, and above all Belgium that the reign of the bourgeoisie should be studied. Since the unification of Italy under the scepter of Victor-Emmanuel, Italy can also be studied. But nowhere is the bourgeoisie's reign so plainly marked as in France; it is in this country that we shall chiefly examine it.

There, the bourgeois principle has had full freedom to be expressed in literature, politics, and social economy since 1830. That principle can be summarized in a single word: *individualism*.

By *individualism* I mean that tendency which considers all members of society, the mass of individuals, to be mutually unconcerned rivals and competitors, natural enemies with whom each individual is forced to live but who block each other's way, that tendency which impels the individual to gain and erect his own well-being, prosperity, and good fortune to the disadvantage of everyone else, despite them and on their backs. It is an overland racecourse from point to point, a general headlong flight in which each individual seeks to arrive first. Woe to the weak who stop; they are passed. Woe to those who collapse on the way, tired with fatigue; they are soon crushed. Competition has neither heart nor pity. Woe to the vanquished! In this struggle, many crimes must inevitably be committed; this fratricidal struggle is moreover a continuous crime against human solidarity, which is the only basis of all morality. The State, which is said to represent justice and to deliver it, does not prevent the perpetration of these crimes. On the contrary, it eternalizes and legalizes them. What it represents and defends is not human justice but juridical justice, which is nothing but the consecration of the victory of the strong over the weak, of the rich over the

poor. The State demands only one thing: that all these crimes be committed legally. I may ruin you, walk over you, and destroy you, but I must observe the laws in doing so. Otherwise I should be declared a criminal and treated as such. That is the sense of this principle, this word, individualism.

Now let us see how this principle is manifested in literature, in this literature created by the Victor Hugos, the Dumas, the Balzacs, the Jules Janins, and other authors of books and articles in the bourgeois newspapers which have inundated Europe since 1830, instilling depravity and evoking egoism in the hearts of the young people of both sexes, and unhappily even among the people themselves. Take whichever novel you like: aside from false, lofty sentiments and fine sentences, what do you find there? Always the same thing: a young man is poor, humble, and unrecognized; he is consumed by all kinds of ambitions and desires; he would like to live in a palace, eat truffles, drink champagne, live in a grand style, and sleep with some pretty marquise. While all others fail, he succeeds through heroic efforts and extraordinary adventures. That is the hero: that is pure individualism.

Let us look at politics. How is the principle expressed there? It is said that the masses need to be led and governed, that they are incapable of doing without government, as if they are also incapable of governing themselves. Who will govern them? [Under the reign of bourgeois individualism, c]lass privilege no longer exists. Everyone has the right to attain the highest social positions and offices. But to get there one must be intelligent and clever; one must be strong and wealthy; one must know how to surpass all rivals and be able to do so. It is again a race from point to point: it is the clever and strong individuals who will govern and fleece the masses.

Let us now examine this same principle in relation to the economic question, which is at bottom the basic question, one may say the only question. The bourgeois economists tell us that they are partisans of unlimited freedom for individuals and that competition is the condition necessary for this freedom. But let us see, what is this freedom? And right away, let us ask one question: Does isolated and solitary labor produce all the marvelous riches of which our age boasts, has it produced them? We know very well to the contrary. The isolated labor of individuals would hardly be able to feed and clothe a small savage tribe; a great nation becomes rich and survives only through collective labor, where the work of one person depends on that of the other. Since labor, which is the production of wealth, is collective, wouldn't it seem logical that the enjoyment of this wealth should also be collective? Well, this is what bourgeois economy does not want, what it hatefully resists. It wants individuals to enjoy [the fruits of collective labor] separately. But which individuals? All of them? Hardly! It grants this pleasure to the powerful,

the intelligent, the cunning, and the wealthy. Yes, the wealthy above all. For in the social organization [which follows from bourgeois political economy], and in accordance with the law of inheritance which is [that society's] principal foundation, a minority is born richer and more successful than millions of disinherited and unsuccessful others. Then bourgeois society says to all these individuals: struggle and fight for the prize of well-being, wealth, and political influence. The winners will be the lucky ones. Does equality exist at least in this fratricidal struggle? No, not at all. A small number are able-bodied, armed from head to foot with education and inherited wealth, and millions of men of the people enter the arena almost naked, with their equally inherited ignorance and poverty. What is the inevitable result of this so-called free competition? The people yield, the bourgeoisie triumphs, and the fettered proletarian is compelled to work like a galley-slave for the individual bourgeois, who dominates him unendingly.

