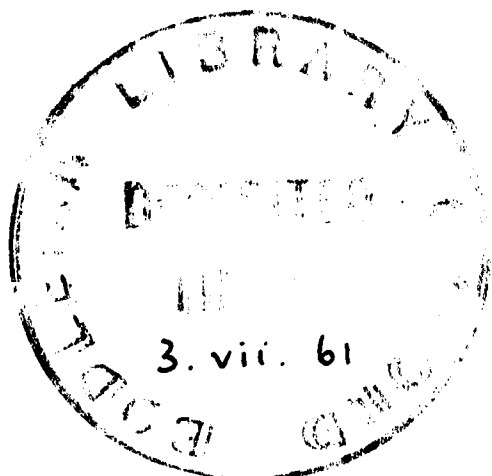


THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE JEWISH BUND
AND THE RSDRP
1897 - 1903



ABSTRACT

The Jewish Social Democrats who founded the Bund in 1897 were russified intellectuals who saw the Jewish labour movement as an integral part of the Russian revolutionary movement. Thanks to the greater deprivations and higher revolutionary potential of the Jewish workers, the Jewish Social Democrats made contact with the masses earlier than their Russian counterparts. The turn to mass agitation for economic demands as a means of awakening the political consciousness of the masses was given theoretical justification by a leading Vilna Social Democrat, Arkadi Kremer, in Ob Agitatsii (1894). By the mid-nineties a politically led labour movement, centred on Vilna, had developed in the north-west region of the Jewish Pale of Settlement. The leaders of this movement were closely associated with the Social Democrats of St. Petersburg and those in exile abroad. From the mid-nineties, the Vilna Social Democrats made deliberate efforts to spread their experience to other cities in

Russia.

The founding of the Bund in September 1897 was a formalization of the existing labour organization. It was hastened by the imminent prospect of the formation of the all-Russian Social Democratic Party and by the activities of Arkadi Kremer. Kremer, by his contacts with Social Democrats in Petersburg and Kiev, and with the Plekhanov Group abroad, was also partly instrumental in summoning the First Congress of the RSDRP held in March 1898. The main initiative for this, however, belongs to the Kiev Social Democrats. The Congress was held in Minsk, the seat of the Bund's Central Committee who were responsible for the technical arrangements for the Congress. Kremer became one of the three members of the new Party's Central Committee, and through his association with Plekhanov arranged that the new Party should be represented abroad by the Union of Russian Social Democrats. The Congress unanimously agreed to the Bund's request for autonomy in all matters pertaining to the Jewish proletariat.

A week after the Congress the police made mass arrests of Social Democrats in Kiev, Ekaterinoslav and Moscow, whose organizations were liquidated, and in July 1898 the police also devastated the Bund leadership. Thus the new Party was almost totally liquidated and the remaining Russian Social Democratic movement consisted

virtually of the emigre circles and the Bund's local committees.

After the great arrests, two Bundists, John Mill and Timofei Kopelzon, were successful in raising support and funds for the Bund abroad. They were helped by the resurgence in the autumn of 1898 of the Bund in Russia. By the end of the year a new Bund Central Committee was in contact with the Bundist emigres who, in December 1898, set up a Bund Foreign Committee, which became an autonomous part of the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad. The practical success of the Bund in Russia won it the admiration of the younger emigrants in the Union who accepted the Bund's method of mass economic agitation in face of Plekhanov's "orthodoxy." As the number of the younger men (the Rabochee Delo group) increased so did the isolation of Plekhanov's Group and in April 1900 it withdrew from the Union.

Early in 1900 Lenin and Martov returned from exile in Siberia, determined to combat "economism" and resurrect the Party. They found that the Union was planning a Party Congress in Smolensk in May 1900 and was offering them editorship of the Party organ which, in spite of their alliance with Plekhanov, they agreed to accept. On the failure of the Smolensk Congress, Lenin went abroad

and established his own newspaper Iskra with the theoretical cooperation of Plekhanov. As the Bund's success in raising money grew and its alliance with the Rabochee Delo strengthened, Plekhanov's hostility sharpened. At times he even rebuked the Iskraists for their tolerance of the Bund. Martov remained in Russia to establish a transport and distribution system for Iskra. His brother Sergei Tsederbaum (Ezhov) became Iskra agent in Vilna while his younger brother Vladimir (Levitskii) collaborated with the Bund in Dvinsk. In 1901 the split in the exile factions had little effect on Social Democrats in Russia who read avidly and indiscriminately any Social Democratic literature they could obtain.

While Martov was successfully establishing an Iskra network in Russia, the Bund had grown into one of the leading revolutionary groups in Russia. In answer to appeals from Jews in the south of Russia, it began to spread its organization beyond the northwest region of the Pale of Settlement. In May 1901 the Bund held its Fourth Congress. The Congress agreed that Bundist committees should be established in the south but only in places where effective Party committees were not in existence. On the initiative of the Foreign Committee who had become increasingly concerned with the national question, the Congress resolved that the Jews could be

classed as a nationality and that ultimately, in the democratic Russia of the future, they should strive for national cultural autonomy. The Congress divided, however, over the question of whether agitation for national cultural autonomy should be started immediately: it was agreed that such agitation was premature and indeed harmful. The Congress further agreed that the Bund should be a federated part of the RSDRP which itself should be a federated union of national organizations. This proposal was to be put to the next Party Congress.

Throughout 1901, Iskra's literary ascendancy grew. Iskra agreed to meet the Union at a "unification" congress to be held in September 1901, but first made two unsuccessful attempts to split the Bund Foreign Committee from the Union. After the deepening of the exile split which resulted from the failure of the "unification" congress, the Union made efforts to call a Party Congress. The technical arrangements were carried out by the Bund Central Committee, but owing to numerous arrests the gathering which met in Belostok in March 1902 had to declare itself a conference. The voting at the Conference shows that the Bund was inclining towards Iskra though still assuming the role of mediator. The chief result of the Conference was the formation of an Organizational Committee (OK) to arrange the next Party Congress. Of

the three members of the OK, however, only Portnoi of the Bund Central Committee escaped arrest in the week after the Conference.

The initiative for rebuilding the OK was taken by Lenin who combined it with his campaign to win over the Russian committees to Iskra. In mid-August 1902, Lenin created a secret OK nucleus of three Iskraists, which in November 1902 held a conference at Pskov at which the official OK was formed. Although Lenin had been concerned to observe the legal formalities, the Bund either deliberately or through a misunderstanding was not invited to Pskov.

The OK published an Announcement of its formation adding that the Bund "for reasons unknown to us" had not sent its representative to Pskov. The Bund Central Committee answered the Announcement with a Declaration accusing the OK of carelessness and bad faith, but nonetheless agreed to join it. In February, 1903 the Bund took part in the second meeting of the OK where reconciliation was achieved. In the meantime, however, a series of polemics ensued between Iskra and the Bund Foreign committee. Through the efforts of the OK the polemics were stopped in March 1903. Lenin continued to +urge his agents in the OK to make no concessions to the Bund. Both Bundist and Iskraist OK members attempted to work together and in varying degrees disapproved of the

exile polemics.

The Bund's Fifth Congress was held in June 1903. A preliminary conference held in Geneva of selected Bundists had drafted resolutions on national-cultural autonomy and Party federation. In spite of the nearly unanimous support of the Foreign Committee, the Congress divided exactly in half over the question of whether the demand for national cultural autonomy should be placed in the Bund's programme and no resolution was adopted. The opposition to the demand for Party federation was smaller and the Congress passed Statutes defining the Bund's position in the Party, of which ten points were selected as an ultimatum to be presented to the Second Party Congress.

Lenin had succeeded in ensuring that the Second Party Congress would have an Iskra and therefore anti-Bund majority. The Bund delegation through their chief spokesman, Liber, consistently opposed Lenin over every issue. The Congress, however, solidly opposed both the "maximum" and "minimum" demands of the Bund and the latter withdrew from the Party.

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BUND AND THE RSDRP,
1897 - 1903

D.Phil. Thesis []
submitted by H. Shukman

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used:

<u>Kat. i Ssyl.</u>	<u>Katorga i Ssylka</u>
LS	<u>Leninskii Sbornik</u>
OK	Organizatsionnyi Komitet
<u>Posled. Izv.</u>	<u>Posledniia Izvestiia</u>
<u>Prolet. Rev.</u>	<u>Proletarskaia Revoliutsiia</u>
<u>Soch.</u>	<u>Sochineniia</u>
TsK	Tsentralnyi Komitet
ZK	Zagranichnyi Komitet

INTRODUCTION

The rise of the Jewish labour movement and
its contacts with the Russian Social Democrats

At the Second Congress of the All-Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in 1903, the Bund withdrew from the ranks of the Party. This was an event which six years earlier would have been unimaginable. The Jewish intellectuals who founded the Bund in 1897 shared a common cultural and ideological background with their Russian counterparts: both had passed through the school of Narodnaia Volia to Marxism. They saw themselves not as pioneers of a separate Jewish organization, but rather as the agents of the Russian revolution among the Jewish population of Russia.¹ Indeed, the Bundist leaders were to play an indispensable role in the formation of the RSDRP in 1898.

The Jewish revolutionaries of the eighties, still adhering to the tenets of Narodnaia Volia, confined their activities to the search for intelligent workers, whom they gathered into small educational circles, and attempted to train as socialist propagandists for the Russian movement. No thought yet existed of developing a revolutionary

1. Kurskii, in Arkadi, pp74-5; Mill, in Historishe Shriftn III, p370.

organization among the Jewish workers, who were employed predominantly in small artisan workshops and seemed too split up to be unified. Instead, they saw their first task in the orientation of the Jewish worker towards the Russian Revolution through the medium of Russian culture.¹ Economically destitute as a result of his political disabilities and the restrictions on movement out of the overcrowded Pale, the Jewish worker was particularly susceptible to this propaganda: for some it meant the possible means of escape from the pariah-state of the ghetto-Jew, for others it was the path to the noble vocation of revolutionary "intellectual."²

The latter half of the eighties saw an important change in the revolutionary movement in the north-west region, notably in Minsk and Vilna: the writings of Plekhanov, leader of the Gruppa Osvobozhdenie Truda in Switzerland, and chief Russian exponent of Marxism, began to be seen and digested by Jewish socialists. Marxist ideas reached Vilna through Jewish students returning from Russian and European universities for their vacations or deported there: such were Isaiah Aiznshtat who came to Vilna from Iaroslavl

1. Kopelzon, Evreiskoe rabochee dvizhenie kontsa 80-kh i nachala 90-kh godov, in Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev, p71.

2. Tobias, Origins and Evolution of the Jewish Bund until 1901, Ph.D Stanford, 1957, p20.

in 1889, Arkadii Kremer and his wife Matilda Srednitskaia (Pati), who came to Vilna in the same year after having studied in St. Petersburg. In Vilna they joined forces with Kopelzon, Gozhanskii, and John Mill. By the early nineties, there were between 60 and 70 members of the intellectual circles, and at least 150 workers in the workers' circles. The central organization included Aiznshtat, Kremer, Pati and Kopelzon. They dealt with any secret work and contacts abroad. By 1892 Vilna had links with St. Petersburg, Kiev, Kharkov, Warsaw, Dorpat, and Minsk through Vilna-born university students.¹ In 1893 Martov was exiled to Vilna from St. Petersburg, and the following year Kossovskii came from Kovno and Mutnik from Germany. Closely associated with them were the Vilna-born Goldman brothers - Boris (later known as Gorev) and Leon.²

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1. Kopelzon, op.cit. pp70, 72, 74; Evzorov, in Arkadi, pp277-8; Doires Bundistn, I, p143.
 2. Martov, Zapiski Sotsialdemokrata, p160. Martov took over John Mill's circle when the latter went abroad probably at the end of 1893, Ibid. p181; Doires Bundistn, I, pp196-197; Bernshtein, L., Ershte shprotsungen, p164 (Bernshtein was also a member of Martov's circle). Boris and Leon Goldman both later became Iskraists. The youngest Goldman, Mark, better known as Liber, who was still a schoolboy at this period, later became a prominent Bundist. The future leader of the Bund in Russia was also associated with Martov at this time - Noah Portnoi, who had been a student at the Vilna Teachers' Institute, was working in Kovno until his arrest in 1895. He escaped in 1900 and spent five years living illegally in Russia - longer than any other revolutionary, Martov, op.cit. p200; Kurskii, Gezamlte Shriftn, ppl41-2.

During the early nineties the number of Marxist circles increased; but their work was still carried out in Russian and was still aimed primarily at training agitators for the Russian movement.

* * *

Simultaneously with the increase of small propaganda circles, now expounding the aims of Social Democracy, there arose in the north-west region a spontaneous economic strike movement, the basis of which was the strike fund. The strike funds were a recent development from the old mutual aid societies which had existed in the Pale for decades, and which had originally included both small employers and their employees as a kind of insurance scheme against the depression that came inevitably with the slack season in the trades. The turn of the decade saw the development of these mutual aid societies into workers' funds aimed against the employers.¹

At a moment when the Jewish Social Democrats were debating the question of how to apply their new Marxist ideas in their enforced isolation from the main arena of activity - Russia, they were confronted with the manifestations of an organized, though fragmentary labour movement. Their Social Democratic programme required them to awaken class consciousness in the masses and to call them out to

1. Martov, op.cit. p73.

political struggle; they had interpreted this to mean the agitation of the Russian masses. Now that the Jewish masses were exhibiting signs of readiness for such agitation, the Jewish Marxists responded: by seizing upon the issues which lay at the root of the spontaneous strikes and using them as a means both of reaching the workers and of increasing the tempo of the strike movement itself.

In 1892 the intellectuals had their first success: one of the chief figures in the Vilna circles, Gozhanskii, discovered a law passed in 1789 by Catherine II which fixed the artisan's working day at twelve hours - considerably less than the average time then being worked.¹ The result was a sharp increase in the strike movement which now "like a wind .. stirred up the .. lower depths [of Jewish society] which had seemed immobile and incapable of movement"; even the most wretched of the Jewish poor "suddenly began to talk of their rights and even began the struggle to defend them."²

The idea of spreading the strike funds throughout the Pale occurred to the workers who had been through the propaganda circles and was supported by the intellectuals who now found themselves in a position of some influence over the funds. The long tradition of keeping the workers'

1. Mill, Pionern un Boiern, I, p86.

2. Akimov, Materialy dlia kharakteristiki razvitiia RSDRP, p9.

funds secret from the employers and the police to avoid victimization and persecution would ensure the security of the intellectuals' circles. The Jewish workers' konspiratsiia was already highly developed - he was a good security risk.¹

The turn to mass agitation for economic demands, however, created its own problems in the circles. The workers who had been educated by the circles saw their importance gradually overshadowed as the intellectuals became more concerned with economic agitation among the masses than with the political education of a privileged few. The educated workers regarded the funds as a means of awakening the masses to political consciousness, not as an end in themselves. The intellectuals, on the other hand, saw the "worker-intellectual" simply as a means of entry into the working class. Furthermore, they came to regard their past policy of educating selected workers as mistaken: it had bred an elite of worker aristocrats, many of whom had, indeed, gone on to higher education and lost their contact with the working class.²

The dispute between these workers and the Social Democrat leaders over the new policy broke out in 1893 and in some places in the north-west continued until 1897.

1. Rafes, Ocherki po istorii Bunda, pl7.

2. Martov, op.cit. p223; Akimov, op.cit. pp11-12.

In Vilna, however, it was resolved by the end of 1894.

* * *

The conflict over the question of whether to continue the policy of political education through the circles or pursue the evidently successful policy of mass agitation was inevitably one-sided: the demands of the worker-intellectuals depended for their success on the very SD intellectuals they were attacking.¹ The latter, however, felt constrained to give ideological substance to their views and did so in two pamphlets, the second of which was to have lasting effect outside the milieu for which it was originally intended.

The first pamphlet, A Letter to Agitators, was written in Yiddish by Gozhanskii and appeared in 1893. It expressed the need for the immediate organization of the Jewish proletariat into a compact force.² Gozhanskii's argument was an appeal, not to any nationalist strivings in his readers, but to their desire for political equality. The Jewish proletariat, Gozhanskii argued, could expect no political liberty from a constitutionalized Russia until they developed the class consciousness, the strength of which

1. Tobias, op.cit. p29.

2. Gozhanskii, Pismo k agitatoram, 1893. Originally written in Yiddish, the "Letter" is extant only in a MS Russian translation in the Bund Archives in New York. It has been published only in Yiddish, Historishe Shriftn, III, p626. The present writer has used the Russian text in the Bund Archives.

was the measure of political rights which social groups gained for themselves. Only by participation in the general political struggle would the Jewish proletariat develop its own political interests and thereby prepare itself for political equality. The circles had had the effect of creating a barrier rather than a bridge between the masses and the Social Democrats who could make them aware of their political interests. Mass agitation on the basis of questions which the workers were spontaneously asking themselves would enable the SD's to root themselves in the labour movement, thus facilitating their task of rousing the political awareness of the masses.

Written in Yiddish and permeated with references to the local Jewish scene, A Letter to Agitators did not receive the degree of fame, even notoriety, accorded the second pamphlet. Entitled A Letter on Agitation, this pamphlet was written in 1894 by Arkadii Kremer in Russian and edited by Iulii Tsederbaum (Martov), deported from Petersburg to Vilna in 1893 and one of the members of the Vilna Group of Social Democrats.¹ On Agitation was the theoretical appraisal of the recent successes in mass agitation, based not on the special circumstances of the Pale, with its

1. Martov, op.cit. p233. The pamphlet was first published in Geneva in 1896 by the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad. It was entitled Ob Agitatsii and was accompanied by a Postscript by Akselrod.

Jewish labour population consisting largely of artisans, but on what seemed to the Vilna SD's to be the general propositions governing the course of the proletariat's struggle for political power.

According to the Kremer, the sine qua non for the success of the labour movement in its struggle for substantial improvements was the attainment of political power by the working class. Therefore, its involvement in the political struggle was essential. The working class was at the moment, however, unaware of its political interests and it was utopian to expect them to fight for them now. Only when the proletariat came face to face with its political powerlessness could it be expected to fight for political rights. The task of Social Democracy was to bring the workers to this position. Experience had shown that the workers were already alive to certain issues, issues which affected their everyday lives and which they were therefore prepared at once to fight over. The Social Democrats must therefore push this fight on, stimulate the workers to fight for every conceivable everyday need and with the hold they already had on the strike funds, they must in all cases retain the initiative. The masses were, under the present circumstances of capitalism, ripe for purely economic struggle against the employers. The time would come when economic improvement could no longer be

wrung from the employers, and at that point the proletariat must be made to go over to the struggle for the political power necessary for further improvement. Having exhausted their conflict with the bosses the workers would find themselves confronted with the State, which protected the bosses:

"The role of the party which has taken upon itself the political education and organization of the people is...to establish the precise moment when the [economic] struggle is sufficiently mature in order to go over to political struggle, and it must prepare, with the minimum waste of strength, the essential elements for this change in the masses."¹

It must be emphasised that the immediate aim of On Agitation was to awaken in large masses of workers their oppressed and dormant instinct to fight for a better life and not to accept passively every misery that afflicted them. The strategy contained in the pamphlet aimed, however, at bringing the same large masses under the influence of Social Democratic political propaganda.

The Vilna Group of Social Democrats had devised a plan whereby they would maintain their organizational hold over the labour movement, raising the latter to the Social Democratic outlook at a rate correlative to the development of the economic struggle.

In the conflict which later arose over the question of

1. Ob agitatsii, pp7-9, 16.

"economism," On Agitation came to be regarded as the source of "economist" ideas.¹ At the time of its appearance in Petersburg, 1895, and Moscow 1894-5 and Kiev, 1896, however, the Marxist intellectuals there were, as in Vilna in 1892, seeking access to the workers. As in Vilna, mass agitation was seized upon as an effective method of accomplishing what the circles had so signally failed in - namely, the development of political awareness in the masses.² The value of the pamphlet was, however, recognized by the defenders of "orthodox" Marxism, Plekhanov, Akselrod, Lenin, as a useful handbook for the purpose of bringing the workers into the revolutionary struggle, and their attacks invariably amount to the argument, not that On Agitation was itself "economist," but that its mis-application in Russian conditions had led to this heresy.³

The plan of the Vilna Social Democrats was to complete the process of turning all mutual aid funds into fighting organizations; to establish direct contact between the Social Democratic centre and these funds through permanent

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1. For example, Plekhanov, *Eshche raz sotsializm i politicheskaia borba*, in Zaria, No.1, April 1901, pl2.
 2. Akimov, Materialy dlia kharakteristiki, p82; Eidelman, *K istorii vozniknoveniia RSDRP*, Prol.Rev. No.1, pp47-8, first published in Nasha Strana No.1, 1907.
 3. Plekhanov, in Zaria No.1, pp7-8, 12; Akselrod, preface and postscript to Ob Agitatsii, ppl, 38; Lenin, *Chto Delat?* Soch. IV, p385.

assemblies of prominent members of the funds and representatives of the centre; to adapt the circles to train workers for agitation - which meant the final abandonment of the policy of educating relatively few workers; finally, to train agitators chiefly in Yiddish, thus ensuring the recruitment of workers for this role.¹

The decision to use Yiddish as the medium of agitation had the immediate effect of enlarging the pool of resources to draw on for both writing agitation literature and training worker-agitators. Vilna, the cultural centre of Russian Jewry, drew large numbers of young Jewish intellectuals to its trade schools and teachers' training institute, in addition there were rabbinical schools whose students, excluded from general secular education by the numerus clausus in Russian schools, were generally receptive to socialist propaganda. These young students were products of the Pale of Settlement: brought up in a Jewish milieu, they had a better understanding of the Jewish worker than the Russified intellectuals, and Yiddish, moreover, was their mother-tongue.² Partly assimilated and partly

1. Martov, op.cit. p226.

2. Kremer, Osnovanie Bunda, Prol.Rev. No.11, p51; Historishe Shriftn, III, pp551-2. Such were Litvak, Bernshtein and Zeldov. The latter two were also members of Martov's circle, Martov, op.cit. pp199-200. Zeldov subsequently became a member of the Bund TsK and at the same time of the Petersburg Union of Struggle.

educated, these young aspirant intellectuals were dubbed "half-intellectuals," but their role of executive to the Social Democratic leadership became indispensable.

In the course of 1894 the Vilna Social Democrats came to believe that the time was ripe for the introduction of political demands in mass agitation. The previous year they had come to realize the value of the Jewish disabilities to agitation, and Gozhanskii had developed this idea in his Letter. On 1st May 1895 Martov delivered a speech, published in 1900 under the title Turning Point, to a meeting of forty selected agitators.¹ Martov asserted that, in order to merit freedom and in order to contribute to the Russian Revolutionary movement without whose success Jewish rights would be unattainable, the Jewish proletariat must enter the political struggle and demand civil equality. Martov told his audience that their aim must be to create a special Jewish workers' organization which should be the leader and mentor of the Jewish proletariat in its struggle for economic, civil, and political emancipation. Furthermore, he declared that the national passivity of the Jewish masses was an obstacle to class awareness: as long as the Jewish masses were reconciled to the status of a pariah tribe, they would not rise against their lot as an oppressed

1. Di geshikhte fun Bund, I, p73. Martov's speech, given in Russian, was first published by the Union in 1900, under the title of Povorotnyi Punkt v istorii evreiskogo rabocheho dvizhenia. The text used here is that reproduced in Materialy k istorii evreiskogo rabocheho dvizhenia, 1906, p154.

class. Therefore, "the awakening of national and class consciousness must go hand in hand."¹ In this context "national consciousness" was to be expressed in the struggle for full rights for the Jews as citizens, not as Jews.

* * *

Thus it came about that by the mid-nineties a politically led labour movement existed among the Jewish workers of the Pale. Its distinguishing feature - its purely Jewish membership - was the inevitable result of the estranged relations that existed between Jew and Gentile in Russia as a heritage of mutual religious, racial and economic prejudice, of the accident of Jewish distribution, and of the fact that the Jewish worker suffered greater economic and political oppression than even his Russian counterpart.

However, although the revolutionary activity of the Jewish Social Democrats had turned what was to have been an auxiliary force of the Russian revolution into a labour movement with its own aims, the leaders still realized that without the support and cooperation of the Russian movement, the Jewish proletariat's achievements would be limited. The Vilna Group of Social Democrats, unaffected culturally by the change in the work they were doing, kept a close watch on developments in the Russian scene and were regular

1. Materialy p155.

visitors to the Russian centres of revolutionary activity as well as to the emigre circles abroad. Conversely, Vilna, thanks to its ideological leadership, its practical achievements, and geographical location close to the Russo-German frontier, became the leading revolutionary centre of Russian Social Democracy. Vilna-born Jewish students from universities in other parts of Russia would spend their vacations in their home-town working for the Vilna Group; in this way links were forged with other Russian centres.¹

Isiah Aiznshtat (Iudin), a leading member of the Vilna Group, had talks in the summer of 1895 with Lenin (then Ulianov) in Berlin on the question of establishing permanent contact between the Vilna and Petersburg Social Democratic Organizations. Aiznshtat had gone to Berlin to arrange the transport of illegal literature to Vilna. While abroad he also had talks with Plekhanov and Akselrod, who were evidently impatient for the formation of a Russian Social Democratic Party. In spite of the impression he had of Lenin, that he was a born leader, Aiznshtat could not report to his Vilna comrades that Social Democracy in Petersburg was advancing.² A year later, Kremer _ _ _ _

1. Martov, Zapiski sotsialdemokrata, p200; Historishe Shriftn, III, p552. Such students included Liakhovskii from Kiev University, later to be a figure of the Petersburg Social Democrat circle until his arrest in 1896; Levin from Kharkov University, later to become a leading member of Iuzhnyi Rabochii; and Aron Lure, also from Kharkov University

2. Martov, op.cit. pp252-4; Geshikhte fun Bund, p296, Lenin is reported to have visited Vilna in 1895, LS, I, p166.

visited Petersburg, Kiev, and the Plekhanov group in Switzerland.¹

In spite of increasing unrest among Russian workers in other centres, Russian Social Democratic groups were still unable to make contact with the masses. As a result some of the leading Vilna Social Democrats became eager to leave Vilna where there was now an abundance of capable agitators, and to move further afield, some to "colonize" neighbouring towns, others to share their experience in the large Russian centres, Petersburg and Odessa, and Warsaw.² The exodus was not on any large scale and, indeed, the majority of Social Democratic intellectuals remained in Vilna.

In the autumn of 1894 Martov visited Petersburg, taking with him a hectographed copy of On Agitation which he circulated among his friends in the numerous Social Democratic circles.³ A year later Martov's exile from the capital came to an end and he returned to Petersburg, where he embarked on a battle against the adherents of the circle system.⁴ Among his supporters were Liakhovskii who

1. See Chapter I.

2. Martov, op.cit. p253;

3. Ibid. p236-7. The time of Martov's visit, which lasted one month, *ibid.* p235, is established by his statement that Alexander III died while Martov was in Petersburg, i.e. October 1894.

4. Ibid. p257.

had been closely connected with the Vilna group, Aron Lure from Kharkov, and Boris Goldman (Gorev) from Vilna.¹

At about the same time as Martov left Vilna, Aiznshtat left for Odessa where he stayed until his arrest in 1896. Aiznshtat's wife, with Gozhanskii, and a small group of workers, moved to Belostok. Kopelzon, Leon Goldman and John Mill moved to Warsaw.²

In the early summer of 1897, a group of Vilna workers were sent to Ekaterinoslav; the group included one intellectual, Litvak, later famous as a Bundist writer, and the worker, Moisei Dushkan, one of the founders of Arbeidershtime in 1897, and later an organizer of Rabochaia Gazeta. Later in 1897 another group of Social Democrats came to Ekaterinoslav: these were from Vitebsk and some of them had had experience in Vilna.³

By 1897, Kiev, a key city in the subsequent history of

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1. In 1897, Lure was a member of the Kharkov organization and in close touch with the north-west, Hist. Shriftn, III, p364. Boris Goldman came to Petersburg from Vilna in 1894 and helped to run the group after Martov and Lenin were arrested in the winter 1895/6, Doires Bundistn, I, p196.
 2. Martov, p253; Mill, op.cit. p230. Gozhanskii was arrested in Belostok in 1896. Leon Goldman later became an Iskra agent in Kishinev.
 3. Poliak, Pered I s"ezdom, in Kat. i Ssyl. No.40, 1928, p28; Vilenskii, SD rabota v gorodakh raiona Bunda ... in K 25-letiiu, p153. The Vilna group and the Vitebsk group divided up their work among the Ekaterinoslav labour population. The Vilna group applied the Vilna methods to the Jewish artisans, while the Vitebsk group attempted to make contact with the Russian factory workers. Vilenskii, op.cit. pp154-5.

Russian Social Democracy, had firm links with Vilna. Through Vilna, the Kiev Social Democrats received news from Petersburg, illegal literature, and news of the exile movement, and they based their methods of agitation on those of Vilna.¹ The personal link between Kiev and Vilna centred on A. Poliakov who had been a member of a circle in Minsk which had been "colonized" by Vilna in 1892. From Minsk, Poliakov had moved on to Gomel, and thence, in the autumn of 1895 to Kiev where he became prominent in Rabochaia Gazeta group.² The illegal press for the group was collected by the Vilna Group and brought to Kiev from Gomel.³

It was largely through Kiev that the Vilna experience spread to the south of Russia. In February 1897 Poliakov visited Kharkov where he made firm friends; in August he went to Odessa which had earlier been connected with Vilna through Aiznshtat and where the change had already been made to mass agitation.⁴ A year later, also to Odessa

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1. Eidelman, K istorii vozniknoveniia RSDRP, in Prolet. Rev. No.1, 1921, pp31, 32, 47. Eidelman credits both Vilna and Moscow for being the model for Kiev, but since Moscow's method was derived from Vilna, the latter better deserves the title, Angarskii, Otv. Eidelmanu, Prolet. Rev. No.81, p162. Angarskii also shows that Moscow applied Kremer's theories differently from Kiev, the latter being much closer in their method to Vilna, loc.cit.
 2. Poliakov, op.cit. pp24-5; Vilenskii, op.cit. p157.
 3. Kremer, op.cit. p55; Poliakov, op.cit. p25.
 4. Poliakov, op.cit. pp27, 28.

came Olia Volfson, who had worked in Vilna in 1895 and subsequently in Kiev and Kremenchug.¹

* * *

Thus by 1897 contacts existed between SD organizations and groups in Vilna, Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Ekaterinoslav. In turn, all these cities had their own local contacts with neighbouring towns. Frequently links were forged and sustained by an individual agent and would fail when he was removed through choice or police interference. Vilna and its environs were a rich source of such agents: they were the overflow from a large reserve of activists who had initiated the mass movement in the north-west and by 1895 were seeking wider fields. Apart from their revolutionary and organizational zeal, their great mobility was also stimulated by the fact that, as Jews as well as illegal revolutionaries, their movements outside the Pale (in Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev, for example) placed them outside the law and made further movement essential. Where they operated among Jewish workers the SD's applied the Vilna system of mass agitation on the basis of economic needs. Where they worked among Russian workers they found it still necessary to use the circle, which they traditionally regarded as their means of entry

 1. Poliak, op.cit. p25; Dargolts, .. o sostoianii odesskoi organizatsii ... in K 25-letiiu, pl33

to the Russian masses.

In his report for 1894 to 1897, Muravev, the Minister of Justice, wrote: "The programme of the party of 'social-democrats' is contained in the hectographed pamphlet called 'On Agitation' and boils down to the following proposition:

"The task of the social democrats is constant agitation among the workers in factories and mills on the grounds of existing everyday needs and demands...The struggle thus induced will teach the workers to defend their interests...The class war will create the soil for political agitation, the aim of which will be the change of the existing political conditions in the interests of the working class...The slightest pretext must be used to make the workers fight in unison, therefore agitators must constantly mingle with workers...He is not a social democrat who does not promote the growth of class consciousness and the revolutionary demands of the proletariat."¹

For the given period Muravev's description of Kremer's pamphlet was inaccurate in that there was as yet no SD Party. But to describe it as the programme of the SD organizations then existing would be neither inaccurate nor a gross exaggeration.

 1/ Muravev, N./Rev. dvizh. v Rossii, 1894-1905 v dokladakh ministra Muraveva, 1907, p26.

Chapter: I

The Founding of the Bund and of the RSDRP

The founding of the Bund

In the course of five years, from 1892 to 1897, the Vilna Social Democrats had come unofficially to assume the tasks of a central committee in the Pale. They published two newspapers, Der Yiddisher Arbeiter since December 1896, and Di Arbeitershtime since August 1897.¹ Contacts between towns in the Pale and in the Russian interior were almost exclusively invested in the Vilna Group. Contacts abroad were conducted through Vilna.² The formal establishment of the Bund was a mere step from this already centralized system of relations.

From the practical point of view, the perpetuation of the present well run system of producing and distributing literature in Yiddish, of centralized relations with the outside world would be more realizable if the present organization were to be formally constituted. Moreover, since it was the declared intention of the Jewish Social

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1. The former, intended for intellectuals and educated workers, was printed abroad; the latter, printed in Vilna, was initiated by a group of workers, among them Moisei Dushkan, but became, from the second number, the de facto central organ of the Vilna Group, intended for mass circulation, Tobias, The Origins and Evolution of the Jewish Bund until 1901, pp63-6.
2. Kremer, Osnovaniia Bunda, in Prol.Rev. No.11, 1922, p51.

Democrats to enter the all-Russian party as soon as it formed, they thought it expedient to do so as a body.¹

The formation of the Bund and the founding of the Russian Social Democratic Party were closely linked. Kremer, a leading member of the Vilna Group, had gone to Switzerland in 1896 in order to discuss with Plekhanov, Akselrod and Zasulich, among other things, the foreign representation of Russian Social Democrats. He had gone to them as a representative of both Vilna and Petersburg. Plekhanov and his colleagues had told him that they would find it hard to represent a number of disunited organizations. This reaction had fired Kremer to work for the formation of a Party, and, as a first step, for the unification of the Jewish organizations.²

The imminent prospect of the formation of a Party stimulated the Vilna Social Democrats to hasten the unification of the Jewish organizations. As a result of talks in the autumn of 1896 between representatives of Vilna, Kiev and Petersburg, a conference had met in Kiev in March 1897 to discuss the formation of a Russian Social Democratic Party.³ Either because their invitation went astray⁴

1. Kremer, op.cit. p52; Tobias, op.cit. p71. An additional incentive was the pressure of the PPS (Polish Socialist Party) in Warsaw, Tobias, op.cit. p68.

2. Kremer, loc.cit. says the talks took place in the summer of 1897, but Tobias, op.cit, p70, shows convincingly that 1896 was more probable.

3. Eidelman, B.N., K istorii vozniknovenia RSDRP, Prolet.Rev. No.1, 1921, p32. Eidelman was a leading figure in the Kiev organization.

4. Loc.cit.

or because they were concerned to complete their own unification before joining the new Party,¹ the Vilna Social Democrats did not appear at the Kiev Conference. Without Vilna the scope of the Conference was limited, the chief decision being to convene a congress and circulate a list of questions for discussion.² It was when the Vilna Group received the prospectus of the forthcoming congress, some time between March and August 1897, that they decided to hasten their own founding congress of the Bund.³

The founding Congress of the Bund was convened in Vilna at the end of September 1897, the time being chosen × to coincide with the Jewish New Year as a cover for the movements of the delegates.⁴ Thirteen delegates represented the five main centres of Jewish socialist activity, - Vilna, Minsk, Warsaw, Belostok, and Vitebsk. Vilna was represented by six delegates, and in all ten of the thirteen delegates had been trained in Vilna. In spite of recent intensified police activity in the area, the Congress was not detected. Indeed the Vilna Group's and other Jewish organizations' almost pathological obsession with security may have been one of the reasons for their

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1. Akimov, Pervyi S"ezd RSDRP, Minuvshie Gody, No.2, 1908, ppl44-5.
 2. Iaroslavskii, Istoriia VKP(b), I, pl43. See below: The founding of the Party.
 3. Tobias, op.cit. p72.
 4. Tsoglin, Mezhdu I i III s"ezdami Bunda, in Rev. Dvizhenie sredi evreev, pl38.

determination to unite before the Russian Party was formed: there would be considerably less danger to the Jewish organizations if the threads that bound them to the Party were held by one unifying centre with a brilliant security record, Vilna.¹

Arkadi Kremer opened the Congress with an explanation of the need for a unified Jewish organization: a central organization would be able to prevent the isolation of any one organization by police activity, which had of late become intense in the Pale; the political demands of the Jewish movement must be kept abreast of those of the Russian, and to accomplish this a central body was required which would be in close touch with the Russian movement; only a central organization could unite all the force and influence of the Jewish masses in their essential demand for civil rights.² This last consideration led the Congress to pass a resolution to the effect that the new organization should enter the Party as an autonomous section with the right to deal with all Jewish questions.³

Kremer's ideas on the need for a separate Jewish SD organization were essentially the same as Martov's in

1. Tsoglin, op.cit. p137.
 2. Tobias, op.cit. pp76-7, from Arbeidershtime, No.6, October 1897; Akimov, op.cit., p145.
 3. Mill, Arkadi un der ershter tsuzamenfor, Arkadi, p165.

1895 and Gozhanskii's in 1893-4: the practical purpose of such an organization was to ensure the centralized, and therefore effective, control and development of a vital sector of the all-Russian proletariat; the use of Yiddish was a pure expedient, and the raising of "national" issues, such as civil equality, was wholly based on class-political considerations. In other words, an essential stage in the political struggle of the proletariat was the political equality of the Jews. Gozhanskii had already written in 1893 that political rights had to be fought for, and that they would be attained by each class and social group in proportion to the latter's political strength. Therefore, since the Jewish proletariat had certain specific problems, and was culturally separated from the Russian working masses, it must learn to fight for the rights which, as a proletariat, it hoped to enjoy in the future. As proletarians they must seek political liberty; as Jews they had to demand political equality.¹ The autonomy which the Congress agreed to ask for at the forthcoming Party Congress was considered essential, but it was no more than a function of the above practical needs. This view

1. Tsoglin, op.cit. p141; Martov, Zapiski, pp245-6; Gozhanskii, Pismo k agitatoram, Bund Archives, New York.

was accepted by the Party Congress in 1898.

Some dissent arose over the naming of the new organization, the alternatives suggested being to call it either "Jewish Social Democracy in Russia and Poland" or "General Jewish Workers' Union (Bund) in Russia." Those in favour of "Bund", the majority led by Kremer, argued that "Social Democracy" could be applied only to that handful of people who were the leaders of the labour movement. A union of such groups, they argued, would be a union of "summits" of a few leaders of the working-class. To be strong the organization must embrace the entire struggling working class, and the name "General Jewish Workers' Union" precisely expressed the idea of access to all Jewish workers thirsting for struggle.¹

John Mill and his two fellow delegates from Warsaw advocated "Social Democracy." They argued that, while "Bund" might attract the workers of small scattered places, the workers in the large towns used the word "socialism" in their everyday speech, and it was there that the political struggle was developing.²

The Congress accepted Kremer's version, adding "Poland," and, in accordance with Kremer's evaluation of "Social

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1. Arbeidershtime No.6, Oct. 1897, cited in Bukhbinder, Pervyi S"ezd...Bunda, in Prolet.Rev. No.34, p206, and Akimov, op.cit. p145.
2. Mill, Pionern I, pp276-277.

Democracy" agreed that local Bund committees should style themselves "Social Democratic."¹

Although the Congress was conducted in Russian, it was as the Bund, and not in translation (soiuz or zwiozek), that the new organization came to be known to the rest of the movement.

The Vilna Group, which had always been a secret nucleus within the Vilna Committee, provided the members of the Central Committee of the new organization (the TsKB/unda) - Kremer, Mutnik, and Kossovskii. It was decided that in order to increase the security of the TsK it should move from Vilna to Minsk.² The Congress agreed to place the Bund's foreign representation in the hands of the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad, whose functions would also include the printing and provision of literature, and the dissemination of news about the Jewish labour movement.³

Kremer's ideas as expounded in his speech on the naming of the Bund are of significance in the light of the conflicts which were to arise some four years later. Kremer offered the literary services and moral support of the Bund to Jewish workers anywhere in Russia. His aim,

1. Mill, Pionern I, p277.

2. Akimov, op.cit. p146.

3. Arbeidershtime No.6, cited by Tobias, op.cit. p79.

however, was not "expansionist" as later critics were to allege, but rather to take account of the peculiarities of the Jewish proletariat in the all-Russian revolutionary struggle.

The Founding of the Party

With the increase, since the mid-nineties, of contact and mutual help between the various cities, the urge grew to unify and form the Russian Social Democratic Party. Vilna, Kiev, and Petersburg, as the key centres, were most active in this respect. The first serious attempt to accomplish unification was begun in the autumn of 1896, when talks were held between representatives of Vilna, Kiev, and Petersburg to discuss the formation of the Party.¹

During the same period, Kremer had talks with the Union of Struggle in Petersburg with a view to establishing official contact between Vilna, Petersburg and Kiev.² From Petersburg, Kremer went on to Kiev where he found agreement with the Petersburg view that the Gruppa Osvobozhdeniie Truda in Switzerland should be approached and asked to collaborate, but that it was only Plekhanov's theoretical authority that was required; he was not to be asked to participate in the running of the Russian organization.³

1. Eidelman, K istorii vozniknoveniia RSDRP, Prol.Rev. No.1 pp31-32.

2. Akimov, Pervyi s"ezd RSDRP, Minuvshie Gody, No.2, pp129-130.

3. Ibid. pp132-133.

At the suggestion of the Kiev Social Democrats Kremer travelled to Zurich to confer with Plekhanov. Their talks were marred by Plekhanov's sarcastic tone when Kremer told him of the Russian organizations' desire for his non-interference in their internal affairs; and indeed the talks temporarily broke off when, to Kremer's question why did the exiles not produce more pamphlets for mass distribution, Plekhanov replied that as a veteran of the revolutionary struggle he did not propose to sit there and be told he was unproductive. The talks were resumed with more restraint on the following day, and as a result they drew up a plan for the unification of the three centres into a party.¹

While Kremer was still abroad,² the Kiev group, Rabochaia Gazeta, without awaiting the outcome of his talks with Plekhanov, went ahead and arranged a Conference of the centres in March 1897.³ For reasons given variously,⁴ Vilna did not attend; the scope of the Conference was therefore limited to the following decisions: 1) to convene a congress and circulate a list of questions for discussion, 2) to set up in Kiev an all-Russian newspaper, Rabochaia Gazeta, already the organ of the leading

1. Akimov, op.cit. pp133-134.

2. He appears to have remained abroad at least until June 1897, Ibid. p134.

3. Eidelman, op.cit. p32. A delegate from Moscow attended the Conference but was considered too young and inexperienced to take part, loc.cit.

