

CORRUPTION AND THE COUNTERREVOLUTION:  
THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BLACK HUNDRED

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in the Department of  
History in the Graduate School  
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ABSTRACT

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation analyzes the ideology and activities of the Black Hundred movement at the end of the Imperial period in Russia (1905-1917). It seeks to explain the reasons for the sudden, rapid expansion of Black Hundred organizations in 1905, as well as the causes of their decline, which began just two years after their appearance. It further attempts to elucidate the complex relationship between the Black Hundred and Russian authorities, including the central government and local officials.

The problem is approached by offering two distinct perspectives on the Black Hundred. First, a broad overview of the movement is presented. The focus here is on the headquarter branches of Black Hundred organizations in St. Petersburg, but these chapters also look at the activities of many different provincial branches, relating trends in the provinces to events in the center in order to draw conclusions about the nature of the overall movement. Second, this dissertation offers an extended case study of the Black Hundred in the city of Odessa, where a particularly large and violent Black Hundred movement emerged in 1906. It explores the factors that made Odessa conducive to the Black Hundred, and explains events in Odessa as symptomatic of the overall condition of Black Hundred groups.

The research is based primarily on material from archives in Moscow and Odessa comprising police reports and resolutions approved at national monarchist congresses. It also draws on memoirs, newspaper accounts from the liberal, leftist, and Black Hundred

press, and the secondary literature. The framework primarily consists of analyzing the membership, leadership, ideology, funding, and activities of the Black Hundred organizations that served as the main expression of the monarchist movement.

This dissertation concludes that the decline of the Black Hundred cannot be attributed to the harmful actions of government officials, as historians have previously argued. Instead, the movement lost public confidence and fell victim to bitter infighting owing to the corruption of Black Hundred leaders, both in the center and in the provinces. Because Black Hundred organizations enjoyed the backing of many state officials and the outspoken support of the tsar, they were often perceived as officially-sponsored parties. This attracted many unscrupulous members who hoped to use their links to the Black Hundred to cultivate official connections or to identify money-making opportunities. These members, often rising to leadership positions, proved particularly prone to corruption, a habit that ruined the organizations' finances, sparked bitter internecine rivalries, and ultimately discredited the entire movement.

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## Introduction

In July 1917, just months after the tsar was overthrown in the February Revolution, a former State Duma member sat down for a conversation with investigators commissioned by the new Provisional Government. The times were chaotic. Fighting the Great War, Russian troops licked their wounds after their June offensive turned into a rout at the hands of the Germans and Austrians. Internally, economic conditions disintegrated and political power became paralyzed by the rivalry between the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet. As the Bolsheviks staged armed antigovernment demonstrations, liberal and conservative politicians warned that the country faced “catastrophe.”<sup>1</sup>

The subject of the interrogation was N. E. Markov II. As the former president of *Soiuz Russkogo naroda* (Union of the Russian People, or URP), Markov had dedicated his political career to buttressing the authority of the now-deposed tsar. Markov’s union represented the original and quintessential organization of the Black Hundred, a far-right movement that burst on the scene during the Revolution of 1905.<sup>2</sup> For its first two years,

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<sup>1</sup> A. K. Drezen, ed., *Burzhuaizii i pomeshchiki v 1917 godu: Chastnye soveshchaniia chlenov gosudarstvennoi dumy* (Moscow and Leningrad: Partiinoe Izdatel'stvo, 1932), 192, 206.

<sup>2</sup> The term “Black Hundred” originally applied to guilds of small tradesmen in Medieval Muscovy. See Gurko, V. I. *Features and Figures of the Past*, ed J. E. Wallace Sterling, Xenia Joukoff Eudin, and H. H. Fisher, trans. Laura Matveev (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1939), 676N. Liberals and socialists called monarchists “Black Hundred” as a pejorative to emphasize the lumpen proletarian and hooligan elements of the movement. In an example of “owning the insult,” many grassroots rightists adopted the moniker themselves, although monarchist leaders tended to eschew it. This dissertation uses the term “Black Hundred” to describe the overall rightist movement. It employs the terms “rightist” and “monarchist” interchangeably to refer to a person who subscribed to an ideology, propagated by the Black Hundred organizations discussed herein, based on Russian nationalism, anti-Semitism, and support for unlimited autocracy. Although adherents of more moderate groups like the Octobrists were technically monarchists in that they supported the existence of the autocracy within the political structures created by the October Manifesto, these groups are best described as “conservative,” as Russians at the time usually reserved the “monarchist” designation for the tsar’s more extremist supporters.

the URP led the Black Hundred in meting out vigilante justice against revolutionaries, Jews, and other perceived enemies of the tsar. Its members beat Jewish passers-by, engaged in street fighting with revolutionaries, and developed a paramilitary force that assassinated liberal politicians. But with the suppression of the Revolution of 1905, the URP entered a terminal decline. Its popular support vanished along with the immediate specter of revolution as the group became dependent on government subsidies for its continued existence. By the time Markov gained complete control of the organization in 1912, it had ripped itself apart, done in by the infighting and pervasive corruption of its own leaders.

Markov's interrogators, the kinds of liberals and socialists he had relentlessly denounced as scoundrels and traitors throughout much of his life, had been assigned to investigate possible illegality in the tsarist government's support for Black Hundred organizations. During the interview, Markov answered questions about the URP's ideology, secret government subsidies, and its paramilitaries. The key questions, however, concerned the movement's downfall. By 1916, the Black Hundred had lost 90 percent of its members. When the revolution arrived, the movement proved incapable of putting up the slightest resistance. This critical failure ruined Markov's political career in Russia. Once a Duma member of national prominence, he went into hiding as his organization disbanded and his newspapers closed down. What had led to this turn of events? What was the root cause of the decline of the Black Hundred?

Markov attributed the movement's collapse to the government and especially to Prime Minister Petr Stolypin (1906-11) who, Markov insisted, had feared the URP had

become too powerful. Although Stolypin made a pretense of supporting monarchists, in reality he “destroyed” the movement by playing various factions and organizations off against one another, supporting one group while persecuting another, Markov claimed.<sup>3</sup>

One of Russia’s foremost historians of the Russian right, Iu. I. Kir’ianov, cited this assertion by Markov, along with similar sentiments expressed by other Black Hundred leaders, in attributing the decline of the Black Hundred, above all, to a negative shift in the government’s attitude toward the movement.<sup>4</sup> It was certainly convenient for Black Hundred leaders to blame the government, as this explanation relieved them of responsibility for their organizations’ disintegration. Moreover, their protestations contained an element of truth; the government certainly did play off monarchist leaders against one another, undeniably exacerbating tensions between various groups and personalities. In accepting the Black Hundred’s self-absolution, however, Kir’ianov overlooked the primary cause of the movement’s downfall—its leaders’ corruption.

Above all, the story of the Black Hundred is a tale of corruption. Markov hinted at the habit during his interrogation, explaining that he doled out most of the government subsidies within the URP, “but I spent some myself,” while sharing accounts of the funds only with his own supporters.<sup>5</sup> URP leaders’ venality was the main reason for the schisms that roiled the organization almost from its inception. Members of the URP leadership council (*sovet*) quit the group to protest the leaders’ financial misdeeds or were pushed out when they insisted on seeing fiscal accountings. The growing number of dissatisfied or expelled members eventually created new, often hostile monarchist groups whose

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<sup>3</sup> Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, ll. 28-30.

<sup>4</sup> Iu. I. Kir’ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN, 2001), 388-94.

<sup>5</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 10.

leaders frequently replicated the very corrupt practices that they had previously denounced.

This dissertation traces the history of the Black Hundred from its inception in 1905 through its final collapse in 1917 following the February Revolution, focusing on the impact of corruption among the movement's leadership. The first chapter presents an historical survey of the evolution of Black Hundred ideology, particularly the conspiratorial brand of anti-Semitism that permeated the Black Hundred worldview. The chapter presents nineteenth-century intellectual currents and political groups as the Black Hundred's most influential source of inspiration, particularly the Pan-Slavs, who provided an organizational model for the twentieth-century rightists. The two groups elicited a similar, ambivalent attitude from the government, which funded both movements despite its misgivings about them.

The following two chapters offer a broad overview of the Black Hundred movement from 1905 to 1917, focusing on the URP and its two splinter groups – the Union of the Archangel Michael and the All-Dubrovinit Union of the Russian People. The chronology is divided roughly into three periods: 1905-1907, when the Black Hundred was at its most popular and most violent in the wake of the Revolution of 1905; 1908-1913, when the movement disintegrated due to corruption and internecine fighting within its leadership; and 1914-1917, when Black Hundred activities focused on World War I and the subsequent creation of the oppositionist Progressive Bloc.

In contrast to the overview presented in chapters 2 and 3, the final three chapters offer a more detailed case study of Black Hundred activity. These focus on the city of Odessa, where the URP engaged in an all-out assault on the city's Jews, students, and

other perceived revolutionaries with the active complicity of some elements of the local authorities. These chapters, arranged chronologically, shed new light on the structure and activities of the URP and its complex relationship with local governments. Most importantly, they illuminate the crucial role of corruption in the organization's disintegration. Local officials repeatedly audited the Odessa URP and the city's other monarchist groups. These records clearly demonstrate how the financial crimes of monarchist leaders created devastating schisms in the local Black Hundred organizations that closely mirrored the conflicts of the groups' headquarter branches in St. Petersburg.

Focusing on the monarchists' corruption, which was greatly enabled by state subsidies, helps to clarify the relationship between the government and the Black Hundred. While Kir'ianov found a drop in state support for the URP from the end of 1907 onward, this dissertation describes a more fluid relationship. Lacking a defined policy for interacting with rightist groups, the central government's attitude toward the far right largely depended on the personal inclinations of a group of top officials, including the prime minister, ministers of justice and internal affairs, and the chief of police. Moreover, this situation allowed for a great deal of latitude in official relations toward the Black Hundred in the provinces, where local governments' attitude toward the monarchist organizations ranged from outright support to deep hostility.

Although the central government's relations with the Black Hundred varied according to the whims of its top officials, its overall attitude between 1905 and 1917 must be considered supportive. This is evidenced by the government's secret funding for Black Hundred organizations, which increased nearly every year during this period. The historical record points to two reasons for the government's benevolence: a feeling of

gratitude to the Black Hundred for its “service” in helping to suppress the Revolution of 1905, and the tsar’s well-known affinity for the movement. Nicholas II repeatedly expressed his approbation for the URP and held regular private audiences with national and local Black Hundred leaders. Crucially, the tsar personally approved the official subsidies for the movement, which mostly originated in his own secret fund. This casts some doubt on Kir’ianov’s assertion that Stolypin successfully encouraged the tsar to distance himself from the monarchists after the government quelled the Revolution of 1905.<sup>6</sup>

This dissertation does not claim to account for every aspect of the Black Hundred movement. In order to capture the breadth of the entire 1905-17 period and to incorporate an extended local study as well, I have had to sacrifice certain details. Most notably, I do not systematically survey the far right’s position on all the political issues confronting Russia at the end of the Imperial period. Questions such as workers’ rights and church-state relations were bitterly disputed within the Black Hundred movement, and it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to provide an in-depth account of the far right’s conflicting views on these questions or their discussions of them in the Duma.<sup>7</sup> Although important to the country at large, these issues did not animate the Black Hundred. I focus instead on the subjects at the forefront of rightist ideology—the fight against revolutionaries, the preservation of autocratic prerogatives, anti-Semitism, the proper role of the Duma, and from 1914 onward, the war against Germany.

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<sup>6</sup> Kir’ianov, *Pravye partii*, 389-90.

<sup>7</sup> For a comprehensive study of the monarchists’ conflicts over these issues, see M. N. Luk’ianov, *Rossiiskii konservatizm i reforma, 1907-1914* (Perm’: Izdatel’stvo Permskogo universiteta, 2001). Robert Zimmerman analyzes the far right’s arguments and strategies in the Duma in “The Right Radical Movement in Russia, 1905-1917” (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1976).

Additionally, the constellation of hundreds of national and local Black Hundred groups is too large to be incorporated in this study.<sup>8</sup> As such, this work concentrates on the URP and its two splinter organizations. These groups, especially the URP, exerted the biggest impact on the overall Black Hundred movement. They dominated the national monarchist congresses, controlled the most money, and had the most active press outlets of all the Black Hundred organizations.<sup>9</sup>

Detailed studies of the Black Hundred began appearing before the February Revolution. Although liberals and socialists vociferously denounced the Black Hundred, the Menshevik V. Levitskii penned a surprisingly dispassionate survey in 1914 entitled “Pravye partii” (Rightist Parties).<sup>10</sup> Most likely due to the Soviet regime’s discomfort with the degree of working class participation in the Black Hundred movement, few works appeared on the Black Hundred during the Soviet period, and those that did reflected the anti-monarchist party line.<sup>11</sup> In 1929, however, the Soviet government published *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, a valuable collection of archival documents compiled during the brief tenure of the Provisional Government’s investigative commission.<sup>12</sup> This

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<sup>8</sup> For studies of other monarchist groups, see Iu. I. Kir’ianov, *Russkoe sobranie, 1900-1917* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN, 2003); Iu. B. Solov’ev, *Samoderzhavie i dvorianstvo v 1902-1907 gg.* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1981); Iu. B. Solov’ev, *Samoderzhavie i dvorianstvo v 1907-1914 gg.* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1990) and George Simmonds, “The Congress of Representatives of the Nobles Associations, 1906-1916: A Case Study of Russian Conservatism” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1964).

<sup>9</sup> Although the paper of the Union of the Archangel Michael, *Priamoi put’*, had a small readership, the group compensated for this handicap with the outsized influence of its leader, Vladimir Purishkevich, whose outrageous antics in the Second Duma made him one of the most famous Black Hundred leaders.

<sup>10</sup> V. Levitskii, “Pravye partii,” in *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachale XX-go veka*, vol. 3, eds. L. Martov, P. Maslov, and A. Potresov (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia t-va “Obshchestvennaia Pol’za,” 1914), 347-469.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, S. B. Liubosh, *Russkii fashist Vladimir Purishkevich* (Leningrad: Byloe, 1925).

<sup>12</sup> A. Chernovskii and V. P. Viktorov, eds., *Soiuz Russkogo naroda: Po materialam chrezvychainoi sledstvennoi komissii vremennogo pravitel’sva 1917 g* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo, 1929).

includes many Black Hundred leaders' written submissions to the commission's interrogators, as well as a compilation of official correspondence on the Black Hundred.

In the West, Hans Rogger contributed the first scholarly works on the Black Hundred with a pair of articles explaining the origin of the movement in the twentieth century and questioning whether the Black Hundred could be classified as fascist.<sup>13</sup> Dissertations appearing in 1971 and 1972 by Don Rawson and John Brock, respectively, built upon the foundation laid by Rogger. The two inquiries analyzed the formation, ideology, and violent activities of the URP, especially its St. Petersburg headquarter branch, during the 1905-07 period.<sup>14</sup> These studies represented valuable early forays into the field by western researchers, although they were limited chronologically and, aside from citations from the *Soiuz* collection, lacked a strong archival base due to the inaccessibility of Russian archives at the time.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Black Hundred became a more popular topic among Russian researchers, while work in the West remained sparse.<sup>15</sup> In the 1990s, S. A. Stepanov published the most important investigation with his book *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii* (The Black Hundred in Russia). Using archival material to extend the

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<sup>13</sup> Hans Rogger, "The Formation of the Russian Right, 1900-1906," *California Slavic Studies* 3 (1964): 66-94 and "Was there a Russian Fascism? The Union of Russian People," *Journal of Modern History* 36 (Dec 1964): 398-415. Rogger concludes that the URP was not fascist because it did not respond to a crisis in Russian civilization, did not claim to speak for the youth against a decrepit old order, and could not lead a genuine national revolution owing to its loyalty to the tsar.

<sup>14</sup> Don Rawson, "The Union of the Russian People, 1905-1907: A Study of the Radical Right" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1971) and John Brock, "The Theory and Practice of the Union of the Russian People, 1905-1907: A Case Study of Black Hundred Politics" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1972). In 1995, Rawson extended his study to provide an overview of Black Hundred activity, especially its electoral alliances, during the 1905 Revolution. See Don Rawson, *Russian Rightists and the Revolution of 1905* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>15</sup> Walter Laqueur's *Black Hundred: Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia* (USA: HarperPerennial, 1993) is not particularly helpful for the study of the Black Hundred, as most of the book focuses on anti-Semitism under the Soviet regime. The twelve-page chapter on the Imperial-era Black Hundred does not cite archival material.

study of Black Hundred organizations to 1914, Stepanov provided the first comprehensive overview of the movement for most of the duration of its existence.<sup>16</sup> In the ensuing decade, numerous other scholars published local studies of the Black Hundred, usually encompassing most of the 1905-17 period.<sup>17</sup> In 1998, Kir'ianov and several colleagues put out a two-volume collection of archival documents on the far right with an introductory essay and commentary by Kir'ianov.<sup>18</sup> He published his seminal work, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917* (Rightst Parties in Russia, 1911-1917), in 2001. My critique of parts of Kir'ianov's analysis notwithstanding, *Pravye partii* was an immense contribution to the field that revealed countless new details of the Black Hundred's campaign. Since then, two books have appeared discussing aspects of the far right after the tsar's overthrow: O. V. Budnitskii's book discusses the fate of Russian Jews during the tumultuous years of 1917-20, while Michael Kellogg's work analyzes émigré Russian rightists after the October Revolution.<sup>19</sup> Kellogg's book cites archival sources to expand upon John Stephan's earlier work on rightist émigrés.<sup>20</sup>

As ultra-nationalist sentiment has spread in Russia since the collapse of communism, the Black Hundred has become a source of inspiration for some far-right activists. At a May 2007 gay rights rally in Moscow, for example, a crowd of

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<sup>16</sup> S. A. Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii (1905-1914 gg.)* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo BZPI, 1992). In 2005, Stepanov revised his book and extended his study through 1917. See *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii* (Moscow: EKSMO-Press, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> See E. M. Mihailova, *Chernosotennye organizatsii Srednego Povolzh'ia v 1905-1917 gg.* (Cheboksary: Izd-vo "Klio," 2000); A. P. Tolochko, *Chernosotentsy v Sibiri* (Omsk: OmGU, 1999); and M. L. Razmolodin, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie v Iaroslavl'e i gubernakh Verkhnego Povolzh'ia v 1905-1915 gg.* (Iaroslavl: Alexander Rutman, 2001).

<sup>18</sup> *Pravye partii: Dokumenty i materialy, 1905-1917, v 2 tomakh* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN, 1998).

<sup>19</sup> Michael Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Emigres and the Making of National Socialism, 1917-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), and O. V. Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei mezhdru krasnymi i belymi, 1917-1920* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN, 2005).

<sup>20</sup> John Stephan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925-1945* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

ultranationalists that attacked the rally's participants included a group identifying itself as the "Black Hundred."<sup>21</sup> In connection with this attempt to resurrect the Imperial-era rightist movement, several authors have penned sympathetic accounts of the Black Hundred.<sup>22</sup> The newest of these is *Chernosotentsy* (The Black Hundreds), which Vadim Kozhinov published in 2004. Among other apologetics, Kozhinov argues that it is "absurd" to describe the Black Hundred movement and its leaders as anti-Semitic because one of the movement's early leaders, V. A. Gringmut, and one of its government supporters, I. Ia. Gurliand, were of Jewish origin.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the size and violence of Black Hundred organizations in Odessa, they have not yet received the attention they deserve. There are some useful official documents about Odessa in the *Soiuz* collection, including the postrevolutionary testimony of A. I. Konovnitsyn, the founder and first president of the Odessa URP branch. But the Black Hundred is largely absent even from the best studies of Odessa. Patricia Herlihy's history of Odessa overlooks the movement,<sup>24</sup> while Robert Weinberg's book on the Revolution of 1905 in Odessa ends with the 1905 pogrom, which occurred over three months before the URP established its Odessa branch.<sup>25</sup> Odessa is discussed episodically in Kir'ianov and Stepanov's work, and the city is one of several Ukrainian areas in which I. V. Omel'ianchuk analyzes Black Hundred activity and projects membership estimates in *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie na teritorii Ukrainy, 1904-1914 gg.*

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<sup>21</sup> "Officers and Counterprotestors Disrupt Gay Rights Rally in Moscow," *New York Times*, May 28, 2007.

<sup>22</sup> See Vadim Kozhinov, *"Chernosotentsy" i revoliutsiia* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi obshchestvennyi fond, 1998); Anatolii Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia: Vzgliad cherez stoletie* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo "Tsarskoe Delo," 2000); and Viktor Ostretsov, *Chernaia sotnia: Vzgliad sprava* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Russkoe Slovo," 1994).

<sup>23</sup> Vadim Kozhinov, *Chernosotentsy* (Moscow: IOKSMO-ALGORITM, 2004), 207-08.

<sup>24</sup> Patricia Herlihy, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

<sup>25</sup> Robert Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa: Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

(The Black Hundred Movement on the Territory of Ukraine, 1904-1914).<sup>26</sup> By focusing three chapters of this dissertation exclusively on Odessa and incorporating local archival sources and the Odessa Black Hundred press, I aim to offer a significantly more detailed account of rightist violence, internecine strife, and corruption in the city that illuminates important aspects of the overall monarchist movement.

One advantage to studying the Black Hundred is the rich array of available primary sources. The best source is Moscow's Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation, or GARF). This contains several collections (*fondy*) focused on the Black Hundred, including collections dedicated to the Union of the Archangel Michael and the All-Dubrovinit Union of the Russian People.<sup>27</sup> There is also a substantial collection from the Provisional Government's investigative commission. The most valuable GARF sources are the reams of secret police reports on the Black Hundred. These include discussions of members' activities, reports on monarchist congresses, and relevant clippings from both the leftwing and rightwing press. The reports, naturally, reflect the views of the agents compiling them. They sometimes betray a distinct sympathy for the rightists, especially during the 1905-07 period, and must therefore be read with a critical eye.

There is also a wide assortment of rightwing papers, both national and local, that provide the Black Hundred viewpoint. In addition to the many press outlets of Black Hundred organizations, unaffiliated papers like *Novoe vremia* (New Time) provided

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<sup>26</sup> I. V. Omel'ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie na teritorii Ukrainy, 1904-1914 gg.* (Kiev: Natsionalnyi institut Ukrainsko-Rossiiskikh otnoshenii, 2000).

<sup>27</sup> Many of the URP's internal records were lost when a mob destroyed the URP archive soon after the February Revolution. However, many of the documents in the GARF collection on the All-Dubrovinit Union of the Russian People in fact relate to the original URP organization.

rightwing commentary on political issues and analyzed the travails of the monarchist movement. The liberal and leftwing press also covered Black Hundred activities, but its condemnatory coverage often emitted more heat than light. As we shall see, official communications reveal the unreliability of its reporting on the Black Hundred in Odessa, where even city mayor Sergei Grigor'ev, a bitter antagonist of the Black Hundred who lobbied to shut down the URP branch and expel prominent monarchists from the city, was forced repeatedly to deny the exaggerated and even fabricated leftwing press accounts of Black Hundred activities.

The Black Hundred is one of the more understudied topics of the twilight of the tsarist era, a period that has generally received a good deal of scholarly attention. The dearth of research, I believe, stems in part from the distaste with which many historians view the movement. I have encountered this attitude on numerous occasions. For example, after presenting a paper on Black Hundred leader Vladimir Purishkevich at a Slavic Studies conference, my panel discussant, an accomplished professor of Imperial Russian history, began her critique by remarking that Purishkevich had been dead for a long time before I had gone and dug him up. She said she hoped I would be happy with him for the next few years, and wished me good luck in burying him again when I was done.

Such perspectives notwithstanding, the Black Hundred is an important topic that sheds new light on areas such as Russian political culture, revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence, anti-Semitism, relations between the central and local governments, popular opinion, the tsar's direct and indirect influence on the government and the bureaucracy, and the memory of the Revolution of 1905 as a factor in the central

government's policy making. This dissertation aims to expand our knowledge of these historical themes by combining an analysis of the national Black Hundred movement with a detailed local study. While this is a somewhat unorthodox approach to the topic, I hope it provides a broad as well as deep account of the movement on both the national and local levels.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Roots of the Counterrevolution**

The Black Hundred creed had deep roots in Russian history, stretching back even before the 1830s, when Minister of Education Sergei Uvarov turned the ideological trinity of “Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality” into a state motto. The philosophy drew on a Russian millennium marked by foreign invasions and internal upheavals. From this history, the Black Hundred learned two main lessons: first, they viewed foreign people and ideas as threats to the realm’s stability; and second, they regarded the Russian people as intrinsically anarchic, thus necessitating an ironfisted, all-powerful tsar to keep the empire from falling into chaos. The movement arose in response to the growing revolutionary movement of the early twentieth century, which monarchists saw as a mortal threat to the autocracy requiring the harshest countermeasures. When the government failed to implement these to their satisfaction, rightists took the task upon themselves. Thus, during its early years, the Black Hundred viewed its primary task as saving a regime that was too weak to save itself.

#### **Precursors**

Black Hundred organizations first appeared in Russia at the beginning of the 1900s, but their ideological antecedents go back to the founding of the Russian state. The Black Hundred’s primary ideological principle consisted of support for the autocracy, an institution believed to embody the unique historical development of the Russian state and

to guarantee its continuity. The fixation on autocratic power was a tenet borrowed from previous generations of Russian conservatives. Elucidated most succinctly by the political philosopher Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826), conservatives viewed absolutism as vital to preserving the integrity of the Russian empire. Internally, peasant and Cossack rebellions, bloody palace revolutions, and military uprisings plagued the history of the Russian state. The search for security against periodic invasions dominated foreign policy, as incursions by Turkic, Tatar, and Mongol tribes could be devastating, such as the thirteenth-century Mongol invasion and the Tatars' sacking of Moscow in 1571. Conservatives viewed the autocracy as the only state structure strong enough to protect Russia from these internal and external threats.

The autocracy resulted from a gradual centralization of power beginning with the Riurik princes of Kievan Rus. The Riuriks subdued Slavic and Finnic tribes as they expanded their realm north and south from Novgorod and Kiev along the Dnepr River, and east and west along the Pripyat and Volga rivers. According to tsarism's supporters, the realm was content and peaceful so long as the dynasty maintained a strong central authority in Kiev. But rivalries among Riurik princes beginning in the eleventh century gradually diluted the dynasty's power, opening the kingdom up to the tragedy of foreign invasion and the subsequent 250-year suzerainty of the Mongols. Proponents of the autocracy argued that Russians cast off the Mongol yoke in the mid-fifteenth century thanks to the recentralization of Russian power by Moscow's Danilov clan, a branch of the Riurik dynasty.

The extinction of the Riurik bloodline in the late sixteenth century allowed the throne to pass to the *boyar* (great noble) Boris Godunov, who a *zemskii sobor* (land

assembly) elected tsar. Conservatives believed Godunov lacked the legitimacy of the previous hereditary monarchs and thus lost control of the realm, leading to a catastrophic fifteen-year period of internal rebellion, economic disruption, and invasions by Poles, Swedes, and Tatars that finally ended when another zemskii sobor elected Michael Romanov tsar, thus inaugurating the 300-year reign of the Romanov dynasty.

Adherents of autocratic rule habitually cited the Time of Troubles, as this period became known, as the quintessential example of the dangers of weakened central power.<sup>1</sup> Although they denounced the election of Boris Godunov as illegitimate, they hailed Michael Romanov's selection as tsar, citing the establishment of the Romanov dynasty as an expression of the people's will. Karamzin denounced the willingness of Russia's rulers during the Time of Troubles to allow free political debate and to share power with the nobles represented in the *Boyar Duma*, claiming such acts discredited these monarchs among the public and prevented the necessary recentralization of power.<sup>2</sup> While praising the zemskii sobor, which continued to function as the tsar's advisory council throughout much of the seventeenth century, for bringing the people's needs to the tsar's attention, conservatives argued that the Time of Troubles proved that Russia's susceptibility to anarchy and invasion necessitated a fierce autocratic power unlimited by laws or other institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> During his 1917 trial by a Bolshevik court, for example, monarchist leader Vladimir Purishkevich defended the institution of autocracy by citing its role in ending the Time of Troubles. He attributed tsarism's overthrow to Tsar Nicholas II's weakness. See I. S. Rozental', ed., "'27-go fevralia my mogli stat' grazhdanami': Tiuremnye zapisi V. M. Purishkevicha. Dekabr' 1917 - mart 1918 g.," *Istoricheskii Arkhiv* 5/6 (1996): 122-23. Purishkevich and other early twentieth-century rightists also frequently compared this historical episode to the Revolution of 1905, which they called a new Time of Troubles. See Mikhail Luk'ianov, "Conservatives and 'Renewed Russia,' 1907-1914," *Slavic Review* 61 (Winter 2002): 784.

<sup>2</sup> Nikolai Karamzin, *Karamzin's Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia: A Translation and Analysis*, ed. and trans. Richard Pipes (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 114-15.

Support for the unlimited autocracy was a vital ideological tenant of the nineteenth-century Slavophiles, a key intellectual forbearer of the Black Hundred. Twentieth-century rightists admired the tenacious resistance to Westernization expressed by the Slavophiles, who advocated the romantic virtues of an idealized Russian civilization based on native cultural traditions, Orthodoxy, and the traditional peasant commune. Their theoretical embrace of the autocracy notwithstanding, leading Slavophiles like Ivan Kireevskii, Aleksei Khomiakov, and Konstantin and Ivan Aksakov strenuously criticized the Russian government and even tsarist “despotism” for impinging on free expression and controlling the Orthodox Church.<sup>3</sup> While the Black Hundred considered it anathema to criticize the tsar, the movement adopted the Slavophile dialectic of supporting the autocracy while blaming many of the country’s problems on government ministers (who the tsar actually handpicked) or an unfeeling and self-interested bureaucracy that allegedly interposed itself between the tsar and his subjects.

The Black Hundred combined the Slavophiles’ cultural nationalism with an opposing intellectual current of state nationalism elucidated by Minister of Education Sergei Uvarov in the 1830s and 1840s. Under the slogan of “Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality,” Uvarov advocated a statist patriotism that relegated autonomous individuals to a passive role of supporting state institutions and Imperial policy. Uvarov’s philosophy complemented the empire’s official Russification campaign, in which the state bureaucracy and the educational system privileged ethnic Russians, the Russian language, and Orthodoxy. Initiated in response to the Polish uprising of 1830-31 and lasting until 1917, Russification stemmed from a philosophy of state-led ethnic Russian chauvinism

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<sup>3</sup> Edward Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Russia* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964), 33.

conducive to the Black Hundred, whose organizational statutes called for ethnic Russians to maintain a “privileged and predominate” position in the state.<sup>4</sup>

The Black Hundred’s somewhat contradictory syncretism of Slavophilic cultural nationalism and official bureaucratic patriotism recalled the more action-oriented conservative philosophies that gained prominence in the second half of the nineteenth century. The 1870s conservative philosopher General Rostislav Fadeev rejected the Slavophiles’ insistence on the people’s ability for cultural progress without the state’s leadership, even while assailing the “bureaucracy” for hindering the people’s natural connection with and support for their government.<sup>5</sup> Michael Pogodin promulgated a similar vision of achieving Slavophile ideals through the aegis of the state. His ideas helped to articulate the basic principles underlying this period’s dominant conservative trend—Pan-Slavism.

The Pan-Slavs jettisoned the Slavophiles’ vague utopianism, metaphysics, and nostalgia for Russia’s lost Christian society, instead focusing on questions of practical policy, especially in foreign affairs. Formed in response to Russia’s international isolation following its devastating defeat by a coalition of Western powers in the 1856 Crimean War, the Pan-Slavic movement advocated the unification of all Slavs under the loose auspices of the Russian tsar. Slavic uprisings within the decaying Ottoman Empire convinced the Pan-Slavs of the tantalizing possibility of vast Russian expansionism, a sentiment frequently expressed in the political writings of Fedor Dostoevsky. Russia’s

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<sup>4</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Thaden, 154.

famed novelist declared the ultimate, revanchist goal of many Pan-Slavs when he insisted in his *Diary of a Writer* that “[s]ooner or later, Constantinople will be ours.”<sup>6</sup>

Black Hundred organizations showed little interest in new Imperial conquests. With the exception of the period leading up to World War I and the war itself, they generally paid only cursory attention to foreign affairs—the early monarchist congresses often declined to discuss any international issues at all.<sup>7</sup> Instead, the movement focused on Russia’s internal development, especially threats to the autocracy posed by Russia’s liberals and socialist revolutionaries. Although they eschewed the Pan-Slavs’ guiding passion of uniting all Slavs under the tsar’s protection, monarchists mimicked the Pan-Slavs’ aggressive ethnic Russian chauvinism, including the Pan-Slavs’ rather condescending view of non-Russian Slavs as a generally friendly people deserving to live under Russian tutelage. Black Hundred ideology typically denied the ethnic distinctions of Ukrainians and Belorussians, defining both groups as ethnic Russians.<sup>8</sup> Its credo professed a generally derogatory view of Russia’s other ethnic minorities, especially Jews, as well as rebellious nationalities such as Poles and Finns. The Black Hundred also found inspiration in the Pan-Slavs’ visceral opposition to the West. Although they rejected the militant messianism of Pan-Slavic writer Nikolai Danilevskii, who predicted that Slavs would militarily defeat the West and then assume their rightful role as head of

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<sup>6</sup> Fedor Dostoevsky, *The Diary of a Writer* (Vol 2), trans. Boris Brasol (New York: Octagon Books, 1973), 628. Seizing the Ottoman capital was revanchist from a political-religious perspective, in that the city had been the capital of the Orthodox Byzantine Empire until the Muslim Turks conquered it in 1453. Its conquest was a popular cause among Pan-Slavs. The publisher of the conservative daily *Novoe vremia*, A. S. Suvorin, echoed Dostoevskii’s declaration, asking bluntly, “Why shouldn’t we seize Constantinople?” See Effie Ambler, *Russian Journalism and Politics, 1861-1881: The Career of Aleksei S. Suvorin* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972), 136.

<sup>7</sup> While eschewing foreign affairs, the congresses frequently declared opposition to autonomy for Poland and Finland, which belonged to the Russian empire at the time.

<sup>8</sup> The statutes of the biggest Black Hundred organization, the Union of the Russian People, asserted the lack of distinction between ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians. See GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l. 3.

a new civilizational archetype, Black Hundred adherents shared the Pan-Slavic view of the West as the practitioners of soulless capitalism whose pernicious revolutionary ideologies necessitated constant vigilance.

### **An Organizational Model**

Although Black Hundred ideology replicated some Pan-Slavic tenets, the Pan-Slavs' primary impact on the Black Hundred was not ideological, but organizational. The Pan-Slavs provided a model for a social movement simultaneously directed at influencing mass public opinion and government policy in a nationalist direction. Both movements achieved this through a combination of socio-political organizations and belligerent newspapers.

The Pan-Slav movement's organizational core was the Moscow Slavic Benevolent Committee. Established in 1858, the committee's membership boasted most of Russia's leading Pan-Slavs, including Alexei Khomiakov, Ivan and Constantine Aksakov, Michael Pogodin, Michael Katkov, and Konstantin Leontiev. The group was founded as an ostensibly apolitical organization dedicated to supporting Slavs living under the Ottoman and Austrian empires through charitable and cultural activities like raising funds for schools, libraries, and Orthodox churches. The committee received modest state funding, including a 300 ruble annual donation from the empress,<sup>9</sup> and spawned sister committees in St. Petersburg, Odessa, and Kiev.<sup>10</sup> The committees' apolitical nature was always tenuous, as all their activities aimed to forward the

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<sup>9</sup> Michael Boro Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Pan-Slavism, 1856-1870* (NY and London: Columbia University Press, 1956), 139.

<sup>10</sup> All the cities hosting Pan-Slavic committees would later count among the cities with the most active Black Hundred organizations

manifestly political agenda of Pan-Slavism. Moreover, their apolitical pretenses collapsed in the mid-1870s when Serbs, Bulgarians, Montenegrins, and Christian Bosnians and Herzegovinians rose in rebellion against the Ottoman Empire.

The Pan-Slavic committees became vociferous supporters of the rebellious Slavs, sending arms and money to the rebels, sponsoring agitation campaigns and public lectures to drum up support for the cause, and helping to organize the estimated 5,000 Russian volunteers who joined the Serbian army once it began fighting the Turks in July 1876. The committees' activities invested Russia's prestige and credibility in the Slavs' victory, especially with the Serbian army fighting under the leadership of a famed Russian general, Mikhail Cherniaev. This, alongside an increasingly agitated public demanding war, drew Russia into a conflict that its government had been hesitant to enter. The resulting Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 convinced the Russian government of the dangers of the Moscow Pan-Slavic Committee, which the government took over during the war and soon after abolished.<sup>11</sup>

The Pan-Slavs propagated their message by appealing directly to the population through mass-circulation newspapers, a theretofore rare model for rightwing agitation that the Black Hundred would adopt several decades later. The Pan-Slavs effectively utilized populist journalism, a new phenomenon in Russia in the mid-1870s enabled by the transition of many publishers from more scholarly "thick journals" to newspapers aimed at a mass audience.

Two Pan-Slavic dailies proved particularly influential. The first, *Novoe vremia* (New Time), was founded in 1865 and largely defended the interests of wealthy land

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<sup>11</sup> Astrid Tuminez, *Russian Nationalism Since 1856: Ideology and the Making of Foreign Policy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 92, 94, 116.

owners in the western provinces. The paper's low circulation and poor finances led to its successive takeover by various publishers, eventually coming under the ownership of the polemicist A. S. Suvorin in 1876.<sup>12</sup> Acting as chief editor, Suvorin quickly turned the paper into a militant Pan-Slavic organ that agitated for Russia's territorial expansion through war. Circulation expanded ten-fold in the first year of Suvorin's reign thanks to the paper's populist reorientation, a move that established *Novoe vremia* as Russia's most influential paper for the next twenty years, even though the conservative editorial line alienated the paper from groups like Jews, the intelligentsia, and students that had been leading consumers of thick journals.<sup>13</sup> Generally supportive of government policy, *Novoe vremia* also garnered an influential audience among government officials, the nobility, and within the Imperial family. Nevertheless, the paper periodically criticized the government harshly, sparking unease in official circles with articles blasting the Congress of Berlin for shrinking the size of the Bulgarian principality that Russia had secured in the Treaty of San Stefano, which ended the Russo-Turkish War. The paper even expressed some sympathy for Vera Zasulich, the revolutionary who shot St. Petersburg City Governor F. F. Trepov after he flogged a political prisoner who refused to remove his cap in Trepov's presence.<sup>14</sup> Although in the early 1900s *Novoe vremia* vociferously supported Prime Minister Petr Stolypin, after his assassination in 1911 the paper became increasingly critical of the government's inadequacies.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Suvorin initially acted as copublisher along with V. I. Likhachev, who left the business in 1878.

<sup>13</sup> E. A. Dinershtein. *A. S. Suvorin: Chelovek, sdelayshii kar'eru* (Moscow: ROSSPION, 1998), 55-57, and Louise McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 74.

<sup>14</sup> Dinershtein. *A. S. Suvorin*, 61, 63, 65, 67-68, 75-76.

<sup>15</sup> David Costello, "Novoe Vremia and the Conservative Dilemma, 1911-1914," *Russian Review*, vol 37, no 1, January 1978, 38-50.

The other dominant nineteenth-century conservative paper, *Moskovskie vedomosti* (Moscow Gazette), originated as a publication of Moscow University. The nationalist Mikhail Katkov took it over in 1863, giving it a militant Pan-Slavic editorial line. The paper became immensely popular thanks to its nationalist attacks on Poles, who launched a large-scale rebellion against Russia in 1863.<sup>16</sup> These excoriations, along with denunciations of foreign capital investments, made Katkov into a powerful opinion-maker who exerted an oversized influence on government policy. Although supportive of Tsar Alexander II and his comprehensive liberal reforms, Katkov attacked the government for its alleged timidity in supporting the Pan-Slav cause, identifying the “cosmopolitan secret enemies of Russia” within the upper echelons of the government bureaucracy as the biggest threat to the empire. Exempted from much of the censorship regime thanks to his powerful supporters, including Tsar Alexander II himself, Katkov cavalierly dismissed the government’s authority over his activities, declaring, “With all due respect for governmental officials, we do not consider ourselves their subordinates and we are not obliged to conform to the personal views of one or another of them.”<sup>17</sup>

While whipping up popular nationalist passions—often with acerbic attacks on the government—Pan-Slavic leaders’ professions of patriotism and loyalty to the tsar left the government confused as to how to deal with the excitable movement. Divining a beneficent political force that could rally the public around Russian Imperial goals, the government subsidized Pan-Slavic organizations and funneled cash to both *Novoe vremia*

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<sup>16</sup> The obstreperous Poles presented an ideological problem for Pan-Slavs, who assumed that Slavs welcomed Russian tutelage. Hardliners like Katkov viewed the Polish nation as an ungrateful aberration that needed to be crushed.

<sup>17</sup> Karel Durman, *The Time of the Thunderer: Mikhail Katkov, Russian Nationalist Extremism and the Failure of the Bismarckian System, 1871-1887* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1988), 64, 67.

and *Moskovskie vedmomosti* by favoring them with paid official announcements.<sup>18</sup> But at other times the government suppressed the organizations and censored or even banned Pan-Slavic media organs, fearing that they were stirring nationalist sentiment to an excessive degree or in a specifically anti-government direction.<sup>19</sup> The government's ambivalent attitude toward the movement was captured by Council for Press Affairs member Nikitenko, who observed, "The government needs to keep a dog like Katkov to bark at thieves or at those who may be suspected of thieving. The dog is to be chained, though."<sup>20</sup>

The Black Hundred reproduced the Pan-Slavs' combination of pressure organizations and populist newspapers. They replicated the network of the Pan-Slavic pressure groups through monarchist organization such as *Soiuz Russkogo naroda* (Union of the Russian People, or URP), which established branches in cities throughout the Russian empire. The Black Hundred also held periodic congresses attended by supporters from various organizations, publications, and institutions, a practice the Pan-Slavs had established by holding congresses in Moscow and Prague in 1867 and 1868, respectively. Similar to the Pan-Slavic committees, URP leaders' receipt of government subsidies did not hinder them from launching the most withering attacks on the government, which they castigated for its alleged timidity in defending the interests of the Russian people and resisting revolutionary encroachments.

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<sup>18</sup> McReynolds, *The News*, 25.

<sup>19</sup> For example, after just two issues the government banned *Parus*, the newspaper of the influential Pan-Slavic philosopher Ivan Aksakov, due to an article by Pogodin denouncing Russia's alleged lack of support for the Slavs. See Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Panslavism*, 117.

<sup>20</sup> Durman, *The Time of the Thunderer*, 64.

Like the Pan-Slavs, the Black Hundred also relied on mass-circulation newspapers to propagate their agenda to a popular audience and to pressure the government to adopt nationalist policies. In response, the government evinced the same ambivalence it had shown toward the Pan-Slavs. Almost every Black Hundred newspaper enjoyed generous government subsidies, but officials frequently fined and suspended them when their (often vulgar) attacks on the government exceeded allowable norms. In general, from the mid-nineteenth century onward, the government failed to articulate a clear, consistent policy toward ultranationalist organizations. This often left responsibility for official relations with both the Pan-Slav and Black Hundred movements in the hands of local officials who lacked clear directives. Thus, while lower-level officials often tried to enforce censorship rules and other official regulations against Pan-Slav and Black Hundred newspapers, the publications could frequently evade these restrictions by appealing to higher-ranking supporters. Since both Alexander II and Nicholas II championed these movements, Pan-Slav and Black Hundred papers enjoyed state subsidies and tended to elicit less censorship than their liberal and socialist counterparts.