So long as capital opposes labor, the proletariat will never be able to defend itself against this nurturer of labor, which is the main weapon of the bourgeoisie and which has become the principal agent of industrial production in every advanced country.

Capital, as it is now organized and used, crushes not just the proletariat; it oppresses and expropriates a vast number of members of the bourgeoisie, transforming them [into proletarians]. The cause of this phenomenon, which the *moyenne* and *petite bourgeoisie* don't understand well enough and of which indeed they know nothing, is nevertheless quite simple. Thanks to this fight to the death called competition, which prevails today in commerce and industry because the people's freedom benefits the bourgeoisie, all manufacturers are forced to sell their products—or rather, the products of the workers they employ and exploit—at the lowest possible price. You know from experience that the expensive products are today more and more shut out of the market by lower-priced products, even though the latter are more poorly made than the former. Here, then, is a first disastrous result of this competition, this struggle internal to bourgeois production: it inevitably tends to replace good products with mediocre products, and skillful workers with mediocre workers; at the same time, it decreases the quality of the products and of producers.

In this competition, this struggle for the lowest price, big capital inevitably overwhelms small capital and the fat Bourgeois ruin the skinny Bourgeois.⁷ For an immense factory can naturally make its products better than a small or average-sized factory, as well as give them a better price. The establishment of a large factory naturally requires great capital, but in proportion to what it can produce it costs less than a small or average-size factory: 100,000 francs is more than 10,000 francs, but 100,000 francs used in a factory will yield [a profit of] twenty to thirty percent, while 10,000

francs used in the same manner will yield [a profit of] ten percent. The large manufacturer saves on the building, on primary materials, and on machines; employing many more workers than the small or average-size manufacturer, he also gains through better organization and a greater division of labor. To put it briefly, a single manufacturer with 100,000 francs invested in an organization produces much more than ten manufacturers each using 10,000 francs; for example, if each of the latter were to realize a net profit of 2,000 francs on the 10,000-franc investment, the manufacturer who establishes and organizes a large factory costing 100,000 francs realizes 5,000 or 6,000 francs on each 10,000 francs [invested], or rather produces five or six [times as much] merchandise. Producing proportionally much more, he can naturally sell his products at a much lower price than the small or average-size manufacturer; but by selling them at a lower price he forces the small and average-size manufacturers to lower their prices, lest their products not be bought at all. But since it is much more expensive for them to produce these products than it is for the large manufacturer, they are ruined by selling them at the large manufacturer's price. In this way big capital is the death of small capital, and if big capital encounters capital bigger still, it is overwhelmed in its turn.

This is so true that there is an undisguised tendency today for big capital to agglomerate into horrendously huge capital. In the most industrialized countries—England, Belgium, and France—exploitation of commerce and industry by private companies is beginning to replace the exploitation by large unassociated capitalists. And as the civilization and national wealth of the most advanced countries increase, the wealth of the big capitalists increases but the number of capitalists decreases. Members of the *moyenne bourgeoisie* find themselves thrown in with the *petite bourgeoisie*, and a still greater number of the *petite bourgeoisie* are inexorably thrust into the proletariat, into poverty.

This is an incontestable fact, supported by the statistics of all countries as well as by the most precise mathematical proof. In the economic organization of present-day society, the successive impoverishment of the great bulk of the bourgeoisie, to the benefit of a limited number of monumentally huge capitalists, is an inexorable law for which the only cure is Social Revolution. If the *petite bourgeoisie* had enough insight and good sense to understand this, it would ally itself with the proletariat before long in order to carry out this revolution. But the *petite bourgeoisie* is in general very stupid; its foolish vanity and unfeeling egoism shut out the spirit [of Revolution]. Overwhelmed on one side by the *grande bourgeoisie* and menaced on the other by the proletariat which it despises, detests, and fears, it sees nothing, achieves nothing, and stupidly allows itself to be led into the abyss.