4. See above: The Founding of the Bund.

Kiev group, and 3) to propose to local Social Democratic organizations that they call themselves "Unions of Struggle for the Emancipation of Labour" on the model of Petersburg.¹

In the course of the year following the Kiev Conference the Rabochaia Gazeta group brought out their paper of that name² and continued the campaign for a congress. Eidelman, the chief figure of the group, made a tour of the centres and at about the time of the Bund's founding Congress he arranged for the technical problems of the Party Congress to be handled by the Bund TsK.³

As a result, the First Congress of the Party convened in Minsk, the residence of the Bund TsK, on March 1, 1898, the date having been chosen as the anniversary of the assassination of Alexander II in 1881.⁴ Of the nine delegates, three were Bundists; Moscow, Petersburg, Ekaterinoslav and Kiev Unions of Struggle each sent one delegate, and the Rabochaia Gazeta group sent two.⁵

The Bund was responsible for the technical arrangements for the Congress: it invited the Lithuanian Social Democrats (who did not appear), it proposed the invitation of Moscow,

1. Iaroslavskii, Istoriia VKP(b), I, p143.

2. Eidelman, op.cit. p42.

3. Poliak, Pered I s"ezdom, Kat. i Ssyl. No.40, 1928, p29; Tobias, op.cit. p107.

4. Akimov, op.cit. p151.

5. Eidelman, op.cit. p67.

it proposed that the Congress be held in Minsk, and through the Minsk Bund Committee it arranged the site of the Congress and the accommodation of the delegates.¹ The catastrophic mass arrests which took place within weeks of the Congress were due not to the Bund, but to intense police spying on Rabochaia Gazeta, first in Kiev, and then in Ekaterinoslav where the press was moved shortly before the Congress.²

The Congress unanimously agreed that because only the Bund had transport and printing facilities of any substance and because these were over-strained,³ a Party Central Committee should be set up to take over these tasks.⁴ The Central Committee was formed of representatives of the three groups that had in fact been acting as a central organization until the Congress - Kremer of the Bund, Eidelman of Rabochaia Gazeta, and Radchenko from Petersburg. In the event of the arrest of the TsK, any surviving delegate to the Congress was to continue the work of the TsK.⁵

The high standing which the Bund enjoyed among the delegates at the Congress, and its own estimate of its position in the Party, were reflected in the successful bid

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1. Eidelman, Po povodu stati Akimova, Prolet. Rev. No.1, 1921, pp73-4.
 2. Vilenskii, SD rabota v gorodakh raiona Bunda ... v 90-kh godakh, in K 25-letiiu I s"ezda, p157.
 3. Tobias, op.cit. p86.
 4. Akimov, op.cit. p151.
 5. Ibid. p157; Eidelman, K istorii voznik. RSDRP, Prolet. Rev. No.1, 1921, p63.

its delegates made to call the new Party "All-Russian" (Rossiiskaia) rather than "Russian" (Rusaskaia).¹ The Party was to be composed of the Russian organizations and the Bund: nobody thought of Ekaterinoslav or Kiev as Jewish organizations since although they were run by Jews and applied Vilna methods, their efforts were not aimed specifically at Jewish workers. The Congress did not question the idea that the Party's name should embody the entire proletariat of the Russian Empire, and no one could deny that to include a specifically Jewish organization under the heading of "Russian" was inappropriate.²

In spite of its rejection of the title "Social Democratic" at its own founding Congress, the Bund made no objection when the Congress so styled the Party. This behaviour is, however, not contradictory.³ The Bund had made it clear that, as an organization, it was open to all Jewish workers; the committees of the Bund, on the other hand, were to call themselves "Social Democratic." The Bund did not regard itself and the Party as equals; on the contrary, the Bund expressed the wish to enter the Party as an autonomous part. Since the Party would embody the Social Democratic principles of the entire movement, there

1. Akimov, op.cit. p152.

2. Loc.cit. The Bund had recently been attacked by the Polish Social Party (PPS) for "russifying" the Jewish proletariat, Tobias, p96.

3. Akimov criticizes the Bund for inconsistency, op.cit. p153.

could be no objection to its using that title.

By a majority of 5 to 4, the Congress defeated a Bund proposal to include "Workers'" (Rabochaia) in the Party's title.¹ (The Bund's proposal was, however, considered consistent by Struve, the author of the Manifesto).

The similarity of views regarding the practical tasks confronting the newly formed Party led to a general acceptance by the Congress of an organizational statute which sought on the one hand to establish a strong and viable Central Committee and on the other hand to avoid offending the parochial susceptibilities of some of the organizations.²

It is unlikely that the Bund was particularly concerned with the degree of centralization adopted: Kremer was a member of the Central Committee both of the Bund and the Party. The Bund had informed the other groups of its desire for autonomy, and the reasons for it, soon after its own founding Congress, and the Party Congress ratified this without objections.³ Moreover, it was a foregone conclusion that the Bund would be given complete freedom

1. Tsoglin, Mezhdou I i III s"ezdami Bunda, in Rev. dvizh. sredi evreev, pl56.

2. Eidelman, op.cit. pp53-54 says that moderate centralization was adopted out of deference to the young and inexperienced organizations; but it was Ekaterinoslav who insisted with an ultimatum on inserting a clause to the effect that local committees could ignore a TsK decision if they saw fit, Akimov, op.cit. pl55.

3. Akimov, ppl46, 155.

to meet its own literary and technical requirements, which the Party TsK was unable to do.¹ And in the still primitive local conditions of Party activity that then existed, it was clear that a severe degree of centralization could not be applied and that therefore local Russian committees would have to be given similar latitude.²

As a result of the talks he had had in Switzerland with the emigre leaders, Kremer was able to inform the Congress that Plekhanov and his Group would be willing and suitable to undertake the foreign representation of the Party. The Congress ratified the plan which Kremer and the emigres had drawn up, by which the Union of Russian Social Democrats became a part of the Party and was entitled to use the name "Foreign Committee of the RSDP."³ Some indication of the degree of esteem in which the emigre group and the Russian leaders held each other is given by the fact that the latter could think of offering committee status to the highly respected veteran revolutionary theoreticians of twenty years standing - and that the former never used it.

The leaders in Russia were unwilling to commit matters of immediate practical importance into the hands of the emigres whom they regarded both as a security risk and out of touch with present conditions in Russia.⁴ On the

1. Eidelman, op.cit. p60.

2. Akimov, op.cit. pl55.

3. Ibid. pl54.

4. Eidelman, p56.

other hand, their treatment of Plekhanov, from Kremer's tactless questions, to commissioning Struve to write the Manifesto, was not conducive to winning his ardent support. The situation would worsen when many of the practical leaders became emigres themselves, a transformation which was to take place very soon after the Congress.

Lacking time and facilities to compose a Party Programme, the First Congress had to commission the task to someone outside.¹ Plekhanov was proposed, but the Congress evidently felt that a policy statement in the form of a manifesto was more appropriate to the nascent Party and that this could be more easily done in Russia. Radchenko indicated that he knew someone in Petersburg who could undertake the work and it was agreed that this should be done.² Radchenko did not reveal that the person he had in mind was Peter Struve, the "legal" Marxist. The Manifesto was to be drafted by Struve and edited by the Central Committee. Shortly after the Congress Kremer received the draft which he was to have published on the Bund press.³ By this time only Kremer and Radchenko were still at liberty, and they differed in their evaluation of Struve's draft. Radchenko naturally supported Struve, since he had first proposed him. Kremer, however, backed by

1. Eidelman, op.cit. p52.

2. Akimov, op.cit. pl58.

3. Kremer, Osnovanie Bunda, Prolet.Rev. No.11, p56.

the Bund TsK, returned with the document to Petersburg and held a conference with Radchenko and Struve, at which he put forward several amendments. Chief among them was his insistence that Struve call the Party by the name the Congress had agreed upon, that is the Russian Social Democratic Party. Arguing, as the Bund had done at the Party Congress, that all the Party's aims culminated in the workers, Struve justified his adding "Workers'" to the Party title, as Kremer had wanted at the Congress.¹ Kremer, as official representative of the Party, asserted the Congress's decision. He was however defeated by the prospect of having no Manifesto at all to publish at a time when the new Party was all but extinguished. Consequently he accepted it as Struve had written it and had it published on the Bobruisk press, first in Yiddish then in Russian.²

The great arrests

The sole act of the new Party TsK was thus the publication, through Kremer, of the Party Manifesto by the Bund press at Bobruisk. A week after the Congress the Russian centres were struck by a series of arrests which for some months had been planned by the secret police. On

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1. Tsoglin, Mezhdur I i III s"ezdami Bunda, in Rev. dvizh. sredi evreev, p156.
 2. Akimov, op.cit. pp160-162; Kremer, op.cit. p56 and Der ershter TsK fun Bund, in Arkadi, p383.

11 March 1898, the police were sufficiently well informed to swoop down on all the Russian centres and in one night they made 500 arrests. In Kiev alone, where special efforts had been made on account of the Rabochaia Gazeta press, 175 people were arrested, including Eidelman, member of the Party TsK, and Tuchapskii, a delegate to the Party Congress.¹ It was because the press had recently been moved to Ekaterinoslav that the organization there was totally liquidated. In Moscow, nearly sixty were arrested, including the delegate to the Congress.²

The liquidation of the Kiev resources after the Congress, placed further burdens on the already overladen Bund: proclamations for Petersburg and Kiev were printed at Bobruisk. In addition the Bund TsK went some way to assuming the literary and technical tasks of the Party TsK. It organized large transports of literature and distributed them to Moscow and Petersburg through Bundist students there; it set up a Russian press with a view to meeting demands from the Russian committees and publishing Rabochaia Gazeta.³ Before its efforts could bear much fruit, however, Zubatov chose to initiate his plan to liquidate the Bund.

1. Akimov, op.cit. p158.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Tsoglin, op.cit. pp158-160.

It was an association shortly before the Congress between Eidelman, who had been trailed by the police for some time, and Mutnik, that turned the attention of the police to the Bund.¹ Once he had dealt with the Russian organizations to his own satisfaction, Zubatov, the Assistant Chief of the Moscow Secret Police Department, concentrated on the Bund.

For four months, Zubatov's agents collected information, plotted trails, watched addresses, but made no arrests. Zubatov evidently set great store by his plan to liquidate the Bund for he spent more than half his total budget on the Bund alone.² It was his belief that the elimination of the Bund would put an end to the movement in general.³ The result of Zubatov's patient watching was that on 26 July 1898, all three members of the Bund TsK, including Kremer, one of the members of the Party TsK, were arrested; the Bund's main press at Bobruisk, which had printed the Party Manifesto and the May Day pamphlets for Kiev and Petersburg, and another press at Minsk, were seized; and between 55 and 70 people were arrested.⁴ The main weight of the attack, thanks to the Bund TsK's carefully concealed

1. Tobias, op.cit. p123.

2. 10,000 out of 18,515 rubles, Menshchikov, Okhrana i revoliutsia, II, vyp. 1, p163.

3. Tobias, op.cit. p124.

4. Menshchikov, op.cit. p112; Mill, Pionern un Boiern, I, p300.

contacts with the local committees, fell upon the leadership of the movement, the periphery largely escaping damage.¹

Thus by the end of July 1898, the ties which had been so carefully built up over the years were severed. The Party TsK which had survived in the person of Kremer until July² and the general Party structure were so badly damaged that no efforts could be made to restore them.

But the Bund's local committees still survived, and the emigre circles were still active and became the focus of the Social Democratic movement.

1. Tobias, *ibid* p131.
2. Radchenko was evidently not arrested but does not appear to have made any efforts to restore the organization. LS VI, p77 only indicates an arrest in Petersburg in 1902.

Chapter II

The Bund, the Union, and Iskra

The Bund raises help abroad

As the Bund's literary commitment had grown it had become evident that its printing facilities were inadequate, and John Mill, a leading Warsaw Bundist in close touch with the Vilna centre, had conceived a plan for founding a Bund press in Geneva. The Bund TsK would not undertake to support the plan until Mill had provided all the appropriate information, and so he went abroad to make enquiries. A matter of days later the great arrests took place in the Bund region.¹

When Mill heard of the arrests he immediately made contact with Kopelzon, who for some time had been the Bund's representative to the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad, and was the official representative of the Bund abroad.² Together they spent the rest of the year soliciting help from Jewish emigrant workers, Jewish students abroad, and friends in America. Of singular importance, among the measures Mill took to secure help for the Bund's recovery, was his success in creating aid groups whose efforts were devoted exclusively to the Bund.

1. Mill, Pionern, I, pp301-3.

2. Kopelzon had been abroad since 1895, Mill, op.cit. p63. He was Bund representative in the Union since February 1898, Letter from Union Secretary (Koltsov) to /Kopelzon/ dated 9 ii 1898, Bund Archives.

For over ten years Russian Social Democrats in exile had received money for publications and for propaganda from Russian-Jewish workers in America, particularly New York.¹ Among the refugees from the pogroms of the early 'eighties were many who watched the growth of the revolutionary labour movement in Russia with a feeling of personal involvement and who were happy to contribute. In addition the majority of Russian emigrant workers in London were Jewish artisans mostly from the Bund region. It goes without saying that however internationalist their view of the revolutionary movement might be, as refugees from a regime which had persecuted them as Jews, they could not fail to respond to an appeal from their erstwhile comrades and brethren, more especially because the latter had miraculously re-organized themselves into an exemplary revolutionary force.²

Funds were raised among the students on a non-partisan basis, and although the majority of Russian students abroad were Jews (a result of the numerus clausus in all Russian schools and universities), the Bundists found little interest at first in the struggle of the Jewish workers, or indeed in the plight of Jews in general. Young Jewish intellectuals whose lives had been blighted by the stigma of inferiority sought to obliterate all feelings of affinity with the

1. Rabotnik, No.3-4, 1897, p169.

2. Mill, op.cit, II, p28; Liadov, Iz zhizni Partii, (1926 ed.) pp6-7.

Yiddish-speaking pariahs in Russia, by embracing the cause of Russian Social Democracy.¹ But the task which Mill set himself was not to win the Jewish students away from the Russian movement - indeed he regarded himself and the Bund as members of it - but to show them that the Jewish proletariat also deserved their championship.²

He was aided in his propaganda by two things: the lack of cohesion among Russian Social Democrat groups abroad, and the resurgence of the Bund only two months after the great collapse. While Russian Social Democracy still remained in a state of chaos and confusion after Zubatov's coup, the Bund had, by the autumn, held a congress in Russia, set up a new TsK and some semblance of a centre, and was in contact with its foreign representatives who were conducting systematic efforts to secure funds and set up a press.³ Interest and sympathy for this tenacious organization grew and, with the formation of Bund-aid sections in the SD organizations in Switzerland and Germany, and of separate Bund-aid groups, by autumn 1898 money began to flow into Russia.⁴

1. Mill, op.cit. II, pp6, 20.

2. Ibid. p20.

3. Ibid. pp20-21; Tobias, Origins...of the...Bund until 1901, pl46, the Bund II Congress was convened in September 1898 by D. Katz who since July had been the unofficial Bund TsK.

4. Mill, op.cit. II, p6; Liadov, Iz zhizni Partii (1926 edition), p6, says that in Switzerland at the turn of the century nearly every emigre student called himself either a zionist or a Bundist, and belonged to an aid group.

In order to coordinate the efforts of their various sources and affiliations and to place an official stamp upon their own efforts, Mill and Kopelzon set up their own Foreign Committee (ZK) of the Bund in December, 1898.¹ Mill also succeeded, within a few months, in setting up a press in Geneva which he placed in the charge of I. Rabkin, a Bundist printer, while he, Mill, remained in Berlin where he was in contact with the German SD's who helped him with type.²

The successes of the Bundists abroad, however, gained them little popularity among the veteran social democrats in Plekhanov's Gruppa Osvobozhdenie Truda.

The Bund and the Union

Since 1895 the Vilna social democrats had been linked with the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad through Timofei Kopelzon.³ When the Bund was founded in 1897 the Union was chosen, quite naturally, to be its foreign representative whose functions were to include obtaining propaganda literature and representing the Bund at international congresses. In February 1898 Kopelzon became the official representative of the Bund in the Union. In November 1898 he was made Secretary of the Union and at

 1. Mill, op.cit. II, p9.
 2. Ibid. p47.
 3. Mill, op.cit. I, p63.

the same time Mill was made Treasurer.¹

According to the decisions of the Party Congress of March 1898, the Union was to have been the foreign representative of the Party TsK, but since the TsK was arrested nothing was changed in the Bund's relations with the Union. With the founding of the Bund ZK in December 1898, however, matters were altered. Now the Bund had its own foreign representation and it seemed logical to extend the autonomy granted to the Bund in the Party to the Bund's Foreign Committee. Thus at the end of 1898, Kopelzon, in his capacity of Secretary of the Union, drew up a supplement to the Union's statutes, by which the ZK became an autonomous part of the Union "in questions concerning the Jewish Workers' Union;"² in addition the ZK was allowed to retain its own treasurer - Mill,³ its own secretary - also Mill,⁴ and its own editorial board. Henceforth relations with the Bund in Russia were to be conducted through the ZK.⁵

The Bund occupied a curious position in the emigre conflicts over the "economist" issue. Among the increasing flow of emigres from Russia, particularly after the great arrests, were many who endorsed the policy of widespread

1. Mill, op.cit. II, p28.

2. Proekt dopolnenii k Ustavu Soiuzu /RSD/, signed Kopelzon, MS, Bund Archives.

3. Mill, op.cit. II, p28.

4. Ibid. p14.

5. Proekt dopolnenii.

agitation which had been applied in the northwest region since the early nineties. They regarded the continued strike movement which swelled in the last years of the century as the fruit of this agitation and they saw their task in its sustenance through popular pamphlets on political and economic questions. Against this trend Plekhanov and his veteran colleagues maintained the position that the role of the conscious Social Democratic leadership lay, not in the promotion of spontaneous working class demands, which would inevitably be of an immediate and economic nature, but on the contrary in placing before the workers their ultimate political aim - the overthrow of the autocracy. Plekhanov warned that to relinquish, even temporarily, as the new emigres from Russia wanted, the primacy of the ultimate slogan was to relinquish the leadership of the working class and instead to adopt the non-revolutionary politics of a trade-union movement.

As the number of emigres increased, the new men from Russia became a majority in the Union and Plekhanov's Group had to contend with increasing odds. Moreover the majority looked on the Bund as an example: in it they saw a well-knit organization which had based itself precisely on the strike movement. In April 1899, as a result of their conflict with Plekhanov, the young Unionists began to put out their own journal, Raboochee Delo, and the quarrel in the Union became public.

In the course of 1899 the Bund's ties with the new men in the Union were strengthened chiefly as a result of the dual functions of Mill and Kopelzon, but also because both the younger men and the Bund were more concerned with the practical questions of organization than the theoretical, and thus were regarded by Plekhanov with hostility. Finally in April 1900, when Plekhanov's Group left the Union, the Bund's support of the Union, as the official representative of the Party abroad, could be argued on legalistic grounds.

Smolensk Congress and formation of Iskra

News of the general disorganization of the Party's life in Russia and of the deepening split in the exile organizations had reached Lenin and Martov exiled in Siberia, and before their return to Russia early in 1900, they and Potresov joined forces with the aim of re-building the Party and combatting "economism."¹ This plan had been elucidated in a series of articles Lenin had published in 1899 in the illegal press,² and boiled down to the proposition that the present state of dissension and disorganization was due to the lack of a central organization and of a central Party organ. As a first step to a solution Lenin and his associates saw their task in resurrecting the TsK and Rabochaia Gazeta.³

1. Martov, Zapiski, pp408-12.

2. Nasushchnyi Vopros, Soch. II, p500; Protest ... in Rabochee Delo, No.4-5, September - December 1899, pp22-23; Nasha programma, Soch. II, p490; Nasha Blizhaishaia Zadacha, Soch. II, p498.

3. Martov, Iz neopublikovannykh vospominanii, in LS IV pp51-2.

When, after his return to Russia, Lenin visited Moscow and Petersburg he discovered that representatives of the Union, Kopelzon and Teplov, had already followed his plan and were raising support for a second Party Congress to take place in Smolensk in May 1900. Moreover, they desired the cooperation of Lenin's group, the Triumvirate, in the capacity of editors of the central organ, Rabochaia Gazeta, which was to be restored. At first glance the Triumvirate interpreted this gesture as "Macchiavellian:" they believed it was an attempt to detach them from Plekhanov, for whom they had pledged their support, and by bringing them within the legal framework of the Party hamper their alliance with the Plekhanov Group.¹

But it was also clear to Lenin that the Union was making a genuine attempt at making peace in the Party, and that they knew the value of Plekhanov's theoretical weight to the Party.²

At their own conference in Pskov in April 1900, the Triumvirate debated the question of whether to attend the proposed congress and decided in favour. They saw a valid reason for attending in the fact that the Union's plan was

1. Martov, Iz neopublikovannykh vospominanni, in LS IV, pp51-3.
 2. In the spring of 1899 John Mill wrote to an unnamed person, on the subject of the Party programme:

"We shall have to give it to Plekhanov to look over. It is of course a pity we have such relations with him now, but what can one do? We must not delude ourselves, he is still better than anyone at correcting the programme."

Mill's Letters, Bund Archives, dated from elsewhere in text.

supported by the Bund and the Iuzhnyi Rabochii organization of Ekaterinoslav, "the two strongest organizations in Russia."¹ Moreover, the position which was being offered to them of editors of the central Party organ would enable them to influence the Party with their ideas while at the same time insulate them from upheavals within the Party organization. Apart from the small but vocal group of Rabochaia Mysl, regarded by all as the embodiment of revisionist trade-unionism in Russian Social Democracy, Lenin's group, as editors of the Party organ, could count on the support of the entire mass of practical Party workers.²

Lenin's views on the immediate need to rebuild the Party TsK were evidently modified by the new prospects offered as an editor of the Party central organ, for at the Pskov Conference of the Triumvirate he read a draft "Statement from the Editors," in which he stressed the need to establish unity in the Party not by the simple decree of a new TsK, but by the development of common views through the Party organ and literature. In addition the Party needed a widespread organization of "postmen" to maintain contact between the centres and ensure deliveries of literature. Lenin pledged his own efforts to the first of these two needs, the provision of literature.³ Martov undertook

1. Martov, op.cit. in LS IV, p53.

2. Ibid, pp53-54.

3. Proekt 'Zaiavleniia ot Redaktsii,' in LS IV, pp67-8.

to put into operation the second of these requirements and after Smolensk he moved to Poltava where he proposed to profit from the high revolutionary temperature of the South, as he had seen it expressed in the active Iuzhnyi Rabochii organization.¹

Iuzhnyi Rabochii was run chiefly by Abram Ginzburg who had had his early training in Vitebsk and Dvinsk in Bundist organizations and had built up the Ekaterinoslav organization into something of a regional centre.² After the 1898 catastrophe, the Bund eschewed the attempt to reconstitute the Party on an all-Russian scale, but in Iuzhnyi Rabochii saw the basis of a regional nucleus, which could serve as the first step in the general renovation of the Party.³ The Bund thus supported Iuzhnyi Rabochii in its efforts to organize the Smolensk Congress, clearly passing on the lessons of its own earlier history.

In the event, however, Lenin's careful assessment of his opportunities, Ginzburg's aspirations, the Bund's support, and the Union's hope for unity - all were rendered academic by a series of arrests which prevented the majority of delegates from attending the Congress. Apart from Ginzburg and Rozanov from Iuzhnyi Rabochii, only two Bundists and

1. Martov, op.cit. in LS IV, pp53-4.

2. Ginzburg, in Rev. dvizhenie sredi evreev, pp106, 112; Martov op.cit. p53.

3. B.N/ikolaevskii7, Iz epokhi Iskry i Zari, Kat.i Ssyl, No. XXXV, p24.

one delegate from Rabochee Delo turned up, and the Congress was called off.¹

After the Pskov Conference, Lenin stayed on in Russia to await the Smolensk Congress, while Potresov set off abroad to see Plekhanov and Akselrod to discuss the setting up of a theoretical Party journal. After the failure of the Smolensk Congress, Lenin joined Potresov in Geneva with the now urgent requirement for a political newspaper in addition to the theoretical journal, both to be published abroad. In fact it had been Lenin's intention to persuade the Smolensk Congress to allow him, should he and his colleagues be made editors, to publish Rabochaia Gazeta in Germany.²

As a result of their talks with Plekhanov in August 1900, from which Lenin derived an almost traumatic shock, so great was his disillusionment with Plekhanov's dictatorial and dishonest methods, Lenin and Potresov were further convinced of the need to set up their own political newspaper, Iskra, in Germany, away from the overbearing Plekhanov.³ Plekhanov was nonetheless to serve as an editor, and the first number of Iskra appeared in December 1900.

1. R/ozan/ov, Vl. Iz partiinogo proshlogo, Nasha Zaria, No.6, 1913, pp31-2.

2. Martov, Iz neopublikovannykh... in LS IV, p60.

3. Lenin, Kak chut ne potukhla Iskra, 2 ix 1900, in LS I, pp33-47.

When Lenin emerged from exile he had no quarrel with the Bund. At different times during his exile he had been in touch with the Bund. Kremer, in his capacity as sole survivor of the Party TsK, had appealed for articles from the exiles in Siberia: Lenin wrote the articles and the Bund received them in 1899, but by that time Rabochaia Gazeta, the paper they were intended for, had ceased to function. Martov also wrote a popular article which he sent to the Bund.¹ Lenin, moreover, tried to moderate Plekhanov's extreme anger when they discussed the Bund in August 1900.²

Once agreement with Plekhanov had been reached and the alignment of Iskra with Plekhanov's Group settled, Lenin's attitude towards the Bund could be expected to change.

The Bund and the "Gruppa"

As the alliance between the Bund and Rabochee Delo abroad strengthened, the hostility of Plekhanov's Group grew apace. In return for their devotion to the Bund,³ Rabochee Delo benefited from the Bund's superior transport

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1. Nikolaevskii, B.I. (ed.) Doklad Iskry, in Doklady SD Komitetov k II s"ezdu; Lenin, Chto Delat? Soch. IV, p482; Martov, Zapiski, p397.
 2. Lenin, Kak chut ne... in LS I, p35.
 3. Mill, op.cit. II, p28, says the younger men were "simply in love" with the Bund. Akimov and others even learned to read Yiddish in order to keep up with its publications. Rabochee Delo carried the long and detailed reports on the Jewish labour movement prepared by Mill, see Note 1 overleaf.

and fund-raising organization.¹ At the International Socialist Congress in Paris in the autumn of 1900, the Bund's twelve votes, out of the total of thirty Russian votes formed a majority with the Union (Rabochee Delo) which had eight votes against the six Plekhanov Group votes on the question of a compromise resolution on Millerand.²

The Bund ZK's increasing success in its search for funds among Russian Jews in America also contributed to the friction with Plekhanov's Group. In 1900, Dr. Ingeman, the New York organizer of funds for Plekhanov's Group, read a letter from Akselrod and Plekhanov in which they appealed for help in their fight with "the yidlekh from Minsk and Vilna" who had apparently brought disorganization and war into the Union.³

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1. The writer has examined a file of Mill's letters in the Bund Archives which show that Mill's functions included: 1) contributing to Rabochee Delo on the Jewish labour movement, 2) procuring addresses in Russia for Rabochee Delo, 3) collecting and dividing funds between the Bund and Rabochee Delo, 4) despatching Bund literature by post or persons.
 2. Rabochee Delo No.8, Nov. 1900, Pt. II, pp6, 16; Mill, op.cit. II, pp89-90. The French socialists were split on the question of Millerand's participation, as a socialist, in a reactionary government. Plekhanov supported Guesde against Millerand, while the Bund and Rabochee Delo supported Jaures's compromise resolution.
 3. Der Idisher Arbeiter, No.9, 1900, p77; Mill, op.cit. II, p29 erroneously says "heroes" instead of "yidlekh."

The Bund was regarded as the main contingent of the Union by Zasulich, and she dubbed them "the patriots of the Minsk-Vilna fatherland."¹ Akselrod, writing to Lenin in November 1900, described the Russian delegation to the International Congress as a ludicrous and pathetic spectacle: four-fifths of the thirty delegates, he wrote, were "exiled Bundists, among them simple Vilna Philistines whose only merit was their avoidance of military service."² In June 1901 Akselrod compared Lenin's "literary group lacking a firm organization" with the Rabochedeltsy whom he considered "astute businessmen, organized in the Bund and doing good business on the sly..."³ A month later he again wrote to Lenin: "...I will enclose Ingerman's report of the Bund's exploits in America ... Watch your pockets when you have business with them or something will surely be snatched."⁴ Akselrod's comments were, however, mild by comparison with Plekhanov's.

At the International Socialist Congress in London in 1896, Plekhanov and his Group had represented the organized Jewish workers of four centres in the north-west region of Russia, and in his report to the Congress Plekhanov had described the Jewish labour movement as "in some respects ...

 1. Tobias, p228. Zasulich was writing to Deich.

2. Letter in LS III, p83, dated 5 xi 1900.

3. Ibid. p185. Letter dated 2 vi 1901.

4. Ibid. p222. Letter dated 28 vii 1901.

the avant-garde of the labour movement in Russia."¹

Plekhanov's utterances on the Bund at the turn of the century reflect a marked decline in his appreciation of his erstwhile

mandators. At the meeting between Lenin and Plekhanov in

August 1900, Plekhanov exhibited "phenomenal impatience"

when the Group's attitude to the Bund was discussed.

Plekhanov declared that the Bund was simply not a social democratic organization and that "our task is to knock this Bund out of the Party."²

Plekhanov described as "an advertisement for the Bund," "a glorification of the Jewish Bund," and "a very dangerous

tendency," an article by Martov written at the end of 1900

for the first number of Iskra.³ Plekhanov clearly revealed

that his objections were not in the content of the article

but in the value of its message to the Bund. Martov had

written about the Bund's resistance to the new tactics

employed by Zubatov of trying to recruit arrested revolutionaries as spies.

The Bund's method of retaliation Martov

considered "totally correct" and added that "Zubatov's

perversion will not touch the core of the Jewish labour

1. Plekhanov, Soch. IX, p365.

2. Lenin, Kak chut' ne .., in LS I, p35. The editors of Leninskii Sbornik, I, p26, indicate that they have omitted nothing from the original except several expressions of Plekhanov's concerning the Bund, and which Lenin described as "plainly indecent."

3. Letter to Lenin, 12 xii 1900, in LS III, p98. In spite of Plekhanov's objections, Martov's article - Novye druzia russkogo proletariata - appeared in Iskra No.1, December 1900, pp7-9. Akselrod had not found the article objectionable, Letter to Lenin in LS III, p90.

movement." In the same letter Plekhanov praised an article by a social democrat, Bogucharskii-Iakovlev, which he found "full of that revolutionary spirit, the absence of which in the Bundists makes me regard them almost with physical disgust."¹

Plekhanov was inclined to exaggerate his own impatience with his enemies, to exhibit bitterness and anger which his close associates found extreme and unnecessary. His bigotry and self-righteousness, his inability and lack of desire to understand another's point of view, and his insincerity, "namely insincerity," all had had a devastating effect on Lenin when they had talked in August 1900.² His attitude to the Bund indicated the general tension in the exile organizations of the Party rather than a rational analysis of the Bund's revolutionary qualities. Indeed, on the basis of Plekhanov's correspondence, it seems possible to say that his attitude to the Bund was an extension of his acute

+ animosity towards Kopelzon. As early as April 1898, well before the Bund ZK was established, Plekhanov described Kopelzon in terms which the editors of his letters found impossible to print.³ In the letters which flowed between Plekhanov and Akselrod Kopelzon's name is a frequent occurrence, almost invariably accompanied by terms of abuse

1. LS III, p99.

2. Lenin, Kak chut ne ..., in LS I, p34.

3. Perepiska Plekhanova i Akselroda, II, ppl4-15.

and violent criticism, and usually the subject concerned is the "American money."

In December 1900, Plekhanov wrote to Lenin concerning a notice on the split in the Union which Lenin had prepared for the first number of Iskra:

"In the notice on the split I would ask you to change the word accusation (against me) to the words: false rumour. Our enemies in Rabochee Delo can lie and spread rumours about us. But they cannot accuse and thus judge us: the Russian revolutionary, like the medieval knight, can only be judged by his peers ... and our peers cannot be people who share the ideas of Mr. G [Kopelzon] ..."1

It is noteworthy that Lenin placed his notice in Iskra without making the alteration desired by Plekhanov.

Iskra transport

Martov did not join Lenin abroad until the spring of 1901. His task in Russia was to establish a system for transporting Iskra and other literature of the Iskra organization into Russia and for distributing it. Martov set up his base in Poltava which lay in the heart of the revolutionary system of Ekaterinoslav, Kiev, Kharkov, and Odessa. Another key area for transport was the north-west of Russia, bordering as it did on Prussia, and the hub of this area was Vilna. Martov thus entrusted to his brother

1. Letter dated 8 xii 1900, LS III, p116. The "accusation" concerned the rightful ownership of the Union (or Group) press after the split. The still independent path that Lenin was taking is clear from the wording of his notice on this point: "We would only point out the inaccuracy of the very widespread and very grave accusation that Plekhanov had seized the Union press."

Sergei Tsederbaum, whose Party name was Ezhov, the task of arranging the Vilna channel. Using his long-standing acquaintance with the Bund, Martov gave Ezhov names and contacts in the Bund which had already promised to give help.¹

Lenin saw the need for a transit point on the Russo-German frontier and in January urged Nogin, one of his associates, to go to the frontier, to make contact with contrabandists, and to find a "Yiddish-speaking . . . comrade" to undertake the task of transport.² In the same month Ezhov arrived in Vilna and established contact with the Vilna Bund committee.

In his memoirs, Ezhov complains that the Bund would give him no help and that after vain attempts he finally got the help of a worker, known as Faivush, who, according to Ezhov, had anti-Bund sympathies.³ Ezhov also trained another worker, Joseph Tarshis, better known as Piatnitskii, to manage the transport.⁴ Although Ezhov does not admit it, both Faivush and Piatnitskii were Bundists.⁵

Ezhov also succeeded in getting help from the Bund in Dvinsk, namely through the agent of the Bund TsK there - Kaplinskii.⁶ Ezhov's younger brother, Vladimir Tsederbaum

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1. Martov, *Iz neopublikovannykh . . .*, in LS IV, p54; Zakharova-Tsederbaum and S.O. Tsederbaum, *Iz epokhi 'Iskry'*, 1900-1905, p52.
 2. Letter dated 24 i 1901, in LS VIII. p115.
 3. Zakharova and Tsederbaum, op.cit. pp54-6.
 4. Ibid. pp59-60; Piatnitskii, *Zapiski Bolshevika* (1st ed.) p18.
 5. See Appendix on Piatnitskii and Faivush.
 6. Levitskii, *Za chetvert veka*, II, p8. Kaplinskii was exposed in 1909 as an agent of Zubatov.

(Levitskii), spent from the end of March until December 1901 working in the Bund organization in Dvinsk. He asserts that official relations were set up with the Bund.¹

Kaplinskii acted as agent in the secret correspondence between Ezhov and Levitskii, provided Levitskii with Iskra and advice on his problems.²

Like his two elder brothers, Ezhov and Martov, Levitskii lacked Yiddish, and this limited the scope of his work for the Bund in Dvinsk. He was able, however, to conduct propaganda among some non-Jewish workers, Poles and Lithuanians, and he also travelled for the Bund.³

Of the three Tsederbaum brothers, however, it was Martov whose activities were the most fruitful for Iskra. By the time Martov left Russia to join Lenin abroad in the spring of 1901 he had been responsible for the setting up of a considerable network of groups and organizations for the support and dissemination of Iskra. There were Iskra groups in Pskov and Poltava, groups were forming in Petersburg, Samara, Kiev, Astrakhan and Baku, the southern section of the Iskra organization had been established in Kharkov. In addition professional agents were operating in Vilna and Riga, and by July 1901 there were further

1. Levitskii, op.cit. p8.

2. Ibid. p37.

3. Ibid.ppl1-12, 44.

professionals in Kharkov, Moscow, Odessa, Kiev and in Kishinev where a secret Iskra press was set up and operated by Leon Goldman, an ex-Bundist. As yet, however, there was no Russian centre for these groups and they communicated with the parent body through Lenin then in Munich.¹ The list is impressive in that it describes only the basis of a transport system and as such was a promising beginning.

Ideological position in Russia

Martov claims, in his memoirs, that the split in the exile organizations at the turn of the century was barely reflected in the organizations in Russia, "because the majority of them either were subjectively drawn towards 'economism,' which was preached by...Rabochaia Mysl, and which repudiated as an immediate task of the working class the struggle to overthrow tsarism, or made peace with it because they did not believe the Party, in its present weak state, would be able to deal with the question in a practical way."²

Martov's claim was correct but his explanation was tendentious. In the years 1899-1901 Social Democrats in Russia were avid for literature and ideas of all tendencies

1. Leninskii Sbornik VIII, pl35, N.10; Martov to Akselrod, 16 vii 1901, Pisma I, pp46-7.
 2. Martov, in LS IV, pp49-50.

and the lack of a clear division of allegiance in the local Russian organizations is evident.

In Odessa, for example, Jewish Social Democrats inspired and organized by the Bund, and guided ideologically by deportees from Petersburg alleged to be "economists," read all the Bund literature they could get, but they also read Iskra "to shreds."¹ During this period Rozanov, soon to become a leader of Iuzhnyi Rabochii and an Iskraist organizer of the Second Congress of the Party, learned to read and write Yiddish in order to be able to read Bundist literature, although he was not a Jew. He was at that time collaborating in Smolensk with the Bundist, Boris Tseitlin. Together they ran a study circle for some ex-Bundist soldiers - their study material were Russian journals.² The Bundists in Vilna complained in the spring of 1901 to Martov, then in Munich, that they were getting their Iskra later than everyone else.³ The blurring of loyalties reached its zenith in April 1901: a mortified Akselrod wrote to inform Iskra that Bundists were selling Iskra for one franc in a Russian restaurant in Zürich. Akselrod was worried about where the money from the sales was going,

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1. Garvi, Vospominaniia sotsial demokrata, pp23, 51.
 2. Rozanov, V Smolenske ... (1899-1902...), in Kat.i Ssyl, No.52, p155.
 3. Martov to Akselrod, 15 iv 01, Pisma, p25.

and added that "it would be best not only in the material sense to regulate the distribution and sale of publications... by handing them over to nominees."¹

Thus in the spring of 1901, and in fact much later in 1901, the mutual recriminations of the exiles had little effect on the practical work of the Social Democrats in Russia or on their ideas. However valid Plekhanov's utterance that the Bund lacked a revolutionary spirit, Levitskii categorically states in his memoirs that there was no incompatibility in his working in the Bund while at the same time regarding himself as an Iskraist.²

1. LS III, p154.

2. Levitskii, Za chetvert veka, p37. After leaving Dvinsk in December 1901, Levitskii continued his revolutionary activities in the Iskra organization in Poltava, Ibid. p102. In March 1902 a copy of the Bund ZK's organ, Posledniia Izvestiia, was found in the prison cell of Maria Shkolnik, a collaborator of Leon Goldman's in the Iskra press in Kishinev, Iskra No.46, 15 viii 1903, p10.

Chapter III

The Fourth Congress of the Bund

During the period when Martov was busy establishing Iskra's organization in Russia, the Bund's activities were equally expansive and energetic. As early as September 1898, a new Bund Central Committee had been elected at the Bund's Second Congress; contacts had been re-established with the old organizations which had formed the Bund since 1897, and with the ever-increasing circle of new organizations which sought to enter the Bund and benefit from its resources; aid-groups were formed abroad and help flowed from the Foreign Committee in which, since mid-1900, many of the original pioneer Bundist intellectuals, now escaped or released from prison or exile, were active; Bundist literature, both abroad and in Russia, proliferated,¹ the most important publication being the ZK's organ, Posledniia Izvestiia which started to appear in 1901 and became widely read among Russian Social Democrats on account of the frequency of its publication and the freshness of its news from Russia. The highly developed revolutionary qualities

1. Local Bund committee organs which emerged in this period included: Der Klassen-Kampf (Vilna), Der Minsker Arbeiter, Der Belostoker Arbeiter, Der Kamf (Gomel), Der Veker (Bristle-Workers' Union), Kirzhnits, Nachalo sotsialisticheskoi pechati na evreiskom iazyke, in Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev v Rossii, pp230-6.

of the Bund's leaders were praised by no less an authority than the chief of the Moscow secret police. In a report to the Director of the Police Department, he wrote: "the leaders of the Jewish organizations are especially distinguished" for their "versatile experience and perfected underground techniques." As a result, the Jewish Social Democratic centres were "being bound together by elusive threads, and the proliferation of Bundist committees - new or replacements" - continued unabated.¹

At the same time, with its constant expansion throughout the Pale of Jewish Settlement, beyond the north-west into the south-west and the south, and its Social Democratic slogan of political equality for the Jews, the Bund began inevitably to assume the appearance of a national revolutionary party. It was in accordance with the decision of the First Congress of the RSDRP that the Bund x should deal with questions specially concerning the Jewish proletariat: the Bund was the only organization in the Party which concerned itself with this task. When Jewish workers and Social Democratic intellectuals appealed to the Bund for literature in Yiddish and help in organization, the Bund was doing no more than its duty in responding. Since

1. Doklad nachalnika moskovskogo okhrannogo otdeleniia .., January 1901, in Menshchikov, Okhrana i revoliutsiia, II, vyp.2, Prilozh. IV, ppl82-4.

there were groups of Jewish workers in the south-west and south of Russia, it followed that the Bund received calls for help from these parts. There was no other reason for such calls than the fact that the appellants were Jews and the organization recognized by the Party as responsible for Jewish needs was the Bund, which for historical reasons had arisen not, say, in Odessa, but in Vilna and the north-west region.