With the official suppression of the Pan-Slav movement and the disillusionment of its advocates owing to the Congress of Berlin, conservatism lost Imperial expansion as its animating factor. Protecting the autocracy from liberals and socialist revolutionaries became the primary motivating force among many conservatives for the rest of the Imperial era, giving the conservative movement a generally defensive character. Conservatism transformed into a dogmatic defense of tsarist prerogatives with a philosophy composed of ad-hoc positions that largely reacted to initiatives from liberals and revolutionaries. Konstantin Pobedonostsev, procurator of the Holy Synod, emerged

as a primary spokesman for the new rightwing catechism. Setting forth his philosophical approach in his *Reflections of a Russian Statesman*, Pobedonostsev explicated his worldview largely by denouncing those principles that he opposed—freedom of speech and of the press, jury trials, democracy, separation of church and state, and the sovereignty of the people. In its place, he urged readers to “submit to the law of life,” offering vague platitudes to the “simple, organic relations of public and family life” that were ostensibly being corrupted by “complex and artificial” philosophies.<sup>21</sup>

The assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 provided an additional catalyst for this philosophical transformation in Russian conservatism. The murder provoked his successor, Tsar Alexander III, to institute a program of counter-reforms designed to reassert state control of the education system, judiciary, *zemstva* councils, and the press; strengthen the police force; intensify the Russification campaign against national minorities; and segregate Jews from virtually all spheres of national life through a raft of new restrictions beginning with the May Laws of 1882. The shock of Alexander II’s assassination had a profound effect on Russian conservatives, convincing them that the Great Reforms he had instituted, such as the abolition of serfdom, comprehensive judiciary reform, and the introduction of limited local self-government through the *zemstva*, had unleashed Russia’s intrinsic anarchic forces and that order could be restored only through the reassertion of firm autocratic rule. Katkov was particularly affected by the new political environment, abandoning his former support for the Great Reforms and adopting a reactionary outlook. As Marc Raeff notes,

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<sup>21</sup> Konstantine Pobedonostsev, *Reflections of a Russian Statesman*, trans. Robert Crozier Long (London: G. Richards, 1898), 94-95.

In this anti-liberal and reactionary furor [Katkov] forgot all restraint and reasonableness. It was also during these years that he gave free reign to his virulent and narrow nationalism, pursuing with implacable hatred the national minorities of the Russian empire and advocating a racial and religious chauvinism unparalleled in Russia before. . . . But in so doing he lost his popularity with the public, and his influence became limited to a handful of inveterate reactionaries, the forerunners of the Union of the Russian People and the Black Hundred.<sup>22</sup>

### **Anti-Semitism in Russian Conservative Thought**

Alongside support for the autocracy, anti-Semitism, which had particularly deep roots in Russian history, emerged as a primary ideological tenet of the Black Hundred. The Russian origins of this dogma extend back to the anti-Semitic elements found in Byzantine Christianity, which Kievan Rus adopted in the late tenth century. From its inception, Russian orthodoxy defined Judaism not as an ancestor of Christianity, but as an unscrupulous antagonist. Emphasizing the superiority of the New Testament over its Jewish predecessor, Russian Orthodoxy accentuated those gospels and biblical passages that negatively portrayed Jews. According to Russian religious scholar G. P. Fedotov, the tension between the Old and New Testament and between Judaism and Christianity represented “the only theological subject which is treated by Russian [Byzantist] writers with never-tiring attention.”<sup>23</sup> Thus Easter eventually emerged as the most popular time of year for anti-Jewish pogroms, often committed by Orthodox congregations riled up by fire and brimstone sermons denouncing the Jews’ nefarious role in the crucifixion of Christ.

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<sup>22</sup> Marc Raeff, “A Reactionary Liberal: M. N. Katkov,” *Russian Review* 11, no 3 (July 1952): 159.

<sup>23</sup> G. P. Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind* (Massachusetts: Belmont, 1946), 91-92. Fedotov attributes the emphasis on anti-Semitism in Russian Christianity to the poor knowledge of the ancient world among Russian religious thinkers stemming from their lack of a Graeco-Roman tradition. This left only the Jewish world, as described in the Bible, to contrast with their own civilization.

Many Black Hundred leaders spiced their anti-Semitic discourse with religious themes and biblical references. URP President N. E. Markov II, for example, characterized the Jewish people as being intrinsically hostile to all mankind, a disposition he argued had originated in the passage in the Book of Genesis in which Jacob wrestles with an apparition from God who renames him Israel “because he wrestled with God and with man.” According to Markov, Christians understand this passage metaphorically, but Jews interpret the scene literally, believing that their people are blessed specifically for their “struggle” against God and their fellow man. “The entire history of Jewry is the history of the struggle with God and with mankind,” wrote Markov. “And this entire struggle—according to the interpretation of the Talmud, and, therefore, according to the Jewish conscience—is led not contrary to, but in fulfillment of the Jews’ holy Law of God.”<sup>24</sup> Markov thus identifies Jews as being bound by their own religion to exude hostility not only to all non-Jews, but even to their own God.

Anti-Semitism was widespread among the Russian Orthodox clergy. Many priests in the countryside had no personal experience with Jews, but simply accepted anti-Semitism as an important aspect of Orthodox doctrine. The presence of Jews, simply put, helped to explain the existence of evil in the world. Years after his abandonment of the Black Hundred movement, the monk Ilidor, a fanatical anti-Semite and early influential URP member, recalled:

The Jews I hated with every fiber of my soul. In the Jew I saw only the descendants of the priests of Judea who, pursuing their trivial personal interests, had condemned to death the greatest Jew that ever lived. . . . All

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<sup>24</sup> N. E. Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil* (Paris: Izdatel'stvo sveteishago khiazia M. K. Gorchakova “doloi zlo,” 1928), 7-8.

I had been taught about the Jews was this: the Jew drinks human blood, the Jew regards it as a pious deed to kill a Christian, the anti-Christ will spring from Jewish stock, the Jew is accused by God, the Jew is the source of all evil in the world. My hatred of Jews was thus based wholly on religious fanaticism. The Jew in private life I did not know.”<sup>25</sup>

Russian Orthodoxy, championed by the Black Hundred as a pillar of Russian exceptionalism, provided a convenient historical precedent for the movement’s hostility toward Jews. This religious-based prejudice formed an ideological base that the Black Hundred enhanced by adding racialist anti-Semitic arguments popularized in nineteenth-century Europe. Jews occupied a special place in the Black Hundred’s racialist worldview. As would the Nazis over a decade later, the Black Hundred regarded the Jews as a special race that stood in opposition to all humanity. The Black Hundred periodically fulminated against other nationalities, but the Jews were the only ethnic or religious group incessantly singled out for permanent censure in Black Hundred congressional resolutions, publications, electoral campaigns, and Duma speeches.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, the only group specifically banned from membership in the URP was the Jews—even if they had converted to Christianity.<sup>27</sup> This prohibition is further evidence of the Black Hundred’s view of the Jews as a people defined by race rather than religion.

The main anti-Semitic tropes adopted by the Black Hundred already existed in the Russian and European milieu when the movement first arose in the early 1900s. In

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<sup>25</sup> Hieromonk Iliodor, *The Mad Monk of Russia, Iliodor: Life, Memoirs, and Confessions of Sergei Michailovich Trufanoff* (New York: Century Co, 1918), 41-42.

<sup>26</sup> In his memoirs, Kadet Party leader Pavel Miliukov recalled a typical example of the way Black Hundred leaders would single out Jews for opprobrium. During the Third Duma, monarchist deputies Vladimir Purishkevich, G. G. Zamyslovskii, and Markov organized a campaign to react to Duma debates about the army, education system, professions, and every other sphere of Russian life by proposing new restrictions on Jews in each of these areas. See Pavel Miliukov, *My Political Memoirs, 1905-1917*, ed. Arthur P. Mendel and trans. Carl Goldberg (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), 214.

<sup>27</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l. 5.

addition to the religious and racialist elements, the Black Hundred adopted other specific grievances that surfaced throughout the nineteenth century, as the technologies, belief systems, and economic modes associated with modernization and international capitalism displaced traditional ways of life. Russia's economy grew rapidly in the late nineteenth century—industrial production approximately doubled in the quarter century following the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, and by the 1890s industrial growth averaged 8 percent annually.<sup>28</sup> Industrialization sparked an economic transformation that fundamentally altered Russian society, resulting in rapid urbanization and the rise of an educated, professional middle class. The bewilderment and powerlessness felt by many Russians in the face of such rapid social change found a convenient outlet in anti-Semitism.

Thus Russians' grievances against their Jewish compatriots grew more extensive in the nineteenth century. Most of these related to Jews' alleged predatory business practices. These complaints originated in the late eighteenth century, when objections from Russian merchants about competition from Jews helped to pressure Catherine the Great into creating the Pale of the Settlement, the western region of the empire to which she confined most Jews.<sup>29</sup> Popular opinion, repeated in the press, in popular literature, and by government officials reaching up to the tsar, begrudged Jews their prominent role in resented occupations like moneylending, the liquor trade, and acting as lease-holders for noble landlords. Despite the poverty experienced by the overwhelming majority of

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<sup>28</sup> Gregory Freeze, "Reform and Counter Reform, 1855-1890," and Reginald E. Zelnik, "Revolutionary Russia, 1890-1914," in *Russia: A History*, ed. Gregory Freeze (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 184, 206.

<sup>29</sup> O. V. Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei mezhdru krasnymi i belymi (1917-1920)* (Moscow: ROSSPION: 2006), 15-16.

Russian Jews (a Ministry of Internal Affairs report from 1850 found that only three in one hundred Russian Jews had any substantial capital, with the majority of them living in destitution),<sup>30</sup> a strata of high-profile Jews amassed fortunes in the nineteenth century in prominent sectors like banking and railroad construction. Other Jews grew wealthy as merchants, displacing Russian and other Christian elites from their control of trade networks in grain and other commodities. This fed a popular perception of Jews as a rich, privileged caste.

The relative scarcity of Jewish peasants—a phenomenon partly attributable to restrictions on Jewish residency rights in rural areas—removed the Jewish people from the idealized, romantic conception of the Russian peasantry to which Russians on both the right and the left adhered. (In a country that remained 90 percent peasant in the early twentieth century, even the Marxist parties had to pay tribute to the glories of the Russian *muzhik*, notwithstanding Marx’s contempt for the “idiocy” of peasant life.) International issues, including American political pressure on Russia to improve the treatment of its Jews, as well as Russian financial dependence on the Rothschilds and other foreign Jewish financiers, further engrained anti-Semitic prejudices and fueled popular conspiracy theories of Jewish world domination. These resentments supplemented other complaints relating to Russian Jews’ alleged religious obscurantism, prominent leadership positions in revolutionary parties, collaboration with the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War, high rate of draft dodging, high birthrate, and ability to exceed legal quotas on Jewish representation in Russian universities.

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<sup>30</sup> Hans Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 17.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 was a watershed in Russian political history, marking the point at which anti-Semitism emerged as a major force. With popular passions whipped high by the likes of *Novoe vremia*, the population needed a convenient scapegoat to explain the war's unsatisfactory outcome. Some blamed Jewish-born British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli for stymieing Russia's ambitions at the Congress of Berlin, while others believed the theories proffered by the anti-Semitic writer and official crown historian V. V. Krestovskii, who described Jews as greedy cowards who had refused to fight on the frontlines and had seized control of the army's provisional supply network.<sup>31</sup>

Many of the allegations against Jews had some basis in fact, but much of the objectionable Jewish behavior stemmed from the unique discrimination the Jews faced in Russia. Jewish price-fixing and Jewish traders' preferencing of Jewish business partners and customers were not uncommon occurrences that stemmed, according to some scholars, from the conditions of over-competition in the Pale of the Settlement.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, Jewish draft dodging became a common practice after 1827, when Nicholas I began conscripting Jewish children from the age of twelve, while the predominance of Jewish tavern owners can be explained by the taverns' attachment to plots of land, which Jews were otherwise barred from owning.<sup>33</sup> Rumors of Jewish collusion with the Japanese stemmed from some rare but high-profile Jewish demonstrations of support for Japan, most notably the underwriting of a 5 million pound bond to support the Japanese

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<sup>31</sup> Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, "The 'Jewish Policy' of the Late Imperial War Ministry: The Impact of the Russian Right," *Kritika* 3, no 2 (Spring 2002): 223-34. In accounting for the rise of anti-Semitism at this time, Petrovsky-Shtern emphasizes widespread but false accusations that a Jewish supply partnership, Greger, Gorvits, and Kogan, swindled the army and was responsible for food shortages.

<sup>32</sup> John Klier, "Russian Jewry on the Eve of the Pogroms," in *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, eds. John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1992), 6.

<sup>33</sup> Rogger, *Jewish Policies*, 11, 148.

war effort by the New York financier Jacob Schiff, who declared that a Japanese victory over Russia would benefit Russian Jews by sparking constitutional reform.<sup>34</sup> Finally, it is hard to blame Jews for their high birthrate (the Jewish population expanded by 20 percent between 1881 and 1896)<sup>35</sup> or for exceeding manifestly discriminatory quotas on their university attendance.

But public opinion did not interpret Jewish transgressions as responses to anti-Jewish regulations. Explanations became popular that drew from historical medieval blood libels purporting Jewish ceremonial murders of Christian children, as well as long-standing claims of Jewish power being spread through secretive Masonic lodges. These theories simply held Jews to be an intrinsically kabalistic and predatory people who secretly plotted within their *kahals*—organs of Jewish self-government from Poland that were abolished in 1844 but widely rumored to continue underground—to fulfill pernicious Talmud commandments to exploit Christians.<sup>36</sup> Markov, for example, claimed the *kahals* allowed Jews to control their own government, police force, and court system; impose the death penalty; and control entire local economies by forcibly seizing non-Jewish property and selling it off to Jews. The *kahals* allegedly maintained their power by ordering the exile or death of anyone who interfered with their monopolies and through a system of false declarations and bribes to police and government officials.<sup>37</sup>

The Black Hundred tended to eschew complicated socioeconomic explanations of Jewish behavior in favor of grand conspiracy theories. The Talmud—a collection of

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<sup>34</sup> Shlomo Lambroza, “The Pogroms of 1903-1906,” in *Pogroms*, 214-15.

<sup>35</sup> Alexander Orbach, “The Development of the Russian Jewish Community, 1881-1903,” in *Pogroms*, 139. The growth rate of Russia’s Jewish population, however, was tempered by the emigration of approximately 2 million Jews between 1880 and 1914. See Rogger, *Jewish Policies*, 178.

<sup>36</sup> Klier, “Russian Jewry,” 8.

<sup>37</sup> N. E. Markov, *Istoriia Evreiskogo shturma Rossii* (Tipografiia “Nash put’,” 1937), 6-7.

historical discussions of Jewish law and customs—usually played a central role in these theories. Thanks to a Jewish historical proscription against translating the Talmud from Hebrew, the Black Hundred’s fantastic claims of the Talmud’s “secret” instructions for Jewish oppression of non-Jews found a receptive audience among some in the general public who, without a knowledge of Hebrew, had no way of debunking these accusations. Markov, for example, claimed Jewish elders inserted passages into the Talmud in the sixteenth century that ordered Jews to enslave or exterminate all non-Jews. In order to keep these instructions secret from non-Jews, Jewish leaders allegedly threatened to kill any Jews who translated these passages.<sup>38</sup>

The Black Hundred also helped to propagate what would become the most widespread anti-Semitic conspiracy theory of the twentieth century—*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The chronicle, which is currently enjoying a renaissance throughout much of the Arab world,<sup>39</sup> originated as the 1865 French-language novel *Dialogues in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, a political satire directed against Napoleon III that made no reference to Jews. Various European authors modified the story over the ensuing decades, turning it into a purportedly true reproduction of the minutes of a cabal of Jewish elders plotting Jewish world domination and the overthrow of national governments. *The Protocols* reached its final version under the editorship of anti-Semitic

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<sup>38</sup> Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil*, 13.

<sup>39</sup> One example from recent years is the inclusion of an Arabic translation of *The Protocols* next to the Torah in a display of the holy books of monotheistic religions in Egypt’s Alexandria library. The museum’s director claimed *The Protocols* may be more important to “the Zionist Jews of the world” than the Torah. See *Al-Ussbu’* (Egypt), November 17, 2003, as cited in MEMRI, Special Dispatch Series No. 619, December 3, 2003. Another example is *Al-Hadith wa’l-thaqafa al-Islamiyya*, an elementary school textbook published by Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Education. According to the book, “The indisputable evidence of the truth of the existence of these Protocols and their contents of the hell-raising Jewish plans is: the fact that a lot of the schemes, conspiracies, and instigations found in it have been implemented.” See “The Hijacking of Islam: How Extremist Literature is Subverting Mosques in the UK,” Policy Exchange, <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/libimages/307.pdf>.

agents of the *Okhrana* (tsarist secret police) and was first serialized in the St. Petersburg newspaper *Znamia* (Banner) by the Moldavian publisher Pavel Krushevan, who would later establish the URP's Kishinev branch. The document, however, had only a small circulation until its inclusion in the second edition of a book published by the mystic writer Sergei Nilus in 1905 entitled *Velikoe v malom* (The Great Within the Small).<sup>40</sup> Many Black Hundred newspapers reprinted *The Protocols*, which they cited as proof of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy against the entire non-Jewish world.

An example of the enduring importance of *The Protocols* to rightist ideology is found in a booklet Markov published from exile in Germany in 1937. Writing sixteen years after *The Times* had definitively revealed *The Protocols* to be a fraud,<sup>41</sup> Markov sought to confirm *The Protocols'* authenticity by relating a fantastic version of how Nilus came into possession of the document. According to Markov, an Okhrana agent seized *The Protocols* at the 1897 Zionist congress in Switzerland. Pilfered from the personal papers of Zionism founder Theodore Herzl himself, and allegedly containing notes in Herzl's own handwriting, Markov claimed the document reached Russian Minister of Internal Affairs Ivan Goremykin, who stashed *The Protocols* in his ministry's secret files, where it was discovered by Goremykin's successor, Dmitrii Sipiagin. Sipiagin allegedly wanted to publish the manuscript but, not wanting to reveal the illegal methods through which the Okhrana obtained it, instead gave a copy to a group of rightists that either included Nilus or from whom Nilus obtained the document. (Sipiagin, Markov notes

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<sup>40</sup> Valery Kadzhaya, "The Fraud of the Century, or a Book Born in Hell," *Novoe Vremia/New Times*, [http://www.newtimes.ru/eng/detail.asp?art\\_id=470](http://www.newtimes.ru/eng/detail.asp?art_id=470). For an in-depth study of the evolution of *The Protocols*, see Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World-Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1967).

<sup>41</sup> *The Times* published a three-part series of articles displaying passages side by side from both *The Protocols* and its French predecessor, *Dialogues in Hell*, revealing the former as a plagiarized version of the latter. See *The Times*, August 16-18, 1921.

cryptically, was assassinated soon after handing over the document.) The original draft allegedly remained in the secret files of the Ministry of Internal Affairs until it, along with all secret documents relating to Jews, was removed in 1917 on orders of the head of the first Provisional Government, the Mason Prince L'vov.<sup>42</sup> Thus within the conspiracy theory of the *The Protocols*, Markov weaves an auxiliary conspiracy theory to explain the fate of the missing original manuscript.

The Black Hundred found conspiracy theories with an international dimension like *The Protocols* particularly useful, as the tales tied Russians into a much larger community of victims of the Jews. Markov frequently discussed this theme, elucidating it in a blistering February 1911 Duma speech in which he argued that Jews often faced discriminatory laws because

all the states of the world, all the peoples of the world, defended themselves against the onslaught upon them of the criminal Jewish race, against the attempts of this criminal race on their prosperity, on the very spirit of these peoples. . . . From the creation of the world, Jews were always antihuman [*chelovekonevistsicheskaia*], they always hated all peoples with which history put them in contact, they were always hated by all peoples, they're hated even now by all people without exception, including, of course, by the Russian people.<sup>43</sup>

In his two-volume *Voiny temnykh sil'* (Wars of the Dark Forces), Markov offers an explanation of world history, spanning from biblical times to the twentieth century, in which great upheavals throughout history are attributed to Jewish conspiracies. The Reformation, the advent of socialism, the beginning of World War I, and anticolonial

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<sup>42</sup> Markov, *Istoriia Evreiskogo shturma*, 31-32. Markov wrote this pamphlet for a Berlin congress honoring Fedor Vinberg, a fellow Black Hundred exile who, as we shall see in chapter 3, helped to introduce *The Protocols* into Germany, where Adolf Hitler quickly accepted it as a legitimate historical document.

<sup>43</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, Feb 9, 1911, col. 1556, 1558.

rebellions throughout the developing world, including Mahatma Ghandi's campaign against British rule in India, are just a few of the events Markov cites as stemming from the Jews' eternal plot to destroy Christianity and enslave mankind.<sup>44</sup> Much of the turmoil since the eighteenth century, Markov claims, was instigated by Free Masons, who allegedly decided at an 1872 meeting in Germany to kill all of Europe's monarchs.<sup>45</sup> The first stage of this plot had already been realized in France in 1793, but the Free Masons there really just acted as the pawn of a larger, more evil force: "The so-called 'great' French Revolution was conceived, led, and ended by Free Masons. And Free Masons in this affair, as always, were the obedient instrument and servants of their owner and master—worldwide Jewry."<sup>46</sup>

As for Russian history, Markov blames the Decembrist revolt and the Russo-Japanese War on the Jews or on Masons working for Jewish masters, while the February Revolution was allegedly carried out mostly by Russians implementing a Jewish-conceived plot. ("The hands were Russian, but the brain was Jewish.")<sup>47</sup> Nineteenth-century Russian terrorist groups such as *Zemlia i volia* (Land and Liberty) and *Narodnaia volia* (People's Will) had acted at the behest of the "central Jewish kahal" and deliberately chose non-Jewish assassins in order to disguise the Jews' leadership of the

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<sup>44</sup> Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil* (Vol. 1), 25, 42-45, 104, 142. In his 1921 book *Krestnyi put'*, Vinberg had sounded a similar note, arguing that the Jews were behind Voltaire and Diderot. See Jane Burbank, *Intelligentsia and Revolution: Russian Views of Bolshevism 1917-1922* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 176.

<sup>45</sup> Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil* (Vol. 1), 92.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 102, 117-18, 173.

movement.<sup>48</sup> Likewise, the Revolution of 1905 really stemmed from a plot by the Jewish Bund, to which all other revolutionary organizations were allegedly subordinate.<sup>49</sup>

Within Markov's worldview, it was nearly impossible for any upheaval to occur independent of Jewish influence; if the situation were analyzed properly, the all-powerful black hand of the Jews could always be uncovered somewhere. If a terrorist was Christian, he worked for the Jews. If a Russian party opposed the tsar, it acted on orders of the Jews. In *Voiny temnykh sil'*, Markov even accused the quintessential rightist newspaper, *Novoe vremia*, of falling victim to Jewish intrigues.<sup>50</sup> Jewish power, he insisted, was "almost inhuman."<sup>51</sup>

The Black Hundred prolifically propagated such conspiracy theories, which reflected their Manichean view of Russia as divided between noble, spiritual, simple, and naïve Christian peasants and other decent Russian folk on the one hand, and powerful, pernicious, controlling Jews responsible for Russians' suffering on the other. These legends gave credence to and tied together the disparate Black Hundred claims of Jewish economic exploitation, Jewish media control, and Jewish leadership of the revolutionary movement. Ultimately, the Black Hundred required grand conspiracies to explain how the sufferings of tens of millions of Russians stemmed not from the country's autocratic political system or economic anachronisms like the peasant commune—both of which the Black Hundred usually hailed as unique, beneficent Russian institutions—but rather from the depredations of a small and mostly poor religious minority comprising under 5 percent of the Russian population. Belief in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories could have

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 108-13.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>51</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, February 9, 1911, Col. 1558.

deadly consequences in Russia. This particularly held true during the 1905 pogroms, when some Russian Christians were mobilized to violence by outlandish rumors that Jews were “cutting up” Christians, killing monks, and preparing to sack monasteries.<sup>52</sup>

### **The Black Hundred and Jewish Revolutionaries**

Although the Black Hundred reveled in grand conspiracy myths and tales of Jewish economic depredations, it was the Revolution of 1905 that provided the impetus for the creation of the Union of the Russian People. Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement became one of the Black Hundred’s most prominent anti-Semitic themes. Duma speeches, monarchist congresses, and the rightist press conflated Jews and revolutionaries into one overarching nemesis. In light of the importance of this trope in monarchist propaganda, it is worthwhile to evaluate to what extent Jews participated in the revolutionary movement.

Large numbers of Jews joined Russian revolutionary organizations and occupied prominent leadership positions from 1875, when two Jewish populist leaders, Mark Natanson and Lev Ginzburg, merged their followers and co-led the new organization Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups. The union quickly dissolved, allowing Natanson to establish the archetypal populist revolutionary organization, *Zemlia i volia* (Land and Liberty), the following year. Jews—comprising four to five percent of the Russian population—constituted 16 percent of the group’s first inner council and were also

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<sup>52</sup> Michael F. Hamm, *Kiev: A Portrait, 1800-1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 196.

prominent among *Zemlia i volia*'s terrorists, including two of the three assassins who killed Chief of Police General N. Mezentsev on August 4, 1878.<sup>53</sup>

When *Zemlia i volia* split into two organizations, *Chernyi peredel* (Black Repartition) and the terrorist *Narodnaia volia* (People's Will), "Jews were to be found in both factions and played a substantial role in the formation and activity of both organizations."<sup>54</sup> Approximately eighteen Jews numbered among *Chernyi peredel*'s loosely one hundred members, including Lev Deich and Pavel Aksel'rod, both of whom later helped to establish Russia's first Marxist organization, *Osvobozhdenie truda* (Emancipation of Labor). Jews were particularly prominent in the *Narodnaia volia* leadership, which included Mark Natanson's wife Olga, Grigorii Goldenberg (who assassinated Kharkov Governor Prince Dmitri Kropotkin in 1879), and Aron Zundelevich, who was *Narodnaia volia*'s chief founder. The arrest and sentencing of several Jewish terrorists from *Narodnaia volia* in 1879 for participating in various high-profile plots and assassinations created a connection in the public mind between the Jewish population overall and the revolutionary movement. These included the execution of Solomon Vittenberg for leading a plot by mostly Jewish youths to assassinate the tsar; the hanging of *Narodnaia volia* executive committee member Izrail-Aron Gobet for leading another plot against the tsar; the arrest of three Jews among the perpetrators of the 1879 Moscow railroad explosion, which was an attempt on the tsar's life; and the

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<sup>53</sup> Erich Haberer, *Jews and Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 119, 126, 144, 162.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

arrest of Zundevich, who led efforts to smuggle dynamite and other contraband into Russia.<sup>55</sup>

Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement greatly increased in the 1880s, partly owing to the approval in 1882 of the May Laws, as well as Jewish dismay over the sympathetic reaction of many officials to the widespread pogroms that followed the tsar's assassination in 1881. Between 1884 and 1887, Jews or converted Jews comprised five of the revolutionary populist movement's seven leaders, while 20-25 percent of the movement's activists were Jews in the second half of the decade. This number reached approximately 35 percent in the southern and southwestern provinces, where Jews lived in the highest density and the revolutionary movement was strongest.<sup>56</sup> Norman Naimark concludes: "[B]y the mid-1880s minority peoples and especially Jews provided the critical force behind the continuation of the movement [in the south and southwest]."<sup>57</sup>

Between 1901 and 1903, Jews accounted for 29 percent of all political arrests, with the figure rising to 53 percent for the 1903-04 period, when Jews comprised an estimated 50 percent of the membership of revolutionary parties. As O. V. Budnitskii observes, the Kishinev and Gomel pogroms of 1903 probably played a significant role in pulling Jews toward the revolutionary movement at this time.<sup>58</sup> The Mensheviks cultivated a particularly large and influential Jewish presence:

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 154, 158, 160-70, 179, 189, 197.

<sup>56</sup> Norman Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats: The Russian Revolutionary Movement Under Alexander III* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1983), 92.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 53, and Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 32.

Georgians and Jews played an especially important role in the Menshevik movement. The prominence of Jews became evident from the earliest moments of the split in 1903. Out of 57 revolutionaries who attended the Second Congress of the RSDWP, 25 were Jews. . . . It may well be that Menshevism owed its Western orientation—a dimension most notable a few years later and one that Bolshevism lacked—to the prominence in it of Jewish intellectuals.”<sup>59</sup>

Additionally, Russia had many Maximalist, anarchist, and Zionist groups comprised almost exclusively of Jews.<sup>60</sup>

The most visible and powerful Jewish revolutionary organization in the early twentieth century was the Bund. Founded in 1897, the Bund was officially part of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) from the party’s inception in 1898. Aside from the 1903-06 period, when the Bund withdrew from the RSDLP, the Bund usually operated autonomously within the party in alliance with the Menshevik faction. The Bund leadership played a particularly active role in the Revolution of 1905, which began in response to the Bloody Sunday massacre of hundreds of peacefully protesting workers in St. Petersburg on January 9, 1905. Already shaken by Russia’s poor performance in the Russo-Japanese War and a widespread assassination campaign of government officials by resurgent revolutionary parties, the autocracy struggled to maintain its authority in the wake of the widespread labor unrest, peasant disturbances, and military mutinies that followed the Bloody Sunday killings.

Viewing Bloody Sunday and the ensuing turmoil throughout 1905 as a prime opportunity for revolution, the Bund’s February 1905 conference openly called for an armed insurrection. The Bund engaged in highly-publicized revolutionary activities

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<sup>59</sup> Abraham Ascher. *The Revolution of 1905: Russia in Disarray* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 187.

<sup>60</sup> Giefman, *Thou Shalt Kill*, 34.

throughout 1905, including organizing meetings, demonstrations, and strikes; printing leaflets calling for general protest; attacking government offices; smuggling guns into Russia; forcibly closing shops that remained open during declared strikes; leading boycotts of uncooperative shopowners; and constructing bombs.<sup>61</sup> A leaflet written by Bund leader Raphael Abramovich after Bloody Sunday captured the Bund's revolutionary fervor:

The great day has come! *The revolution has come!* It began in St. Petersburg and will set the whole country on fire with its flame. Either we will gain our freedom or we will die! . . . Comrades in all towns, take up the battle! Throw down your work in the shops, in the factories. . . . Let everyone go into the street and unfurl the red flag!

Attack the stores where arms are sold! Everyone get a gun, a revolver, a sword, an ax, a knife! Arm yourselves! If you are attacked by the Tsar's soldiers you will be able to defend yourselves like soldiers of the revolution.

Remember that life in prison is harder than dying in battle!

Let every street become a battlefield! . . . Let us give up the blood of our hearts and receive the rights of human beings!<sup>62</sup>

Thus, we see that Jews indeed comprised a highly active and highly visible element of the revolutionary movement. Black Hundred propaganda used this phenomenon to great effect by portraying the Jewish community en-masse as a disloyal people inherently harmful to the Russian people and the Russian state. This caricature of Russia's Jewish community ignored the fact that outside of the younger generation, Jews often showed a distinct lack of sympathy for the revolutionaries. In his memoirs V. V. Shul'gin, a prominent monarchist Duma representative who commanded a platoon tasked with suppressing the 1905 pogrom in Kiev, recounted how an old Jewish man asked him

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<sup>61</sup> Henry Tobias, *The Jewish Bund in Russia: From its Origins to 1905* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), 296-98, 300-302, 307, 314.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

why the government didn't simply hang Jewish bombthrowers. When Shul'gin inquired why the Jewish elders didn't restrain the terrorists themselves, the Jewish man responded:

What can we do? You think they want to listen to us? . . . They come to my house. Who? The punks! They say 'Give!' And I have to give. They say 'self defense!' And we give for self defense. . . . And when the pogrom came, where was the self defense? Those lousy punks shot, shot and ran away. They ran away, and we stayed behind. They did the shooting, and we got beaten.<sup>63</sup>

Likewise, Prime Minister Sergei Witte related that when Minister of Internal Affairs V. K. Plevé told Jewish leaders he would suppress pogroms and ease restrictions on Jews if the leaders would order the Jewish youth to forsake revolution, the elders responded: "It is not in our power to do so, for the majority—the youth—is crazed by hunger and we have no control over them, but we are certain that if you begin to ameliorate their conditions, they will quiet down."<sup>64</sup> Bessarabian Governor Sergei Urussov, known for his sympathy for his Jewish constituents, reported the same phenomenon: "An indubitable division was apparent between the old generation of the Kishinev Jewry, who were peacefully inclined towards thinking only how to earn their daily bread, and the youths, who were carried away by the idea of an active participation in the revolution."<sup>65</sup>

The Black Hundred ignored such distinctions and blamed "the Jews" as a people for revolutionary unrest. The chaos of the Revolution of 1905 lent conservative

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<sup>63</sup> V. V. Shul'gin, *Days of the Russian Revolution; Memoirs From the Right, 1905-1917*, ed. and trans. Bruce F. Adams (USA: Academic International Press, 1990), 35.

<sup>64</sup> Sergei Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, ed. and trans. Sidney Harcave (New York and England, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990), 380-81.

<sup>65</sup> Prince Sergei Dmitriyevich Urussov, *Memoirs of a Russian Governor*, ed. and trans. Herman Rosenthal (London and New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1908), 53.

tendencies toward anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and vulgar Russian supremacism a violent immediacy. This issue resonated with many of the Black Hundred's early supporters who were not ideological rightists but who, shocked and frightened by the assassinations, lawlessness, and violence that convulsed Russia in 1905, became willing to lend their support to a movement vowing to fight the revolutionaries and restore law and order. Through newspaper articles, leaflets, and public meetings, the Black Hundred used every opportunity to cement the connection in the public mind between the revolutionary movement and the entire Jewish community.

Markov, for example, characterized the anti-Jewish pogroms that swept Russia in 1905 as a furious antirevolutionary reaction which, he claimed, explained the large number of people killed in comparison with earlier pogroms. Previous pogroms, he declared, stemmed largely from economic grievances—not passionate antirevolutionary sentiment—and therefore resulted mostly in attacks on Jewish property rather than the killings of Jewish people.<sup>66</sup> In connecting the Jews to the revolutionary movement and blaming the 1905 pogroms on Jewish revolutionaries, the Black Hundred found a sympathetic ear from the tsar, who analyzed the 1905 pogroms thus: “[T]he people became enraged by the insolence and audacity of the revolutionaries and socialists, and because nine-tenths of them are Yids, the people’s whole wrath has turned against them.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Markov, *Istoriia Evreiskogo shturma*, 19.

<sup>67</sup> Edward Bing, ed., *Letters of Tsar Nicholas and Empress Marie: Being the Confidential Correspondence Between Nicholas II, Last of the Tsars, and his Mother, Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna* (London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1937), 190-91.

## The Incipient Black Hundred Movement

Although long-standing tensions between Christians and Jews played a principal role in the pogroms, historical evidence indicates that antirevolutionary sentiment was, in fact, among the most salient factors in the outbreak of anti-Jewish violence in 1905. S. A. Stepanov notes the significant role that political conviction played in the pogromists' choice of victims.<sup>68</sup> Agitation to violence against these perceived revolutionaries appeared months before the major pogroms erupted in October 1905. With nationalist sentiment heightened by the war with Japan, the threat of pogroms hung in the air from the beginning of the year, when monarchist groups began proliferating throughout Russia. Often taking the form of small, ad-hoc collections of local individuals rather than structured organizations, the groups took on names like The Party of Russian People (Tambov), The Patriotic Union (St. Petersburg), and The Tsarist-National Russian Society (Kazan).<sup>69</sup> Most groups did little other than print and distribute pogromist flyers. Carrying titles like "Death to Revolutionaries,"<sup>70</sup> these were violent calls to arms usually exhorting Russians to defend Russia, its people, and the autocracy by attacking revolutionaries. Naturally, the Jews stood at the forefront of the "enemies" threatened with pogroms, but the flyers often denounced other groups and nationalities—the intelligentsia, students, "constitutionalists," Poles, Finns, and the government of Japan—believed to partake in the revolutionary movement or otherwise demonstrate hostility to

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<sup>68</sup> Stepanov argues that during October 1905 pogromists chose their victims "not only, and even not as much, by nationality as by political conviction." I believe this statement downplays the prominence of pure anti-Semitism in the pogromists' actions and their singling out of Jewish shops and neighborhoods for attack. Nevertheless, political conviction played an important role in the pogromists' assaults that is often overlooked. See S. A. Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii (1905-1914 gg.)* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo BZPI, 1992), 61.

<sup>69</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, ll. 1, 14, 27.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 20.

Russia.<sup>71</sup> The following flyer from the Monarchist Russian Society is a typical example of how these early Black Hundred factions connected disparate groups of Russia's alleged enemies to the revolution:

Beat the damned traitors everywhere and all over, wherever you find them and with whatever [you can], beat the Yids, destroyers of the Russian tsardom, beat the bloodthirsty robbers [in] the zemstva, beat the instigators of the sedition and strikes, beat . . . the school youth, even if he would be your son, brother, or relative, all the same he's a traitor, don't pity [him], beat him, he's a complete wretch and is the destroyer of the people and the Russian land, the more of them we destroy, the better for Russia and [for] the people, the more of them we kill, the less sedition there will be in Russia and Russia will be on the path to redemption.<sup>72</sup>

Similar flyers appeared throughout Russia. In St. Petersburg, the Secret Society of Terrorists-Conservatives White Repartition issued a proclamation calling for its members to answer revolutionary proclamations with counterrevolutionary ones and to respond to revolutionary bombs with bombs of their own. In Tambov, counterrevolutionaries issued an appeal asking loyalists to "teach a lesson" to student strikers. Flyers appeared in Vladimir and Tula provinces agitating against members of the intelligentsia, the zemstva, and others who sought to limit the tsarist autocracy. Literature found in Bessarabia encouraged the masses to engage in demonstrations and strikes to protest against revolutionary parties. Another Bessarabian flyer called for violence against Jews and seditionists, the latter category said to include impoverished land owners, professionals, and school youths. In their appeals to defend the autocracy, some of the flyers even took on an antigovernment tone, rebuking local governments and specific local officials for

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., ll. 1, 20, 31, 45-46.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., ll. 43-46.

their lackadaisical fight against the revolutionaries or even for allegedly conspiring against the tsar.<sup>73</sup>

The central government reacted indecisively to the formation of these monarchist groups, which were illegal until the proclamation of the October Manifesto in October 1905. Central Police Department Director Kovalenskii addressed reports of the groups' pogromist agitation in a circular issued to provincial police and secret police officials on April 15, 1905. Acknowledging that the inflammatory flyers could spark serious unrest and were thus "undoubtedly undesirable and even extremely dangerous," Kovalenskii urged police to confiscate all such flyers, which he ordered not to be treated differently from agitation by revolutionary organizations. Kovalenskii reminded the police, however, that these groups formed with the beneficent intention of helping the government battle against revolutionaries. Furthermore, he argued, bringing charges against the groups' founders would create unspecified "new complications." So he ordered his subordinates merely to discover who printed and distributed the flyers and then to await further instructions.<sup>74</sup> In essence, Kovalenskii ordered the empire's police force not to prosecute or detain the leaders of admittedly illegal, unregistered organizations involved in inciting pogroms against entire sectors of society perceived as sympathetic to the revolution. Individual police officials sometimes even went beyond this kind of benevolent neutrality toward the pogromists—authorities caught Police Captain Mikhail Komissarov printing

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<sup>73</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 999, ch. 61, ll. 25-26.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

pogromist leaflets in the basement of the police department headquarters in St. Petersburg.<sup>75</sup>

Throughout 1905, local government officials frequently turned to Kovalenskii and other high-ranking police and Ministry of Internal Affairs representatives for instructions on how to respond to the new rightist groups and their agitation. Governors and their subordinates, while voicing concern about the monarchists' violent proclivities and rhetorical broadsides against local governments, usually hailed the groups as a useful counterweight to revolutionary organizations. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, perceiving the same benefits and drawbacks as the governors, allowed local officials a great deal of latitude in setting policy toward rightist groups. The day after Kovalenskii issued his circular, for example, the governor of Novgorod wrote Minister of Internal Affairs Aleksandr Bulygyn seeking instructions on the kind of members allowed into rightist groups. Citing the formation of a new group dedicated to supporting the autocracy and counteracting "by all means" all other parties with differing political goals, the governor noted that nobles led the group, which also included influential people like landowners, teachers, police officials, and zemstvo representatives. Hailing the group, whose recognition he claimed would be "extremely desirable" for counterbalancing the revolutionaries, he asked if such high-profile figures were allowed to join the organization, warning that it would collapse without these esteemed members. The letter

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<sup>75</sup> Kommissarov printed the leaflets on presses confiscated from revolutionaries. Upon discovering these activities, Prime Minister Witte ordered the leaflets and the printers destroyed. See Witte, *The Memoirs*, 516-17. Kommissarov, who was fired for this infraction, was drawn to intrigue for his entire career. After the tsar was overthrown, he went to Germany and helped to establish *Aufbau*, an organization uniting far-right Germans and monarchist Russian émigrés. He later joined the Soviet cause, apparently having worked with *Aufbau* as a Soviet double agent. See Michael Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Emigres and the Making of National Socialism, 1917-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 36.

was passed on to Kovalenskii, who replied that he foresaw no obstacles to these people joining the group.<sup>76</sup>

Thus, with the tacit—and occasionally active—cooperation of the government, the incipient Black Hundred movement spread throughout Russia.

### **The October Pogroms**

The great wave of pogroms in 1905 first broke out as a direct backlash against revolutionaries. The tsar's declaration of the October Manifesto, which granted most basic civil liberties to the people and called for the creation of a representative legislature, provoked jubilant street demonstrations in cities throughout Russia. Demonstrators waved red flags, sang revolutionary songs, defaced portraits of the tsar, and took over city дума buildings where they ceremonially vandalized official symbols. The pogroms initially began as a violent response by the regime's loyalists to these symbolic acts. The counterrevolutionary mobs first targeted the demonstrators themselves, who they usually chased off the streets in one day. Lacking a visible target and encouraged by the authorities' lackadaisical efforts to restore order, the mobs then turned their fury on the Jews, who were identified in the popular mind with the revolutionary cause. A traditional target of mob violence, Jewish communities were easy prey, as they often lived closely concentrated in specific neighborhoods and, before this series of attacks, had historically put up little armed resistance to pogroms.

Events in Kiev provide a typical example of the way the 1905 pogroms unfolded. Tension between the Jewish and Christian populations remained high all year, as the local

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., ll. 1-4.

population blamed much of the chaos from the gathering revolution on Jewish radicals. Warning the Kiev general-governor as early as April that he expected a large pogrom, Minister of Internal Affairs Bulygin ordered that the “most decisive measures” be taken to uphold order. Pressures spiked during the summer when armed, revolutionary Jewish youths repeatedly clashed with police and soldiers, resulting in at least one death. Then a general strike hit the city in October, during which Jewish students played a leading role in closing down the universities.