The consequences of this bourgeois competition are disastrous for the

proletariat. The manufacturers, forced to sell their products—or the products of the workers whom they exploit—at the lowest possible price, naturally must pay their workers the lowest possible wages. Therefore they can no longer reward their workers' talent. They must seek labor which is sold, forced to be sold, at the lowest price. Since women and children are satisfied with a smaller salary, the manufacturers endeavor to employ children and women in preference to men, and mediocre workers in preference to skillful workers, unless the latter are happy with the salary of unskilled workers, children, and women. Every bourgeois economist has demonstrated and acknowledged that the size of a worker's salary is always determined by the cost of his daily living. Thus, if a worker could lodge, clothe, and feed himself on one franc a day, his salary would fall very quickly to one franc. And this [is so] for a very simple reason: workers tormented by hunger are forced to compete with each other. The manufacturer, on the other hand, is forced by bourgeois competition to sell his products at the lowest possible price and, eager to grow as quickly as possible by exploiting the workers' labor, he will naturally hire those who will offer him more hours of labor for a lower salary.

This is not just a logical deduction, it is an actual event which occurs every day in England, France, Belgium, Germany, and those parts of Switzerland where big industry, exploited in big factories by big capital, has been established. In my last lecture I told you that you were privileged workers. Although your salary is still less than the full value of your daily production, and although you are undeniably exploited by your employers, nevertheless you are better paid in comparison with workers in large industrial establishments, you have spare time, you are [relatively] free and fortunate. And I hasten to acknowledge that you deserve so much the more merit to have entered the International, becoming devoted, zealous members of this vast association of labor which will liberate the workers of the entire world. It is noble and generous of you. You prove thereby that you are thinking not just of yourselves but of the millions of your brothers who are much more oppressed and less prosperous. It is with great happiness that I bear this witness.

But let me tell you that this act of unselfish and fraternal solidarity is also an act of foresight and prudence. You perform it not only for your unhappy brothers in other industries and other countries but also, if not for yourself, then for your children. You are well-rewarded, free, and prosperous, not absolutely so but by comparison. Why is this? Simply because big capital has not yet overrun your industry. But surely you don't think that this will always be the case. Big capital is compelled, by a law inherent in it, inevitably to overrun everything. It began, naturally, by exploiting those branches of commerce and industry which promised it the greatest advantages and were the most easily exploited; and after it has sufficiently exploited them, the competition created by this exploitation

will inevitably push it to assail those branches which will still then be untouched. Don't machines already make clothes, boots, and lace? Mark well these words, that sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, machines will also make watches. The springs, the escapements, the cases, the cap, the finishing, the ornamentation, and the engraving will be done by machine. The products will not be as perfect as those which come from your expert hands but they will cost much less and be sold for much less than your more perfect products, which they will eventually exclude from the market. And so you, or at least your children, will be as slavish and poor as workers in large industrial establishments now. So indeed you see that in working for your brothers, the impoverished workers of other industries and other countries, you are also working for your children if not for yourselves.⁸

You are working for humanity. The working class has today become the sole representative of the great and sacred cause of humanity. The future now belongs to the workers: those in the fields and those in the factories and cities. The classes which have always exploited the labor of the popular masses—the nobility, the clergy, the bourgeoisie, and the myriad military and civil functionaries who represent the injustice and malevolent power of the State—are corrupt classes, struck with impotence, capable neither of judging what is good nor of seeking it, influential only for evil's sake].

The clergy and the nobility were unmasked and defeated in 1793. The Revolution of 1848 unmasked and showed the impotence and evil-doing of the bourgeoisie. During the June Days in 1848, the bourgeois class boldly renounced the religion of their fathers, this revolutionary religion whose principles and bases were liberty, equality, and fraternity. As soon as the people took equality and liberty seriously, the bourgeoisie, existing thanks only to the people's economic inequality and social bondage, retreated into reaction.

