

R. NA GORSKI

HISTORY OF THE
ANARCHIST MOVEMENT IN
POLAND



**PRINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &
DISCUSSIONS
FOR LAND & FREEDOM**

AN INTRODUCTORY WORD TO THE
'ANARCHIVE'

“Anarchy is Order!”

*'I must Create a System or be enslav'd by
another Man's.
I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create'*
(William Blake)

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism – of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives—a 'new' kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as 'Anarchy is order', 'Property is theft',...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The 'anarchive' or 'anarchist archive' Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the '**principles, propositions and discussions**' of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe that these texts are part of our own heritage. They don't belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the 'new

anarchism' outgrow the slogans. This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

'Anarchy Is Order' does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing texts from the CD (collecting all available texts at a given moment) that is available or copying it, e-mailing the texts to friends and new ones to us,... Become your own anarchivist!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and authors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchivist offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*“...demons of flesh and blood, that sway scepters down
here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark diseases and
wish to
squash us like horseflies;
and the will-‘o-the-wisp of the saddest ignorance.”*
(L-P. Boon)

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us.
Don't mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism, cooperation can be sent
to A.O@advalvas.be.

A complete list and updates are available on this
address, new texts are always

WELCOME!!

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By R. NAGORSKI

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The History of the Anarchist Movement in Poland describes the evolution of Anarchism in Poland from the 19th Century to the 1990s-- from famous Polish Anarchist writers, the Anarchist idea spread like wildfire throughout the Polish Working Class living under Capitalism and a Police State--strikes and labor unrest spread across Poland. Between the Wars a "130,000 strong" Anarcho-syndicalist movement emerged which fought the Nazis in places like the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Anarchist ideas can be seen in the founding principles of the *Solidarity* trade union federation and in the campaigns of the *Polish Anarchist Federation* today.

Credits:

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POLISH WORKING-CLASS STRUGGLE

FOR A LONG TIME PAST THE POLISH proletariat had been in the habit of concentrating its revolutionary effort in the field of direct action. The Polish worker, oppressed at the same time as a worker and as a revolutionary, rapidly realized that he could count on no one but himself, and that his only option was to resort to a direct struggle in order to improve his position. In the important centers of the textile industry (Bialystok, Warsaw, Lodz), and in the mines (Dxbrowa, Sosnowice), the worker did not hesitate to make use of the most drastic methods of defense: economic blackmail during strikes, armed demonstrations and revolts, sabotage and so on . . . Extremism in their methods of struggle is therefore a valued tradition acquired by the working-class under Tsarist domination. Besides that, the Polish workers movement suffered the disastrous influence of various State-socialist currents of thought. Some, the Socialist Party of Poland (PPS) for example, envisaged the realization of their ideal in liberation from the Russian yoke and hoped for the creation of an independent Republic of Poland. Others, the Social-Democracy of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) For example, actually communist, calling themselves internationalists, aspiring to the creation of a pan-Russian democratic republic and, within it, the complete autonomy of Poland, which would have formed an independent federation. It was only after the realization of these preliminary conditions that these two parties believed it possible to engage in the struggle to bring about socialism.

So, we can see that the tactics of the Polish proletariat were imbued with an extremely revolutionary spirit, often indeed Anarchist. However, at the same time their theoretical spokesmen were always from more or less radical and nationalist State-socialist parties; but who were constantly doing their utmost to separate the proletariat from the active social and revolutionary struggle, and who strove to direct it toward political struggle with the aim of victory being either exclusively Polish State-socialist government, or Polish State-socialist government in participation with the Russian State-socialist government.

ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA BEFORE WORLD WAR I

An Anarchist movement of Narodnik (Russian anti-capitalist democratic activists of the late 19th century) and Anarchist ideas from Russia and Western Europe came into existence at the turn of the 19th century. Although a small number of isolated groups had existed in various towns, Anarchism did not play a very important part in the Polish workers' movement until 1905.[1] In 1899 one of these groups published the first Anarchist work to appear in Polish: *God and the State* by Michael Bakunin. This book, and several others, like most Russian revolutionary publications, were published abroad because of persecution by the Russian police.