The promulgation of the October Manifesto on October 17 led to boisterous antigovernment demonstrations the following day featuring symbolic antinationalist acts including the defacing of tsarist portraits. The local дума held a raucous session in which a Jewish deputy unleashed an antigovernment speech, then defaced various state emblems and raised a revolutionary red flag.<sup>77</sup> These demonstrations sparked loyalist counterdemonstrations on October 19 that quickly degenerated into a pogrom. Gathering in the city’s main Jewish quarter, a group of 5,000 pogromists attacked its inhabitants. Some Jewish residents shot at the rioters from their windows as the mob set fire to Jewish homes. Meanwhile, a second loyalist crowd set off singing patriotic songs and hoisting portraits of the tsar. The crowd stopped in various churches to hold prayers, then joined the attack on the city’s Jews. The Kiev vice governor reported that some soldiers and police officers refused to intervene against the pogromists who, he specified, were particularly incensed over the defacing of tsarist portraits during revolutionary

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<sup>77</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 2000, ch. 2, ll. 1, 3, 7, 22-23, and I. V. Omel’ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie na teritorii Ukrainy, 1904-1914 gg.* (Kiev: Natsionalnyi institut Ukrainsko-Rossiiskikh otnoshenii, 2000), 150-56.

demonstrations. Other soldiers actually participated in the attacks, he added.<sup>78</sup> The three-day pogrom eventually resulted in between 47 and 100 deaths, 300–400 injuries, and 1,800 ransacked homes and shops.<sup>79</sup>

The way in which outrage at the symbolic attacks on the tsar metastasized into the deadly Kiev pogrom is further explicated in the memoirs of Shul'gin, who led soldiers ordered to suppress the pogrom. Describing Kiev when its inhabitants learned of the October Manifesto, Shul'gin writes:

The town had never looked like this. It seemed everyone who could walk was in the streets. All the Jews certainly were. And their provocative behavior made it seem there were more of them than there actually were. They weren't concealing their joy. The crowd was filled with color. Ladies in red skirts. Competing with them were red bows, cockades and armbands. They were all yelling, whooping, shouting and waving to one another.<sup>80</sup>

According to Shul'gin, people who did not even understand what the October Manifesto meant—including some monarchists—joined the crowd. But many people became irritated by antinationalist speeches and actions that were attributed to Jewish revolutionaries, including the act of tearing the Imperial crown from the Duma balcony and smashing it on the street, as well as the actions of a mob that broke into the city Duma and vandalized Imperial portraits.<sup>81</sup>

Shul'gin also relates a man's description of the beginning of the pogrom in one neighborhood:

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., ll. 16, 22-23, 33.

<sup>79</sup> Hamm, *Kiev: A Portrait*, 191.

<sup>80</sup> Shul'gin, *Days*, 5.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 8.

Some people came out of a public bath. One of them climbed a telephone pole. A crowd gathered and the man on the pole shouted, ‘The yids threw down the tsar’s crown! What right do they have?! Are we going to let them?! Are we going to leave it like that?! No, brothers!’ He climbed down, took a walking stick from the first man he came to, crossed himself, swung the stick around his head and heaved it with all his might through the nearest shop window. The glass shattered, the crowd let out a whoop and dashed through the broken glass into the shop. And so it went.<sup>82</sup>

As for these symbolic antitsarist acts, Shul’gin summarizes: “The people can’t talk about anything else. ‘The yids broke the tsar’s crown!’”<sup>83</sup>

In many cities throughout Russia, the revolutionaries’ symbolic desecration of tsarist symbols, and the association of revolutionaries with Jews in the popular mind, provided the immediate impetus for the October pogroms.<sup>84</sup> According to Charters Wynn’s study of worker unrest and pogroms in the Donbass-Dnepr Bend, during celebrations of the October Manifesto Russians “often became indignant at the orators’ mocking of Nicholas II, although at the time they generally kept their anger at the ‘damned *demokraty*’ to themselves.”<sup>85</sup> Wynn reports that many of the counter-demonstrators and pogromists comprised Russian workers who had originally joined the revolutionary demonstrations, but became offended by insults directed at the tsar and rumors of slights against Orthodoxy. During the early 1900s, Wynn writes, “[n]ot just miners, but steelworkers too—such as those at the Briansk factory—voiced their opposition to anyone who held the tsar ‘responsible for the bad position of the workers,

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>84</sup> Budnitskii notes the same phenomenon. See Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 57.

<sup>85</sup> Charters Wynn, *Workers, Strikes, and Pogroms: The Donbass-Dnepr Bend in Late Imperial Russia 1870-1905* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 212.

rather (than) the *chinovniki* (bureaucrats) and capitalists.’’<sup>86</sup> As we shall see, pogromists voiced similar grievances in Odessa.

Although the Bloody Sunday massacre chipped away at the myth of the benevolent tsar, in October 1905 many Russians were not yet ready to abandon Russia’s historical, sentimental attachment to its monarch.<sup>87</sup> Demonstrations against the government may have been popular, but symbolic attacks on the tsar provoked a vicious backlash. The jubilation of many Russians at news of the issuance of the October Manifesto quickly gave way to shock at the ensuing, deadly pogroms. The Black Hundred stood ready to capitalize on the chaos.

## Conclusion

Anti-Semitism provided a core tenet of Black Hundred ideology. Monarchists effectively exploited widespread fears of revolutionary violence in 1905, as well as common conceptions of Jewish domination of the revolutionary movement, to direct and amplify long-standing popular passions against Jews. The Black Hundred movement, existing for months in an incipient state comprised of loosely-organized pogromist groupings, emerged out of the revolutionary violence and pogroms of 1905. Within days of the October pogroms, the Union of the Russian People held its founding meeting in St. Petersburg. The organization grew at an astonishing speed, with URP branches quickly

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 128-29, 213.

<sup>87</sup> In my view, it cannot be said that Russians *in general* still supported the tsar in late 1905. The violent reaction in many cities to the desecration of tsarist symbols—even by some people who had celebrated the October Manifesto—does indicate a lingering attachment to the tsar, as does the mass membership in the URP during the 1905-07 period, as described in chapter 2. The plurality of revolutionary socialists elected to the Second Duma in early 1907, however, demonstrates significant opposition to the autocracy even among the peasantry, which dominated the electorate. For more on the myth of the benevolent tsar, see Daniel Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976).

appearing throughout the entire Russian empire. Boisterously proclaiming allegiance to the tsar, rightists from all social classes reacted with fervor to the creation of a national organization that expressed their fears and hostilities. Peasants, workers, shopkeepers, professionals, priests, and nobles joined together in a new kind of union dedicated to mobilizing the population against the revolutionaries.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Taking It to the Streets**

During the Revolution of 1905, the Union of the Russian People acted as a vigilante organization that violently confronted revolutionaries. With the regime destabilized by widespread civil unrest, many police officials and political authorities welcomed the group's assistance. This service earned the Black Hundred the abiding gratitude of the government, which rewarded monarchist groups with copious state subsidies. Nevertheless, the URP's jeremiads against Jews and local and central government officials led to an uneasy relationship between the two sides, as the government struggled to keep the URP's campaign from metastasizing into pogroms against Jews or popular unrest aimed at the government itself. Moreover, from the beginning, the URP leadership showed signs of corruption and engaged in infighting that would later do irreparable harm to the Black Hundred movement.

#### **Origins**

The Union of the Russian People held its first meeting on October 23, 1905, six days after the proclamation of the October Manifesto, at the St. Petersburg apartment of the physician Aleksandr Dubrovin, whom participants promptly elected president. Inspired by a vigilante organization called "The People's Defense" that had helped to provide security for a trip to Moscow by Tsar Alexander III, the founders dedicated the new group to supporting the tsar in the face of the perceived challenges presented by the revolutionaries in general and the October Manifesto in particular. The manifesto itself,

they believed, had been forced upon the tsar by Prime Minister Sergei Witte at the behest of the Jews.<sup>1</sup>

The URP's statutes defined the group's primary goal as "the unshakable preservation of Orthodoxy, Russian unlimited autocracy, and nationality," a throwback to the state credo of the 1830s elucidated by Minister of Education Sergei Uvarov. The inclusion of the term "unlimited autocracy" reflected the Black Hundred's position on the debate as to whether the Fundamental Laws should be regarded as a constitution—a de facto limit on autocratic prerogatives. The Fundamental Laws, adopted by the tsar in February 1906, codified the stipulations of the October Manifesto and created the partially-elected State Council and fully-elected State Duma. Any legislation henceforth had to be approved by both bodies as well as the tsar before being enacted in law, thus giving each of the new bodies effective veto power over the tsar's legislative initiatives. The only exception to this arrangement was Article 87. Stolypin used this law, which allowed the government to pass emergency legislation when the Duma was not in session, to subvert the spirit, if not the letter, of the Fundamental Laws.

Constitution or not, this stipulation clearly limited the autocrat's power; the Fundamental Laws notably dropped the traditional Imperial reference to the "unlimited" autocracy. The Black Hundred, however, refused to acknowledge this limitation, insisting that no real check existed on tsarist powers, since the tsar could revoke the Fundamental Laws whenever he wished. They received encouragement in this belief by direct

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<sup>1</sup> A. Chernovskii and V. P. Viktorov, eds., *Soiuz Russkogo naroda: Po materialam chrezvychainoi sledstvennoi komissii vremennogo pravitel'stva 1917 g.* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1929), 32, 34, 35, 52.

messages to the URP from Nicholas II himself, who assured the organization that “my autocracy remains as it was in days of old.”<sup>2</sup>

Rightists felt stifled from expressing outright opposition to the Duma’s creation, since the tsar himself had brought it into being. Instead, the URP statutes explicitly rejected constitutionalism and expressed support for a Duma that would function “as a direct connection between the tsar’s autocratic will and the Orthodox people”<sup>3</sup>—a mystical connection ostensibly broken by the intrusion of the bureaucracy into state life. This formulation invoked an old conservative trope, implying hope that the Duma would function along the lines of the seventeenth-century zemskii sobor that had elected the first Romanov tsar and had functioned as the tsar’s advisory council during the reigns of tsar Michael (1613-45) and his son, Alexis (1645-76). URP statutes further stipulated that the Duma “must be nationalist-Russian,”<sup>4</sup> a vague formulation that would allow the Black Hundred to turn against the Duma if it governed against the movement’s interests—that is, if the Duma ruled unacceptably, the Black Hundred could argue that it was not “nationalist-Russian” and therefore should be abolished. When the first two Duma convocations turned out to be dominated by liberal oppositionists and socialist revolutionaries, this is what the rightists argued, applauding the tsar after he dissolved both bodies.<sup>5</sup> But for the time being, the statutes directly called for URP participation in Duma elections.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 3, l. 1.

<sup>3</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The URP newspaper, *Russkoe znamia*, frequently reiterated this point, often further insisting that the Duma’s role be downgraded to an advisory capacity. In December 1908 for example, the paper insisted that “only a State Duma consisting of Russian people, Orthodox and loyal to the tsarist autocracy, in the form of an advisor to the tsar, can be regarded as useful.” See *Russkoe znamia*, December 14, 1908.

<sup>6</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l. 3.

The statutes also stated the URP's intention to spread patriotism and support for the autocracy by opening schools, hospitals, and orphanages, building churches, holding public meetings and readings, and publishing newspapers. Reflecting the Black Hundred's economic nationalism, they advocated the creation of a URP bank to assist exclusively Russian traders and industrialists and to provide cheap loans to Russian peasants as well as trading assistance to help them bring their goods directly to consumers without the need for middle-men (a position perceived to be dominated by Jews). Membership was open to women but limited to Russians (defined to include Belorussians and Ukrainians). Orthodox non-Russians could be accepted as members by a special vote, while anyone born Jewish was constitutionally barred.<sup>7</sup>

A complex series of elections determined the organization's leadership. They called the group's founders "founding members," a status that could also be conferred on those deemed "particularly useful" to the organization and those donating over 1,000 rubles to it.<sup>8</sup> Founding members would elect the initial twelve-member leadership council, called the *sovet*, from its own ranks to run the organization's affairs for three years, as well as eighteen council candidate members. The council, in turn, would elect a president and two vice presidents from its ranks. After three years, three council members would be replaced every year by candidate members or founding members according to a decision by a joint meeting of the council and the founding members. Elected council members would serve three-year terms, after which they would be eligible for reelection. The united council and founding members' meetings would also elect a three-man

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ll. 3-5. Although the URP sponsored some women's clubs, men dominated the group's membership and leadership. The one influential female URP leader was E. A. Poluboiarinova, the rich widow of a book publisher who became a key URP financier after joining the organization in 1907.

<sup>8</sup> The URP barred women from becoming founding members.

auditing commission to report to general members' meetings at least once per year on the organization's financial situation.<sup>9</sup>

A small circle actually elected the first council at the founders' initial meeting in Dubrovin's apartment, before the adoption of the statutes. In addition to Dubrovin, other council members included the engineer Aleksandr Trishatnyi (vice president), his brother—the military official Sergei Trishatnyi (secretary), fish merchant Ivan Baranov (treasurer), and seven others, while another six participants were elected as candidate members. The council's composition changed quickly, with new members replacing those who either quit or whom Dubrovin forced out. The council's instability largely stemmed from dissatisfaction with the autocratic leadership style of its president who, according to one participant of the URP's founding meeting, was elected simply due to his ownership of the apartment in which they held the founding meeting.<sup>10</sup>

Born in 1855, Dubrovin graduated from the St. Petersburg Medical-Surgical Academy and became a physician in December 1879. He then worked for the military administration for four and a half years, with another two years of service added on due to his failure to pay university fees. He was a military doctor, mostly practicing in St. Petersburg, through the early 1900s. He became involved in the monarchist movement through the auspices of the Russian Assembly (*Russkoe sobranie*), a nationalist organization founded in 1901 by Prince D. P. Golitsyn. The organization, dedicated to “patriotic” cultural pursuits like Russian literature and poetry readings and Russian theatrical productions, mostly comprised aristocrats, government and court officials, and military officers, including Minister of Internal Affairs V. K. Pleve, his successor, P. D.

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<sup>9</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 6-9.

<sup>10</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 32.

Sviatopolk-Mirskii, and *Novoe vremia* publisher A. S. Suvorin. Although numbering under 2,500 members, the group provided an arena for Dubrovin to form contacts with influential nationalists such as Vladimir Purishkevich, a noble from Bessarabia who sat on the Russian Assembly council and became URP vice president in one of the URP's initial council reconfigurations.<sup>11</sup>

The URP statutes called for so many elections that some members complained that the group, as an advocate of unlimited autocracy, should abandon its “constitutional” and “democratic” structure and instead organize in an “autocratic-monarchist” way with total power vested in the president.<sup>12</sup> But in reality, the statutes created an extremely strong presidency for Dubrovin. Named president-for-life, he could not be removed except by his own volition. He was responsible for convening council meetings and summoning and presiding over the joint meetings between the council and the founding members. His power extended to local URP branches, which were subordinated to the St. Petersburg council on all national issues. Moreover, Dubrovin retained control over the URP newspaper, *Russkoe znamia* (Russian Banner), which he founded in December 1905 and published until the February Revolution. Finally, he oversaw the organization's finances, which it gathered from members' dues (initially set at 15 kopeks per year), private donations, fees for public URP activities, and payments from local branches.<sup>13</sup>

From his unassailable post as president, Dubrovin quickly established his power over the entire organization. His position strengthened even further when the group began

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<sup>11</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 797, ll. 25-26. For more on the Russian Assembly, see Iu. I. Kir'ianov, *Russkoe sobranie, 1900-1917* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 14, ll. 26-27. Adolf Hitler later employed a similar argument against the democratic procedures of the early Nazi Party. Insisting these methods emulated those of the reviled Weimar government in Berlin, Hitler argued that the Nazis should adopt a more dictatorial party structure. See Charles Bracelen Flood, *Hitler: The Path to Power* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), 79.

<sup>13</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 14, ll. 5-6.

collecting secret state subsidies in 1906, many of which government officials gave over to Dubrovin personally. His prerogatives as president allowed Dubrovin to run roughshod over the URP's democratic procedures, easily forcing his opponents out of the council. Most crucially, Dubrovin frequently ignored the stipulations for internal auditing and simply refused to report many of the donations and subsidies that he personally received.<sup>14</sup> This provoked almost instant accusations of corruption from other council members, who Dubrovin promptly pushed out. According to I. I. Komissarov, a member of the URP secretariat, Dubrovin "was, in the full sense of the word, an absolute leader who did not tolerate any kinds of objections or obstacles to achieving whatever was necessary. I would not be mistaken if I said that he did anything that he wanted. Getting financial and other support from the government, he inspired fear of himself as a man with whom it was impossible to struggle."<sup>15</sup>

### **Spreading the Word**

Dubrovin proliferated URP branches throughout Russia at an astonishing speed. The chaos of the Revolution of 1905 had shaken the empire, and many Russians yearned for law and order. Most of the monarchist groupings that had sprung up throughout 1905 merged with the URP, which became the largest and most influential rightist organization. S. A. Stepanov notes that the URP's expansion sparked some resentment from the leaders of smaller monarchist groups, who felt the URP was growing at their

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<sup>14</sup> A man claiming to be an early member of another monarchist group, *Obshchestvo aktivnoi bor'by s revoliutsiei i anarkhiei* (Society for the Active Struggle Against Revolution and Anarchy), reported a similar situation in that organization. Once the organization's leader, L. M. Dezobri, began attracting large, private donors, he allegedly spent the money without any oversight and refused to account to anyone for the group's finances. See *Utro*, March 29, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 155, ch. 32, l. 12.

<sup>15</sup> Chernovskii, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 40.

expense. As Stepanov observes, the URP's success stemmed from its appeals to all social classes, in contrast with the aristocratic tendencies of the other major monarchist organizations.<sup>16</sup> This wide appeal helped the monarchist movement pull in an estimated 400,000 members between 1905 and 1907, the large majority of whom affiliated with the URP.<sup>17</sup> The movement thus dwarfed the Social Democrats, whose membership numbered just 8,400 at the beginning of 1905, as well as the Bund, whose approximately 34,000 members made it the largest revolutionary group during the 1905-07 period.<sup>18</sup>

Various organizations with a similar outlook, however, stayed independent of the union. Although many of these comprised small, local groups without branches in other regions,<sup>19</sup> a few, more substantial organizations existed outside of the URP's auspices. While the headquarter branches of the URP and Russian Assembly operated out of St. Petersburg, the other two major monarchist groups were founded in Moscow. *Moskovskie vedomosti* editor V. A. Gringmut and the Church official I. Vostorgov established the first of these, *Russisskaia monarkhicheskaia partiia* (Russian Monarchist Party, or RMP), in May 1905. Beginning as a largely aristocratic organization but later actively recruiting among the lower classes, the group's program differed little from that of the URP; in addition to calling for the perpetuation of the unlimited autocracy and the privileging of Orthodoxy and ethnic Russians, the RMP viewed the fight against the revolutionaries as

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<sup>16</sup> See S. A. Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii, 1905-1914 gg.* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo VZPI, 1992), 94-95.

<sup>17</sup> Iu. I. Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN, 2001), 388-94.

<sup>18</sup> O. V. Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei mezhdru krasnymi i belymi (1917-1920)* (Moscow: ROSSPIEN: 2006), 53-54.

<sup>19</sup> For example, just in the city of Kiev we find URP branches, a Russian Assembly branch, *Russkoe bratstvo* (Russian Brotherhood), *Kievskaia monarkhicheskaia partiia* (Kiev Monarchist Party), *Molodezhi dvukhglavogo Orla* (Youth of the Two-Headed Eagle), and *Kievskii soiuz rabochikh* (Kiev Union of Workers). See GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 184, l. 20.

its primary task, declaring that no internal reforms could be successful until the government suppressed the revolutionary movement.<sup>20</sup>

The other leading monarchist organization in Moscow was *Soiuz Russkikh liudei* (Union of the Russian Men, or URM).<sup>21</sup> A collection of Moscow nobles including P. Sheremet'ev, O. Golitsyn, and its president, A. G. Shcherbatov, established the group around the same time as the RMP began its activities. Its program, elucidated in March 1905, also stressed the need for absolute rule by the tsar and the fight against the revolutionaries. Both Moscow groups operated in a similar vein to the URP; they held weekly meetings for discussing political topics and propagated their views through their own newspapers (the RMP's *Moskovskii vedomosti* and *Russkii vestnik*) or through the mass dissemination of flyers (the preferred method of the URM).<sup>22</sup>

Although the URP would quickly become notorious for the activities of its paramilitary battalions, the union, along with the other monarchist organizations, also periodically took part in cultural and charitable activities and established various trade associations. Monarchist leaders designed most of these activities to further the groups' political program. Education was a particular focus of Black Hundred leaders, who universally believed that leftwing gymnasium teachers and college professors indoctrinated revolutionary ideals in the Russian youth. The URP organized its own seamstress school in St. Petersburg,<sup>23</sup> while the Odessa URM ran a boys' gymnasium, a

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<sup>20</sup> V. Levitskii, "Pravye partii," in *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachale XX-go veka*, vol. 3, eds. L. Martov, P. Maslov, and A. Potresov (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia t-va "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za," 1914), 362-63.

<sup>21</sup> Although technically the URM's English-language name would be Union of the Russian People, its last word is usually translated as "Men" in order to distinguish it from the URP.

<sup>22</sup> Levitskii, "Pravye partii," 363, 366, 368.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

women's school, elementary schools, and occupational trade classes.<sup>24</sup> The Russian Assembly opened its own gymnasium in St. Petersburg in 1907.<sup>25</sup>

Purishkevich, who played a particularly active role in this field, sponsored rightwing "academic unions" among students at the St. Petersburg Political, Technological, and Mining Institutes.<sup>26</sup> In 1908 Purishkevich created a monarchist League of Education to help spread a religious and patriotic education program,<sup>27</sup> and in February 1914 he founded another group dedicated to the same goal, the short-lived *Filaretovskoe obshchestvo* (the Filarets Society).<sup>28</sup> These efforts came in addition to the rightists' frequent sponsorship of public lectures, such as a series of talks sponsored by the RMP for factory workers between 1905 and 1907 in which speakers such as former revolutionary Lev Tikhomirov propounded on topics like socialism, religion, and Russian history.<sup>29</sup>

Most of the groups' efforts in these realms, aside from their public speeches, proved short-lived and unsuccessful. This especially held true with respect to their economic and financial ventures. The URP created economic unions and trade organizations for ethnic Russians designed in part to boycott Jewish trading networks,

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<sup>24</sup> Derzhavnyi arkhiv Odeskoi Oblasti (DAOO), f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, l. 144; GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 6. The Odessa UAM, however, was independent of the Moscow-based group of the same name.

<sup>25</sup> Levitskii, "Pravie partii," 358.

<sup>26</sup> "Rostovshchichestvo," in *Kolokol*, reproduced in *Ideinye Kassiry: Iz istorii Gornogo instituta Imperatritsy Ekateriny II* (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia A. S. Suvorina, 1910), 6. Although Purishkevich's student unions disavowed any political goals in their statutes, in private correspondence Purishkevich said the groups were organized "for the active struggle against [student] strikes." See GARF, f. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 41, 52, 100. The first such rightwing student organization, it appears, was the *Kruzhok Russkikh studentov* (Circle of Russian Students) formed in 1904 by the Russian Assembly.

<sup>27</sup> This was meant to counteract an existing League of Education, which Purishkevich and other rightists claimed was dominated by revolutionaries and presented a "serious danger" to Russian national life. See GARF, f. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 73, and GARF, f. 117, op. 1, d. 3, l. 3.

<sup>28</sup> F. Vinberg, *V Plenu u "Obez'ian"* (*Zapiski "kontr-revoliutsionera"*) (Kiev: Tipografiia tubernskogo pravleniia, 1918), 15.

<sup>29</sup> Levitskii, "Pravie partii," 391.

including a “Union of Native Russian Engineers and Contractors” that agitated for railroad construction contracts.<sup>30</sup> The URP and Purishkevich’s later splinter group, *Russkii narodnyi soiuz imeni Mikhaila Arkhangelia* (Russian National Union of the Archangel Michael, or UAM) also created mutual aid societies, lending banks to provide low-interest loans for group members, and peasant cooperatives.<sup>31</sup> Finally, the organizations engaged in various charitable activities; the UAM tried to find places in orphanages for children whose parents were killed by revolutionaries, while the URP held donation drives to assist wounded soldiers during World War I and to erect a monument at the grave of Andrei Iushchinskii, the Ukrainian boy killed in the infamous Beilis case, in which the URP led a public campaign accusing a Jew of having murdered Iushchinskii as part of a religious ritual.<sup>32</sup>

With a similar political program and general outlook, the rightist organizations cooperated closely during the 1905-07 period, when the immediacy of the revolutionary threat overshadowed the incipient personal rivalries among Black Hundred leaders that would later divide the movement into ever-smaller, often-hostile splinter parties. The main mechanism for coordinating the parties’ efforts was the convocation of monarchist congresses. The groups staged three such congregations in 1906 and four in 1907. From 1908 onward, as the movement disintegrated, monarchists usually only held one to two congresses per year, and some of these featured members of only one organization.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. 5, l. 90.

<sup>31</sup> Levitskii, “*Pravye partii*,” 393, 411; GARF, f. 117, op. 1, d. 4, ll. 1, 3. Purishkevich’s student unions also created a fund to give loans to poor union members. See GARF, f. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 9.

<sup>32</sup> GARF, f. 117, op.1, d. 55, l. 5., and GARF, f. 116, op. 1 d. 22, l. 69. Dubrovin’s URP faction collected 3,330 rubles for this effort by November 4, 1906. See GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 633, l. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Kir’ianov, *Pravye partii*, 105-07.

The congresses allowed the different groups an opportunity to enunciate a common position on political issues and to heighten the sense of unity within the movement. The Russian Assembly sponsored the first congress, called the “First All-Russian Congress of the Russian Assembly and the Russian People,” in St. Petersburg on February 8-12, 1906. Reflecting the nascency of the movement in general and of the URP in particular, the poorly-attended affair postponed discussion of political issues, although it released a statement declaring that the October Manifesto neither created a constitutional regime nor limited the autocracy. The following assembly, the Second All-Russian Congress of Russian People, convened on April 6-12, 1906, in Moscow. Around 300 people representing fifty-one monarchist groups attended the convocation, initiated by the Moscow monarchists in RMP and URM. Delegates hammered out a common position on a number of issues enjoying wide agreement among rightists, including opposition to Polish autonomy, a demand to abolish Finnish autonomy, and support for recognizing Russian Jews as foreign citizens, stripping their voting rights, retaining their residential restrictions within the Pale of Settlement, and banning them from government and military service, state educational institutions, and media organs.<sup>34</sup>

The Third All-Russian Congress of Russian People, with 450 delegates representing seventy-two organizations, began on October 1, 1906, in Kiev. This meeting focused on the possibility of uniting the monarchist movement within one organization. The logical choice for such a centralized group was the URP, which by then had emerged as the most numerous, well-funded, and influential rightist union. Moreover, the congress confirmed the URP’s ideological supremacy by recognizing its program as the one that

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<sup>34</sup> Levitskii, “Pravye partii,” 384-86.

came closest to articulating a common monarchist view. In the end, however, the congress decided against a merger with the URP, instead voting to create a three-man commission to coordinate the movement. The responsibilities of this organ, which came to comprise Dubrovin, the Russian Assembly's M. L. Shakhovskii, and the RMP's Vostorgov, included organizing future congresses, demonstrations, and delegations, creating a central press bureau, organizing electoral efforts, and the like. But the congress failed to establish a funding mechanism for the commission, whose decisions were not binding on local organizations. Deprived of money and power, the monarchists quickly liquidated it.<sup>35</sup>

In a nod toward organizational unity, the succeeding monarchist congress, held from April 26 to May 1, 1907, in Moscow, proposed that smaller groups unite with the URP in light of the URP's growth to over 900 branches.<sup>36</sup> While the URP became the largest far-right organization partly by absorbing such local groups, many of them preferred to retain their independence, resulting in a constellation of monarchist groups with names and political programs so similar that even the authorities sometimes confused them. But the existence of a multiplicity of monarchist groups did not significantly hinder the movement's unity between 1905 and 1907. Despite some disagreements between upper- and lower-class elements on issues like land reform and workers' rights, monarchists attributed secondary importance to such questions compared to the immediate need to suppress the revolutionaries and to undermine the first two Duma convocations, which liberals and socialist revolutionaries controlled. The urgency of fighting the revolutionaries thus papered over any ideological cleavages within the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 418-20.

<sup>36</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 106-07.

movement, whose organizations found little difficulty in cooperating on important activities like electoral agitation.<sup>37</sup> When the movement began showing signs of internal discord at the end of 1907, the main schisms, more personal than ideological in nature, appeared within the URP, not between the URP and other organizations.

The spring congress in Moscow expounded on various political issues, nearly all of which delegates analyzed through the prism of revolutionary threats, Jewish control, and the need for the government to resort to harsher methods. Among other policies, the congress advocated the dissolution of the Duma and its replacement with an advisory council; placing all of Russia under martial law; liquidating Jewish self-defense forces and legalizing the URP's paramilitary battalions; and banning Jews from the military, state service, and the legal profession, limiting their participation in trade and industry, and boycotting Jewish enterprises in areas where Jews participated in the revolution. In the educational sphere, the congress recommended revoking university autonomy; closing all schools, to be reopened gradually as revolutionary students and professors were expelled; banning private schools; and segregating Jews into their own schools, which were to employ Russian teachers under state supervision.

Declaring that the workers' "particularly difficult" position stemmed partly from Jewish control of many factories, the congress urged workers to unite in patriotic mutual aid unions that could help establish schools, stores, and lending funds for its members. The government, it declared, should help workers by forming unions for them or having them join the URP; enforcing laws against members of revolutionary parties; minimizing

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<sup>37</sup> For example, the URP and Russian Assembly created a "United Congress" to coordinate the groups' electoral efforts. See GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 37.

foreign and Jewish influence in factories; and rehiring fired URP workers.<sup>38</sup> On the land question, the congress advocated a vague, conservative approach, calling for the tsar to convene a new zemskii sobor (land assembly) comprised of Orthodox Christians and Old Believers of all social classes to solve the problem in a way that preserved the peasant commune.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, the Black Hundred emerged with an ideology focused on defeating the revolutionaries, preserving the autocracy, and privileging ethnic Russians throughout the empire. The movement's outlook was vaguely antimodern and outwardly antiwestern, rejecting in principle the gold standard, parliamentarianism, rapid industrialization, the governmental bureaucracy, the international banking system, foreign investment in Russia, and capitalism in general. The movement largely promulgated this creed through short newspaper articles rather than more complex philosophical studies. The rightists' underdeveloped ideology exacerbated strains stemming from the Black Hundred's successful efforts to create an all-class movement; the disparate social elements quickly encountered bitter political disagreements.

Consequently, the Black Hundred lacked a united position on many of the great issues of the day; the role of the Duma, land reform, the Church's role in society, the responsibilities of the nobility, the extent of civil freedoms, the desirability of war with Germany during World War I, and even the evaluation of key historical events like the reign of Peter the Great—all these issues produced acrimonious dispute among the far

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<sup>38</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 101-07. During the 1905-07 period, and to a lesser extent afterward, monarchist organizations frequently alleged that liberal factory managers fired workers simply for belonging to the URP or some other monarchist group.

<sup>39</sup> Levitskii, "Pravye partii," 424.

right.<sup>40</sup> The movement's positions largely comprised ad-hoc responses to assertive moves by liberal and socialist revolutionaries and reflexive opposition to revolutionary philosophies. The agenda was ossified and highly dogmatic from the beginning, leading to a general rightist prohibition on any criticism of the tsar. Naturally, the elevation to the highest philosophical principle of obedience to a single man's every whim had a stultifying effect on the movement's intellectual dynamism.

In addition to public lectures and periodic congresses, rightists disseminated their message through speeches by their Duma members, leaflets, and occasionally, published books. But their newspapers functioned as their main megaphone. At the beginning of 1906, monarchists published an estimated eighty-nine newspapers and journals throughout Russia.<sup>41</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, as the official organ of the URP, acted as the movement's standard bearer, while *Moskovskie vedomosti*, which came under the editorship of Lev Tikhomirov, and *Novoe vremia* continued their tradition of nationalist invective aimed partly at the revolutionaries and partly at the government. After the URP began splitting into separate organizations in 1908, both of the national splinter groups published their own organs: one faction led by Markov issued *Zemshchina*,<sup>42</sup> while Purishkevich's group distributed *Pramoï put'* (Direct Path). Additionally, URP branches sometimes published their own papers for local consumption, such as *Ruskaia pravda* (Russian Truth) by the URP's Astrakhan branch and *Za tsaria i rodinu* (For Tsar and Fatherland) by the Odessa URP. Independent monarchist groups also established their

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<sup>40</sup> For an examination of the intellectual and political disputes within the Black Hundred movement, see M. N. Luk'ianov, *Rossiiskii konservatizm i reforma, 1907-1914* (Perm': Izdatel'stvo Permskogo universiteta, 2001).

<sup>41</sup> Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia*, 112.

<sup>42</sup> The title *Zemshchina* refers to the section of Russia that was left free from the Oprichnina purges during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. Another paper, *Vestnik Souiz Russkogo naroda* (Herald of the Union of the Russian People) was also associated with Markov's organization.

own papers such as *Chernyi sokol* (Black Falcon) by *Obshchestvo aktivnoi bor'by s revoliutsiei i anarkhiei* (Society for the Active Struggle Against Revolution and Anarchy, or SASARA), a group headquartered in St. Petersburg that later merged with the URP in some cities.

The papers varied in temperament, but many—especially URP publications—prominently featured vulgar attacks on Jews, revolutionaries, and other perceived enemies. Especially during the 1905-07 period, local government officials, individual ministers, and the central government *in toto* came under withering attack in the rightist organs for their alleged pusillanimity in fighting the revolution. For example, the murder of three URP members in March 1907 provoked a typically acerbic article in *Russkoe znamia* under the headline, “To the Attention of the Hypocritical, Soulless Ministers.”<sup>43</sup> The papers’ diatribes occasionally provoked local government officials to fine, suspend, and even close the offending journals. Most notably, Dubrovin, a priest, and the *Ruskoe znamia* editor all received six-month jail sentences in 1913 for publishing a blood libel purporting that a Jewess had ritually tortured a young peasant child (although Dubrovin apparently never served out his sentence).<sup>44</sup> Dubrovin proved no more cooperative during wartime; in 1914 *Russkoe znamia*’s repeated publication of military-related stories without their prior submission to the censor provoked authorities to place the paper under a full censorship regime.<sup>45</sup>

The tension between the monarchist papers and the authorities reflected the complex relationship between the Black Hundred and the government. The government

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<sup>43</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, March 30, 1907.

<sup>44</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 830, ll. 17-18.

<sup>45</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 632, l. 1.

subsidized most of the rightist press, as detailed below, yet it could never completely control its content. As Markov told the Provisional Government's investigative commission, Prime Minister Stolypin tried to give instructions along with the subsidies, but Markov simply refused them, insisting on the URP's freedom of action.<sup>46</sup> Yet the government, which had been reeling from the attacks of the revolutionaries when it began funding the Black Hundred movement in 1906, supported often hostile rightwing papers in hopes that they could influence public opinion against the revolutionaries. If the government itself had to withstand some rightist attacks as well, that was a price it was willing to pay.

### **Foot Soldiers of the Tsar**

The URP was active in the countryside, where local priests often led recruiting efforts. Priests comprised 10 percent of URP provincial presidents and 32 percent of district presidents.<sup>47</sup> They were particularly successful in recruiting peasants into the Pochaevskii branch, whose activities stretched across several western provinces. According to Stepanov, this branch alone accounted for approximately one quarter of the URP's total membership in 1908.<sup>48</sup> Peasants in Tsaritsyn reacted particularly strongly to the monk Iliodor, whose fiery denunciations of Jews, landowners, and the government frequently drew crowds of thousands until the church, on the request of the Saratov governor, who feared the popular passions Iliodor stirred up, sent him into exile.<sup>49</sup> Aside

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<sup>46</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 20.

<sup>47</sup> I. V. Omel'ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie na teritorii Ukrainy, 1904-1914 gg.* (Kiev: Natsionalnyi institut Ukrainsko-Rossiiskikh otnoshenii, 2000), 57.

<sup>48</sup> Stepanov, *Chernaia sotniai*, 108.

<sup>49</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1911, d. 246, l. 112-13.

from the endorsement of clergymen, peasants joined the URP in the belief that the group's official connections and closeness to the tsar could help them gain control of the land they worked. URP recruiters often encouraged them in this belief. The recruitment of peasants, however, led to tension within the URP between peasant members and the numerous nobles and landowners in the national leadership. Many peasants soon left the group, disillusioned by its refusal to support land redistribution. These malcontents ultimately came to the same conclusion as Iliodor himself, who abandoned the URP after denouncing its leaders as aristocrats and landowners who only championed the autocracy and Orthodoxy in order to defend their own class interests.<sup>50</sup>

In terms of agitation and political activities, however, the monarchist movement was most active in urban areas, with particularly strong branches in major cities like St. Petersburg and Moscow. The URP also established large branches in the Western provinces of Mogilev, Bessarabia, Kherson, Kiev, and Podolia—all located in the Pale of the Settlement, where the relatively high Jewish population and the strength of the revolutionary movement lent the URP's broadsides against "Jewish revolutionaries" a popular appeal.

From the beginning, the URP sought to counter the socialists' class-conscious philosophies by creating an organization encompassing all social classes. The first point of the organization's statutes specified the group's intention to "develop the natural Russian consciousness and the lasting unification of the Russian people of all classes and statuses for general work to benefit our dear fatherland—Russia united and undivided."

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<sup>50</sup> Hieromonk Iliodor, *The Mad Monk of Russia, Iliodor: Life, Memoirs, and Confessions of Sergei Michailovich Trufanoff* (New York: Century Co, 1918), 46.

The URP did, in fact, attract members from all social classes. The founding council of the St. Petersburg branch was largely middle-class, including at least six merchants or shopkeepers, two engineers, two police officials, one zemstvo official, and the physician Dubrovin. The middle- and upper-classes also dominated the councils of the bigger branches in cities like Moscow and Odessa. But the rank-and-file members of most branches, and the leaders of many of the smaller branches (which could open with as few as twenty founding members),<sup>51</sup> tended to be workers, the semi-employed, and other lower-class elements.

Worker membership in Black Hundred organizations was a logical outgrowth of their participation in the October pogroms, in which workers comprised a majority of pogromists in industrial areas.<sup>52</sup> Viewing Jews as economic competitors or even ethnic enemies, workers often responded approvingly to the URP's scapegoating of Jews. As Charters Wynn notes, "at times anti-Semitism seemed to be the only unifying force within the ranks of industrial workers."<sup>53</sup> As we shall see, some of the most violent clashes between URP members and revolutionaries during the 1905-07 period took place in factories, where the URP established workers' branches, or between factory workers on the streets. The precise number of workers in Black Hundred organizations is the source of some dispute. Kir'ianov points to police reports showing that even in 1915-16, workers still predominated in many Black Hundred branches.<sup>54</sup> Stepanov, however, cites a relatively low figure of 12,000-15,000 Black Hundred workers nationwide during the

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<sup>51</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l. 9.

<sup>52</sup> Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 57.

<sup>53</sup> Charters Wynn, *Workers, Strikes, and Pogroms: The Donbass-Dnepr Bend in Late Imperial Russia 1870-1905* (Princeton: Princeton U Press, 1992), 65.

<sup>54</sup> Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii*, 91-92.

peak year of 1907. I. V. Omel'ianchuk, on the other hand, finds approximately 11,800 Black Hundred workers at this time just in four western cities.<sup>55</sup>

URP membership, especially among the lower classes, contained a significant number of socially marginalized individuals, with police characterizing numerous branch presidents as being psychologically disturbed. In the city of Astrakhan, the provincial governor described the local URP president, N. N. Tikhanovich-Savinskii, as a “physically ill person, totally deaf, and apparently psychologically abnormal.” Having quickly pushed away all the genuine monarchists around him, Tikhanovich-Savinskii surrounded himself with a group comprising “dozens of drunks incapable of useful activity and desiring only pogroms.”<sup>56</sup> In Chernomorsk Province, police reported that P. Kh. Ialanskii, a former revolutionary who founded a URP branch in early 1906, was an “insolent, rude, uneducated, and psychologically unbalanced person.”<sup>57</sup> A police official in Kherson Province reported that an I. P. Fomenko had organized a local URP branch in 1905 and was elected president despite his “unsober” lifestyle. Forced out due to the mismanagement of URP funds and a criminal investigation of his son, he moved to Elizavetgrad, became a URP member there, and began passing himself off as an official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In this capacity, he incited workers and peasants to violent actions against landowners and factory owners, and even formed a paramilitary battalion to fight them. After serving a month in jail for publishing an antigovernment

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<sup>55</sup> These were Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, Kiev, and Slavianska. See Omel'ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie*, 65.

<sup>56</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 830, l. 8.

<sup>57</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 63-64.

newspaper, he joined a different URP branch and briefly served as president, before he was again removed by its members.<sup>58</sup>

The Bessarabian governor issued a circular recommending that the URP be kept under surveillance. Citing the “unusual success” and “outstanding speed” at which the organization had spread throughout the province, the governor warned that its branch leaders were often “debauched” people and its members, almost exclusively hailing from the lower classes and possessing little cultural or political development, made rude and impertinent demands on the local government.<sup>59</sup> In Kherson Province, the vice governor reported to the police that “simple people” united almost exclusively by their hatred of Jews dominated the URP branch in Elizavetgrad, which had “very few more-or-less educated people.” The organization, he maintained, was incapable of engaging in any kind of activity and had almost no influence on educated society.<sup>60</sup> The governor of Kursk Province, testified that he had closed a URP sub-branch due to the “undeveloped” and “rude” behavior of its president, the peasant I. D. Chuichenko, who had abused his position for personal and criminal goals.<sup>61</sup> A police report on a URP branch in Mogilev Province noted that the group consisted of thirty-three members “who are noted for their attachment to alcohol.”<sup>62</sup>

What attracted these kinds of people to the URP? Many undeniably believed in the organization’s stated goals of fighting the revolutionaries and protecting the autocracy. In fact, there were cases of URP recruiters being physically attacked by

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<sup>58</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1911, d. 244, ll. 11-12.

<sup>59</sup> *Tovarish*, February 1, 1907, and *Slovo*, February 3, 1907 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, ll. 69, 75, 78,

<sup>60</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, l. 525.

<sup>61</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. 5, l. 187.

<sup>62</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 2, l. 147.

peasants who mistakenly thought the recruiters were insulting the tsar, as well as attempts by revolutionaries to stir up peasant opposition to new URP branches by falsely claiming that the URP opposed the monarch.<sup>63</sup> As noted in the previous chapter, between 1905 and 1907 many Russians, even those critical of the government, remained loyal to the tsar and would not countenance criticism of him personally.