These very traitors who wish to disgrace France today once more—the Thiers, the Jules Favres, and the vast majority of the 1848 National Assembly—worked for the triumph of the most foul reaction back then, just as they do today. They began by suppressing universal suffrage, and later [using it] they raised Louis Bonaparte to the presidency. The fear of Social Revolution, the dread of equality, the awareness of its own crimes, and the fear of popular justice hurled this downfallen class, once so intelligent and heroic but now so stupid and cowardly, into the arms of the dictatorship of Napoleon III. And they had military dictatorship for the next eighteen years. We should not think that the Bourgeois Gentlemen were too inconvenienced. Those who rebelled and played at liberalism in too loud and incommensurate a manner for the imperial regime were naturally isolated and repressed. But everyone else—those who left the political nonsense to the people and applied themselves earnestly and

exclusively to the great concern of the bourgeoisie, the exploitation of the people—they were well protected and powerfully supported. They were even given all the appearances of liberty so that they could save their honor. Didn't a Legislative Assembly exist under the Empire, regularly elected by universal suffrage? All went well, according to the desires of the bourgeoisie. There was only one black mark. This was the ambition for conquest exhibited by the sovereign, who forcibly dragged France into ruinous expenditures which led to the destruction of his own power. But this black mark was not an accident, it was a necessity of the system. A despotic and absolute regime, even one with the semblances of freedom, must inevitably depend upon a powerful army, and every large standing army sooner or later brings foreign war, because ambition is the principal inspiration of the military hierarchy. Every lieutenant wishes to be a colonel, every colonel a general. As for the soldiers, who are systematically demoralized in their barracks, they dream of the noble pleasures of war: massacre, pillage, theft, and rape—the exploits of the Prussian army in France, for example. Well, if all these noble passions, nurtured systematically and knowingly among the officers and soldiers, remain long unsatisfied, then they grow worse, provoking the army to discontent, and from discontent to revolt. War thus becomes a necessity. So all the expeditions and wars undertaken by Napoleon III were hardly the personal caprices the Bourgeois Gentlemen claim, but a necessity of the despotic imperial system which they themselves founded out of the fear of Social Revolution. Thus the privileged classes, the cardinals and priests, the downfallen nobility, and finally this respectable, honest, and virtuous bourgeoisie above all, are as much to blame as Napoleon III himself for all the horrible misfortunes that have recently struck France.

And comrades, you all saw that to defend unhappy France there was in the entire land but a single group, the urban workers: precisely those betrayed by the bourgeoisie and delivered to the Empire, which sacrificed them to bourgeois exploitation. In the whole country, only the unselfish urban and industrial workers sought an uprising of the people for the safety of France. The rural workers, the peasants, demoralized and stupefied by the religious education which they have been given from Napoleon I to the present, took the side of the Prussians and of Reaction, against France. They could have been revolutionized. In a pamphlet which many among you have read, *Letters to a Frenchman*, I described the methods by which they could have been won over to the Revolution.⁹ But for this to have happened, it was first necessary that the cities rise in insurrection and organize themselves in a revolutionary manner. The workers wanted this; they even tried it in many cities in central France, in Lyons, Marseilles, Montpellier, Saint-Étienne, and Toulouse. But everywhere they were held back and paralyzed in the name of the Republic by the bourgeois radicals. Yes, in the name of the Republic, the members of

the bourgeoisie who had turned republican out of fear of the people—in the name of the Republic of the Gambettas, that old sinner Jules Favre, Thiers the infamous fox, and all the Picards, Ferrys, Jules Simons, Pelletans and many others—in the name of the Republic they assassinated the Republic and France.

Sentence has been passed on the bourgeoisie. It is the richest and most numerous class in France—except for the masses of the people of course—and had it wished, it could have saved France. But for that it would have had to sacrifice its money and its life and rely unreservedly on the proletariat, as did its forefathers, the bourgeoisie of 1793: Well it didn't want to sacrifice its money any more than its life, and it preferred to see France conquered by the Prussians than saved by popular revolution.

The issue between the workers in the towns and the Bourgeois was stated just as clearly. The workers said: We would sooner blow our houses up than deliver our towns to the Prussians. The Bourgeois replied: We would sooner open the doors of our towns to the Prussians than allow you to create public disorder, and we would prefer to retain our expensive houses at all cost, even if we have to kiss the behind of these Prussian Gentlemen.