The same year in Austrian Poland where the censorship was much less severe another book was published entitled *The Problems of Socialism* (Leopole 1899) signed Z.R. Walcrewski. The author was at that time a young student of philosophy at Warsaw University. He

became in due course one of the most remarkable sociologists of Poland. His true name was Edward Abramowski. In 1904 the same author published another work under the name of N.A. Crajkowski, *Socialism and the State* (Leopole 1904). In his book *A Public Collusion Against Government* he gave some instructions about how people should struggle with the Tsar for their own national maintenance. He advocated non-payment of taxes and refusing to join the army. He prophetically warned "The politics of modern socialism is not a politics of strengthening and extending national authority that tends not towards setting people free but towards toward authorizing everything which only they themselves can authorize." In accordance with his conclusions that "The politics of anti-authoritarian socialism are based on evolutionary tendencies diametrically opposed to those upon which the politics of State-socialism are based, that is, upon the tendencies toward co-operation and free collaboration which are becoming more and more characteristic of modern capitalist society," he devoted himself to the cooperative movement. Abramowski presented his views in works such as *Ethics and Revolution*, *Republic of Friends* and *The Co-operative as the Workers Task of Emancipation*. An alternative to the state system was, in his opinion, free associations of producers and mutual services associated in bigger co-operatives. Only these support real freedom, and give welfare, order, justice and brother hood to the individual. Furthermore they are organized from the grassroots, spontaneously without compulsion. Existing associates should form on a specified territory, a free commune without authority and police. However the lack of a supposedly indispensable repression machinery does not mean chaos at all. The reverse happens--it releases energy and makes people

wanting to create the surrounding reality and to find themselves in it.

Abromowski's second book, *Socialism and the State*, was issued by a "Publication Society" in Leopole which later published *The Conquest of Bread* and *Concerning a Life* by Peter Kropotkin as well as *An Appeal to the Young*.

At approximately the same time, the Anarcho-syndicalist comrade Jozef Zielinski, a medical student, was active in Paris. In five years (1901-1906) he published four pamphlets: *The General Strike* (1901), *Hypocritical Socialism* (1902), *Is Anarchism in Poland Justified?* (1906), *Workers' Unions in Struggle* (1906).

ANARCHIST ORGANIZATION BEFORE WORLD WAR I

Meanwhile, the situation in Poland was becoming serious. Showers warned of the storm to come; there were presentiments of the 1905 Revolution. Reaction and repression drove the workers to adopt more and more violent methods of exerting pressure. And soon Anarchism ceased to be only a word. Already, in 1903, the Anarchist group *The Struggle* was formed in Bialystok, and from then on that town became a center for Anarchist action and propaganda. At first the group concerned itself chiefly with propaganda and published several pamphlets as well as numerous leaflets addressed to workers, peasants and soldiers. The Anarchists organized meetings which were attended by six to eight hundred workers (a very satisfactory number for a small town). After three months of intensive effort the number

of active members of the group reached seventy. It was chiefly in the period before May 1, 1904 that the meetings, which took place daily, became particularly lively. The group took part in the workers' struggle and organized several strikes, some of which were only successful due to economic blackmail. In general, at Bialystok, and afterwards in Warsaw, the Anarchist movement distinguished itself from that in other countries by its use of economic rather than political blackmail. It was only later that they too were forced by savage persecution to have recourse to political blackmail. During periods of unemployment, the Anarchists were at the head of the unemployed whom they urged by their example to seize the bread and foodstuffs that were necessities for them. Action which did not fail to displease the political parties. In the small town of Krynki, the Anarchists, weapons in hand, attacked the town hall and seized a certain number of blank passports.

The Anarchists actively participated in the events of 1905.[2] Some even took part, on an individual basis, in the Councils of workers' delegates which had been formed and they exercised a considerable influence there. On January 9, during the General Strike, the Anarchists were the only other revolutionary parties at the head of the movement. Terrified, the police fled and all the government institutions fell into the hands of the workers. It is with the indecisive attitude of the political parties that the responsibility lies for the defeat of the movement which was soon annihilated by the troops sent against the insurgents.