But there was more to URP recruitment than pure political conviction. Some people clearly joined the organization thanks to the prospect of jobs, money-making opportunities, and power associated with membership in a movement that had the tsar's blessing. The tsar's public proclamations of support for the URP reinforced the perception that the URP enjoyed official connections that could benefit its members. These included messages sent to the organization declaring "Unite Russian people, I am counting on you" and "I believe that with your help the Russian people and I will succeed in defeating the enemies of Russia."<sup>64</sup> The URP incessantly trumpeted these pronouncements, reproducing them on the cover of their statutes booklet.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, URP recruiters emphasized these official connections, promising prospective members that the group could intercede with officials in order to obtain various things for its members, such as land for peasants.<sup>66</sup> Some rank-and-file members viewed the organization as a means to drum up customers for their businesses, even using their speeches during URP meetings as opportunities to hawk their wares. As we shall see, members of the URP's various paramilitary groups exploited their positions to earn

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<sup>63</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, l. 104, GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, ll. 510-14.

<sup>64</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 96.

<sup>65</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 43-44.

<sup>66</sup> GARF, f. 102, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, l. 114-15. In Odessa, for example, the leader of the Union of the Archangel Michael promised jobs in the city administration to UAM members who participated in the group's electoral campaigns. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 853.

money through robberies and extortion schemes, particularly aimed at Jews.<sup>67</sup> The founder of SASARA in Ekaterinoslav, which initially functioned purely as a paramilitary organization for fighting revolutionaries, admitted that members took up collections for weapons but spent their earnings on “carousing.”<sup>68</sup>

URP members constantly bombarded Dubrovin with letters citing their loyal service to the organization and asking for his assistance in securing employment.<sup>69</sup> After establishing his own monarchist organization in 1908, Purishkevich likewise received myriad entreaties seeking his help on all sorts of personal matters or his funding for everything from newspapers to unusual inventions like a fuel-less motor.<sup>70</sup> Most importantly, leaders of URP branches often became key public figures in their regions; in Odessa, for example, A. I. Konovnitsyn worked for a steamship company before establishing a URP branch that transformed him into one of the key powerbrokers in the city.<sup>71</sup> URP branch presidents also earned the right to control a branch’s funds derived from membership dues, private and state donations, and occasional subsidies from the organization’s headquarters in St. Petersburg. The party’s branches replicated the lax modes of financial oversight that Dubrovin established in the capital. This provided an irresistible temptation to corruption for many local URP leaders.

The prospect of engaging in organized violence represented a final incentive for joining the URP. The organization quickly earned notoriety for carrying out assaults, robberies, and murders, a reputation enhanced by the antirevolutionary and anti-Semitic

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<sup>67</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 43-45.

<sup>68</sup> Omel’ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie*, 40.

<sup>69</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 601 (most of this archival *delo* is comprised of personal requests for Dubrovin’s assistance, mostly in finding jobs).

<sup>70</sup> GARF, f. 117, op. 1, d. 11, ll. 16, 21 and GARF, f. 117, op. 1, d. 66, l. 7.

<sup>71</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 13, d. 6, l. 38 and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 89-93.

incitement of URP flyers and of *Russkoe znamia*. As we shall see, URP violence included everything from isolated battles with revolutionary workers to organized assassination campaigns against leftwing Duma members. The violence began with clashes between leftist and rightist workers, especially those employed in factories and in the railroads, in the summer of 1905 in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and other cities. These were usually street brawls, but they sometimes escalated into gunbattles ending in killings.<sup>72</sup> The fighting intensified after the URP's creation, when leftwing workers sometimes violently resisted the intrusion of Black Hundred branches into their factories.

Genuine political conviction certainly played a role in these battles; some workers surely objected to the appearance of organized URP groups in their midst, while numerous URP members sincerely wanted to fight revolutionaries or, in darker cases, act on URP circulars encouraging members to agitate to expel all the Jews in their area.<sup>73</sup> But other workers seem to have been motivated simply by a desire to engage in meaningless violence. This is borne out by repeated instances of groups of workers switching their allegiances between the URP and various revolutionary organizations, including cases of entire paramilitary battalions defecting from one side to the other.<sup>74</sup> A report from a URP congress in February 1908 revealed that these defections presented a significant problem, warning that “many URP members,” intimidated by antagonistic workers or refused work by hostile employers, had left the organization, with the “weakest, most unstable, and

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<sup>72</sup> V.V. Brusianin, “Chernaia sotnia na fabrikakh i zavodakh Peterburga v gody reaktsii,” *Krasnaia letopis'* 28 no. 1 and 29 no. 2, 1929; M. E. Gordeev-Binter, “Boevaia družhina v 1905 g. za Nevskoi zastavoi (iz vospominanii),” *Krasnaia letopis'* no 5 (20), 1926; and GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 999, ch. 61, l. 5.

<sup>73</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 1, l. 17.

<sup>74</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 9, ch. 52, l. 261, GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 568-71.

most irresolute element” often joining the revolution.<sup>75</sup> The same phenomenon is evident among peasants—in 1914, a Kiev monarchist reported that infighting within the top ranks of the URP had left peasant URP members leaderless, transforming them into a “dangerous, dark element” that threatened to go over to the revolution.<sup>76</sup>

### **URP Paramilitaries**

Much of the URP violence emanated from the organization’s *boevye druzhiny* (paramilitary battalions). Dubrovin ordered the creation of the first druzhina in St. Petersburg. He set out the group’s tasks and secured its funding, while retired provincial secretary N. M. Iuskevich-Kraskovskii directed its day-to-day activities. This soon spawned separate druzhiny assigned to different parts of the city, with similar brigades quickly spreading to Moscow, Odessa, Nizhny-Novgorod, Astrakhan, Kiev, Arkhangel, and other cities. Armed with bombs, revolvers that Iuskevich-Kraskovskii obtained from St. Petersburg City Governor Fon-der-Launits, and Brownings that Iuskevich-Kraskovskii smuggled into Russia from Finland, the St. Petersburg druzhiny stored their weapons at Dubrovin’s apartment, which doubled as the URP head office.<sup>77</sup>

According to a former St. Petersburg druzhina member, the druzhiny comprised the “dregs” of society, including officials with criminal records, “down-and-out workers,” “bottom-dwellers,” and brothel owners. Members organized themselves into teams of 100, called “hundreds,” which in turn were composed of smaller bands of

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<sup>75</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 568-71.

<sup>76</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 244 (1914), d. 244, ll. 126-27.

<sup>77</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 41, 49, and GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 830, l. 11. A *Rus* article quoted an official investigator reporting that there were approximately 500 druzhiny members in St. Petersburg. See *Rus*, January 24, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, l. 44.

“tens.” With assurances from Dubrovin that he could use his political connections to ensure the immunity of druzhiny members from prosecution (or, in a worst case scenario, that they would be found not guilty at trial), druzhiny members aimed to fight the URP’s political enemies using all means, including violence. The druzhiny were ostensibly secret groups kept separate from the party’s main organization, which retained no records of druzhiny activities. They were not answerable to the council as a whole, but rather to an inner council consisting of Dubrovin and his close allies. Nevertheless, their existence was well-known throughout the URP, and the leftwing press covered their activities in some detail. In fact, opposition to the druzhiny’s unaccountable and outright criminal activities was the primary reasons why some of the early URP council members resigned or were forced out of their posts.<sup>78</sup>

Like so much of the URP apparatus, the druzhiny quickly succumbed to corruption. They regularly engaged in robberies and extortion rackets, especially the blackmailing of Jewish communities with threats of pogroms. Dubrovin not only approved these activities, but received a cut of the proceeds as well. The druzhiny enforced secrecy within its ranks by threatening to kill members who protested their activities or who were suspected of wanting to inform the authorities. In one case, a druzhina assassinated one of its own members—a worker at the Putiovsk factory named Mukhin—suspected of being a provocateur.<sup>79</sup>

The URP druzhiny assassinated several prominent politicians including M. Ia. Gertsenshtein, a Jewish member of the Kadet party who served on the Duma’s agriculture commission. Dubrovin ordered the murder, while Iuskevich-Kraskovskii planned the

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<sup>78</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 44-45, 50-51, 62.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 43-45, 48, 56, 65, 435.

operation and paid for the revolvers used in the crime. Along with a four-man *druzhina* crew, Iuskevich-Kraskovskii traveled to the Finnish town of Terijoki<sup>80</sup> to oversee the assassination, which A. E. Kazantsev performed on June 14, 1906.<sup>81</sup> A Finnish court later convicted two members of the assassination squad, including Iuskevich-Kraskovskii, of the murder. In a dramatic example of Nicholas II's support for even the most violent URP elements, the tsar pardoned both men. Although the court also sought to bring charges against Dubrovin, the Ministry of Justice declared him outside of the Finnish court's jurisdiction.<sup>82</sup>

The second major URP assassination victim was *Russkie vedomosti* (Russian Gazette) editor G. B. Iollos, another Kadet member of the First Duma. Count A. A. Buksgevdn, a URP member and local Moscow official, apparently ordered and financed the murder. Kazantsev, who had met Buksgevdn at a URP meeting, organized the killing. Kazantsev duped two leftists from St. Petersburg—the tailor A. S. Stepanov and Vasilii Fedorov, who was unemployed—into cooperating with him. Presenting himself to the two as an anarchist, Kazantsev convinced the pair to move with him to Moscow, where he claimed that he had orders to kill a Black Hundred member. Proving the better

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<sup>80</sup> Although Terijoki was part of the independent Finland that emerged from the Russian Revolution, the town was reconquered during the Winter War and incorporated into Russia in 1940. It is now called Zelenogorsk.

<sup>81</sup> The man sent along with Kazantsev to shoot Gertsenshtein, E. S. Laritskin, later confessed to carrying out the death sentence against the worker Mukhin. See Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 42, 65, 87.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-49, 54-55, 428. Although A. V. Polovnev, a member of the assassination squad, later testified that the squad counted five members, other former URP members would claim that a sixth man, Topolev, was also involved.

shooter of the two, only Federov accompanied Kazantsev on the mission. The duo gunned down Iollos on the streets of Moscow on March 14, 1907.<sup>83</sup>

This group of assassins also attempted to kill former Prime Minister Sergei Witte, who the Black Hundred despised due to his support for industrialization, the gold standard, and easing restrictions on Jews; his negotiating of the Treaty of Portsmouth ending the war with Japan; and his role in convincing the tsar to sign the October Manifesto.<sup>84</sup> The attempt on Witte, originating with Dubrovin, occurred shortly before the group moved to Moscow for the plot against Iollos. Having convinced his dupes that revolutionaries had ordered Witte's murder, Kazantsev conceived an elaborate plot to blow up Witte's apartment with time-bombs, which the team lowered into the chimneys of Witte's St. Petersburg apartment on January 29, 1907. The bombs, however, failed to explode and were discovered shortly thereafter.<sup>85</sup> Following the subsequent murder of Iollos in Moscow, Federov and Stepanov learned from press articles that Iollos had been a leftwing Duma member, not a Black Hundred member as Kazantsev had claimed. From this, they realized that Kazantsev was a Black Hundred provocateur. Enraged by the deception, Federov accompanied Kazantsev back to the capital after Kazantsev asked for his help in another attempt on Witte. But once they arrived, Federov murdered Kazantsev in revenge. After this killing, Stepanov went into hiding for the next five years, while Federov escaped to France.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 58-62; GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, ll. 122-23. It appears that Federov fired all four shots into Iollos. See GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, l. 128.

<sup>84</sup> The police had received previous credible reports that URP assassins had been assigned to kill Witte. See GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, l. 3.

<sup>85</sup> Witte described these events in some detail in his memoirs. See *The Memories of Count Witte*, ed. and trans. Sidney Harcave (New York and England: M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990), 629-41.

<sup>86</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 58-62; GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, ll. 133-34, 173.

Rumors circulated that the URP druzhiny carried out a spate of other killings and planned assassinations as well. The public widely believed that the URP had murdered a member of the Second Duma, Trudovik party member Dr. A. L. Karavaev, in Eaterinoslav in 1908.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, former URP members would testify to a Provisional Government investigative commission in 1917 that the URP had planned to kill the liberal lawyer O. O. Gruzenberg, First Duma member M. M. Vinaver, Nevsky shipbuilding factory director I. I. Gippius, and others.

The URP's actual assassinations—although relatively few in number—gave rise to some fantastic accusations against the group. Gruzenberg's assistant, G. F. Veber, claimed to have seen a list compiled at a secret URP meeting of forty-three people slated for assassination. In December 1916, the leftwing press drew attention to a man claiming to be a former URP member and *Russkoe znamia* employee who declared that Dubrovin had recently asked him to kill Kadet leader Pavel Miliukov, and that Dubrovin had also spoken of the need to murder the Octobrist leader M. V. Rodzianko.<sup>88</sup> These allegations are doubtful, seeing as the URP had disbanded its druzhiny and ended its assassination campaign eight years earlier. Other media reports of URP death sentences seem not to have been operational orders, but rather efforts at intimidation that the URP deliberately

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<sup>87</sup> An investigation into Karavaev's murder was halted by Justice Minister Sheglovitov, a URP sympathizer. After the February Revolution, the Provisional Government took steps toward reopening the case, but their efforts were interrupted by the October Revolution. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 499, l. 11.

<sup>88</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 362, ll. 8, 9, 12, 31, 40. In his memoirs, Miliukov claims to have been targeted by the Black Hundred much earlier, after Duma members from his Kadet party had traveled to Finland in 1906 to sign the Vybor Manifesto, which called on Russians to refuse to pay taxes or serve in the army and to engage in civil disobedience in reaction to the tsar's dissolution of the First Duma: "More serious, however, was the possibility of violent reprisals against us by the Black Hundreds. On the way back, we found out that they were already preparing to ambush us along the road. In addition to Hertsenstein and Iollos, both [Kadet Party deputy M. M.] Vinaver and myself were on their list of condemned." Pavel Miliukov, *My Political Memoirs, 1905-1917*, Ed by Arthur P. Mendel, Trans by Carl Goldberg (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), 133.

leaked to the opposition press. In Saratov, for example, the paper *Saratovskii vestnik* (Saratov Herald) reprinted an alleged death sentence passed by a URP branch against a rival newspaper editor for supporting the Socialist Revolutionaries and publishing state secrets.<sup>89</sup>

Aside from assassinations, between 1905 and 1908 URP members engaged in other acts of violence against their political enemies. Participating in violent clashes with revolutionary groups throughout the empire, the URP and affiliated rightist groups often succeeded in forcing the revolutionaries underground. In Astrakhan, for example, the governor reported that a three-day patriotic street demonstration in November 1905 succeeded in its goal of driving the Social Democrats off the streets, and that a new monarchist group's dissemination of rightist flyers there provoked the "whole population" to fear the outbreak of a pogrom.<sup>90</sup>

URP members demonstrated a particular fondness for beating Jewish passers-by. Such beatings often occurred in the vicinity of URP tearooms, which opened as part of a nationwide campaign led by Purishkevich. The tearooms aimed to create meeting places stocked with patriotic literature that would be conducive to rightwing political discussions and to the recruitment of URP members. Threats of mass beatings of Jews featured prominently in many URP flyers, whose dissemination frequently sparked widespread fears of the possibility of pogroms and large-scale Jewish flight from those localities.<sup>91</sup> URP members often rampaged against Jewish populations after funerals of assassinated police officials or URP members. Following the funeral of an assassinated

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<sup>89</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, l. 152.

<sup>90</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 999, ch. 61, ll. 11-13.

<sup>91</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, l. 99.

URP druzhina member in March 1907 in Kherson, the governor reported one murder, ten injuries from stabbings and clubbings, and thirty beatings in the ensuing violence.<sup>92</sup> During another such episode, the funeral of an Elizavetrad URP member in February 1907 led to attacks against the city's Jews that even threatened to spread to the police forces; afterward, the police arrested the vice president of the local URP branch for encouraging a crowd to attack a police official who attempted to restrain the rioters.<sup>93</sup> A local rabbi wrote to Stolypin that calm could only be restored to the city after it closed the URP branch and disarmed its druzhina.<sup>94</sup>

The revolutionaries by no means took this lying down. The establishment of URP branches provoked local Jews and members of revolutionary parties jointly to create armed "self-defense" forces (*samooborna*) that engaged in skirmishes and even outright assaults against URP members.<sup>95</sup> Revolutionaries attacked the rightists both in their press organs and on the streets, meting out their own beatings to URP members. One notable example occurred in Iaroslavl. By September 1906, the URP had achieved "tremendous success" in the province, according to a local police official. The workers at nearly all the province's trade and industrial enterprises had gone over to the URP, including the employees of factories that had previously exhibited strong revolutionary tendencies. The URP then began agitating at a textile plant that was the last large enterprise not to have joined the organization's ranks. After enlisting 2,000 new URP members, revolutionaries beat around fifty of the group's followers and chased them into hiding. The police official

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<sup>92</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, l. 163, 180.

<sup>93</sup> The crowd reportedly accused the policeman of being a "Jewish hireling." Ibid., ll. 157, 264.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., l. 157.

<sup>95</sup> Samooborna forces first appeared in response to the 1903 pogrom in the Bessarabian city of Kishinev. See Christoph Gassenschmidt, *Jewish Liberal Politics in Tsarist Russia, 1900-1914: The Modernization of Russian Jewry* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 15.

warned that the beatings risked provoking a URP response that could result in “many victims.”<sup>96</sup> Likewise, in Kubansk, rumors that a local URP branch was preparing a pogrom against revolutionaries and Jews in March 1907 provoked a mob of 2,000 people to attack a URP meeting and beat its members until Cossack troops broke up the melee.<sup>97</sup>

Assassinations of URP members and even branch presidents were not uncommon; in May 1908 Odessa General-Governor Tolmachev reported that revolutionaries had killed thirty people in assassination attempts against rightist party members in February and March, including seven URP branch presidents.<sup>98</sup> Between 1906 and 1908, revolutionaries also attacked the URP and other Black Hundred organizations by planting bombs in their meeting rooms and tearooms.<sup>99</sup> A police official described one of these, safely removed from the Baku URP premises, as large enough to destroy the entire building.<sup>100</sup>

### **The Mixed Blessing of Secret State Subsidies**

The central government’s attitude toward the URP was shaped by its tenuous situation during the revolutionary period of 1905-07. As previously described, labor strife, mutinies, and social chaos convulsed Russia as many parts of the country descended into a state of lawlessness. A campaign of assassinations aimed at police and government officials by Socialist Revolutionary maximalists and other socialist and

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<sup>96</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, ll. 161-62.

<sup>97</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, ll. 300-302.

<sup>98</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, May 17, 1908. Illustrating the distaste with which the Left viewed the URP, a remark in the Second Duma by Purishkevich calling attention to the assassination of a URP branch president elicited laughter from leftwing deputies. See *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskiĭ Otchet*, April 9, 1907, Col. 1829.

<sup>99</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 101, l. 12.; GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, l. 416.

<sup>100</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, l. 193, 195.

anarchist parties and groupings shook the government; official statistics show 1,588 people were assassinated in 1906 alone.<sup>101</sup> As such, the government perceived in the URP a beneficent group that could buttress the autocracy and channel the lower classes' passions against the revolutionaries.

But the government also realized that it could not always control the URP's propensity for violence. Furthermore, from its inception, the URP's incessant denunciations of the government and the bureaucracy for their allegedly timorous fight against the revolutionaries discomfited ministers and other high officials. The government's ambivalence about the organization resulted in a lack of a clear policy toward the URP. This inconsistency mimicked the government's reaction to the formation of the loosely organized monarchist groups in mid-1905, and even to the agitation of the Pan-Slavs several decades earlier. The government clearly hoped to keep the URP as a "chained dog" to be let loose when necessary against Russia's enemies, much as it had sought to use Mikhail Katkov in the 1860s and 1870s. Like Katkov, however, the URP did not always accede to the government's leash.

Lacking a consistent policy, the central government's relations with the URP largely depended upon the attitude of the prime minister and the minister of internal affairs at any given time.<sup>102</sup> Serving in both capacities from 1906 until his death in 1911, Petr Stolypin set government policy toward the URP during this crucial period. Stolypin initially gained the URP's favor with his uncompromising campaign against the

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<sup>101</sup> Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: Authority Restored* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 20.

<sup>102</sup> The Provisional Government's investigative commission reported that, from 1905 to 1917, prime ministers Goremykin and Sturmer and ministers of internal affairs Makarov, Maklakov, Khvostov, and Protopopov had been the most active supporters of the URP and other rightist organizations. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 830, ll. 24, 32.

revolutionaries. Determined to reestablish law and order, Stolypin instituted harsh repressions including the institution of field courts martial that sentenced up to 1,000 suspected revolutionaries to death after perfunctory trials in which authorities denied the accused recourse to either lawyers or appeals.<sup>103</sup> Dubbing the gallows that dispatched these convicts “Stolypin’s neckties,” liberals and leftists who dominated the Second Duma and the nation’s press corps launched acerbic jeremiads against the prime minister. The URP, in contrast, offered unflinching support for Stolypin’s antirevolutionary campaign; Purishkevich, one of just two URP members elected to the Second Duma, distinguished himself in that body with his provocative speeches defending Stolypin’s policies as necessary countermeasures provoked by revolutionary terror.<sup>104</sup>

Showing no patience for URP violence, Stolypin took reports of URP assaults seriously and insisted that his subordinates suppress any attacks by URP members. Despite Russia’s undermanned police force, Stolypin firmly believed that officials should be able to cope with revolutionaries without having to resort to assistance from URP vigilantes. Stolypin, however, also thought the URP could be politically useful in countering the revolutionaries. After the First Duma’s oppositionist disposition provoked the tsar to dissolve that body, Stolypin hoped the far-right could help counterbalance the opposition in the Duma’s succeeding convocation. Consequently, in addition to legalizing

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<sup>103</sup> Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 170.

<sup>104</sup> See, for example, *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskiĭ Otchet*, March 6, 1907, col. 140-42, and March 12, 1907, col. 380. Purishkevich became famous throughout Russia for his inflammatory Duma speeches, which repeatedly provoked his suspension from the Duma. After his death, former Minister of Internal Affairs N. A. Maklakov commented that his Duma performances “can only be explained by either a Machiavellian desire to discredit the Duma itself or a morbid lack of equilibrium, linked to a vainglorious desire to get himself talked about.” See V. M. Purishkevich, *The Murder of Rasputin*, ed. Michael Shaw and trans. Bella Costell (Ann Arbor: Ardis Publishers, 1985), 62.

the URP, he initiated a secret program to subsidize the organization that lasted until the February Revolution.<sup>105</sup>

As minister of internal affairs, Stolypin personally oversaw the URP funding program, which was part of a larger campaign to support rightist organizations and their press organs. In the beginning, Stolypin regularly ordered a courier to collect funds in amounts up to 100,000 rubles from the treasurer of the central police department. The courier would then distribute the money, in the form of checks, to rightists around St. Petersburg or mail them off to recipients on a list that Stolypin provided. After the death of the police treasurer Klechkovskii, the courier received the funds directly from Police Department Director S. P. Belitskii.<sup>106</sup>

At the same time, other disbursements came through the Main Board for Press Affairs. This source of funding steadily grew, eventually replacing the police department source entirely. Rightists appeared to representatives of the Main Board with decrees from the minister of internal affairs ordering the disbursement of funds.<sup>107</sup> These monies ultimately originated in a secret 10 million ruble fund used by the tsar to cover “extraordinary” expenses. The minister of internal affairs submitted requests for funding for the rightists to the finance minister, who presented them to the tsar for approval.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Imperial State Secretary Sergei Kryzhanovskii claimed an impetus for beginning this subsidy program was Stolypin’s gratitude after Dubrovin rendered medical assistance to the victims of the bombing of Stolypin’s dacha on August 6, 1906. Dubrovin and Purishkevich happened to be meeting with Stolypin at the dacha when it was bombed by SR terrorists. See Sergei Efimovich Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia: Iz bumag S.E. Krizhanovskogo, poslednego gosudarstvennogo sekretaria rossiiskoi imperii* (Berlin: Petropolis, [no date]), 152-56.

<sup>106</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 421, ll. 23-24.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 12-13.

<sup>108</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 421, ll. 26-27, 29-31. Markov, however, claimed the ministers themselves always gave him the money. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 15. The fund seems to have been created in 1884 as a 65,000 ruble account for the use of Tsar Alexander III. See GARF, f. 102, 1<sup>st</sup> delopro., (op. 26), 1906, d. 11, l. 125.

It is unclear how much money was disbursed through this secret channel when Stolypin first opened it in 1906, but the amount grew almost every year until the February Revolution. By 1909, the fund doled out between 600,000 and 700,000 rubles,<sup>109</sup> with the amount rising to 910,000 rubles by 1912. Funding was slightly reduced to 825,478 rubles in 1913,<sup>110</sup> then increased to 976,000 rubles for 1914.<sup>111</sup> The distributions further rose to 1,318,300 rubles for 1915 and 1,400,000 rubles for 1916.<sup>112</sup>

The fund extended especially large subsidies to Markov. From 1909 onward, he received 12,000 rubles per month from the government. His monthly subsidy grew to 16,000 rubles in 1916, and was supplemented by additional payments totaling 160,000 rubles from 1915 to 1917.<sup>113</sup> Other major recipients of these funds included Purishkevich, rightwing Duma members G. G. Zamyslovskii and V. A. Bobrinskii, and V. N. Dezobri-Stepanova, a leading member of SASARA and widow of the group's founder.<sup>114</sup> Stolypin initially gave Dubrovin a 15,000-ruble monthly subsidy, then cut it off due to *Russkoe znamia*'s unrelenting attacks on the government. Stolypin's successors, however, reinstated Dubrovin's funding.<sup>115</sup>

Although the Ministry of Internal Affairs sometimes doled out these funds for purposes like book publications, the convocation of monarchist congresses, or general party needs, most of the money funded rightwing newspapers. Monarchist papers were generally not well-subscribed; S. A. Stepanov estimates *Russkoe znamia*'s circulation as

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<sup>109</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 421, l. 37.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., l. 25.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., ll. 26-27, 29.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., ll. 9, 16. The preceding figures include the original subsidies for each year plus supplementary amounts later approved by the tsar.

<sup>113</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, ll. 11, 13, 16-19. Markov claimed wartime inflation necessitated the raise in his subsidy for 1916 and 1917.

<sup>114</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 136-39; GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 421, l. 18.

<sup>115</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 138, and GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 37.

low as 14,500, while the circulation of *Zemshchina* only reached 9,000.<sup>116</sup> Rightists frequently complained that a nationwide leftist and Jewish boycott inhibited their sales. Indeed, a boycott by newspaper vendors in 1906 in St. Petersburg forced *Russkoe znamia* to create its own vendor cooperative in order to ensure the paper's availability.<sup>117</sup> An advertisers' boycott took a further toll on rightwing papers' income, which often could not cover their expenses.<sup>118</sup> If not for state subsidies, many—if not most—rightist papers would have been unable to continue operating.

The succession of ministers of internal affairs justified their annual petitions for these funds by arguing that some newspapers could not survive without the subsidies, and that these papers were vital for counterbalancing the “harmful influence” of leftwing and Jewish papers.<sup>119</sup> Minister of Internal Affairs Aleksei Khvostov argued in December 1915 that at a time when “leftist organizations are exerting all their force and are not sparing their finances in leading a ‘siege’ of the government and striving to loosen the basis and foundations of the Russian state, the zealous voice of the rightwing press, [speaking] in accordance with the views of the government [and] defending Russian self-reliance and independence, will have to go silent in many places of our vast fatherland due to a lack of government subsidies.”<sup>120</sup>

Records of the fund's distributions show fifty-four local and national rightist newspapers received subsidies in 1914, with fifty-five recipients appearing on the list for

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<sup>116</sup> Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia*, 104. E. A. Poluboiarinoва, a close associate of Dubrovin and the chief financier of *Russkoe znamia*, admitted in 1917 that the paper “did not have particularly many subscribers.” See Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Souiz Russkogo naroda*, 39.

<sup>117</sup> Levitskii, “Prave partii,” 401.

<sup>118</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 815, l. 2.

<sup>119</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 421, ll. 26-27.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 31-32.

1915.<sup>121</sup> Recipients included Markov's *Zemshchina*, Purishkevich's *Priamoi put'*, and Tikhomirov's *Moskovskie vedomosti*. The poor circulation of rightist papers provoked some high-ranking officials to object to the futility of this massive funding scheme. Minister of Finance Kokovtsev bemoaned *Zemshchina*'s subsidy in particular, remarking later that "the paper was not generally read and many people wondered why it was continued, since it frequently attacked government officials, myself in particular."<sup>122</sup> Kokovtsev further claimed that Imperial Secretary Kryzhanovskii, who helped to distribute subsidies to rightists for electoral campaigns, agreed that the disbursements were a waste of money, while Stolypin's successor as Minister of Internal Affairs, A. A. Makarov, had initially planned to cut the subsidies after the 1912 elections to the Fourth Duma.<sup>123</sup> (He was replaced soon after the elections, however.) Stolypin's Minister of Education, A. V. Shvarts, even resigned to protest government funding of the rightwing university student unions established by Purishkevich.<sup>124</sup>

So why did this funding program continue? Despite occasional opposition from figures like Kokovtsev, the succession of prime ministers and ministers of internal affairs supported it in the belief that the rightists—their petulant attacks on the government notwithstanding—were ultimately the government's allies against its real nemeses on the left. The need to "counterbalance" the leftwing and Jewish press is omnipresent in official correspondence about the subsidy program and about the utility of the URP in

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., ll. 18-21.

<sup>122</sup> Vladimir Nikolaevich Kokovtsev, *Out of My Past: The Memoirs of Count Kokovtsov*. Ed by H. H. Fisher, Trans by Laura Matveev (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935), 338.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> A. V. Shvarts, *Moia perepiska so Stolypinym* (Moscow: Greko-latinskii kabinet, 1994), 45.

general. Ministers wanted to support the rightwing press not as a buttress to the government, but as a constant source of opposition to the revolutionaries.

Although ministers oversaw the funding, the decisive support for the entire program came from the tsar; the money originated from his secret fund, and he personally approved the overall level of funding. The fact that the amount of the subsidies rose nearly every year undercuts Kir'ianov's argument that Stolypin had convinced the tsar to distance himself from the monarchists. To illustrate the tsar's supposed change of heart, Kir'ianov cites two relatively weak pieces of evidence: first, a 1912 meeting between the tsar and Duma deputies in which one participant claimed the tsar had shown more attention to a liberal Kadet than to monarchists; and second, that at the end of 1916 the tsar met with one monarchist leader but rejected requests for a personal meeting with some others.<sup>125</sup>

With a philosophy extolling the sanctity of the tsar's every word and deed, the URP enjoyed the public support of Nicholas II despite the harm done to his reputation from associating himself with vulgar anti-Semites. His freeing of the killers of Gertsenshtein, for example, was only the most high-profile of his interventions to pardon rightists convicted of serious crimes, which he undertook continually throughout 1908. Moreover, he held regular private audiences with Dubrovin and provincial URP leaders that were not arranged through the regular official channels, but rather through the intervention of URP supporters at the court.<sup>126</sup> The tsar did not share the ambivalence toward the organization felt by his top officials like Stolypin; often distrustful of Witte,

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<sup>125</sup> Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii*, 389-90.

<sup>126</sup> A. A. Mossolov, *At the Court of the Last Tsar; Being the Memoirs of A. A. Mossolov, Head of the Court Chancellery, 1900-1916*, ed. A. A. Pilenco, trans. E. W. Dickes. (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1935), 143, 146.

Stolypin, and other ministers, the tsar was untroubled by the URP's crude attacks on them, which virtually never extended to criticism of the autocrat himself.

The tsar's affinity for the URP helped to create an environment in which an attitude of outward sympathy for the URP became de rigueur within the upper echelons of Russian officialdom. Even officials who opposed the URP felt obliged to sprinkle their criticism of the organization with praise for the group's principles. Odessa City Mayor Sergei Grigor'ev, a strident adversary of the URP, wrote a letter to the police department director in 1906 accusing a URP druzhina of attacking students and terrorizing the Odessa population. Even in this letter, Grigor'ev felt compelled to assert that the URP stands for "ideals with which I personally fully sympathize."<sup>127</sup> He reiterated these sentiments in a letter accusing URP members of plotting to assassinate him, proclaiming to Stolypin his need to act against rightist violence "despite all my sympathy for the ideals of the [URP]."<sup>128</sup> Stolypin himself invoked a similar refrain in a letter to Odessa's military commander, declaring that URP violence could not be tolerated "regardless of the moral value found in the ideals of the union's theoretical program."<sup>129</sup>

Furthermore, official correspondence demonstrates that top-level authorities believed that the URP had been instrumental in defeating the Revolution of 1905. Officials frequently invoked the memory of this service all the way until the February Revolution as a reason for the government to show sympathy for the organization. In a 1909 letter to a successor of Grigor'ev, I. N. Tolmachev, the vice minister of internal affairs praised Tolmachev for bringing the URP under control, but also related his

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<sup>127</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 62.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., l. 91.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., ll. 87-88.

“personal impression” of the URP’s “historic role in rendering essential assistance to the government” in suppressing the revolutionary movement and labor unrest in 1905-06. Noting that “the memory of this service is still alive” in Odessa, he recommended that Tolmachev strive to maintain good relations with the organization even as he acts against its “further abuses and disorders.”<sup>130</sup>

In February 1908, the acting governor of Tula Province banned a local URP branch from holding public meetings because URP members verbally abused a police official after the officer warned the branch president that an anti-Semitic speech had violated the law. In response, a high-ranking official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs criticized the governor’s actions in light of the “undoubtedly important historical role of the URP in the battle with the antigovernment movement of the last few years,” as well as the approbation the tsar had expressed toward the organization.<sup>131</sup> As late as June 1916, after the commander of the Southwestern Front, General Brusilov, wrote to Prime Minister Sturmer criticizing the activities of N. N. Rodichev, the president of a local monarchist group, Sturmer opposed taking any repressive measures against Rodichev, reminding Brusilov of rightists’ past service and sacrifices for the nation, including the murder of some of their members.<sup>132</sup>

Rightists played on these conventions prevailing at the height of Russian officialdom in order to secure favors and funding from the government. In a 1913 letter to Finance Minister Kokovtsev seeking the resumption of her 300 ruble monthly subsidy after an unexplained two-month interruption, SASARA member V. N. Dezobri-

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<sup>130</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. III, l. 236.

<sup>131</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, ll. 213, 216, and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 5, ll. 114-15.

<sup>132</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 830, ll. 26-27.

Stepanova wrote, “I think I have a right to material support [in exchange] for my activity in 1905.”<sup>133</sup> In a letter to the vice minister of internal affairs, URP Vice President E. I. Konovnitsyn argued that government organs should support the URP because the tsar does, and because the group helps guarantee that the events of 1905-06 won’t be repeated.<sup>134</sup> Likewise, cognizant of officials’ belief in the need for press organs to “counterbalance” those of the leftwing and Jewish newspapers, publishers of local rightwing newspapers emphasized this role in their petitions for funding.<sup>135</sup>

The government’s secret funding channel formed a lifeline for the Black Hundred movement after its public support began to whither in 1908.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, Markov later admitted that the URP could not have survived without these subsidies.<sup>137</sup> But the URP incurred substantial damage from the scheme as well. A program of such scope could not remain secret for long in a society with an elected legislature and a relatively free press, which dubbed the subsidy program the “reptilian fund.” As word spread that the URP existed on the government dole, politicians, public figures, journalists, and even foreign observers from across the political spectrum denounced the organization and the entire rightist movement as government tools generating “subsidized opinion.”<sup>138</sup> While the public revelation of the subsidies provoked some of their recipients, such as members of the Nationalist Party, to abandon the funding,<sup>139</sup> the URP never weaned itself off the program. The funding also discredited the government, which could not publicly defend

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<sup>133</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 137.

<sup>134</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 786, l. 15.

<sup>135</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1912, d. 244, l. 8.

<sup>136</sup> The decline of the Black Hundred movement is discussed in chapter 3.

<sup>137</sup> P. E. Shcheglovitov, ed., *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1926, 181.

<sup>138</sup> Pares, *My Russian Memoirs*, 148.

<sup>139</sup> Kokovtsev, *Out of My Past*, 286-87.

the subsidies. The public widely disbelieved its outright denials that such funding took place. These refutations sometimes bordered on being illegal; for example, Vice Minister of Internal Affairs N. V. Pleve in December 1915 testified to the Duma Budget Commission that the reptilian fund did not exist.<sup>140</sup> This argument was particularly difficult to sustain after 1914, when Purishkevich acknowledged and defended the subsidy program from the Duma tribune, baldly proclaiming, “I will say directly, without any ceremony: yes, the government subsidies the local rightist press.”<sup>141</sup>

Aside from undermining public support for the URP, the government subsidy program also debilitated the Black Hundred movement by exacerbating internal rivalries among its leaders. Officials usually distributed the funds to Dubrovin, Purishkevich, and (later) Markov personally, creating ample opportunities for corruption and resentment over the amounts of each other’s takes.<sup>142</sup> Stolypin and his successors seem to have used the funding deliberately to play these leaders off against one another in hopes of turning them into more pliable clients and increasing their dependency on the government. Records for part of the funding for 1915 and 1916, for example, show that officials ordered some disbursements to be kept secret from certain rightist leaders, while they gave other funds to rightist leaders with instructions to hand them over to other

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<sup>140</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 421, ll. 39-40. Pleve continued to deny any knowledge of the reptilian fund when he was interrogated by the Provisional Government in 1917, arguing that he made payments to rightists on the instructions of the prime minister without asking the purpose of the funding. Kokovtsev, however, told the commission that Pleve “well knew” about the fund. See ll. 39-40, 61.

<sup>141</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, May 2, 1914, Col. 1615.

<sup>142</sup> Markov admitted later that he did not report these funds to the URP, although he claimed he kept a separate record for his personal supporters. While he acknowledged that he spent some of these funds himself, he said the amounts spent on URP activities were recorded in the organization’s books as personal donations from himself. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 10, 25.

monarchists.<sup>143</sup> Once the URP splintered into rival organizations, they would mimic the criticism from the left by attacking each other in their respective press organs as government-funded toadies.<sup>144</sup>

Although the government thus sowed some discord among Black Hundred leaders, Kir'ianov exaggerates the effect by blaming the government, first and foremost, for the downfall of the monarchist movement.<sup>145</sup> Markov and other monarchists would also later make this argument. The government's activities, however, were more an irritant than a deathblow to the movement. As previously noted, Markov himself acknowledged that the URP would have closed down without government subsidies. Instead of bringing down the Black Hundred, the government in fact was its most crucial source of support, despite periods of tension between the two sides. As we shall see in chapter 3, the generally poor character of Black Hundred leaders resulted in widespread corruption, the alienation of private donors, financial problems, and bitter schisms in monarchist organizations. These factors, along with the suppression in 1907 of the immediate threat of revolution, devastated the Black Hundred movement, while the government served as its lifeline.

### **The URP, the Duma, and the Stolypin Reforms**

Between 1905 and 1917, relations between the URP and the government were most fluid during Stolypin's tenure. Stolypin first began funding the rightists in August

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<sup>143</sup> Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Soiuz Russkogo naroda*, 138-39. In 1917, Markov told the Provisional Government's investigative commission that Stolypin and other ministers always denied to him that Dubrovin was also receiving state subsidies. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 37.

<sup>144</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 26.

<sup>145</sup> Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii*, 388-94.

1906, at a time when relations between the two sides were good; the URP supported Stolypin's harsh crackdown on revolutionaries, while the prime minister hoped URP representatives could help to balance out the oppositionist majority in the Second Duma. The First Duma had been a severe disappointment to both parties. The URP quickly abandoned its skeptical hopes that the Duma would strengthen the bond between the tsar and his people when the elections produced an opposition majority dominated by the liberal Kadets. From the Duma, they constantly attacked both the government and the autocracy, leading to the tsar's order to dissolve the body after just six weeks.

The URP ran its own candidates for the First Duma, including Dubrovin, but failed to get a single one elected. It conducted a highly disorganized electoral effort,<sup>146</sup> hindered by a lack of URP branches in many key areas where it did not establish a presence until after the First Duma convened in April 1906.<sup>147</sup> Hoping to turn out a more tractable Second Duma, Stolypin initiated his funding program for the URP while further extending to the organization an organizational advantage over its liberal and socialist rivals. During elections to the First Duma, all the competing political parties were technically illegal, although their members could sit in the Duma if elected. After the dissolution of the First Duma, Stolypin legalized the URP, which allowed it to avoid restrictions on campaigning that applied to the illegal parties.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> A united congress between the URP and the Russian Assembly in November 1906 identified the organizational problems in the First Duma elections, including: poorly-organized regional electoral meetings, an unclear electoral program, a lack of orators, indifference toward the elections by rightwing party members, electoral lists were published late, mailings that were carried out carelessly, a lack of funds, weak agitational, administrative, and financial organization, and a refusal to recognize the perception of monarchist organizations as being retrograde. GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 37, l.1.

<sup>147</sup> Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, 171.

<sup>148</sup> Alfred Levin, *The Second Duma: A Study of the Social-Democratic Party and the Russian Constitutional Experiment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 63.

The URP had internal disagreements over electoral strategies to the Second Duma. These reflected divergent views on the Duma's proper role in a system that the right refused to acknowledge as constitutional. Dubrovin led a faction that supported the formation of alliances with moderate conservative parties like the Octobrists, while Purishkevich joined a group of purists advocating an untainted slate of far-right candidates. Still others believed the URP should support the far-left in hopes that a second oppositionist Duma would provoke another quick dissolution by the tsar.<sup>149</sup> Eventually, the URP decided to allow alliances only with "neutral" candidates who were not members of "constitutional" parties.<sup>150</sup> Despite a better organized electoral effort, Stolypin's benevolence, and the rapid spread of URP branches, the far-right only got ten of their representatives elected to the Second Duma, nearly all of them from the Western province of Bessarabia. Among these were two URP members—Purishkevich and P. A. Krushevan, the founder of the URP's Kishinev branch and editor of a newspaper, *Bessarabets*, whose anti-Semitic broadsides had helped spark the 1903 Kishinev pogrom. The result in Bessarabia illustrated the popularity of the URP's anti-Semitism in the Pale of the Settlement, even among non-Russian minorities like the Romanian-Moldavians, who comprised nearly half the province's population.<sup>151</sup>

The Second Duma had a more oppositionist disposition than the first, thanks to the participation of the socialist parties, most of which had boycotted the First Duma. The Black Hundred viewed this outcome as a vindication of its original skepticism of the

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<sup>149</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 37, ll. 1-5. One representative at the URP/Russian Assembly Congress of November 1906 said he would prefer to boycott the elections, although he acknowledged this was not a real option, as it would violate the will of the tsar.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 6.

<sup>151</sup> Andrei Brezianu, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Moldova* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2000), xlviii, 102, 183.

Duma's creation. The fourth monarchist congress in Moscow called for the Duma's immediate dissolution, the approval of new electoral procedures, and the Duma's transformation into a purely advisory council.<sup>152</sup> The tsar, judging the body unworkable, dissolved the Duma after barely three months, a move for which the URP campaigned via a letter-writing campaign to the tsar.<sup>153</sup>

The day after the dissolution, on June 3, 1907, Stolypin promulgated a new electoral law intended to boost conservative representation in the Duma by increasing the weighting of landowners at the expense of industrial workers, peasants, and ethnic minorities.<sup>154</sup> The new system worked as intended, awarding forty-nine seats to the far-right in the Third Duma, including a URP contingent led by Purishkevich and Markov. This gave the rightists control of 11 percent of the Duma, creating a majority for the conservative bloc, including 22 percent for the more moderate right (comprised largely of the Nationalist Party) and 35 percent for the Octobrists.<sup>155</sup>

Stolypin's victory was pyrrhic, as the rightists in the Duma as well as the State Council<sup>156</sup> formed a key element in defeating much of his ambitious reform program. Stolypin had bestowed state funding on the URP, legalized the party, secured for the far-right movement an exaggerated representation in the Duma, and satisfied the URP's primary demand for a ruthless crackdown on the revolutionary movement. Yet, while

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<sup>152</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, l 101.