And note that these same members of the bourgeoisie now dare to insult the Paris Commune, this noble Commune which is saving France's honor and, let us hope, the freedom of the world at the same time. And in the name of what do they insult the Commune? *In the name of patriotism!*

They are really brazen-faced! They have sunk to a level of infamy which has caused them to lose nearly their lowest sense of decency. They do not know shame. Before they have even died, they are already rotten to the core.

And it is not just in France; comrades, that the bourgeoisie is rotten, morally and intellectually destroyed; it is the same throughout Europe; and in all the countries of Europe, only the proletariat has kept the sacred fire. It alone is now humanity's standard-bearer.

What is its motto; its morality; its principle? *Solidarity*. All for one, one for all, and one by virtue of all. This is the motto, the fundamental principle of our great International [Working-Men's] Association which transcends the frontiers of States, thus destroying them, endeavoring to unite the workers of the entire world into a single human family on the basis of universally obligatory labor, in the name of the freedom of each and every individual. This Solidarity is collective labor and collective property in social economy; in politics, it is called the destruction of States and the freedom of every individual, which arises from the freedom of all individuals.

Yes, dear comrades, you the workers, jointly with your brothers the workers of the whole world, today you alone inherit the great mission of emancipating humanity. You have a co-inheritor; he is a worker like you,

but he works under different conditions. This is the peasant. But the peasant does not yet realize the great mission of the people. He has been poisoned and is poisoned still by the priests, and he acts against himself, as an instrument of Reaction. You must teach him and save him in spite of himself, winning him over and explaining to him what Social Revolution is.

At this moment, and above all in the beginning, the workers of industry must count, can count only on themselves. But they will be all-powerful if they wish it. Only they must earnestly wish it. And there are but two ways to realize this wish. The first is by establishing, first in their own groups and then among all groups, a true fraternal solidarity, not just in words but in action, not just for holidays but in their daily life. Every member of the International must be able to feel that all other members are his brothers and be convinced of this in practice.

The other means is revolutionary organization, organization for action. If the uprisings of the people in Lyons, Marseilles, and other French towns have failed, that is because there was hardly any organization. I can speak with full knowledge of the affair, for I was there and I was pained by it.¹⁰ And if the Paris Commune holds fast so valiantly today, this is because during the whole siege the workers are earnestly organized. Not without reason do the bourgeois newspapers accuse the International of having produced the magnificent uprising of Paris. Yes, let us say it boldly, these are our brother-members of the International, who have organized the people of Paris and whose steady efforts have made the Paris Commune possible.

Let us then be good brothers and comrades, and let us organize ourselves. Do not think that we are at the end of the Revolution, we are at its beginning. The Revolution is henceforth the order of the day, for many decades to come. It will come to find us, sooner or later. Let us therefore prepare and purify ourselves and become more genuine, let us be less talkers, less criers, less phrasemongers, less drinkers, and less rakes. Let us gird our loins¹¹ and properly prepare ourselves for this struggle which will save all peoples and finally emancipate humanity.

Long live the Social Revolution! Long live the Paris Commune!

Part Two

Bourgeois Socialism and Revolutionary Socialism

strongly suggests that Bakunin intended another meaning. The whole of his revolutionary activity and political philosophy argues against the use of the word "government" in this context.

51. Bakunin, "Pis'mo k Sergeiu Nechaevu" [Letter to Sergei Nechaev], in *Archives Bakounine*, IV, 118-19; translation taken from Lehning (ed.), *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, pp. 191-92. Emphasis in the original.

52. The epithet is Max Nomad's.

53. Bakunin, "Appendice à 'L'Empire knouto-germanique et la Révolution sociale': Considérations philosophiques sur le Fantôme divin, sur le Monde réel et sur L'Homme," in *Œuvres*, III, 219, 234.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

Comment on Texts and Translation

1. Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee, *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (London: Dent, 1791).

2. B. Nikolajewsky, "M. A. Bakunin in der 'Dresdner Zeitung,'" *International Review for Social History*, 1 (1936): 185-92.

3. Dysgloss: a neologism that I may propose for general adoption, as no word in English now has the requisite sense—the prefix meaning "abnormal" and the root meaning "language," from the Greek.