Towards the middle of 1906, a fairly strong Anarchist Federation was already in existence in Bialystok.[3] It

was composed of workers from four trades: weavers, leather and skin workers, joiners [cabinetmakers] and tailors. The body of the group comprised Polish and Jewish workers. There was also a purely Polish federation and fifteen very active propaganda circles joined together with sixteen to eighteen workers in each. The federation took part in innumerable strikes and was particularly noticeable in the General strike launched by the spinners in 1906. The strike was only successful thanks to the direct action seizure of provisions. Some numbers of comrades were executed following these events. In December 1906 the hanging of the brave comrade Jozef Myslinski took place. He was very popular among the workers of Bialystok. But at the same time, an agent provocateur was killed. A little later the executions of comrades Leonard Czarniecki (Olek), Yvan Gainski (Mielek) and Anton Nizborski. The groups possessed a clandestine printing press *Anarchy*, which was seized by the police at the end of 1906 at the same time as several comrades, men and women, were arrested.

Some groups existed in various small suburban towns, such as Sokolki, Rozany, Bielsk, Czestochowa, *etc.*. Activities in these towns most often developed in conjunction with the activities in Bialystok. At Rozany, the Anarchists organized several strikes; in Bielsk an active program of propaganda was carried out by a peasant group; a similar group worked in Orlo. In Wolkowysk economic blackmail was used, as well as in Zabłudowo and Krynki.

Of course this was not all. It is only one small part of the work of which we know, and we are a long way from knowing everything. But the action mentioned proves

already that Anarchism was a quite well-developed movement and continues a struggle, as vigorous as it was implacable, for the complete liberation of humanity. Numerous groups also existed in Warsaw. The most active date from January 1905. The first group, *International*, was composed of Jewish workers; it arranged meetings where speeches were given in Polish and Yiddish. It organized propaganda circles with more than 125 members, and members of the group numbered 40. As at Bialystok, the Anarchists organized numerous strikes using sabotage and economic blackmail. During the strike of bakery workers which was directed by the Anarchists, some ovens were blown up and petrol [gasoline] was poured into the dough. The owners, terrified, surrendered. The Anarchists even gained control of the bakery which they ran communally until the owner gave in.

The Anarchists led an active struggle against the socialist parties who used infamies and vile lies to discredit the Anarchists. On the day of the "freedom" the Anarchists took their message into mass meetings. A little while afterwards repression began and many comrades were arrested. While distributing pamphlets among the soldiers, comrade Victor Rivkind was arrested. He was subsequently shot. A large quantity of weapons and a secret press were seized. In January 1906, sixteen members of the *International* group were shot, several of them were miners. The other members escaped abroad or were deported to Siberia. In August 1906 the movement revived a bit. Two groups were formed: *The Black Curtain* and *Liberty*. In the winter of the same year, the Anarchists were already organizing several strikes making use of economic blackmail.

In 1907 many arrests were carried out (on one occasion alone twenty-one comrades were thrown into prison). They found a secret lithograph transfer for the newspaper *The Revolutionary Voice*. There were groups on Lodz, Siedlce, Biata and Creustochowa. In Grodno the Anarchist Friedman killed a jailer for maltreatment dealt out to detainees; pursued by the police he committed suicide, not wanting to be caught alive. In Brzese many acts of expropriation were carried out. There was also a group in Wilna. There were also several groups working for the Anarchist cause abroad.[4] In London in 1907 there was a *Polish-Russian Anarchist-Communist Group* [5] which published two pamphlets: Thour's *What the Anarchists Want?* And Malatesta's *Anarchy*. In the same year Emile Henry's pamphlet, *Speech Before the Assize Court* was published in Paris.