<sup>153</sup> The leftwing press reprinted Purishkevich's instructions for URP members to begin the campaign when a black cross appeared on the front page of *Russkoe znamia*. See *Rech'*, March 23, 1907. The cross appeared on the March 16 issue.

<sup>154</sup> Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, 181. Technically, the electoral law was decreed through an Imperial Manifesto, which still arguably violated the Fundamental Laws.

<sup>155</sup> Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, 216-18, 221.

<sup>156</sup> Despite Witte's tempestuous relationship with the far-right, he joined the movement in this campaign from his seat in the State Council, apparently out of a feeling of personal animosity toward Stolypin.

offering him vociferous support in his fight against the revolutionaries, the URP stridently attacked many of his other policies.

The initial blow to the URP's relations with the prime minister was Stolypin's early proposal to ease some of the official restrictions on Jews. Naturally, this met with outrage from URP members; Stolypin reported that he and the tsar received twenty to thirty telegrams a day from all across Russia accusing Stolypin of selling out to the Jews. The tsar eventually vetoed this proposal, as he did Stolypin's proposed overhaul of the naval general staff, which elicited objections from rightwing members of the State Council that the reform would impinge on the tsar's prerogatives. Moreover, nobles and rightists sabotaged Stolypin's ambitious program to reform local government, fearing it would curtail nobles' rights. Finally, the court, Church, and rightists emasculated Stolypin's bills to eliminate disabilities on Old Believers—a schismatic sect of Russian Orthodoxy. As a result of this opposition, Stolypin withdrew from Duma consideration bills allowing for mixed marriages and freedom of worship.<sup>157</sup>

It is hard to determine why Stolypin continued to fund the Black Hundred as the movement systematically undermined many of his key reforms. Of course, the fact that the right was behind many of his failures was not lost on the prime minister; after rightists in the State Council defeated another of his key reforms—a bill meant to replace some Polish representatives in the State Council with Russians by creating six new zemstva in the Western provinces—Stolypin offered his resignation, exclaiming to the tsar, “The rightists are not rightists but shady, smooth-tongued, and mendacious

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<sup>157</sup> Ascher, *P. A. Stolypin*, 165, 230, 287, 299.

reactionaries.”<sup>158</sup> Pressure from the tsar to continue supporting the Black Hundred was surely an important factor in Stolypin’s continuation of the rightists’ subsidies.

Additionally, Stolypin likely viewed the funding as a lever of influence on the movement that, while not able to pacify the rightists completely, could encourage a more docile attitude toward himself and the government. Thus, while Stolypin’s subsidy program began as an attempt by the prime minister to support his allies, at times it seemed more like an effort to buy off his opponents.

### **URP Relations with Local Governments**

As noted above, the central government never developed an overall policy to govern its relations with the URP. Although the government’s general attitude toward the URP fluxuated throughout the 1905-17 period according to the inclinations of the various prime ministers, decisions as to what activities URP branches could engage in, how actively URP members would be prosecuted for violence, and whether URP newspapers would be punished for publishing inflammatory anti-Semitic or even antigovernment articles usually devolved down to local governmental and police officials. This was particularly true during the revolutionary period, when the central government often found itself unable to enforce its orders in the provinces. Lacking the means even to adequately fund or equip provincial police forces,<sup>159</sup> the government left local authorities on their own to subdue revolutionary agitation and formulate a response to rightist violence.

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 344. Stolypin eventually withdrew his resignation and bypassed his opponents by suspending the Duma and State Council and passing the bill via Article 87, which permitted the approval of emergency legislation when the Duma and State Council were not in session.

<sup>159</sup> Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905*, 24-25.

Thus government-URP relations differed depending on the locality and the local officials in charge. As previously noted, some officials dismissed the URP as rabble-rousers incapable of any useful activities. But others viewed the organization's penchant for vigilantism as a useful counterweight to the revolutionaries who their police forces struggled to subdue. Regarding the pacification of the revolution as their most pressing immediate task, these officials accepted the URP's anti-Semitic incitement and its degradation of their authority as an acceptable price to pay for some popular assistance in fighting the revolution. And some went to quite remarkable lengths to support the organization.

One illustrative example occurred in the city of Aleksandrovsk, where local officials openly assisted in establishing a URP branch. In December 1905, revolutionaries seized the city's railroad. As the city had only thirty soldiers and an additional fifty Cossack troops, the civil and military authorities enlisted the help of a "small druzhina" composed of civilian volunteers armed with revolvers and hunting rifles. The soldiers and the druzhina together stormed the railroad station and drove out the revolutionaries. Afterward, several officials who had led the attack helped to open a URP branch, which enlisted some 2,000 members, mostly railroad workers, by January 1907. One such official, Budagovskii, subsequently recruited hundreds of "volunteer agents" from among the URP members to work in his service.<sup>160</sup>

In a letter to Stolypin, the acting governor of Ekaterinoslav in March 1907 reported on the URP's subsequent growth in the city. The official begins by

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<sup>160</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, ll. 7-9. Most of the revolutionaries who had seized the railroads had also been railroad workers. It is not clear how many of these were subsequently replaced by URP members, and how many of them simply went over to the URP.

acknowledging there are “serious reasons” for rumors that pogroms could break out in Aleksandrovsk, as the URP had become much more active there and in other parts of Ekaterinoslav Province. But he reports that no disorders had occurred in the city, where the URP’s activities had generally been legal thanks to the influence that the local government exerted on the group. The URP, he argues, is “necessary” for leveling out the political trends in Russian life.<sup>161</sup> He then recounts that the URP branch in Aleksandrovsk originated “not only under the patronage, but almost on the initiative of local government representatives” including Budagovskii, the court investigator, the police chief, and other police officials. This caused the writer some anxiety; anti-Semitism “can even be useful” when demonstrated by private people or representatives of social institutions, he affirms, but the expression by government officials of indiscriminate hatred toward the province’s large Jewish population was intolerable. In Aleksandrovsk, he maintains, the local government sought to boost the URP’s influence. In doing so, officials who had become too friendly with URP members were protecting their anti-Jewish excesses; officials refused to investigate beatings of Jews by URP members, and the police failed to report the dissemination of anti-Semitic flyers threatening pogroms. More ominously, Budgovskii and the police chief had even spoken of the certainty that a deadly pogrom against “the Yids” would break out. (The pair simply dismissed the possibility that preventive measures against the pogrom could work.) The acting governor ends his letter by recommending the “renewal” of the entire local government.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 851, ll. 2-3.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid. The URP branch’s members, the acting governor notes, are from the lower classes and are sometimes “unsober” and “lack restraint.”

Government and military officials frequently took part in URP activities despite laws banning them from becoming members of political organizations or addressing political meetings. In Yalta, the former general-mayor founded a URP branch and hosted several military officers at its opening ceremonies. These featured a fiery speech by a colonel about the suffering of the motherland at the hands of terrorists and the need to elect to the Duma representatives who would show loyalty to the tsar.<sup>163</sup> In Poltava Province, the general-mayor reported that the opening of a rightist party branch in the city of Priluk attracted “nearly the entire administration of the city.”<sup>164</sup> In Ekaterinoslav, the vice governor reported that “nearly the entire Russian urban population” had joined the far-right parties, including all of the city and zemstvo administration. While warning a local URP delegation to act with restraint toward Jews, he assured them that all levels of government would sympathize with their activities.<sup>165</sup> In Iaroslavl, the governor reported to Stolypin in February 1907 that the URP had approximately 10,000 members and held regular “non-partisan” meetings to discuss “patriotic and religious themes” that the lower classes and workers enjoyed. Pronouncing the URP’s activities as “healthy and desirable,” he asked for permission from the Ministry of War to allow the URP to use a military building for their meetings. In March, a military commander gave permission for the URP to hold “nonpartisan” meetings in the building.<sup>166</sup> The URP, which characterized itself as a union representing all Russians as opposed to a partisan political party, had some fun with this kind of subterfuge; *Russkoe znamia* insisted that all state officials

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<sup>163</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, l. 69.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 114-15.

<sup>165</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, ll. 213-14.

<sup>166</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, ll. 111, 210.

were *obligated* to support the organization.<sup>167</sup> Some local officials clearly felt such a compulsion; the Provisional Government's investigative commission found that Nizhegorod Governor A. N. Khvostov, who would later be appointed minister of internal affairs, presided over a giant scheme of vote fraud in order to get only rightists elected to the Fourth Duma from his jurisdiction.<sup>168</sup>

Aside from political patronage, some local officials went even further in their support for the organization by issuing them weapons permits or even actively arming them. A prime example was the St. Petersburg city mayor's assistance for the URP druzhiny and SASARA, the latter representing an entire organization that acted as a kind of druzhina—a paramilitary group meant to engage in armed conflicts with revolutionaries and armed strikers, and to act as an auxiliary force for the government in the event of an armed insurrection.

URP and SASARA members could obtain weapons-carrying permits if their organizations' leaders applied in the members' name to St. Petersburg City Mayor V. F. Von der-Launitz. The city mayor's office approved weapons-carrying permits for 120 members of these organizations by January 25, 1906. What's more, the city mayor, with the permission of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, doled out one hundred revolvers from police supplies to URP members on January 5 and 6, 1906. These armed the URP druzhiny, which the URP characterized to the authorities as security details that would help the police and soldiers defend various locations if revolutionaries attacked them. Fearing widespread unrest would break out on January 9—the first anniversary of Bloody

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<sup>167</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, September 30, 1906.

<sup>168</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 539, ll. 39-43.

Sunday—police dispatched URP druzhiny throughout the city to help defend public buildings, commercial centers, and printing presses. This kind of close police cooperation with the URP was by no means unusual; the police regularly approved voluntary security details composed of URP members to protect official parades and other official activities.<sup>169</sup> In the existing revolutionary environment, these assignments could be dangerous; in the city of Chenigov in March 1907, presumed revolutionaries shot three URP members who were on nightly street patrols that the police had endorsed.<sup>170</sup>

The St. Petersburg police collected the weapons from the URP two months after distributing them, when the immediate revolutionary threat had subsided. This was not the case, however, in Tula Province, where the vice governor ordered the police to distribute 600 revolvers to the “reliable population”—including an unspecified number of workers belonging to the URP branch at the local railroad—and to official institutions in response to social unrest at the end of 1905. In February 1907, police ordered those who had received the weapons to either pay for them or turn them in. The governor, however, decided to leave the weapons in the hands of URP members after a railway police official reported that these were “reliable people” who needed the guns to defend themselves against attacks by leftist workers.<sup>171</sup>

The same pattern of local complicity with the URP is evident with the Okhrana. Many rumors closely linked the URP to the secret police. Officials in the highest spheres of government believed this to be true; in his memoirs, Witte asserted that the assassination of Gertsenshtein was perpetrated “by agents of the Okhrana and of the

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<sup>169</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 122-23. The URP assassin Kazantsev sometimes participated in these security details.

<sup>170</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, l. 382-83.

<sup>171</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1910, d. 299, l. 33.

Union of the Russian People, which was so closely linked to the Okhrana that it was difficult to mark the boundary between the two bodies.”<sup>172</sup> Witte had believed this at least since Kazantsev tried to assassinate him, after which Witte insisted that his would-be killer was either an Okhrana agent or had close connections with the agency. An interpellation of ministers during the Third Duma also explored the relationship between the URP and the Okhrana. The declaration, submitted by seventy-three Duma members, accused Kazantsev as well as several members of the URP St. Petersburg druzhina of being Okhrana agents.<sup>173</sup>

An internal police department inquiry related to the Witte assassination attempt found that no URP members, including Kazantsev and the St. Petersburg druzhina members, ever became secret police agents.<sup>174</sup> Likewise, in response to a letter from a court investigator asking if Kazantsev had ever served in the Okhrana, the police department launched an internal investigation that also turned up negative.<sup>175</sup> The first of these reports, however, was demonstrably false, while the second was misleading. Contrary to the results of the Witte inquiry, the Okhrana’s own records show that one of the St. Petersburg druzhina members alleged in the Duma interpellation to be an Okhrana agent, Stepan Iakovlev Iakovlev, was in fact a secret police agent from 1899 to 1906.<sup>176</sup> Moreover, although Kazantsev apparently was not an Okhrana agent, a report on him from the head of the Moscow Okhrana speculated that Kazantsev may have had

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<sup>172</sup> Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, 637-38.

<sup>173</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, ll. 142-43.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 139.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 20-21, 28-30, 32, 36, 43-44, 59, 72. The investigation did reveal an Okhrana agent named Mikhail Afanas’ev Kazantsev, but this was a different man than the URP member. See l. 31, 45.

<sup>176</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 20-38.

connections with Okhrana agents in either Moscow or St. Petersburg.<sup>177</sup> Other Okhrana records relating to Kazantsev reveal that this indeed was the case. They further show that the URP and the Okhrana were linked through the activities of URP sympathizers within the secret police.

According to Okhrana internal reports, Kazantsev lived in Moscow for a time with a stolen passport bearing the name “Oleiko.” Police officials later discovered the passport during the arrest of another man and turned it over to the Moscow Okhrana, which sent it to its rightful owner. The real Oleiko, however, had by then obtained a duplicate copy, so he returned the original passport to the Moscow Okhrana. This was the end of the issue—until the passport mysteriously turned up on Kazantsev’s body after his dupe, Fedorov, killed him. An internal investigation could not determine how the passport found its way from the Moscow Okhrana back to Kazantsev; a Moscow Okhrana official could only speculate that Okhrana employees stole the passport from the Okhrana office.<sup>178</sup>

The Okhrana thus may have had no official relationship with the URP, but URP sympathizers within the agency’s branches proved willing to bend—and even break—the law in order to assist the organization. This should come as no surprise in light of Nicholas II’s unending support for the Black Hundred. In fact, illegality enshrouded the movement’s relations with all levels of the Russian government. In addition to the tsar’s pardoning of URP convicts, sympathetic prosecutors protected Black Hundred members. During World War I, V. V. Klimov, a member of Purishkevich’s URP splinter group, the UAM, submitted a letter he claimed to have intercepted to the Moscow police that

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<sup>177</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, ll. 122-23.

<sup>178</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 511, l. 131.

allegedly incriminated the German embassy. Concluding that Klimov wrote the letter himself, the Moscow police sought to bring charges against him. But the Moscow prosecutor opposed the case, arguing that it could “compromise” “high-profile figures” in the Moscow UAM—namely, Moscow UAM President V. G. Orlov and Secretary I. F. Tridenskii.<sup>179</sup> In his memoirs, Witte relates a similar story, asserting that the St. Petersburg prosecutor Kamyshanskii told him the investigation into the assassination attempt on him would not go anywhere because it would implicate people like Dubrovin and lead to even higher places. Kamyshanskii reportedly told Witte that the justice minister refused to give assurances that investigators could pursue these kinds of leads.<sup>180</sup>

## Conclusion

The URP burst onto the scene in 1905 intent on fighting the revolutionaries by any means necessary. The organization rapidly spread throughout Russia, drawing hundreds of thousands of members. It successfully confronted the revolutionaries in many cities, earning the group the enduring gratitude of the government and the tsar, despite its virulent denunciations of local and national officials. But the seeds of the URP’s demise were evident almost from its inception. Dubrovin’s autocratic leadership

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<sup>179</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 45-46, 71, 88. The Okhrana kept quite busy investigating the rightists’ frivolous accusations of revolutionary activity. Purishkevich was particularly prolific in this realm, submitting allegations including: that a Jewish dentist reported information to revolutionary groups that he had enticed from patients who were Okhrana agents; that the death of a peasant really constituted an elaborate ruse by a Jewish doctor trying to cover up a botched assassination attempt by revolutionaries against an Okhrana agent; and various other supposed plots and activities of revolutionary organizations. The Okhrana routinely investigated these claims and reported that they were unfounded. See GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 458, l. 10-12, 15-16, 19, 29, 67-68, 78-80. Aside from political conviction, rightists had an additional reason for submitting these kinds of denunciations, including false ones—citizens who informed on terrorists or otherwise assisted the police were rewarded with payments of 25-100 rubles. See GARF, f. 102, 1<sup>st</sup> delopro, (op. 27), 1907, d. 45, l. 25.

<sup>180</sup> Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, 637.

and refusal to account for URP funds stirred dissatisfaction among other URP leaders, leaving a growing, embittered group of former URP members seeking other monarchist organizations that would stand up to the URP leader as well as the revolutionaries.

With illicit funding from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, unlawful paramilitary formations that cooperated with local police forces, and members who included convicted criminals and even killers pardoned by the tsar, the URP earned generous state support during the revolutionary period of 1905-07. Ministries, governors, and police agencies received and conveyed the message that laws could be circumvented in order to assist the URP. Local as well as national government officials resorted to this policy in hopes of augmenting the empire's undermanned police force in the face of an immediate threat from the revolutionaries. But this action bound the government to the URP in a conspiracy that outlasted the Revolution of 1905. Once the precedent had been established of illegally assisting the URP, the government found it difficult to extricate itself from the organization. Despite the URP's vitriolic attacks on the government and its rapidly declining utility from 1908 onward, the memory of the URP's "historic role" in countering the revolutionaries when the autocracy was tottering created a sense of debt to the rightists. The government, for better or worse, had forged a surreptitious, permanent alliance with the URP.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Collapse and Catastrophe**

Between 1905 and 1907, the Black Hundred metastasized from a disorganized collection of independent, short-lived pogromist groupings into a mass movement with hundreds of thousands of members coalesced around the URP. But that period turned out to be the high-water mark for the URP and for the wider rightist cause. URP branch presidents in other cities throughout the empire replicated the corruption and authoritarianism that characterized Dubrovin's presidency in St. Petersburg, provoking vicious power struggles that paralyzed and discredited the Black Hundred. With Stolypin's crackdown forcing the revolutionary movement underground, former Black Hundred supporters no longer viewed the squabbling rightists as a necessary bulwark for law and order. Monarchist groups' large, private donors cut off their funding, making the groups dependent on state subsidies. Even more damaging, members abandoned the organizations in droves, while the most competent and energetic leaders gave way to a highly opportunistic cohort hoping to parlay their positions in rightist organizations into money-making opportunities. This sent the Black Hundred movement into a terminal decline from which it never recovered.

#### **Schisms**

Although ideological factors sometimes played a role in the schisms that roiled the URP, the source of the disputes was mostly personal, both in the center and in the provinces. These rows surfaced by the summer of 1907 owing to dissatisfaction with

Dubrovin's blatant embezzlement, his dismissal of the URP's constitutional procedures, and among some, his support for the URP druzhiny. For a time, Dubrovin skillfully kept control over the organization by maneuvering his critics out of the URP council. As increasing numbers of his former allies turned against him, however, he proved unable to contain the rebellion.

By August 1907, Dubrovin faced serious internal difficulties as the organization's debts mounted owing to his embezzlement of party funds. He faced a revolt by the URP's Moscow branch led by its vice president, the clergyman Ioann Vostorgov. A major URP donor, Vostorgov accused the URP president of ignoring council resolutions, accumulating huge debts despite Vostorgov's large donations, breaking his promises to report on URP activities to the tsar, and falsely claiming the tsar's personal support for Dubrovin's policies. He refused to subordinate the Moscow branch to the council and threatened to secede from the organization unless Dubrovin paid off the URP's debts or resigned. Vostorgov gained the support of other dissatisfied elements in the URP leadership such as council candidate member Andrei Ososov, who demanded organizational reforms to fix the "abnormal order of our administrative machine."<sup>1</sup>

The rising opposition to Dubrovin's rule did not escape the attention of Purishkevich, whose own relations with Dubrovin soured rapidly. Much of their dispute revolved around the URP's position toward the Duma. Despite his election to the Second Duma, Purishkevich had agreed with Dubrovin on the need to dissolve the oppositionist body. But thanks to Stolypin's change to the electoral law, the Third Duma, ushered in on November 1, 1907, had a loyalist majority led by the Octobrists. After being elected to

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<sup>1</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 3, ll. 34, 37-38.

the Third Duma, Purishkevich regarded the institution as an acceptable and even useful source of support for the tsar. He also reversed his earlier anathema to cooperating with other conservative or right-leaning parties. Dubrovin, however, continued his old course of uncompromising obstructionism to the Duma. The URP council issued a circular to URP branches forbidding any electoral cooperation with other parties, including rightist ones.<sup>2</sup>

After the elections, Dubrovin further irked Purishkevich by organizing a letter-writing campaign to the tsar calling for the Third Duma's dissolution.<sup>3</sup> In response, Purishkevich published a letter in *Novoe vremia* denouncing "inappropriate and harmful" articles appearing in *Russkoe znamia*,<sup>4</sup> and later complained to a journalist about Dubrovin's letter-writing campaign.<sup>5</sup> Dubrovin then began maneuvering to oust Purishkevich from the organization, scheduling a joint meeting of the URP council and URP founders for December 21, 1907, to discuss Purishkevich's activities. The council accused Purishkevich of violating the URP credo by cooperating with other parties, supporting a constitutional monarchy, and calling for all nationalities to unite against revolutionaries.<sup>6</sup> In response, on the day of the meeting, Purishkevich sent a telegraph to Dubrovin announcing his resignation from the URP.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The circular included the admonition to URP branches that electoral activities could only be funded with private donations, not government subsidies, because "the government lacks the moral authority to spend the people's money in order to create, with the help of the URP, an Octobrist Duma." Since Dubrovin opposed the Duma's existence altogether, it's not surprising that he tried to minimize the amount of funds that the URP spent on its electoral campaign. See GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 1, l. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Rech'*, November 28, 1907.

<sup>4</sup> *Novoe vremia*, November 18, 1907.

<sup>5</sup> *Rech'*, November 28, 1907.

<sup>6</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 4, l. 78.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 75.

Unlike most of the council members whom Dubrovin had previously pushed out, Purishkevich did not fade into obscurity. Instead, on March 11, 1908, less than three months after his resignation from the URP, Purishkevich registered his own rightist organization, *Russkii narodnyi soiuz imeni Mikhaila Arkhangel'a* (Russian National Union of the Archangel Michael, or UAM). The group's statutes reiterated the URP position on nearly all issues. It distinguished itself, however, by recognizing the Duma and its right to veto any proposed legislation.<sup>8</sup>

The loss of Purishkevich damaged the URP. With his antirevolutionary harangues in the Second Duma, Purishkevich had emerged as the Black Hundred's most famous defender of the autocracy. Fanatic, intolerant, and above all, evincing a militant opposition to the revolutionaries and Jews, he became a larger-than-life symbol of the Black Hundred creed. Moreover, by the end of 1907, his position within the URP had been strengthened by the large sums of money at his disposal. These stemmed from donations to Purishkevich personally by private contributors as well as state officials, who began shifting their subsidies from Dubrovin to Purishkevich in response to Dubrovin's hostile attitude toward the Third Duma and *Russkoe znamia's* continued attacks on the government. Even the URP council's denunciatory report on Purishkevich acknowledged his popularity within the organization and the copious funds that he controlled.<sup>9</sup>

With Purishkevich's exit, the URP not only lost its most recognized spokesman and an effective fundraiser, but it gained a formidable rival. Purishkevich took advantage of the internal dissatisfaction with Dubrovin by poaching URP members for the UAM.

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<sup>8</sup> S. A. Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii (1905-1914 gg.)* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo BZPI, 1992), 175.

<sup>9</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 4, l. 78.

Despite an entreaty by Dubrovin in *Russkoe znamia* for URP members to refuse all appeals from Purishkevich,<sup>10</sup> Dubrovin's many internal opponents, such as Vostorgov, bolted the party for the UAM. By putting his energy, fame, and connections to work against the URP, Purishkevich delivered the first crushing blow to the organization.

The URP rapidly degenerated after Purishkevich's departure. Opposition to Dubrovin's dictatorial leadership grew as URP members, donors, and supporters abandoned the group. When the URP convened a party congress for February 1908 in St. Petersburg, an anti-Dubrovin faction comprising twelve URP members refused to recognize the congress and called on Dubrovin and URP founders to reform the URP. In typical URP style, the congress voted to expel the faction's members from the organization.<sup>11</sup> At the congress, URP Odessa branch president A. I. Konovnitsyn presented a report that outlined the URP's weaknesses. These included internal discord within the group's leadership and its branches stemming from personal ambitions and intrigues; members' lack of work efficiency; the presence in the URP of agitators and people of questionable character; and the group's financial disorganization.<sup>12</sup>

The problems outlined by Konovnitsyn are evident in the fate of the URP in Samara Province. In 1906 a peasant trader named Shustov established the first URP branch in Samara, quickly attracting 5,000 members. The organization opened up additional branches in rural areas and nearly the entire population of some villages joined the group. In mid-1907, however, the main branch began disintegrating, with membership falling from 5,000 to just 200. The biggest reason for the branch's decline,

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<sup>10</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, February 2, 1908.

<sup>11</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, l. 205.

<sup>12</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 568-71.

according to a local police official, was the entry of lower-class elements (“almost hooligans,” in the official’s words) who joined the organization for “selfish” reasons, thinking that being a URP member would allow them to do “whatever they want.” These members mocked the more educated, upper-class elements and drove them out of the party. According to the official, with the honest and energetic members gone, the lower-class constituents turned on each other, accusing one another of embezzlement. When the merchant Korenev accused Shustov of corruption, the branch split into two. By 1911, the branches had just eleven and twenty-three members, respectively.<sup>13</sup>

The decline of the URP discredited the wider Black Hundred movement. Despite the defections to the UAM, the URP remained the largest rightist organization and the dominate group at the multiparty monarchist congresses. Its members had led the street fighting on the rightist side during the 1905-07 period, which lent the party its cachet as the quintessential Black Hundred organization. But from 1908 onward, the URP’s activities diminished, as its leaders increasingly devoted their time and energy to endless internecine quarrels.

Even police reports otherwise sympathetic to the Black Hundred at the time were unsparing in their portrayal of a movement in crisis. A report on the rightist movement in 1909, for example, argued that the Black Hundred still exhibited some strength in the provinces.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the report claimed that anemic rightist groups generally lacked energy and depended on state subsidies, without which they might not survive. The report described rightists as filled with distrust toward the government and toward each other.

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<sup>13</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 848, ll. 47-50.

<sup>14</sup> This assertion, disproved by many other police reports and other evidence cited in this chapter, exemplifies the abiding sympathy for the URP that sometimes characterized police accounts of the group.

According to the report, Black Hundred adherents trusted neither Purishkevich nor Vostorgov, while the URP council had launched intrigues against Dubrovin, whose prestige had hit bottom. The strife even extended to the Russian Assembly and rightwing Duma members, who Dubrovin's followers attacked for purely personal reasons. Finally, monarchists had begun to blame the government's weakness on the tsar himself. This, the report noted, would have been unthinkable just a year prior.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, URP members had grown so disillusioned by the URP's degeneration that they began to reject the group's ideology, which centered on the near-infallibility of the tsar. The mounting dissatisfaction with the tsar himself, however, also grew naturally out of the URP's own attacks on the government. Since the tsar personally chose the ministers, a weak government, at the very least, reflected poor appointments made by the sovereign. But the Black Hundred anathematized the expression of this logic. For if the tsar could not even choose a government capable of safeguarding his throne, then it became more difficult to justify the unlimited autocracy that they demanded. This reflected a crucial weakness in the ideology of absolutism: What do you do with a weak or incompetent ruler? The Black Hundred addressed this dilemma by deflecting all the tsar's deficiencies onto the government that he appointed.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 631, ll. 25-27.

<sup>16</sup> The conservative philosopher N. M. Karamzin addressed this issue simply by asserting that a bad autocracy was better than anarchy: "Civil societies suffer greater harm from the arbitrary dispensation of justice by the people than from the personal iniquities or delusions of monarchs. The establishment of authority requires the wisdom of whole centuries; one hour of a mob's frenzy suffices to destroy the foundation of authority." See Richard Pipes, ed., *Karamzin's Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia: A Translation and Analysis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 115.

## The Dubrovinites

The URP underwent another devastating schism in 1910, when the URP council rebelled against Dubrovin due to his opposition to any cooperation with the UAM. Realizing the damage that the split with Purishkevich had done to the overall rightist movement, council members negotiated a loose agreement with the UAM to adhere to a common program and to cooperate on certain issues.<sup>17</sup> Dubrovin retained a great deal of enmity toward Purishkevich, who not only represented a serious rival for leadership of the movement, but also presented an ideological challenge to Dubrovin over the legitimacy of the Duma. Dubrovin steadfastly opposed collaboration with the UAM, but the URP council adopted the agreement over his objections.

In addition to his position toward the UAM, the council began criticizing Dubrovin's expulsions of council members.<sup>18</sup> As he continued to resist demands for a full accounting of URP funds, the group's other leaders became increasingly assertive against their boss, eventually gaining a majority that voted to replace Dubrovin as president with E. I. Konovnitsyn, a founding member of the URP council and the brother of the leader of the URP's Odessa branch. Dubrovin briefly retained his role as honorary URP president, but the council had in fact stripped him of most of his authority. Markov, who had joined the council in 1908 and had been elected to the Third Duma, was a key collaborator in Dubrovin's ouster. Led by Konovnitsyn and Markov, the "renewed" council, as it became known after Dubrovin's dismissal, became engaged in a sustained and often vulgar campaign against Dubrovin's remaining supporters, prominently

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<sup>17</sup> M. L. Razmolodin, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie v Iaroslavle i guberniakh Verkhnego Povol'zhia v 1905 – 1915 gg.* (Iaroslavl: Alexander Rutman, 2001), 210.

<sup>18</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 26-28.

featuring mutual accusations of corruption and government toadyism.<sup>19</sup> In 1912, Markov would replace Konovnitsyn as URP president.

At the end of November 1911, Dubrovin convened a congress of his supporters in Moscow that marked their definitive break with the renewed URP. The Dubrovinites called for the removal of the entire URP council. When its leaders refused to resign, Dubrovin called on URP members to recognize the validity only of correspondence signed by him and to address all correspondence solely to him. The congress enumerated sixteen reasons for ejecting the council that included, ironically, its refusal to account for the organization's finances. Unable to reassert his authority, the following year Dubrovin decided on a new strategy: he cut his ties with the URP and registered yet another rightist organization, *Vserossiiskii Dubrovinskii Soiuz russkogo naroda* (All-Russian Dubrovinist Union of the Russian People), with himself as president.

Dubrovin's Moscow congress approved a series of official positions on social and political questions that defined the new organization. The Dubrovinites advocated a series of reforms to curb the Duma's power, such as allowing the tsar to appoint some Duma members and removing from the Duma's purview topics relating to the Orthodox Church. Such reforms, however, essentially became irrelevant when the congress further demanded a change in the Fundamental Laws to allow all the tsar's proposals to become law without the Duma's participation, thus rendering the Duma a purely advisory body. As for cooperation with other rightist groups, the congress denounced any electoral blocs

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<sup>19</sup> For a lengthy compilation of documents justifying Dubrovin's actions during the schism, see his *Kuda vremenshchiki vedut Soiuz Russkogo naroda* (St. Petersburg: Otechestvennaia tipografiia, 1910).

or agreements with leftist parties, the Octobrists, or even the nationalists. Branches recognizing the URP's pact with the UAM would be closed down.<sup>20</sup>

The congress addressed other issues, mostly advocating further repressive measures in a variety of spheres. These included a crackdown on the publication and dissemination of the works of the writer Lev Tolstoy. Excommunicated from the Church in 1901, Tolstoy's death in November 7, 1910, sparked widespread antigovernment unrest on university campuses that would reoccur annually on the anniversary of his death. The congress also called for stricter control of the content of movies, banning pubs from factory premises, raising the price of vodka, and reducing the number of internal passports granted to rural women without the approval of their husbands or fathers. Championing the Orthodox Church, the congress demanded a greater emphasis on Orthodox religious instruction in schools, the exclusion of non-Orthodox Duma members from decisions affecting the Church, and stricter observance of the Sabbath. Hoping to elicit greater support from a politically divided Church, the congress requested that the Holy Synod cooperate with the URP during elections, while it simultaneously scolded "some" liberal clergy members for engaging in "uncannical, unchurch-like, and unpatriotic" activities.<sup>21</sup>

Overall, the congress's resolutions confirmed that the Dubrovinites would focus sharply on Russia's single existential enemy—the Jews. On the railways, the congress advocated banning Jews from acting as railway construction contractors and for replacing unreliable foreign, Polish, and Jewish railway workers with previously fired URP members. In schools, delegates called for "avoiding" suspicious teachers, especially Jews

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<sup>20</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 2, d. 1, ll. 83-85.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 73, 76-77, 82-83.

and converted Jews; reducing incidents of forged diplomas, especially by Jews; segregating Jewish from Orthodox students and ultimately confining Jews to their own schools funded by Jewish money; and disallowing foreigners, especially Jews, from becoming teachers. Despite the existence of a raft of restrictions on Jewish land ownership, on the land question, the congress demanded that the government ban Jews entirely from trading in land, investigate Jewish rent gouging against peasants, and counteract the concentration of land in the hands of Russian “kulaks” and Jews.<sup>22</sup>

The Dubrovinites’ worldview is most evident in the congress’s insistence that the Jews’ domination reached such an extent that “it literally strangles all Russia and particularly its [rightist] unions.” It specified that the best solution would be to expel the Jews from Russia altogether. Since this was not possible due to “state-political-economic” reasons, however, delegates recommended a series of harsh measures to protect Russians and to isolate Jews. These included: banning Jews from state service; withholding equal rights of Jewish converts to Christianity until the seventh generation; apprehending the criminal Jewish youth still at large from the Revolution of 1905; lowering the number of Jewish doctors to under 3 percent of the population and banning them from Russian hospitals and the field of psychiatry; expelling Jews from the Duma, State Council, army, navy, state theaters, and the alcohol, pharmacy, meat, and bread trades; and increasing censorship of Jewish literature and art. The congress also called for Jews to be barred from serving in courtrooms or testifying against Christians because

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., ll. 75-77, 80-82.

“the Talmud orders every Jew to harm every goy, and it allows them to break every oath given to a non-Jew.”<sup>23</sup>

While the government was happy to continue funding the URP after it relieved itself of its intransigent president, Dubrovin secured his group’s funding by taking along with him his longtime collaborator, Poluboiarinova, who became the Dubrovinites’ chief financial backer. While Dubrovin continued to collect intermittent state subsidies, Poluboiarinova supplied the organization with around 100,000 rubles annually.<sup>24</sup> Much of this funded the publication of *Russkoe znamia*, over which Dubrovin retained control. To disseminate its own agenda and to counter the continual attacks on it by *Russkoe znamia*, the “renewed” URP began publishing its own paper, *Vestnik Souiz Russkogo naroda* (Herald of the Union of the Russian People), which echoed the sentiments of Markov’s other paper, *Zemshchina*. The two sides traded lively barbs through their publications, one of the more notable being *Russkoe znamia*’s death threat against URP council members who allegedly planned to poison Dubrovin.<sup>25</sup>

## **Downfall**

The provincial branches replicated the dysfunctions of the URP council. Local URP members, if they had not already bolted for the UAM, often divided their branches into two debilitated, squabbling groups, with the factions lined up behind either the

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., ll. 78-79. The Dubrovinites’ attitude toward Jews as expressed in the 1911 congress was not particularly more extreme than that of the other rightist groups. In September 1911, two months before the Dubrovinite congress, the councils of the Russian Assembly, URP, UAM, and the St. Petersburg council of the *Vserossiskii natsional’nogo soiuz*a (All-Russian Nationalist Union) wrote a joint letter to the newly appointed prime minister, V. N. Kokovtsev, pleading for many of the same restrictions on Jewish property, voting, and educational rights as the Dubrovinite congress sought. See GARF, f. 102, op. 1911, d. 244, ll. 23-25.

<sup>24</sup> This was Poluboiarinova’s own estimate. See Chernovskii and Viktorov, *Souiz Russkogo naroda*, 39.

<sup>25</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. 5.

“renewals” or the Dubrovinites. The Nikol’sko-Predmostnyi URP branch provides a typical example. Founded in December 1907, the branch expelled its original vice president in 1908 for allegedly working for the “assimilation” of Jewish and Russian school children. In 1910, the branch likewise dismissed its president, Il’in, for embezzling funds, refusing to account to members for the branch’s finances, failing to call any meetings, and expelling his opponents. When he refused to step aside, members complained to the police about Il’in’s financial misdeeds, landing Il’in a two-month jail sentence. Nevertheless, the St. Petersburg URP council sided with Il’in, rebuffing members’ request to audit the branch’s finances. Some members then defected and established a separate URP branch, while other rebels fought Il’in from inside the original branch. Both groups appealed to the council to recognize their own branch and not the other.<sup>26</sup>

This was not an unusual case. As we shall see, Dubrovin’s council also sided with the corrupt leadership of the URP’s Odessa branch, despite vociferous protests from rank-and-file members and undeniable evidence of the president’s embezzlement of branch funds. It’s difficult to establish precisely why URP leaders left corrupt branch presidents ensconced in their positions; after all, these leaders embezzled funds from the URP itself, and their activities sowed tremendous discord within the organization. Most likely, the council leadership, especially under Dubrovin, was reluctant to remove branch leaders for the kind of infractions that commonly occurred in the council itself. Removing a branch president for refusing to account for the group’s finances or for summarily

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<sup>26</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 14, ll. 20-23.

expelling his opponents might set a precedent that could eventually be applied to the URP president.

Moreover, in the context of Imperial Russian culture, it's clear that public figures tolerated and even expected this kind of corruption. The government knew much of its subsidies to rightist leaders never left their pockets, and rightist leaders in turn understood that branch presidents embezzled funds. Many monarchists, it seems, simply viewed the illicit income as a perk of service to the rightist cause. The fact that so much of the rightists' money originated in a "secret" state slush fund further justified and enabled the embezzlement, since it meant that much of the money passing through rightists' hands was illegal and would be difficult to trace.

Was there something about the rightist ideology itself that was conducive to corruption? There seems to have been a connection, albeit a tenuous one. Rightists held the tsar to be virtually infallible, making anathema any direct criticism of him or his actions. The tsar's public support for the rightists gave a royal stamp of approval to their organizations, thereby lending the groups' leaders a similar aura of political rectitude. This, in part, enabled rightist leaders to establish antidemocratic norms within their organizations that contradicted the groups' charters. With power centralized in the presidents' hands and with few mechanisms for oversight, corruption was a natural result. Rightist leaders became adept at invoking the tsar's name in their own defense when they were accused of corruption. As we shall see, Odessa URP leader A. I. Konovnitsyn in particular could repeatedly claim the tsar's personal support thanks to his numerous audiences with the autocrat.

But overall, the corruption within the URP is better explained by opportunity than ideology. The movement's leaders simply recognized in 1905 that the October Manifesto's legalization of political organizations, along with the popular demand for a rightist movement to counteract the revolutionaries, could open the door to a unique array of funding possibilities from both private and official sources. The tsar's support for the URP, along with that of many top local and national officials, lent the organization the trappings of a state-sanctioned party. As previously noted, this attracted numerous unscrupulous members to the party who hoped to reap some personal advantage, cultivate official connections, or attain other money-making opportunities. Such members, when they achieved leadership positions and access to party finances, were naturally prone to corruption. This situation stands in sharp contrast to that within revolutionary parties, where members could not expect their party affiliation to bring them much interaction with the state other than official harassment.

The schism with Dubrovin left the entire rightist movement in tatters. An internal UAM report from November 1911 illustrated the dire straights that rightist organizations faced. The report asserted that many rightist organization branches had disappeared as fast as they had been created. It specified that this was also a problem for the UAM, which hosted a "very large" number of purely nominal members who had joined the organization only to reap some personal advantage. The report noted that many branches "exist only on paper," a situation it attributed to two causes: the "personal characteristics" of branch leaders and a lack of funds. Because income from membership fees was "insignificant," the UAM relied on capricious donations, jeopardizing the existence of the entire organization. Indeed, the UAM's finances were in such dire straights that the report

suggested that UAM leaders refuse to respond to any correspondence that didn't include a return postage stamp.<sup>27</sup>

Lacking a uniform policy to govern its interactions with monarchist organizations, the government reacted with typical ambivalence to the movement's degeneration. On the one hand, the monarchist movement had begun to alienate the government, which the Okhrana kept well informed as to the weakness, infighting, and near uselessness of rightist organizations' branches. An internal circular from the URP council in April 1912 freely acknowledged that both society and the government had lost faith in rightist organizations due to their inactivity and personal rivalries.<sup>28</sup> Owing to the strained relationship some URP branches had with local governments, some local officials, even those with rightist tendencies, began withdrawing their support from the URP or allying with rival monarchist groups. In Orel, for example, the president of the local URP branch beseeched the URP council to intercede with ministers to end official and police harassment of his branch members. According to the president, the campaign was orchestrated by a group of local officials who had signed on to a published declaration by a rival rightwing editor that had referred to the URP as "a gang of evil, dark people acting in the hands of the Yid-Masons."<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, in October 1913, Purishkevich wrote to Police Department Director S. P. Beletskii complaining about the official obstruction he faced in opening up UAM branches in Moscow. Purishkevich told Beletskii that in Moscow he had expected to meet with the "extraordinarily benevolent assistance and patronage" of local officials—a

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<sup>27</sup> GARF, f. 117, op. 2, d. 201, ll. 4-21.

<sup>28</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 786, l. 74.

<sup>29</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 330, l. 58.

situation Purishkevich had enjoyed in many cities since establishing the UAM in 1908. However, “from the first day,” Purishkevich’s representative, V. G. Orlov, encountered ill-will and intrigues not only from leftists, but from those on the right and from the Moscow city mayor. Purishkevich appealed to Beletskii to vouch for Orlov to the minister of internal affairs in hopes of eliciting a more cooperative attitude from the Moscow authorities.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, despite meeting some new hostility from local officials, rightists continued to enjoy the central government’s support. Notwithstanding the loss of faith in the movement among the public at large, the infighting held out certain advantages for the government—namely, it turned the movement into a more pliable government client. Not only were most rightist groups now completely dependent on state subsidies for their existence, but the various organizations and their provincial branches fought among themselves for the government’s favor, seeking not only state funds but also punitive actions against rival rightist groups and their newspapers. Although monarchist newspapers still bemoaned the government’s alleged timidity in confronting revolutionaries and Jews, the government could now count on more supportive articles in the rightwing press and more consistent backing from rightists in the Fourth Duma, to which Markov and Purishkevich were both elected.

Indeed, police records show that by 1913, some rightist leaders, such as Orlov, G. P. Snezhkov, and A. Ivanov in Moscow, were essentially police informers, writing updates to Police Department Director Beletskii about their own activities as well as the

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<sup>30</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 458, ll. 100-01.

alleged misdeeds of their rightwing rivals.<sup>31</sup> The exception, Dubrovin, retained a degree of autonomy thanks to his independent financing via Poluboiarinova. Since her money supported *Russkoe znamia*, the paper largely retained its vitriolic tone against the alleged traitors to the tsar within the Council of Ministers.