The growth of the Bund's influence over a group of Jewish students in Kiev at the turn of the century is typical of the way in which the Bund was inevitably drawn to the south. In the autumn of 1899, some Jewish socialist students who rejected the teachings of Zionism yet felt themselves unable to assimilate, formed an organization which was admitted to the Kiev Social Democratic Student Union as a Jewish section.¹ Although at that time there were no Jewish Social Democratic workers' circles as such in Kiev, the Social Democratic circles that did exist "had a very Jewish appearance" and the Jewish students found, when they joined these circles, that the practice of teaching the workers in Russian had only limited success, in spite of the fact that many of these workers had recently migrated from the north-west region of the Pale precisely in order to

1. Zaslavskii, D. Tsu der geshikhte fun Bund in Kiev, in Roiter Pinkus, I, pp72-74.

develop their knowledge of Russian and thus widen their field of activity.¹ Thus a gradual change to Yiddish took place and a demand for Yiddish socialist literature grew. In the course of 1900 the Jewish group released the first Yiddish revolutionary proclamation in Kiev, in which they stressed the need to find ways of struggling for Jewish equality; one of the group, Fainshtein, who had had experience in the Bund, gave a lecture to the group on the Bund's activities and raison d'etre; Fainshtein's account was reinforced by the appearance in Kiev of an appeal by the Bund to the Jewish intelligentsia, and by frequent visits of Noah Portnoi. As a result the group became a Bundist aid group and maintained permanent direct contact with the Bund TsK.²

The problem of how to reconcile the increasing demand for Bund aid with the growth of Party activity, in towns where both organizations were active, was one of the vital issues that led to the convening of the Bund's Fourth Congress in May 1901.

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The scope and activity of the Bund at the turn of the

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1. Roiter Pinkus, I, p76; Berman, L. In loif fun iorn, p226.
 2. Rozental, P. Der bialistoker period in lebn fun /TsK/ fun Bund (1900-1902), in Roiter Pinkus, I, p54; Zaslavskii op.cit. pp76-77.

century was reflected in its Fourth Congress which, in the variety and importance of the questions it dealt with, far outweighed previous congresses. Twenty four delegates attended the Congress which was held in Belostok, and the TsK, - Rozental and Portnoi, had, with the help of Zeldov, then active in the Petersburg Union of Struggle, carefully prepared resolutions on the national question, and relations with the RSDRP, which they laid before Congress.¹

Other topics of debate included: a) strike action. Congress resolved that in future strikes should be developed chiefly in branches of industry which were still unaffected by the movement, but in industries where further economic improvement was unfeasible, strikes should be used with discretion; b) demonstrations. It was agreed that these had great value when called by the organization, and that whenever possible Christian workers should be called out as well;² c) political struggle. Congress repudiated the "economist" theory of stages as a means of awakening the masses politically, and asserted that political oppression was so patent in Russia that the workers needed no stages in order to understand it. The economic struggle was acknowledged

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1. Rozental, *ibid.* p59; Chetvertyi S"ezd...(Bunda), in Materialy K istorii evreiskogo rabocheho dvizheniia, p96.
 2. Even S. Tsederbaum, whose memoirs are hostile to the Bund, writes that in Vilna in 1900 he witnessed a street demonstration organized by the Bund "such /as/ were unknown at that time in internal Russia," Iz epokhi Iskry, p61.

"merely as the best way to draw the masses into the movement," after which political agitation must be developed far beyond the bounds of the economic struggle; political demonstrations were included among the methods of political struggle; d) renaming the Bund. Until now the Bund had been officially called the "General Jewish Workers' Union in Russia and Poland." Since its chief area of activity was in fact Lithuania it was proposed that this name be added. It was also agreed that the chronology of the Bund's growth should be visible in its name, and thus it was renamed the "General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia."¹

The expansion in the south

The Bund Fourth Congress formulated a policy for dealing with the complex situation which was arising in the south of Russia where a Jewish labour movement had grown up. Almost without exception the Jewish workers were organized separately from Christians, but in some places the Jewish organizations formed part of the local Party committees. Frequently these organizations appealed to the Bund for Yiddish literature and even for membership of the Bund.

The Congress adopted a resolution which it hoped would take account of the interests both of the Jewish organizations

1. Materialy, pp100-121.

and of the Russian proletariat. Firstly, the TsK was ordered to answer all the appeals for literature as far as was possible. Secondly, it was to establish Bund committees in towns where only Jewish organizations existed, with the consent of the latter. Thirdly, where the Jewish organizations formed part of Party committees that were able to satisfy their requirements, and where their separation from the Party committee might harm the Russian labour movement, it was categorically emphasized that separate Bund committees must not be formed.¹

Excluded from the Report of the Fourth Congress was the decision to send someone to tour the entire south with a view to taking stock of the position of Jewish organizations and making contacts.²

The national question

The national question, which had been raised at the Bund's Third Congress in 1899 by John Mill, was also debated by the Fourth Congress. Opinion in 1899 had been overwhelmingly against adopting a national policy for the Bund and instead the simple demand for political equality had

1. Materialy, pp124-5.

2. /Rozenal/, in Roiter Pinkus, I, p60. During the period April/May 1901 to June 1903, Bundist committees were formed in Zhitomir and Berdichev, an organization was created in Odessa, and affiliated groups arose in Kiev and the Kiev gubernia, and in the Volynia, Podolia and Poltava gubernii, Materialy, pp129-30.

been acclaimed. The increasing interest in national problems shown by other socialist parties and groups, and the acceptance of national programmes by such parties, coupled with the strengthening influence of Zionism, gave rise, however, to a belief, strong among exile Bundists, that the Bund must pose and answer the national question for the Jews, from the socialist standpoint.¹ Concern with the national question had become a preoccupation of the exile Bundists, rather than of the practical leaders in Russia and, as in 1899, the question was raised at the Fourth Congress by a delegate recently returned from abroad.

There was general agreement at the Fourth Congress that the time was ripe for a discussion of the problem; the demand for the right of every nation in the State to self-determination, which had been incorporated in the decisions of the First Congress of the RSDRP on the basis of the resolution of the International Socialist Congress of 1896, was considered too brief and general a slogan to be of any use.

Since 1899 the Bundists who concerned themselves with the problem had sought and found other Social Democratic authorities on the national question. At the Brunn Congress

 1. Tobias, Origins...of the...Bund, p258.

of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, in September 1899, the South Slav delegation had proposed a resolution advocating cultural or personal, as opposed to territorial autonomy. The proposal, although it was not adopted by the Austrians, served as a precedent for the proposals put forward at the Fourth Bund Congress.¹ Any solution to the national question based on territory was abhorrent to the Bund since it would involve a step towards Zionism which the Bund consistently condemned as a bourgeois philosophy.² The idea that national integrity could be based on cultural inheritance, language and psychology, seemed to fit the position of the Jewish masses, whose hostility both to Zionism and to assimilation were the Bund's raison d'etre. Another source of authority for this solution was found in the writings of Karl Kautskii, who was highly respected by the Bund. Kautskii had advocated the equality of all nations on the basis of language.³

The Bund Fourth Congress discussed the national question from two aspects, theoretical and tactical. From the first point of view the Congress was unanimous in its agreement

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1. Chetvertyi S"ezd... (Bunda), in Materialy, p113 talks of the South Slav proposal as "accepted" at Brunn. The concept of personal autonomy was in fact not accepted, but was subsequently associated and confused with the official nationalities programme adopted at Brunn, Kogan, A.G. The Social Democrats in the Hapsburg Monarchy, in Journal of Modern History, vol.XXI, No.3, September, 1949, p214.
 2. The Congress passed a resolution to this effect, Materialy ppl26-7.
 3. Tobias, Op.cit. p252.

that all nations must be free to develop their own cultural characteristics and that the Bund must fight against all forms of national oppression. The Congress further agreed that in order to guarantee the free cultural development of all the nations in a multi-national state like Russia, the latter should, in the democratic future, be reorganized into a federation of nationalities, each with full autonomy in questions pertaining to ^{culture} ~~nationality~~, that is, language, education, art and so on. Congress unanimously recognized that all these conditions were applicable to the Jews and that the concept of nationality was also applicable to the Jews.¹

The Congress revealed a far less ambitious attitude when it came to the question of the practical necessity of a national policy for the Bund in its everyday agitation and propaganda. Three trends emerged. The first, represented solely by Mark Liber (Mikhail Goldman), recently returned from abroad where he had visited John Mill in the Bund Foreign Committee,² took the firm line that, having recognized the right of every nation, to national freedom and autonomy, and having recognized the Jews as a nation, the Bund must include these demands in its agitation forthwith.

1. Materialy pp113-114.

2. Doires Bundistn, I, pp198-199.

Liber urged that the demand for civil equality was insufficient, for even after the achievement of this the Jews could continue to suffer as a nation. Liber did not claim that national autonomy for the Jews was attainable as an immediate goal; instead he stressed that his programme was valuable as a means of preparing the Jewish masses now for future national autonomy. He concluded with the demand that the Bund immediately begin national agitation on the basis of the oppressed position of the Jewish nation in Russia, and assured the Congress that such a policy would not dim the class consciousness of the workers, but would rather heighten their political awareness.¹

The second trend, headed by Portnoi of the TsK,² while agreeing with Liber that the Jewish proletariat had special national disabilities, believed that the Bund's task lay not in the demand for national concessions which had no chance of realization, but in the development of Jewish national consciousness through the persistent exposure of all forms of that oppression which arose out of the fact of Jewish nationality. The demand for national autonomy was an unrealizable aim; for the moment the Bund should go no further than demanding the abolition of all exclusive laws against the Jews, that is, to demand civil and political

1. Materialy, pp114-116.

2. Rozental in Roiter Pinkus I, p60.

equality.¹

The third group at the Congress, headed by Portnoi's colleague in the TsK, Rozental,² protested that the Jewish masses knew nothing of the national question, that it was a foreign importation, and that its artificial and premature stimulation could lead to nothing but harm. The Social Democratic propaganda of recent years, Rozental's group held, had precisely weaned the Jewish masses from their traditional attitude of suspicion and distrust towards their Christian comrades and imbued them with the belief that all men were brothers. The traditional Jewish pessimistic belief in the eternal existence of antisemitism, the fertile soil of Zionism, had equally been undermined by the non-discriminatory propaganda of Social Democracy.³

The Resolution which the Congress passed, after numerous unsuccessful attempts at amendments by Liber, was a compromise worked out by Portnoi and Rozental, and indeed reflected the views of their groups. The Resolution was in two parts, theory and tactics: the views of Portnoi constituted the former while Rozental's constituted the latter. The first part of the Resolution stated that the oppression of one nation by another was impermissible, that Russia

1. Materialy, pp116-118.
 2. Rozental/ op.cit. p60.
 3. Materialy, pp118-119.

should in future be reorganized into a federation of nationalities, each with full national autonomy independent of territory, and that the concept of nationality was applicable to the Jews. The tactics recommended by the Resolution in its second half show that Rozental's group was strong enough to render the first half of the resolution virtually sterile: it declared that the demand for Jewish national autonomy was premature, and that, in existing conditions, it was adequate to fight all discriminatory laws against the Jews, to expose and protest against oppression of the Jews, while "avoiding the fanning of national feeling which can only dim the class consciousness of the proletariat and lead to chauvinism."¹

In spite of the fact that the IV Congress resolved that agitation for national Jewish autonomy was in present conditions both premature and ill-advised, the exile Bundists continued their propaganda on this subject. In January 1902, the Bund Foreign Committee called the First Congress of Bundist Aid Groups Abroad in order to hold a thorough discussion of the national question, still a delicate one for many Bundists, some of whom, indeed, wished the "whole episode could pass like a bad dream."² At this

1. Materialy, pp119-120.

2. Kurskii, Gezamlte Shriftn p214. None of the ZK's correspondence on this event has survived, and Kurskii's remarks are from memory.

Congress, Kossovskii delivered a speech in which he pleaded that, whatever the future structure of Russia would be, a real case existed now for putting the demand for national autonomy into the present programme. By virtue of its psychology, language, and culture, he argued, the Jewish proletariat had developed as an individual national group and as such had the right to demand national-cultural autonomy.¹

The Bund and the Party

The Fourth Congress also discussed the question of the Bund's status in the RSDRP and the organization of the latter. As the number of Party organizations grew and contacts and activities multiplied, it had become clear that the re-creation of a strong Party centre was both vital and inevitable. Just as in 1898 the Bund had helped to create the Party Central Committee which was to control all-Party affairs, so in 1901 it believed in the need for a strong centre, and would indeed again contribute towards the attempt to create it.² But the stature which the Bund

1. The speech is not reproduced in the Report of the Congress, Otchet o pervom s"ezde tsentralnykh bundovskikh kruzhekov, 1902, Konspirativno, MS in Archives of Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. The speech was published, with "minor" alterations, by the Bund TsK in Belostok, probably before April 1902, Kurskii, op.cit. p218. It was later published in London in 1902 as K voprosu o natsionalnoi avtonomii i preobrazovanii RSDRP na federativnykh nachalakh.

2. See Belostok Conference below.

had acquired by 1901 impelled it to reconsider its constitutional relations with the party in the future.

In the organizational system set up by the First Congress of the Party, the Bund had no de jure representation in any central Party institution. Since the Bund was responsible for the needs of the Jewish proletariat, its status in the Party virtually cut the latter off from the Party as such, except insofar as the Bund TsK chose to avert this position on its own initiative. This led the Congress to consider improvement in the structure of the Party, particularly in view of recent proposals by the Polish Social Democratic Party (SDKPiL) for unification with the RSDRP.¹ The form of unified organization proposed by the Poles, who aspired to the status of a national party, was federation, that is, wide independence for the control of their own party affairs, and representation in the central Party institutions alongside the representatives of all the other national Social Democratic parties in Russia.²

Drawing the "logical conclusion from the resolution passed on the national question,"³ the Fourth Congress

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1. In February 1901 the Polish SD's had written to the Union, Iskra, the Bund and the Lettish Sd's, proposing unification, Dziewanowski, Communist Party of Poland, p33; Materialy, pl25.
 2. The proposals were printed, without comment, in Iskra, No.7, August, 1901, pp15-16.
 3. Materialy, pl25.

decided that the Bund's relations with the Party ought also to be on the federal principle and, with the Polish Social Democrats in mind, passed a resolution envisaging the RSDRP as a federated union of the "Social Democratic parties of all the nations inhabiting the Russian State;" the Bund, as the representative of the Jewish proletariat, was to constitute a federated part of the Party and the Congress ordered the TsK to implement this decision.¹

The baldness of the Fourth Congress's order to its TsK "to implement this decision" subsequently provided the grounds for a polemic between the Bund and Iskra.² However, in envisaging the RSDRP as a federation of the Social Democratic parties of all the nationalities inhabiting the Russian State, the Bund was manifestly describing the form and scope of the Party in the future: such a description in no way fitted the existing Party. Secondly, since the Party itself would of necessity be involved in any attempt to change its structure, it is evident that the resolution of the Fourth Congress was intended to be merely a proposal to the next Party Congress. The Bund TsK subsequently explained that it had been ordered to discuss the question

1. Loc.cit. The Fourth Congress also resolved that: "Since the PSD is the Social Democratic party of one of the nations forming part of the Russian State, the Congress considers it possible for the Bund to enter into federal relations with it." Materialy, pl26. See also Appendix VII.
2. In Iskra, Nos. 7 & 8, August & September 1901, see Chapter IV.

at the next Party Congress.¹ Until that time the Bund's status in the Party would remain the same, and in an appeal to the Jewish intelligentsia, released by the TsK after the Fourth Congress, the Bund is still described as "an autonomous part of the RSDRP."²

Although the official Report of the Fourth Congress does not give details of the debates on the relations of the Bund to the Party, two arguments for federation were current among Bundists; the extent to which they were successful can be seen from the proceedings of the Bund's Fifth Congress.³ The first argument, expounded by Kossovskii, developed the Fourth Congress's demand for "simplicity in relations with the Party."⁴ Under the existing system, where the components of the Party enjoyed "autonomous relations" with the Party Central Committee, there existed the permanent contradiction between local independence and strict centralization. In addition the accidental preponderance in the central institutions of members of one nationality could lead to the neglect of the proletarian interests of the other nationalities in the Party.

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1. Letter from TsKB, Iskra, No.8, 10 ix 1901, p17.
 2. Vozzvanie k evreiskoi intelligentsii (2nd. ed.), 1901, p10; /Kossovskii/, K voprosu o natsionalnoi avtonomii i preobrazovanii RSDRP na federativnykh nachalakh, 1902, p22 where 1st ed. of Vozzvanie is referred to.
 3. See Chapter VI.
 4. Materialy, p125.

Organized on the single principle of equal representation in the Party centres for all national groups, the Party need not fear predominance by any one of its parts to the detriment of another part.¹ Such was one argument for federation.

The second argument, undoubtedly of Bund origin and certainly used by the Bund at a later date, was put by Krichevskii in Rabochee Delo. According to this, the Bund's present ties with the Party comprised no more than the moral bond of mutual recognition of the 1898 Manifesto. Permanent organizational collaboration could come about only if the Bund had equal representation in the Party TsK, and federation provided the means of achieving this.²

The arguments for federation of the Party implied acceptance of the idea that national demarcation was permanent and indeed hardening. Its proponents, however, saw no contradiction between Social Democratic propaganda for international class solidarity, on the one hand, and the separate organization of national proletariats, on the other. Nor did the Fourth Congress see any contradiction in proposing that the Bund, as the representative of a national proletariat, be given equal status in a federated

1. Kossovskii / K voprosu, p19.

2. Krichevskii, Po povodu IV S"ezda Bunda, in Rabochee Delo No. 11-12, February 1902, pp121-122.

Party with other national groups, while at the same time deciding to agitate only for civil, as opposed to national, equality for the Jews; indeed the resolutions, at the Fourth Congress on the national question and relations with the RSDRP mirrored each other. Each expressed an accepted principle and each advocated delay in the application of that principle. In the case of the national resolution, the Bund would not apply it in everyday tactics but would await the opportunity. In the case of the organizational resolution, federation was accepted as a principle but was to be put forward to the Party only as a proposal.

Although the question of Party federation had to await the next Party Congress, the Bund was able to apply the principle of federation in another field shortly after the IV Congress, namely to the Tanners' Union. The IV Congress had approved the formation of a federated Tanners' Union to include Jewish and Christian workers,¹ and in the autumn of 1901 the General Federated Union of Tanners was formed at a congress of tanners held in Belostok.² The Manifesto of the new organization was published in Yiddish, Polish and Russian and appeared at the end of January 1902. In the words of Rozental, the author of the Manifesto, "We decided

1. Materialy, pp110-1. See Appendix IV.

2. Rozental, op.cit. p66; Abram der Tate, Bleter fun mein iugnt, p118. Both the constitution for the Union and its Manifesto were written by Rozental.

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for the first time to apply the principle of federation .."¹

The Manifesto was published in full in Iskra No.19 (April 1902) with an editorial comment welcoming the event and wishing the Union success. Iskra further urged tanners of "strictly Russian" centres to join the Union as soon as they could.² The Manifesto made the meaning of federation quite clear: "This means that tanners of all nationalities (Jews, Poles, Russians, etc.) are organized separately and form separate unions, but they are all united through the central (federated) committee in which the respective nationalities are represented ... Polish, Russian, Jewish, and Lithuanian comrades vary in language, mentality, inclinations, level of education, and are exploited in different degrees. Thus they may have their own tasks; they .. need their own agitators and literature. This is why each nationality must have its own organization. But they must all be united in order to give each an equal voice ... This is federation."³



1. Rozental, op.cit. p66.
 2. Iskra No.19, i iv 1902 p11.
 3. Loc.cit.

Chapter IV

The prospects of unity

The "Unification" Congress

While Iskra's Russian organization was still in construction any attempt to call a Party Congress was plainly abhorrent to Lenin, and he accordingly kept himself informed of any move to repeat the Smolensk attempt. Moreover, Lenin had cause to believe, in April 1901, that such a congress was being planned to take place without the participation of Iskra.¹ In July he learned that efforts had been increased to bring about a Party Congress, but was relieved to learn also that recent arrests had caused it to be delayed.² The poor state of Iskra's finances, dependent upon an aid-organization that was still in the process of creation, coupled with the still small proportion of support that Iskra enjoyed in the Russian organizations, would deprive Iskra of the possibility of dominating a general Party Congress.³

Iskra, Lenin believed, was rapidly overtaking the Union as the literary centre of the Party; there were instances where traditionally Union helpers abroad had begun to give

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1. Lenin to Radchenko, 27 iv 1901. LS VIII, p133.
 2. Lenin to Akselrod, 9 vii 1901. LS III, p192; Krupskaja to Piskunov (Nizhnii), 5 vii 1901. LS VIII, p135, n11, archive cited.
 3. Lenin to Bauman (Moscow), 24 v 1901, LS VIII, p142.

their support to Iskra.¹ A serious obstacle to Iskra's supremacy over the Union in the emigre colonies was, however, the support the latter had in the form of the Foreign Committee of the Bund. The Union was still the legally appointed official representative of the Party abroad, and the ZK of the Bund an autonomous section of it. Thus, although Lenin was amenable to the proposal to meet the Union at its Third Congress,² to take place in September 1901, with a view to settling differences, he did not overlook the role the Bund ZK could play.²

Indeed, Akselrod believed that the Union was relying increasingly on the support of the Bund ZK: "...in the form of the Bund they [the Union] have an active organization both abroad and in Russia..."³ An ideological victory over the Union at its Third Congress, a prospect which was brightened by concessions made by the Union at a preliminary meeting with Iskra in June,⁴ would only have material significance if the Union's organization, "in the form of the Bund," could be detached. Lenin had already in May

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1. Krupskaja to Noskov (Voronezh), 26 vi 1901, LS VIII, p167.
 2. Lenin to Akselrod, 1 vi 1901, LS III, p180. The question of relations with the Bund ZK was included in an agenda for the Union Congress sent to Lenin by the mediating group Borba, probably in July, Martov and Lenin to Gurevich-Danevich, (of Borba), 16 viii 1901, LS VIII, p195, n5.
 3. Akselrod to Lenin, 28 v 1901 and 2 vi 1901, LS III, pp177, 183.
 4. Krupskaja to Noskov, 26 vi 1901, LS VIII, p166.

thought of excluding the Bund ZK from the preliminary conference in June on the legal point that the Bund's autonomy extended only to questions concerning the Jewish proletariat. But no doubt the likely failure of such an attempt led him to decide "under no circumstances to make it a casus belli,"¹ and the ZK did attend.

In the second half of June, Iskra attempted again to detach the ZK from the Union. The proceedings were initiated by Martov who wrote two "threatening" letters to the Bund TsK soon after the appearance of the IV Congress decisions.² In his letters, which were subsequently published in Iskra,³ Martov attacked the Bund for "harnessing the Jewish proletariat into the shafts of nationalism" on completely artificial grounds; Martov did not quote the Bund's resolution on the national question, nor did he quote the complete resolution on relations with the Party, omitting thereby the moritorium on the national policy and the implied intention to put the question of organization to the next Party Congress; by omitting the resolution on the South of Russia, which had emphatically taken a cautious

1. Lenin to Akselrod, 25 v 1901, LS III, p173.

2. The decisions first appeared in the ZK organ, Posledniia Izvestiia No.23 dated 24 vi 1901, Pisma I, p47, n.4. It has not been established whether this date is Old or New Style. Posled. Izv. was at this stage hectographed. After No.45 it was printed; both style dates were given only from No.98, 4/17/xii 1902.

3. Iskra Nos.7 and 8, August and September 1901.

line on setting up Bund committees, Martov implied that Jewish workers were threatened by "nationalistic" incursions by the Bund, but he was confident that they would resist and continue to struggle alongside their Russian comrades in the same organizations.¹

The Central Committee of the Bund, typical of organizations in Russia at that time in its desire for unity and dislike of factional dispute, approached the Iskra agent in Vilna, Tsederbaum-Ezhov, and asked for peace.² Martov, on hearing this news from Ezhov, immediately ordered his brother to demand from the Bund first of all a declaration that it would support Iskra as the all-Russian Social Democratic organ and that the Bund solidly shared its views, and secondly that this move would be "countersigned" by the ZK. Martov had no illusions that the Bund would actually support Iskra: all he sought was that "by this declaration they [the TsK] will disavow their foreign representatives."³ With the entire intellectual leadership of the Bund then in the ZK, the TsK's refusal to combine with Iskra to force a rift between the ZK and the Union was a foregone conclusion and Ezhov's talks with Portnoi came to nothing.⁴ Martov's

1. Iskra No.7, p16.

2. Martov to Akselrod, 16 vii 1901, Pisma I, p46.

3. Loc.cit.

4. Zakharova-Tsederbaum and Tsederbaum, S. Iz epohki Iskry, 1900-1905, pp59-60.

letters were then published in Iskra, together with a reply to the first from the Bund TsK, thus making the "threats" public. The aim of the polemic was, however, too transparent to maintain and it failed completely.

At a preliminary meeting before the "Unification" Congress the Union debated a declaration by the Bund ZK that, as an autonomus part of the Party, with independence in questions only concerning the Jewish proletariat, the ZK did not deem it legal to take part in the forthcoming congress of the Union. It was decided, in order to guarantee the presence of the Bund at the Congress, to allow the Bund ZK to vote as members of the Union, and as Bundists only in questions concerning the Jewish proletariat.¹ At the Congress, which began immediately after this meeting, Lenin and his associates accepted this decision "without reference to the motivation:"² whether in fact this decision was accepted by the Iskra side as a result of a vote is not disclosed in the literature.

As a result of continued polemics immediately before the Congress, the atmosphere was strained and unconducive to unity. The Union retracted a series of "concessions"

1. Dva S"ezda, p14. This was the Union's account of the Congress.

2. Dokumenty "ob"edinitelnogo" s"ezda, p5. This was the account given by Lenin's side.

it had made at the June conference, and Lenin pressed for still more concessions. Deadlock was reached when the Union greeted one particular attack with ironical laughter: Lenin read a solemn statement that no further cooperation was possible and led his side from the hall.¹

Had the Bund supported Lenin at the "Unification" Congress he would have had a majority over the Union. The latter had 16 votes, Iskra and Plekhanov's faction combined to make 14 votes, and the Bund had 5: the 3 votes of Borba, a literary group who had recently left the Union, remained uncommitted to either side.² The legally committed position of the Bund ZK at the Congress, making it difficult for them to manoeuvre without compromising their right to be there at all, left a question mark in Lenin's mind as to what position they might adopt now that total rupture had been accomplished. Accordingly, he invited them to a private conference.³ The entire long-drawn out conversation was carried on exclusively by Lenin and Kremer, neither Martov nor any of the other Bundists joining in. To Lenin's questions what was the Bund's position vis a vis the split, Kremer replied, according to Mill, that since the Union was still the official representative of the Party abroad, and

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1. Dva S"ezda, pp13-14; Mill, Pionern un Boiern, II, pp101-102. Mill was present as one of the five delegates of the Bund ZK.
2. Krupskaja to Nogin, before 22 x 1901, LS VIII, p198.
3. Mill, op.cit. p102.

the ZK of the Bund was a part of it, the ZK must continue to support the Union until a Party Congress should decree otherwise. At that Lenin got up and left, a gesture that appeared to mean: "There is nothing more to say to you."¹

The Belostok Conference

After the failure of the "Unification" Congress, efforts to convene an all-Party Second Congress were increased. The Union despatched an agent, Kogan-Grinevich, to Russia in order to muster support. At this time Iskra's influence in the Russian committees was growing, the journal was appearing almost every two weeks, in marked contrast to Rabochee Delo - of which only three numbers appeared between May 1901 and February 1902 - and the demand for it was increasing. The Union, however, still had the great advantage of the Bund's technical organization, as Iskra well knew. The Bund TsK, which at the end of 1901 resided in Belostok and comprised Portnoi and Rozental, in fact undertook the entire task of organizing the new Congress. With the help of Zeldov, a coopted TsK member and member of the Petersburg Union of Struggle, the Bund TsK planned the campaign: Portnoi undertook to tour the south and muster support there, while Zeldov was given the north to deal with. Zeldov also promised funds in the name of the Petersburg Union. All

1. Mill, op.cit. p103.

the technical arrangements for the Congress, which was planned to be held in Belostok, were entrusted to Rozental.¹

Early in December, Lenin heard about the arrangements which were being made but he believed them to be in preparation for a conference to decide the issue of the exile conflict. The preponderance of pro-Rabochee Delo feeling in the committees at this time lay behind Lenin's instructions to his agents to work for a postponement of the Conference "at least until the spring."² Lenin also needed time in which to finish an article explaining to the whole movement the essence of the conflict, and he expected the rabochedeltsy to do the same.³

Until early March Lenin appears to have believed that the forthcoming gathering was to be devoted to theoretical disputation in an attempt to end the discord in the Party. The Bund had kept the purpose of the meeting well concealed, for Lenin, in the Report which he prepared for Iskra's delegate to the meeting, protested against the "completely unexpected...plan to hold a Party Congress" which he had heard of "only the day before yesterday."⁴

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1. An-man [Rozental], Der bialistoker period .., in Roiter Pinkus, I, p67.
 2. Lenin to Russian comrades (unnamed), early December LS VIII, p214.
 3. Lenin finished his article, Chto Delat? within days of the Conference, too late for it to have the desired effect, LS VIII, p216, n.4.
 4. Doklad ... Iskry soveshchaniu, 5 iii 1902, Lenin, Soch. V, p66.

Lenin had received notification of the meeting equally late, for until Rozental informed the Petersburg Committee of the time and place in the middle of February, they were known to nobody except the Bund TsK.¹ The Petersburg Committee informed the Union abroad of the time of the meeting on February 13 and added that they would inform Iskra separately.² An Iskra organization had existed in Petersburg, but in the winter of 1901 it had been almost entirely arrested,³ thus it was the anti-Iskra Committee that sent Lenin the information on the time and place of the Belostok Conference "in such a way that they could not arrive."⁴

Iskra's delegate, Dan, found when he got to Belostok, that he had the wrong password, and in order to find the right one he travelled to Moscow, Voronezh, Orel, and Kharkov. Finally, in Samara, where in January the central bureau of the Iskra organization in Russia had been set up,⁵ Dan was able to get the correct password and locate the Conference.

Wide-spread arrests in February considerably reduced the number of invited delegates who attended and as a result

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1. [Rozental] op.cit. p68 says beginning of March, but in view of the letter from Petersburg, see below n.2, this must be New Style.
 2. Petersburg Committee to Union, 13 ii 1902, LS VIII, p226.
 3. Ilin-Zhenevskii, Vtoroi s"ezd .., in Krasnaia Letopis, No.2, 1928, p16.
 4. Menshchikov, Okhrana i revoliutsiia, II, vyp. 2, p95.
 5. Krzhizhanovskii to Iskra, 30 i 1902, LS VIII, p222.

when Dan arrived, on March 28 five days after the Conference was due to begin, he found that he had missed nothing: the delegates were arriving in sparse numbers and when all were finally assembled there were only nine.¹

The delegates and the organizations which they represented were as follows: Kogan-Grinevich (Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad), Zeldov and Krasnukha (Petersburg Union of Struggle), Kogan-Ermanskii (Iuzhnyi Rabochii), Dan (Iskra), Kremer (Bund ZK), Portnoi and Rozental (Bund TsK), Shipulinskii (Ekaterinoslav Committee).² In addition, Piskunov, an Iskraist, had arrived in Belostok from Nizhnii Novgorod before Dan and, thinking that Iskra was being kept out, he protested and left on March 24.³

The alignment of the meeting revealed the major rift between Iskra and the Union, and the main alliance between the Union and Iuzhnyi Rabochii.⁴ Ermanskii, of Iuzhnyi Rabochii, was the sole survivor of the central committee of the "Union of Social Democratic Committees and Organizations of South Russia" - of which Iuzhnyi Rabochii had been proclaimed the organ - which had been formed in December 1901

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1. Nikolaevskii, Doklady, p72; Rozental, op.cit. p68.
 2. Rozental op.cit. p68. The editors of LS VIII, p226, leave as unestablished the Bund ZK delegate. The editors of Lenin, Soch. V, p402, n.6, describe Rozental as the ZK delegate. Rozental, like Portnoi, was one of the few eminent Bundists never to serve in the ZK, Mill, Pionern, II, pl1.
 3. Nikolaevskii, op.cit. p93; Menshchikov, op.cit. p95.
 4. Details of the voting are given in Zametki A. Kremera o belostokskoi konferentsii, March 1902, MS Bund Archives.

as a regional organization covering the entire south of Russia as far as the Kiev and Kharkov gubernii.¹ The other members of the central committee - B. Tseitlin and A. Ginzburg, both ex-Bundists (Tseitlin had been active in the Vitebsk Bund as late as spring 1901) were arrested in February 1902.² But it was through their contact with the Bund that Ermanskii came to take part in the Belostok Conference.³

Further support for the Union came from the Petersburg delegation. The Iskra delegate from Petersburg, Krasnukha, had little local backing since the Iskra organization there had been badly hit during the previous winter, and Petersburg's contribution to the organization of the Conference had been made through the Bundist, Zeldov.⁴ Whether or not Zeldov and Krasnukha supported or opposed each other does not emerge from the literature. As a delegation, however, they voted twice as frequently with the Union as with Iskra.

The voting of the Ekaterinoslav delegate was divided equally between Iskra and the Union, and this perhaps is an

 1. Otchet S"ezda Iuzhnykh Komitetov, 1902.

2. Ermanskii, Iz perezhitogo, p57; Levitskii, Za chetvert veka, p44. In Nikolaevskii's view the idea of a southern regional organization had arisen among the leaders of the Bund, who were using their experience of the early Bund as a model, B.N./ikolaevskii/, Iz epokhi Iskry i Zari, in Kat. i Ssyl. No.6, 1927, p24.

3. Garvi, Vospominania, p180.

4. Ilin-Zhenevskii, op.cit. p16.

indication of the imperviousness of the Russian organizations to the dissensions of the exiles.

The Bund took a somewhat independent line, the only consistency in the voting of the two Bund delegations being that they never opposed each other, although one frequently abstained while the other voted. On balance, the Bund delegations voted more with Iskra than with the Union or Iuzhnyi Rabochii.¹

The initiators of the Belostok Conference had intended it to be the Second Party Congress; but for the February arrests, the gathering would no doubt have been one, and moreover a Congress with an anti-Iskra majority.² Projected points on the agenda included: "a) economic struggle and means of struggle (strikes, boycott, demonstrations, economic terror); b) political struggle and means (demonstrations, terror: offensive and defensive); c) political agitation; d) 1st May; e) relations with opposition elements; f) relations with non-Party revolutionary groups; g) Party organization; h) central organ and foreign representation, and exile Party organizations."³

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1. Of 10 votes noted by Kremer, the Bund combined with Iskra in 7.
 2. Garvi, op.cit. p156.
 3. St. Petersburg Committee to Union RSD Abroad, 13 ii 1903, LS VIII p227.

After five attempts to constitute the meeting a Congress, the delegates agreed to declare it a Conference. Again after various unsuccessful partisan resolutions to this end, the delegates unanimously, and without preamble, declared the meeting a preliminary conference¹ and limited themselves to passing a general ideological resolution and a May Day proclamation, and to creating an Organizational Committee for convening the Second Party Congress.

The Bund TsK appeared as a mediator in the Belostok Conference. It withheld its vote on the issue of why the meeting should be declared a preliminary conference, for the resolutions proposed, by the Union and Iskra, were mutually recriminatory, the Union blaming the lack of a central Party organization, Iskra blaming the lack of a general Party organization or wide Party activity. Both proposals were frustrated by the TsK's abstention, and the meeting was declared a conference without preamble.

Similarly, when the Conference discussed a general ideological resolution, the draft which Lenin had prepared and which rejected the need to conduct agitation solely on economic grounds, was too transparently based on Lenin's belligerent directives to Dan for either the Bund or the

 1. No indication for the initiative for this proposal appears in Kremer's notes. The editors of LS VIII, p226 and /Rozenal/ in Roiter Pinkus I p68 ascribe it to Dan. Lenin had included it in his directives to Dan, Soch. V, p70.

Union to accept it.¹ The Union's proposal for an ideological resolution was equally unacceptable, calling for agitation "to raise the political and class consciousness of the working class,"² at a time when the ripeness of the urban masses for political protest was manifest.

It was the draft put forward by the Bund TsK which was accepted, against opposition from the Union and Iuzhnyi Rabochii, as the basis of a final resolution. Defining the first task of the Party as the overthrow of the autocracy and leadership of the struggle for political freedom, the Bund outlined the means for achieving these ends:" a) leadership of all manifestations of the proletariat...against all forms of oppression ... in order to convert the dissatisfaction...of the working class into conscious struggle for the democratic republic and socialism; b) support of... all movements by progressives against the status quo, in order to develop the political and class consciousness of the proletariat; c) the spread of scientific socialism... the development of socialist theory and...struggle against all attempts to deny or narrow its meaning."³ The first task of the Conference, the Bund proposed, was to create a firmly welded militant Party organization. The Union and Iuzhnyi Rabochii opposed the resolution as it stood, but

1. Doklad...Iskry, Lenin, Soch. V, p69, pp72-73. Only Dan supported it.

2. Zametki Kremera.

3. Ibid.

having succeeded in passing certain amendments, in face of the opposition of the Bund and Iskra, they voted for the resolution. But in this form the resolution was too watered down for the Bund and Iskra and they therefore opposed it. It was passed by one vote.¹

Among the directives which Lenin had given Dan, in the form of his report to the Belostok Conference, was one which demanded the removal from the agenda of the points on relations with other revolutionary tendencies. This question, according to Lenin, needed detailed discussion which until now had been inadequate. He added: "...we say nothing of the...strange impression everyone has received from the mention of non-Party revolutionary groups [and the absence of any mention of such an important question as relations with the Bund and review of the decisions of the First Congress on it..."²

The Fourth Congress of the Bund had instructed the TsK to implement its decision to re-establish the Bund's relations with the Party on a federal basis at the "next Party Congress."³ The question was evidently not raised at the "next Party Congress," Belostok, nor apparently beforehand. The limited scope of the small gathering

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1. Zametki Kremera. Dan stated his reasons for opposing the amended resolution in this sense.
 2. Lenin Soch. V, pp67-68.
 3. Letter from TsKB, Iskra No.8, 10 ix 1901, pl7.

rendered impossible a discussion on the Bund in the Party, and in any event the alignment of the Bund at Belostok indicates that immediate rapprochement with Iskra was of greater interest to the Bund at that moment than the detailed question of Party structure.

The alignment of the Bund at Belostok was a strong indication that under the leadership of Portnoi and Rozental the Bund had deepened its concern for the political struggle and placed it in the forefront of its tactics. It also showed that the Bund declined to make ideological compromises in order to conform with the alignment of forces abroad. The revolutionary tempo in Russia was high at this time and the intensified police persecution and large-scale arrests that accompanied strikes and demonstrations stimulated the urge to unify, particularly in the light of the recent unification of Socialist Revolutionary organizations into the new SR Party and the threat of a surge of terroristic feeling in the ranks of Social Democracy.¹ Ever since they had been the central committee, Portnoi and Rozental had resisted the feeling of alienation which the dissension among the exiles was breeding among Bundists - the feeling of "we" and "they." Kremer, the other Bundist delegate at Belostok, was equally devoted to the aim of "one working

 1. The question of terror in the Bund is treated in Appendix II.

class, one Party - one Party in the whole State."¹ A discussion of the Bund's projected demand for federation would not have been compatible with these factors.

Anticipating the success of his demand that the Congress be declared a preliminary conference, Lenin had instructed Dan to propose the election of an Organizational Committee (OK) for the purpose of preparing and convening the Second Congress. Among other things the Committee would be responsible for setting up Party presses to print pre-Congress literature: the facilities of the two Iskra presses in Russia were to be placed at the disposal of the Committee, together with the services of their operators. "In 3 or 4 months this O[rganizatsionnyi] K[omitet], supported by all the organizations, could completely prepare the ground for the creation of a real Central Committee, capable in reality of conducting the entire political struggle of our Party."² To cope with the complex variety of tasks before it the OK should comprise, according to Lenin, not less than five to seven people. The Second Congress, Lenin had urged, should be held in summer, or at

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1. Kurskii, Gezamlte Shriftn, pp98-99. In May Krupskaja wrote to Lengnik (Samara) "...we are thinking now of unification. Since Belostok the Bund is inclined towards Iskra, the Union is also talking of unification," 23 v 1902, LS VIII, p238. See Appendix III for ideological similarities between Bund V Conference 1902 and Chto Delat?
2. Doklad...Iskry, Soch. V, p70.

the latest in the autumn.

The Belostok Conference complied with Lenin's suggestions almost completely: an OK was formed for the purposes outlined by Lenin, and it was decided that the Congress be convened in five months time, i.e. late summer.¹ But the OK was composed of three people from Russian organizations, (as opposed to exile,) whose alignment suggests that the OK was based on partisan considerations: the three groups being Iskra, Iuzhnyi Rabochii, and the Bund, i.e. the three strongest and most aspirant elements of Social Democracy in Russia. The three delegates elected to the OK were Dan, Kogan-Ermanskii, and Portnoi.² In the event of their arrest the tasks of the OK were to be fulfilled by any surviving participants of the Conference.