The years 1905-1907 caused the interesting personality of Waclaw Machaiski, founder of the system of the "workers' conspiracy" to emerge from the ranks of Polish Anarchism. Born in 1876, he was a patriotic activist in the PPS party but gradually he came to anti-intelligentsia views. The chief principle of the International that "the emancipation of the workers should be the task of the workers" he took literally and fought fanatically against any participation, even physical participation, of intellectuals in the workers' movement, believing that intellectuals only tend toward power behind the mask of socialism, revolutionary socialism or even Anarchism (*Workers' Conspiracy No. 1*). Foretelling the constraints that follow socialism he augured an arrival of a slavish system in which bureaucratic machinery set up by intelligentsia would constrain an ordinary workman. He believed that a single path led to Anarchy: the direct struggle of the workers

themselves using the most revolutionary modes of struggle to obtain slight improvements and reforms which will finish by leading us little by little towards society without property or authority. Although strange, he idea is quite interesting. However, Machaiski worked above all among the Russian workers, and his ideas did not have the slightest influence on Anarchism in Poland.

The years 1904-1907 were the period of the development of Anarchism in Poland. The young movement with only a recent past but profound experience, committed mistakes and errors as every lively and active group has elsewhere. To exchange opinions on these faults of the movement and to try to remedy them in the future, a secret conference of Anarchist-communist groups from Lithuania and Poland took place in June 1907. The discussion was published by the conference's own secret press. Its resolutions were addressed to all workers. We must stop awhile on these resolutions, which read as follows:

"The Conference records that the general character of our epoch is supremely revolutionary. Each revolution carries within itself deeply de-centralist, essentially Anarchist tendencies. Also, all preceding revolutions have imbued the worker with the Anarchist spirit. It is because of this that, now on the eve of the great revolution, the fooled masses begin to see clearly, and a powerful Anarchist movement, born out of the necessities of our social life, is beginning to develop. But some faults have got in to our young movement. It is precisely the need for examination of these faults that provoked this Conference. The Conference believes that:

A federal organization of all the groups which up to now have been isolated and dispersed is now necessary. Seeing that the seizures of property that have taken place up until now were frequent but unimportant and badly organized, this has involved a useless waste of strength and the chaotic use of conquered resources; only the complete federation is in the position to carry out considerable seizures of property which are well prepared and from which we can gain most judiciously. Serious measures must be taken against the provocative attitude of the political parties against the Anarchists. Having examined the tactics of the Anarchists and of the other parties, the Conference proposes that groups should struggle against the trade unions in whatever form they exist, or under whatever name they appear, as if against a dangerous and perfidious weapon of the bourgeoisie having its aim that of distancing the worker from the path of revolution and of throwing him onto the path of compromise and thus poisoning all revolutionary class-consciousness. (The Conference) Declares itself in support of mass seizure of foodstuffs during strikes, periods of unemployment, etc. . . . (The Conference) Permits conspiracy."

Twenty-four comrades were tried for having been members of this *Federation of Anarchist-Communist Groups of Poland and Lithuania*. Among them were the German comrade known as Senna hen (Johann Holzman), Kalinin, Kac, Grzeznarowski (twice condemned to death), Kilacrycki, and the women comrades Marcewska (twice condemned to death), and Malinowska. They were detained for a long time in deplorable conditions. Some became mad as a result of the persecutions of which they were the victims.

At the International Congress in Amsterdam, Poland was represented by two delegates: I Zielinska and Joseph Schweber.

The Anarchist movement in Galicia (the Austrian part of Poland) developed independently. In 1907 the newspaper *The New Epoch* (Leopole) was published and just three editions came out. Another newspaper *The Free World* (Leopole) was no luckier. Unfortunately we do not have all the details we should like about the activities of the comrades of Galicia. A periodical *Utopia* was published with the support of Gustav Landauer and Eric Muhsam. The editorial group represented the individualist Anarchist tendency whereas all the others represented the Anarchist-communist trend.

The active work of Anarcho-syndicalist comrade Augustyn Wroblewski during the years leading up to the war must be mentioned. He was a teacher of chemistry and put out his propaganda at first only among the youth at school and university. He finally put it out among the workers of Krakow. An exceptional personality, he edited several works among which were *The Manifesto of Humanity*, *The Red Religion* (Paris 1911), etc. Apart from this, in Krakow, he published the newspaper *The Workers' Cause*, an Anarchist organ of which more than one issue bore marks of censorship.