### **A Last, Dashed Hope: The Beilis Case**

During this period of decline before World War I, in the absence of an immediate revolutionary threat, monarchists struggled to find an immediate cause to reinvigorate the movement.<sup>32</sup> With membership plummeting, rightist organizations were hard pressed to find something to heal their divisions and move the public focus away from their debilitating infighting and corruption. In 1911, they found such a cause in the Beilis case.

On March 20, 1911, a group of children discovered the mutilated body of thirteen-year-old Andrei Iushinskii in a cave in Kiev. Local monarchist groups, including *Dvukhglavnyi orel* (Double-headed Eagle), *Bogatyr* (Hero), SASARA, and the URP, pounced on the case, viewing the murder as a sensational story they could exploit for propaganda purposes, with the specific hope of scuttling efforts in the Duma to promulgate equal rights for Jews. The rightists pronounced Iushinskii a victim of a

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<sup>31</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 458, ll. 103-04, 106, 111, 113-16.

<sup>32</sup> I have found the suppression of the revolution after 1907 to be an important factor in the decline in the Black Hundred, for it robbed the movement of an immediate threat against which the public could be rallied. Leopold Haimson, however, argues that Russia was, in fact, facing an increasingly revolutionary situation leading up to the outbreak of World War I, as expressed in growing labor unrest. He notes that his findings apply largely to St. Petersburg, not the provinces. See Leopold Haimson, "Labor Unrest in Imperial Russia on the Eve of the First World War: The Roles of Conjunctural Phenomena, Events, and the Individual and Collective Actors," in *Strikes, Wars, and Revolutions in an International Perspective: Strike Waves in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Leopold Haimson and Charles Tilly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 500-11. Michael Melancon takes a nuanced approach to the question, stressing that revolution was not inevitable before World War I, but also speculating that the autocracy's fate may have been sealed by the public outrage provoked by the 1912 massacre of hundreds of strikers at the Lena goldfields. See Michael Melancon, *The Lena Goldfields Massacre and the Crisis of the Late Tsarist State* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006).

Jewish ritual murder. The Kiev Black Hundred groups disseminated flyers warning Christians that Jews habitually murder Christian children during Passover to use the victims' bloods in religious rituals.<sup>33</sup> A Duma member read one such appeal from the Duma rostrum:

Orthodox Christians, the boy Andrei Iushinskii was tortured by the Yids. Every year before their Passover, the Yids torture several dozen Christian boys in order to pour their blood in matzo. Court doctors found that the Yids stabbed Iushinski 50 times. Russian people, if your children are dear to you, beat the Yids, beat them until not one Yid remains in Russia.<sup>34</sup>

The monarchist organizations in St. Petersburg repeated this assertion, made even before the official investigation had reached any conclusions, and rightwing newspapers reported it as fact. *Novoe vremia* reacted to Jewish declarations that the Torah made no reference to ritual murders by arguing that only a particular sect of Hassids committed such killings, which began after the coming of Jesus Christ. The paper also claimed that officials were focusing "exclusively" on protecting Jews from public scrutiny instead of trying to discover Iushinskii's murderer. It further reported rumors that Jews had amassed huge amounts of money to block the investigation, as they allegedly had done following previous ritual killings. "The Jews are very, very strong," the paper warned darkly.<sup>35</sup>

The monarchists had a decisive influence on the prosecutor, the convinced anti-Semite G. G. Chaplinskii, who met regularly with local rightist leaders throughout the case. Chaplinskii worked closely with Justice Minister I. G. Shcheglovitov, who lent the government's support to the ritual murder accusation. The head of *Dvukhglavnyi orel*, a

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<sup>33</sup> Alexander Tager, *The Decay of Czarism: The Beiliss Trial* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1935), 26-29, and GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 494, l. 164.

<sup>34</sup> *Novoe vremia*, April 30, 1911.

<sup>35</sup> *Novoe vremia*, April 29, 1911.

university student named V. Golubev, played a particularly important role. Chaplinskii allowed Golubev to conduct his own private investigation into the case designed to identify a Jewish culprit. It was Golubev who first suggested to Chaplinskii that the murder had been committed by Mendel Beilis, a Jew who managed a brick factory located close to the cave in which Iushinskii's body was found.<sup>36</sup>

Thereafter, Chaplinskii directed the investigation and the legal process toward prosecuting Beilis. Chaplinskii dismissed the initial investigators, who concluded that a criminal gang surrounding Vera Cheberiak, the mother of Iushinskii's friend Zhenia, had killed Iushinskii due to suspicions that the boy, while spending time at Cheberiak's apartment, had gleaned too much information about the group's illegal activities. When the initial autopsy found no signs of a ritual murder, Chaplinskii brought in two professors to perform a second one whose findings pointed to a ritual murder explanation. Police arrested Vera Cheberiak and her gang in July, then released them following the arrest of Beilis. Just days after the beginning of Beilis's trial, Cheberiak's son Zhenya, who had last seen Iushinskii in Vera Cheberiak's apartment, died under mysterious circumstances, apparently from poisoning. Cheberiak's young daughter died a few days later. Many people suspected that Vera Cheberiak, after helping to murder Iushinskii, dispatched her own children to keep them from testifying.<sup>37</sup>

The case became a major political event when the Duma's rightist faction raised it during an interpellation on April 29, 1911. This came at the request of the head of a Kiev URP branch, who wrote a letter about the case to the faction's leader, A. S. Viaigin, on April 15. The letter alleged that other Christian children had been ritually killed in

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<sup>36</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 494, ll. 228-29.

<sup>37</sup> Tager, *The Decay of Czarism*, 37-38, 78, 92, and GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 494, ll. 162-63.

Warsaw and other cities at the same time as the Iushinskii murder, thus proving that a fanatical group with huge resources had carried out a planned series of killings.<sup>38</sup> During the interpellation, Purishkevich ominously hinted at the possibility of a pogrom if the government failed to uncover the “truth” of Iushinskii’s killing. Markov also raised the specter of anti-Jewish vigilantism.<sup>39</sup> Rightwing Duma member G. G. Zamyslovskii became particularly involved in the case, publishing a series of articles in *Zemshchina* purporting to reveal the history of Jewish ritual murders. He even served as a civil prosecutor at Beilis’s trial, offering anti-Semitic canards such as the following during his closing summation:

The sacrifice ceremonies were conducted at the Temple in Jerusalem. Since the Temple was destroyed, the rites of sacrifices continue. The Jews’ hatred for Christians is intensifying, as they were the ones who destroyed the Temple. Jewish religious books are replete with references to the goy, who is an abomination, and to kill a goy is permissible, even on the Sabbath.<sup>40</sup>

Zamyslovskii was apparently unaware that the Second Temple was destroyed not by Christians, but by Roman soldiers under the command of General Titus in 70 AD, a time when Jerusalem’s Christians still largely comprised a Jewish sect rather than a distinct religious community.<sup>41</sup> But it was an appropriate note on which to end the entire charade. Beilis spent over two years in jail before a jury found him not guilty on October 28, 1913. Monarchists, however, took solace with the jury’s assertion that a ritual murder had, in fact, been committed by some unknown assailant.

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<sup>38</sup> GARF, f. 116, op. 1, d. 787, l.1.

<sup>39</sup> *Novoe vremia*, April 30, 1911.

<sup>40</sup> Ezekiel Leikin, *The Beilis Transcripts: The Anti-Semitic Trial that Shook the World* (New Jersey and London, Jason Aronson Inc, 1993), 212-13.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity* (New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 1976), 33.

The Beilis trial demonstrated that the right could still count on support from sympathizers in the local and national governments, as well as in the Duma. Furthermore, the affair did provide a rallying point for demoralized Black Hundred organizations, which were near-unanimous in their insistence on Beilis's guilt. The notable exception was Shul'gin, the editor of the monarchist paper *Kievlianin* who had helped suppress the Kiev pogrom of 1905. Writing in *Kievlianin*, Shul'gin attributed Chaplinskii's prosecution of the case to Zamyslovskii's public declarations, made shortly after Iushinskii's body was discovered, that Jews only commit ritual murders in districts where they can bribe the police. Since this implied that the Kiev police had been bribed, Shul'gin reasoned that Chaplinskii felt compelled to go to extreme lengths to demonstrate that Jews hadn't bought him off. *Kievlianin*'s apostasy on the Beilis case elicited "a flood of the most vile abuse, including not a few charges that the *Kievlianin* had been bought by the Jews," according to Shul'gin. His coverage also angered some government officials, resulting in his conviction for libel in January 1914 for one of his articles on the trial.<sup>42</sup>

Hans Rogger explained the Beilis case as an attempt by monarchists to compensate for their lack of a coherent ideology by establishing anti-Semitism as the paradigm through which they viewed the world. In Rogger's view, "The very monstrosity of the fiction [of the ritual murder allegation] made it particularly appropriate to such a purpose, for the degree of its acceptance would be a test of the degree to which a myth might serve to inspire, to test and to cement loyalty to the creators of the fiction and of

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<sup>42</sup> V. V. Shulgin, *The Years: Memoirs of a Member of the Russian Duma, 1906-1917*, trans. Tanya Davis, (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1984), 104, 113-15, 118-19. Although Shul'gin received a jail sentence for his writings on the Beilis trial, as a Duma member he enjoyed immunity. At any rate, Shul'gin volunteered for the army during World War I and the tsar pardoned him while Shul'gin was at the front.

the myth.”<sup>43</sup> There is little evidence, however, that rightists thought of the Beilis accusation as either fictitious or as a “test” of political fidelity. Anti-Semitism was so ingrained within the far right that most monarchists undoubtedly believed the claim. Monarchists who silently accepted Beilis’s innocence, if they existed, most likely agreed with the jury’s conclusion that some other Jew had committed a ritual murder. This, for example, was the position of *Novoe vremia*, which warned that the “defenders of Judaism” could not rejoice in Beilis’s acquittal, since the jury confirmed the central fact of the commission of a ritual murder.<sup>44</sup> The right’s ideology revolved around a view of the Jews as a race of superhuman power spreading evil on a biblical scale. Recall the monk Ilidor’s conception of Jews: “The Jew drinks human blood, the Jew regards it as a pious deed to kill a Christian, the anti-Christ will spring from Jewish stock, the Jew is accused by God, the Jew is the source of all evil in the world.”<sup>45</sup> Belief in fantastic charges like ritual murder flowed naturally from these premises.

Although the Beilis case served as a rallying point for the Black Hundred, it was not enough to heal the divisions plaguing the badly fractured movement. Moreover, the spurious case failed to gain the Black Hundred movement new adherents. Aside from their infighting and static ideology, the public still largely regarded the rightists as corrupt government lackeys. The spectacle of nearly the entire Black Hundred movement cheering on a high-profile government prosecution of a demonstrably innocent defendant

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<sup>43</sup> Hans Rogger, “The Beilis Case: Anti-Semitism and Politics in the Reign of Nicholas II,” *Slavic Review* 25, no 4 (December 1966): 626, 629.

<sup>44</sup> *Novoe vremia*, October 29, 1913. M. I. Trifnov, the assistant editor of *Kievlianin*, later claimed the prosecutor Chaplinskii had told him even before the trial ended that he didn’t care if the jury found Beilis guilty, so long as it confirmed that a ritual murder had taken place. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 494, ll. 168-69.

<sup>45</sup> Ilidor, *The Mad Monk of Russia*, 41-42.

did not help to dispel this perception. Thus, it probably would not have surprised most Russians at the time to learn that the government not only gave Zamyslovskii a secret 2,500 ruble payment for his services in the Beilis trial, but that two years after the absurd case ended, the government would extend to him an additional secret subsidy of 25,000 rubles to write a book insisting that Iushinskii was the victim of a ritual murder.<sup>46</sup>

## **World War I**

With the outbreak of World War I, monarchists found themselves in a difficult ideological situation. The movement had arisen in response to the perceived threat that revolutionaries and Jews posed to the autocracy. As such, until the war, rightists had focused largely on Russian domestic affairs. Although frequently criticizing the autonomous status of Poland and Finland, Russia's foreign relations did not overly exercise monarchist leaders. When they ventured into the realm of foreign affairs, they generally analyzed Russia's interests through the prism of its internal fight against revolutionaries. Thus, they evinced hostility toward England and France, which they viewed as the source of many of the revolutionary ideologies challenging the autocracy. Monarchists considered parliamentary democracies in general to be antithetical to Russian autocracy.

The rightists' inclination was to support an alliance with Germany, which they saw as a fellow autocracy sharing a common interest in containing revolutionary sentiment—a throwback to the nineteenth-century Holy Alliance. They bemoaned tensions in Russian-German relations, attributing them to an international Jewish

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<sup>46</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 494, l. 27, and d. 830, l. 29.

conspiracy. “Our relations with Germany, to the joy of the Jewish-Mason clique, are growing worse and worse,” lamented the UAM’s *Priamoi put’* in January 1910.<sup>47</sup> Three months later, the paper denounced Russia’s warming relations with England, brusquely noting the “joy with which the Mason and Yid parties in the State Duma view the Anglo-Russian rapprochement and that insolent fervor with which the Jewish press in Russia and in Germany try to create mutual acrimony and distrust.”<sup>48</sup>

As late as 1912, a visit to Russia by an official English delegation provoked the UAM council to telegram the minister of foreign affairs warning that the trip must not harm relations with Germany, which was described as a “powerful bulwark of monarchist principles amid a circle of raging seas of revolution.”<sup>49</sup> This accompanied a telegram sent to the minister of internal affairs warning against “dangerous unions directed against neighboring monarchs who have long been friendly to us.”<sup>50</sup> UAM leaders dispatched these telegrams after hearing a report advocating a Russian alliance with Germany in light of the “terrible results” that a Russian-German war would bring to both Russia and the entire European continent. Warning that such a war would benefit only England, the report declared that the English sought to improve relations with Russia because its leaders feared Germany’s increasing economic and sea power.<sup>51</sup>

Germanophile sentiments were strong enough on the right that, years before World War I, leftwing papers reported rumors that Emperor Wilhelm II secretly financed

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<sup>47</sup> *Priamoi put’*, January 20, 1910.

<sup>48</sup> *Priamoi put’*, April 30, 1910

<sup>49</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 121, d. 117, l. 1.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 1-3.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 1.

the URP.<sup>52</sup> As the prospect of war with Germany grew throughout 1914, some rightist leaders continued to advocate a friendly course toward the Germans. This was particularly true of Markov who, in a Duma speech on May 10, 1914, warned against the possibility of Russia's being drawn into a Balkan war. Denouncing England as an unreliable ally that would drag Russia into war with Germany, Markov urged Russian diplomats to ally instead with the kaiser. Stressing the two nations' common interests and the fact that they had not gone to war in over a century, Markov warned that Russia's present course vis-à-vis Germany would lead to a "terrible war, the results of which no one can calculate."<sup>53</sup>

Markov was not alone in his assessment. Most famously, the rightwing minister of internal affairs, P. N. Durnovo, had related similar sentiments to the tsar in a report issued in February 1914. Advocating friendship with Germany, Durnovo warned that Russia's alliance with England would force her into war with Germany. Russia's industrial and military weakness would make such a war a disastrous undertaking, he argued. Crucially, Durnovo declared that a Russian defeat could lead to economic collapse and internal rebellions, possibly even enabling an emboldened opposition to overthrow the autocracy.<sup>54</sup>

The declaration of war met with near universal approval in Russia. In his study of the end of the Imperial Russian Army, Allan Wildman describes "patriotic enthusiasm on

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<sup>52</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. 5, l. 102.

<sup>53</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, May 10, 1914, col. 419-32. After the February Revolution, while the war with Germany was still raging, Markov told the Provisional Government's investigative commission that his tilt toward Germany stemmed from his knowledge, thanks to his seat on the Duma defense committee, of the inadequacy of Russia's weaponry and its military industry in comparison to Germany. He blamed the situation on resistance by socialists, liberal Kadets, and Octobrists in the Duma to securing the necessary military credits. See GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 317, l. 40.

<sup>54</sup> Frank Golder, *Documents of Russian History* (New York and London, The Century Co., 1927), 3-23.

an unprecedented scale” among educated Russians.<sup>55</sup> Socialists who had dedicated their lives to ridding Russia of the autocracy now united behind the tsar in the war effort.<sup>56</sup> The liberal papers *Rech’*, *Gazeta kopeika*, and *Russkoe slovo* all backed the government and the war.<sup>57</sup> Leaders across the political spectrum called on their followers to suspend their internal struggles for the sake of Russia’s national defense. “Whatever our relationship to the government’s internal policy may be, our first duty is to preserve our country united and undivided,” Kadet leader Pavel Miliukov declared in the Duma. “By postponing our internal quarrels, we won’t give the enemy the slightest occasion to hope for disagreements that will divide us,” he added.<sup>58</sup> Duma members representing Russia’s minorities all spoke in support of the war as the Duma unanimously approved a declaration backing the conflict. The Bolsheviks, the only major party to oppose the war, left the hall rather than vote against the resolution.<sup>59</sup>

The war’s outbreak and the accompanying calls for national unity put rightists like Markov in a difficult position. The war unleashed a wave of nationalism and xenophobia throughout Russia that jibed closely with rightist sentiments. Loath to find themselves on the wrong side of a nationalist surge and stung by accusations that they supported Russia’s enemies, rightists put aside their previous jeremiads and threw their support behind the war. Notwithstanding his earlier warnings of the disastrous

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<sup>55</sup> Wildman notes, however, that peasant recruits demonstrated significantly less enthusiasm than did the educated classes. See Allan Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army, Vol. 1: The Old Army and the Soldiers’ Revolt (March-April 1917)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 75-80.

<sup>56</sup> Socialists in many countries abandoned international solidarity and supported their countries’ war effort, leading to the collapse of the Socialist International in 1916.

<sup>57</sup> Eric Lohr, “The Russian Press and the ‘Internal Peace’ at the Beginning of World War I,” in *A Call to Arms: Propaganda, Public Opinion, and Newspapers in the Great War*, ed. Troy R. E. Padock (Connecticut and London: Praeger, 2004), 101-02.

<sup>58</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, July 26, 1914, col. 24-25.

<sup>59</sup> Golder, *Documents*, 37.

consequences of war with Germany, Markov spoke approvingly in the Duma of the reaction to the declaration of war in his native Kursk where, he declared, he did not hear a single objection to the conflict. According to Markov, “Everyone spoke only of one thing, everyone thought only of one thing: Lord, let us have victory.”<sup>60</sup>

Markov, Dubrovin, and some other rightwing leaders, however, never felt comfortable with Russia’s alliance with Western democracies against autocratic Germany. Their support for the war struck many as insincere, provoking criticism throughout the war from liberals and socialists. Miliukov, for example, accused rightists of being Germanophiles who secretly campaigned for Russia’s withdrawal from the war.<sup>61</sup> Monarchists’ public statements on the war, sometimes peppered with admiring references to the German autocracy, fed public suspicion about the rightists’ loyalties. An October 1915 appeal from the URP council signed by Markov, for example, offered the now customary denunciations of Jews and Germans, but then noted the defeats suffered by France and the disorder and corruption in the supply of the French Army. Attributing these problems to France’s republican system, the appeal contrasted the situation to that in Germany, whose war effort ostensibly benefited from a state structure in which ministers reported directly to the kaiser, not to parliament.<sup>62</sup>

As for Dubrovin, his superficial support for the war and *Russkoe znamia*’s uncharacteristically moderate writing on the subject provoked even rightwing papers to accuse him of Germanophilia. *Novoe vremia* condemned the “Germanophilic nonsense” proffered by *Russkoe znamia*, an organ that, the paper argued, “the right disowned long

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<sup>60</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, July 26, 1914, col. 27.

<sup>61</sup> Golder, *Documents*, 159.

<sup>62</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, ll. 40-41.

ago.” It had similarly harsh words for Markov’s *Zemshchina*, which criticized monarchist attacks on Dubronvin’s Germanophilia as divisive to the rightist cause.<sup>63</sup>

An incident at the end of 1914 captured the rightwing unease with the war, as well as lingering pro-German sentiment within the rightist movement. An issue of the monarchist newspaper *Rossiiskii grazhdanin* (Russian Citizen) carried an article by a member of the Russian Assembly council, P. F. Bulatsel’, which defended Wilhelm II as “representative of the monarchist principle.” The article elicited a defensive, furious denunciation from the UAM council. Proclaiming that the UAM would welcome the destruction of the Hollenzollern and Hapsburg dynasties, the council blasted “Germanophile monarchists” and called on all UAM members who shared Bulatsel’s views to withdraw from the union.<sup>64</sup>

In contrast to the tepid campaigns by both the URP and the Dubrovinites, the UAM wholeheartedly supported the war effort. While the group’s ideological platform differed little from that of the URP, the difference on the war issue stemmed from the attitude of the UAM’s leader, Purishkevich, who viewed the conflict with Germany as a crucial test of Russia’s status as a great power. Although Purishkevich shared rightwing fears that a military defeat could threaten the autocracy, he focused on the war’s positive domestic repercussions, as liberal and leftwing parties put aside their attacks on the tsar and closed ranks in the face of a foreign threat. He even singled out for praise pro-war socialists like G. V. Plekhanov, possibly the first compliment Purishkevich ever paid to a

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<sup>63</sup> *Novoe vremia*, November 23, 1915.

<sup>64</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 244 (1914), d. 244, l. 144.

Marxist.<sup>65</sup> Thrilled with the left's new-found nationalism, Purishkevich led a campaign encouraging monarchist leaders to suspend their battles against the left and focus exclusively on promoting the war effort. Purishkevich aided the cause personally, organizing transportation of food, medicines, and other supplies to the front and the evacuation of the wounded.<sup>66</sup>

Despite rightist leaders' sympathy for the German autocracy, monarchist organizations sought to exploit the widespread anti-German sentiment that exploded across Russia with the outbreak of war. A 1915 police report on the mood of the population related the depths of the people's antipathy toward all things German. According to the police official, Russians and even Poles rejected the possibility of peace without decisive victory, willingly joined the army, and "generally desire[d] that all Germans living in the empire be deprived of all their rights and all their land." People blamed war losses on Germans at all levels of Russian state service and on Germans within Russia generally, failing to distinguish between Russia's ethnic Germans and German citizens. As for the peasants, they believed that the solution to the land question lay in the liquidation of German land holdings.<sup>67</sup> In May 1915, anti-German passions even spilled over into a ferocious pogrom in Moscow in which a mob largely comprising

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<sup>65</sup> Vladimir Purishkevich, *Chego khochet Vilgelm II ot Rossii i Anglii v velikoi bitve narodov* (St. Petersburg: Elektropechatia "Maiak," 1916), 77.

<sup>66</sup> For a description of Purishkevich's frontline supply efforts, see the foreword by former Internal Affairs Minister N. A. Maklakov to the following edition of Purishkevich's diary, which was published after the war: *Ubiistvo Rasputina: Iz dnevnika V. M. Purishkevicha* (Paris: Tipografiia "Franko-russkaia Pechat'" [no date]).

<sup>66</sup> Miliukov, *Political Memoirs*, 309.

<sup>67</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 167, ch. 45, ll. 1-3. Such a simplistic solution to the land question did not escape the attention of the URP. The president of the Kharkovsk URP branch, for example, wrote to Internal Affairs Minister A. N. Khvostov declaring that the only question that the government should consider aside from the war is that of rewarding peasant soldiers with land, especially from Germans. See GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro. op. 124, d. 110, l. 33.

workers sacked German-owned stores and apartments and beat or forcibly drowned several Germans and other foreign subjects. The attacks spread to Russian enterprises before police officers and soldiers restored order. At least eight civilians died in the violence, while rioters killed at least seven soldiers trying to suppress the disturbances.<sup>68</sup>

Their ambivalence over the war notwithstanding, monarchist leaders saw an opportunity to entice support for their xenophobic agenda by leading the charge against ethnic Germans. In the communications of the URP, UAM, and the Dubrovinites, Germans assumed a place aside the Jews as a race of monstrous power pursuing insidious goals both within and outside the Russian empire. The formulation “German-Yid” became a common term of abuse for banks, organizations, or any other institution or group that drew the Black Hundred’s wrath. Upon the war’s outbreak, the UAM rescinded point 17 of its statutes, which had allowed ethnic Germans to join the group.<sup>69</sup> Rightwing papers not associated with the monarchist organizations also began demonizing Germans. According to Eric Lohr, “Even before the outbreak of hostilities, *Novoe vremia* began to develop one of the most important themes in the paper during the war years, its campaign for a domestic ‘war on German and foreign dominance’ to accompany the external struggle.”<sup>70</sup>

This was a natural focus for rightists; uncomfortable with the war, they concentrated their energy on the more familiar issue of Russia’s eternal battle against internal enemies. The new emphasis on anti-German scapegoating, however, would ultimately prove to be horrifically counterproductive for the Black Hundred. Popular

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<sup>68</sup> Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign Against Enemy Aliens During World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 32-35.

<sup>69</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, l. 180.

<sup>70</sup> Lohr, “The Russian Press,” 98.

resentment of German influence in the Imperial court itself, especially as encapsulated in the German-born Tsarina Alexandra, as well as suspicions that rightwing officials sought a separate peace with Germany, played a prominent role in the overthrow of the tsar in the February Revolution.<sup>71</sup> The final political push against the autocracy, initiated by the Kadets, consisted largely of accusations that top governmental officials, especially the German-named prime minister, B. V. Sturmer, had committed treason. Miliukov began the campaign on November 1, 1916, with his famed “stupidity or treason” Duma speech in which the Kadet leader accused myriad high officials of conspiring with the Germans and accepting German bribes.<sup>72</sup>

### **Re-energized**

Although Dubrovin largely ignored the “internal peace” declared by both the left and the right in response to the war, other rightist groups adhered to it through the spring of 1915. The war had begun relatively well for Russia, with dramatic victories against the Austrians in Galicia compensating for heavy losses in Eastern Prussia. While the military outlook seemed hopeful, society remained united behind the government, the tsar, and the war. The Germans, however, undertook a surprise counteroffensive in April 1915, routing the Russians and forcing their retreat from Galicia, Poland, and much of the

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<sup>71</sup> Figes and Kolonitskii describe rumors among Russian soldiers that the tsarina did not speak Russian, that Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna gave military secrets to the Germans, that the Germans had paid Prime Minister Sturmer to starve the Russian population, and that Count Fredericks, Minister of the Imperial Court, had agreed to sell western Russia to Germany. The wife of Octobrist leader A. I. Rodzianko wrote in her diary, “It is now clear that it is not just [Tsarina] Alexandra Fedorovna who is guilty of treason—the tsar is even more criminal.” See Orlando Figes and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1999), 18-19. For more on wartime “spy mania” in Russia, see William C. Fuller, *The Foe Within: Fantasies of Treason and the End of Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Tellingly, Miliukov included *Novoe vremia* among the alleged recipients of German largesse.

Baltics. This left 23 million Russians—13 percent of the empire’s population—in the hands of the Central Powers. The Russian army suffered over 1 million soldiers captured in 1915, leading to demoralization among Russian soldiers, a belief in the invincibility of the Germans, and a tendency to surrender quickly on the battlefield.<sup>73</sup>

As Richard Pipes has observed, “By June 1915, the spirit of common purpose that had united the government and opposition in the early months of the war vanished, yielding to recriminations and hostility even more intense than the mood of 1904-5 when the Russians were reeling from Japanese blows.”<sup>74</sup> The government’s mismanagement of the war effort, which was compromised by a lack of munitions stemming from Russia’s inadequate industrial and transport infrastructure, outraged leftists, liberals, and even many conservatives. Politicians from nearly all the parties in the conservative-dominated Third Duma abandoned the short-lived “internal peace” and united in the Progressive Bloc in hopes of pressuring the government into allowing civil society a greater role in the war effort. In August 1915, the Progressive Bloc publicized its program, which included demands for a greater role for the Duma in appointing ministers; the freeing of political prisoners; an end to discriminatory laws against Jews; autonomy for Poland; and concessions to independence-minded Finns and Ukrainians.<sup>75</sup>

The Progressive Bloc’s program could not have been better calculated to offend the extreme right, which became almost the sole faction to remain outside the coalition. Markov, Zamyslovskii, and others resumed their attacks on the left with a vengeance. Dubrovin led the way, threatening Progressive Bloc adherents at the end of 1915 with a

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<sup>73</sup> Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 219.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

“Bartholomew’s Night.”<sup>76</sup> The right interpreted the Progressive Bloc’s demands for the government to surrender some of its prerogatives to the Duma and to society as a direct attack on the autocracy. Naturally, the insistence on a more lenient policy toward Russia’s minorities, especially Jews, further outraged the monarchists.

The new, combative political environment energized the Black Hundred. Its leaders, demoralized for a year by their need to support a war they found undesirable, felt reinvigorated by the platform of what they quickly dubbed the “yellow bloc.” Although their campaign against ethnic Germans kept the right in the familiar realm of ethnic scapegoating, with the formation of the Progressive Bloc monarchists resumed excoriating the same people and policies that they had based their entire movement on attacking since its inception in 1905.

At the end of August 1915 rightists convened a series of major monarchist congresses, the first in over two years. These meetings aimed to hammer out a united front against the Progressive Bloc, end the schisms that plagued rightist organizations, and consolidate the movement by creating centralized, pan-monarchist committees. The Saratov UAM branch, the Odessa URL branch, and the Astrakhan branch of the *Nardonaia monarkhicheskaia paritiia* (National Monarchist Party) organized the first congress in Saratov on August 27-29.<sup>77</sup> This convocation established the monarchists’ new program, which largely replicated their prewar agenda. In official resolutions, delegates singled out the Jews en-masse for allegedly engaging in rumor-mongering,

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<sup>76</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 369-73. This referred to the wave of popular mass violence, resulting in thousands of deaths, which Catholics unleashed on Huguenots in France in 1572. The killings began on a day dedicated to the feast of Bartholomew the Apostle.

<sup>77</sup> Astrakhan’s National Monarchist Party president, N. N. Tikhanovich-Savinskii, emerged as a key figure within the monarchist movement at this time. He was the leading organizer of the Saratov congress as well as the Nizhnii Novogorod congress held three months later, even though he did not attend the second congress due to illness.

espionage, and treason. They recommended “isolating” Jews from the general population and placing them under strict surveillance. The question of Jewish refugees had become an urgent one; army commanders, viewing Jews as likely to spy for the Germans, had forcibly evacuated hundreds of thousands of Jews from the western provinces closest to the frontlines.<sup>78</sup> While monarchists naturally shared the perception of Jews as unreliable in wartime, they worried that the Jews’ eastward transfer represented the de facto abolition of the Pale of the Settlement. Afraid that Jews’ presence would bring harm to the “weak Russian population” of the internal provinces, the congress recommended sending Jewish refugees to outlying Caucasian cities like Baku and Tbilisi, “where the population will not yield to their domination so easily.”<sup>79</sup>

The right resumed its attacks on the Duma, calling for the body’s dissolution in light of Progressive Bloc deputies’ oppositionist speeches. Delegates denounced Miliukov’s soliloquies as an “invitation to a revolt of workers and the army.” Monarchists also resurrected their complaints of government “inactivity” in the face of renewed revolutionary threats, even while denouncing the opposition’s censure of the government. “Criticizing the activities of the government,” the monarchists declared, “must be done calmly and convincingly” —an ironic admonition, considering the history

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<sup>78</sup> The expulsions in mid-1915 resulted in a series of large-scale pogroms, often instigated by Russian and Cossack troops. Under pressure from government ministers and Russia’s allies, the military eventually ended the expulsion policy, but replaced it with one of seizing Jewish hostages to ensure the loyalty of Jewish communities. Cossack officers seem to have used both policies as an opportunity to extort money from Jews. See Eric Lohr, “The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages, and Violence During World War I,” *Russian Review*, July 2001, 404-19. For more on anti-Jewish violence during World War I, see O. V. Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei mezhdru krasnymi i belymi (1917-1920)* (Moscow: ROSSPION: 2006).

<sup>79</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro, op. 1915, d. 110, l. 85.

of acerbic attacks on the government by the rightwing press. The congress also called on the government to concentrate solely on winning the war, not on internal reforms.<sup>80</sup>

Despite the denunciations of the government's apathy in fighting the revolution, the congress sought to bolster official support for the Black Hundred by invoking the movement's service during the Revolution of 1905. It warned the government that if the left were to foment a rebellion, the government should not hinder rightists' counterrevolutionary actions as it ostensibly had in 1905, but instead should provide them with weapons permits and arms. This was also the theme of the congress's appeal to governors, city leaders, and other high-ranking local officials, who were asked to allow armed monarchists, in the event of a leftist revolt, to occupy city dumas, zemstvo buildings, and other institutions used by the revolutionaries in 1905, as well as to arrest revolutionary leaders. The congress further called for the appointment of a government leader "with unlimited power" in order to crush any revolutionary adventures. Underlining their belief in the imminent danger of revolution, the congress's attendees drafted a telegram to the tsar (who had left the capital for Mogilev a week prior to assume personal command of the troops) warning the sovereign that "if you don't desire the death of Russia, buttress your autocracy, remembering that no force can shake the tsarist throne if the tsar himself doesn't allow it."<sup>81</sup>

Convening about three months later in the capital (renamed Petrograd during the war), the second monarchist congress, organized by rightwing members of the Duma and the State Council, largely reiterated the positions established at the Saratov congress.

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<sup>80</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, ll. 171-72, and 4<sup>th</sup> delopro, op. 1915, d. 110, l. 85.

<sup>81</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, ll. 171-72; 4<sup>th</sup> delopro, op. 1915, d. 110, l. 85, and f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, l. 226.

Declaring that “Judaism is leading the war against Russia in league with Germany,” delegates took a hard line against Jews, Germans, foreigners in general, and Ukrainian and Finnish separatists, who had become increasingly active during the war. The congress did not spare the government from criticism, demanding the removal of any ministers who sympathized with or even failed to oppose the Progressive Bloc, and blasting the minister of education for allowing Jews to exceed their quotas in universities.<sup>82</sup>

The congress also called for a range of new restrictions against Russia’s ethnic Germans, including the revocation of citizenship of Germans who became Russian citizens after 1870; abolishing the German colonies within Russia; withdrawing state support from “German-Yid banks”; sequestering all money and enterprises belonging to people fighting against Russia; revoking the shares in banks belonging to German citizens; and banning foreign citizens from enterprises involved in state defense. The Black Hundred added an unintended element of irony to its resolutions by warning its adherents to avoid groundless accusations against citizens with German or foreign names. Additionally, the congress demanded various restrictions on banks, whose speculative activities it faulted for causing wartime inflation. Delegates criticized the national zemstvo and city unions and the war-industry committees, which had sprung up as a means for society to assist the war effort, for assuming government prerogatives. Finally, delegates denounced the “criminal declarations” of the “Jewish progressive press” for opposing the tsar’s assumption of personal command of the army.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, ll. 175-78, and f. 102, op. 1916, d. 358, l. 7, pg. 31.

<sup>83</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, ll. 175-78, and f. 102, op. 1916, d. 358, l. 7, pg. 31.

S. V. Levashev, president of the far-right Duma faction, gave a speech at the Petrograd congress that crystallized the monarchists' conspiratorial view of Russia's wartime condition. Leftist parties had previously pointed to wartime as the most conducive time to overthrow the government, Levashev noted. But the popularity of the war initially forced leftist parties to adopt a "mask of patriotism" and call for an end to domestic political discord. Once the war ran into difficulties, however, the left allegedly began sabotaging the war effort by exaggerating Russia's defeats, denying military funding in the Duma, using the defeats as an excuse to expand the Duma's powers, and generally working for the benefit of Germany in order to increase internal strife. All this stemmed from a plot by Moscow Kadet financiers who, Levashev claimed, were mostly Jewish bankers who had grown rich thanks to Witte's economic policies.<sup>84</sup>

The congress attempted to unify the monarchist movement by electing a nineteen-member council to help coordinate the right's activities across its various organizations, in the Duma, and in the State Council. Former Justice Minister Shcheglovitov, who had helped to orchestrate the Beilis trial, was elected president, while Levashev and A. A. Rimskii-Korsakov, a member of the State Council and the URP council, were named vice presidents. Other members included Dubrovin, Markov, Zamyslovskii, former Interior Minister N. A. Maklakov, and a number of URP branch presidents.<sup>85</sup>

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In hindsight, the attack on the critics of the tsar's decision to direct the war effort appears misguided, as such critics included nearly all government ministers as well as close relatives of Nicholas II such as the Dowager Empress. These persons, all supporters of the tsar, feared that his direct leadership of the war would make him vulnerable to popular anger if Russia's wartime performance failed to improve under his command. In the end, their concerns proved prescient. See Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, 225.

<sup>84</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 358, l. 27, pg. 9-18. Levashev took a typical monarchist swipe at Russia's democratic wartime allies when he claimed that the Progressive Bloc was preparing Russia to meet the same depressing fate at the hands of the Germans as "our wonderful ally France."

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 26-27.

The delegates of the Saratov congress organized the third congress, which convened in Nizhnii Novgorod on November 26-29, just three days after the conclusion of the Petrograd congress. This meeting failed to break much new ground, largely reiterating the program outlined in the previous congresses while throwing in a few new demands. Despite some ritual declarations of support for the war, the congress's resolutions made clear that Russia faced its most dire threat not from its wartime opponent, but from internal enemies determined to destroy Russia. Denouncing the Progressive Bloc as a tool of an "international plot" to change Russia's state structure, the congress called for the criminal prosecution of all people striving to realize the bloc's agenda. Delegates further recommended a ban on Ukrainian literature, bookstores, and refugee committees, which allegedly aided the separatist movement by fueling belief in a fictitious Ukrainian nationality.<sup>86</sup> Numerous resolutions expressed the usual condemnation of Jews and Germans. The anti-German campaign even metastasized into a general denunciation of Protestants, including a call for the firing of all Protestants from state service.<sup>87</sup>

The congress also sought increased government intervention in the economy in order to fight inflation, shortages, and other economic ills associated with the war. Suspicious of banks, international finance, and capitalism generally, delegates called for the auditing of banks and the investigation of shareholders of other enterprises; establishing a uniform tax on wholesalers and traders of essential consumer goods;

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<sup>86</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 279-82.

<sup>87</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 1915, d. 110, l. 185.

creating a government monopoly on kerosene, tea, sugar, tobacco, and liquor; and securing a government monopoly on bread, which Jews allegedly bought up for export.<sup>88</sup>

Although organizers intended the congresses to display unity against the Progressive Bloc, the gatherings only highlighted the insurmountable fractures within the monarchist movement. The new national council elected in Petrograd proved ineffective, unable to overcome the bad blood dating back to the original schism between Purishkevich and Dubrovin. Additionally, the war had opened up new ideological cleavages that further divided the movement. Like Purishkevich, *Novoe vremia* temporarily reconciled with the prowar majority of liberals and socialists at the expense of the Dubrovinite and Markov factions on the right. Defending the valuable work of the city and zemstvo unions in assisting the sick and wounded, *Novoe vremia* ridiculed the Petrograd monarchist congress and Levashev's speech in particular for presenting domestic revolutionaries as a greater threat to Russia than the Germans. This view, the paper argued, was "another sad sign of some kind of lunacy characteristic of extreme parties."<sup>89</sup>

The monarchists remained hopelessly divided. Despite the fear of many rightists—well-founded, as it turned out—that Russia was moving into a revolutionary situation, the movement could not unite even when the autocracy itself came under direct attack.

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<sup>88</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 1915, d. 110, l. 183.

<sup>89</sup> *Novoe vremia*, November 24, 1915.

## Divided to the End

The alienation of Purishkevich's UAM from the wider movement proved particularly injurious to efforts at rightist unity. A convinced supporter of the war, Purishkevich refused to join the URP, the Dubrovinites, Zamyslovskii, and most other monarchist leaders in renouncing the "internal peace" after the formation of the Progressive Bloc.<sup>90</sup> In fact, owing to Purishkevich's insistence on avoiding partisan sniping, the UAM boycotted both the Petrograd and Nizhnii Novgorod congresses, which Purishkevich criticized as distractions from the war effort.<sup>91</sup> Purishkevich's position, although firmly upheld among the UAM leadership, stirred resentment among many monarchists; fifty-three rightwing organizations reportedly called for his resignation from the UAM.<sup>92</sup>

The congresses also revealed another fracture sparked by Moscow monarchist leader V. G. Orlov, a former railroad worker. Moscow had been the site of damaging infighting among the Black Hundred leadership. Divided from the beginning among rival monarchist organizations, the Moscow rightists split in 1912 during a power struggle for control over the most influential Moscow rightist group, the Russian Monarchist Union, which Vostorgov led after the death of the group's founder, Gringmut, in 1907.<sup>93</sup> Orlov, apparently angered by Vostorgov's refusal to allow him to run as a candidate for the Fourth Duma, first pushed Vostorgov out of the presidency, which went to Vostorgov's ally, S. I. Tomilin. Orlov then created a breakaway council that attempted to expel both

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<sup>90</sup> GARF, f. 117, op. 1, d. 282, l. 1.

<sup>91</sup> *Golos Rusi*, December 26, 1915, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro. op. 124, d. 110, l. 101, and *Novoe vremia*, December 2, 1915.

<sup>92</sup> *Russkiiia vedomosti*, March 6, 1916, in GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, l. 73.

<sup>93</sup> This organization was originally called the Russian Monarchist Party, changing its name in January 1911 to the Russian Monarchist Union.

Tomilin and Vostorgov, with Orlov and Vostorgov accusing each other of corruption.

Orlov eventually joined forces with Purishkevich and opened several UAM branches in Moscow.<sup>94</sup>

In 1915, however, Orlov took a highly unusual turn for a monarchist by publicly rejecting anti-Semitism. He justified this demarche as necessary to unite all of Russia's supporters during wartime. The move, however, was too much even for Purishkevich, who closed down all the UAM branches established by Orlov and expelled Orlov from the organization. In June 1915 Orlov created a new, Moscow-based monarchist organization, *Otechestvennyi patrioticheskyi soiuz* (Fatherland Patriotic Union, or FPU), which mostly comprised former UAM and URP branches. Rumors quickly circulated among rightists that Orlov allowed Jews to join the organization. Orlov denied the charge, whose veracity remains uncertain, but it was readily believed by monarchists already outraged by Orlov's heresy on the Jewish question.<sup>95</sup>

*Russkoe znamia* blasted the FPU soon after its founding for being sympathetic to Jews, and *Zemshchina* vehemently denounced the group: "V. Orlov has outdone all the Miliukovs, Efremovs, Kerenskys, and Ukhenkels, and under the banner of monarchism comes to the defense of the Yids," the paper thundered.<sup>96</sup> Henceforth, Orlov's presence

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<sup>94</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 243 (1913), d. 244, ll. 189-90, 217-28. One of Orlov's opponents within the Moscow monarchist camp reported to police that the real reason behind Orlov's determination to gain control of the Russian Monarchist Union was that the president received 60,000 rubles annually "from St. Petersburg." See GARF, f. 102, op. 1908, d. 458, ll. 286-87.

<sup>95</sup> Orlov claimed the FPU's statutes banned Jews, while other monarchists insisted the statutes allowed for their entry. Although it became conventional wisdom among monarchists that Jews had joined the FPU, it remains unclear whether any actually did. One of the more common accusations against Orlov was that he accepted a 300 ruble bribe to make a Jewish convert to Christianity an honorary member of a Moscow UAM branch. See GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, ll. 97, 113, and *Russkaia volia*, January 7, 1917, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 285. See also Orlov's denial to Police Department Director S. P. Beletskii that he ever allowed Jews into the FPU: GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 307-09.