4. Jean Dubois, *Le vocabulaire politique et social en France de 1869 à 1872* (Paris: Larousse, [1962]).

The Basic Bakunin

1. In late October 1870, Bakunin wrote: "However much I try to convince myself to the contrary, I believe that France is lost, betrayed to the Prussians by the incapacity, the cowardice, and the cupidity of the bourgeoisie. The militarism and the bureaucracy, the aristocratic arrogance and the Protestant Jesuitry of the Prussians, in affectionate alliance with the knout of my dear sovereign lord and master the Emperor of All the Russias, will triumph over the Continent of Europe for I know not how many decades. Goodbye to all our dreams of approaching liberation." Thus the Knouto-Germanic Empire. (Cited in James Guillaume, *L'Internationale: documents et souvenirs*, 4 vols. (Paris: Société nouvelle de librairie et d'édition, 1905-10), II, 112; translation taken from E. H. Carr, *Michael Bakunin* [New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1961], p. 424.) Between November 1870 and February 1871 Bakunin composed, and in April 1871 he published, the pamphlet *L'Empire knouto-germanique et la Révolution sociale* (Geneva: Imprimerie coopérative, 1871), in which he expanded on this theme; only fragments have appeared in English, in G. P. Maximoff (comp. and ed.), *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1953), pp. 220-22, 259-60, 281-82, 368, 388-89, 392-93, 404-8.

Other parts of the manuscript gained greater notoriety after Bakunin's death. The title page of the 1871 publication had added: "Part I"; from Part II, written in February-March 1871, was drawn the famous "God and the State," not to be confused with another fragment of this same manuscript, composed in April-May 1871, published by Nettlau under the title "Dieu et l'Etat" in *Œuvres*, 6 vols. (Paris: P. V. Stock, 1895-1913), I, 261-335, and translated in part in Arthur Lehning (ed.), *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973), pp. 139-52. The "Preface to Part II," which Bakunin wrote in June 1871, is none other than "The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State," which is translated integrally in *ibid.*, pp. 195-213.

More information on this history of the manuscript, and on its still more numerous fragments may be found in Paul Avrich, "Introduction to the Dover Edition," in Bakunin, *God and the State* (New York: Dover, 1970), pp. viii-xii. Since Avrich wrote, the fragment called "An Essay against Marx" has been partially translated in Lehning (ed.), *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, pp. 263-66. The entire manuscript, with many variants appearing for the first time, has been published as vol. VII of the *Archives Bakounine*. Arthur Lehning's "Introduction" to this volume is the definitive history of the work's composition.

2. More literally but less alliteratively: "War on the castles and peace to the hovels!" (In the German: Friede den Hütten, Krieg den Palästen!) In *The Peasant War in Germany*, Engels opined that this popular movement was not progressive because it opposed the historically necessary centralization of Germany; to Bakunin, however, so widespread a popular revolt could not be in the wrong.

3. The phrase is the title of a folksong with the refrain: "Do not speak of liberty, poverty is slavery." Pierre Lachambeaudie, *Fables*, 10th ed. (Paris: Pagnerre, 1852), pp. 188-89.

4. Cf. *Œuvres*, I, 41: "... whereas socialism seeks to found a republic of men, [pure republicanism, "the darling of the Robespierres and Saint-Justs"] seeks only a republic of citizens, even if—as in the constitutions which came as a necessary sequel to that of 1793, from the moment when, after a brief hesitation, [pure republicanism] came to the point of deliberately ignoring the social question—even if the active citizens, to use an expression of the Constituent Assembly, must base their civic privilege on exploiting the labor of the passive citizens." (Translation taken from Lehning [ed.], *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, pp. 100-101; emphases in the original.) Those who characterize Bakunin as a Jacobin tend erroneously to discount such sentiments as these, which are found throughout his writings.

5. The book Bakunin refers to is: Ph. Buonarroti, *Conspiration pour l'égalité dite de Babeuf, suivie du procès auquel elle donna lieu, des pièces justificatives, etc., etc.*, 2 vols. (Brussels: Librairie romantique, 1828). The only English translation of this work appeared in 1836, but Babeuf's speech to the court that condemned him is more widely available: *The Defense of Gracchus Babeuf before the High Court of Vendôme*, ed. and trans. by John Anthony Scott (New York: Schocken Books, 1972).