In 1911 in Paris there was a Polish group of Anarchists who edited the Anarcho-syndicalist newspaper *Najmita* (*The Salary*). The group was incontact with Russian and Austrain comrades from Poland among whom were the railway workers of the Warsaw area who had prepared the ground for the paper by means of an active program of propaganda. At the same time a revolutionary organ

was published in Chicago, probably by the I.W.W. [Industrial Workers of the World], putting forward ideas of Anarchism and Revolutionary Syndicalism. In the U.S. two pamphlets in Polish were published later, also probably by the I.W.W.: Kropotkin's *The Necessity of Revolution* and Grave's *Future Society* (a few chapters), and many topical pamphlets were also published. At the same time, the Krakow University Youth, in association with the editors of *Najmita*, began to publish in monthly installments Kropotkin's *The Great French Revolution*, and announced the appearance of *The State: Its Historic Role*. Unfortunately, World War I interrupted the group's work. Only three installments were published (instead of eight) and *The State: Its Historic Role* did not appear at all.

In 1914 there was the group *International* in Warsaw. In 1915 the group in Bialystock once more led an intense course of action: putting out propaganda, organizing strikes, *etc.*. What particularly intensified activity in all center was news from the Russian Revolution, Bloody Sunday in St Petersburg. These groups took part in terrorist activity as well as propaganda actions such as attempts on police officers' and factory owners' lives. There were also bank robberies to gain funds. Nowadays the majority of us Anarchists entirely reject such methods but to understand the motivation to act in this way it is important to realize the level of cruelty and despotism of the tsar's authority. For example in Warsaw, on Governor general Saklow's order, 16 young anarchists, (about 18 years old) were murdered by the authorities and their bodies thrown into the Vistula. Shots at demonstrating workers were not uncommon either.

At the same time material popularizing the ideas of Anarcho-syndicalism came pouring in. Adherents of this kind of Anarchism repudiated terrorism claiming it did not contribute to an increase in society's consciousness, but on the contrary averted it from anarchism and caused disarray in the movement. That is why Anarcho-syndicalists encouraged other Anarchists towards propagandistic activity and joining trade unions.

ANARCHIST ORGANIZATION BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

During the inter-war period Syndicalist ideas had repercussion in the Union of Trade Unions (Związek Związków Zawodowych--ZZZ in Polish) this was 130,000 strong and active from 1931-1939. The association presented itself to join the IWA. It is still active today and assembles Anarcho-Syndicalist and Syndicalist trade unions. During the war the ZZZ and other organizations formed the Polish Syndicalist Union (Związek Syndykalistyczny Polski--ZSP in Polish) which actively battled against Fascists. However it was not isolated from other formations and co-operated with the National Army ('royal army'--Armia Krolewski--AK) and the People's Army ('popular army'--Armia Ludowy--AL). An illegal newsheet, *The Syndicalist*, was published and ZSP detachments took part in the Warsaw Uprising.

ANARCHISM AFTER WORLD WAR II

Anarchistic ideas reappeared after World War II as the *Alternative Societies* movement and in the early 1980s

as the *Sigma* club. Other groups like the *Autonomous Anarchistic Federation of Lublin, Freedom and Peace, Intercity Anarchistic Federation* and *Orange Alternative* shot up like mushrooms after that. They were all active against the Communist system however as distinct from *Solidarity* ('Solidarnosc' or 'Narodowy Solidarnosc Zwiaskow Zawodowych'--NSZZ in Polish) they defended themselves with irony and humor and refusing to join the army than more traditional methods. A lot of the radical ecological activists came from these movements. Some still exist and there are new ones as well such as *Social Activity Membership* in Slupsk. Anarchist ideas of the workers movement found a lot of support. A group of the *Anarchist Federation* published a paper *Works* in Nova Huta.

The original *Solidarity* which had a lot of Syndicalist features in its program. "The only possible way to change the actual situation is to set up authentic workers' autonomies which would make the employees the real master of a factory. Our association demands a restoration of the autonomous nature of the co-operative. It is necessary to pass a new bill which will protect from administrative interference." This was passed by the National Deputies conference of *Solidarity* in 1981. Their current program is much less radical and very different than the original.