In fact, although the Conference had been exceptionally well "conspired," it resulted in a series of arrests. The police were evidently unaware of the Conference in Belostok, but Dan's movements had attracted the attention of the secret police and he was followed there. In spite of this

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1. Lenin to Krzhizhanovskii, 6 v 1902, LS VIII, p232, based on Dan's report to Lenin.
 2. Ermanskii, Iz perezhitogo, p59 erroneously suggests Rozental was Bundist OK-member. Editor of LS VIII, p240, n.6, was unable to establish whether OK-Bundist was Kremer or Portnoi. Nikolaevskii, Doklady, p72 states Portnoi was OK-Bundist. This is corroborated, beyond further doubt, by Rozental, in Roiter Pinkus, I, p68.

the Conference passed undisturbed, thanks to the help of the Belostok Committee of the Bund.¹ On the day after the Conference ended, however, Kogan Grinevich was arrested at Belostok railway station, and when the news reached Portnoi two days later he immediately removed important Bund documents, the May Day proclamation of the Belostok Conference, and himself from Belostok. That night, March 31, Rozental was arrested.² Dan was arrested in Moscow on April 4.³ Ermanskii was arrested in the south of Russia on April 6.⁴ Five delegates escaped arrest: Kremer, Portnoi, Krasnukha, Shipulinskii and Piskunov. Zeldov escaped abroad but was arrested upon his return to Russia in October 1902.⁵

Thus within one week of its formation the OK had been all but liquidated, and half the participants of the Conference were in prison.⁶

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1. Mikhalevich, Zikhroinus fun a yidishen sotsialist, I, pp135-6.
 2. Rozental/ op.cit. p68.
 3. LS VIII, p234, n.2.
 4. Ermanskii, op.cit. p59.
 5. According to Kurskii, op.cit. pl55, Ermanskii, op.cit. p59, and an obituary in Roiter Pinkus, II, pl82, Zeldov was arrested in April, soon after his "return to Petersburg." However, the most contemporary source, Iskra No.26, 15 x 1902, p25, reported that Zeldov had been arrested at the beginning of October. This date is also given by Rozental (with whom, according to Ermanskii he should have been in prison in April), op.cit. p68; Doires Bundistn, I, pl92; LS VIII, pp245-246, n.2,
 6. Ermanskii op.cit. p63 remarks that all those arrested were Jews and suggests that this indicated a police "pogrom" of the Jewish revolutionary movement. Seven of the ten delegates at Belostok were Jews.

Lenin builds the OK

The virtual extinction of the Organizational Committee set up by the Belostok Conference did not nullify the grounds on which a new one should be created: in the event of the arrest of members of the OK, its re-establishment had been left in the hands of the surviving participants of the Conference.¹ Of the six participants of the Conference at large immediately after the Conference three were Bundists, Kremer, Portnoi and Zeldov. Kremer' was a member of the ZK; Zeldov, a member both of the Bund TsK and of the Petersburg Committee of the RSDRP, maintained ties between the two groups; Portnoi had for two years run the Bund's entire Russian organization.² These men would be an asset in the task of recreating the OK and preparing for the Second Congress of the Party.

The Belostok Conference, conceived and organized by other minds, convinced Lenin, however, that any OK must be controlled by Iskra: a successful Congress of the Party, from his point of view, could come about only if it were composed of the right people, and therefore an appropriate OK was required.

After hearing the result of the Conference, during the second half of April,³ Lenin immediately set about perpetuat-

1. Editors LS VIII, p226.

2. /Rozenal/ in Roiter Pinkus I, p54; Mill, Pionern, II, p94.

3. Lenin first heard the news in a letter from Krzhizhanovskii dated 12 iv 1902, LS VIII, p234, n.1.

demonstrate the latter's legality. He constantly directed his agents in terms which were designed on the one hand to guarantee Iskra's control of the OK, and on the other hand to use the Bund's membership as an advertisement of the OK's legality. "Thus," Lenin wrote, "your task now is to make of yourselves a committee to prepare the Congress, take a Bundist into this committee (having weighed one up from all sides, NB this!) slip your people into as many committees as possible, guarding yourselves and yours like the apple of your eye until the Congress...Be wise as snakes, and gentle (with...the Bund and Petersburg) as doves."¹ Lenin gave similar instructions to his Petersburg agent: "We have just given the Bundist a pass to you...Together with him...you must form a Russian committee to prepare for Congress. Act imposingly and with care."² But the Bund's participation³ in the rebuilt OK was to be little more than nominal, for Lenin urged Radchenko "to take upon yourself as many regions as possible...behave as though the entire business is completely in your hands, for the time being leave the Bund to itself."⁴ The manner in which Radchenko was to "act imposingly" over the Bund was by pretending that a "Russian

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1. Lenin's postscript to Lengnik, 23 v 1902, LS VIII, p239.
 2. Lenin to Radchenko, 22 vi 1902, *ibid.* p244.
 3. Editors of LS VIII, p245, n.2 hazard the guess that the Bundist in question was Zeldov. The Editors of Soch. XXVIII, pl40, footnote, were however, able correctly to assert that it was Portnoi.
 4. Lenin to Radchenko, 22 vi 1902, LS VIII, p244.

ing the OK. First he wrote to Kremer, as "respected Comrade," and asked him who else had been elected to the OK besides the Iskra representative, and how could Iskra communicate with such other members, by what addresses, codes and passwords?¹

Presumably on the basis of information received back from Kremer, Lenin wrote to his agency in Samara that of the OK members only the "Bundist" was still at large and that Lenin would refer the latter to Samara so that together they could proceed with the work of preparing the Congress: "but you must be diplomatic with him and not show him all your cards."²

Lenin was anxious to preserve the legality of the Belostok OK while building it up anew with his own people. The original OK had had the recognition and support of all the important organizations in Russia, and in the present state of disunity, where every ally counted, goodwill was not a cheap commodity. Thus while Lenin urged upon his agents that the "chief task" now was to prepare for the Second Congress by making sure that "our best people penetrate as many committees as possible..."³ yet he was equally firm in insisting that the Bund's participation in the OK would

1. Lenin to Kremer, 4 v 1902, LS XIII, p136.

2. Krupskaja to Lengnik, 23 v 1902, LS VIII, p238.

3. Lenin to Krzhizhanovskii, 6 v 1902, ibid p232.

committee for preparing the Congress" had already been formed - (its composition as it was to be hinted to the Bund, was to be "favourable" to Iskra) - and by telling the Bund that he, Radchenko, would welcome the Bund's participation. The secretarial duties of this committee were to be taken over "without fail" by Radchenko.¹

Lenin was unsure of the Bund. The line the Bund had taken at Belostok, and the apparent shift towards Iskra after the Conference, noted by Krupskaja,² coupled with the Bund's undisputed right to participate in the OK, led Lenin to adopt a cautious attitude: "Be extremely careful and reserved with the Bund [~~ist~~]," he wrote to his Petersburg agent, "do not show your cards [~~but~~] leave him to handle the Bund's affairs and do not let him poke his nose into Russian affairs: remember, this is an unreliable friend, (if not an enemy).³ But because "the formal side [~~had~~] now gained the utmost importance,"⁴ Lenin was prepared to accommodate this unreliable friend in a Party institution which he was planning to make purely of Iskra men.

The talk of unification within the various factions, of which Krupskaja had spoken to Lengnik, "of course in no way [~~affected~~] the need for the tactics...of conquering the

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1. Lenin to Radchenko, 22 vi 1902, LS VIII, pp244-245.
 2. Krupskaja to Lengnik, 23 v 1902, *Ibid*, p238.
 3. Lenin to Radchenko, 16 vii 1902, *Ibid*, p258.
 4. Lenin to Krzhizhanovskii, 6 v 1902, *Ibid*. p232. My italics.

committees."¹ Lenin's immediate aims were to create an Iskra-controlled OK to prepare and convene the Second Congress, and to gain support for that OK of as many committees as possible. A Congress composed of committees which recognized an Iskra-sponsored OK would in theory be a congress of Iskra committees, and such a Congress now became the chief task of the Iskra organization. Keeping alive the OK formed at Belostok, by means of one of the original members, the Bundist, was Lenin's means of preserving the continuity and therefore legality of the OK. The ultimate preponderance of Iskraists in the OK, at a later time when the committees were more ready to recognize Iskra than had been evident in the spring of 1902, would not ostensibly break this continuity, and indeed as will be shown below, the OK which was eventually to emerge claimed its origin in the Belostok Conference, or rather Lenin did so on its behalf.

Thus from May to November, 1902, Lenin concentrated his efforts and those of his organization on the campaign to bring the committees over to Iskra's side. The conversion involved a committee's renunciation of Rabochee Delo, recognition of Iskra as the Party organ, and acceptance of the centralized plan of Party organization advocated by Iskra.

 1. Krupskaja to Lengnik, 23 v 1902, LS VIII, p238-239.

Lenin's task in the south of Russia was facilitated by the strong desire of local committees there, recently hard hit by arrests and deportations, for someone "to rule" them. The southern organization, centred around Iuzhnyi Rabochii, had been starved of literature and technical help since the arrests of February, and was ready to recognize the sovereignty of any organization which was equipped to make good their losses.¹ Although the "best worker elements" in the Social Democratic organizations in the south, and to a large extent the Social Democratic intelligentsia also, were Jews trained in the Bund and migrant from the northwest, these were by their nature unable to constitute the necessary support for the large-scale factory organizations that were beginning to stir.² As the Congress of Southern SD Committees, held in December 1901,³ had shown, the unity so ardently desired by the southern local committees could be engineered by Jewish SD's, some of them ex-Bundists: but in terms of numbers alone, in addition to their type of trade distribution, the Jewish artisans of the south could not constitute the core of the organized masses, as they could in the north-west. The Southern Committee which Lenin had thought was his chief obstacle in the south,⁴ was finally

1. R/ozan/ov, Iz partiinogo proshlogo, in Nasha Zaria No.6, 1913, pp32-34.

2. Ibid, p33.

3. See above: Belostok Conference.

4. Lenin to Krzhizhanovskii, 6 v 1902, LS VIII, p232.

liquidated by the arrest in April of Ermanskii. Iuzhnyi Rabochii continued to survive as an editorial board but by August Iskra was assured of its allegiance, although the southerners were not yet ready to give up their own newspaper: they would continue to publish it in political line with Iskra. In addition, five southern towns had agreed to support Iskra.¹

The conquest of Petersburg, the hub of the mass labour movement and therefore the traditional butt of "orthodoxy's" attacks on "economism" was a matter which Lenin regarded as vital.² Already in the latter half of June his agent, Radchenko, was able to inform him that the Petersburg Union of Struggle had recognized Iskra's organizational principles and had accepted Radchenko into a commission specially set up to reorganize the Committee, according to a plan which Radchenko requested from Lenin. In August, however, this decision was refuted by a leading member of the Committee who had been on holiday at the time of the agreement, and who demanded the expulsion of the Iskra representative from the Committee. In mid-September a meeting was called of the former members of the Committee to decide the issue and a split resulted.³ The existence in Petersburg of two SD

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1. Krupskaja to Radchenko, 16 viii 1902, LS VIII, p273. The decision to support Iskra had been taken at a conference in Poltava in July. The information was transmitted to Iskra by a confirmed Iskraist, E. Levin, *ibid.* pp274-275, n6.
 2. Martov and Lenin to Iskra Group in Petersburg, October 1901, LS VIII, p202.
 3. Lenin, Soch. XXVIII, ppl49-150, n.4.

organizations, one calling itself the "Committee of the Workers' Organization," the other, controlled by Iskra, called the Petersburg Committee of the RSDRP, continued up to the Second Congress of the Party.

Although the experience of Iskra in Petersburg was not typical, yet it was some months before Lenin's campaign bore fruit. This impression is also exaggerated by the delay declarations of conversion were subject to through technical publishing difficulties. For example, although it was August 11 when Lenin wrote, in answer, to the Moscow Committee, thanking them for their pledge of support and their undertaking to allot 20% of their funds to Iskra, yet the public announcement did not appear until October.¹ The first publicly recorded success, that in Tver, did not appear until Iskra No.24 on September 1. However, from that time Lenin was increasingly successful, the flow increased, reports of pledges of support appeared in almost every alternate issue of Iskra, and by the end of 1902 Lenin could reckon with the support of more than fifteen committees.²

In mid-August, in order to speed up his campaign of conquering the committees, Lenin reversed his tactics, in a sense: instead of waiting for the number of Iskraist committees to grow to sufficient proportions to allow the

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1. Lenin to Moscow Committee, 11 viii 1902, Soch. VI (4th ed.) pl85; Iskra No.26, 15 x 1902, p22.
 2. Volkovicher, Staraiia Iskra, in Prol.Rev. No.48, p66.

emergence of an Iskra-controlled OK, Lenin created a secret OK-nucleus which would form the embryo of the formal OK of the Party Congress and at the same time be an organizational centre from which the campaign of conquering the committees would be conducted. The creation of this OK-nucleus took place at a meeting in London on August 15, 1902, and the nucleus was composed of the Iskraist from Petersburg, Krasnukha, the representative of the Russian organization of Iskra, Krasikov, and the Northern Union representative, Noskov.¹ Nobody was to be told about this unofficial OK, except Iskraists, it was to be composed strictly of "our" people, and it would take upon itself the duties and role of a central committee "and try to prepare actual unification."² But its chief task was to send "our own people into the committees and conquer them." When sufficient committees had recognized Iskra, particularly Iuzhnyi Rabochii, the latter would be accepted into the "OK" which would then proclaim its existence, "and invite the Bundist [to join]."³

The Pskov Conference

The work of Lenin's "unofficial" OK nucleus formed in

1. Krupskaja to Radchenko, 16 viii 1902, LS VIII, p272.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Ibid. p273.

August resulted in the Pskov Conference on November 2-3, at which the official OK was formed.¹ The Conference, which was attended exclusively by Iskraists,² restricted its work to constituting the OK, coopting new members, all Iskraists, and delegating the technical work of arranging the congress.³ Fundamental questions such as the criteria for the right to take part in the Congress were barely mentioned, for "nothing can be decided until [the Bund's] attitude to [the OK] is made clear."⁴ "For reasons as yet unknown" the Bund had failed to send its delegate to the Conference. The Conference had resolved to go ahead without the Bund and then later to inform it of the situation and invite it to send its delegate. As soon as the Bund replied the OK would release the official announcement of its establishment.⁵

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1. Lenin to Krasikov, 11 xi 1902, LS VIII, p294. Lenin first learned of Pskov results from Krasikov; Lepeshinskii, who had a letter on him to Iskra containing a report, was arrested soon after the conference, Lepeshinskii, Na povorote, p128. The unofficial "OK" comprised Krasnukha, Levin, Radchenko, Krasikov, Lengnik, Stopani - Levin to Iskra, 23 xi 1902, LS VIII, p296.
 2. Nikolaevskii, Doklady, p75; Akimov, K voprosu o rabotakh II s"ezda RSDRP, p3.
 3. Levin to Iskra, 23 xi 1902, LS VIII, p296. OK bureau was delegated to Petersburg, transport of literature and people to Radchenko in Petersburg, release of general OK handbills to Levin in Iuzhnyi Rabochii.
 4. Loc.cit.
 5. Loc.cit. With the polemics which were soon to start over this point in mind, it is significant that Levin wrote: "For reasons as yet unknown Boris, i.e. the Bund [did not send its/ representative." In the MS the phrase in square brackets is replaced by several dots and the Editors of LS assume that "did not send" are the missing words, loc. cit. Perhaps Levin knew that Lenin would not be surprised at this news and saw little cause to complete his sentence.

Lepeshinskii, a delegate at Pskov, claims in his memoirs that it was thanks to the Bund's absence that the conference was completed in one day. In addition he cites the report which he wrote to Lenin but which was confiscated when he was arrested after the conference. In it he wrote: "For some reason the Bund did not turn up. Therefore it was easier to take certain decisions and coopt our people." One of the chief decisions was to compose an announcement of the formation of the OK. "The Bund will be asked to sign it and then it will be published. Talks with the Bund, as suggested, will have a meticulously polite character, if only to...deny the gentlemen of the opposition the chance to obstruct... The OK...will openly acknowledge its relationship with [Iskra] ...and if the Bund protests [the OK] will not be ceremonious with it."¹

According to the Announcement of the formation of the OK published in January, 1903,² the Bund had been invited to the Pskov Conference but had not appeared. The footnote which contained this information ended with the comment, "We hope the reasons [for this] were purely accidental and that Bund will not hesitate to send its representative."

Talks with the Bund TsK over its participation in the

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1. Lepeshinskii, op.cit. ppl28-129. Lepeshinskii claims his letter as the sole extant document from the Pskov conference.
 2. Iskra, No.32, 15 i 1903, ppl-2.

forthcoming Pskov Conference had taken place during the latter half of October 1902, between Krasikov and Portnoi.¹ For security reasons it had been decided that under no circumstances should any further arrangements be made by letter.² Krasikov later claimed that the Bund TsK had been informed of the time and place of the Pskov meeting both by letter and by personal message.³ Levin, a leading member of Iuzhnyi Rabochii and participant of the Pskov meeting, confirmed in a letter to Lenin that the invitation to the Bund had been given verbally through the Vilna Committee of the Bund, but admitted that this was "the strangest way" to invite the TsK of the Bund.⁴ The Bund's absence from Pskov was explained ten years later by Rozanov, a leading member of Iuzhnyi Rabochii and subsequent member of the OK, by the fact that the invitation was received by the TsKB only after the Pskov Conference had taken place, and Rozanov further adds that Iuzhnyi Rabochii received their invitation too late to give their delegate instructions, thus implying that the Bund's misfortune had come about purely accidentally.⁵ The Bund TsK, however, in a declaration it released in reply to the OK's Announcement, claimed

1. Lenin, Soch. XXVIII, p152, nn. 2 and 3; Protokoly II S"ezda, p492, n.11.

2. Otvet Iskru. TsKB pamphlet. March 1903.

3. Letter to the Editor, Iskra No.33, 1 ii 1903, p22.

4. 6 ii 1903, Pról.Rev. No.79, p56.

5. R/ozan/ov, Iz partiinogo proshlogo, Nasha Zaria No.6, 1913, p36.

that it heard about the Pskov meeting nearly a month after it had taken place.¹

That the Bund was not invited to the meeting is confirmed by none other than Lenin, who wrote to Krasikov:

"I am very, very glad to hear that you have expedited the OK business and have composed it of six. I am surprised only that you have coopted other members before formally constituting the OK, before summoning the Bund? Surely it was decided to do it the other way round?"

But Lenin was prepared to countenance this deviation from his original plans so long as Krasikov was sure "that no inconveniences could arise."²

A further oversight, or a breakdown in communications (See next chapter) prevented the Bund from seeing the OK's official Announcement before it was published. The Announcement indicated the organizations which had subscribed to the OK (Petersburg Union of Struggle, Iskra and Iuzhnyi Rabochii) and pointed out that its obligations were naturally only to these organizations and to those organizations which had or would have empowered it to act for them.³ To all other committees and groups it was a private organization that offered them its services. Having thus established the legality of the OK, the Announcement went

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1. Zaiavlenie po povodu "Izveshchenia...OK"...January 1903, in Poslednia Izvestiia No. 106, 21 i 1903, pl.
 2. 11 xi 1903, LS VIII, p294.
 3. The Bund was officially included in absentia, Iskra, No.32, 15 i 1903, pl.

on to say that, in the absence of a central Party organization, it had taken upon itself certain tasks essential to the convening of the Party congress, in other words it was a temporary TsK.

In welcoming the OK's Announcement Lenin stressed this point and exhorted "all Russian Social Democrats, without exception, committees and circles, organizations and groups.. to hasten their reply to this call and to strive to establish direct...relations with the OK...We must make sure that not one group of Russian Social Democrats is unconnected with the OK..."¹ Lenin justified the OK's taking up certain general functions (publication of handbills, transport, inter-committee relations) as an extension of its offer of services.

In his letters to his agents, before the Announcement appeared, he had been more explicit. The OK was to hand over the technical arrangements of the Congress to "nobody" but its own "agents;" an official and "written" reply as to whether or not they recognized the OK must be obtained from "each" committee.²

Recognition of the OK became Lenin's new battle-cry. His agent in Kiev was ordered to conduct his struggle with

1. Loc.cit.

2. Lenin to Krasikov, 11 xi 1902, LS VIII, p294, and to Levin not before 11 xii 1902, *ibid.* p299. Lenin's italics.

the rabochedeltsy, who had recently staged a coup against Iskra, on this issue.¹ He was told, in fact, that this issue was to be applied "always" and "everywhere" to the general campaign. To the Iskra bureau in Samara Lenin wrote: "The chief task now is to strengthen the OK, to give battle to all the dissidents on the grounds of recognizing this OK and then to prepare the congress as quickly as possible."²

While the OK had been advertised as a separate body, empowered by certain committees and organizations to arrange the Congress, and while recognition of it by a committee did not invariably entail simultaneous recognition of Iskra as the Party organ, yet the only Party organ which handled OK announcements, proclamations, information, was Iskra. Apart from the OK's own publication of the first Announcement, only Iskra published it.³

To summarize Lenin's tactics on the OK: already by November a large number of committees had recognized Iskra, but the position was not secure enough to guarantee the correct composition of the Party Congress; minds were changed too readily, coups were staged, there was indecision.

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1. Lengnik to Iskra, 4 xii 1902, LS VIII, p301; Lenin to Lengnik, 27 xii 1902, *ibid.* p303.
 2. Krupskaja to Samara, 28 xii 1902, *ibid.* p308. (Lenin's postscript).
 3. Lenin to Levin, not before 11 xii 1902. *Ibid* p299. "I advise you to publish the Announcement in Russia, i.e. not only in Iskra."

If recognition of Iskra was not a binding enough commitment, then dependence upon an Iskra-controlled OK for a committee's participation in the Congress surely was. In the event Lenin gained all round: in the majority of cases it transpired that the OK's services were accepted together with Iskra's sovereignty.

Chapter: V

The Polemics and the OK

The Bund's Declaration

The first indication of the Bund's position regarding the new OK appeared in the official Announcement of the OK, published in Iskra in January. It was a footnote which read as follows:

"The Bund was also asked to send its representative to the /OK/, but for reasons unknown to us the Bund did not respond to this invitation. We hope the reasons were purely accidental and that the Bund will hasten to send its representative."¹

The Bund Central Committee reacted to the Announcement with a Declaration² to the effect that the OK's footnote on the Bund was ambiguous, that although the reasons for the Bund's absence from Pskov were "accidental", had the initiators of the Conference taken a little more trouble, the Bund would certainly have participated. It was not, however, only its absence from the Conference that the Bund was concerned with now. It complained that it was nearly a month after the Pskov Conference that a representative from

1. Iskra, No.32, 15 i 1903. The Announcement must have also been printed in Russia early in December: it was not yet published when Krasikov and Portnoi had talks at the end of November, but Levin sent it to the Bund on 18 xii 1902, See below.
2. Zaiavlenie po povodu "Izveshchenie ob obrazovanii Org. Komiteta", TsKB, January 1903, published in Posled.Izv. No.106, 21 i 1903. The editorial comment and presentation support the probability that the Declaration was published earlier in Russia. Levin wrote to Lenin on 21 i 1903 mentioning talks he had had with Portnoi about the Declaration, Prol.Rev. No.79, p54.

the OK had come to tell them, for the first time, of the meeting and the formation of the OK and of the proposed release of the official Announcement. It had then been agreed that the Bund's absence from Pskov could be compensated for if the Bund edited the Announcement or at least saw it before publication. Alas, only some weeks after publication had the Announcement accidentally fallen into the Bund's hands. Thus deprived of the opportunity to express its views on the forthcoming Party Congress through the official Announcement, the Bund TsK was compelled to do so in an independent Declaration.¹

The talks to which the Bund TsK's Declaration referred were evidently those which took place at the end of November between Portnoi and Krasikov.² The Bund's account of these talks is corroborated by a letter from Levin to Lenin in which he complained of Krasikov's tactlessness for having promised Portnoi to send the draft Announcement to the Bund for editing although Krasikov "certainly knew that it had been decided to publish [it] immediately, without waiting for [the Bund] ..." ³ Krasikov later claimed that he

1. Posled. Izv. No.106, p1.

2. Letter from TsKB (Portnoi) to Iskra, MS Bund Archives. The letter is mentioned in letter from Lenin to ZKB, 18.iii.03, LS XIII, p151, and Krupskaja to Iuzh. Rab. 31.iii.03, LS VIII, p336. The Editors of Leninskii Sbornik VIII did not have the Iskra copy of the letter, p338, n2.

3. Levin to Iskra, 21 i 1903, Prolet.Rev. No.79, p54.

had undertaken only to delay publication if possible.¹

The original intention of the OK had been to publish the Announcement simultaneously in Iskra and illegally in Russia through Lepeshinskii and Radchenko, both members of the OK. The latter were both arrested on November 4, soon after the Pskov Conference, the account of the meeting, which was to form the basis of the Announcement, being taken together with Lepeshinskii.² Krasikov sent Lenin his own report, to which Lenin was able to reply as early as November 11.³ After his talks with Portnoi, nearly a month after the Pskov Conference, Krasikov wrote to Levin of his promise to the Bund, whereupon Levin sent the Announcement to the Bund on December 18, and a following letter on December 31, neither of which was received.⁴

Krasikov's tactlessness towards the Bund, of which Levin complained to Lenin, either consisted in his concealing from Portnoi that the Announcement was already in Lenin's hands - or at least the basis for it - and that the Bund would be unable to place its imprint on it; or in his hinting that this was the case, and thus forcing upon the

1. Letter to Editor, Iskra No.33, 1.ii.03, p22.

2. Kirzhnits, Bund un RSDAP, in Visnshaftlikhe Iorbikher, p63; Lepeshinskii, Na povorote, p128.

3. LS VIII, p294.

4. Levin to Iskra, 21 i 1903, Prol.Rev. loc.cit.

Bund the choice of either accepting the formation of the OK and its own exclusion from editing the Announcement as faits accomplis, (and thus relegating itself to second place as a Party unifier) - or of re-establishing itself in the front rank of the Party by coming out with its own declaration of the need to rebuild the Party. The Bund chose the second course.

In its Declaration the Bund agreed with the OK Announcement that Russian Social Democracy was confronted with the same disorganization today as it had been in 1898. But from this the Bund inferred the OK's agreement that there was no Party as such, and therefore the forthcoming Congress must be constituent:

"...besides the various Russian Social Democratic committees and the Bund, the [SD] organizations of the Poles, Lithuanians, Letts, etc., must also be represented at the Congress....only by observing this condition is it possible to create "one centralized, disciplined army" - the RSDRP."¹

The Declaration ended with the assurance that as soon as the OK took the necessary steps the Bund would not hesitate to send its delegate.

The significance of the Declaration is twofold:

1) it underlined the Bund's differences with Iskra, and the OK by implication, regarding the character of the Second Congress; 2) it made known that the Bund was ready to co-

 1. Posled. Izv. No.106, p2, inner quotation is from Iskra No.32, p2.

operate in the OK, that whatever its complaints it was not obstructing the cause of Party unity. As a corollary of the last, the Bund was also asserting its right to participate in the OK as a matter of course.

While the Bund TsK's Declaration laid the blame for its absence from Pskov squarely but politely on the shoulders of the OK, the editorial comments with which the Bund ZK introduced the Declaration were more directly abusive and provocative. In the Declaration, the OK "did not fulfil the promise of its delegate..;" in the ZK's comments the OK "broke its promise..." In the Declaration: "The reasons for our absence,.. were indeed accidental, but we are sure that, had the initiators of the meeting taken a little more trouble, these 'accidental reasons' would not have prevented us...;" in the ZK's comments: "...knowing the reasons which prevented the Bund from 'responding to the invitation...from the OK,' they Iskra add... a footnote which mentions 'reasons unknown to us.'" The ZK ascribed the actions of the OK to the desire to give the impression that the Bund was indifferent to "such questions of the utmost importance as the 'actual resurrection' of the Party." The ZK condemned this view and concluded its comments: "Nonetheless, in spite of the extremely strange behaviour of the 'initiators of unification,' the Bund is ready to help them in the task they have

undertaken..."¹

Though less provocative than the editorial comments of Posledniia Izvestiia, the Bund TsK's Declaration was nonetheless undiplomatic: on the one hand it condemned as incorrect the behaviour of the OK both over the invitation of the Bund to Pskov and the publication of the Announcement, but on the other hand it undersigned the legality of the OK by agreeing to join it as one of the participants of the Belostok Conference. Such public reserve, when what was required was unlimited enthusiasm for the new OK, was intolerable to Lenin and he made it the subject of a violent attack in Iskra No.33.²

Lenin's reply to the Bund's Declaration

In the meantime, the measures which the Bund considered the OK should take in order to secure its participation were initiated, abortively at first,³ but eventually with success⁴ and the Bund took part in the second meeting of the OK at Orel on February 1-3, 1903.⁵

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1. Posled. Izv., No.106, pl.
 2. Po povodu zaiaveniia Bunda, (in Iskra No.33, 1.ii.03 pl2). Soch. V, pp236-240.
 3. Levin to Iskra, 21.i.03, Prolet. Rev. No.79, pp54-55. OK's Announcement was sent to Bund 18.xii.02. Confirming letter sent 31.xii.02. Neither received. This announcement must not be confused with draft which Krasikov had promised to send, knowing that OK had no intention of waiting for Bund's ratification, loc.cit.
 4. Levin asked Lenin for Krasikov to call on Bund en route back to Russia, 6.i.03, ibid. p53. On 21.i.03 he wrote to Lenin: "In a few days there will be an OK meeting, the Bund will also attend." Ibid. p55.
 5. Levin to Iskra, 6.ii.03, ibid. p56.

Up to this time the polemics which had arisen over the Bund and the OK amounted to the OK's "ambiguous footnote" and the Bund's Declaration. At Orel, the blame for the misunderstandings was divided between Krasikov and the initiators of the OK, Portnoi retracted the insinuation that the OK had intended to ignore the Bund, and the OK made no demand for a public retraction from the Bund.¹

The reconciliation achieved at Orel² was soon shattered by the arrival in Russia of Iskra No.33 with Lenin's attack on the Bund's Declaration. Boris Goldman (Gorev) who had undertaken the task of mediating between Iskra and the Bund³ had been sent by Iskra to the Orel meeting⁴ but had arrived too late to take part.⁵ Within two days after the meeting he had met Levin, who had been present at the Orel meeting.⁶ Gorev knew about Lenin's attack on the Bund and when he heard that peace had been made with the Bund he wrote to Lenin with the request not to publish, as he feared a new polemic would start.⁷ Levin, no doubt informed by Gorev

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1. Loc.cit; Krzhizhanovskii to Iskra, ll.iii.03, Prol. Rev. No.77-78, p173.
 2. In spite of a temporary alliance between the Bund and Iuzhnyi Rabochii against an "undemocratic" proposal by Iskra, the meeting was friendly and no friction was caused, Rozanov, Nasha Zaria, No.6, 1913, pp38-9.
 3. See Appendix: The Gorev Compromise Plan.
 4. Shortly after 27 i 1903, LS VIII, p323.
 5. Ibid. p338, n2. Archives cited.
 6. Letter from Levin to Iskra, 6 ii 1903, Prol.Rev. No.79, p56.
 7. LS VIII, p338, n2; Kirzhnits, Bund un RSDAP, in Visnshaftlikhe Iorbikher, I, p64.

of the imminent danger of a new flare-up, also wrote to Lenin that peace with the Bund had been won, and he asked Lenin to stop the polemic and announce that the Bund had sent its delegate to the OK.¹ Levin's letter was received in time to place the news of the Bund's participation only in Iskra No.34.² Gorev's letter arrived far too late to prevent Lenin's attack being printed in Iskra No.33. Both Levin's and Gorev's efforts were futile, since Iskra No.33 was published on 1st February, before the Orel meeting had begun.³

Lenin began his attack by reducing the Bund's Declaration to a squabble with a footnote:

"What else could the OK do? To have been silent about the Bund would have been false for the OK had not ignored the Bund, nor indeed could it, so long as the Bund is part of the RSDRP on the basis of the decision of the Party Congress of 1898... thus we had to say that we had invited the Bund."

And further:

"And it is even clearer that if the reasons for the Bund's silence were unknown to the OK then it OK had...to say 'for unknown reasons...' By adding: we hope the reasons were purely accidental and that the Bund will hasten its delegate, the OK announced openly and directly its desire to work together with the Bund..."⁴

Lenin omitted to show, as the Bund ZK had done, that there

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1. Letter of 6 ii 03, Prol.Rev. loc.cit.
 2. Iskra No.34, 15 ii 1903, p18.
 3. Care has been taken to ensure that dates are consistently Old Style.
 4. Po povodu zaiavlenia Bunda, (in Iskra No.33, 1.ii.03, p12), Soch. V, p236.

had been talks between the Bund and the OK delegate, Krasikov, between the time of the Pskov Conference and the publication of the Announcement. Lenin emphasized the OK's legality, this time basing it on the sacrosanct Manifesto of 1898. Thus the burden of Lenin's first attack was to show that the Bund had accused the OK falsely, that the OK was legal, and that therefore the Bund was obstructing the course of the Party's unification.

The second prong of Lenin's attack was aimed at proving that the Bund had sought an opportunity to come out with its Declaration separately from the rest of the Party:

"And you wanted to come out separately in order simultaneously to demonstrate and carry through your decision to place [your] relations with [your] Russian comrades on a new basis: not to be in the RSDRP on the basis of 1898 statute, but to be in federated union with it."¹

And pressing home his identification of the OK (and the private groups which formed it) with the Party, Lenin went on:

"Instead of discussing this question of federation and nationality, - as all or the great majority of Russian comrades wanted, instead...you broke off joint discussion... You acted not as a comrade of Petersburg, [Iuzhnyi Rabochii], Iskra, - you acted directly as a side, ... presenting to the whole Party your conditions."²

 1. Po povodu., Soch. V, p237. Lenin's Italics.
 2. loc.cit.

Thus from an enemy of Iskra the Bund had become the enemy of the Party.

Accusing the Bund of gross tactlessness, Lenin assured them that there had been no need to make their separate Declaration, for the whole point of the Congress was to discuss all opinions within the Party, and in any event the OK which had invited the Bund to join it had made no statement regarding the Party's structure.

Lenin went on to assert that Iskra had in the past successfully fought against economism and terrorism in the Bund and now that the Bund, in his view, had raised the issue of federation on the basis of the national question Iskra would also fight that, and he was sure that nationalistic deviations would disappear. The Bund must rest content with the autonomy of the 1898 decision.¹

At the close of his attack Lenin delivered the coup de grace by charging the Bundists at the First Congress of the RSDRP, five years earlier, with economist, terrorist, and nationalistic deviations. As for the Bund's demand for a constituent Party Congress of all organized nationalities in Russia, Lenin argued that this question could be raised only after the unification of the Party at the Second

1. Po povodu, Soch. V p238.

Congress. This unification depended on the success of the OK: "And now it is a historical fact that the Bund, from the very beginning, has tried to throw a spanner in the works of the OK."¹

The Bund ZK replies to Lenin

The Bund TsK, although it was furious with Lenin's attack,² was inclined to restraint, no doubt prepared to take into account the fact that Lenin had written and printed his article before Orel. Portnoi, aware that the intellectual Bundist leadership in London would tend to over-react and thereby waste the efforts of Orel, cabled the Bund ZK not to reply to Iskra No.33.³ Like the letters of its Iskra-colleagues, in the OK, the TsK's cable arrived too late.⁴ On February 13, the Bund ZK published an abusive reply in Posledniia Izvestiia to Lenin's article,⁵ in which, with the generous use of thinly veiled innuendo, it outlined the whole of Iskra's tactics over the OK, at the same time assuring its readers that documents could be produced to prove its assertions.

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1. Po povodu, Soch. V, pp238-239, 240.
 2. Gorev to Iskra, 23 ii 1903, Prol. Rev. No.77-78, p130.
 3. Loc.cit.
 4. Levin to Iskra, 7 iii 1903, Prol. Rev. No.79, p60.
 5. Iskra o Bunde, Posled. Izv. No.109, 13 ii 1903 whole issue, 4pp.

The Bund ZK accused Iskra of trying to gain not only theoretical but also organizational hegemony, and of fighting the Bund because its independent existence hampered Iskra's plans; Iskra had thrown savage and false accusations at the Bund in order to incite the uninformed "crowd" against it; Iskra's public and underground propaganda had led its revolutionary followers to pronounce that the task of the Second Party Congress was to annihilate the Bund.

The ZK defended the Bund against Lenin's charge of economism by showing that both in Chto Delat? and in Po povodu Lenin had misquoted the facts to the Bund's disadvantage. By citing the resolution on the economic struggle adopted by the Bund's Fourth Congress and a statement in Iskra No.32 on the same question, the ZK proved that only Lenin's distortion made any discrepancy in the two cases.¹

Lenin's boast that Iskra had helped to conquer terroristic deviations in the Bund provoked the ZK's most contemptuous outburst. Having enumerated the, needless to say, great efforts the Bund itself had made in this issue, and the little Iskra had done, the article went on:

"That, gentlemen, is all you did, for anyway nobody in the Bund needed your judgments on terror...And if, all the same, you have the nerve to say that you

1. Posled.Izv. No.109, pp2-3.

fought and conquered the Bund's terrorism, then it can only be explained by the fact that at all costs you want to drum into your readers' heads that you are the 'navel of the earth,' that all things proceed from you and return to you."¹

The article sarcastically continued:

"So you conquered economism and terrorism in the Bund, but nationalistic deviations are still thriving.. this could shake our faith in your omnipotence, if you had not added in your article that you had long held off continuing the polemic you had started on this...and we can be sure that when you break your vow of silence and throw yourself into battle with these deviations they will melt like ice under the life-giving rays of the sun."²

The reason Lenin had given for holding off the polemic on nationalism was so that it could be discussed with the issue of federation before the whole Congress.³ "Only people who have no experience of congresses can think like that," the article taunted, "we...who know what a congress is can tell you that...discussion is impossible without preliminary discussion in the press..."

Iskra had greeted with enthusiasm the formation of the Armenian Union of Social Democrats,⁴ and had especially praised its national policy, which demanded not political but cultural autonomy for the Caucasian peoples. Why, then, the ZK asked, had Iskra not accepted the Bund's demand for cultural autonomy two years earlier? Perhaps Iskra had

1. Posled. Izv. No.109, pp2-3.
2. Ibid. pp3-4.
3. Po povodu, Soch. V, p237.
4. Iskra No.33, p22.

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only invented a bogey of nationalism from which to attack the Bund?¹

Lenin's new attack

On 13th February, the day that the ZK published its answer to Iskra No.33, Lenin received the news from the OK that the conflict with the Bund over the question of the invitation to participate had been settled, and Levin, the writer of the letter, asked Lenin to publish that the Bund was now in the OK and to stop the polemics.²

Together with the announcement that the Bund was in the OK Lenin also published in Iskra No.34 an article in which he asked whether any separate organization was necessary for the Jewish proletariat.³ The article was an answer to an attack by the Bund ZK on the Ekaterinoslav Committee of the Party, in which the Bund had claimed that the Ekaterinoslav Committee had intentionally concealed the existence of the Bund in an address to the Jewish workers in Ekaterinoslav.⁴ Although only two days elapsed between Lenin's learning that the Bund was in the OK and the publication of this article, yet his article was a new line

1. Posled.Izv. No.109, p4.

2. Levin to Lenin, 6 ii 1903, Prolet.Rev. No.79, p56. The letter was received on 13 ii 1903. By polemics Levin clearly had in mind Lenin's article in Iskra No.33 about which he had probably heard from Gorev.

3. Nuzhna li samostoiatelnaia politicheskaiia partiia evreiskomu proletariatu ? Iskra No.34, 15 ii 1903, pp4-6.

4. Po povodu odnoi proklamatsii, Posled.Izv. No.105, 15 i 1903.

of attack. Lenin made no mention at all of the OK conflict. For reasons of printing and editing it must be assumed that the article was written in late January or early February, before Lenin knew the results of the Orel meeting. It is unlikely that he was able or willing to alter the article in the two days concerned.

The most likely explanation of this change in line is that Lenin anticipated the Bund's inclusion at Orel and had accordingly prepared his new attack. While the OK controversy was alive Lenin had not found it necessary to attack Posledniia Izvestiia No. 105. Therefore, Lenin's policy was probably to ensure that the Bund was committed to the new OK and then to force it, by an open polemic on "ideological" grounds, to renounce its federalist ambitions. This policy is well documented by Lenin's own directives to his agents.

In his article Nuzhna li..? Lenin objected to the Bund's description of itself as an independent political party of the Jewish proletariat.¹ He said that until now he had always assumed that the Bund was a part of the RSDRP, that, indeed, the Bund had said so itself when Iskra had attacked the Fourth Congress decisions on federation. The Bund's attack on Ekaterinoslav, Lenin explained, was an expression of their new attitude: so long as the Bund

 1. Posled.Izv. No.105, pl.

believed itself to be the independent organization of the entire Jewish proletariat in Russia, and not simply an autonomous part of the RSDRP, it would demand that all addresses made by other parts of the Party to the Jewish proletariat be referred to the Bund first, and certainly no address could be permitted which did not represent the Bund as the independent organization of the Jewish workers. At the root of their attitude Lenin saw the national * question, in which he believed the Bund had made a fatal error:

"As soon as...you demanded 'federation' you had to declare the Bund an 'independent political party' in order to carry through federation at all costs. But [this declaration] is precisely the reductio ad absurdum of the basic mistake in the national question... The autonomy of the 1898 Manifesto guarantees the Jewish proletariat all it needs: propaganda and agitation in Yiddish, literature and congresses, putting special claims into...the SD programme, and meeting local needs and demands arising out of the peculiarities of Jewish life. In everything else the full and closest ties with the Russian proletariat is essential...in the interests of the struggle of the entire proletariat in Russia."¹

The burden of the Bund's article on the Ekaterinoslav proclamation had been to show that the best way to combat antisemitism among the workers in towns where Bundist groups did not exist was to advertise the Bund to these workers, and to explain to them the aims of the Jewish Proletariat.² The Ekaterinoslav address had denied the

1. Iskra No.34, p6.

2. Posled Izv. No.105, p2.

existence of antisemitism among the workers, and had ascribed it purely to the bourgeoisie.¹ The Bund's reply had been to give two examples from the very recent past, and of interest to Ekaterinoslav, which proved the contrary.

Ridiculing the pettiness of the two examples, Lenin shifted the question of antisemitism on to the international plane and asserted that antisemitism was evident among unorganized workers in their tens of thousands,² but he emphasized the "indubitable link between antisemitism and the interests of...the bourgeoisie, not of the working classes."³ (To support his assertion he sarcastically referred his Bundist readers to Kautskii's Social Revolution, which had "recently been published in Yiddish"!) Lenin accused the Bund of obfuscating the whole issue of antisemitism, which the Ekaterinoslav committee had put so clearly, and of thereby dimming the class consciousness of the Jewish workers. This brought him to a summing up of the Bund's position on federation:

"Do not dare to organize 'Jewish' workers anywhere... together with 'Christian' workers! Do not dare to address Jewish workers in the name of the RSDRP .. directly .. except through the Bund..!"⁴ *

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1. Posled Izv. pl; Iskra No.34, Nuzhna li..? p5.
 2. Iskra No.34, loc.cit.
 3. Loc.cit.
 4. Loc.cit.