6. Bakunin refers to his fourth speech at the Berne Congress (1868) of the League of Peace and Freedom, which is a rare item and has not been translated into English: *Bulletin siénographique du deuxième Congrès de la Paix et de la Liberté*, no. 4 (25 September 1868): 214-39. See, however, "On Russia" and "A Few Words to My Young Brothers in Russia" in this volume.

7. "... les gros capitaux doivent nécessairement écraser les petits capitaux, les gros bourgeois doivent ruiner les petits bourgeois." The grande, moyenne, and petite bourgeoisies were capitalists of varying wealth; Bakunin "invented" the *gros capitaux* and *gros bourgeois* (on the construction of *gros capitalistes*, which locution was current in Lyons near the end of 1870 when he was there) in order to play on the double meaning of *petits bourgeois*. See the lexicographical study by Jean Dubois, *Le vocabulaire politique et social en France de 1869 à 1872* (Paris: Larousse, [1962]), esp. pp. 48-49, 110-11, 229-31, 236-39.

The haute (also vieille or ancienne) bourgeoisie were aristocrats, probably descended from the noblesse de robe. Because all these terms have specific and interdependent connotations, they are as a rule kept in the translations here, rather than replaced with others less definite (such as "upper middle-class," which would not only confound the haute and grande bourgeoisies but also be anachronistic).

8. In 1911 Guillaume commented: "Things have greatly changed in the St.-Imier Valley since 1871. The watchmaking industry has entered large-scale production; most workers who make watches now labor in factories, and their salaries have greatly diminished." *Œuvres*, V, 325, n. 1.

9. The anonymously printed *Lettres à un Français sur la crise actuelle, septembre 1870* [Neuchâtel: Imprimerie G. Guillaume fils, 1870], reprinted in *Archives Bakounine*, VI, 106-

31. were the result of Guillaume's extensive editing of a Bakunin manuscript composed in Lyons under the title "Lettre à un Français" (see *ibid.*, VI, 3-103). The original manuscript has been fairly widely but only fragmentarily translated into English: see Lehning (ed.), *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, pp. 232-35; Maximoff (ed.), *Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, pp. 174-75, 203-4, 370-72, 373, 389-92, 393-97, 397-403, 405, 406-7, 408, 410-11; and Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy* (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 183-217, despite the plural title "Letters."

10. Bakunin participated in the aborted Lyons insurrection.

11. Following the transcription in *Archives Bakounine*, VI, 245 ("Ceignons nos reins..."); Michel Bakounine, *De la guerre à la Commune*, ed. F. Rude (Paris: Editions anthropos, 1972), p. 404, gives "serrons nos reins," which it rectifies to "serrons nos rangs" (respectively: let us close our loins, let us close our ranks), but the manuscript is ambiguous. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Salle des manuscrits, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises, folio 23690, p. 446.

12. Held in Berne in 1868. After this vote by the Congress Bakunin, who had been a member of the League's Central Committee, withdrew from the League with his associates and founded the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy.

The "Program of the Alliance," which Bakunin wrote upon his withdrawal from the League, is so concise a statement of his anarchist principles and objectives, that it is worth reproducing here. This translation is taken from Lehning (ed.), *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, pp. 174-75:

1. The *Alliance* stands for atheism, the abolition of cults and the replacement of faith by science and divine by human justice.

2. Above all, it stands for the final and total abolition of classes and the political, economic and social equalization of individuals of either sex, and, to this end, it demands above all the abolition of the right of inheritance, so that every man's possessions may in future be commensurate to his output, and so that in pursuance of the decision reached by the last working men's Congress in Brussels, the land, the instruments of work and all other capital may become the collective property of the whole of society and be utilized only by the workers, in other words by the agricultural and industrial associations. [See note 33 below.]

3. It stands for equality of the means of development for all children of both sexes from the cradle onward—maintenance, upbringing and education to all levels of science, industry and the arts—being convinced that while at first the effect of equality will be only economic and social it will increasingly lead to greater natural equality among individuals by eliminating all artificial inequalities, the historic products of a false, iniquitous social system.

4. Hostile to all despotism, acknowledging no political form other than the republican form, and totally rejecting any alliance with reaction, it also repudiates all political action whose target is anything except the triumph of the workers' cause over Capital.