THE POLISH ANARCHIST FEDERATION

The *Anarchist Federation* (Federacja Anarchistyczna) became active in the early 80's. Members of the FA include Anarcho-ecologists, Anarcho-feminists, anti-militarists, anti-clericalists and anti-capitalists. There is a

section of the FA in almost every major (and many minor) cities in Poland. Congresses of the FA are held every 6 months, determining some guidelines for cooperation between groups from different cities, but in the end every group is free to do whatever it will.

Demonstrations Against Police Violence - As aggressive capitalism has grown in our country, so has aggressive criminality and police violence. These things seem to be very tightly related. In the recent period, many people were shot and killed by bandits. At the same time, bandits in blue uniforms killed unarmed passers-by, or persons arrested without any apparent reason. Despite this fact, people have shown support for the police, and demanded to increase the rights of cops to use firearms. Ridiculous "Black Marches" were organized by populist politicians for this end.

The *Anarchist Federation* (FA) thinks that the only way to fight crime is to organize self-defense groups in endangered neighborhoods. Experience has shown that the law, the police and the prisons only increase criminality. Any increase of the power of the biggest criminal organization - The State - will not reduce criminality.

In reaction to this, the *Anarchist Federation* (FA) has organized "*Blue Marches*" in Warsaw and Rzeszow, recalling murders, rapes, rackets and other crimes committed by cops. Two "bodies" in black plastic were carried to the headquarters of the police in Warsaw, and candles were lit. Slogans like "The police will protect me from thieves, but who will protect me from the police" and "Dogs serve, wolves are free" ("dog" is used instead of "pig" in Polish) were shouted.

Demonstrations Against Bourgeois Hypocrisy - "*The Banquet*" is organized every year by prominent capitalists and other scum who have power in Cracow, to show a spectacle of charity to the population. It's a pity the food served at these banquets costs ten times more than the funds raised for the poor! People wouldn't need to live on the scraps from the table of the wealthy if they didn't spend all their lives stealing from the poor.

The Krakow section of the *Anarchist Federation* (FA) has picketed "*The Banquet*" regularly for several years, recalling all the scandals related to the careers of prominent guests (union-busting, stealing of public funds, exploitation of workers). Free food was served to homeless people, and Molotov cocktails were "served" to the police.

Police repression was very severe. Riot cops and undercover agents were very violent, and a lot of people were arrested and charged with false accusations. Sadly, these repressions have been partly successful: many people from the *Anarchist Federation - Krakow* (FA-Krakow) can't be active because they are threatened with suspended sentences.

Radical Anti-Fascist Action - The *Radical Anti-Fascist Action* (RAAF) was created as a response to Nazi-skinhead banditism. It's main goal is to protect people on punk/alternative concerts and Anarchist demonstrations against aggressive Fascists. RAAB also organized armed patrols, and disturbed some Fascist/Nationalist demonstrations. The main merit of RAAB is that people from the alternative/punk/Anarchist scene have stopped being afraid of Nazi-skinheads.

Anarchist Black Cross - Poland - The *Anarchist Black Cross - Poland* (ABC) has until now worked on the following cases:

Marek Milewski, arrested in February 1996, during a demonstration in Krakow (more info on that demonstration in "*Demonstrations Against Bourgeois Hypocrisy*") and has waited for a trial in jail for over a month. He was accused of throwing a Molotov cocktail at a policeman. Various sections of ABC-Poland organized demonstrations of support, wrote petitions, raised funds for the lawyers. After those demonstrations, he was released, while his trial continued. At the end of 96, he was found not guilty by the judge.

Jacek Zbierajski, Tomek Czechowicz, arrested in August 1996 in Prague in the Czech Republic. They were accused of devastating a tram, which was not true. The Polish consulate was not interested in the case, and the accused were not allowed to see anyone. They were also forced to sign false testimonies. ABC-Warsaw organized a demonstration at the Polish Foreign Affairs Ministry, and the Czech Republic Embassy. Three days later, the two guys were released, and came back to Warsaw. Probably they will not come back to the Czech Republic to continue the trial.