Lenin declared that the Bund need not fear domination by the rest of the Party under conditions of autonomy, for autonomy guaranteed the Jewish proletariat freedom from precisely such domination "in questions peculiar to the Jewish movement..." But Lenin went on,

"in... the struggle with the autocracy, with the bourgeoisie of entire Russia, we must act as a united, centralized fighting organization, we must base ourselves on the entire proletariat, irrespective of language and nationality...and not create organizations to act independently...and not weaken the force of our blows by splitting into numerous political parties, and not introduce alienation and exclusiveness in order later to cure this artificially induced disease with the plasters of notorious 'federation.'"1

The Bund ZK answers Lenin's new attack

The Bund ZK replied to Lenin's article in an indignant and abusive tone.² It scorned Lenin's reference to the 1898 Manifesto, for "in the absence of a unifying centre, the Party does not and never did exist as a whole" and the Bund's autonomy remained on paper only. It countered Lenin's objection to the phrase "independent political party" with:

"Since its inception the Bund has worked and developed as a completely independent organization. Without asking anybody (there was no one to ask) .. it has perfected, changed, multiplied its organs, widened its field of activity, decided all questions of theory and practice .. even worked .. out a national programme ... and now Iskra rubs its eyes and cries 'What's this! What disorder!'"3

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1. Iskra No.34, p6.
 2. Serditoe bessilie, Posled.Izv. No.112, 1 iii 1903, ppl-3.
 3. Loc.cit.

The ZK found it ironical that Lenin should accuse the Bund of negligence in respect of the Party statutes, while he devoted his efforts to building an entirely new, "all-Russian" Party under the original Party name.

Lenin had referred¹ to a separate organization of the Jewish proletariat's strength as "an organization of the Jewish proletariat's weakness." "These words," demanded the ZK, "should be burned into Iskra's imperialistic brow as proof of its utter contempt for the Jewish proletariat."²

In a footnote to his article Lenin had deprecated the Bund's use of the terms "Christian proletariat," "Christian proletarian organizations" and he had claimed that the use of such expressions was designed to further the cause of a separate Jewish organization. With characteristic argument Lenin had asserted that "the organizations of the RSDRP [had] never distinguished among their members according to religion, [had] never asked them about their religion and never would, - even when the Bund has in fact formed itself into an independent political party."³

There had been ample opportunity in the past for the same charge to be made, and the ZK cited the example of Posledniia Izvestiia No.88, in which the Bund's Fifth

1. Iskra No.34, p5.
2. Posled.Izv. No.112, p2.
3. Iskra No.34, p5.

Conference resolution on organized revenge had been permeated with identical expressions. On that occasion "Iskra did not notice the Bund's 'clericalist' tendencies..." On these previous occasions the words "Christian proletariat" etc. had been used as a quick and easy substitute for "Russian, Polish, Lithuanian etc."

"Now, however, there is a need to give vent to impotent anger and add up the 'interfactual' accounts."¹

The ZK alleged that Lenin "gave the order to Iskra correspondents to begin to thunder against the Bund,"² before the end of March,³ between Nos. 33 and 34 of Iskra. Indeed Iskra No. 33 had carried an "advertisement" for the organized shop-assistants of Odessa: in No. 34 these same shop-assistants became the vehicle for an attack on the Bund's "unofficial operations in Odessa...where it has been preparing to sing its nationalistic tunes," and they were dubbed "yesterday's zionists."⁴

If Lenin tried to impute religious, and by implication national, discrimination to the Bund, it is also true that ZKB ascribed an attitude to Iskra which could be interpreted as antisemitic: "Iskra got furious and said Social

1. Posled. Izv. No. 112, p3.

2. Loc. cit.

3. LS VIII, p337, Lenin to Iuzh. Rab. 31.11.03, where Lenin gave the order "to prepare...everyone...for the fight with the Bund at the Congress."

4. Iskra No. 34, p17.

Democrats know of no Christian proletarians in the Party...
The Bund was accused of hysterically warning the 'children
of God' against the 'gois'..."¹

Martov answers the Bund ZK

Iskra's answer to both ZK articles - Posledniia Izvestiia
No.109 of 13th February and No.112 of 1st March - was a
long article by Martov in Iskra No.36 of 15th March.²

In his opening sentence Martov complained that whereas
Iskra had hoped that the "inevitable" polemic between the
Bund and Iskra would continue after the Bund's entry into
the new OK on ideological grounds, in fact the "vulgarity"
of the Bund's articles had disappointed Iskra.³ Martov
proceeded to analyse the ZK's arguments point by point.
On the Bund's "economism" and Iskra's alleged silence on
this for two years⁴ Martov referred the ZK to an article on
the Jewish labour movement which had appeared in Zaria in
1902,⁵ in which "we prove that all Russian economism is of
Bund origin."⁶

This assertion was based on a fiction. The article in
Zaria had found the practice of the early Jewish SD's, as

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1. Posled.Izv. No.112, p3. Goi is Yiddish (and Hebrew) for
"Gentile." Like "Yid" (from German Jude) it is a
legitimate word, but similarly it can be pejorative.
 2. Edinaia rossiiskaia sotsial-demokratiia i evreiskii
proletariat, Iskra No.36, 15 iii 1903, pp4-12.
 3. Ibid. p4.
 4. Posled.Izv. No.109, p3.
 5. K. K/autskii/ O evreiskom rabochem dvizhenii, Zaria,
No.4, August 1902.
 6. Iskra No.36, p6.

exemplified in Ob Agitatsii, entirely appropriate for the Jewish masses.¹ Their mistake, the article continued, had been to believe that their programme was applicable to conditions in the Russian interior. Thus, while their programme, which became elevated into the "theory of stages," according to which the degree of political content in agitation should be proportional to the cultural level of the masses, did not involve the abandonment of political demand when applied in the Jewish region, yet when it came into the hands of the Russian SD's, who were confronted with a lower cultural level, indeed "the lowest cultural level," the whole of the political content was thrown out and purely economic agitation was applied. Unequivocally, the author in Zaria asserted:

"We do not blame Jewish social democracy for the absurdities of economism, to which they never went."²

In support of his denial that Iskra had been silent on the Bund's economism, Martov also referred to Lenin's Chto Delat? which, he said, Posled.Izv. No.109 itself had claimed, contained a reference to the Bund's economism. Was this so? At the place concerned,³ Lenin was attacking

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1. K.K. [Kautskii], Zaria, No.4, p42.
 2. Ibid. pp42-46.
 3. Chto Delat? Lenin, Soch. IV, p407.

the Union and the Bund for their "economic, trade-union interpretation of politics," because the Bund Fourth Congress and, under its influence, the Union,¹ had declared the economic struggle to be the best means of drawing the masses into political struggle.

Even the fact that Lenin had distorted the meaning of the Fourth Congress resolution, which declared the economic struggle to be the best means of drawing the masses "into the movement,"² does not allow an inference from his statements of an accusation of economism: the question for Lenin was, after all, the Bund's method of drawing the masses into the political struggle.

Martov denied that Lenin's description of a separate organization of the Jewish proletariat as "an organization of weakness" was contemptuous of the Jews as such: Iskra would think the same of the Russian proletariat if it fell into independent political parties organized regionally or by nationality.³

Coming finally to what he called the central question, of the need for an independent party for the Jewish proletariat, Martov asked how, if the Bund was now in the OK as a part of the Party with the aim of convening congress,

1. Rabochee Delo, No.10, p123.

2. IV S"ezd ... (Bunda). In Materialy k istorii, SPB, 1906, p109.

3. Iskra No.36, p7.

could it be a separate party?

"The ZK says this is a fact...The Bund has 'decided all (!) questions of theory (!!) and practice'..."¹

Martov asked why all other Party committees, which had also developed independently, could not say the same? He reduced the Bund's claims of "decisions of theory" etc. to "a few programme resolutions worked out by different congresses on 'burning questions.'"²

Martov concluded his article by taking up the ZK's assertion that Iskra was striving for organizational hegemony in the party. "My friends," he exclaimed, "we admit this - but hegemony over whom?" Iskra, according to him, was uniting the organizations into a party. Once the Party had established its own hegemony over its parts there would be no further need for Iskra as a group; the Bund must recognize the Party's hegemony over it.³

The Bund TsK contributes to the polemics

The Bund TsK was not entirely blameless in the polemics which continued after the entry of the Bund into the OK. Although no reaction is recorded, nor is there any mention in the subsequent literature, a pamphlet was released by the TsK during March, in which the point appears to have consisted in attacking Iskra, as a private, exile organ,

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1. Iskra No.36, p9.
 2. Loc.cit.
 3. Ibid p10.

while at the same time associating the TsK of the Bund with the line taken by the OK.¹

The pamphlet was a straight answer to Iskra's hostile questions regarding the Bund's behaviour over the Pskov conference and the OK. It assumed that Lenin knew the Bund was participating in the OK at Orel when he wrote his attack in Iskra No.33. On this assumption it refuted Lenin's insinuation that the Bund did not want to work in the OK. To Lenin's jibe that the Bund, with its efficiency, could convince no one that it had been unable to send a letter to the OK organizers, the TsK replied that it had undertaken with Krasikov, "who had no doubt forgotten to inform Iskra," to conduct further relations under no circumstances by letter.

At the moment when Iskra was accusing the Bund of breaking off discussion on the national question and federation in order to avoid discussing them at the Party Congress, at that moment the pamphlet stated, "our representative in the OK was declaring that for the time being the Bund would leave entirely open the question of one or another form of organization, as we believed this question should be discussed before the entire Congress."²

Otvét Iskre was intended to show that the TsK did not identify the OK with Iskra:

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1. Otvét Iskre. TsKB. March 1903.
 2. Otvét Iskre. ibid

"The OK does not share Iskra's view that our publication of a separate declaration was a 'transgression of the elementary principles of co-operation.' The OK is familiar with Russian conditions..."

"None of Iskra's accusations must in any way be reflected in the Bund's relations with Social Democratic organizations in Russia, especially the OK."¹

It ended with the hope that the OK would use its authority to end the polemics of the "exile organizations" and to protest against interference in misunderstandings of an internal nature, "for they, of course, can always be settled more easily and quickly by the interested parties on the spot."²

The TsK's position was that while it wholly disapproved of Iskra's activity, it adhered to the OK, and it did not publically or privately associate itself with the ZK's position.

The end of the polemics

The efforts of the OK to stop the polemics eventually took effect and the next number of Iskra after Martov's long attack published a statement from the OK that both it and the Bund were now fully satisfied that the previous misunderstanding which had given rise to the polemics had

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1. Otvet Iskri
 2. Op.cit.

been explained and that neither had sought to undermine the other. In order to avoid similar misunderstandings the OK further requested "organizations not to publish comments on the organizational matters of the OK without corresponding with the latter and without first trying to clear up the matter through organizational means."¹

Together with this Iskra published a short letter from Portnoi in which he stated that as a result of the OK decision he would refrain from replying to Krasikov's comments which had been published in Iskra No.33.²

The last shot to be fired came in the form of a pamphlet from the Bund ZK two weeks after the appearance of Iskra No.37.³ Ostensibly a sharp attack on Martov's article in Iskra No.36, the ZK's pamphlet was in fact a vehicle for the exposition of the ZK's views on the conditions of the Bund's status in the Party, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Apart from the opening shots - the OK's official Announcement⁴ and the TsKB's Declaration⁵ - and the TsKB's

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1. Zaiavlenie OK, 13.iii.03, in Iskra No.37, 1.iv.03, p23.
 2. Loc.cit. Signed "Member of Bund TSK - Member of OK." An earlier letter from Portnoi to Iskra, taking up Krasikov's comments in a sharp tone, had not been published but sent on to the OK, Representative of TsKB to Iskra, February 1903, MS Bund Archives; Iskra to ZKB, 18/5/.iii.03, LS XIII, p151; Krupskaja to Iuzh.Rab. 31.iii.03, LS VIII, p336.
 3. Avtonomiia ili Federatsiia? ZKB, 27/14 April, 1903, 4pp.
 4. Iskra No.32, pp1-2.
 5. Posled.Izv. No.106, pp1-2.

restrained Otvét Iskre, the polemics were conducted by Iskra and the Bund ZK. Although the polemics were instituted by the principal organizations in Russia they were continued and developed by their "literary agents" abroad.

How much unanimity was there between Iskra and the OK, on the one hand, and the ZK and the TsKB, on the other? Although a settlement had been made at the Orel meeting at the beginning of February and Lenin was informed of it soon after,¹ Lenin chose to devote himself to continuing the polemics on "purely ideological grounds,"² and opened the new battle in Iskra No.34.

For the ZK the announcement in Iskra No.34 that the Bund had now entered the OK, should have been enough to halt any further attacks on Iskra, which would compromise the Bund delegation in the OK. Instead, the ZK sharpened its tone and took up the new challenge.

Lenin's directives to his OK agents

While the exile organizations seemed to be aiming at disruption, efforts were being made within the OK to hold the rival and dissenting factions together, and Lenin had constantly to remind his agents that no concessions in principle were to be made to the Bund.

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1. Levin to Iskra, 6 ii 03, received 13 ii 03, Prol.Rev. No.79, p56.
 2. Martov, Edinaia RSD., Iskra No.36, p4.

Lenin was, of course, pleased that the Bund in the OK had been pacified, but he feared the wrong sort of pacification - that of compromise.¹ He warned his representatives in Russia that the ZKB would stoop to all kinds of mischief in order to hamper the work of the OK.²

Perhaps with Gorev's family connection in mind, Lenin rebuked the initiator of the compromise plan with the sin of partiality towards the Bund and the tendency to exaggerate the latter's goodwill.³

Lenin made clear the tactics he wished his agents to adopt with regard to the Bund and the OK:

"...(privately) we want you to prepare everyone everywhere for the fight with the Bund at Congress. The Bund will not give up its position without fierce struggle. And we cannot accept that position. Only firm resolve on our part to see it right through, to expulsion of the Bund from the Party, will force it to yield..."⁴

His reply to a long letter from one of his agents in the OK,⁵ Aleksandrova, was more explicit:

"Formally...one must be correct and loyal to the Bund, (no open smashing in the teeth), but at the same time one must be arch-cold, all buttons done-up, and mercilessly and hourly keep up the pressure on legal grounds, without fear of going to the limit. Let them leave if they want to, - but we must not give them the slightest excuse...to make a split."⁶

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1. Letter to Krzhizhanovskii 6 iii '03, Prol.Rev. No.77-78, pl75.
 2. Loc.cit; Letter to (Gorev) 26 iii 03, op.cit. pl32.
 3. Letter to (Gorev) loc.cit. See Appendix on Gorev Compromise Plan.
 4. To Iuzhnyi Rabochii 18 iii 03, LS VIII p337.
 5. Aleksandrova's letter, written not later than 19.v.03, LS VIII pp345-353, will be discussed below.
 6. Written after 22 9/ v03, LS VIII, p355-356.

Answering Aleksandrova's question "Why,...drag [the Bundist] into the OK?" Lenin assured her that "of course, you must observe the formalities until the Congress," but he saw no need to show the Bund his cards.¹

Now that a large number of committees had recognized Iskra, together with the OK, Lenin proposed to Aleksandrova that instead of canvassing for Iskra in the name of the OK she and her colleagues should now do so in the name of those committees which had recognized Iskra. He believed this would be still more effective and from the formal point of view irreproachable. He urged her that "one of the most important tasks of the moment" was to prepare the committees against the Bund, "...and this is also entirely possible without breaking the rules."²

The OK-Iskraists and the polemics.

The degree of firmness towards the Bund that Lenin would have liked on the part of his followers in the OK³ was to some extent lacking.

In his report on the Orel meeting Levin wrote to Lenin that while he did not approve of the Bund's attack on the OK's Announcement, yet "one must put oneself in [the Bund's] position."⁴ Gorev, writing in late February to Lenin,

1. LS VIII, p356.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Lenin to Iuzh.Rab. 31/[18?] iii.03, LS VIII, p337.

4. 6.ii.03, ProI.Rev. No.79, p56.

complained that Lenin's article in Iskra No.33 would create additional difficulties.¹

Later Levin wrote: "We are not supporters of formalism (formalities), but having started that way we will keep it up...we think Krasikov raised all the fuss to avoid contradicting you."² And again a week later: "What about the Bund? Everyone's opinion is that it is all the result of a misunderstanding."³

Even Krzhizhanovskii, in whom Lenin would place nearly all hope,⁴ wrote: "I must say Boris [Portnoi] has been very 'decent' ('dober'), and conducted himself correctly. He is a clever lad with a lot of Party backbone and understanding of Party discipline."⁵

Krzhizhanovskii also found Lenin's attack in Iskra No.33 pitched too high.⁶ (Similarly, Plekhanov had suggested to Lenin in January that, although the attack would have its effect, he believed a gentler tone was more appropriate to fellow Social Democrats.⁷)

The most clearly expressed opinions on the question of

1. 23.ii.03, op.cit. No.77-78, p130.
2. 27.ii.03, op.cit. No.79, p58-59.
3. 7.iii.03, Ibid. p60.
4. Letter from Lenin 3.iv.03 [21.iii.03?] LS VIII, p340.
5. 11.iii.03, Prolet. Rev. No.77-78, p173.
6. Loc.cit.
7. Plekhanov to Lenin, 27.i.03, LS IV, p219. Plekhanov's amendments have not been found.

Iskra's relationship to the OK and the relations within the latter came from Ekaterina Aleksandrova, who had joined the OK as an Iskraist at Orel, but because of her personal convictions about the other members, had not found it possible to function as an OK member until the end of March.¹

Contrary to Lenin's assertion that "all our people have rushed to take the side of the Bundist..."² Aleksandrova wrote that she and Levin had not made peace with the Bund: "We simply did not try to smash its teeth in at all costs - that is [Krasikov's] speciality."³ Aleksandrova then described talks which had taken place in March between members of the OK and the two TsKB-OK members, Portnoi and Aiznshtat. Krasikov had been absent from the first meeting and it had "therefore" been undisturbed by invective. Instead they had discussed federalism and autonomy, nationalism, and the Bund's right to start up where there were already committees. The Iskra members had announced their solidarity with the attack in Iskra No.33. The Bund had then announced that it would not discuss the first questions until the Congress itself.⁴ On the question of

1. Aleksandrova to Lenin et al, not later than 19.v.03, LS VIII, pp345-353.

2. Lenin to Gorev, 26.iii.03, Prolet. Rev. No.77-78, p132.

3. Aleksandrova, LS VIII, p349.

4. Ibid. p350.

new committees in towns where non-Bund committees already functioned, the Bund had been more recalcitrant, and, later, on her own initiative Aleksandrova had advised three of the non-Bund committees concerned to prepare ultimatums to the Bund, threatening "war" if the Bund did not remove its representatives.

On the next day Krasikov had turned up and the meeting turned into a fiasco, with mutual recriminations hurled from side to side. Aleksandrova wrote that she did not know who was telling the truth and that the two statements, of the OK and of the Bund TsK, which were finally printed in Iskra No.37, had provided the only way of stopping the exchanges. The Bund had agreed after fierce debate that it had contravened organizational discipline by coming out with its separate Declaration, but, Aleksandrova lamented, this advantage was lost to Iskra through Krasikov who had refused to acknowledge that his separate statement had also been a contravention.¹

Coming to the purpose of the polemics, Aleksandrova objected to Lenin's "intercession for our honour,"² and asserted that the OK's honour would have been unharmed had Iskra not indulged in polemics on "our" organizational affairs.³

1. LS VIII, p350.

2. From a letter of Lenin's to OK, untraced by Editor, LS VIII, p354, n11.

3. Ibid. p350.

Aleksandrova believed that Lenin's real representative in the OK was Krasikov.

"Krasikov's motto and (he says) yours is "To hell with the Bundist." I don't understand. Why then drag him the Bundist into the OK? To observe the formalities?.... I believe the formalities should either be disregarded altogether or observed right up to the Congress. Otherwise the result is some sort of political intrigue which I don't understand."¹

The Bund evidently offered no opposition in the OK to Iskra's practice of bringing pressure to bear on obstinate committees in the name of the OK. This led Aleksandrova to believe that the Bund would give ground on a great deal, "though not everything," in order to remain in the OK, and the reason for this, she believed, was so that it could demonstrate to the "rebellious" Bundist organizations that the Bund was not at all isolated from the Russian movement.² In order to deprive the Bund of the possibility of using these tactics, tactics which Aleksandrova had only a few sentences before been condemning in connection with Iskra, she proposed that Iskra should now print a series * of articles on nationalism, federalism and autonomy which, together with the private propaganda of the Iskra organization in Russia among the committees, should make the Bund's position sufficiently clear by the time of Congress: "the Bund will be adequately cooked through by the time of the Congress."³

1. LS VIII p351.

2. Loc.Cit. The precise degree of dissent in the Bund over its relations with the Party will be seen in the following chapter.

3. Loc.cit.

The OK-Bundists and the polemics.

In February the ZK had promised that the TsK member concerned would reply to Krasikov's letter of Iskra No.33,¹ and although Portnoi did in fact do so² Iskra did not publish the letter but sent it to the OK which it considered to be the more appropriate recipient.³

It seems, however, that Portnoi did not want to get the TsK, or more properly the Bund as such, involved in the polemics. He had found some degree of accommodation in the OK at Orel, and if Iskra refrained from publishing his reply to Krasikov, a reply which he may have felt wished upon him by the ZK, this may well have suited him better. Moreover, according to Krzhizhanovskii, Portnoi regarded the ZKB "with a certain irony,"⁴ no doubt mingled by this time with some of the impatience that a hard-worked, underground leader must have felt towards the theorizing exiled intellectuals. In the same letter Krzhizhanovskii urged that the TsKB, personified by Portnoi, should not be identified with the ZKB, that he, Krzhizhanovskii, could not conceive of Portnoi agreeing with the tone of ^{the} reckless and infuriating article in Posledniia Izvestiia No. 109

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1. Posled.Izv. No.109, 13, ii. 1903, p2.
 2. Letter to Iskra from Representative of TsKB, February, 1903. MS Bund Archives.
 3. Letter from Iskra to ZKB, 18 [5?] iii 03, LS XIII, p151.
 4. Letter to Iskra 11.iii.03, Pról.Rev. No.77-78, p173.

(attacking the Iskra campaign for the OK) "for otherwise no cooperation at all would be possible!"

Krzhizhanovskii's beliefs were clearly not without good grounds, for Aleksandrova had told Lenin that Portnoi had declined, in the name of the TsKB, to accept responsibility for the ZK's actions.¹

While Lenin's assertion may be true that the ZK "is doing its level best to split up the TsKB and the OK..."², there is little doubt that Portnoi did his best to prevent this happening, as is shown by the TsK pamphlet "Otvét Iskre."³

* * *

The relative positions of the OK, Iskra, the Bund TsK, and the Bund ZKB by May 1903 may be summarized as follows: as its authority in Russia increased the OK came occasionally to assert itself even against Lenin. Lenin, apprehensive of waverings and mistakes in the OK, persisted in firm directives in private and fierce polemics in public.

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1. LS VIII, p350.
 2. Lenin to Gorev, 26.iii.03, Prolet. Rev. No.77-78, p132;
Lenin to Krzhizhanovskii, 6.iii.03, ibid. p175.
 3. Otvét Iskre. TsKB. March 1903.

The Bund TsK, anxious not to be left outside the OK, for fear this would bring total isolation to the Bund and exacerbate dissent within it, acquiesced in Iskra's tactics and did its best to put off committing itself to any firm line on doctrine, preferring to leave that task to the Bund's forthcoming Fifth Congress. The Bund ZK, fully aware that a fight was inevitable at the Party Congress, armed itself through public polemic; the apparent indifference it showed towards the situation in the OK indicated that the ZK anticipated nothing but the worst.

According to a tendentious memoir, written in memory of Martov, by Kossovskii, who was almost single-handed conducting the ZK's polemics, the bitter fight with Iskra affected personal relations. Kossovskii broke off all contact with Plekhanov, whose sarcastic wit he found abhorrent; he cut to a minimum his meetings with Lenin whose language he compared with that of a Jewish market woman; only with Martov, whom he considered honest and to the point, did Kossovskii continue to deal as with a close friend and good comrade, even at the height of the polemics, and even though he considered Martov's attacks the most pointed.¹

The ZK's antipathy for Iskra and general apprehension

1. Kossovskii, Martov un di Russl. SD, Tsukunft, March 1924, cited in Doires Bundistn, I, p31.

about the forthcoming Congress could not have been lessened by reports from Liber that he had heard that the OK had invited the Polish SDs to the Party Congress, and that the latter had assured him that they would oppose the Bund's demands;¹ and again that in a conversation with Plekhanov, the latter had exploded when Bund-Iskra relations were touched upon with "We shall see who shall conquer whom!"²

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1. Letter from Liber to ZKB, undated, cited in Kirzhnits, Bund un RSDAP, in Visnshaftlikhe Iorbikher, p72.
 2. Letter from Liber to ZKB, 19 iv 1903, op.cit. p73.

Chapter VI: The Bund's Fifth Congress

I. The preliminary Geneva Conference

Neither the cessation of the polemics of the previous six months, nor the continued presence of the Bund in the OK, succeeded in bringing about an improvement in relations among the exiles, and as the Second Congress of the RSDRP drew nearer, and the authority of the OK increased, the grim thought that the results of the Congress were already a foregone conclusion crystallized in the minds of the Bund leadership.¹

Liber, who was travelling in Europe on Bund Central Committee business in the spring of 1903, and who was in touch with both the Bund Foreign Committee and Iskra,² was convinced of the "colossal, even decisive" importance of the Bund's V Congress which was to be held just before the Party Congress.³ Arguing that vital decisions, such as the V Congress would be called upon to take, could not be expected to issue from a congress held under the strain of conditions in Russia,⁴ Liber, with the agreement of the Bund Central Committee, proposed that a smaller, more private, preliminary conference should be held in Switzerland. This meeting would

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1. Kossovskii, Martov un di RSD ... cited in Doires I, p31; Letters from Liber to ZKB, in Kirzhnits, Bund un RSDAP, in Visnshaftlikhe Iorbikher, pp72-73.
 2. Abramovich, In tsvei revoliutsies I, p103.
 3. Letter to ZKB dated 19 iv 1903, in Kirzhnits, op.cit. p73.
 4. For this reason the site of the V Congress was subsequently changed from Berdichev to Zurich, Abramovich, op.cit. p104.

deal only with certain theoretical questions, namely the national and organizational questions, on which it would "quietly and carefully work out clear resolutions to put before the /V/ Congress.."1

Police interference was not, however, Liber's sole concern for the V Congress: he was also disturbed by the thought that many comrades would come from the organizations in Russia unprepared on these vital issues. More than that, he wanted to safeguard the Bund's interests, as he understood them, against any "surprises" certain "groups" at the Congress might spring. Only careful preparation of the resolutions could provide that safeguard.2

The Conference gathered in Geneva towards the end of May.3 Participants included Kremer, Mill and Kopelzon from the Bund Foreign Committee; Frumkin and Zhenia Gurvich from Minsk; Lenskii and Mazover from Vilna; Rozen, Levinson and Abramovich from among the young Bundist intellectuals studying in Switzerland; Medem, then an agent for the Foreign Committee in Switzerland;4 and Liber.5

The first major topic of discussion at the Geneva

1. Kirzhnits, op.cit. p73.

2. Ibid. pp73-4.

3. Abramovich, op.cit. p104 gives "end of May or early June;" documents cited by Kirzhnits, p77, are dated "May 1903." According to Kurskii, late Curator of the Bund Archives, no record of the discussions remains, cited in Abramovich, p114.

4. Medem, Fun mein leben, II, p11. Medem became a full ZK member in June 1903, Mill in Vladimir Medem (Yiddish), p126.

5. Medem, loc.cit; Abramovich, p104.

Conference was the national policy to be adopted by the Bund. Since the hesitant decision adopted by the IV Congress in 1901, opinion in the Bund leadership had been divided - although as yet little-expressed - between those who regarded the national question as only a question of civil equality and who accepted Yiddish as a temporary expedient for agitation and propaganda, and those who considered the Jewish question as equal to the national question of other minorities in Russia, and on this basis sought a solution of general applicability in the principles of national-cultural autonomy.¹ Generally speaking, the protagonists of the former tendency were leading Bundists from the committees in Russia, while those of the latter tendency were, with one or two exceptions, notably Kopelzon, all exiled intellectuals.²

There are no records of the debates at the Geneva Conference. Kopelzon, who would soon prove to be the chief spokesman against a national programme at the V Congress, was probably its most vocal opponent at the Geneva Conference. Liber's preparations for the meeting were, however, aimed at achieving a united front to present to the V Congress, and it is therefore likely that Abramovich is close to the truth when he says that the Conference passed unanimously the resolution on national-cultural autonomy which he and Medem had drafted.³

1. Abramovich, op.cit. pp104-5.

2. The division became apparent at the V Congress, see below.

3. Abramovich, op.cit. p111; Medem, op.cit. p17.

Of greater pressing concern than the future of the Jews in far-off revolutionized Russia, was the question of the Bund's status in the RSDRP, if in the Party it was to remain. It had become abundantly clear to the Bund Foreign Committee, as well as to some of the better-informed leaders in Russia, that Iskra's hostile attitude, which it was instilling into the local Party committees, was "simply unifying everyone" against the Bund.¹

In April 1903 the Foreign Committee had specified the powers that the Bund should demand if it was to be recognized as the representative of the Jewish proletariat in the Party. The Foreign Committee had demanded the following rights:

- "1. Unrestricted expansion of territory.
2. Unrestricted publication of literature in Russian and Polish in order to attract the intelligentsia.
3. Direct control of its internal affairs without petty interference from outside.
4. The right to have a national programme. [The Party] may demand that this does not conflict with the general social-democratic programme.
5. Some power to decide certain general questions in accordance with the general programme.
6. The right to enter into temporary agreements with non-Party social-democratic organizations for practical purposes (e.g. May Day demonstrations)."²

The second task of the Geneva Conference was to draw up a clear set of conditions for the V Congress to ratify in order to forearm the Bund delegation to the Second Party Congress. The exact terms of the Conference's ten conditions

1. Liber in Kirzhnits, p73.

2. Avtonomiia ili Federatsiia? ZKB, 27/14/April 1903, p4. The pamphlet was a polemic against Iskra. No response appeared.

are nowhere reproduced but from the statutes which were presented to the V Congress it is evident that the six conditions drawn up by the Foreign Committee were the framework of the Geneva Conference's deliberations.

The resolution adopted by the Geneva Conference which generalized these conditions was based on the premise that the proper framework for the closest link between Party and proletariat was national;¹ not to accept this premise meant to deny the existence and development of national social-democratic organizations. Two conditions were essential to a national social-democratic organization: it must be allowed its own programme, which might differ from the general Party programme only in specific points concerning the given national proletariat; it must be given the widest possible freedom and independence. Since the Bund's special task was vested in the Jewish proletariat, which was not concentrated in one region, it logically followed that the Bund must not be limited regionally, and that no other party or organization could be recognized as representative of the interests of the Jewish proletariat.²

What then was to be the role of the Party? The Party should coordinate and guide the activities of all the national organizations which compose it. The Party should not fuse the

1. Proekt rezoliutsii soveshchaniia pri [ZKB] v mae 1903, K voprosu o strukture RSDRP, in Kirzhnits, op.cit. p74.

2. Ibid. pp74-5.

special demands of the national proletariats into general demands, but should defend all the demands of all the organizations; and in order to accomplish this while at the same time allowing the national organizations the maximum of independence and equality, the Party must be a federated union.¹ This conclusion reached by the Geneva Conference was a development of the Foreign Committee's assertion that their six points for the Bund's independence could "be realized only with federation."²

The Conference worked out three variants for a rubric resolution which would serve as the first point in the statutes the Bund would present to the Second Party Congress:

- "1) The RSDRP is a federated union of national social-democratic organizations.
- 1a) The RSDRP is a federated union of the national social-democratic organizations and other united social-democratic organizations which are in the Party.
- 1b) The RSDRP is a federated union of the Bund and the remaining social-democratic united organizations which compose the Party.

NB. ... new organizations may enter the Party on another basis (i.e. not federated), as independent parts. Local and regional organizations will not be regarded as independent parts."³

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- 1. Op.cit. pp75-6.
 - 2. Avtonomiia ili Federatsiia ? p4.
 - 3. Proekt rezoliutsii .. in Kirzhnits, p77.

These variants were clearly graded to accommodate
1) the Polish Social Democrats (PSD) and/or the Letts;¹
1a) a Party Congress which might recognize the Bund as
"national" but not the rest of the Party, i.e. Iskra; 1b) a
totally anti-"national" Congress.

The Geneva Conference thus resolved to lay before the
Fifth Congress of the Bund the demand for a mandate to seek
at the Second Party Congress the reorganization of the Party
into a federation.

1. Undated letter from Liber to ZKB, written before 19 iv
1903, in Kirzhnits, p73.

II. The Fifth Congress Proceedings

The Fifth Congress of the Bund opened in Zurich some time in June 1903.¹ Thirty delegates participated,² of whom at least seven had taken part in the Geneva Conference.³ The purpose of the Congress was to clarify the Bund's attitude towards the forthcoming Second Party Congress, with particular reference to the form the Bund's relations with the Party should take.⁴ In addition the Congress debated the national question,⁵ although this question does not appear in the agenda given in the official Report. The memoir literature is, in this respect, no less tendentious than the Report: while Abram der Tate asserts that the Congress spent most of the ten days of its duration on the national and organization

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1. Exact dates do not appear in the sources: the official Report V S"ezd /Bunda/, released in October 1903 gives "early June;" Medem, Fun mein leben, II, p17 gives "a couple of weeks after the Geneva Conference," and Abramovich, In tsvei revoliutsies, I, p104 places the Geneva Conference at the end of May or beginning of June. Thus the V Congress could have taken place in either early or mid June, allowing for variation in Style usage.
 2. V S"ezd /Bunda/, London, October 1903, p3.
 3. This estimate is based on the approximate lists of names in Abramovich, op.cit. I, p104; Medem, op.cit. II, pp11, 18-19; Abram der Tate, Bleter fun mein iugnt, p158.
 4. Medem, op.cit. p21; Abramovich, op.cit. p111.
 5. Materialn un dokumentn. Di diskusie vegn der natsionaler frage oifn tsuzamenfor fun Bund, iuni 1903, in Unzer Tseit, Warsaw, November, December 1927, January 1928. Unzer Tseit is the sole source for the protocols of the V Congress debates on the national question. They are translated into Yiddish from the original Russian.

questions, Medem claims that the national question took very little time, although he does not conceal the gulf of opinion which opened.¹

The debates on the national question

The draft resolution advocating national-cultural autonomy introduced to the V Congress by the participants at the Geneva Conference encountered strong resistance. More than half the delegates had come from Russia for the Congress² and were primarily concerned with immediate problems; the national question was one of long-term strategy since it dealt with the rights and privileges which the Jews in Russia were to demand after the overthrow of the autocracy. Moreover the idea of national-cultural autonomy presupposed the continued existence of the Jews as a nation after the advent of the democratic republic, and an antipathy towards assimilation on the part of the Jewish masses. The special problem of the Bund, as the advocates of the Geneva national resolution saw it, was to find a synthesis of social democracy and national needs; its opponents denied the present existence of national needs, and declared that since it was not possible to divine the future needs of the Jewish masses, no position should be adopted on this issue.³

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1. Abram der Tate, op.cit. p158; Medem, op.cit. p20.
 2. Abram der Tate, op.cit. p158.
 3. Unzer Tseit, loc.cit. passim.

The high degree of dissent at the V Congress indicated a greater awareness of the problem under discussion than had been the case at the IV Congress. John Mill, who had originally raised the question at the III Congress in 1899, had taken advantage of his position as editor of Der Idisher Arbeiter, the organ of the Foreign Committee, to publish articles on the national question. Kossovskii had addressed Bundist groups abroad advocating national-cultural autonomy although his purpose was rather to polemicize against Iskra. The majority of the delegates to the V Congress were conversant with the question they had to answer. The fact that the opposition mustered half the delegates, in spite of the fact that the resolution was proposed and supported by the entire exile intellectual body (with the exception of Kopelzon), is proof of this. Where at the IV Congress the opposition to a national policy for the Bund had been strong enough only to delay its application, at the V Congress they contrived to halt its progress entirely.

The initiators of the resolution advocating national-cultural autonomy believed that they had found a way of expressing the social democratic position on the national question in general and on the Jewish national question in particular. Their most articulate spokesman was Vladimir Medem, and in his main speech to the V Congress he adumbrated the ideas of his major work, which was to appear in 1906, The National Question and Social Democracy. According

to Medem there were three solutions to the national question: the first was the nationalistic solution which isolated and developed those qualities in a people which in fact constituted the problem; the second was the assimilationist solution which sought to obliterate those qualities; and the third was that of social democracy which was neutral: it neither promoted nor sought to obliterate national peculiarities. Social democracy, Medem argued, had to resist all forms of forceful assimilation for it was always the working class which suffered most in such cases, and cultural autonomy was the form of national status best suited to allow for either a flowering or a withering of Jewish culture in the future.¹

The supporters of the national resolution pointed out that wherever the political struggle of the proletariat of national minorities was in progress, the national question was being raised. Liber asked: " .. Is there no Polish question, no Caucasian question?" Later he added: "The Czechs are raising the national question in the Socialist International. In Posen .. the Poles want a Polish deputy, not a German." The Jewish masses, he argued, were surrounded by militant nationalisms: "The class consciousness of the proletariat is being dimmed and in order to brighten it, a stable national organization must be created."²

1. Unzer Tseit, November 1927, pp92-4.

2. Ibid. p92; op.cit. December 1927, p87.

A delegate from Warsaw, Vainshtein, put the question in terms of organization:

"It is Iskra's point of view that the Bund represents Yiddish-speaking Jews. One or the other: either the Bund is a national party, in which case it must have a national programme, or Iskra is right .. the Bund is a technical committee..."¹

But for Vainshtein national-cultural autonomy was merely a safeguard against national oppression and as such was a socialist solution: "Until someone shows me a better one, I can see no other."²

Medem had already foreshadowed the organizational argument when he stated: "Everyone agrees that there must be a Bund, that there must be official agitation and propaganda for the Jewish masses. It is impossible to imagine the Jewish masses giving up their psychological identity..."³

Kossovskii argued that the characteristics of a national culture were emerging among the Jews: classes were forming, a Yiddish literature was growing, the Jewish proletariat was growing. Therefore some guarantee should be demanded now, which would safeguard the free development of the Jewish masses after the fall of absolutism. National-cultural autonomy was precisely such a guarantee.⁴

The argument for a national policy, however, involved some circularity: if social democracy was not concerned to

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1. Op.cit. December 1927, pp89-90.
 2. Ibid. p90.
 3. Op.cit. November 1927, p94.
 4. Op.cit. December 1927, pp83-4.

promote national peculiarities, and if the Bund existed to serve the Jewish masses, then the Bund's tasks were to resist national oppression and to revolutionize the Jewish proletariat. But since the fight against any form of oppression was a general task of social democracy and not peculiar to the Bund, and since the revolutionizing of the Jewish masses had to take place chiefly in Yiddish, was Iskra after all not right, was the Bund not left with the fact that it should be content with the status of a technical committee?

The opposition was headed by Timofei Kopelzon, Ionah Koigen and Aiznshtat. They denied the existence of Jewish culture and asserted that Jewish disabilities in Russia really amounted to a bar on assimilation: once the discriminatory laws were abolished the Jewish masses would rush into assimilation. In the absence of a peasant class they argued, the Jews could not be compared with, say, the Ruthenes, who could be said to possess a culture. To adopt national psychology as the basis for social democratic activity would involve abandoning the proletarian position. This would be reactionary, for with the development of capitalism national psychology would give way to class psychology.¹

Koigen, the most consistent spokesman for the opposition, summed up the dilemma which faced both sides of the Congress:

1. Op.cit. November 1927, pp88, 90, 95, 96.

if the national faction was right and truly national, as distinct from political, strivings were emerging among the Jewish proletariat, then of course the Bund should demand national-cultural autonomy as a principle. It was the opposition's contention, however, that the distinction between those two strivings, political and national, was blurred in the Jewish case, and that they could be determined only by conjecture. Therefore no solution should be adopted.¹

The opposition was supported by some delegates, mostly from Russia, who opposed national-cultural autonomy in spite of their admission that a Jewish national problem did exist in Russia. They were not satisfied that national-cultural autonomy was adequately understood either by themselves or by anyone else, and they therefore felt uneasy about its being put into the programme.² Conversely, the "national" faction gained the support of some waverers who felt that, on balance, if the future freedom of the Jews was being debated it would be well to err towards the certainty of an adopted national policy, rather than bank on the spontaneous flood of liberties after the successful revolution. They also pointed out that the autocracy would be followed by a bourgeois regime which would not necessarily abolish national oppression.³

1. Op.cit. December 1927, pp90-1.
 2. Ibid. p87; op.cit. January 1928, p86.
 3. Op.cit. January 1928, pp88-9.

In his summing up of the debates on the national question, Portnoi, as chairman of the final session on the question¹ exhibited ambivalence towards the resolution and indeed summarized only the opposition's case.²

The voting on the resolution was divided exactly in half and no resolution was adopted.³ It was further decided that the debates should not be included in the official report, and that the question itself should not appear in the agenda.⁴

No amendments or counter-resolutions were made by the opposition: the opposition was the simple negation of any national policy.⁵

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1. The presidium was made up of one pair from the TsK and one from the ZK (Portnoi and Aiznshtat, Kremer and Kossovskii). The pairs presided in shifts, Medem II, p20.
 2. Unzer Tseit, January 1928, pp93-4. At the Orel meeting of the OK in February, Portnoi, as chief Bund delegate, had chosen not to discuss the national question (or federation and autonomy), Aleksandrova's letter to Lenin, LS VIII p350.
 3. Unzer Tseit, November 1927, p87; Abram der Tate, p158; Medem, II, p20 implies that the discussion was abandoned when it became clear that no resolution would result, and that no vote was taken.
 4. Unzer Tseit, loc.cit; Medem, loc.cit. The debates were first published in Unzer Tseit in 1927-8.
 5. An extraordinary feature of the debates on the national question was the total absence of any reference to the great pogrom which had taken place in Kishinev only one month before the Congress, and which had caused distress and fury far beyond the confines of the Pale of Jewish Settlement. If the pogrom was a factor at all, it is an interesting comment on the Bundists from Russia, and particularly on Koigen who was then active in the South, that their faith in international proletarian solidarity was unimpaired. Abramovich, op.cit. I, p115 writes that the Kishinev pogrom which caused a surge of national feeling among the Jewish masses affected the attitude of some Bundists to the national question.