5. It recognizes that all the political and authoritarian States of today must scale down their functions to the simple administration of the public services in their respective lands and merge into the universal union of free Associations, both agricultural and industrial.

6. The concrete, final solution to the social question can only be realized on the basis of international workers' solidarity, and the *Alliance* repudiates any policy based on so-called patriotism and national rivalry.

7. It stands for the universal Association of all local associations, through Liberty.

13. From the League's untitled circular of [4 May 1869. Bakunin does not mention that the contributions being solicited were to have been redeemable for shares in a company

"which we are organizing to assure the appearance of the newspaper *Les Etats-Unis d'Europe*."

14. A Berlin newspaper, founded by Johann Jacoby in 1867 and closely allied to the Volkspartei, which Bakunin once called the "principal organ of Prussian democracy." See Guillaume, *L'Internationale*, I, 51, n. 1, and 212.

15. "Après nous, le déluge!"—a remark attributed to Jeanne, Marquise de Pompadour (1721-1764), mistress of Louis XV, toward the end of her life.

16. Bakunin elsewhere expresses the principle of authority thus: "With God... humanity is divided into men greatly inspired, less inspired, and uninspired.... The greatly inspired must be listened to by the less inspired, and the less inspired by the uninspired. Thus we have the principle of authority well established and with it the two fundamental institutions of slavery: Church and State." *God and the State*, p. 53, translation modified slightly according to the original text in *Œuvres*, III, 86; emphasis in the original. Cf. P.-J. Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century* [Idée générale de la révolution au XIXe siècle, 1851], trans. by John Beverley Robinson (London: Freedom Press, 1923), Fourth Study.

17. The International Students' Congress, held from 29 October through 1 November 1865, and attended by over a thousand persons. Bakunin met a number of them later in the decade, in Geneva and through the League of Peace and Freedom. For more, see *Archives Bakounine*, IV, 454, nn. 55-57.

18. Bakunin heard of this while in the United States (perhaps from Charles Sumner), or while he was travelling to or from the United States, after his escape from Siberia and on his way to London.

19. Cf. P.-J. Proudhon, *What Is Property? An Inquiry into the Principle of Right and of Government* [Qu'est-ce que la propriété? ou Recherches sur le principe du droit et du gouvernement, 1840], trans. by Benj. R. Tucker (New York: Humboldt, [ca. 1890]; reprint ed. [with a new Introduction by George Woodcock], New York: Dover, 1970), First Memoir, chap. III, sec. 7, esp. p. 146: "... an artist's talent may be infinite, but its mercenary claims are necessarily limited..."

20. This is an idea with which Mao, in a different social and political context, had the opportunity to experiment. A brief description in English is provided by Rennselaer W. Lee, "The Hsia Fang System: Marxism and Modernization," *China Quarterly*, no. 28 (October-December 1966): 40-62.

21. "L'hypocrisie est un hommage que le vice rend à la vertu"—aphorism no. 218 in the *Réflexions ou sentences maximes* of François, duc de la Rochefoucauld.

22. Syrian god of riches, whose name was often used to refer to great unearned wealth. 23. The brief first installment of this series may have been written jointly by Bakunin and Charles Perron (1837-1909), the principal editor of *L'Égalité* whom Bakunin replaced for several months in the summer of 1869.

24. The agenda was, "How should the International's goal be realized?" Resolutions repudiating *La Montagne* and endorsing *L'Égalité* and *Le Progrès* were passed; the assembly was unanimous but for three votes. Coullery had used *La Montagne* to attack the resolutions of the IWMA's Brussels Congress (1868) on collective property. (See note 33.) He did not appear at the meeting on 30 May 1869 but declared the following day that, had he been there, he could easily have refuted his opponents' arguments; given this opportunity that very evening by his followers, who also invited Bakunin, Coullery stayed home. After his earlier bravado, this was taken as his acknowledgment of defeat. The series of articles on Coullery was catalyzed by his own attacks a month later, again printed in *La Montagne*, against the "aberrations" of the socialist-revolutionaries who had turned their backs on him. See also note 30.

25. On the front page.

26. The President of the League had, at Bakunin's behest, sent a letter to his counterpart in the International, inviting representatives of the latter to the League's Congress in Berne;