Tomasz Wilkoszewski, accused of murder of a Nazi-skinhead in Radomsko. He was sentenced on February 20, 1997 for 15 years of prison. Although it may be true that the fascist died by his hand, but the charges of conspired murder are unjust, and the sentence much higher than murderers usually get (there was a case of a Nazi who got 3 years for killing an Anarchist--what's more, the sentence has been suspended). Also, the history of the conflict has to be taken into account. The accused and his friends were regularly threatened,

beaten up and injured for many years by Nazis living in their neighborhood. One of the Anarchists almost had his eye stabbed out. All this makes it a case of self-defense. **ABC is convinced that the use of violence in self-defense is more acceptable than police oppression and imprisonment.** This case still has to be worked out.

Initiative For The General Boycott of Chinese Products - The *Initiative For The General Boycott of Chinese Products* is not a strictly Anarchist one (This is why this name was invented - we don't sign it as the *Anarchist Federation* (FA)) and is meant to make people conscious of the existence of forced labor camps (Laogai) in China. People should be aware that the money they bought a toy with, is used to finance torture chambers. We also point out that capitalist corporations are participating in this mass murder.

So far, the Initiative has made several demonstrations and happenings at the Chinese embassy in Warsaw and at the commercial center, similar demonstrations were made in Poznan, Krakow and other cities. The Initiative is also interested in the case of a Chinese marriage, the Manduquechi, which are threatened with extradition to China where they may face the death penalty. Petitions are sent to the ministry of justice, and demonstrations will be made.

We chose not to act as the FA to make cooperation with the press and official institutions like Amnesty International, Helsinki Foundation, and the Circle of Friends of Tibet easier, and so that the FA is not associated with politicians of any kind.

NOTES

In the Russian-dominated part of Poland, however, a number of Polish Anarchists did participate in the wider revolutionary struggle.

Jaroslav Dombrowski (1838-1871) also took an active part in the Polish uprising of 1863. He was arrested for complicity in the uprising in 1864 and was imprisoned in Moscow. Receiving help from Russian revolutionaries, he escaped in broad daylight, dressed as a woman. He was hidden for a while in St. Petersburg before leaving the country, for exile in Paris, where he was killed as a Communard in 1871.

There are also reports of one Anarchist group in Warsaw in 1844, which had as its organizers a number of magistrates! While information about this group is scanty, from what is known it seems likely that it was an organization composed of people with links with the Russian *Social Revolutionaries*, and one or two were followers of Peter Lavriv, and not Anarchists at all.

A mass strike--General Strike.

Ironically recent reports indicate that a special detention camp has been built at Bialystok, to imprison those workers that were convicted following the riots in Poland during June.

Polish Anarchists have been truly international: Dombrowski was not the only Pole to fight at the barricades of the Paris Commune of 1871. Walery Wroblewski escaped death there, returning to take an active part in the struggle in Krakow. Others were active

in North and South America--Simon Radowitzky, for example, who blew up the Buenos Aires Chief of Police in 1902.

Many were active in exile: Walery Mroczowski was a member of the Bakininist *Alliance of Social Democracy*.

In London, one of the four Anarchist clubs in existence at the end of the 19th Century was frequented mainly by Russian and Polish exiles, and for a time an Anarchist paper, printed in Yiddish was circulated among Polish workers in the tailoring industry in East London.

One historian even mentions the arrest of a Polish Anarchist in Andalusia during the so-called "Black Hand" affair. However, he quotes her name as "Sofia Pereskania" which is not Polish (Russian?), and it could have been an incredible attempt by the Spanish authorities to discredit (?) local Anarchist groups by associating them with Sofia Pereskania, the courageous Russian woman who assassinated the Tsar during the same period.

'Anarchist-communists' were inspired of the writings of Peter Kropotkin who advocated a "Free Socialism" ("Anarchism") patterned after the economics of the Paris Commune of 1879.

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