The official Report of the V Congress, which does not mention the debates on the national question, comments that the opposition to the organizational statutes used arguments which were "typical for the entire course of the debates and analogous with dissent on other questions."¹ Just as the opposition to the national resolution had in fact argued: of course, the Jews will be allowed to develop freely in the democratic republic - why talk about it? Why show distrust? so the chief argument of the opposition to the organizational statutes - many of them the same delegates - was that a detailed statute was unnecessary; once the Party was properly unified, guarantees for the Bund's freedom of activity would be automatic - why demand them?

1. V S"ezd /Bund/, p9.

The organizational question

The Geneva Conference had regarded as imperative a thorough examination of the conditions in which the Bund could exist in the Party, and had accordingly drafted a ten-point statute to present to the V Congress.¹ By the time it was presented to the Congress it had increased by two more points.²

According to the official Report, from which the national question was excluded, the debates on the organizational question followed the committees' reports as the second point on the agenda.³ It appears from the memoirs, however, that this question was debated after the national question.⁴

There was a smaller opposition to the Geneva Conference's proposals on the question of the Bund and the Party than there had been on the national question: it comprised, on the average, one third of the total votes.⁵ The Report hints that the opposition was a more or less consistent group,⁶ and the Protocols show that its chief spokesmen were two of the opposition leaders to the national resolution: Koigen and Aiznshtat.⁷

1. Kirzhnits, p75; Medem II, p17. Apart from Para.1 of the Statute in Kirzhnits, p77, the draft is not detailed in the literature.

2. V-tyi S"ezd /Bunda/, p7.

3. Ibid. p3.

4. Kirzhnits, p82 prefaces Protocols on Organizational Question with a brief account of the fate of the national question, thus also suggesting this sequence.

5. V-tyi S"ezd /Bunda/, pp17, 24.

6. Ibid. p9.

7. Kirzhnits, pp82-88..

The statutes prepared by the Geneva Conference suffered only minor amendments at the V Congress¹ and emerged in the official Report in the following form:

- "1. The Bund is a federated part of the RSDRP
2. The Bund is the social democratic organization of the Jewish proletariat, unlimited in its activity by any regional framework, and is in the Party as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat; moreover, activity in the name of the entire proletariat of any given territory, in which, apart from other Party organizations, the Bund is also active, is permissible only with the participation of the latter.
3. The Bund elects its own representation to the Party Central Committee, the Party Foreign Committee, and the Congresses of the Party .. Representation must be based on principles similar for all contracting sides.

Bund's Powers

4. The Bund's programme is the all-Party programme, which the Bund has the right to supplement with special points ... raised by the particular conditions of the Jewish proletariat in Russia...but not in contradiction with the Party programme.
5. The Bund holds its own congresses to deal with all questions affecting the Jewish proletariat; it has its own TsK and ZK.
6. The Bund may decide general questions on which no resolutions have been passed by the Party Congress, such decisions to have only temporary force, pending a decision by the general Party Congress.
7. The Bund has free control of its own organizational affairs.

 1. Kirzhnits, p75.

8. The Bund may publish directly in any language... it may publish addresses to the proletariat of another nationality only by agreement with the appropriate organs of the Party; it may address the proletariat of the whole country with the permission of the Party Central Committee.

Note: Other contracting sides may address the Jewish proletariat only with TsKB permission.

9. a) The Bund may enter into temporary agreement, for practical purposes, with non-Party revolutionary organizations, where neither Party Congress nor Central Committee have issued special prohibition. TsKB informs Party Central Committee of all such cases. Joint publication with non-social democratic organizations is not permitted.
- b) With special Central Committee permission, the Bund may enter into temporary agreement with non-Party social democratic organizations for collaboration in some aspects of revolutionary activity.
10. Party Congress may change Bund congress decisions, except for decisions taken on the precise basis of this constitution. Party Central Committee may demand explanations from the TsKB for any acts contravening Party Congress decisions.
11. Party Central Committee may, when necessary, enter into relations with parts of the Bund only with TsKB permission. In each case the TsKB will decide how such relations shall be conducted.
12. All these points are fundamental and may be altered, added to and deleted only by agreement of the contracting sides.

The V Congress has^s decided that the above plan should be submitted to the /RSDRP/ as a basis for the discussion of the question of the Bund's position in the Party."1

The V Congress debates on the Bund in the Party began with the second point of the Statute, treated as two

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1. V-tyi S"ezd /Bunda/, pp6-7. The second half of the last sentence "...P/ as a basis .. etc." is pasted inside the cover of the Report as a genuine omission from the text, which is meaningless without it.

halves.¹ The first half up to "sole representative of the Jewish proletariat," was passed unanimously without debate.² The opposition emerged when the second part was debated, their chief protest being that the first half of Point 2 implied the second, and that it would be bad tactics to adopt any explicit limitations by the Bund of other Party organizations. As an example of the superfluity of this half of Point 2, they point out that just as the Bund could not represent the proletariat of the whole of Poland and Lithuania, so neither could, say, the Polish Social-Democrats represent the entire proletariat of Poland and Lithuania, for to do so they would have to include the Bund in their composition. The opposition further complained that this point bore a polemical character which was the result of strained and abnormal relations in the Party, and it was clearly designed to protect the Bund against future "inconveniences." "We must not base our party statutes," they protested, "on abnormality, we hope that after unity is achieved all friction will cease, or at least diminish. Therefore we must plan our statute on the basis of normality."³

The task of those who supported the statutes was to convince the opposition that while it was true that the

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1. V-tyi S"ezd /Bunda/. Correction slip inside cover.
 2. Ibid. p8; Kirzhnits, p82.
 3. V-tyi S"ezd, pp10-11.

second half of point 2 was tautologous - indeed "the entire plan represents no more than an elaboration of the first half of point 2...."¹ - yet it was of desperate importance to put forward a detailed account, point by point, of what the first half of point 2 meant to the Bund.

Equally they rejected the argument for normality, and replied that their statute annihilated abnormality and was a safeguard against future manifestations of it: "We must come to normality, we cannot start from it."²

By 22 votes to 3 with 4 abstentions the Congress passed the second half of point 2.³

Discussion on Bund representation in the central Party institutions, point 3 of the Statute, centred on two questions, first whether Bund delegations should vote in a body or as individuals, and secondly the status of a Bund delegation.⁴

The uncompromising opposition of Aiznshtat, both to the national resolution and to certain major points in the Statute,⁵ must have been in the minds of the delegates at the V Congress when they voted by 22 to 1, with 6 abstentions,

1. V-tyi S"ezd, pl1.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Ibid. pl2.

4. Ibid. ppl2-14.

5. Kirzhnits, pp84, 85, 86.

in favour of block voting by the Bund delegation at Party congresses "when the question involves the extent of the Bund's powers:"¹ a member of the Party OK, Aiznshtat would automatically go to the Second Congress as a Bund delegate.²

By the same vote the Congress decided that Bund delegates should be allowed to vote on general Party issues purely as Party members.

The second point of point 3, on equality of representation, passed with a somewhat smaller majority, 18 to 2 with 9 abstentions, and this foreshadowed the uneasiness of many of the delegates when faced with such outspoken federalism.³

The immediate cause for concern among the militantly federalist delegates was the degree and status of the Bund delegation to the Second Party Congress. The OK had agreed that, "in view of its exceptional size and influence," the Bund should be allowed three votes for its TsK and two for the ZK, while all other Party committees were allowed two only.⁴ But in the circumstances this would mean that, from the Bund's federalist point of view, - Russian - (as opposed to

1. V-tyi S"ezd, ppl2, 14.

2. Levin to Iskra, 27 ii 1903, in Prolet.Rev. No.79, p59; LS VIII, p338, n2. Aiznshtat had been a co-delegate with Portnoi in the OK at Orel in February, when they decided not to discuss precisely these questions, Aleksandrova to Lenin in LS VIII, p350.

3. V-tyi S"ezd, ppl3-14.

4. Protokoly II S"ezda, p446, p450.

all-Russian) - social democracy would possess the votes of at least twenty organizations, while the Bund, which in its own mind constituted an equally representative part of the All-Russian Party, would have a mere five votes. The certain knowledge that Lenin's anti-Bund campaign had succeeded and that the Bund delegation to the Second Congress would stand alone was the basis of the V Congress discussions on the status of the delegation: Iskra and the Russian committees together represented Russian social democracy; the Bund represented Jewish social democracy. The two were qualitatively, if not quantitatively, equal and were federated parts of the general Party, therefore they should have equal representation at the Congress. The V Congress was content to leave open the question of actual numbers of delegates, but it was firm in insisting that, if the Russian social democracy sent delegates from the committees which constituted it, then so should the Bund.¹ Were this demand to be accepted it would mean that the Bund delegation would represent 14 committees, plus the Brushworkers' and Leather workers' Unions,² in addition to the TsK and ZK votes.

1. V-tyi S"ezd, ppl3-14.

2. II S"ezd .. Otchet delegatsii Bunda, p2; Materialy k istorii evreiskago rabochago dvizheniia, pl37 lists 22 towns of "committee" or "organization" status - i.e. combinations of groups.

On the other hand, should the Russian social democrats decide to base their delegation on the number of workers organized, then so would the Bund which boasted 30,000.¹

The opposition to the national resolution was echoed in the debates on point 5 of the Statute. The friction arose over the implication of a difference between "general" and "Bund" questions: the opposition denied that there was a difference, and claimed that any question affecting the Jewish proletariat was closely linked with all other questions and was therefore "general." The proposers argued that as soon as an all-Party organization came into being the difference would be apparent: what might be a vital question to the Jewish proletariat could be only a detail to the rest of the Party. The point was carried by 16 votes to 5, with 8 abstentions.²

The Congress passed the remaining points on the Statute, leaving points 1 and 12 until last.

Apart from point 9, all points from 7 to 11 conveyed a single idea:

"The Party deals with the Bund as with a united, whole, independent organization. As a whole the Bund is responsible before the higher Party institutions, as a whole the Bund submits to Party discipline,

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1. Materialy, pl40.
2. V-tyi S"ezd, ppl6-17.

as a whole the Bund conducts its own affairs ... all relations between its parts...manifestations of all revolutionary activity...all is in the Bund's exclusive control...the Bund is entirely free from interference..."¹

Thus, under Point 11, to guard against "indiscipline in the Bund's ranks" and maintain the authority of the TsKB, all relations between the Party and the Bund would be conducted through the TsKB.²

Point 10 was among the least veiled in the whole Statute, and caused some dissent: the first half was opposed by a small group who probably demanded that Party Congresses be recognized as the highest organ in the Party and therefore be allowed under any circumstances to alter Bund Congress decisions. Again, over the second half of point 10, a small group insisted the Party Central Committee be allowed to alter decisions of the Bund TsK if the former thought such decisions contravened Party decisions. The majority, however, argued that since the TsKB was the executive organ of the Bund Congress, any control of the former would entail control, or limitation, of the latter, and the Party Central Committee could not be invested with such powers: this was the role of the Party Congress.³

1. V-tyi S"ezd, pp17-18.

2. Ibid. p18.

3. Ibid. pp18-19.

Behind this transparent wall of rationalization lay the fear that the future Party Central Committee, composed chiefly of anti-Bund Iskraists, might abuse such power against the Bund's interests. There were, however, still some leading Bundists who, in spite of the fierce polemics of the last six months, and in spite, in the case of Aiznshtat, of first-hand knowledge of Iskra's organizational method, were either not totally pessimistic, or were prepared to make concessions from fear that the Bund would become isolated from the general social democratic movement.¹

The opposition grew to six when the second half of point 8 was debated. This point, probably the most "federalist" in the whole statute, with the exception of point 3, illustrates that the negative result of the debates on the national question was in no way applied to the demands the Geneva Group saw fit to make in organizational matters. The principle of federalism, which was regarded as the proper form of relations between national social democratic organizations, was unequivocally applied here in spite of the fact that Congress had been unable to agree to adopt a national programme. The inclusion in the statutes of phrases like "social democratic organization of the Jewish proletariat," "all-Party programme," "decisions of

 1. Medem, II, p21; Kirzhnits, p82.

the general Party congress," appears as a meagre concession to the opposition when compared with the outright federalism in such points as number 8. This point which allows the Bund to address the proletariat of another nationality only with appropriate permission, adds in a note, almost as an afterthought, that other Party organizations (of another nationality, understood) may address the Jewish proletariat only with TsKB permission. Then, frankly practical, the Report explains that this limitation applies only to personal as opposed to literary approaches.¹

The Report cites an example of the need for point 8: just as it would be inappropriate for a Jewish organization to call out the Polish comrades to a demonstration over the heads of the leadership of Polish social democracy, so it would be equally inappropriate vice versa.²

If "Russian" be substituted for "Polish," and "Iskra" for "Russian,"³ it again becomes clear that what appears to be national tact and diplomacy is an organizational device for keeping the "imperialistic"⁴ Iskra at bay. The Bund later admitted that such indeed were their motives.⁵

1. V-tyi S"ezd, pp7, 20.

2. Ibid, p20.

3. Abramovich, I, p105, writes: "At that time we referred to the RSDRP as Iskrovtsy."

4. Poslednia Izvestiia, No.112, 1 iii 1903, p2.

5. Rezoliutsiia V-go S"ezda, ZKB, September 1903, p2.

Congress then debated the first point of the Statute. Congress was asked to decide whether the foregoing points of the Statute could be summed up in one general title, describing the Bund's relations with the Party, and if so, whether it should be "federation" or "autonomy."¹

The formula "The RSDRP is a federated union..," devised by the Geneva Conference, was dropped in favour of one which defined the Bund's terms of reference, rather than those of the RSDRP. The opposition, Aiznshtat, David Kats (Taras), and Koigen, rejected the demand for federation on the grounds that it was associated with separatism. They argued that the concrete demands which the Congress had passed were the basis for an organizational statute, not a contract: the Bund, as a part of the Party, could not put forward the principle either of autonomy or federation to the whole Party, for it was the Party Congress which had to decide the basis of relations, not the Bund; if the Bund put forward a new principle in contradiction to the 1898 decisions the Party would be sure to reject it and the Bund might have to leave the Party, which would be harmful to itself; what was needed was a centralized Party, and it had yet to be proved that federation would achieve this.

 1. V-tyi S"ezd, p21; Kirzhnits, pp83-6 reproduces only this part of the protocols. Neither expression had yet appeared in the Statute.

The opposition wished to avoid generalizations based on the need for certain concrete organizational terms. While acknowledging that the Bund's interests must be protected by the points in the Statute, they nonetheless did not wish to elevate these practical needs into a principle, particularly since the rest of Party's attitude towards the principle proposed was well-known. Even Aiznshtat, who spoke in such terms as "In the interests of both the Jewish and the Russian proletariat we must demand that the Party not split into parts....," "... a centralized Party is in the interests of the proletariat..." agreed that the Bund must speak out for certain rights to protect its interests.¹

Portnoi, whose position on the national question was equivocal, emerged as a realist among the sponsors of Point 1, arguing that the Statute would not come as a surprise to the Russian comrades, that the question "federation or autonomy?" had been discussed since the Fourth Congress in 1901, that whatever names the Statute bore it would be opposed by the Party Congress: "We must not play blind man's buff... We must call our statute one thing or the other. If we cannot call it federation ... what then is

 1. Kirzhnits pp84-85.

autonomy?"¹

Liber based his arguments for federation on the assumption that the all-Russian Party had still to be built, and that without the Bund and other national organizations, the Party would not be able to call itself all-Russian:^x it would be merely the Russian Social Democratic Party. Therefore, "we can boldly say that we stand for federation."²

Medem replied to Taras's uneasiness about confronting the Party with a contract and demanding changes in the Party's structure. He argued that the accepted resolutions were based on the existence of another contracting side; the all-Russian Party consisted of at least two equal parts, namely, the Bund and Russian social democracy; the Bund's resolutions required that the rest of the all-Russian Party i.e. the Russian Party, should transform itself into a second equal part, and this meant federation.³

Liber agreed with the opposition that a centralized Party was necessary, but for him it was equally necessary that all the national organizations should enjoy equal status in the Party. Under the conditions that now existed in the Party, Liber went on, there were only two parts to which this principle could be applied, and this was the Bund's

 1. Kirzhnits, p84.
 2. Loc.cit.
 3. Loc.cit.

demand - that it be applied to the Bund and the Russian social democracy.¹

The official Report summed up similarly: "autonomy" as understood by the Bund, was not the opposite of "federation:" federation was the union of autonomous sections, autonomous with respect to the whole which they constituted. Thus, there was the All-Russian Party - the whole; then there was the Bund, one of its autonomous components; the other component, however, - Russian social democracy - was absent, or rather identified with the whole. And that was the entire inner contradiction of the Party structure. As soon as the Russian SD ceased to identify with the All-Russian Party and became united with the other autonomous parts as an equal, the federalist principle would be applicable.²

The debate was ended by two opposition speakers, both Warsaw delegates.³ One, Rosa Levit, attacked the proposal to dictate to the Party what form its relations with the Bund should take, and protested that Liber and Medem had not proved that federation was most desirable for the proletariat.⁴

The second, Varshe, declared that it was immaterial what

1. Kirzhnits, p85.

2. V-tyi S"ezd, p22.

3. Abramovich, I, pl13; Abram der Tate, pl54.

4. Kirzhnits, loc.cit.

label the Statute bore, the most important thing for the Bund was that a united Russian Party should exist, and no formalities should be allowed to hinder this.¹

The form of point 1, when it was put to the vote, had been altered, from that drawn up by the Geneva Conference: it now read "The Bund is a federated part of the RSDRP" as opposed to "The RSDRP is a federated union..." and in that form it was passed by 20 votes to 7, with 2 abstentions.²

1. Kirzhnits, p86.

2. Loc.cit; V-tyi S"ezd, p24.

Ultimatum

The V Congress then moved on to the question of what, if any, points in the Statute should be declared an ultimatum, or minimum Statute.

By discussing an ultimatum the Congress was flouting one of the conditions laid down by the OK for participation in the second Party congress, namely that delegations must not be tied by imperative mandates, but they must be free in the exercise of their power.¹ The formal reason for this measure was that the Party Congress would be regular as opposed to constituent, therefore all the participants must be free to submit totally to the decisions of the Congress majority.

Since the Bund had failed in its campaign inside the OK to change the status of the Congress to constituent,² and had also attempted to achieve the exclusion of the clause on imperative mandates from the Party Congress statutes,³ should the V Congress pass an ultimatum the Bund delegation would necessarily have to indulge in the practice of "keeping the minimum in its pocket" while it presented its maximum to the Party Congress.

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1. Protokoly II S"ezda RSDRP; p446, prilozh. VI, para.7 of "Proekt ustava II S"ezda..."
 2. Krzhizhanovskii to Iskra, [24] 11 iii 03, Pro1.Rev. No.77-78, p173.
 3. Protokoly, p8.

Before detailed ^{discussion} at the V Congress began, however, the opposition attempted to reject the whole idea of an ultimatum, claiming that it would lead unavoidably to the isolation of the Bund.¹ Koigen wanted Congress to adopt only a conditional position: if the Party Congress should reject the minimum, then the Bund should either remain in the Party conditionally until the next Party Congress, or leave the Party conditionally until the next Party Congress. In either case the question should be left to be solved by a special Bund commission after the Party Congress.

Liber was uncompromising: only one form of ultimatum was possible, if the Party should reject the minimum the Bund should leave.²

Koigen, however, could not reconcile himself to the idea of total war at the Party Congress: "We cannot foresee what the Congress will give us. Convincing arguments and proposals might be made...we should hold a conference of our own after the Party Congress..."³

Rosa Levit, a Warsaw delegate, agreed with Koigen and added that an ultimatum was not in the general Party interests. Furthermore, she added, if the Bund had to

1. V-tyi S"ezd, p24; Kirzhnits, p86.
 2. Kirzhnits loc.cit.
 3. Ibid. pp86-87.

leave the Party it would be better to do so after the Party had organized, because "to do so now would disturb the organization of the RSDRP."¹

The protagonists of the ultimatum, Liber and Medem, were unyielding in their conviction that the Party, meaning the amalgamation of Iskra committees, had already organized and therefore the Bund would cause no disturbance, and they insisted that a conditional ultimatum would achieve nothing. Further, no conference could be entrusted with the task of deciding the issue, therefore it must be decided immediately, and "if our interests are as dear to the Party as its interests are to us, then it must satisfy our basic demands."²

By a vote of 19 to 6 with 2 abstentions the Congress agreed that the ultimatum should be unconditional and that they should now proceed to decide which points to select from the maximum statute to constitute the minimum.

Koigen's own resolution that the question of leaving the Party should be left to a special commission, and no ultimatum at all be put forward, received only his vote, with 5 abstentions.³

From the ten-point minimum which issued from the

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1. Kirzhnits, p87.
 2. Loc.cit; V-tyi S"ezd, pp24-25.
 3. Kirzhnits loc.cit.

debates that followed,¹ it is evident that the minority of the earlier debates had made some impression, for although the new minimum statute was in fact as "federalist" as the maximum, it was composed in terms of essential demands, without the embarrassing tautologies and explanations of the maximum.

One of the most drastic cuts the Congress made in its demands was in throwing out Para. One altogether. The pressure of the opposition, which sought to avoid the provocative ostentation of the Bund's superior idea of itself before the still unorganized ranks of its Russian comrades, was fully expressed in the official Report: "Whether or not the Party should decide our Statute is federalist, we know it is based on that principle. Arguments over words must not hinder unity."² As a safeguard the Congress passed a resolution to the effect that any formula proposed by the Party in the spirit of autonomy (e.g. "The Bund is an autonomous part of the Party") must be unconditionally rejected, while acceptance by the Party of federation was not to be regarded as an ultimatum:³ "The autonomous basis of the Bund's relations with the

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1. These debates are not published.
 2. V-tyi S"ezd, p25.
 3. Ibid. p26.

RSDRP as have till now existed must be unconditionally liquidated."¹ This resolution was not, however, included in the ultimatum and figures in the Report only as a footnote.²

Nothing appears in the literature on the debates over the actual selection of the ultimatum points, but from the debates described above it may safely be assumed that the majority's minimum was only a partial satisfaction of the minority's wishes.

The ten points of the ultimatum, on minimum statute read:

- "1. The Bund's position in the Party is defined by the following points:
2. The Bund is the social-democratic organization of the Jewish proletariat, unlimited in its activity by any regional framework, and is in the Party as sole representative of the Jewish proletariat.
3. The Bund elects its own representation to the Party Central Committee, the Party Foreign Committee and the Congresses of the Party...Representation must be based on principles similar for all parts of the Party.
Note: In this respect local and regional organizations are not considered as independent parts of the Party.
4. The Bund's programme is the all-Party programme.
5. The Bund holds its own congresses to decide all questions specially concerning the Jewish proletariat, it has its own TsK and ZK.

1. Kirzhnits, p88.

2. The Editors of Lenin Sochineniia, VI, 2nd/3rd ed. p419, n29, enumerate this resolution as Para. One of the minimum.

6. The Bund has free control of its own organizational affairs.
7. The Bund has the right to direct publication of literature in other languages besides Yiddish.
8. Party congress may alter all Bund congress decisions.
9. When necessary, the Party Central Committee may have relations with parts of the Bund, but only with permission of the Bund TsK.
10. All these points are fundamental, and can be altered... only by mutual agreement of the component parts of the Party.
Note: In this respect local and regional organizations are not considered as independent parts of the Party."¹

In addition to the conditional point, not included in the ultimatum, on the ultimate rejection of "autonomy" but not ultimate insistence on "federation," the Congress also agreed that, should the second congress demand the amendment of point 7 to conform to point 8 of the maximum ("The Bund may address the proletariat of another nationality only by agreement with the appropriate organs of the Party") - then the Bund must demand as an ultimatum the following amendment: "Other parts of the Party may address the Jewish proletariat only with the permission of the TsKB."²

Thus, with what Lenin would later call a "maximum of shamelessness and a minimum of logic,"³ the V Congress had

1. V-tyi S"ezd pp26-27.

2. Ibid, p26.

3. Maksimum bezzastenchivosti i minimum logiki, Soch. VI, p68, reprinted from Iskra No.49, Oct.1, 1903.

attempted to trim down its demand for outright federation to a series of points which contained no mention of "federation" but which, especially in points 2, 3, 9, and 10 and in the conditional amendment to point 7, entailed nothing other than that.

The jibes which Lenin would later write about the Bund - "trading with principles," "twisting and turning and finally having to show their [the Bund's] 'minimum,'" "Nowhere had the Bund's lack of concern for principles been so naively expressed..."¹ - all this would be beside the real point of the Bund's need to bother with "maximums" and "minimums." The debates of the V Congress render inconceivable the notion that the Bund was so naive as to anticipate that "the dogmatists fear only certain frightful words" and "decided that if these words were removed then the dogmatist would understand nothing of the concrete points!"²

The ultimatum represented a definition of the Bund's aims and raison d'etre, whether inside the Party or outside.

1. Soch. VI, pp69-70.

2. Ibid. p70.

Chapter: VII

The Second Congress of the RSDRP

I. The Alignment.

At the same time as the Bund was preparing its delegation for the Second Congress, Iskra was also appraising its position. From early May Iskra's delegates began to assemble in Geneva for talks with the leaders, particularly with Lenin. The aim of these talks was to ensure that the Iskraists would present a solid, mature front at the Congress.¹ Topics discussed included the central committee, the central organ, a popular newspaper,² and, in detail, the Bund.³ Already in December 1902, soon after the OK had begun to function, Lenin had placed the Bund first on his agenda for the Congress;⁴ he had urged his agents to wage a campaign against the Bund and Bund sympathy in Russia,⁵ and he himself fully expected a split with the Bund at the Congress.⁶ It was therefore essential to gauge at first hand the success of his tactics, and where necessary to correct inadequacies.⁷ By the time the

1. Shotman, Kak ot Iskry ... p96; Lenin Soch. VI, p92.

2. Trotskii, O Lenine, pp31-34.

3. Krupskaja, Memories, p97; Lenin lists Bund as first in Iskra's discussions, LS VII, p125.

4. LS VIII, p298.

5. Loc.cit; ibid. p338, p340, p356.

6. Gorev, Kat.i Ssyl No.8, 1924, p54.

7. Some delegates were given private instruction, Moshinskii, Kat. i Ssyl. No.45, p19; Shotman omits to mention that he was "sent to live with Trotskii for 'training' purposes," Krupskaja, op.cit. p92.

congress was about to begin the general feeling among the delegates was that there were no real differences and that all would go well.¹

After the Iskra talks in Geneva Lenin made an analysis of the composition of the Congress in which he attempted to predict the disposition of the votes in terms of consistent Iskraists, doubtful Iskraists, and anti-Iskraists.² Assuming the total number of votes was 47,³ Lenin numbered only 8 anti-Iskra votes, those of the Bund (5), the Union of Russian Social Democrats (2) and the St. Petersburg Workers' Organization (1). Of the remaining 39 he questioned the allegiance of 13: the total possible opposition to his aims was then 21; the total possible support - 39. Lenin's estimate proved broadly correct when Congress was to debate Party affairs: most of the doubtfuls - the "centre" or "bog" - voted against Iskra. With the voting on the Bund, however, the doubtfuls almost to a man supported Iskra.

For its part the Bund faced the Second Congress with apprehension. It is ironical that thanks largely to the Bund's

1. Krupskaja, op.cit. p93.

2. LS VI, pp80-83.

3. Total votes at the Congress were 51. Various changes took place between Lenin's calculations and the Congress.

brilliantly run transport organization across the Russian frontier more than 30 delegates were successfully smuggled out by the OK,¹ and the Bund thus had taken a large share in providing Lenin with his anti-Bund majority which was soon to drive it out of the Party. Several of the Bund's possible allies had been excluded from the Congress: in Ekaterinoslav the Bund-educated committee had been replaced by an all-Iskra committee whose two delegates to the Congress turned out to be "hard" Iskraists.² In Odessa where there had been a Bund-educated committee since the 90s, Iskra had made efforts in January 1903 to establish its own agency.³ The agent responsible, Zemliachka, became one of the delegates to the Congress; the second delegate, the Bund-trained Zborovskii, Lenin classed as a doubtful although he too in fact supported Iskra against the Bund. Another Odessa organization, Rabochaia Volia, which had been founded in May 1902 was a Bund-type organization of Jewish artisans; the OK had found it "unsolid" and thus excluded it from the Congress.⁴

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1. Moshinskii, op.cit. p19. Ironically one of the two arrests at the Bund's transit point was of Gorev who had sought a compromise between the Bund and Iskra. His arrest was accidental. Gorev, Kat. i Ssyl, No.8 p64.
 2. Levitskii, Za Chetvert Veka, II, pp143-57. In December 1902 Martov had observed that special pressure would be required to ensure the allegiance of Ekaterinoslav and Odessa, Letter to Iskra board, 1 xii 1902, LS IV p172.
 3. LS VIII, p326, n10.
 4. Protokoly II S"ezda p10, p496 n25. Garvi, Vospominania, pp23, 27-30.

The Kishinev committee also had been excluded by the OK because it had not made clear its attitude towards the Bund.^{1*} And of the ten committees excluded from the Congress, seven had substantial Jewish populations (five were in the Pale), and although it is conjecture it is likely that these committees included many Jews, perhaps also Bund-educated, perhaps also obscure in their attitude towards the Bund. The point is not that Lenin sought to exclude Jews as such - indeed, as he would show later, half of the delegates were Jews² - but that such Jews as were excluded may have had sympathy for the Bund.

Lenin's analysis of the anti-Iskra votes was correct; the only consistent friends the Bund found at the Congress were the rabochedeltsy from the Union and the St. Petersburg Workers' Organization - Akimov, his sister Bruker, and Martynov. But even this trio turned out to be allies only insofar as they supported all the Bund's attacks on Iskra: they deserted the Bund at the last ditch when they abstained from voting on the last chance of the Bund's remaining at the Congress.³

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1. Protokoly, Prilozhenie VII, p451. There was an illegal Bundist press in Kishinev, Garvi, op.cit., p57.
 2. Sostav S"ezda, LS VI, p190. Had all the Jews voted together they would have had a majority of one, assuming that only Martov among the Jews had two votes.
 3. Martynov's line was that the Bund's nationalism and separatism should be treated so as not to damage the Bund's organization, Protokoly, p62.

* The Kishinev organization in fact joined the Bund after the Congress.

The chief spokesman against the Bund at the Congress was Martov. While his contribution to the campaign against the Bund before the Congress was publicly smaller than Lenin's in private he may well have been the dominant figure. Whether or not he was expiating the sins of his youth in Vilna when he had advocated the need "specially to create a Jewish labour organization which would be the leader and mentor of the Jewish proletariat...",¹ or simply regarded himself as best qualified, as a Jew and with considerable knowledge of the matter in hand, to handle the situation, throughout the Congress he was the Bund's chief antagonist, always the first to speak against it, always expressing the views of the majority. Nor did he reward the Bund for its support when he split with Lenin, support without which his majority vanished. His enmity was implacable.

An eloquent opponent of the Bund's "separatist" tactics was Knuniants, one of the three Caucasian delegates.² Speaking throughout most of the Congress against the Bund from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, he and his

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1. /Martov/ Povorotnyi Punkt ... in Materialy, pp154-55.
 2. They originally composed the Caucasian Union, but at the beginning of the Congress this Union was declared by them to be defunct; they were then each given 2 votes as delegates of 3 separate committees. They were all "hards." Protokoly, p9.

group wavered only once, on the question of equality of language, when they joined the Bund, the rabochedeltsy and the "bog" against the Iskra majority. Right up to the 27th session, at which the Bund left the Congress, Knuniants consistently denied that the Bund was a national organization¹ and supported and advocated measures to create "a unified organization," i.e. measures which entailed rejection of the Bund's plan. But at the 28th session, in the afternoon of the very day the Bund left the Congress and the Party, Knuniants opening the debates on "regional and national organizations" said: "With the exit of the Bund .. we are left with only [regional organizations] to discuss - the Bund was the only national organization in the Party."² He then asked Congress to agree that because "such exclusive conditions" existed in the Caucasus a regional organization should be allowed to grow there. His fellow Caucasian, Topuridze, at once supported him with the demand for a local centre in the Caucasus with wide powers, although he had earlier claimed that national prejudice had been uprooted among the Caucasian SDs.³ One delegate warned the Congress that the Caucasians

1. Protokoly, pp58-9.
2. Ibid. p334.
3. Ibid. p334, p57.

were singing the same song as the Bundists and added:

"The Caucasian comrades are modest in their demands now only because they are children compared with the Bund. Let them grow up and you will see if not a Bund at least a bundik."¹

Iskra had further hoped for substantial support against the Bund from the delegation of the Polish Social Democrats who were invited to the Congress not by the OK but by the Congress itself at its third session. The PSD were known to be opposed to the Bund and had expressed the desire to join the RSDRP. When, however, the two delegates arrived, it was found that they had come straight from their Party's IV Congress armed with the demand to join the RSDRP on a ~~an~~ basis that was federalist in all but name. Lenin, anxious to prevent the Bund from exploiting the situation, succeeded in isolating discussion of the Poles' demands within the private walls of a commission. The Poles were assured that the commission would draft a resolution which Congress "will pass" and that they would enter the Party.² Lenin was prepared to make an exception in allowing the Poles the wide independence they demanded although it

1. Protokoly, p340.

2. Ganetskii's letter to Dzerzhinskii, written on the Poles' second day at the Congress (23 vii 1903), Krzhizhanovskii, S. in Prolet. Rev., No.2, 1933, pl11.

clearly conflicted with his ideas on organization, most probably because it was utopian to expect Polish workers to rally to the call of a Russian Party committee. In the case of the Bund and the Jewish proletariat this was not the case. In the commission, however, the Poles raised a new demand, namely that the Party should drop the demand for national self-determination from its programme. This Iskra would not agree to do. Before the commission had come to any conclusion Congress had to transfer to London and the Poles, probably relieved, took the opportunity to withdraw.¹

The Bund delegation realized as soon as they arrived at the Congress how successful Lenin's campaign against them had been. They met "a wall of hate and bitterness"² and even in private felt they could hardly speak with the other delegates.³ The delegation comprised six of the Bund's leading figures: Kremer, Kossovskii, Medem, Liber, Portnoi and Iudin-Aiznshtat.⁴ Although Liber had already emerged in the Bund as a talented and original speaker, it was expected that Kossovskii, who had conducted the polemics against Iskra would do the talking for the Bund with Medem to help on issues

1. See Appendix. VII.

2. Medem, II, p24 reporting Kremer's personal account to him.

3. Loc.cit.

4. Medem joined the delegation only at 10th session. Kremer was invited by the OK, without the knowledge of the other delegates, as a member of the original TsK of 1898 with consultative vote. Medem, op.cit. p23.

touching the national question.¹ Instead it was the 23 year old Liber, (perhaps the youngest delegate), who defended the Bund against the main attack, and more than that who attacked the Iskra majority on almost every point debated while the Bund was still at the Congress. Later, Lenin characterized the anti-Iskraists as the Libers, Akimovs, and Martynovs.² Although the Bund delegation included Aiznshtat, one of the opposition spokesmen at the Bund V Congress, and Portnoi whose attitude had been equivocal, they presented a united front in face of Iskra's hostility and reflected none of the dissension that had rent the Bund so short a time before. Aiznshtat, indeed, was stunned by the reception of the Congress³ and went on to earn Lenin's subsequent grudging respect for the "rabid obstructionism" which he practised as a member of the mandate commission.⁴

1. Doires, I, p203.

2. Shag vpered, Soch. VI, passim. Lenin took the trouble to count the speeches made by the chief speakers: Martov - 145, Lenin - 110, Liber - 101, Trotskii - 79, Plekhanov - 70, LS XI, pp265-8. Liber, however, attended only 27 sessions compared with the others' 37.

3. Medem, op.cit. p24.

4. Rasskaz o II S"ezde, LS VI, p221; II S"ezd Zagran. Ligi, in Lenin, Soch. VI pp92-3.

II. The Proceedings

The debates on the agenda

Congress opened on 17 (30) July 1903 in Brussels. The first subject for debate was the list of questions on the agenda.¹ Liber asked why the question of national organizations was to be treated separately from that of the Bund. Lenin replied that the question of national organizations involved the organization of the Party and therefore would be dealt with later.² The Congress accepted the list and immediately opened discussion on the order of questions.

Liber proposed a new agenda by which instead of the Bund being discussed first, the first point would be the committees' reports in order to acquaint the Congress with the state of the Party it represented; the second point would be the Programme because since the Party in fact had no programme it could not settle its organization; and finally, because both these points affected it, Party Organization. Since, Liber argued, according to the resolutions of the First Congress, the Bund was a part of the Party, it should be discussed under Party Organization.³ Akimov supported Liber on the grounds that he would like to see the Party organized on the same democratic, republican principles as the Bund;

1. Protokoly, p15.
 2. Ibid. p16.
 3. Ibid. pp16-17.

and if this were not to be the case, he would fight for all measures to preserve, at least for the Bund, its wonderful organization.¹

The attitude expressed by Lenin, Plekhanov, Martov, and Trotskii was that since the Bund had raised this all-important issue of the Party's organization, the Party must necessarily express itself on this. Lenin explained that Congress took its stand on the Manifesto of 1898: the Bund must come first formally because it had expressed the desire to change the Party organization to federation. Moreover, the polemics and disagreements which had taken place between the Bund and various other groups made it impossible to proceed to "friendly matters" (such as the Programme) until the unfriendliness had been settled.² As one delegate put it, the committees which had not expressed an opinion on the Bund had in fact made their position clear by recognizing Iskra.³

Plekhanov, as Chairman, summed up the problem: "There can be no doubt that the Congress is not constituent but regular, and therefore any proposal to change the Party's life in a radical manner must first be put to our approval or disapproval. The question is 'Federation or Autonomy?'"⁴

1. Protokoly, p18.
2. Ibid. p18.
3. Ibid p20.
4. Ibid p21.

Congress then voted on the agenda with the result that a majority of 30 voted to discuss the Bund first. Five "centre" votes were cast in favour of the Bund's argument.¹

The debates on the Bund's maximum statute

Within the space of the first three sessions, between Thursday afternoon and Saturday morning, the Bundists had seen and heard enough to realize the mistake of the V Congress in not heeding its opposition and to understand that the present Congress was in no mood to make concessions to the Bund. Thus when the time came for Liber, as spokesman for the Bund, to present the Bund's case, he produced an amended version of the maximum statute. The Bund delegation took advantage of the fact that the results of the V Congress were still unknown to the world at large, and it is an interesting comment on the "democratic" organization which Akimov had so ardently admired that its virtually self-appointed leaders could do as they pleased with the decisions of their own congress.² The Bundists had decided to jettison those parts of their statute which to them seemed to express the Bund's theoretical position, and to shift the argument

1. Kalafati (2 votes), Tseitlin (1) - whom Lenin (LS VI, p192) described as a "Bundist from Moscow" - and Moshinskii (2). LS VI, p88.

2. The first news of the V Congress was a two-page leaflet with resolutions, questions discussed (less "the national question"), and the "maximum." V S"ezd /Bunda/. ZKB, 7/20 viii 03. Reproduced in Iskra No.46, 15 viii, p24.

on to practical ground: "that is, to determine whether certain concrete demands were compatible with the interests of the labour movement in Russia, regardless of their underlying principle."¹ They threw out Point 1, the controversial "rubric," and in its place put "The Bund's position in the Party is determined by the following points;" they threw out the second half of Point 2, in which the Bund's participation was implicit in all action taken in the name of the entire proletariat of any given area where the Bund was active; they removed everywhere the phrase "contracting sides."²

The Bund's case was now that it demanded sole representation of the Jewish proletariat in the Party with a preference for federation. To this Iskra was to answer by rejecting federation and proposing instead independence limited to the tasks of agitation among the Jewish proletariat, the exact details of which would be postponed until the debates on Party Organization.

Liber put the case for the Bund. In his preamble he complained that his task of presenting the Bund's proposals

1. Vtoroi S"ezd RSDRP. Otchet Delegatsii Bunda. pp7-8.
2. Protokoly, pp48-9. See original form of Statutes in previous chapter.

was made difficult by the apparent fact that the majority had already made up its mind. The majority was moreover ill-informed on the question since the polemics of the previous months had in reality said nothing.¹

The Bund based its proposals on the need for the rationalization of the 1898 resolutions: "autonomy" was a vague term which could mean anything or nothing. Equally the Bund did not insist on federation, but simply wanted to define the status quo and the extent of its own activities. Regional status was not acceptable to the Bund because Jewish disabilities and the peculiar social relations existing among the Jews - who possessed neither peasants, landlords, nor nobility - were common to all Jews in Russia. In addition, regionalism led to decentralization, and the Bund as much as anybody wished for a strong and centralized party. Forestalling the argument from language, Liber declared that the Bund was not based on language, that if it were the status of a technical committee would be enough. The sole criterion for the Bund's autonomy was the existence of the Jewish proletariat.

Liber then turned to the question of Party structure. The Bund wanted the Party to be federated. Liber argued

 1. Protokoly, p48.

that federation enhanced centralization, on the grounds that autonomy encouraged the proletariat to concentrate on their narrow national problems and their own organization to the detriment of their international solidarity. Liber then read the amended statutes.¹

Martov presented the case for the opposition to the Bund's proposals. His opening manoeuvre was calculated to embarrass the Bundists and place them in an invidious position: he declared that the Bund's statutes amounted to an "agreement" between two independent organizations, one of Jews and the other of non-Jews.² Martov's argument made it seem that the Bund sought to exclude all Jews from the Party who were not in the Bund; in fact, of course, the Bund recognized that many Jews, Martov himself for that matter, were active in the general Party, but what they sought was recognition of the Bund as sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in the Party, i.e. that no other group or organization should bear this title.