<sup>96</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, September 11, 1915, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro. op. 124, d. 110, l. 25, and

became a lightning rod of criticism at every monarchist event he attended. The UAM cited his invitation to the Petrograd congress as another reason for its boycott of the conference,<sup>97</sup> while the Nizhnii Novgorod congress split between Orlov's supporters and opponents. His rivals, denouncing his Jewish policy on the gathering's first day, eventually forced him out of the congress.<sup>98</sup>

Thus, as Russia hurtled toward the February Revolution, the monarchists proved unable to render any kind of meaningful support to the tsar. Paralyzed by divisions among the movement's leaders, suspected of secretly opposing the war, and prone to corruption, the right could not regain the popular level of support it had enjoyed in many provinces during the 1905-07 period. As the war ground on and Russia's internal economic situation deteriorated, the right failed to offer any meaningful program to address Russia's many pressing problems. The monarchists' panacea for Russia's problems—a stronger autocracy—drew few supporters as the tsar became ever more discredited by his poor leadership of the war effort.

Furthermore, the sovereign's absence from the capital left a power vacuum filled by his wife, whose disastrous reliance on her debauched mystic advisor, Rasputin, led to a constant reshuffling of ministers. This "ministerial leapfrog," as Purishkevich famously called it, left the government virtually leaderless and further stoked popular resentment of the Imperial family. With the autocracy's many inadequacies bared in such a public way,

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*Zemshchina*, October 6, 1916, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro. op. 124, d. 110, l. 253.

<sup>97</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro. op. 124, d. 110, ll. 178-79.

<sup>98</sup> *Golos*, December 1, 1915, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro. op. 124, d. 110, l. 76. The Nizhnii Novgorod delegates' criticisms of Orlov mostly related to a letter he had sent to Prime Minister I. L. Goremykin in which he praised Jews for behaving loyally in Galicia; noted that it would be useful at the present time to have 7 million Jews as "friends" of Russia; commented approvingly that Jews did not have separatist ambitions; and suggested that easing Jews' conditions could create for Russia "millions of rich, energetic, and competent citizens."

the monarchists' strategy—a concerted attack on the Duma, zemstva, war-industry committees, and virtually any other institution that allowed society a role in the war effort—failed to resonate with an increasingly rebellious public. More government monopolies, punitive measures against banks, and ethnic scapegoating held out a certain visceral appeal, but Russians had already cast a negative verdict on the monarchist movement.

Police reports on local monarchist branches provide a clear picture of the movement's impotence during World War I. In Rostov-on-the-Don, the police informed that the URP, UAM, and Club of Nationalists branches had too few members to be regarded as significant political organizations. Their leaders had been compromised, and the URP vice president and another prominent member had been forced to resign due to embezzlement. According to the report, the remaining members, noted for their "darkness" and "lack of development," were incapable of organizing or engaging in real political action. Despite the right's campaign against inflation and price gouging, the report noted that the population resented a rich URP member and other nationalists whose commercial speculation increased flour prices.<sup>99</sup>

Another URP branch, in Armavirsk, comprised a small number of illiterate members who had accomplished nothing during the branch's entire existence. Despite members' lack of grammatical skills, the police reported in March 1916 that the group's main activities consisted of participating in letter writing campaigns to government ministers or to rightwing Duma members when ordered to do so by the URP leadership in Petrograd. These aimed to convey to the recipients of these letters, which typically

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<sup>99</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, l. 4.

blamed leftwing Duma members for the army's lack of military supplies or denounced the opposition's calls for a ministry responsible to the Duma, the impression that people all across Russia were sending letters.<sup>100</sup>

In August 1916, a police official in Mogilev Province reported that "rightwing organizations, in fact, do not exist in the province at the present time." Some branches had closed several years prior, while others became inactive after a majority of their members entered the army.<sup>101</sup> A police dispatch from the same province on the Dubrovinites' Khotimsk branch found that it did not do much except publish anti-Semitic proclamations and proved ineffective in its goal of fighting revolutionaries.<sup>102</sup>

According to Kir'ianov, total membership in rightist organizations plunged from around 400,000 in 1908 to 45,000 in 1916.<sup>103</sup> Attempts throughout 1916 and early 1917 to reunite the fractured monarchist movement proved unsuccessful. The schism between the FPU and the other monarchist groups over Orlov's Jewish policies provoked both camps to hold separate national meetings in October 1916. *Zemshchina*, a vitriolic critic of Orlov, published a declaration from the anti-Orlov camp proclaiming that its members would not attend Orlov's meeting, and that the FPU should not be considered a rightist organization if it supported equal rights for Jews.<sup>104</sup> Orlov responded by having the FPU complain to the minister of internal affairs that *Zemshchina* received state subsidies to develop patriotic activities, but instead caused divisions by attacking Orlov.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 108-09.

<sup>101</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 167, ch. 45, ll. 26-27.

<sup>102</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 2, ll. 147-49.

<sup>103</sup> Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii*, 82.

<sup>104</sup> *Ranee utro*, date unknown, GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 252; *Kolokol*, October 22, 1916, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 259.

<sup>105</sup> *Ranee utro*, October 30, 1916, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 262.

Aside from Orlov, the URP anathematized other monarchists as well. Hostility toward Purishkevich increased throughout 1916 as he insisted on unity with the left even as the Progressive Bloc intensified its campaign against the government and the autocracy. The situation came to a head on November 19, when Purishkevich gave a blistering Duma speech blasting the government's weakness, disunity, reliance on censorship, and ostensible lack of patriotism. In dramatic opposition to the URP's campaign to dissolve the Duma, Purishkevich praised the institution's honesty and its accurate expression of Russian public sentiment. Although he pledged loyalty to the tsar, Purishkevich implicitly criticized the sovereign by lamenting his ignorance of Russia's true state of affairs, calling for the government's ministers to open the tsar's eyes to reality.<sup>106</sup>

The shocking speech reflected Purishkevich's single-minded focus on the war. With his experience at the front, Purishkevich knew first-hand the inadequacies of the government's war effort and its lack of leadership from the tsar. He also saw the baleful influence exerted on the homefront by Rasputin, who Purishkevich had long denounced, including during his November 19 Duma speech. About a month after his address, in fact, Purishkevich participated in the assassination of Rasputin at the palace of the Russian aristocratic monarchist Feliks Iusupov. Purishkevich hoped the assassination of the Imperial family's personal advisor would, in effect, save the monarchy from itself. Like many rightists, Purishkevich felt Rasputin discredited the autocracy, thereby adding to revolutionary sentiment.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskii Otchet*, Nov 19, 1916, col. 260-88.

<sup>107</sup> For Purishkevich's account of the assassination, see his *Ubiistvo Rasputina*. For Iusopov's version, see his *Konets Rasputina: Vospominaniia* (Paris, 1927).

Markov's denunciation of Purishkevich's November 19 speech was so acerbic that it provoked Purishkevich's resignation from the Duma's rightwing faction. In February 1917, just before the revolution, the URP council distributed a circular to its branches and to other monarchist groups announcing plans for another monarchist congress to convene in Petrograd. In addition to the customary condemnations of revolutionary organizations, zemstvo and city unions, war-industry committees, and the Duma, the communication also attacked the conservative State Council and even the rightist United Nobility—both of which had begun criticizing the government's war leadership—for allegedly engaging in revolutionary activity. The circular also accused Purishkevich of betraying his followers and repeating the “vile slander invented by Yid-Masons” in order to gain popularity and solicit the approval of the Jewish press and revolutionary circles.<sup>108</sup> In response, Purishkevich and other UAM leaders asserted that, aside from the authors of the URP circular, virtually all Russians, even members of the extreme left parties, were united in the quest for wartime victory. “The [UAM] leadership does not claim for itself or for other rightist monarchist organizations a monopoly on patriotism,” the UAM proclaimed. Denouncing any divisive political congresses as “completely intolerable” during wartime, the group further declared that the UAM would boycott the congress planned by the URP.<sup>109</sup>

The circular demonstrates just how isolated the URP had become by the time of the February Revolution. The organization viewed nearly every issue through the prism of anti-Semitism, refused to recognize the shortcomings of the autocracy or any useful role that society could fill in wartime, and rejected any criticism of the government other

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<sup>108</sup> *Vechnee vremia*, February 9, 1917, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 306.

<sup>109</sup> *Novoe vremia*, February 9, 1917, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 305.

than its own. Consequently, as it became clear that the autocracy had failed to meet the challenges of a major European war, the URP broke its remaining ties not only to society, but also to those monarchists who acknowledged the state's shortcomings. The organization thus became ostracized from the State Council and the United Nobility, two bastions of the far right. The URP proved unwilling to countenance any ideological flexibility, even for the sake of the war effort; its leaders condemned fellow monarchists like Orlov and Purishkevich, who prioritized the war over ideological purity, as enemies and traitors.

By the time the revolution began with demonstrations in the capital on February 23, 1917, the autocracy had become so discredited that even its prominent supporters among the military leadership supported the tsar's removal. The revolution did not take the URP by surprise. It had continually warned of imminent revolutionary threats since its founding in 1905, and its jeremiads became more insistent and specific toward the end of 1915. A police report on the Astrakhan URP branch in October 1915 revealed that members expected the outbreak of a revolutionary movement similar to the 1904-05 period.<sup>110</sup> Astrakhan URP President Tikhanovich-Savinskii, the organizer of the 1915 monarchist congresses in Saratov and Nizhnii Novogorod, was particularly prescient. In 1916 he warned that "the decisive onslaught against the central government is prepared, pray that the Sovereign does not lay down the autocracy, he cannot give Russia away to madmen."<sup>111</sup> In January 1917, Tikhanovich-Savinskii traveled to Petrograd and warned

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<sup>110</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1915, d. 244, t. 1, l. 115.

<sup>111</sup> GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 128.

the ministers of internal affairs and justice of an imminent revolution.<sup>112</sup> His warning came too late.

### **The Monarchists in Defeat**

URP leaders did not fare well after the February Revolution toppled the tsar, as the Provisional Government quickly outlawed monarchist organizations. Without the autocracy to protect them, revolutionary mobs threatened the physical safety of Black Hundred adherents. In such circumstances, few monarchists continued their political activities. In fact, many of them, in hopes of securing their personal safety and eliciting leniency from the new authorities, recognized the Provisional Government. These included Tikhomirov, Purishkevich, Vostorgov, Zamyslovskii, Orlov, and A. I. Konovnitsyn. Such gestures notwithstanding, the Provisional Government arrested numerous prominent monarchist leaders, most within a few weeks of the revolution, such as Dubrovin, Markov, Poluboiarinova, Orlov, Tikhanovich-Savinskii, A. I. Konovnitsyn, Stepanova-Dezobri, A.V. Polovnev and Iuskevich-Kraskovskii (the latter two having participated in the assassination of Duma member Gertsenshtein in 1906).<sup>113</sup>

Anxious to uncover the misdeeds of the tsarist government, including its collusion with the Black Hundred, the Provisional Government established a special investigative committee that interviewed many monarchist leaders and government officials. Despite this testimony and the recovery of the Dubrovinites' archive at Dubrovin's St. Petersburg

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<sup>112</sup> *Den*, January 23, 1917, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 295.

<sup>113</sup> V. G. Makarov and A. V. Repnikov, "Russkie monarkhisty posle Oktiabria 1917: Novye dokumenty," in *F. I. Tiutchev (1803-1873) i problemy rossiiskogo konservatizma* (Vol. 1) (Iuzhnorossiiskoe obozrenie TSCRIiP RGU i ISPI PAN: Rostov-na-Dony, 2004), 47-65, and P. Sh. Chkhartishvili, "Chernosotensy v 1917 gody," *Voprosy istorii* 8 (1997), 133-43.

apartment (the URP archive was destroyed when a mob looted the group's headquarters), the new authorities showed a curious reluctance to prosecute the rightists. They released all the aforementioned prisoners with the possible exception of Stepanova-Dezobri, whose fate is unknown. The Provisional Government considered bringing charges against Dubrovin, but eventually declared him innocent of any crime. In what seems to be an attempt at justifying its release of these high-profile figures, the Provisional Government cited illness as the reason for letting go Dubrovin, Iuskevich-Kraskovskii, and Poluboiarinova. The fate of many monarchist leaders after the October Revolution is unclear, although documents indicate that the Bolsheviks executed Dubrovin, Orlov, Tikhanovich-Savinskii, Polovnev, and Vostorgov. The Bolsheviks likely killed many more without any official announcement.<sup>114</sup>

Nevertheless, a handful of monarchists remained politically active after the revolution. Purishkevich by far retained the highest profile among former Black Hundred leaders. He had earned some sympathy among center and even leftwing parties for his insistence on national unity during the war and his highly publicized break with Markov.<sup>115</sup> Recognizing the Provisional Government, Purishkevich continued his supply efforts at the front and started a newspaper in Petrograd, *Narodnyi tribun* (People's Tribune), which agitated against the Germans, the Bolsheviks, and the newly created Petrograd Soviet. He made similar arguments during meetings of the Fourth Duma's

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> The Kadet paper *Rech'* had even offered some rare praise for Purishkevich after the UAM renounced the monarchists' monopoly on patriotism. See *Rech'* February 10, 1917, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 307.

provisional committee, which was a largely powerless venue for speeches by former members of the Fourth Duma, mostly Kadets and Octobrists.<sup>116</sup>

Purishkevich turned increasingly hostile toward the Provisional Government as law and order in Russia disintegrated throughout 1917, eventually re-proclaiming himself a monarchist and advocating a military dictatorship. The Provisional Government arrested him in September for allegedly participating in General L. G. Kornilov's coup attempt, but quickly released him for lack of evidence. Shortly after the Bolsheviks seized power in October, Purishkevich wrote a letter to General A. M. Kaledin offering to lead an uprising in Petrograd if Kaledin were to order his troops to the capital to fight the Bolsheviks. Before sending the letter, however, the Bolsheviks arrested Purishkevich. Tried in December along with thirteen alleged co-conspirators, he received a four-year jail sentence, but the Petrograd Soviet amnestied him in May 1918. As the civil war between the Bolsheviks and the disparate white armies commenced, Purishkevich fled south to join Anton Denikin's Volunteer Army. He started a new political party, *Narodno-gosudarstvennaia partiia* (People's–State Party), which published its program alongside an essay in which Purishkevich blamed foreigners, socialists, and Jews for Russia's misfortunes. He also advocated a return to the autocracy, though without specifying who the tsar should be. (The Bolsheviks killed Nicholas II in July 1918.) Purishkevich died in 1920 from typhus.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Jacob Langer, "Fighting the Future: The Doomed Antirevolutionary Crusade of Vladimir Purishkevich." Master's thesis, Duke University, 2003.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. Budnitskii notes that the leftwing press reported on the presence of monarchists like Purishkevich among the White armies in order to discredit them. Purishkevich's anti-Semitic harangues during the Civil War once provoked the general-governor of Rostov-on-the-Don to expel him from the city. See Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 206, 248.

Shul'gin, the *Kievlianin* editor who denounced the Beilis trial, also had a notable postrevolutionary career. Upon the outbreak of the February Revolution, the Fourth Duma's Provisional Committee sent Shul'gin and the Octobrist A. I. Guchkov to the tsar to negotiate his abdication.<sup>118</sup> After returning to Kiev, local authorities arrested Shul'gin in August 1917 but quickly released him. Nominated by a local monarchist group for the Constituent Assembly, he presided over the congress of Russian electors to the assembly in Kiev Province. Within weeks of the October Revolution, Shul'gin met with General M. V. Alekseev and assisted in forming the Volunteer Army. The Bolsheviks arrested him in January 1918 after they seized Kiev, but they also freed him. Shul'gin later speculated that a Bolshevik whom Shul'gin had helped out of Siberian exile during the tsarist period may have secured his release.<sup>119</sup>

During the Civil War, he continued to edit *Kievlianin* and various other papers that supported the White armies. Losing three sons and his wife to the conflict, he went into exile after the Bolshevik victory. He joined up with General Wrangel's network of anti-Soviet émigrés, who sent him on a secret trip to the Soviet Union in 1925 to make contact with anti-Soviet elements. After his trip he pronounced Lenin a hero for seemingly abandoning socialism in favor of the partially capitalist NEP policy. Later it was revealed that the Soviet secret police had authorized and monitored his trip, leading some anti-Soviet émigrés to suspect Shul'gin's loyalty.<sup>120</sup> After moving to Yugoslavia, he wrote his memoirs and several other books, gave lectures, and eventually ended his

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<sup>118</sup> The pair intended to convince the tsar to abdicate in favor of his thirteen-year-old son, Alexis, but instead he chose as his successor his brother Michael, who declined the honor. See Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, 313-20.

<sup>119</sup> Makarov and Repnikov, "Russkie monarchisty," 57.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-62.

political activities. He was arrested after the Red Army entered Yugoslavia at the end of World War II and transferred to the USSR, where he received a twenty-five year jail sentence. After his early release in 1956, either out of pressure from the government or a genuine change of heart, he wrote a long open letter to Russian émigrés in 1961 in support of the Communist authorities. They responded by making him an official guest at the Communist Party's Twenty-second Congress. Shul'gin died in 1976 at the ripe old age of ninety-nine.<sup>121</sup>

A final pair of monarchists who had consequential post-revolutionary careers was Markov and the little-known Fedor Vinberg. A member of the Imperial court, army colonel, and vehement anti-Semite, Vinberg had been a UAM member, later joining the *Filaretovskoe obshchestvo* (the Filarets Society), an organization Purishkevich created in 1914 to develop a nationalist public education program. He became one of Purishkevich's close collaborators, standing trial alongside the UAM founder in December 1917 and earning a sentence of three years.<sup>122</sup> When the Bolsheviks released him early in 1918, Vinberg went to Kiev, then under German occupation. A Germanophile who hoped for a German war victory that would overthrow the Bolsheviks, he followed the retreating German army to Berlin accompanied by two close collaborators, P. N. Shabel'skii-Bork and Sergei Taboritskii.

Vinberg became a prolific writer, starting up the monarchist paper *Prizyv* (The Call) in Berlin and then *Luch sveta* (Ray of Light) in Munich, as well as penning a

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> While in jail, Vinberg struck up an unlikely friendship with a Jewish Zionist whom Vinberg found to be "direct," "resolute," and smart. The pair agreed that if they'd ever meet outside of jail during a time of political struggle, they'd do each other the honor of shooting one another. F. Vinberg, *V Plenu u "Obez'ian"* (*Zapiski "kontr-revoliutsionera"*) Kiev: Tipografiia tubernskogo pravleniia, 1918, 15.

monograph entitled *Krestnyi put'* (The Way of the Cross). In his writings, Vinberg advocated an alliance between Russian and German rightists aimed at restoring the monarchy in both countries. Moreover, he put forward what had quickly become the monarchists' dominant interpretation of the Bolshevik revolution: that it stemmed from a Jewish conspiracy. This explanation flowed naturally from the Black Hundred worldview, which had interpreted great historical upheavals stretching back to the French Revolution as Jewish conspiracies, and had always equated Russian revolutionaries with Russian Jewry.<sup>123</sup>

Vinberg's activities were particularly significant because of the milieu in which he moved in Germany. He joined a circle of Russian monarchist émigrés and rightwing Germans seeking to overthrow the Soviet and Weimar governments. In Munich, Vinberg became the chief ideologue of *Aufbau* (Reconstruction), a German-Russian rightist organization led by the Baltic German Max von Scheubner-Richter. *Aufbau* developed strong links with the German Workers Party, the forerunner of the Nazi Party, and through these auspices Vinberg held long discussions with the young Adolf Hitler. According to Michael Kellogg, Vinberg and his rightwing Russian associates had a decisive effect on Hitler's ideology. The future Führer wholeheartedly embraced their

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<sup>123</sup> After the October Revolution, Purishkevich also equated Bolshevik power with a Jewish conspiracy. See his poem "Trotsky Peace" written from his jail cell after the Bolsheviks signed the Brest Litovsk treaty, I. S. Rozentel', ed. "'27-go fevralia my mogli stat' grazhdanami': Tiuremnye zapisi V. M. Purishkevicha. Dekabr' 1917 — mart 1918 g.'" *Istoricheskii Arkhiv* 5/6, 1996, 140. Also see his essay introducing the *Narodno-gosudarstvennaia partiia* program, *Narodno-Gosudarstvennaia partiia, Programma i ustav* (Odessa: 1919), 3, and his introduction to a 1919 essay by his brother Mikhail, *Respublika ili monarkhiia* (Rostov na Donu: Tipographiia F. A. Polubatko, 1919), 5-6.

interpretation of Bolshevism as a Jewish conspiracy, a view that became part of the core Nazi creed.<sup>124</sup>

Vinberg's collaborator, Shabel'skii-Bork, took with him from Russia a copy of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* from which the first German translations were made. The document, printed in the third issue of Vinberg's *Luch sveta*, profoundly influenced Hitler by its supposed revelation of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. Hitler began incorporating its themes into his speeches, alongside references to the Jewish origins of Bolshevism that he had gained from Vinberg. During this period, Hitler demonstrated distinct pro-Russian sympathies, viewing Russians as natural rightists and monarchists who, like the Germans, had been deceived and exploited by the Jews. While retaining these anti-Semitic tropes for the rest of his life, Hitler later abandoned his Russophilic outlook for a racialist paradigm that deemed Russians to be a racially inferior people occupying land destined to be German living space.<sup>125</sup>

While in Germany, Russian monarchist émigrés tried to reprise their old organizational tactics—and met with the same result. They loosely divided into two camps: one comprising the *Aufbau* group, and the other gathered around *Soiuz vernykh* (Union of the Faithful), which Markov led after his emigration to Berlin in 1920. Hoping

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<sup>124</sup> Michael Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Emigres and the Making of National Socialism, 1917-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 110, 123-24, 130.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 63, 73, 141-42. Budnitskii, however, takes a different view. While acknowledging the contribution of Vinberg and other Russian rightists to early Nazi ideology, he argues their influence was not decisive. Budnitskii stresses that the Nazis did not arise simply as a reaction to Bolshevism, and that their insistence on Jewish responsibility for Bolshevism was simply another argument in a worldview that deemed the Jews responsible for all the world's misery. See Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 499-500. While dismissing the influence of some Russian émigrés such as Scheubner-Richter on the development of Nazi ideology, John Stephan finds that the Baltic German Alfred Rosenberg had a strong influence on Hitler personally: "Rosenberg's demonology appealed to Hitler, confirming the Austrian's views on Jews, Slavs, and Bolsheviks. It elevated his hatreds into a philosophy. By defining Communists in racial rather than in ideological terms, it obviated the need to respond to the intellectual challenge of Marxism." Rosenberg had not been active in the Black Hundred movement before his immigration to Germany. See John Stephan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925-1945* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 20-22.

to gather both camps under his own leadership, Markov organized a monarchist congress in Berlin from May 29 to June 5, 1921. With 105 delegates, a majority of whom had been URP or UAM members, the congress called for the restoration of the monarchy in Russia and voted to create a Supreme Monarchical Council to unify the movement under Markov's leadership.<sup>126</sup>

Shortly thereafter, however, the two camps grew antagonistic. Suspicious of German attempts at a rapprochement with the Soviet government, Markov adopted a pro-French orientation, while *Aufbau* maintained its insistence on German-Russian unity. Markov, who insisted that Russia's future monarchy regain the Imperial borders, also took offense at *Aufbau*'s inclusion of nationalist Ukrainians and Balts, for whom *Aufbau* envisioned autonomous states. Finally, the two camps had divergent candidates for the throne, with *Aufbau* supporting Grand Prince Kirill Romanov, grandson of Tsar Alexander II, while Markov's group advocated Grand Prince Nikolai Nikolaevich Romanov, grandson of Tsar Nicholas I.<sup>127</sup>

Cooperation between the groups broke down as Markov and his supporters began publicly insulting the *Aufbau* leadership. At a congress held from November 16-23 in Paris, *Aufbau* led a group of organizations in rejecting Markov's leadership. According to Kellogg, "in 1923, *Aufbau*'s distrust and even hatred of the pro-Nikolai Nikolaevich actions of Markov II's Supreme Monarchical Council intensified even more markedly. *Aufbau*'s leadership even carried out contingency planning for a temporary alliance with

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<sup>126</sup> Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism*, 145-47, 149.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 143-44, 155,

the Red Army in the case of a French-led invasion of the Soviet Union launched in the name of Nikolai Nikolaevich.”<sup>128</sup>

Aside from holding congresses, the monarchists reprised another of their former tactics—political assassination. On March 28, 1922, Russian monarchists attempted to kill Miliukov as he left the stage after an address to émigrés at Berlin’s Philharmonic Hall. Although the assassins missed their target, they accidentally shot and killed Vladimir Nabokov, father of the acclaimed Russian novelist. The killers were none other than Vinberg’s colleagues, Shabel’skii-Bork and Taboritskii.<sup>129</sup>

The attempt on Miliukov’s life reflected a view, not uncommon among monarchists, that Russia’s centrist parties—especially the Kadets—deserved even more blame than the Bolsheviks for Russia’s disastrous fate. As Vinberg wrote in *Luch sveta*, “In all my books I always devote attention above all to the main culprits of the Russian disasters, who are Miliukov, and Guchkov, and Kerenskii, and Chernov, and Breshkovskaia, and other jackals from the ranks of the ‘liberators.’” According to Vinberg, the “mothers of the wolves”—the Bolsheviks—were less responsible for Russia’s catastrophe because their bloody policies were the logical outgrowth of the “liberators’” accomplishments.<sup>130</sup>

Although the botched assassination of Miliukov seems to have been a collaborative effort between the *Aufbau* and Markov camps, the bitter schism among the groups remained. With the monarchists divided into two bitterly feuding camps, their

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>129</sup> Jane Burbank, *Intelligentsia and Revolution: Russian Views of Bolshevism 1917-1922* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 186-87.

<sup>130</sup> “Beseda s blizhnimi,” *Luch sveta*, No. 4. Purishkevich also echoed these sentiments in 1919, insisting that the Kadets were even more dangerous than the Bolsheviks because the liberals were a “hidden enemy” that had worked for decades to undermine Russia. See *Narodno-Gosudarstvennaia partiia*, 13-15.

effectiveness was severely compromised. At any rate, *Aufbau* disbanded soon after the 1923 beer hall putsch. *Aufbau* acted as a key organizer of Hitler's infamous failed coup, during which soldiers killed the *Aufbau* leader, Max von Scheubner-Richter.<sup>131</sup>

Suspected by the German government of helping to organize the assassination attempt on Miliukov, Vinberg fled to Paris in 1923. Markov continued to publish anti-Semitic tracts well into the 1930s. His 1928 monograph, *Voiny temnykh sil* (Wars of the Dark Forces), and his 1937 booklet *Istoriia evreiskogo shturma Rossii* (History of the Jewish Storm of Russia) partly recounted his activities with the URP. Unrepentant to the end, Markov insisted on the authenticity of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and that Andrei Iushchenskii, the murder victim in the Beilis affair, had been dispatched as part of a Jewish ritual killing.<sup>132</sup> As for the URP's legacy, Markov bragged that the URP represented the "exact prototype" of fascist movements and that he considered the URP *druzhina* to be a forerunner of the Nazis' SA paramilitary formation.<sup>133</sup>

## Conclusion

The government's subsidy program, along with Stolypin's electoral reform, perpetuated the Black Hundred movement when it otherwise would have collapsed completely. Although the URP met with some genuine support during the violence-plagued period of the Revolution of 1905 as demonstrated by the rapid spread of URP branches even before they received official subsidies, Stolypin's very success in subduing the revolution had the paradoxical effect of robbing the URP of its *raison d'être*. Without

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<sup>131</sup> Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism*, 211-14.

<sup>132</sup> Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil*, 141-42, and *Istoriia Evreiskogo shturma*, 31-32.

<sup>133</sup> Markov, *Istoriia Evreiskogo shturma*, 22.

the need for its militants to chase the revolutionaries off the streets, the URP lost much of its public support.<sup>134</sup> The public did not lose confidence in the rightists because of their use of violence; to the contrary, that was a chief source of its public support. Instead, as the revolution subsided, the URP grew irrelevant. And as reports of URP corruption and infighting increased, public perception of the group turned hostile. Although war with Germany offered the URP a convenient opportunity to exploit widespread xenophobia in Russia, public suspicion of the rightists only increased due to the movement's abiding sympathy toward Germany and its continued internecine quarrels.

Thanks to the policies set in place by Stolypin, from 1908 onward the URP retained subsidized branches that otherwise would not have existed, newspapers that few people read, and Duma representatives who had earned few votes. These elements allowed the URP to continue exerting an outsized influence in public affairs, as Stolypin ruefully discovered. But the organization had become part of a Potemkin movement that lacked a genuine base of social support. When the February Revolution commenced, the Black Hundred proved incapable of offering any resistance to the revolutionaries. The revolution exposed the movement for what it was—an empty shell propped up by an undemocratic electoral process and a government slush fund.

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<sup>134</sup> This also held true for the smaller rightist organizations. In February 1908 a member of the Saratov ASBR, which apparently remained separate from the URP in that city, reportedly told an ASBR meeting, "There would still be hope for success if there was a strong revolutionary movement in Saratov, but there is not. I have repeatedly heard it said that only lunatics and fools struggle against a revolution that doesn't exist." GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 101, l. 29.

## Chapter 4

### Rise of the Rabble Rousers: The Black Hundred Comes to Odessa

The fortunes of the Black Hundred headquarter organizations played out in microcosm in local branches throughout Russia. The 1907-08 schism affected hundreds of localities, as rebellious leaders split off from the URP and formed branches of Purishkevich's UAM, sometimes taking their *druzhiny* with them. Hurling accusations of corruption at each other, the competing organizations' disputes discredited the rightist movement in the provinces. Big financial donors cut off their support in disgust while members abandoned the movement in droves, reducing the Black Hundred organizations into a shadow of their former selves. Deprived of the energy, funding, and constituency base of the 1905-07 period, the movement faced the humiliating specter of irrelevancy, with its *pro forma* existence only ensured by the government's continued financial support.

Nowhere was the rise of the Black Hundred so calamitous, nor its fall so sensational, as in the city of Odessa. The city's unique historical development, demography, and chaotic experience with the Revolution of 1905 resulted in the creation of a particularly large and violent Black Hundred movement. The city's URP branch became virtually a law unto itself, even managing to establish dominance over the city's port, its main economic artery. Enjoying the sympathy of local leaders, prodigious membership rolls, and its own truculent newspaper, the Odessa URP quickly became one of the Black Hundred's strongest outposts. Frequently resorting to violence, the group

achieved an unusual degree of power among local rightist organizations. This, however, simply made its collapse all the more stunning.

### **The Founding of a City**

Odessa's distinctive history helps to explain why the city offered such a welcoming environment to the Black Hundred. In 1794, Russian soldiers began building the city of Odessa at the site of their garrison on the orders of Empress Catherine the Great (1762-1796). The land, seized during Russia's victory in the Second Turkish War (1787-1792) over its perennial Black Sea rival—the Ottoman Empire—occupied a strategic location on which to establish a warm water port where ships could enjoy nearly year-round access. Hoping to accelerate the city's growth, the empress authorized special incentives to encourage robust immigration into the area. Promises of free land, state loans, tax exemptions, and freedom from conscription lured Russian government officials and traders to the region.<sup>1</sup>

The government also sought out groups whose presence would not normally be considered desirable, attracting runaway serfs with promises of freedom, and welcoming non-Russian nationalities from within Russia as well as from neighboring countries. The city took on a cosmopolitan air as Greeks, Armenians, and other peoples fleeing Ottoman rule, as well as Italians, Germans, and even Turks moved to Russia's new frontier. Odessa proved so popular with minorities and foreigners that by 1819, only one-quarter

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<sup>1</sup> The city was named after a nearby Greek settlement called Odessos. See Patricia Herlihy, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 7.

of the population was ethnically Russian, while Italian emerged as the port's main commercial language.<sup>2</sup>

Officials attempted to draw Jews to Odessa. A small colony of 240 Jews already existed in the area before the city arose, and this population rapidly expanded in response to officially mandated religious toleration, promises of economic and social freedoms not available to Jews in most of the Russian empire, and a friendly local government that even subsidized construction of a synagogue. Throughout the city's initial decades, Odessa's Jews actively engaged in commerce, acting as middlemen and retailers in the silk, cotton, wool, and shoe trades. Jewish settlers, like their non-Jewish counterparts, tended to be less religious, less traditionally minded, and often unruly young men willing to abandon their hometowns to seek their fortunes in an alien environment.<sup>3</sup> Alongside its reputation as a highly-cultured city serving as an intellectual center of the *Haskallah* (Jewish Enlightenment) movement, Odessa cultivated a darker counter-image as a rough, crime-prone frontier town whose bawdy legacy was captured a century later in the colorful gangsters who lurked in the novels of Isaac Babel.

The city grew rapidly as its port became Russia's biggest outlet for the export of grain and the import of Asian tea. Significant Jewish immigration throughout the 1800s, along with the community's high birthrate, boosted Odessa's Jewish population from 17,000 in 1854 to nearly 52,000 in 1873, when Jews comprised 27 percent of Odessa residents. Although about half the Jewish population lived in poverty, a stratum of Jewish merchants and shopkeepers emerged as the city's dominant commercial entrepreneurs,

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<sup>2</sup> Steven Zipperstein, *The Jews of Odessa: A Cultural History, 1794-1881* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 22-30, and Herlihy, *Odessa*, 44.

<sup>3</sup> Zipperstein, *The Jews*, 35-37.

displacing the Greeks' control of the grain trade in the mid-1800s. By the 1870s, Jews owned over half of Odessa's stores and controlled 60 percent of its commercial firms.<sup>4</sup> Jewish economic ascendancy, along with the emergence of a handful of highly visible Jews who became rich investing in railroads, provoked resentment among Greeks, Russians, and other nationalities, as well as accusations of Jewish discrimination against non-Jews in trade relations. These ethnic tensions led to outbreaks of street fighting between Greeks and Jews in 1821 and 1859. In 1871, Greeks instigated a three-day pogrom following rumors that Jews had desecrated a Greek Orthodox church, leaving six people dead.<sup>5</sup>

The city's Jews and non-Jews alike suffered when the local economy began to decline in the 1870s due to falling grain prices. Competition from American grain exporters and from new Black Sea ports in Kherson, Nikolaev, and Rostov, antiquated grain processing equipment at the Odessa port, and the high cost and low efficiency of grain transport on Russia's poorly constructed railroad system all contributed to an economic malaise in Odessa that lasted into the early twentieth century. The port's decline spawned a permanent class of unskilled, marginally employed, or unemployed dockworkers who frequently lived in public shelters and developed a predilection for drunkenness and criminality.<sup>6</sup>

The economic recession hit Odessa's Jews especially hard, as it coincided with the central government's adoption of an increasingly hostile Jewish policy. Beginning in 1870, with the Jewish birthrate outstripping that of Russians throughout the empire, the

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 70-71.

<sup>5</sup> Herlihy, *Odessa*, 301.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 177, 219, 222.

government passed a succession of laws restricting Jewish representation in municipal dumas. The assassination of Tsar Alexander II on March 13, 1881, provoked a spate of nationwide pogroms that spread to Odessa in May. The central government reacted by passing the May Laws, which further restricted Jewish business practices, freedom of movement, and the right to acquire land. The government's approval in 1886 of quotas on Jewish representation in universities also outraged the Jewish population. The government had traditionally allowed many Jews with professional degrees to live outside the Pale of the Settlement. Thus, the enactment of quotas seemed to revoke the government's tacit agreement to provide greater freedom to Jews who made themselves useful to the state.<sup>7</sup> Odessa's Jews particularly resented the quotas, as they comprised a third of the university student body before the restrictions came into effect.

Odessan Jews' relations with the local government turned rancorous. Jews expressed indignation at the local authorities' perfunctory efforts to suppress the city's 1871 and 1881 pogroms, as well as their enforcement of St. Petersburg's new anti-Jewish laws. For their part, local officials grew more suspicious of their Jewish inhabitants, who were the subjects of bitter complaints by the city's Russian and Greek populations. As Hans Rogger notes, the promulgation of anti-Jewish legislation in the 1880s acted as a great trigger for Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement.<sup>8</sup> This was also the case in Odessa, where local Jews' increasing propensity toward revolutionary activity from the 1880s onward further soured Jewish-government relations in the city.

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<sup>7</sup> Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 52.

<sup>8</sup> Hans Rogger, See *Jewish Policies and Left-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 18.

## **Revolution and Repression**

By the dawn of the twentieth century, Odessa had become one of Russia's largest cities, with a population approaching a half million. It had changed significantly from its roots as a haven for ethnic minorities with plentiful employment opportunities. Russian immigration into the city intensified from the mid-1800s, as the city became dominated by ethnic Russians and Jews, who comprised a respective 51 percent and 33 percent of the population in 1897. As Patricia Herlihy notes, the two groups occupied separate social ranks in Odessan society; ethnic Russians predominated at the bottom, among unskilled laborers, as well as the top, among government officials and landowners. Jews, on the other hand, largely comprised traders, shopkeepers, and other middle-class professions. The remaining nationalities in Odessa included Ukrainians (6 percent), Poles (4 percent), Germans (3 percent), and Greeks (1 percent). Of the total population, 56 percent adhered to Orthodoxy, and 58 percent was literate. Sixteen percent of the working male population worked at the city's military garrison. Half the population belonged to the working class, including 4,000-7,000 dockworkers and around 16,000 semi-employed day laborers.<sup>9</sup>

Disaffection with the city's prolonged economic stagnation and the illiberal regimes of Alexander III (1881–94) and Nicholas II (1894-1917) resulted in a dramatic upswing in labor unrest after 1900. An audacious assassination campaign launched by newly-formed revolutionary parties against the police and government officials contributed to a general breakdown of law and order and an explosion of unrestrained

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<sup>9</sup> Herlihy, *Odessa*, 242, 246, 249, 255, and Robert Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa: Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 45.

criminality. The consequent yearning for a return to basic law and order acted as a catalyst for the rise of the Black Hundred movement in Odessa.

Odessa was naturally conducive to the revolutionary movement. The port had served as a convenient entry point for subversive publications, helping to transform the city into a center of revolutionary nihilism in the 1870s. The Social Democrats established small revolutionary circles in Odessa as early as the 1890s that grew into a branch of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party. Between 1900 and 1903, revolutionaries established branches of the Socialist Revolutionary Party (SR) and the Jewish Bund, as well as various smaller anarchist, Zionist, and radical ethnic minority parties. Jews predominated in the membership and leadership of most of these organizations, especially the SDs. Despite persistent problems with factional infighting, the SDs' recruitment and agitation efforts met with much success among workers in the Jewish-owned workshops and smaller factories who resented the restrictions of the May laws. Odessa's Russian workers, who dominated the city's larger industrial enterprises, viewed Jewish workers as economic competitors. Reluctant to join the heavily Jewish revolutionary parties, they reacted more favorably to the state-sponsored labor unions created by Moscow secret police chief Sergei Zubatov. These unions, which became active in Odessa in 1902, aimed to keep labor protests confined to purely economic demands, thus giving workers an outlet for expressing grievances outside of the revolutionary movement. Thus, the Russian and Jewish labor movements, like Russian and Jewish workers, remained largely segregated in Odessa at the turn of the century.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905*, 49-51, 75-76.

Small-scale strikes broke out in the Popov tobacco factory and other Odessa enterprises in 1901, with the unrest gradually spreading throughout the city's labor force through the summer of 1903. In this initial period, strikers largely voiced economic as opposed to political grievances. These focused on issues directly affecting the workplace, such as demands for higher wages, shorter working hours, the rehiring of fired workers, the dismissal of unpopular foremen, and an end to fines and searches. Revolutionaries attempted to inject political themes into the strikes movement but had little success among workers, who frequently jeered revolutionary orators during strike meetings and rallies.<sup>11</sup>

The absence of overtly political demands stemmed partly from the embryonic state of the labor movement and local revolutionary party branches. Furthermore, press censorship and restrictions on public assemblies kept workers isolated from employees at other factories, making it difficult to organize politically. The popularity of the Zubatov unions, which closely adhered to their mandate of advancing exclusively economic demands, also helped to keep political demands off the strikers' agenda. In fact, the Zubatovites became a constant target of SD propaganda, which ridiculed the unions as tools of the autocratic regime. Relations between union and SD members became so estranged that the groups' adherents sometimes engaged in fistfights.<sup>12</sup> Although the SDs had the largest revolutionary organization in Odessa, their influence could not match that of the Zubatov unions. The SDs' efforts to politicize the growing economic unrest

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<sup>11</sup> Jeremiah Schneiderman, *Sergei Zubatov and Revolutionary Marxism: The Struggle for the Working Class in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976), 325, 329.

<sup>12</sup> F. E. Los, ed, *Revoliutsiia 1905-1907 na Ukraine* (Kiev: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury USSR, 1955), 62-63, 65-66.

initially met with little success beyond the convocation of May Day demonstrations that typically ended in the participants' arrest.

Meanwhile, the Zubatovite-led strike movement spread rapidly in the summer of 1903. On July 1, 2,000 railroad workers went on strike demanding higher wages. Dockworkers, steamship crewmen, and factory workers soon joined them. Facing a general strike, on July 18 the authorities suppressed the movement with the brutal aid of Cossack soldiers, resulting in hundreds of arrests and serious injuries.<sup>13</sup> The central government banned the Zubatov unions in the strike's aftermath—a counterproductive maneuver that radicalized Russian workers, leaving them with little legal means of expressing their grievances.

The smothering of the strike temporarily calmed the city, but unrest picked up once again at the end of 1904. This can partly be attributed to the outbreak of war with Japan which, in addition to depressing Odessa's Far Eastern tea trade, provoked widespread criticism of the government's inept wartime leadership. The Bloody Sunday massacre of January 9, 1905, which came in reaction to a peaceful demonstration organized by a St. Petersburg Zubatov union, sparked large protests at the city's major university, Novorossiisk, which authorities smothered by indefinitely canceling classes. Revolutionary groups responded by increasing their agitational activities against the government.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, the convocation in Odessa of a series of partisan lectures added an overtly political dynamic to the city's turbulence. These took place as part of a national campaign

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 331, 333, 339.

<sup>14</sup> For an account of Bloody Sunday by the Zubatovite organizer of the demonstration, see Georgii Gapon, *The Story of My Life* (NY: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1906).

organized by the liberal Union of Liberation to hold banquets and professional gatherings that agitated for the creation of an elected legislature or the convocation of a constituent assembly.<sup>15</sup> Several thousand people routinely turned out to listen to lawyers, doctors, and other professionals in Odessa lecture about topics related to their fields. Remarks pertaining to healthcare or the legal code, however, quickly gave way to strident criticism of the autocracy, which met with enthusiastic applause. A critical speech about the government given by an Odessa lawyer provides a typical example. Speaking to 2,000 people, his talk elicited a boisterous ovation. After this, members of the crowd, including SD members, began shouting “Down with the autocracy!” and making revolutionary speeches. When the police moved in to close down the proceedings, audience members attacked them with broken-off stool legs.<sup>16</sup>

In early 1905, the strike movement swung back into action. Although the strikers voiced the same demands concerning wages and working hours, they evinced an increasingly militant stance. The movement began to take on a political dimension, with some workers insisting on the reform or outright abolition of the autocracy. As Robert Weinberg notes, workers became particularly radicalized by the revolutionary banquets, which many workers attended, rather than Bloody Sunday, whose shocking outcome elicited uncharacteristic indifference from Odessan workers. Railroad workers struck early in the year. By April, striking steamship workers prevented the departure of ships from the Odessa port. The unrest crippled the industrial sector, as armed mobs of workers burst into factories and threatened employees who refused to walk out. The SDs became emboldened, printing leaflets calling for armed rebellion. With less than 1,000 members

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<sup>15</sup> Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 19.