In a weak attempt to base the argument against federation on the resolutions of the First Congress, Martov declared that the autonomy given to the Bund had not been a special exception, but the same as the autonomy granted to all other committees, with the difference that the autonomy of the

1. Protokoly, pp48-52.

2. Ibid. p52.

latter was somewhat narrower.¹ This was no argument, for the First Congress had not defined autonomy: its statement that the Bund was to be autonomous in all questions concerning the Jewish proletariat had, on the contrary, left open the question of scope and form rather in the Bund's present interests.

Martov then refused even to consider the Bund's conditions on the grounds that no preliminary views had been expressed in the Party press.² Yet it was only the day before that Congress had waived legalistic considerations in order to invite the PSD to the Congress, in spite of the fact that nothing on this question had appeared in the press, that the OK had not found it possible to invite them, and that the PSD had not even made clear their attitude to joining the Party.

Martov, however, turned to a more powerful argument: regardless of federation or autonomy, the Party would not allow any of its parts to represent group, professional, or national interests of any part of the proletariat. National differences played a secondary part to class interests. As for the legal disabilities of the Jewish proletariat these could serve only as a reason for somewhat widening the Bund's autonomy, not for giving it the status of a national organiz-

1. Loc.cit.
2. Ibid. p53.

ation. Martov described the Bund's position as a contradiction which had arisen out of unfortunate historical conditions; by which he evidently meant the inordinately long time the rest of social-democracy in Russia had taken to organize itself, thus having left the Bund in a position to grow geographically large and develop aspirations commensurate with such growth. Realistically he agreed that one "heroic" resolution would not eradicate the contradiction, and he therefore proposed a resolution which, he believed, would guarantee the Bund a degree of independence, the precise limits of which would be determined by Congress when it came to discuss the general Party organization.

Martov proposed the following resolution:

"Whereas:

- a) the closest unification of the Jewish proletariat with the proletariat of the races among whom they live is unconditionally essential in the interests of their struggle for political and economic emancipation;
- b) only such unity guarantees social democracy success in its struggle with all chauvinism and antisemitism;
- c) such unity in no way excludes the independence of the Jewish labour movement in everything concerning the private tasks of agitation among the Jewish population, created by peculiarities of language and conditions of life, --

the Second Congress of the RSDRP expresses its profound conviction that a change in the organizational relations between the Jewish and Russian proletariat on federal principles would be a fundamental obstacle to the fuller *

* organizational rapprochement of the conscious proletarians of different races, and would unavoidably cause great harm to the interests of the whole, in general, and of the Jewish, in particular, proletariat of Russia, and therefore, in decisively rejecting as unconditionally impermissible in principle all possibility of federal relations between the All-Russian Party and the Bund, as one of its component parts, the Congress decrees that the Bund occupies in the RSDRP the position of an autonomous component part, the limits of whose autonomy shall be determined when the All-Party statutes are defined. In view of the aforesaid, regarding the 'statute' proposed by the Bund delegates as a draft section of the All-Party Statute, the Congress relegates discussion of it to Point Six of the Agenda and passes on to its next business."¹

The independence which Martov offered the Bund extended to "everything concerning the private tasks of agitation among the Jewish population created by peculiarities of language and way of life," in other words, the same degree of independence as that of any local committee. With studied care, Martov excluded all reference to "nation" in his resolution, and talked instead of the "races" among which the Jews lived in Russia, and of the great damage the federal principle in the Party structure would bring to the cause of uniting the proletarians of these races.²

The general debates on the position of the Bund in the Party started at the fifth session and continued until the eighth. The line of attack constantly changed: at one moment as if the Congress were constituent the Bund was

1. Protokoly, pp54-55.

2. Ibid. pp53-4. Interesting differences emerge between Martov's resolution and the one which Lenin incompletely drafted but did not present. See Appendix.VI.

invited "to join" on terms to be determined later; at another the Bund could not be allowed to leave the Party and thus deprive it of its great strength. Some delegates attacked the Bund's very existence, others while blaming the Bund for its nationalism praised it for its organizational achievements and its historical role. In addition, the Bund's statutes which Martov had found impossible to discuss came under attack and were defined as "no more than a formulation of distrust in the Party as a whole:" while it was understandable for the Bund to put them forward, it would be moral and political bankruptcy for the Party to accept them.¹ The sharp criticism and condescending flattery to which the Bund delegation had to listen from people whom they rightly considered totally ignorant of the real position, people who were rehearsing lines taught them a month before at Geneva, drew bitter and heated retorts.

The debates were opened by the Caucasians, Topuridze and Knuniants. Topuridze maintained that the SDs working in the Caucasus had liquidated all national prejudice and would not dream of demanding separate national organizations for the Armenians, Georgians, and other Caucasians.² Knuniants declared that the Jews had no common language - an argument which Liber had expressly not put - and "no

1. Protokoly, p69.
2. Ibid. p57.

common territory in the Empire." Having thus removed the technical arguments for the separate existence of the Bund, Knuniants considered the "theoretical" arguments, e.g. the special legal position of the Jews, anti-semitism, and so on, and came to the conclusion that such arguments existed for all oppressed minorities in Russia and did not, therefore, constitute an exclusive reason. With Congress's permission to exceed his allotted time, Knuniants went on to deny that the interests of the Jewish proletariat in the slightest degree contradicted the interests of the proletariats of other nationalities, and explained that only such a contradiction would justify separate organizations. Echoing Martov he asserted that "as long as we are talking on a class and not a national basis" such a contradiction could not arise. Knuniants foreshadowed the attitude Congress would adopt later when, developing Martov's idea of "unfortunate historical conditions," he defined the Bund's separate existence as an error of the First Congress which could only be justified by the fact of the Bund's already developed organizational strength in 1898.¹ It went without saying that the mistakes of the First Congress would be corrected by the Second, and Knuniants was warmly applauded.²

The second blow came from a quasi-Bundist quarter,

1. Protokoly, pp58-9.
2. Ibid. p60.

namely from Zborovskii, one of the Odessa delegates. Zborovskii initiated a new approach: on the one hand he condemned the Bund's policy of setting up committees where Jewish workers were already organized by non-Bundist committees and thus, as he claimed to have experienced in Odessa, creating disorganization; but on the other hand, he exhorted the Bund to unite with the all-Russian organization for reasons flattering rather than disciplinary: " ... If there is a danger that the all-Russian proletariat will not strive for all the demands of the SD programme (which programme fully satisfies all the Bund's demands) then instead of moving away, the Bund should give the Party the benefit of its higher class consciousness and join closer in order to make sure its interests are served."¹

Zborovskii's line of praising while blaming came into its own when Martynov reminded the Congress that what they must fight against was not the Bund as such, but the nationalism which had broken out in it. Knuniants went further and said that the Bund's strength did not give it the right to live solely for the Jewish proletariat.² One after another delegates rose to recite the list of the Bund's disorganizing efforts. In the area of the Northern Union (Pskov, Iaroslavl), Bund-trained workers had isolated the Jewish proletariat and ignored the position

 1. Protokoly, pp60-1.
 2. Ibid. p64.

of the nationalities around them.¹ When the Bund had unofficially organized a committee in Kiev the Jewish proletariat there, already organized in a mixed committee, had been embarrassed by "this show of distrust towards their Russian comrades."² "Only a few months ago," the "untoward appearance of a Bundist committee" in Ekaterinoslav had caused the Jewish proletariat "who had been quite content to work with the Russians" to doubt the wisdom of the First Congress's decision to grant the Bund autonomy. Bundists in Berlin had tried to turn a general protest meeting against the Kishinev pogrom into a purely Jewish protest.³

Portnoi reminded the Congress at one point that Liber had presented the Bund's statutes for discussion not as an ultimatum.⁴ At another point Liber protested with such indignation that the Chairman asked him to behave more calmly that what in fact was being debated was whether or not the Bund was necessary at all, and he castigated the Bund's critics as "people who have forgotten their own birth." No

1. Protokoly, pp61-2.

2. Ibid. p72.

3. Ibid. pp63-6. The Ekaterinoslav delegate, Malkin, did not mention that a) the workers there had long been organized regionally and the Jewish workers were in one region; b) the Jewish region had been organized by migrant Bundists on the Bund pattern; c) it was only after an Iskra committee had been set up in the spring of 1903 that "Bund-indoctrinated" workers mustered an opposition and a split had occurred. Levitskii, Za Chetvert Veka, pp133-45.

4. Protokoly, p63.

doubt enjoying the irony he reminded the delegates that Rosa Luxemburg had demanded that the organization of the Polish proletariat in Germany have complete control over all matters concerning them.¹ He may well have guessed that the PSD would ask the same of the RSDRP.

Trotsky summarized: either the Bund was to be recognized as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in the Party, or it was to be a special Party organization for agitation and propaganda among the Jewish proletariat. It was in the latter sense that the Bund could be incorporated into the Party. Thus it was the Bund's anomalous position which would be liquidated, not, as Liber suggested, the Bund itself and all the "fruitful work it had done in developing the consciousness of the Jewish workers."²

Liber's comment on people who had forgotten their own birth gave the majority the opportunity to adopt yet another line of attack: of course no one was attacking the great role of the Bund in the nineties when it had been the unifier of the movement - it was only after its Fourth Congress in 1901 that the Bund had begun to move away from the Russian movement.³

1. Protokoly, p68.
 2. Ibid. pp68-70.
 3. Ibid. pp73-5.

Martov criticized the Bund for holding its Fifth Congress in secret from the Party OK, of which it was a member, and with the most blatant hypocrisy Martov added: "Had a Russian comrade been at the Fifth Congress the Bund would have known the attitude of the RSDRP to the question and none of this would have happened."¹ In fact, Martov was probably more surprised himself by the degree of unanimity they had forged among their own supporters.²

Some respite came when Akimov again eulogized the Bund's record. He even praised it for its approach to the national question, which he saw as the rightful development of the Jewish proletariat's national consciousness in its struggle with the nationalistic Jewish bourgeoisie. For Akimov the desire of the Congress to reduce the Bund to the level of a committee was criminal.³

In all the accusations and recriminations which had run on for three sessions, Lenin had taken no part at all. There was no need for him to intervene while his plans were being carried out for him: the Bund's proposals were too obviously extreme for serious hesitation on the part of his supporters. His first speech came after Kossovskii had complained that, while the Bund had been criticized for

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1. Protokoly, p69.
 2. Letter to Akselrod, 14 iv 1903, Pisma, I, p82 in which he expresses doubts about some OK-Iskraists.
 3. Protokoly, pp82-3.

acting as a side, in fact from the very beginning the Congress had been a compact majority acting as a side against the Bund.¹ Amid applause, Lenin proclaimed his pride in the compact majority, and declared they would be even more proud if the Party were a 90 per cent compact majority.² Until the issue of federation which "some of the delegates considered harmful" had been settled the Congress could not go on to discuss the Party's internal affairs. Lenin X ridiculed Liber for suggesting that federation promoted centralism: centralism demanded the absence of any barrier between the centre and the remotest part of the Party. "The Bundists would laugh if it were suggested that there should exist inside the Bund such 'centralism' that the TsK of the Bund could contact all the Kovno groups only through the Kovno committee."³ Liber's response was still truculent.

The sixth session closed with applause for an impassioned speech by Levin, of Iuzhnyi Rabochii, who appealed to the Bund as a Bund-trained revolutionary who retained his respect for his teachers whom he saw among the Bund delegates at the Congress. He urged them to remember the old days when they had carried on the great tradition of the 70's and had been

1. Protokoly, p83.

2. Ibid. p87. With 5 out of 51 votes the Bund was a 10% minority.

3. Ibid. pp87-9.

all-Russian revolutionaries in the best sense: "Comrades! Consider the question coldly, do not regard us as enemies, believe in our readiness to work together and before saying 'No' think of the consequences..."¹

* * *

1. Ibid. pp92-4. Levin had had experience in Vilna in the 90's. Historische Shriftn, III, p552.

Debates on the Ultimatum.

The Bund delegation took stock of the situation during the rest of the day: it was a Sunday and there was no afternoon session. On the following morning, at the seventh session, Liber announced that they had taken account of the majority's objection to their proposed statutes and had decided to make certain concessions in the interests of unity.¹ In private the Bundists had decided to withdraw the amended "maximum," and to present the Fifth Congress ultimatum, or "minimum," but, again in contravention of the Fifth Congress stipulations, only those points of the ultimatum which they considered the essentials of the Bund's existence.² The form of the new ultimatum was as follows:

- "1. The Bund's position in the Party is determined by the following points:
2. The Bund is the social democratic organization of the Jewish proletariat, unlimited in its activity by any regional framework and is in the Party as its sole representative.
3. The Bund selects its own representation in the Party TsK, the Party ZK and to the Party congresses.
4. The All-Party programme is the Bund's programme.
5. The Bund has its own congresses to decide all questions specially concerning the Jewish proletariat, it has its own TsK and ZK.

1. Protokoly, p95.
 2. Otchet Bunda, p15.

6. The Bund has free control of its own organizational affairs.
7. The Bund has the right to publish literature in other languages, besides Yiddish.
8. Party Congress has the right to alter all decisions of Bund Congress.
9. All the enumerated points are fundamental and can be altered, added to, or deleted by a majority of two-thirds of the votes at Party Congresses."¹

The amended "minimum" was a considerable reduction from the conditions the Bund had proposed at the fourth session: by comparison with the V Congress "maximum" it must have seemed to the Bund delegation the last resort. They had, however, left intact Para. 2, which, as had been made clear at the V Congress, contained the Bund's raison d'etre, and they remained silent over their instructions ultimately to reject any formula in the spirit of autonomy.

Liber made it clear to Congress that this was as far as the Bund could go, but when Plekhanov interrupted to ask him the direct question whether the announcement was to be taken as an ultimatum, he replied that the Bund well knew the Congress regulations and had brought no imperative mandates.² To judge from the way the Bund delegation had treated its congress's orders up to this point alone it may

1. Protokoly, pp95-96. See previous chapter for original terms of the ultimatum.

2. Protokoly, p96. In the Bund's Otchet this became an 'indirect' answer, p17.

well be that Liber meant what he said!

Akimov immediately spoke strongly in favour of the new conditions and pointed out that they showed, as he had said, that the Bund was not guilty of nationalism.¹

According to the Bund's Report at this point the "compact majority" wavered, some of them finding the new proposals acceptable.² A 15-minute adjournment was declared by the Chairman,³ during which Lenin conducted a lightning campaign to restore unity.⁴

The rest of the session and the whole of the eighth session was spent in discussing whether the new terms should be discussed at all. With one insignificant exception the entire wrangle was conducted by Martov, Plekhanov, Trotskii, Liber and Kossovskii.

The Bundists held that Congress had placed the Bund first on the agenda in order to get an answer to the question of its position in the Party; it had then decided that this meant in effect the question "federation or autonomy?" Congress had shown clear disapproval of the Bund's first proposals on the grounds that they implied federation, which was unacceptable; to please Congress, the Bund had therefore thrown out those points in its proposals which it believed

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1. Protokoly, p97.
 2. Otchet, pl7.
 3. Protokoly, p507, n91.
 4. Otchet, loc.cit. The only waverer Lenin mentions anywhere is Tseitlin, whom he describes as a Bundist, LS VI, pl92; LS VII, pl26; LS XI, p311. L.S. Tseitlin had been active in 90's in Bundist organization in Vitebsk, Ginzburg in Rev. dvizh. sredi ev. pl05.

contained the federalist principle; in order, therefore, to finish with this, the first point on the agenda, Congress must examine the amended statutes which were an answer to the question of the Bund in the Party.¹

The Iskraists opposed this view on the grounds that, whereas the original proposals had been unequivocally federalist, the new ones were a mixture of federation and autonomy and therefore did not give a clear answer to the question. Furthermore, it was only because the original statutes were unequivocal that Martov had been able to assess them in his general resolution, which was now before Congress. As Martov's resolution proposed to reject federation, and there was doubt whether the new statutes were free from federalist elements, these new proposals could either be rejected en bloc or completely withdrawn until Party organization was debated.²

To this the Bund replied that Martov's resolution was as much an answer to the question of party organization as it was to that of the Bund in the Party, and was moreover a surreptitious move to predispose the Congress to a definition of the Bund's autonomy which was narrower than the First Congress could have intended. Liber demanded to know what

1. Protokoly, p98, p99, p101.
2. Ibid. pp97-99.

Iskra was for; all they had said was that they were against federation; everyone had said what the Bund's position in the Party ought not to be, nothing had been said about what it ought to be.¹ Examining Martov's resolution, Liber asked among which 'races' the Jewish workers lived, and added that they lived among nations not races. What, he asked, was the "independence of the Jewish labour movement?" If it were to be independent then it should have an independent organization.²

Iskra replied to these questions that it was in favour of autonomy for the Bund and this was what was meant by the independence of the Jewish labour movement. In broad terms autonomy was technical, i.e. agitation and propaganda, issue of proclamations, demonstrations and so on, but overall control by the Party central committee. Anything beyond this was for Iskra federation and as such unacceptable. The limits of autonomy were, however, flexible and had to be fixed in each case. For the Bund they would undoubtedly be wider than for a local committee, but that question could only be answered when the Congress came to discuss party organization.³

1. Protokoly, pp99-102.

2. Ibid. p105. Liber's objection to 'race' was ridiculed by Martov and Trotskii as archaic religious prejudice, but no doubt his point reminded Martov of Lenin's unfinished draft resolution on the Bund, see Appendix. V!

3. Ibid. p100, p101, p105.

Deadlock was reached with the Bund demanding the immediate examination of the new proposals as an answer to the first question on the agenda, and the Iskraists demanding a vote on Martov's resolution which they claimed also gave a clear reply to the question.

After a short interval requested by the Bund for consultation, Liber demanded examination of the new proposals and declared that if this demand were not met the Bund would table an amendment to Martov's resolution to the effect that the independence in all questions concerning the Jewish proletariat, granted by the 1898 decisions would in no way be impaired.¹ Instead of voting on Liber's proposal, the Congress proceeded, after a short wrangle in which Lenin saved Martov from endangering his own resolution,² to vote on Liber's amendment.

The voting on Liber's amendment, expressing the guarantee of independence in 1898 terms, was 13 in favour, and 26 against.³ This meant that 12 votes had not been cast and in effect this meant that 25 votes were in the hands of delegates who were troubled by the thought of repudiating the

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1. Protokoly, p106.
 2. Martov wanted his resolution voted on before the amendment. Lenin supported Akimov and Martynov for the reverse procedure, Ibid, p508, n96.
 3. Ibid, p107. This obvious cleavage is not analysed by Lenin in any of his careful studies of the voting.

1898 decision.¹ The Iskraists then dragooned the waverers, by passing the decision to take a vote on Martov's resolution by name, into the old compact majority. The resolution was passed by 46 to 5.² There were no deserters from the Iskra camp when Liber proposed an immediate examination of the new statutes: only 5 abstainers expressed their disapproval of the shock tactics which had disposed of the first question on the agenda.³

For nearly five days the Congress had debated the Party's relations with the Bund. Throughout this time the Bund delegation had made concession after concession in the demands its Fifth Congress had passed. It had been an easy task for Lenin and Martov to marshal Congress into a compact majority, and Lenin wrote, in October, in one of his analyses of the Congress: "Fight with Bund...Federation rejected."⁴

What had been achieved? Congress had rejected the principle of federation, the Bund had concurred, under duress, by removing what it saw as the most obviously federalist elements in its proposals; the new terms proposed

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1. This conjecture must be qualified by the fact that non-participation in voting was a common feature at the Congress. Lenin, *Shag Vpered*, Soch. VI, p201.
 2. Protokoly, p107.
 3. Loc.cit.
 4. LS VII, p126.

by the Bund were removed to a later stage of the Congress, in spite of the admission by the majority that they might contain federalist elements. Clearly all the Bund could look forward to was a repeat performance of the majority's attitude to their first proposals: the Congress would be able to say: we have already said we reject federation, and here you offer us new proposals in which federation, though masked, is undoubtedly present. We have no choice, we are bound by our decision on principle to reject the new proposals, and since the federalist elements are disguised in them, we must reject the proposals en bloc.

In spite of this bleak outlook the delegation stayed on, determined either to see their case through to the end, or to share in the work of the Party congress because the Bund was still a part of the Party. With opinion as it now stood, their exit from the Party was a foregone conclusion, but before that time arrived they would, through Liber, remain as the most consistent opponent to Lenin.

The debates on the Party Programme: the issues affecting nationality

The second point on the agenda, the Programme, was given in its entirety to a commission which included one Bundist, Aiznshtat¹ and emerged for discussion at the fifteenth session. In the meantime the third point, the Central Organ, was completed by the acclamation of Iskra;² point four, Committees' Reports, was partially completed by the reading in full of the Bund's report³ and in part by those of a number of other organizations.⁴ It is ironical that Lenin had urged the OK to ensure that all committee reports should be "full and solid" for the reason that "... our second congress will be more constituent than the first."⁵ The fifth point on the agenda, the Organization of the Party, began to be debated at the fourteenth session and the debates were continued from the 22nd session after the discussion of the Party Programme.

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1. Protokoly pl39, pl22
 2. Ibid. pl55. Resolution in two parts: 1) recognition of Iskra as Central Organ, 2) expression of solidarity with its record. Only Akimov and Bruker voted against 1); the Bund voted in favour. On 2) the Bund abstained with Martynov; Akimov and Bruker were against. Lenin, Shag vpered. Soch. VI, pp165-66.
 3. Protokoly pl57. Bund's report was long and detailed. Congress was impressed and applauded. Medem, II, p29; Shotman, pl16.
 4. Protokoly pp160-2, 515-21, nn130-3
 5. Unpublished letter to OK sometime before Congress in 1903. In Prolet. Rev. No.24, 1924, pl60.

The programme, which had been handed to a commission at the 8th session, emerged again for debate at the 15th session. All points in the general preamble resolution were passed with minor amendments. General debate was scant and no serious dissent arose. Indeed, Liber and Plekhanov even collaborated in putting through a minor amendment.¹

Serious divisions emerged when the Congress moved on to discuss the political section of the programme. The first sign that national and regional feeling existed in other than the Bund delegation appeared when Topuridze, one of the Georgian delegates moved that the phrase "regardless of nation or religion"² be added to the demand for universal suffrage. No response is recorded, nor did it go into the final version of this clause, but the subsequent debates show that the matter did not rest there.

More signs appeared when the Congress came to the next clause, "Wide local and regional self-government." This clause, absent in Lenin's draft, had been added by the Commission at the request of the Caucasians:³ "regional" had been requested by the Bundist, Aiznshtat, against the fierce opposition of Lenin and Plekhanov, but with the enthusiastic support of the Caucasians.⁴ In open session

1. Protokoly, p178.

2. Ibid. p180.

3. Dnevnik, LS VI, p105.

4. Otchet Bunda, p27, footnote.

Lenin again opposed "regional self-government" on the ground that it implied the desire to break up the State. Martov, clearly in order to pacify the Caucasians, offered a compromise; "Wide local self-government; regional self-government for those borderlands which are distinguished by their way of life and by the composition of their population from the truly Russian localities."¹ This was enthusiastically supported by the Caucasians, one of whom declared that the slogan "autonomy for the Caucasus" would be a strong weapon against Georgian nationalism.² With evident reluctance the Congress then passed two further amendments, by Plekhanov and Kalafati, which resulted, after stylistic treatment in the commission, in the following final version of the resolution:

"Wide local self-government: regional self-government for those localities which are distinguished by their special way of life and by the composition of their population."³

The Bund can thus claim to have been the originator of the demand for regional self-government in the Party programme, but it was thanks to the Bund's unexpected alliance with the Caucasians that the measure succeeded.

Liber exploited the evident national susceptibilities of some of the delegates by proposing, during the debates on

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1. Protokoly, p183.
 2. Ibid. p184.
 3. LS, II, p165.

Clause 5 (4 in Lenin's draft), to add "freedom of language" to the freedoms enumerated in the clause. In spite of the laughter which greeted this proposal, he had evidently again found an echo: as a result of a sarcastic jibe against Liber by Plekhanov, Trotskii asked Krupaskaia to persuade Lenin to act as chairman and avoid a split, for Trotskii had observed a growing uneasiness among delegates "upon whom the Bund's influence was at work."¹

The most marked divisions, however, took place in the debates over Clause 7 (6) on the equality of citizens. Liber proposed firstly to remove "language" from Lenin's draft clause ("Abolition of classes, and complete equality of all citizens regardless of sex, religion, race, nationality, or language") and secondly to add a separate clause guaranteeing the equality of language. While a small majority of the Congress voted against Liber's first proposal, over the second proposal the Congress proved to be exactly divided. The deadlock was not relieved by a series of votes, both straight and by name. Supporting Liber were the Caucasians, the "centre", the rabochedeltsy, and two "hard" Iskraists - Vilenskii from Ekaterinoslav and the Finn, Shotman, from St. Petersburg.

Eventually, Zhordaniia, one of the Georgians, managed, by a majority of one, to get through an amendment acknowledging the equality of language in all schools, institutions,

1. Protokoly, p185; Lenin, Soch. VI, p178; Krupaskaia, Memories, p103

and assemblies. Thereupon the Bund had no difficulty in getting Congress to agree to Liber's first proposal to remove "language". The whole resolution, as amended, was then put to the vote and was passed by a majority of two. "Certain members,"¹ however, then immediately demanded a name vote and deadlock was again reached at 24 to 24. After further voting, and proposals by Plekhanov and Trotskii to drop the whole question, the entire clause was thrown out,² but eventually Congress agreed to hand the clause back to the commission for re-wording.

At the 21st session, the commission spokesman presented new proposals: 1) to leave "and language" in the original version, and 2) to add a new clause proclaiming the right of every citizen to receive education in his native tongue, to speak his own language at assemblies and in social and state institutions. Point 2) was accepted by the Congress, but after further argument the Bund succeeded in defeating point 1).³

Thus in a series of sessions, rent by divisions and angry exchanges, the Bund had succeeded in making two additions to the programme, which would compensate for the

1. Protokoly, p523, n150.
 2. Ibid. pp186-8.
 3. Ibid. p531, n191.

Party's reluctance to face the fact that in multi-national Russia the solution of the national problem did not necessarily require a nationalist attitude, but did require recognition of the specific problems of the proletarians of different nationalities. These two points were regional self-government, and the right of every citizen to speak his native tongue.

It is an interesting feature of the Bund's efforts to include regional self-government in the Party's programme that it was clearly not claiming such autonomy for the Jews as such: the very basis of its claim to represent the entire Jewish proletariat in the Party was that the Jews were ubiquitous in Russia and that the Bund could not, therefore, constitute a regional organization.

It seems probable that at least one of the Bund's purposes in proposing regional self-government was in order to stimulate the local and national feelings of the Congress delegates whose support the Bund needed if it were to succeed in amending Iskra's draft proposal on national self-determination. Certainly these tactics bore fruit in the disputes on the equality of language. In the debates on national self-determination, however, they were to prove barren.

With the Congress still divided over the language question, Clause 8 (7) of the Programme came up for debate:

the right of all nations in the State to self-determination.¹ According to Iskra, social-democracy was neutral in its attitude to the national question; if nations chose to develop their independence to the point of political and economic separation from the Russian State, social-democracy would neither help nor hinder them. Oppression of one nation by another in any form was to be fought against, but it was not the business of social-democracy to advance national strivings among the proletariat.²

It was to this broad generalized formula that the Polish Social Democrats' delegates had objected in the commission set up by the Congress to establish the grounds on which the Poles could unite with the RSDRP. Unless the Russians clearly and explicitly condemned the nationalist slogan of "independent Poland," union with them was of little value to the PSD for this was the slogan of the rival Polish Socialist Party. The PSD delegates had thus set the removal of self-determination from the programme of the RSDRP as an essential condition for their joining the Party, but Lenin and Martov had rejected this ultimatum and the Poles had left the Congress.³ Before they left, Medem had asked the

1. Protokoly, p190.

2. Lenin, Natsionalnyi vopros v nashey programme, Soch. V, p337.

3. See Appendix: The PSD delegation at the II Congress.

Poles in private to support the Bund in proposing a motion for national self-determination and the creation of institutions guaranteeing free cultural development; but the Poles had refused, being consistent in their demand for the removal of national self-determination.¹

It was this demand for the addition to Clause 8 of the phrase "the creation of institutions guaranteeing freedom of cultural development"² that Medem put to the Congress when he opened the debates. The V Congress of the Bund had adopted no position on the national question, being equally divided between those who advocated national-cultural autonomy for the Jews and those who argued that the Jews had no national problem only a Jewish, i.e. political, problem; thus Medem was free to speak independently. He supported social democratic neutralism on the question of secession, but doubted whether a democratic constitution would eliminate all the possibilities of conflict arising from the special needs of the national minorities. He pointed out that regional self-government not only did not imply self-determination, but excluded those nations which were non-regional. It was therefore in order to guarantee the right of minorities to free development that Medem put his amendment.

1. Medem, II, p28.

2. Protokoly, pp190-1.

After surprising lack of debate, however, Medem's proposal was overwhelmingly defeated, as was an amendment by Liber which called for "recognition for all nations in the State of the right to self-determination and the freedom of their cultural development." With a few abstentions, the original version of the clause was passed by the Congress.¹

The Bund's failure to muster the same support over the question of national self-determination as it had over the question of language was probably evidence rather of a lack of interest than of opportunity. Self-determination was after all a blanket term which would accommodate most needs and the Caucasians were satisfied with the acceptance of local and regional self-government. The explicit demand for linguistic equality, on the other hand, was of immediate practical use in the Social Democrats' struggle with their nationalist rivals.

1. Protokoly, p192.

The organization of the Party: the Bund and the Martov/Lenin split

At the fourteenth session the Congress came to the fifth point on the agenda, the Organization of the Party. Lenin read his draft statutes,¹ and after some discussion, including a comment by Liber that Lenin's proposals were the epitome of "organized distrust,"² Medem and Liber reminded the Congress that the question of the Bund had still to be discussed, yet no provision had been made in the statutes. They asked that the list of speakers be not closed. They were told not to panic or think an ambush was being constructed for them: the Bund must be discussed separately. The list was closed. Levin, of Iuzhnyi Rabochii, noted that this constituted a formal breach by the Congress of its own decision to debate the Bund's terms under Party Organization, and the Bund delegation made a formal statement to this effect.³

The Bund realized that when, if ever, its proposals for its relations with the Party were discussed, it would have to be on the basis of Lenin's statutes, should the latter be accepted by the Congress. The right Lenin wanted

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1. Protokoly, pp162-3, pp456-7, Prilozhenie XI.
 2. A paraphrase of Trotskii's definition of the Bund's statutes, Ibid. p69.
 3. Ibid. p169.

to give the Party Central Committee to settle disputes within Party organizations would conflict with the Bund's categorical demand for "free control of its organizational affairs"; the Bund wanted its congresses' decisions to be alterable only by the Party congress, but Lenin's plan gave that right to the Party Central Committee; the Bund sought the right to appoint its own representatives to the Party Central Committee, but in Lenin's plan the Party Central Committee was appointed by the Party Congress. Lenin's plan, moreover, included the final subordination to the Central Committee of all organizations, groups, unions, or committees of local, regional and even national status.¹ As Liber pointed out this, if passed, would preclude discussion on national organizations, the next point on the agenda. "Lenin," he said, "signs our death warrant, but he delays our execution and leaves it to the Party Central Committee."² Both Liber and Medem declared that the Bund could not remain in the Party if either the Bund's demands were rejected or Lenin's plan were passed.³

The Bundists made it plain that they did not object to centralism in principle: indeed, when Liber had earlier

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1. Lenin, Proekt ustava RSDRP, Soch. VI, ppl2-13; Protokoly, p96.
 2. Protokoly, p172
 3. Ibid. pp172-3.

been asked, after the reading of the Bund's report, whether the Bund believed that the "principles of so-called democratism" could be applied to their local committees, he had replied: "We find it impossible to apply the principles of democratism proposed and defended by some comrades."¹

But the Bundists now contended that Lenin's centralism led not merely to the desirable control and guidance of the lower Party organs by the higher, but to the eclipse of the former.

The general discussion which took place before Lenin's draft statutes were handed to the Statute Commission (to which no Bundist was appointed) was limited to the objections expressed by the representatives of Iuzhnyi Rabochii, who were interested in establishing a single centre, such as their own, to control both theory and practice; by Akimov who had visions of dissenting committees, like Voronezh, being liquidated out of hand;² and by the Bundists who prophesied that Lenin's Party would turn out to be no more than a "phantom organization of generals without an army."³

After three days in the Statute Commission, Lenin's statutes re-emerged at the 22nd session on August 2 (OS). The Commission's preamble which was directed chiefly at the Bund⁴

1. Protokoly, pp158-9.

2. One of the most vocal of the committees excluded from the Congress.

3. Ibid. pp165-73.

4. Ibid. p531, n193.

allowed for exceptions to the statutes to be made in special appendices which would be worked out after the general Party statutes had been gone through. Naturally, the Bund wanted to know what exceptions to expect before it agreed to accept the general statutes. The Bund explained that the Commission's proposal to break up the Bund's terms and attach them where possible to Lenin's statutes would be tantamount to liquidating them: many of their points had no counter-part in Lenin's plan. While not seeking to place the Bund's statutes above those of the Party, the Bund insisted that its proposals be discussed first: it could clearly not commit itself to Lenin's plan until it knew the margin of its own independence within that plan.¹

Iskra's attitude was epitomized by Trotskii: "... We must first work out the general Party statutes and from that point of view work out the Bund's place in the Party. The Party is not for the Bund: the Bund is for the Party."² The Congress therefore rejected the Bund's demand to discuss the Bund first.

In fact, however, the Commission had made amendments to Lenin's draft, obviously with the Bund in mind. Lenin's point 8, for instance, which subordinated all Party organiz-

1. Protokoly, pp261-3.

2. Ibid. p262.

ations, including national organizations, to the Central Committee's control, was amended to read: "All organizations in the Party autonomously control all the affairs relating specially and exclusively to that sphere of Party activity for the control of which they were created."¹ Their subordination to the Central Committee was still implicit elsewhere in the statutes, but this amendment served as a vehicle for the introduction of "autonomy" which was absent in Lenin's draft. The Commission also assured the Bund that new organizations would only be created to carry out unfulfilled tasks.² This in practice could turn out to be a challenge, but for the moment had a conciliatory ring, and indeed the Bund did not oppose it.

The Congress opened the discussion on the first point of the Party statutes.³ Lenin and Martov each presented a draft of the first point, on Party membership. The disagreements which they had had in private over the future composition of the Party's Central Organ and Central Committee now found their way on to what each had thought was neutral ground, namely, the Party statutes.⁴ The difference between the two formulas was briefly that Martov's appeared to allow for wide membership, while Lenin's advocated a narrowing

1. Protokoly, p424

2. Ibid. p308

3. Ibid. p263

4. Lenin, Soch. VI, p191.

down to actual participation in a Party organization. At last a crack had appeared in Iskra's armour, and its cause could not have been more momentous. Martov, the manager of the Congress, the chief spokesman for Iskra, the Bund's worst enemy, had openly disagreed with Lenin, the architect of the Party and the most vocal exponent of unity. Even the day before, a difference between them, in public, would have been laughable.

The Bund immediately supported Martov; they reminded Lenin that what the Congress had foregathered to organize was a Party, not an organization.¹ It is tempting to ascribe to the Bund delegation a feeling of genuine revulsion from Lenin's formula, and from this feeling to infer an entire catalogue of democratic, anti-authoritarian virtues. The Bund's own organization, however, conflicts with such an interpretation: the Bund Central Committee could disperse any local committee, appoint and expel individuals to and from any committee; it appointed the entire Foreign Committee; it could bar from its congresses any person elected by a local committee.² An appeal for "democratism" from the Bund could not be taken seriously.³

The reason why the Bund chose to support Martov, who

1. Protokoly, p267.

2. Ibid. p482, The Bund's report to Congress.

3. According to Lenin, Shag vpered, Soch. VI, p197, they did indeed "laugh at the Bund".

had exerted himself to alienate them, was clearly in order to widen the split in Iskra and thus compromise the possibility of a full-blooded Party Statute going through. If Lenin and Martov could quarrel over the definition of membership, they could surely quarrel over the more important points to come, and such unanimity as existed before the split, once broken, would not mend easily. The reason why the Bundists supported Martov and not Lenin was surely not, as Lenin says, because they saw in him the lesser of two evils;¹ it was Lenin's plan that was being attacked by Martov. Martov's formula was revealed only after Lenin's statutes had been read in full and worked over by the Statute Commission. If the Bund sought further to dilute Lenin's plan it could do so by supporting Martov.

Akimov and Martynov supported Martov for what amounted to the same reasons: they chose the formula which best hampered Iskra's plans.² Akimov rightly saw that both Lenin and Martov wanted the same thing and that they only differed in the wording of their respective formulas. The accident of Martov's more "democratic" phraseology was, in Akimov's words, "no great improvement" on Lenin's formula.³

With the support of the Bund, Akimov and Martynov,

1. Rasskaz, IS VI, p229.

2. Protokoly, pp281-2.

3. As Lenin pointed out, Martov's 39-point draft Statute hardly revealed a negative attitude to centralism, Soch. VI, pp192-6.

Iuzhnyi Rabochii (and Kharkov), the six uncommitted votes of the "bog", and the seven Iskra votes which he had gathered in his conflict with Lenin, Martov gained a majority and his version of point one was passed.¹

On the whole Lenin's bloc remained constant at around 21-24 votes. This left Martov with at least 27 votes of which the Bund held five. Since the Bund was the only group which voted consistently en bloc, it was able to affect the course of any vote, so long as Lenin's faction remained unchanged and Martov's new-found allies did not abstain. But the Bund's alliance with Martov was entirely one-sided: Martov was fully aware that his campaign against Lenin's proposals need cost him nothing in the way of concessions to the Bund. And indeed Martov's failure to support any of the amendments proposed by the Bund did not lead to the latter's desertion. As Lenin would write shortly after the Congress, there was no deal between the Martovites and the Bund, there was, however, an alliance: this alliance did not depend on the Martovites' will, it was not they who joined with the Bund and its allies, but the latter who joined with them.²

The Bund enabled Martov to defeat Lenin on the question of mutual cooptation in the Party Central Committee and

1. Protokoly, p283.
 2. Lenin to Kalmykova, ^{7. ix. 03} LS VI, 206.

Central Organ, and again when Lenin sought to repair this damage by making cooptation into the centres the prerogative of the Party Council.¹ But neither of these "victories," nor even the adoption of Martov's formula for Paragraph 1 of the Statute, had any real importance and relevance to the question of the Bund in the Party. As the Party Statutes stood they were a direct contradiction of the Bund's aspirations in the Party and the Bund naturally opposed acceptance of the Statutes in their entirety.² It was yet to be seen what exceptions and "special appendices" the Congress would agree upon in order to accommodate the Bund's demands.

1. Protokoly, p313.
2. Ibid p318.

The final debates on the Bund

Having dealt with the Party Statute, the Congress went on to discuss the Bund in the light of the new statutes. The spokesman for the Statute Commission explained that the Commission had not been able to discuss the place of the Bund in the Party and therefore proposed that it be debated in open session, using the Bund's amended proposals as a basis for discussion.¹

The Bund delegation expected the worst. They had been invited the day before to attend a meeting of the Commission, which included Lenin and Martov, in order to discuss their proposals. On arrival they had found that Martov had made an excuse not to come. Lenin had come late and announced that other business prevented him from staying. The Commission had decided that without Lenin and Martov there was little point in going on and had adjourned the meeting.²

Whether Lenin and Martov had failed to deal with the Bund because they were themselves at daggers drawn over the Party Statutes³ (which on the day in question were the only topic), whether they each wished to avoid parleying with the Bund precisely at the moment when it was proving itself "master of the situation,"⁴ or whether, as the Bundists

1. Protokoly, p318.

2. Otchet Bunda, p44.

3. The Statute Commission had met on August 4 when a state of war already existed between Lenin and Martov, LS VI, p148. The final split between them had taken place on August 2 or 3, Ibid. p241, n49.

4. Lenin, Soch. VI, p97.

believed, they were so well aware of the course events would take that they had decided not to waste the time¹ - the fact was that their behaviour had prepared the Bund well enough not to have to ask Congress for a recess for consultations at the crucial moment.

The debates on the Bund began and ended with the second point of the Bund's proposals: "The Bund is the social democratic organization of the Jewish proletariat, unlimited in its activities by any regional framework, and is in the Party as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat."

The Congress put up only a token case for rejecting the Bund's cardinal demand. Martov, as had been fully expected, declined to discuss the Bund's proposals on the grounds that the Congress had already made clear its attitude towards federation in its resolution on the Bund in the Party at the 8th session, and "the Bund's second point is clearly permeated with the federalist spirit."² Instead he read a long letter from an organization in Riga, unknown and unrepresented at the Congress, as an example of the harmful effects of federation as practised there by Jewish, Lettish and Russian

1. Otchet Bunda, loc.cit
 2. Protokoly, p320.

workers. After a year of effort, the Riga organization, which had formed itself on national lines, had failed to accomplish a single united task. All attempts to do so had been frustrated by national group interests and the whole venture had ended in the total collapse of the general committee, the "federation."¹

Martov proposed that the Bund's demand, which "legalized separatism," be rejected and not replaced by any corresponding point. In addition he proposed that the Bund's area of activity should not be defined as it was impracticable to do so.² The sense of these proposals was firstly, to deny the Bund any special status in the Party, secondly, to deny it the status of either a national or regional organization, and thirdly, to leave the Bund with no "legal" definition of its position vis a vis other committees in towns where it chose freely to organize itself. Total subordination to the Party Central Committee was already established by the Party Statute.

Dismissing the Riga "evidence" with the retort that Iskra too had had failures, and adding that Martov "seems to

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1. Protokoly. Prilozhenie V, pp443-5. Martov did not say if he was referring to the Bund organization in Riga, but at the 6th session of the Congress he had criticized the Bund for "wasting its marvellous organization in Riga on a handful of Jewish artisans," Ibid.p81. A long repudiation of the "letter" appeared in Vestnik Bunda, No.1-2, Jan.-Feb. 1904, ppl8-20, written by a Bundist ex-member of the Unifying Commission of the Riga organization in which he showed that the organization's failure was not due to "federation".
 2. Protokoly, p320.

think we have only to wave our magic wand and thousands of Russian proletarians in Riga are organized," Liber then presented a long account of the encouragement the Bund had received from the Party in the course of its development as the organizer and representative of the Jewish workers.

Without mentioning the name of the author, Liber began his argument by citing Martov's Povorotnyi Punkt, written in 1895, as the theoretical basis for an independent Jewish organization. He then went on to quote from two articles reprinted from Arbeiter Shtime in Rabotnik, the organ of the Gruppa Osvobozhdenie Truda of which Plekhanov was editor.¹ In one of these articles the Bund had outlined the Polish Socialist Party's objections to an independent Jewish organization, objections which consisted in denying the special interests of the Jewish proletariat and accusing the Bund of isolationism in its programme and organization, which was harmful to the general movement in Poland.² Plekhanov had at the same time published a protest from the Bund. The second article published in Rabotnik³ was what Liber described as the Bund's profession de foi. In it the Bund justified the existence of an independent Jewish organization, such as the Bund now was, on the basis of the autonomy granted by the

1. Rabotnik, No. 5-6, 1899.

2. Ibid. p72.

3. Nashi tseli, Ibid. p96.

First Congress of the RSDRP. Since the editors of Rabotnik had made no comment then, their agreement was implicit. The Bund had not changed. It must therefore be their view of the Bund that had changed. In the same way as the Bund's growth in the 90's had brought it into conflict with the Polish Socialist Party, so now, when Russian Social Democracy, as represented by Iskra, was building its organization all over Russia, similar conflicts must arise.¹

Liber made it plain that the Bund's demand was categorical: "The Bund is and must be the sole representative in the Party of the Jewish proletariat wherever they are in the Russian state and whatever language they speak."²

The Bund's point 2 was divided into two parts and voted on separately: 1) the Bund is the social democratic organization of the Jewish proletariat, unlimited by any regional framework - rejected by 39 to 5;³ 2) the Bund is the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in the Party - rejected by 39 to 5.⁴ The entire point was then rejected by 40 votes to 5 with 3 abstentions.⁵

The Bund's ultimate condition for remaining had been

1. Protokoly, p323.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Ibid. p324. There were 4 abstentions, not 8 as in Protokoly, loc.cit. Akimov and Martynov did not participate since Congress had virtually liquidated their Union.

4. The figure is 40 in Otchet Bunda, p46.

5. Protokoly, p325. The abstainers were Bruker (1 vote) and Kalafati (2 votes).

rejected. Liber made a short announcement to the effect that since Congress had denied the Bund's right to exist the Bund delegation, in accordance with its V Congress's decisions, announces the withdrawal of the Bund from the Congress and the Party.¹ In silence the delegates left the hall, feeling, according to Medem, as if a piece of flesh had been torn from the living body. The flesh was the Bund, the Body - the Russian social democratic movement.² A variation on this theme was provided by one of the delegates who described the "operation" as the removal of a cancer.³

1. Protokoly, p325.

2. Medem II, p31.

3. Protokoly, p536, note 238.

Conclusion

The moral loss to the Bund at its withdrawal from the Party was felt by old and young Bundists alike. Since the pioneer period of the early nineties Bundists had not lost sight of the fact that the fate of the Jewish working class was tied to that of their Russian comrades. Rejecting the pessimism of Zionism while holding out the promise of Jewish emancipation in a democratic Russia, the Bund faced the dilemma of having to foster Jewish interests while at the same time preserving the Jewish labour movement as an integral part of the Russian revolutionary movement. Regarded by Zionists as russifiers of the Jewish workers and by the Russian socialists as Jewish separatists, the Bund sought a middle course in Jewish cultural autonomy in Russia. Federation of the Party offered the best organizational solution to their dilemma, a solution which was also chosen by the Polish Social Democrats, whose position was not wholly dissimilar from the Bund's.

The Bund's plan was frustrated by two main factors. One was the ascendancy of Lenin's group in the Party and the acceptance by the Russian committees of Lenin's plan to construct a strictly centralized Party without any inner partitions and divisions, whether of a national,

regional, or ideological nature. It was the success and scope of the Bund's plan to become a national organization that made it the chief object of Lenin's offensive both before and at the Second Congress.

The other factor was the high proportion of assimilated, or assimilating, Jews in the Russian committees. To them the Bund symbolized a status which they had repudiated - that of the Jew concerned with his own Jewish interests. In abandoning the Pale and purely Jewish organizations, they had believed they were widening their horizons and identifying themselves with the aims of Russian Social Democracy. Their own dilemma was that although they were assimilated and working in the Russian movement, they knew they could nonetheless never become Russians: the Bund's slogans were a constant reminder to them of this fact. Even Jewish opponents to Iskra within the Party, such as Krichevskii and Martynov, while approving the proposal for federation, attacked the Bund's approach to the national question.

The RSDRP remained divided for the rest of its history, while the Bund, increasingly devoted to the national and cultural problems of the Jews, went on to become the political party of the Jewish masses. Its record in the 1905 revolution, as witnessed by even hostile Bolshevik historians, showed that a preoccupation with national political problems had not harmed its

solidarity with the Russian movement. When the need was great to consolidate the ranks of Russian Social Democracy, immediately after the events of 1905, the Bund re-entered the Party as an autonomous part, but with its newly adopted national programme of national cultural autonomy. After a long association with the Menshevik wing of the Party, the Bund faced its first major crisis after the Bolshevik revolution of October 1917. The Bund split, first in the Ukraine, then in Russia and Poland, into the Communist Bund, which eventually merged with the Russian Communist Party, and the Social Democratic Bund, which continued its activities in newly independent Poland. There it grew to become, by the outbreak of the Second World War, the strongest Jewish political party in Poland.

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Appendix IPiatnitskii

Sergei Tsederbaum (Ezhov) explains in his memoirs that his work of arranging Iskra's transport through Vilna in 1901 was hampered by the Bund's hostility towards Iskra.¹ He solved his problems by obtaining the help of two local workers, Joseph Tarshis and Faivush, both Yiddish-speaking and anti-Bund in sentiment.

Ezhov's memoirs are permeated with a strong anti-Bund bias which is totally absent from those of his younger brother, Vladimir (Levitskii). Where Ezhov recalls a "typical Bundist" whose "business-like manner was combined with an extreme narrowness of view, all his attention concentrated on today,"² Levitskii remembers from his months in the Dvinsk Bund that "the Bundists were like a religious brotherhood, raised high above mundane things; their comradely bonds were strong, ... [the Bund] became a symbol.. of spiritual elevation..."³

Ezhov's denigration of the Bund is echoed by Piatnitskii. Joseph Tarshis, who became famous in international trade-union circles in subsequent years as Piatnitskii, was a Yiddish-speaking tailor who had begun his activities in the

1. Zakharova-Tsederbaum and Tsederbaum, S. Iz epokhi Iskry, 1900-1905), p54.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Levitskii, Za chetvert veka, p20.

labour movement in 1898 in Kovno. There he had joined an illegal union for tailors and attended meetings and circles, organized by "some kind of centre." At the end of 1898 he went to Vilna to look for work and in addition soon became the secretary and treasurer of an illegal tailors' union. In June 1900 he was asked to accompany to the frontier two women agitators who had escaped from jail when the latter was raided by workers. During this period he was also travelling to and from Kovno and Vilna for literature for the Bund, "thanks to the personal connections [he] had retained from the Kovno circles."¹

Writing his memoirs in 1925, Piatnitskii took great pains to obliterate the idea that he might once have belonged to the Bund. It is, however, clear that he did: the illegal tailors' union that he joined in Vilna was tied to "some centre which was busy getting literature from abroad;" "the centre (or centres) influenced the illegal trade-unions through the workers who took part in the educational circles and political circles...;"² the two women he accompanied

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1. Piatnitskii, Zapiski Bolshevika, ppl2-16. Unless otherwise indicated all references are from the first edition, 1925. The fifth edition, written in 1956, 17 years after Piatnitskii's death, is remarkable for its amendments to previous editions, notably the addition of "RSDRP" and "RSDRP circles" in places where the first edition merely indicates "the Bund;" and for the omission, e.g. p20, (5th ed) cf. p17, (1st ed), of sections which indicate the extent of the Bund's activities.
2. Loc.cit.

to the frontier had been arrested for distributing "proclamations" which were in fact Bundist literature.¹ Meetings of trade-union leaders were called by "some organization or another," but as far as Piatnitskii could remember in 1925 the question of precisely which organization was of no interest.²

Piatnitskii states that it did not interest him who published the proclamations which he distributed, or what organization signed them. He then discusses the disputes that arose between the different organizations in Vilna, namely the Bund and the PPS, thus obliquely, as everywhere else, placing himself in the Bund.³

Piatnitskii's membership of the Bund is stated openly only in two sources, a police archive source, where he is included in a list of "important Bundists well known to the 'letuchie' (couriers);"⁴ and a report by Zubatov on the state of the Bund in Kovno in 1900. In the latter it is reported that Piatnitskii was sent by the Vilna Committee of the Bund to organize a strike which had broken out in Kovno, and that he promised the strikers 300 roubles in the name of the Vilna Committee.⁵

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1. Муравев, Революционное движение в России, 1894-1905 в докладках министра Муравева, p78.
 2. Piatnitskii, op.cit. p16.
 3. Ibid p17.
 4. Menshchikov, Okhrana i Revoliutsiia, II, vyp.1, p146. He is described as a Bundist in the index, ibid. III, p265.
 5. Reproduced in Rafes, Ocherki po istorii Bunda, p328.

Regarding the anti-Bundist worker, Faivush, who was Ezhov's first helper, Zubatov's report describes him as having been appointed by the Vilna Bund Committee to mediate between them and the Kovno agitators' assembly.¹

Thus while it is conceivable, though unlikely, that Piatnitskii did not know he was working for the Bund, and that Faivush was hostile to the organization that gave him his orders, it is, however, plain that it was as Bundists that both of them were instrumental in giving technical aid to Iskra's agent, Ezhov.

1. Ocherki po istorii Bunda, p326.

Appendix II

Terrorism in the Bund

The assassination of Bogolepov in 1901 and Sipiagin early in 1902 marked a resurgence in Russia of terrorist tactics, revived by the newly formed Socialist Revolutionary Party. The conditions which gave rise to this new trend - the increased use of force by the police against demonstrators, the huge number of strikers and demonstrators arrested, and the heavy penalties imposed on them - were particularly felt in the Pale of Settlement since Jewish workers tended to be more harshly treated than their Russian comrades.¹

At the end of 1901, von Wahl who was known to be skilled in suppressing demonstrations, was appointed Governor of Vilna.² When May Day 1902 approached, von Wahl announced that he would not allow a May Day demonstration and would lash it with cavalry should one take place.³ The Vilna Committee of the Bund discussed the question of

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1. According to Iskra, in Smorgon alone, 600 strikers were exiled by von Wahl, Iskra No.13, December 1901. Jewish workers were usually exiled to eastern Siberia for longer periods than Russian workers who were usually exiled to western Siberia, see, for example, Iskra No.20, May 1902.
 2. As a young officer, von Wahl took part in the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1863. He came to be known as an advocate of corporal punishment. Before becoming Governor of Vilna, he was Governor of Iaroslav, Kharkov, Vitebsk, Podolia, Volynia, and Kursk, J.S. Hertz, Hirsh Lekert, New York, 1952, pl6.
 3. Ibid. p21.

whether they should expose their members to shame and injury, and by a small majority decided in favour of holding the demonstration. May Day demonstrations had become an institution in Vilna, and if the Bund were to give in, von Wahl would certainly apply more vigorous measures against the labour movement.¹

The Vilna May Day demonstration duly took place. It was broken up by Cossacks, thirty people were arrested, and many more, including a Cossack, were injured.² In the evening, von Wahl visited the theatre where the Bund arranged a further demonstration and another thirty-five arrests were made. On von Wahl's orders, a number of those arrested were flogged, and floggings also took place in Vitebsk and Kovno.³

Feelings of unspeakable humiliation and rage were roused among the Bundists. At that period police floggings, particularly of demonstrators, were a rare occurrence. The injury was all the greater in that Jewish workers had only recently awoken from the apathy of the oppressed to

- - - - S. Hertz - - - - -
1. Hirsh Lekert, New York, 1952, p23. The Belostok Conference (See Chapter IV) of March 1902 had drawn up the May Day proclamation and called for a large demonstration, Zametki A. Kremera..., MS, Bund Archives.
 2. Hertz, op.cit. p25. Von Wahl's officers had remained unmoved by the Bund's appeal to them in the autumn of 1901 not to attack strikers and demonstrators, K ofitseram, reproduced in Iskra No.9, October 1901, with the comment, p22, that this was the first attempt at Social Democratic agitation among the military.
 3. Iskra, No.21, p12.

the dignity of the revolutionary. Emotionally charged proclamations issued from the Bund's press in Russia, calling on Russian workers to join with Jewish workers in protesting at the barbarity of the Government, and on Jewish workers to avenge the insult to their dignity.¹

Without the knowledge of the Bund TsK, a group of six Bundist workers decided to assassinate von Wahl. They collected money for arms from many willing fellow-workers and then approached the TsK with the request that it should organize the attempt. The Bund TsK refused. Thereupon, one of the group, Hirsh Lekert, made the attempt alone on May 5th.² The attempt failed, Hirsh Lekert was arrested, and on May 27th was sentenced to death by hanging by a military court.³

The immediate reaction among Social Democrats⁴ was horror mixed with relief: horror that Lekert, a half-literate worker, had been hanged although his attempted assassination had failed;⁵ relief that the insult to the human dignity of the flogged Jewish workers had not gone unanswered.

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1. Vozzvanie k russkim tovarishcham-rabochim, May 1902, reproduced in Posledniia Izvestiia No.74, 19 vi 1902, pp2-3; Ko vsem evreiskim rabochim i rabotnitsam (translated from Yiddish), ibid. pp3-4.
 2. Bukhbinder, Istoriia evreiskogo rabocheho dvizhenia v Rossii, p255.
 3. Girsh Lekert i ego protsess, pamphlet released by the Bund in Russian, Polish and Yiddish, July 1902.
 4. Posledniia Izvestiia, No.74, 19 vi 1902; Iskra No.22, 15 vii 1902.
 5. Karpovich, the intellectual who assassinated Bogolepov in 1901, was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.

According to the Bund TsK, Lekert's excessive penalty could be explained by the Government's intention to discourage workers from taking part in political demonstrations: Plehve had apparently been overheard saying that he did not expect the punishment to affect the intelligentsia, but that it would certainly impress the workers. The Vilna Bund Committee added its own interpretation, namely that Lekert was a Jew, working in Lithuania which was under special regulations, and therefore his punishment had to be appropriately severe.¹

The Bund TsK's approval of Lekert's attempt as a "most natural and lawful act of vengeance,"² was echoed by the rest of Social Democracy. The Bund ZK "sighed with relief" when they heard that Lekert had attempted to avenge the humiliated Jewish workers and assured "those who see in this act a return to terror as a system" that they were mistaken.³ Iskra described Lekert's attempt as "fully worthy and in the circumstances unavoidable," and continued: "Our joy at knowing that the Government's unprecedented crime has not gone unpunished is dimmed only by the regret that the attempt failed."⁴

1. Girsh Lekert i ego protsess, pl.

2. Loc.cit.

3. Posledniia Izvestiia, No.74, 19 vi 1902, pl.

4. Iskra, No.21, 1 vii 1902, pl2.

The new inclination to terrorism which thus arose in the Bund's ranks was discussed at the Bund's Fifth Conference held in Berdichev in August 1902.¹ Still under the impact of the May events, and eloquently persuaded by "first generation" Bundists recently returned from Siberia,² the entire Conference, with one or two exceptions, supported the resolution drawn up by the TsK advocating the use of force against Government servants who insulted the dignity of workers and revolutionaries.³ The Conference argued that such tactics were not terrorism but revenge: "When the Party decides to punish a servant of Tsarism it does not seek to scare the .. Government .. The aim is to wipe clean the Party's escutcheon .. An organized Party can always ensure that such acts do not become an act of terror. Therefore all such acts must be organized by the Party itself."⁴

The first reaction to the resolution on organized revenge came from the Bund ZK. In an article which

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1. Mikhalevich, Zikhroinus fun a yidishen sotsialist, I, pl47.
 2. Particularly Gozhanskii, who had apparently become tainted with anarchist tendencies through his association with Machaiskii, *ibid.* pl48.
 3. *Ibid.* pl48.
 4. Posled. Izv. No.88, 4 x 1902. This number was devoted to the resolutions passed by the Fifth Conference. The resolution on "organized revenge" reflected the general mood of the Bund in Russia: Arbeidershtime No.27, cited in Hertz, *op.cit.* p72, called for acts of violence in reply to indignities.

accompanied its publication of the results of the Fifth Conference, it took a decisive stand against the resolution and refused to agree that there was a difference between organized terror and organized revenge.¹ This was followed by Iskra No.26 in which was pointed out the poverty of the argument that, while terror is harmful because it distracts the Party from the masses, organized revenge is not, because it is not a tactic of political struggle.²

Iskra's reaction, as indeed that of the ZK or of any other Social Democratic group, was predictable. By conviction and tradition, Social Democracy was against terror, and this was especially so after the formation of the new Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1901. In harmony with all other Social Democratic pronouncements on the Lekert attempt, Iskra had greeted the event as inevitable and praiseworthy in the circumstances, but it had added that such methods were useless for ridding Russia of the autocracy.³ Besides the Bund ZK and Iskra, the resolution of the Bund's Fifth Conference came under heavy fire from Iuzhnyi Rabochii, German Social Democracy, and the Bund's own committee in Lodz.⁴

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1. Tsu der frage vegen "organizirte rakhe", Der Yidisher Arbeiter, No.14, October, 1902, pp162-167.
 2. Iskra No.26, 15 x 1902, pp3-5.
 3. Plekhanov, Russkii rabochii klass i politseiskie rozgi, Iskra No.22, p2.
 4. Op.cit. No.26, pp5, 22, 23.

The acrimonious tone of Iskra's attack¹ on the Bund TsK's justification of its resolution,² however, provoked the Bund ZK to reply in a no less polemical spirit.³ In December Iskra replied again.⁴ But by this time the upsurge of terrorist feeling among Bundists in Russia had abated, and in January 1903 the TsK recanted and made an explanation of its position.⁵ The attention of the whole Russian Social Democratic movement became focussed on the OK and its preparations for the Second Party Congress, and the question of the Bund's participation in the OK set off a new series of still more bitter polemics between Iskra and the Bund.⁶

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1. Iskra No.27, 1 xi 1902, pp6-9.
 2. The Bund TsK's justification was published in Arbeidershtime No.28, August 1902 and partly reproduced in Iskra, ibid.
 3. Iskra o Bunde, Posledniia Izvestiia, No.96, 26 xi 1902, ppl-2. On the subject of this article, Martov wrote to Lenin: "Have you seen the coarse attacks on us in the Bundist bulletin..? Only trouble with these people!" Martov to Lenin, 29 xi 1902, LS IV, pl68.
 4. Iskra No.30, 15 xii 1902, pp7-9.
 5. Arbeidershtime, No.31, January 1903, cited in Hertz, op. cit. p85.
 6. See Chapter V.

Appendix III

The Bund's ideological affinities with Iskra

The Bund's Fifth Conference, besides passing the much debated resolution on organized revenge, (See Appendix II), also passed a resolution on the Bund's immediate organizational tasks, which was subsequently published in Russian as a pamphlet.¹ In its advocacy of the separation of the revolutionary organization from the labour movement, the resolution repeats the arguments used by Lenin in Chto Delat? which had appeared a few months earlier in March 1902.

The resolution asserted that the time had come to discard the workers' strike funds as a basis of revolutionary activity: "Although the masses no longer need the funds as a school for battle, the funds nonetheless persist in many places .. acting as a brake on the movement's development." The political struggle must be emphasized over the economic. Jewish Social Democrats should "fight against the old chauvinistic dangers, against Zionism, by which the Jewish

1. The resolutions of the Fifth Conference were published in Arbeidershtime No.28, August 1902. An off-print was published in Russian under the title Nasha blizhaishaia organizatsionnaia zadacha. This 16 page pamphlet is held by the British Museum. It has not been possible to give page references for the quotations in this Appendix, since the pamphlet was at the binders when the writer made his final check of references.

bourgeoisie seeks to disperse the Jewish proletariat; we must awaken protest from all levels of society against national and civil oppression." The Bund's Fourth Congress in 1901 had resolved that "the best way to draw the wide masses into the movement is the economic struggle, on which basis political agitation must be developed ... but it is not at all necessary to begin political agitation only on economic grounds."¹ The Fifth Conference resolution asserted that "our organization must consist not of agitators ... but of revolutionaries."

"Revolutionaries," it is made clear, are people who are prepared to reveal at any given moment their revolutionary energy and zeal; it is their duty to be aware of all events at all social levels and to exploit for revolutionary ends any and all protests, whatever their origin. How are such people to be found? The answer is borrowed from Lenin: "The members of the revolutionary organization are not to be elected by the mass [i.e. the rank and file of the trade organizations], (elections do not make a man into a revolutionary a revolutionary comes into being independently of them). The organization should be recruited only from the most able and energetic people, both from the working class and from the intelligentsia. Their task is not to wait upon the demands of ... funds, but to introduce to the

1. Materialy, p109.

real masses the revolutionary idea and spirit."

Echoing Chto Delat? the resolution goes on to consider the relationship which is desirable between the trade organizations and the revolutionary organization and warns that revolutionaries are not to become simply union secretaries as has happened in places, but must control the unions in order to guarantee that "the economic struggle bears a class character." It is no longer the unions, however, which must occupy the main attention of the revolutionary: in an autocracy, wide unions are impossible, and illegal unions can only be limited in number and scope.

Then, in what seems to be a concession to the democratic susceptibilities of its readers, the resolution admits that the workers, when left to themselves, do not only form trade funds: in Warsaw and Lodz, for example, the first organizations formed by the workers were political funds, i.e. funds whose aims were not the immediate raising of the workers' material standard of living, but rather to imbue them with the idea of political freedom. Such unions would strike, not for an extra kopek a day, but for the abolition of legal disabilities, or against police arbitrariness and corruption.

Thus in the middle of 1902, the Bund's conception of what its own organization should be, greatly resembled the plan which Lenin had outlined for the whole Party.

Appendix IV

The Tanners' Union

In the autumn of 1901, on the initiative of the Bund, the General Federated Union of Tanners was formed. This was the first attempt by the Bund to apply the principles of federation which it had put forward at its IV Congress over the question of the structure of the Party. Since the first congress of Jewish tanners had taken place in 1898,¹ the question had been discussed of how to organize a trade-union in an industry which embraced numerous nationalities, one of which, namely the Jewish tanners, was already affiliated to its own political organization - the Bund. The desire for a multinational union was put forward by the Jewish tanners who were already organized in order to counter the use by the employers of the unorganized Christian workers for strike-breaking and wage-cutting.

The Jewish tanners found themselves unable to organize their non-Jewish fellow-workers and thus in March 1900, by which time the Jewish tanners felt the need for a general union still more urgently, the second congress of Jewish tanners formed a special committee to consider the problem of a multinational union. The committee, which was all Bundist, included Rozental, a member of the Bund TsK.²

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1. Abram der Tate (Leib Blekhman), Bleter fun mein iugunt, p101.
 2. Ibid. p103; /Rozental/, Der bialistoker period, in Roiter Pinkus, I, p66.

The committee's recommendations were eventually ratified by the Bund's IV Congress.¹ They were that a federated tanners' union should be formed to include the entire industry irrespective of nationality; in detail, this meant that three separate autonomous organizations were to be formed (Jewish, Polish and Russian) which would be united through a central institution. The Jewish section would be affiliated to the Bund² and the Poles and Russians were to choose their own national affiliations.³

The General Federated Union of Tanners was created at a congress held in Belostok in the autumn of 1901, and affiliations with the Polish and Lithuanian Social Democratic Parties were formed.⁴ The Manifesto was published in full in Iskra with an editorial comment warmly congratulating the new union and urging Russian tanners to join.⁵

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1. Materialy k istorii evreiskogo rabochogo dvizheniia, p111.
 2. In the manner of the Brushworkers' Union, founded in 1898. Only Jews were employed in this industry, Abram der Tate, op.cit. p101.
 3. Ibid. pp102-3; B. Mikhalevich, Zikhroinus fun a yidishen sotsialist, I, p130.
 4. Rozental, op.cit. p66; Abram der Tate, op.cit. p118; Mikhalevich, op.cit. p130.
 5. Professionalnaia organizatsiia Kozhevnikov, Iskra, No.19, 1 iv 1902, p11.

Appendix V

The Gorev Compromise Plan

Lenin's attacks on the Bund and the ZK's attacks on Iskra during 1902-3 (See Chapter V) did not entirely reflect the attitudes prevailing among the activists of these two organizations in Russia. Both the OK and the Bund TsK made attempts to restrain their exile spokesmen in the latters' polemics. There appears, however, to have been only one attempt to effect a change in the basis of the conflict between Iskra and the Bund.¹

This attempt was made by Boris Goldman (Gorev), elder brother of the Bundist Mikhail Goldman (Liber) and of Leon Goldman (Akim), an Iskra agent in Russia. In his memoirs,² Gorev relates that when he returned from exile in the middle of 1902 he visited his younger brother, Liber, then an important Bundist in Warsaw. When Gorev told Liber that he was considering joining Iskra, Liber spent nights trying to persuade him not to do so, or, if he must, then not to attack the Bund. Gorev spent ten days at the end of 1902 in Geneva among Iskraists and became one of them. He then moved on to London where he spent the first three weeks of 1903 during which time Lenin decided to send him back to Russia to take part in the OK.³ While in London, Gorev was also in touch

1. All the documents relating to this attempt are cited in Kirzhnits, Bund un RSDAP, in Visnshaftlikhe Iorbikhe, I, pp65-9. They were obtained by Kirzhnits on behalf of the Lenin Institute in the 1920's from the Bund Archives in Geneva.
2. Vospominania, Kat. i Ssyl., No.8, 1924, pp42-65.
3. LS VIII, p323.

with the Bund ZK which at that time included all his old friends from Vilna of the nineties.¹ Although he was now a convinced Iskraist, Gorev had strong sympathies for the Bund and, in an effort to effect some kind of conciliation between Iskra and the Bund, he drafted a compromise plan for their relations.²

The basis of his compromise plan was that Iskra should make concessions in its draft programme by introducing points on equality of language and the protection of national minorities, in exchange for concessions from the Bund in the organizational question: Gorev offered the Bund the maximum autonomy in organization which he thought Lenin would allow. He planned his compromise with Lenin's knowledge, although the latter was, justifiably, sceptical and told Gorev that he expected a split with the Bund at the Congress; he allowed Gorev to present his compromise to the Bund ZK as semi-official.³

Gorev's plan was in two parts, the national question and the organizational question. The first proposed that Iskra should revise the paragraph (6) - on the equality of citizens - in its draft programme to read:

 1. Kat. i Ssyl. No.8, 1924, p54.

2. Letter from Krupskaja to Gorev, 26.iii.03, Prolet.Rev. No.77-78, p132.

3. Kat. i Ssyl. No.8, p55; Letter from ZKB to TsKB, Kirzhnits p66.

"Abolition of classes and full equal rights for all citizens regardless of sex, religion, race and language, with the guarantee for minorities in all parts of the multi-national state of the same rights as the majority enjoys."

In Gorev's view his version of Para. 6 would render superfluous the national programme of any minority in Russia. On this basis, he thought, the Bund would be given a ready-made national programme which it could adapt to the Jewish proletariat and which would not conflict with the all-Party programme.¹

The second part of the plan, dealing with the organizational question, was more detailed, consisting of six points. Point One was itself a compromise between the autonomy granted by the 1898 Congress decisions, which Gorev agreed was insufficient for an organization such as the Bund, and the status the Bund sought to achieve on the basis of its Fourth Congress decisions to demand federal relations and expand its activities officially into the south of Russia: Point One read:

"The Bund is in the Party as an autonomous part, independent in all questions essential to the agitation... and organization of the Jewish proletariat, within those limits which the Bund has achieved up to the present moment."²

Since the decisions of the First Party Congress had defined no geographical limits for the Bund, this point may be taken

 1. Kirzhnits, p67.
 2. Loc.cit.

as a concession from the Bund. In his Point Two Gorev allowed the Bund to retain its TsK, its organs and its congresses, whose decisions were to remain in force unless revoked by a Party congress. With Point Three Gorev introduced his only limitation, in his view, on the Bund's full autonomy: he proposed that the Bund TsK should include a member of the Party TsK, elected with the Bund's approval. This, he added, would be a limitation only in principle, for such a representative would scarcely have influence over the Bund doctrinally, but would rather be a liaison with the RSDRP. Conversely, Gorev did not consider it essential for the Bund to have its representative on the Party TsK, since its autonomy would be broad enough, and, anyway, there might well be Bundists on the TsK in their capacity as members of the RSDRP.¹

Going beyond even the Bund Fourth Congress's decision on the formation of Bundist groups in towns where Party organizations already existed in adequate strength - (i.e. not to form such groups) - Gorev proposed in Point Four that where all-Russian Party committees had already been formed in towns including substantial numbers of Jewish workers, Jewish sub-committees should be formed, that is, Jews should enter the committee and carry on agitation among the Jewish workers.

 1. Kirzhnits, p68.

These sub-committee members would participate in Bund congresses and would be elected with Bund approval.¹ This proposal, which appears to advance the cause of "Bundist separatism," in that it contains a strong measure of organizational federalism, if looked at from the Bund's standpoint can be seen to be yet another concession from the Bund: "Jewish sub-committees" does not mean "Bundist sub-committees," indeed "Jews entering such committees" could be drawn from Iskra's own organization, and this could mean Iskra's participation in Bund congresses.

At his most optimistic, Gorev proposed in the Fifth Point that the Bund ZK should become an autonomous part of the Zagranichnaia Liga, and that in order to achieve greater literary unity there should be periodic consultations between the ZKB and Iskra. Finally in Point Six, Gorev proposed that, in any questions of an all-Russian, i.e. not specifically Jewish, nature, the Bund TsK should order Bundists to act solely as members of the RSDRP.²

The Bund ZK fulfilled Lenin's prediction and threw the proposal out,³ without, according to Kirzhnits, analysing its practical significance. They sent the plan together with

1. Loc.cit.

2. The V Congress decision to allow the Bund delegations to Party congresses to vote purely as Party members on non-Jewish issues is reminiscent of this point in Gorev's plan.

3. Kat. i Ssyl. No.8, p54.

a critical commentary and covering letter to the Bund TsK
advising the latter to reject it.¹

1. Kirzhnits p66. Ibid. p68 suggests, in the absence of
contrary evidence, that the Bund's reaction to the plan
finally dispelled any remaining illusions among
conciliatory Iskraists, and that this could have been
Lenin's reason for giving any approval to the plan.

Appendix VIMartov and Lenin:resolutions on the Bund

While Martov's contribution to the campaign against the Bund before Congress was publicly smaller than Lenin's, in that it consisted of only one article,¹ yet in private and at the Congress he may in the long run have been the dominant figure.

As early as December 1, 1902, soon after the OK had been formed, Martov outlined to Lenin a plan by which all the pro-Iskra committees should immediately be united into one organization, with a TsK, all other organizations would be invited to enter into an agreement with Iskra, the weight of this entire body would then be brought to bear upon the remaining recalcitrants, such as Ekaterinoslav and Odessa, "and then we shall have to conduct a real war on the Bund."²

At that time Martov was worried by the thought that even among Iskra committees there were pro-Bund feelings, which at a fully representative congress might compromise the "minimally-centralistic plans to which we would agree." Such feelings, he thought, might arise from the desire to put things right with Ekaterinoslav, Odessa and the Bund,

1. Edinaia RSD, Iskra 36, 15 iii 1903, pp4-12.
2. LS IV, p172.

who "will defend the cause of 'autonomy,' 'decentralization,' local organs, mass newspapers, democratism, etc etc." He agreed that his plan for a coup was unconstitutional, but he felt this was justified because, if successful, it would bring about a Party organization with less a tint of federalism than that which a "general" congress would inevitably bring.¹

In January 1903, when Gorev told him of his compromise plan for the Bund, and of the fact that Lenin had given his sceptical approval, Martov apparently deplored Lenin's "pliancy."²

A comparison of Martov's and Lenin's draft resolutions on the Bund at the Second Congress reveals a similar difference. Martov studiously avoided any reference to "nation" in his draft. Instead he talked of "races" and the "Jewish and all-Russian proletariat, "chauvinism" and "peculiarities of language."³ Lenin, on the other hand, speaks of the need for unity between the "Jewish and non-Jewish proletariat," of the need to fight "national hatred." Where Martov had talked of "peculiarities of language," meaning Yiddish, Lenin allows his Jewish comrades freedom to agitate and publish in any language according to the needs of the "local or national movement"; to use slogans which

1. Letter to Lenin, Ibid, p178, 5 xii 1902. Inverted commas in Martov.

2. Gorev, *Pered vtorym s"ezdom, Katorga i Ssylka*, No.8, 1924, p56.

3. Protokoly II S"ezda, pp53-54.

apply and develop the "general propositions of the SD programme on full equality and full freedom of language, national culture and so on and so on;" and even in categorically rejecting federation Lenin upholds the organizational principle established by the 1898 statute: "i.e. autonomy of national SD organizations in matters concerning..."¹ At this point, the Editors of Leninskii Sbornik point out, the manuscript breaks off.² It was as if Lenin had suddenly realized that his resolution was "Bundist" in spirit and that the rejection of federation was incongruous after such a preamble. As the Editors of Leninskii Sbornik say, no doubt "Vladimir Ilich, on seeing Martov's draft, repudiated his own and thus did not complete it."³ At the Congress he left this issue to Martov, whose own background and familiarity with the Jewish revolutionary movement was sufficient to protect him from the pitfalls into which Lenin had all but fallen.

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1. Nezakonchennyi proekt... LS VI, pp171-172.
 2. Ibid. p171.
 3. Loc.cit.

Appendix VII

The PSD delegation at the II Congress

Although at their III Congress in 1901 the Polish Social Democrats (SDKPiL - or PSD for short) had decided that unification with the RSDRP should take the form of federation,¹ in the spring of 1903, Dzerzhinskii, a leading PSD member, had given Liber to understand that should they be invited to the Congress they would almost certainly vote against federation in principle, for they were "dead against the Bund."²

Lenin was eager for the PSD to join the Congress and had urged the OK in March to take immediate steps to put out a joint declaration of the PSD's complete solidarity with the RSDRP and of its desire to enter the Party.³ He had taken this step on the assurance of the PSD that while no decision about formal ties with the RSDRP could be taken until a full discussion had taken place in the PSD, yet as long as Iskra had in mind ideological and political solidarity, then of course Lenin could count on them.⁴

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1. Iskra No.7, Aug. 1901, pp15-16, reproduces the PSD programme without comment. The same number reports the Bund IV Congress with a long attack on federation.
 2. Liber to ZKB, Kirzhnits, Bund un RSDAP, in Visnshaftlikhe Iorbikher, I, p72. Dzerzhinskii was until about this time Liber's brother in law, Doires, I, p222.
 3. LS VIII, p337.
 4. Letter of PSD Foreign Committee to Iskra, in Volkovicher, Staraiia Iskra i podgotovka II S"ezda, Prol.Rev. No.48, p72.

Lenin and Martov clearly coupled the PSD's participation with their campaign against the Bund. In his letter urging the OK to publish the announcement of the PSD's solidarity with the RSDRP, Lenin continued: "Then having done this ... prepare everywhere and everyone for the fight with the Bund at the Congress."¹ Martov wrote to the PSD on April 19: " ... your explanations will fully satisfy the OK which seeks to ensure for the .. Congress the character of an already functioning party, and not one which is forming, as the Bund would like, so that it could parley with the Party as an independent entity."²

The PSD, however, persisted in regarding the Second Congress as constituent and by the time the Congress began no announcement of solidarity had appeared. The Poles were no doubt waiting for their own IV Congress which was to be held in July 1903. The OK, having defeated the Bund's attempts to make the Russian Congress constituent, had informed the PSD that it could not invite them, but "since their presence was desirable" it would propose that Congress do so.³

At the third session of the Second Congress Plekhanov announced that a decision had to be reached on the participation

1. LS VIII, p337.

2. Krzhizhanovskii, S. PSD i II S"ezd, in Prolet. Rev. No.2, 1933, p111.

3. Ibid. pp111-2.

of the PSD. Liber protested that to invite the Poles would be unconstitutional: first of all the Congress had been declared regular and to invite the Poles would contradict this; secondly, the PSD had not made clear its intentions towards the Party. It had merely expressed a desire for unification, but then so had other organizations which had been excluded.¹ Portnoi proposed that the PSD be invited to send a detailed resolution based on the decisions of the PSD's IV Congress.² Congress, however, supported Iskra's resolution inviting the PSD to send two delegates immediately to participate without vote.³

The two PSD delegates duly arrived hotfoot from their party's IV Congress which had just finished and presented the Russian Congress with the conditions, established by its Congress, on which the PSD would join the RSDRP. Of the seven conditions, the Poles had chosen three as an ultimatum:

1. Full independence for the PSD in all internal affairs concerning agitation and organization in the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. PSD to have its own congresses, committees, and literature.
2. RSDRP to be renamed "SD Rabochaia Partia Rossii" and PSD to retain .. its present name as a sub-title (Emphasized phrase to constitute part of the ultimatum)

1. Protokoly II S"ezda, p38.
2. Ibid. pp39-41.
3. Ibid. p46.

3. Other Polish socialist organizations may enter the Party only by first uniting with the PSD.¹

The meaning of these three points is clear: the PSD regarded itself as a national-regional organization with only ideological connections with the RSDRP, fully master of its own affairs, advertising itself, not as a mere RSDRP committee, but as the SD Party of Poland and furthermore as the sole representative of all Polish socialist organizations in the Party. The remaining points, not forming part of the ultimatum, of the Poles' conditions called for PSD representation on the editorial board of the Party Central Organ to deal with Polish affairs; amendment of the Party's demand for national self-determination to a formula which would make nationalist interpretation impossible; demand of autonomy for the Polish and Lithuanian provinces; and finally a resolution directed against the PSD's rival the PPS (Polish Socialist Party).²

Like the Bund which concealed from the Congress the title of federation in its statutes, the Poles did not specify the form their relations with the RSDRP should take.

When the Second Congress was confronted with these unexpected demands, Lenin, anxious to prevent the Bund from exploiting the PSD's conditions, succeeded in isolating

1. Protokoly, ppl41-2.

2. Loc.cit.

discussion to a commission composed of the two Polish delegates (Ganetskii and Varskii), Martov, Plekhanov, Krokhnal, Levin, and Knuniants.¹ There the Poles were assured that in spite of the perplexity their demands had caused, the commission would be able to draft a resolution on the basis of which the PSD could enter the Party.² As long as the Poles left open the question of the form of their organizational ties with the RSDRP Lenin hoped to exploit the anti-Bund feeling of the Congress to make a false contrast between the Poles' modest demands and the Bund's ambitious claims. He was no doubt prepared to allow the Poles the wide autonomy they demanded, although it conflicted with his ideas on organization, because it was utopian to expect Polish workers to rally to the call of a Russian Party committee. In the case of the Bund and the Jewish proletariat this was not the case.

In the commission, however, a new stumbling block appeared. Very soon after the departure of the PSD delegates to the Second Congress, the PSD leaders had received the latest issue of Iskra (No.44, July 15) in which Lenin had written that the RSDRP programme "in no way excludes the Polish proletariat from adopting as their slogan a free and independent Polish republic, even though the likelihood of its

1. Protokoly, p417.

2. Ganetskii's letter to Dzerzhinskii, in Krzhizhanovskii op.cit. p120.

realization before the advent of socialism is utterly negligible."¹ Luxemburg and Tyshko immediately wrote express to their delegates at the Second Congress that the condition that the RSDRP drop from its programme the demand for national self-determination and replace it by the demand for "institutions guaranteeing the full freedom for the cultural development of all nations in the State" should be added to the ultimatum. Luxemburg added that the delegates must not concede RSDRP representation in the PSD, on the grounds that it was unnecessary, and that they must pronounce as "correct but at present impracticable" the unification of the PSD and the Bund.²

The commission naturally refused to shift the discussion on to national grounds and refused to amend self-determination³ to a formula which was identical with that which the Bund was to propose during the Congress debates on the National Question.⁴ Iskra had swallowed the thinly disguised demand for federation in the Polish conditions; to yield on self-determination would be to throw away the chief purpose of the PSD's participation, that of shaming the Bund. Thus Iskra stuck.

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1. Lenin, Natsionalnyi vopros v nashei programme, Soch. V, p342
 2. Letter to Varskii, 22 vii 03 (08) in Krzhizhanovskii, op. cit. ppl21-2.
 3. Ibid. pl28.
 4. Before the Poles left the Congress Medem asked them to support him in proposing a combination of self-determination and institutions guaranteeing free cultural development, but the Poles refused. Medem, Fun mein leben II, p28. Medem proposed the Poles' own amendment during the debates on the National Question.

For their part, the Poles were probably relieved. After three sessions at the Congress Ganetskii had written to Dzerzhinskii of the "merciless" battle against the Bund and the complete control of the Congress by Iskra. "And what now will happen to us?" he had asked apprehensively. "They ask us what we mean by 'full independence' - wide autonomy or federation? Of course we say the former."¹ Before the commission had come to any conclusion Congress had to transfer to London and the Poles took the opportunity to withdraw leaving a statement to be read by the commission's spokesman.²

Lenin lost the support of the PSD because he had misjudged the Poles' reasons for wanting to join the RSDRP. As Rosa Luxemburg wrote to the PSD delegates, the only value to the PSD of unity with the RSDRP was as a moral weapon against the PPS: "Tell the Russians that after Iskra^{No. 44} the moral value of unity .. (weapon against PPS) is for us minimal, and it only ever had moral significance ... After the article in Iskra I am completely uninterested in unification..."³ In the event the only trace the Poles left was a string of abusive epithets to Lenin's national policy which they characterized as "evasion," "eclecticism" and "opportunism."⁴

1. Krzhizhanovskii, op.cit. p120.

2. Protokoly, p162.

3. Krzhizhanovskii, op.cit. p122.

4. Protokoly, Prilozhenie IX, Zaiavlenie /PSD/, p453.

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