<sup>16</sup> Los, *Revoliutsiia*, 63-65.

divided between hostile Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, however, the SDs followed events rather than led them. This held true through most of 1905, aside from SD participation in student and Jewish self-defense groups, discussed below.<sup>17</sup>

Local authorities' refusal to permit a citywide meeting of workers, along with the arrest of a group of workers' representatives and revolutionaries, sparked the outbreak of another general strike in mid-June. This time, the strike coincided with widespread violence and brash, armed attacks on the police and soldiers. Workers and revolutionaries barricaded the city's streets, expelled clerks from stores, attacked police stations, and plunged the city into darkness after storming the municipal electric station. Authorities summoned Cossack soldiers, who killed two striking factory workers and wounded scores more.<sup>18</sup> In a separate incident, a demonstrator was killed by his own bomb, which also severely injured eight police officers. Police responded with gunfire, injuring ten.<sup>19</sup>

Receiving word of the upheaval gripping the city, mutinous sailors aboard the Battleship *Potemkin* embarked at the Odessa harbor on June 15. The sailors had killed six of their officers the previous day after one of them executed a sailor who complained about the ship's rancid meat. Thousands of strikers gathered at the dock to show solidarity with the mutineers, who laid out their slain comrade's body to create a vigil on the dock. A large hooligan element that had participated in much of the city's on-going violence attached itself to the crowd, which soon degenerated into a frenzied mob that set fire to the port's buildings. Eventually the entire port went up in flames, as rioters looted and set alight huge warehouses, administrative buildings, and dozens of anchored

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<sup>17</sup> Weinberg, *Revolution*, 87-88, 123, and Los, *Revoliutsiia*, 69, 208, 212, 221-22.

<sup>18</sup> Weinberg, *The Revolution*, 117, 129-30, and Los, *Revoliutsiia*, 226-30.

<sup>19</sup> GARF, f. 102 (O.O.), op. 1905, d. 1350, ch. 30, l. A, l. 18.

steamships. The tsar declared martial law in Odessa, ordering the mob suppressed. Cossacks then moved in, firing wantonly into the crowd and perpetuating a massacre that cost hundreds of lives.<sup>20</sup>

With a deadly example set by the *Potemkin* incident, the turmoil and strikes largely petered out over the next few days. Odessa regained enough of a semblance of calm to allow for the lifting of martial law at the end of September. But a new bout of manifestly political unrest erupted that fall with the reopening of Novorossiisk University. The school, traditionally a hotbed of oppositionist sentiment, had theretofore played little role in the turmoil since its classes had been cancelled in January. Shortly before classes reopened, however, student protestors throughout Russia had forced the central government to grant autonomy to universities. Novorossiisk University used its new freedoms to establish itself as the headquarters of the Odessa revolution.

The university's faculty and student unions turned overtly revolutionary once the school reopened. The school's radicalization accelerated with the creation of the Coalition Council, an ostensibly student-run union whose leaders in reality comprised members of all of Odessa's main revolutionary parties—the SDs, SRs, the Bund, and Zionist and ethnic minority organizations. With a new, sympathetic rector, I. M. Zanchevskii, presiding over the school, the unions sponsored mass political rallies that attracted up to 10,000 people. Notwithstanding the university's autonomous status, these meetings were illegal, attracting thousands of workers and professionals to the campus. The rallies, sometimes led by Jewish students whom Zanchevskii allowed to exceed legal quotas, featured unabashedly revolutionary speeches calling for armed rebellion. The

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<sup>20</sup> Los, *Revoliutsiia*, 246-51, and Weinberg, *The Revolution*, 133-36.

meetings produced resolutions declaring periodic student strikes and boycotts of professors deemed unsympathetic to the revolution. Organizing students into armed detachments, participants donated money to buy weapons that they stockpiled inside the university.<sup>21</sup>

In October, Odessa workers joined a national general strike that had spread from St. Petersburg and Moscow. On October 16, two days after street fighting erupted between students and the police, Odessa City Mayor Dmitri Neidhardt deployed Cossack troops to block nonstudents from attending a rally at the university. In response, students joined protestors in the streets, helping them to erect barricades. The crowds looted gun stores, disarmed ineffectual police officers, and engaged in armed skirmishes with the troops. The city's stores and banks shut down as clashes broke out throughout the city, resulting in nine deaths, up to eighty injuries, and 214 arrests. A government investigation later found that 197 of those arrested were Jews, many of whom were beaten after being taken into custody. As an Odessan police official reported, "normal life has ceased."<sup>22</sup>

The streets became quiet the next day, but Neidhardt's offensive failed to subdue the rebels. Thousands of workers continued to strike, while oppositionists delivered revolutionary speeches in the halls of the university and the city дума. Hoping to rally public opinion against the revolutionaries, Neidhardt distributed throughout the city a declaration reprinting a letter he claimed to have received in the name of 30,000

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<sup>21</sup> *Revoliutsionnoe gnezdo: Iz istorii Novorossiiskago Universiteta* (St Petersburg: Tipo-Litografiia K. I. Lingard, 1909), 119-21, 133-34, and *Odesskii pogrom i samooborona* (Paris: Zapadnyi Tsentralnyi Komitet Samooborony Poalio-Tsion', 1906), 50-52. As of November 1906, Novorossisk University had 3,168 students, of whom 782 were Jewish. See *Ruskaia rech'*, November 14, 1906.

<sup>22</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii, Tom. 1: Pogromy po offitsialnym dokumentam* (St. Petersburg: Obshchestvennaia Pol'za, 1908), CXXV-CXXVI, and GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 1350, ch. 30, l. A, ll. 31, 33, 82-86.

Odessans threatening to burn down the university if Neidhardt failed to suppress the revolutionary activity there. In the declaration, Neidhardt denounced Zanchevskii for refusing to follow his orders to end the collection of money at the university for the purpose of buying weapons. After condemning strikers and students who had clashed with the police, Neidhardt ended the declaration with an appeal bordering on incitement to vigilantism: “The unrest and strikes severely raised prices on all essential consumer goods. Who’s to blame for all of it? Decide yourself, good people.”<sup>23</sup>

The following day, jubilant revolutionaries took to the streets as news reached Odessa that the tsar had issued the October Manifesto. Thousands of people, including many students and Jews, waved red flags and chanted revolutionary slogans. They marched to the city дума building, where дума members called for the police to be disarmed and replaced by a civilian militia, while declaring their own assumption of power as a “provisional committee.” After removing a portrait of the tsar from the дума hall and defacing tsarist slogans etched into the building, the crowd then moved on to Neidhart’s office, where the city mayor bowed to its demand to release Odessa’s political prisoners. More clashes broke out between demonstrators and the police, during which several people on both sides were killed. The crowd, disarming twenty-two policemen, chased overmatched police officers from their posts. Intending to consolidate the police forces into larger patrols, Neidhardt pulled the remaining officers from their posts, leaving the streets under the control of student and Jewish militias. According to a militia member, these units primarily comprised Jewish students and Jewish workers. A smaller

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<sup>23</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*, CXXX-CXXXI, CLXXXIV. The government’s official investigation into the Odessa pogrom, known as the Kuzminskii report, found that only one person had actually signed the letter.

group of Russian students also participated, but hardly any Russian workers took part. The Jewish self-defense forces operated out of the university, where the units frequently met during the October events to exchange information and obtain weapons. Other members received arms at a local synagogue.<sup>24</sup> As the militias took over the streets, the first clashes erupted between Jewish demonstrators and tsarist loyalists. More ominously, Russian workers began looting Jewish stores.<sup>25</sup>

On October 19, Odessa plunged into one of the darkest chapters in the city's history. Violent clashes between crowds of Russian Christians and Jewish-led students spread throughout the city. Simultaneously, a large crowd of Russian workers, steamship crew members, and unemployed dockworkers gathered at the dock. With the permission of the Odessa military commander, Baron A. V. Kaulbars, the crowd marched into the city carrying national flags, icons, and portraits of the tsar. Revolutionaries fired shots into the crowd, killing two demonstrators. For the rest of the day, Odessa resembled a war zone. Tsarist loyalists and police patrols engaged in armed street battles with bomb-throwing revolutionaries and Jews. Mobs viciously attacked and looted Jewish shops and homes.<sup>26</sup>

The tide turned later in the day as the police, now joined by Cossack soldiers, regrouped and attacked militia members. Russian mobs, meanwhile, murdered suspected Jews who fell into their hands. Forced off the streets, Jews continued to fire from their apartments, but the shots now had little effect on the mobs, whose frenzied violence met with the indifference or even approval of the police and soldiers. The government's

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<sup>24</sup> *Odeskii pogrom*, 51-53.

<sup>25</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*, CXXIX-CXL, and GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 1350, ch. 30, l. A, ll. 42, 45, 82-86.

<sup>26</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 1350, ch. 30, l. A, l. 47.

investigation into the pogrom later concluded that the city's 853 policemen could have suppressed the pogrom. The police, however, sympathized with the pogromists and at times actually led the mobs in looting and killing, according to the official report. The soldiers, interpreting police complicity as a sign that the authorities approved of the pogrom, also joined in the violence. Indeed, sympathy for the pogromists extended to the highest ranks of Odessa's authorities; in a meeting with Neidhardt and police officials on October 21, Kaulbars spoke of the need to uphold law and order even though "we all, in our soul, sympathize with this pogrom."<sup>27</sup>

The shooting from Jewish apartments died out on the evening of October 20, when Neidhardt threatened to fire artillery against any buildings from which shots continued to emanate.<sup>28</sup> With the Jewish defense forces rendered powerless, the mobs rampaged against the city's Jews for another day, as the violence even spread to the countryside.<sup>29</sup> On October 21, soldiers and police officers began suppressing the disorders, restoring order the following day. The government's investigation of the pogrom found that 500 people were killed, including 400 Jews, and 1,632 properties were looted.<sup>30</sup>

As a result of Neidardt's inept leadership during the pogrom, Prime Minister Witte replaced him with the more liberal Sergei Grigor'ev, who struggled in vain to bring the opposition movement under control. The university continued to use its new autonomy to aid revolutionary activity, as evidenced by Zanchevskii's denial of a police

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<sup>27</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*, CLIII-CLV, CLXV. The Kuzminskii report recommended the prosecution of forty-two local police officials for complicity in the pogrom.

<sup>28</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 1305, ch. 30, l. A, ll. 47, 49, 59

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 75.

<sup>30</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*, CLXVI.

request to search the school for weapons.<sup>31</sup> Throughout November, the school held additional mass rallies attended by thousands of people, while the city дума reiterated its demands for the abolition of the police force.<sup>32</sup> Taking its cue from events in St. Petersburg, local revolutionary groups created a soviet in early November that organized workers and revolutionary party members into armed militias. Declaring itself an organ of “revolutionary self-government,” the soviet directed yet another general strike beginning on December 14.<sup>33</sup>

A citywide breakdown in law and order followed the pogrom. The police force, undermanned and overwhelmed by the scale of the disorders and demoralized by the revolutionaries’ attacks, seems to have simply abandoned its efforts at maintaining security. Officers even briefly went on strike to demand higher pay.<sup>34</sup> Armed robberies and random street violence became daily occurrences, forcing Grigor’ev to run ads in the local papers denying reports that the local government had lost control of the city.<sup>35</sup> But soothing appeals failed to calm the population. Following the commencement of the December general strike and a clash at a railroad station in which police shot and killed six workers, the city again fell under martial law.<sup>36</sup>

## Why Odessa?

Odessa’s history and the violent disturbances associated with the Revolution of 1905 there were not altogether unique in the Russian empire. Other cities had been

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<sup>31</sup> In 1909, a court found Zanchevskii guilty of criminal negligence for allowing revolutionary activity at the university. He was barred from state service. See *Odesskii listok*, February 18, 1909.

<sup>32</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 1305, ch. 30, l. A, ll.71, 88.

<sup>33</sup> Weinberg, *The Revolution*, 210-11.

<sup>34</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1905, d. 1305, ch. 30, l. A, ll. 82-86.

<sup>35</sup> *Rusaskaia rech’*, December 6 and 15, 1905.

<sup>36</sup> *Rusaskaia rech’*, December 16, 1905.

rapidly constructed by government fiat, experienced anti-Jewish pogroms, and had police forces overwhelmed by the revolutionaries. But a combination of distinctive features in Odessa made the city particularly fertile ground for the creation of a powerful Black Hundred movement. The most important factor was the decidedly large and rapidly growing Jewish population in Odessa, which provided an easy scapegoat for nationalist extremists. A city's proximity to a large Jewish population represented one of the chief factors in the establishment of a strong local Black Hundred movement. As we have seen, rightists generally gained the most influence in the empire's western regions where most Russian Jews lived. With the exception of the Poles, whose historic antipathy to the Russian empire precluded the success of any Russian nationalist movement in its territory, the ethnic composition of a city's non-Jewish population was largely irrelevant to the rise of a Black Hundred movement, so long as a large Jewish population was present. This is demonstrated by the strength of the early Black Hundred movement in Kiev and other ethnic Ukrainian cities, as well as among the majority Moldavians inhabiting Bessarabia, whose elected delegation to the Second State Duma consisted exclusively of Russian national chauvinists.

In 1905, Odessa experienced particularly intense violent disturbances, including strikes, armed attacks on the police, widespread street fighting, the burning of the port and subsequent massacre, and a savage pogrom. At some point after the *Potemkin* incident, it is clear that many Russians sympathetic to the revolution became alarmed by the chaos and began to long for calm. It is difficult to pinpoint when this reaction first materialized. In his study of the Donbass-Dnepr Bend, Charley Wynn argues that many people turned against the revolutionaries after the promulgation of the October

Manifesto. According to Wynn, “workers’ pogromist rampages in October and their increased unruliness on the job in November, as well as student unrest and peasant rampages, help explain why the sympathy, or even support, the revolutionary movement had enjoyed in some white-collar quarters dwindled following the promulgation of the October Manifesto.” Wynn further notes that Russians were especially reluctant to tolerate further civil strife since many of them felt that the October Manifesto had secured some of their important goals and given them a legal means for pursuing their grievances.<sup>37</sup>

Robert Weinberg implies a similar chronology for events in Odessa. He argues that the public supported the antigovernment demonstrators during the *Potemkin* protests, which “revealed the oppositionist mood among Odessans, who welcomed the challenge to the regime posed by the mutiny.” He finds that liberals, the middle-classes, and other social strata, however, withdrew their support after the October Manifesto, and especially after the beginning of the December general strike, which many regarded as futile.<sup>38</sup>

While it is certainly apparent that the October Manifesto and accompanying revolutionary demonstrations provoked an immediate, violent backlash, it is less clear to what degree Odessa’s population at large supported the pre-October labor unrest and revolutionary attacks. Did Odessans uniformly welcome a deadly mutiny off their shores that led to the burning of the city port? Or did many disapprove of it, but lack the means to express their opposition within the context of a violent revolution? As previously

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<sup>37</sup> Charters Wynn. *Workers, Strikes, and Pogroms: The Donbass-Dnepr Bend in Late Imperial Russia 1870-1905* (Princeton: Princeton U Press, 1992), 231.

<sup>38</sup> Weinberg, *The Revolution*, 132, 221-22.

noted, armed workers forced those who opposed the strikes to participate in them.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, radical students and professors at Novorossiisk University frequently resorted to coercion in steering the university toward the revolutionary movement. In 1905, a group of twenty-three professors formed a faction opposed to the university's politicization, which also encountered resistance from rightwing student unions and from some professors within the All-Russian Academic Union that directed university affairs. The recalcitrant professors became the subject of student and faculty boycotts, condemnation at student political rallies, and had their election to important administrative positions overturned. Radical students even held trials for professors and students who demonstrated the wrong political convictions, such as one student who refused to participate in a student strike.<sup>40</sup> As Weinberg notes, conservative professors withdrew from the increasingly radical Academic Union, and the university shut down rightwing student unions.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, in Odessa, we cannot simply assume that the public at large supported the revolutionary movement before the October Manifesto, as the more radical antigovernment elements intimidated their opponents. We can only say for certain that the particular ferocity of the revolution in Odessa, and the sheer depths of the anarchy that accompanied it, at some point created a correspondingly strong reaction among frightened citizens. With the police force proving inadequate, some Russians became

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<sup>39</sup> Such incidents were not confined to Odessa. For example, in St. Petersburg, Joan Neuberger finds that "brawling hooligans were not implicated in the violence between workers who were reluctant to go on strike and the radicals imploring them to put down their tools, despite the fact that the boulevard press reported numerous incidents of this kind." See Joan Neuberger, *Hooliganism: Crime, Culture, and Power in St. Petersburg, 1900-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 90.

<sup>40</sup> *Revoliutsionnoe gnezdo*, 5-7, 11, 29-30, 35.

<sup>41</sup> Weinberg, *The Revolution*, 89, 151.

willing to lend their allegiance to a new social movement promising to restore law and order and repress those deemed responsible for the chaos.

This group was especially susceptible to Black Hundred agitation due to the distinctly influential and noticeable role that the Black Hundred's scapegoat—the Jews—played in Odessa's revolutionary movement. As previously noted, because of the initial estrangement of Russian workers from the revolutionaries and their preference for the Zubatov unions, Odessa's revolutionary organizations, especially the SDs, became predominately Jewish. Jews also stood at the forefront of revolutionary activity at Novorossiisk University. The Jewish character of the self-defense militias that took over the streets following the declaration of the October Manifesto offered a seemingly simple explanation as to who was responsible for the unrest. Although Jews tended to be disproportionately involved in the revolutionary movement throughout Russia, the especially evident role they played in Odessa fed into the Black Hundred's ideological precept that the Jews as an entire people had inextricable ties to the revolution. Rightists used this assertion to justify their argument that the Jews en-masse represented a uniquely pernicious race intrinsically hostile to the Russian empire and the Russian people.

The Black Hundred's anti-Semitism tapped into the abiding resentment toward Jews in Odessa that stemmed from long-standing economic grievances, particularly concerning the grain trade. Although much of Russia fell into stagnation or recession at the beginning of the 1900s, Odessa experienced particularly deep economic problems due to the city's dependence on grain. Odessa's very nature as a trading center made the city uniquely vulnerable to periodic shocks such as poor harvests or the outbreak of war with

Japan. The city's prolonged economic doldrums created the conditions in which extremist movements thrive the world over.

Odessa's economic downturn and the port's declining fortunes also created another condition making the city conducive to the Black Hundred—the presence of a sizeable hooligan element. As Joan Neuberger notes, rising incidents of muggings, assaults, robberies, and other street crime committed by so-called “shady characters” accompanied the Revolution of 1905. These criminals, usually poor, semi-employed workers or others living in flophouses on the margins of society, exploited the breakdown of law and order during the revolution to vent their discontent. Neuberger finds that such actions often had a political element, with the violence serving as a form of protest against various forms of oppression. More importantly for our discussion, Neuberger notes that one result of the increasing street crime was the discrediting of the police force, which could no longer guarantee citizens' safety on the streets.<sup>42</sup> This was the case in Odessa, where the Black Hundred exploited the police force's powerlessness to argue for the need for extragovernmental vigilantism to return order to the city.

Odessa's underemployed dockworkers had shown an inclination toward violence long before the Revolution of 1905. During the revolution, they tended to attach themselves to whatever movement or activity offered an opportunity to unleash their belligerence. Thus, we see them joining the revolutionaries at the port riot during the *Potemkin* incident, and then four months later throwing their lot in with the pogromists. Once the organized Black Hundred movement arrived in Odessa, the hooligans found that attacks and robberies of Jewish and student passersby met with the indifference of

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<sup>42</sup> Neuberger, *Hooliganism*, 79, 80-81, 102.

the authorities and the open support of Black Hundred members. A large group of these marginalized workers joined the organization for the opportunity it provided for organized violence, but also, as we shall see in chapter 5, because Odessa's URP branch became a leading source of employment at the city's port.

The sympathy of the local government played a key role in the rise of the Black Hundred movement, especially in Odessa. Although Grigor'ev, who was no rightist sympathizer, had already replaced Neidhardt as city mayor when the URP established its Odessa branch in February 1906, the imposition of martial law gave Commander Kaulbars and the region's governor, K. A. Karangozov, the final say in the city's political affairs. These two men, as we shall see, became ideological Black Hundred supporters, regarding the URP's violent agenda as a form of useful assistance in suppressing revolutionaries, taming the university, and keeping the Jews in line. Throughout the empire, local officials emerged who shared Kaulbars and Karangozov's views on the URP's utility. As noted earlier, the central government's lack of clear instructions to local officials on how to interact with rightist organizations allowed local authorities to set their own policies toward the rightists. The central government, however, occasionally interceded when overt local support for the Black Hundred became an embarrassment. For example, Stolypin recalled the governor of Kiev Province, Major General Veretnikov, after he publicly marched in a Black Hundred parade.<sup>43</sup>

But local government officials did not always sympathize with the URP. Grigor'ev understood the threat the URP posed to local authority and his ability to maintain law and order, as did the governor of Kherson Province, who refused Kaulbars'

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<sup>43</sup> William C. Fuller, *Civil-Military Conflict in Imperial Russia, 1881-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 211.

attempt to transfer twenty Russian army rifles to the Elizavetgrad URP branch.<sup>44</sup>

Unsympathetic officials like these had the power to hinder significantly rightist activity, mainly by withholding permission for meetings, demonstrations, donation drives, and other activities. But in Odessa, Girgor'ev's superiors sabotaged his efforts to restrain the URP. As we shall see, Kaulbars and Karangozov not only approved weapons permits for URP members, but they protected the group's newspaper and even the entire organization from Grigor'ev's attempts to shut them down.

The final contributing factor in the rise of Odessa's Black Hundred movement was the presence in Odessa of a group of people with the energy and connections needed to establish the Black Hundred organizations' branches. The URP did not extend much financial assistance to its branches; to the contrary, branches in effect subsidized the center by handing over a portion of their collected dues. Thus, branch leaders had to raise their own funds from private donors and through other means. A large branch required significant finances to rent or purchase meeting spaces, print publications, and run electoral campaigns. In Odessa, a group of current and former officials had the right contacts to raise these funds. Odessa URP President Count Aleksandr Konovnitsyn had particularly lucrative financing possibilities thanks to his connections at the Odessa port.

With its large, resented Jewish population, acute experience with the Revolution of 1905, notable Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement, large hooligan element, long-term economic stagnation, sympathetic local government, and presence of potential organizational leaders with access to money, Odessa had the right conditions for the rise of a powerful Black Hundred movement. The fact that Odessa had all these

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<sup>44</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39., t. 2, ll. 188, 222.

circumstances in an exceptionally large or intense form explains why Odessa gave rise to one of the empire's most influential and violent organized Black Hundred movements.

### **The Black Hundred in Odessa**

Before December 1905, conservatives in Odessa had a single organization in which to gather—the Russian Assembly. Established in Odessa in February 1905 as a branch of the national organization founded in 1904, the Russian Assembly engaged in cultural pursuits such as the readings of nationalist poetry and the staging of patriotic theater productions. The group's aristocratic character limited its membership, which totaled 278 people in Odessa in 1905.<sup>45</sup> Although the organization never transformed itself into a mass political party, it advocated rightist causes and cooperated closely with the URP. Many of its Odessa branch members later helped to establish the city's URP branch, whose membership and importance rapidly eclipsed that of the Russian Assembly.

After the October Manifesto permitted the creation of political parties in Russia, *Partiia pravovogo poriadka* (Party of Rightist Order, or PRO) became the first rightwing party to appear in Odessa, publishing its program on December 14, 1905. PRO situated itself within the more moderate rightwing camp, advocating progressive reforms like shorter work days and military terms of service, the creation of unions to allow workers to pursue grievances, and a wide measure of local self-government.<sup>46</sup> Most importantly, the party infuriated many rightists by refusing to repudiate the notion that the Duma's creation ushered in a constitutional regime. As previously noted, early rightists

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<sup>45</sup> *Ruskaia rech'*, March 28, 1906.

<sup>46</sup> *Ruskaia rech'*, Dec 14, 1905.

vehemently rejected constitutionalism. Objecting to the PRO's ambiguous position that the October Manifesto had created "the beginning of a Russian constitution, which in no way limits Tsarist autocracy," most Odessan monarchists shunned the PRO in hopes of finding a more ideologically pure party.<sup>47</sup>

The wait was not long, as the URP's Odessa branch (OURP) held its founding meeting on February 5, 1906. The gathering opened with a speech by the rector of the Odessa Orthodox seminary, who beseeched the OURP to "deliver Russia from the failings of West European and American parliamentarianism" and recited prayers for the Imperial family and URP leaders. Following the singing of patriotic hymns, OURP President Count A. I. Konovnitsyn denounced the crimes of the revolutionaries, called for Russians to unite in defense of orthodoxy, nationality, and autocracy, and urged members to elect rightists to the Duma. For the duration of the assembly, the group registered new members and attached OURP pins to their shirts. The meeting ended with participants composing a greeting telegram to the tsar. Consequently, the OURP held weekly Sunday meetings that regularly attracted several thousand people.<sup>48</sup>

Konovnitsyn already had a checkered history when he founded the OURP. Allegedly thrown out of the navy for drunkenness, as a count, he used his connections in high society to find employment as a land captain in the Prisyshskii district. Fired a year later for embezzling funds, he moved to Odessa and worked for the Odessa Steam Navigation and Trading Company (ROPT), a firm that had once employed Sergei

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., February 22, 1906. Like many of the smaller monarchist groups throughout Russia that pre-dated the URP, the PRO eventually merged with the URP. See *Za tsaria i rodinu*, February 11, 1907.

<sup>48</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, Feb 7, 1906.

Witte.<sup>49</sup> His elevation to OURP president did little to curb his vices; government surveillance logs indicate he frequently came home at night so drunk that bodyguards had to carry him into his apartment. He impulsively blurted out anti-Semitic exclamations like “Beat the children of the Yids!” and once provoked a fistfight among his followers when he drunkenly bit the finger of one of his bodyguards. He was married but kept several mistresses, to whom he paid thousands of rubles a year to keep them quiet.<sup>50</sup> In his memoirs, Witte recalls that Konovnitsyn married the daughter of Witte’s first wife, ran through her money, then divorced her and married their governess.<sup>51</sup> Konvonytsin’s moral failings and unbridled venality later played a crucial role in the downfall of Odessa’s Black Hundred movement.

Although he lacked a high public profile when he established the OURP, Konovnitsyn had important contacts both in Odessa and among the URP’s national leaders, including his brother Emmanuil, a founder of the organization who later went on to displace Dubrovin as president. While in St. Petersburg during the October Manifesto’s promulgation, Konovnitsyn became acquainted with Dubrovin as he was creating the URP. On Dubrovin’s suggestion, Konovnitsyn returned to Odessa to organize the group’s Odessa branch.<sup>52</sup>

The city’s first rightist newspaper, *Ruskaia rech’* (Russian Speech), which ran its inaugural issue on December 6, 1905, helped to consolidate Odessa’s budding nationalist

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<sup>49</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 13, d. 6, l. 38. According to some of Konovnitsyn’s opponents, Konovnitsyn oversaw ROPT’s laundry services. In light of his good connections in Odessa, it seems doubtful that this, indeed, was his position.

<sup>50</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 223, ll. 111-12.

<sup>51</sup> Sergei Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, ed. and trans. Sidney Harcave (New York and England, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990), 685.

<sup>52</sup> A. Chernovskii and V. P. Viktorov, eds., *Soiuz Russkogo naroda: Po materialam chrezvychainoi sledstvennoi komissii vremennogo pravitel’sva 1917 g.* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo, 1929), 274.

movement. Published by Colonel Mikulin, a former Russian Assembly president who headed the local military cadet academy, the daily received subsidies from the local zemstvo and the Kherson Provincial Land Bank, both of which hoped to cultivate a movement that could help pacify the spreading agrarian disorders.<sup>53</sup> The paper initially espoused a surprisingly moderate line, even welcoming the Duma as Russia's "future parliament." But its tone changed after a month, as it took a harder line in support of the autocracy, more stridently denounced "Jewish revolutionaries," and introduced anti-Semitic articles and cartoons as a staple of its coverage. The paper's growing stridency apparently stemmed from rightists' mounting criticism of *Russkaia rech'* editor V. F. Dashkevich-Chaikovskii, who the paper fired in April 1906 due to his insufficient zeal for the monarchist cause.<sup>54</sup>

*Russkaia rech'*, however, was rather mild compared to the OURP weekly *Za tsaria i rodinu* (For Tsar and Homeland) that Konovnitsyn began publishing on March 19.<sup>55</sup> *Za tsaria* quickly established itself as a fanatically anti-Semitic and at times openly pogromist broadsheet. It ritually denounced Jews as "enemies of the human race"<sup>56</sup> and made dark threats that the Black Hundred could orchestrate a "colossal" pogrom after which "there would not even remain the memory of revolution and the Masonic-Jewish plot."<sup>57</sup> *Za tsaria* also bitterly attacked the local government for failing to suppress the revolutionaries. Despite City Mayor Grigor'ev's pleas to commander Kaulbars and even to Prime Minister Stolypin that *Za tsaria* be shut down for undermining Odessa's

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<sup>53</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 815, l. 2, 5.

<sup>54</sup> *Za tsaria*, April 16, 1906.

<sup>55</sup> The paper was published daily from February 1907.

<sup>56</sup> *Za tsaria*, April 23, 1906.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, May 6, 1907.

stability and eroding respect for the city's authorities, the paper stayed open thanks to Kaulbars' protection.<sup>58</sup>

The imposition of martial law forced most workers back to their jobs, although strikes continued to plague the city for the rest of December. It did not, however, succeed in reestablishing law and order or in suppressing the revolutionaries. Armed robberies and other attacks on shopkeepers became an ever-present fact of city life, while revolutionaries stepped up their assaults on the police. The SDs, who shunned terror as a tactic, played little role in the revolutionary violence, which was committed by smaller Jewish and anarchist groups as well as the SRs, who voted at their first national congress at the end of 1905 and the beginning of 1906 to commence a "partisan war" against city officials and policemen.<sup>59</sup> On February 1, amid shooting and bombing attacks against police officers, Kaulbars declared that anyone caught storing or transporting unauthorized weapons would be subject to the death penalty.<sup>60</sup>

Unable to pacify the city, Kaulbars and General-Governor Karangozov welcomed the consolidation of the rightist movement as a counterweight to the revolutionaries. In addition to demonstrating support for the OURP by receiving delegations of their members and protecting their organization and its paper from Grigor'ev, Karangozov and Kaulbars provided the OURP with a more valuable service; from the imposition of martial law on December 15, 1905, through November 17, 1906, Karangozov and his successor, P. F. Glagolev, personally approved a combined 686 weapons carrying permits

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<sup>58</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999 ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 1-3.

<sup>59</sup> Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 17.

<sup>60</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, February 2, 1906.

for Odessa residents,<sup>61</sup> of which nearly half went to OURP members.<sup>62</sup> The appearance of armed OURP members on the streets of Odessa sparked rumors of government plans to organize a new pogrom.<sup>63</sup>

Pressures in the city rose throughout the summer of 1906. Another series of strikes beginning in May paralyzed the port, while hospital workers walked off the job in June. Relations continued to deteriorate between the city's Jewish and Russian inhabitants, as on-going revolutionary violence and OURP incitement brought interethnic tensions to a fever pitch. Then, on July 8, a Jewish resident killed a Cossack soldier, Vasilii Zhuraviev. (In *Russkaia rech*'s rendition of the incident, a Jewish mob pelted Zhuraviev with rocks before a member of the crowd stabbed him to death). In response to the Zhuraviev killing, *Za tsaria* published an inflammatory article declaring that "Jewish insolence can only be suppressed by force" and predicting that, if the government continued to prove helpless in suppressing "Jewish brutality," the Jews would fall victim to the "flame of the people's vigilantism."<sup>64</sup>

Zhuraviev's funeral on July 10, which featured a speech by Konovnitsyn, sparked scattered attacks on Jewish shops and apartments that the police quickly suppressed. A larger mob gathered the following day, but shooting from Jewish self-defense forces stymied its aggression. Soldiers, in turn, fired upon the Jewish forces. Similar clashes erupted in other parts of the city, killing at least two Jews.<sup>65</sup> The Zhuraviev killing established a pattern of conflict between OURP supporters and the city's armed Jews for

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<sup>61</sup> GARF, f. 102 (O.O.), op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 77. Karangozov approved 408 permits through the end of his tenure on August 16, 1906. Glagolev approved the rest.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., ll. 89-93.

<sup>63</sup> *Russkaia rech*', July 11, 1906.

<sup>64</sup> *Za tsaria*, July 9, 1906.

<sup>65</sup> *Russkaia rech*', July 11, 13, 1906.

the next year: revolutionary assassinations sparked large funeral processions prominently featuring an OURP contingent; armed clashes broke out between the mourners and Jewish self-defense groups, with each side blaming the other for firing first; shootings then spread throughout the city until the authorities suppressed the disorders.

On the day of Zhuraviev's funeral, Kaulbars met with a delegation of forty Jews to request that they convince Jewish youths to stop committing violent crimes. Denying rumors that the government planned to organize a pogrom, Kaulbars relayed an unmistakable message; responding to accusations that the authorities had been remiss in suppressing attacks on Jews, Kaulbars declared, "If lower officials are not fully concerned with stopping the disorders, you cannot forget that they are closer to the people, they came from this people." He claimed soldiers would maintain order, but warned, "[D]on't forget that aside from the troops there is the people, who cannot remain indifferent to all the current events and insults, and this could lead to the most undesirable consequences."<sup>66</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Monarchist leaders found ideal conditions for the creation of a Black Hundred movement in Odessa. A large Jewish population, already resented as economic competitors by many Russians, provided the leadership of a violent revolutionary movement. Paralyzing labor unrest and widespread criminality added to the social chaos. In the wings stood a number of people, with Konovnitsyn at the forefront, who realized

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., July 11, 1906.

not only that a Black Hundred organization could easily exploit the public yearning for law and order, but that they could make a pretty penny by leading such a group.

By the summer of 1906, conditions in Odessa continued to deteriorate. Unable to restore order or suppress the revolutionaries even under martial law, the local authorities began turning to the vigilantism of the Black Hundreds for support. Protected and even armed by the city's most powerful officials and finding sympathy from a weary and fearful population, the Black Hundred movement rapidly spread in Odessa upon the OURP's arrival. The stage had been set for the explosion of violence that would be unleashed in the autumn, when OURP paramilitaries took to the streets to reclaim them from their enemies.

## Chapter 5

### The Capture of a City

The OURP found a welcoming environment in Odessa. Shocked by the chaos unleashed during 1905, many Russians had few regrets at the prospect of those deemed responsible for the unrest—namely, Novorossiisk University students and the city’s entire Jewish population—being dealt a taste of their own medicine. Despite the OURP’s ineffectiveness in eliminating revolutionary activity or ending the assassinations of police officers, the group’s violent campaign did make the streets unsafe for revolutionary crowds, thereby driving revolutionary activity into underground cells. Regarding OURP vigilantism as a useful force for law and order, Odessa’s military commander protected the group from attempts by both local and central authorities to suppress its violent activities. The fact that Prime Minister Stolypin himself proved incapable of suppressing the organization reveals the extent to which the central government’s control of the provinces significantly eroded during the Revolution of 1905, a problem that the OURP deftly exploited.

#### URP Vigilantism in Odessa

By the summer of 1906, martial law had done little to impose order in Odessa. Two police officers were killed in April, one of whom fell victim to a revolutionary assassination,<sup>1</sup> while a renewed port strike from May through July severely disrupted the

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<sup>1</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, April 16, 25, May 1, 1906. Also in April, Konovnitsyn’s nephew was killed in an assassination attempt on Moscow General-Governor O. V. Dubasov. See *Russkaia rech'*, April 25, 1906.

city's economy.<sup>2</sup> On August 30, authorities introduced field courts in Odessa under commander Kaulbars' control. These courts were empowered to try and sentence (to death, when deemed necessary) suspected revolutionaries within four days.<sup>3</sup> Mere days after their imposition, unknown assailants assassinated a police officer and a night guard. The victims' funeral, featuring a ceremonial wreath-laying by OURP members, led to a conflict between OURP sympathizers and armed Jews, resulting in the stabbing and several beatings of Jews, as well as scattered attacks on Jewish shops and apartments.<sup>4</sup>

The turmoil benefited the OURP, as the city's inhabitants became increasingly supportive of its demands for a merciless crackdown against revolutionaries. Membership in the OURP climbed rapidly, with officials estimating membership at 20,000 by January 1907.<sup>5</sup> This projection, however, seems to have originated with the OURP itself, which likely makes it a considerable exaggeration. Omel'ianchuk offers a more likely figure of 8,440 members between the OURP and Odessa's Union of the Russian Men.<sup>6</sup> This still represents a significant branch that may have been the OURP's largest in a Ukrainian city.

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<sup>2</sup> The strike began on May 12 among steamship crews demanding higher wages, an eight-hour workday, and the reopening of a collective bargaining mechanism called "Registration" that General-Governor Karangozov had abolished on December 31, 1905, due to the alleged politicization of participating workers. Later, strikers also called for the release of four workers arrested during the strike. Work resumed at the end of June, when the Odessa steamship company (ROPT) and Karangozov capitulated to most of the strikers' demands, including the reopening of Registration. That strike immediately gave way to a two-week dockworkers' strike that ended after Karangozov threatened to employ armed force and expel all the strikers from Odessa. See *Russkaia rech'* June 2, 27, July 9, 11, 1906.

<sup>3</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, September 1, 1906.

<sup>4</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, September 8, 1906.

<sup>5</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 147.

<sup>6</sup> I. V. Omel'ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie na teritorii Ukrainy, 1904-1914 gg.* (Kiev: Natsionalnyi institut Ukrainsko-Rossiiskikh otnoshenii, 2000), 143.

The organization established a tearoom on April 23, 1906, that functioned as the OURP headquarters in a building donated by a wealthy supporter.<sup>7</sup> With a rapidly growing membership, support from rich benefactors, the protection of the city's military commander, and an established headquarters, the OURP became more audacious, and its paper, *Za tsaria*, published ever more brazen threats against Jews. On August 13, 1906, *Za tsaria* printed a letter from Konovnitsyn bragging that OURP members had apprehended and turned over to the authorities a Jewish student who was plotting to assassinate him. Konovnitsyn declared "to the scoundrel-Jewish-revolutionaries, their protectors, [and] their instigators" that they will "be destroyed on the spot" if any of their "vile" company should fall into the hands of OURP members after attempting an assassination. Konovnitsyn further ordered his followers to "unmercifully destroy hundreds, and even thousands" of revolutionaries if he himself should fall victim to an assassin.<sup>8</sup> The incitement continued in printed OURP flyers that declared "It's time to beat the Jews." One flyer proclaimed that the OURP had passed a death sentence against City Mayor Grigor'ev.<sup>9</sup>

Vigilantism presented a real threat. In mid-August Konovnitsyn and his vice president, Baron Biuller, began organizing paramilitary druzhiny called the White Guards. Dressed in martial uniforms and legally carrying revolvers thanks to the weapons permits they received from General-Governor Karangozov and his successor, P. F.

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<sup>7</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, March 5, 1906 and *Za tsaria*, February 11, 1907. Purishkevich, who spearheaded the OURP's campaign to open tearooms, attended an OURP meeting on February 12, urging the creation of a tearoom there. *Russkaia rech'*, February 14, 1906.

<sup>8</sup> *Za tsaria*, August 13, 1906. The Jewish student apprehended by the OURP was later tried and found not guilty of attempting to assassinate Konovnitsyn. See GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. III, l. 81.

<sup>9</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 118-21.

Glagolev,<sup>10</sup> the White Guards comprised mostly teenage gymnasium students. They were divided into six main groups called “hundreds” (*sotni*), although some of these groups only contained half the requisite one-hundred members. Each *sotnia*’s leader, called an *ataman*, received assistance from a deputy known as an *esaul*.<sup>11</sup> Konovnitsyn and Biuller presided over the entire apparatus.<sup>12</sup>

Beginning in mid-September 1906, gangs of White Guards—usually sporting OURP badges and armed with truncheons, knives, and revolvers—began patrolling outside the OURP tearoom. They stopped passersby, searched them, and asked “Are you Russian or a Yid?” Regardless of the answer, they beat suspected Jews. The assaults, including the murder of an Odessa steamship company (ROPT) employee who was mistaken for a Jew,<sup>13</sup> rapidly spread throughout the city. Grigor’ev tried to suppress the attacks, but Kaulbars and the successive general-governors undermined his efforts. Novorossiisk University students became a favorite target of the OURP gangs, provoking the university’s rector and its professors’ council to submit complaints to Prime Minister Stolypin. Both letters emphasized the complicity in the violence of police officials, who allegedly allowed OURP thugs to go totally unpunished and even arrested several students attempting to flee OURP attacks.<sup>14</sup> Following the murder of a Novorossiisk student by White Guards,<sup>15</sup> the university’s Coalition Council released a declaration

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., ll. 60-63. Karangozov resigned in August due to illness and was assassinated the following July in the city of Piatigorosk. See *Za tsaria*, July 25, 1907.

<sup>11</sup> These terms, which referred to the top ranks of Cossack military units, were a tribute to Cossack patriotism and military service.

<sup>12</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 4. Despite their basic organization into hundreds, the White Guards typically operated in much smaller groups of a dozen members or less.

<sup>13</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 60-63.

<sup>14</sup> DAOO, f. 45, op. 11, d. 2, l. 3, and d. 7, l. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Birzheviia vedomosti*, September 12, 1906, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 11.

threatening “self-defense measures” and the interruption of university life if the beatings continued.<sup>16</sup>

The university’s protests, along with similar ones from representatives of Odessa’s stock exchange and from a group of seventy-four city electors,<sup>17</sup> had little effect. In early November, the funeral of another assassinated police official turned into a public demonstration of the growing might of the OURP, whose armed members fired a salute to the victim into the air. The funeral led to a vicious spate of OURP attacks on November 8 during which members beat twenty-seven students, provoking the university indefinitely to suspend classes the following day.<sup>18</sup> The following January, OURP members killed another Novorossiisk University student after he shot and wounded two OURP members who chased him.<sup>19</sup> The university’s role in fomenting antigovernment unrest in Odessa henceforth was greatly diminished by the OURP’s physical intimidation of students and by the disruption of university life for the entire school year owing to prolonged student strikes protesting the OURP attacks.

As the beatings spread, Grigor’ev published an open letter affirming that private citizens had no right to search passersby. He further urged police officials to employ “the strictest measures” to apprehend those behind the beatings.<sup>20</sup> The letter most likely came in response to rumors—stemming from police officials’ lackadaisical attempts to suppress the beatings—that the OURP acted with police sanction. These rumors contained an element of truth; although Grigor’ev adamantly opposed OURP violence,

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<sup>16</sup> DAOO, f. 45, op. 11, d. 7, l. 3b.

<sup>17</sup> *Pravitel’ stvennoe soobshchenie*, February 17, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 339 and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 189-90.

<sup>18</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 57, 72.

<sup>19</sup> DAOO, f. 634, op. 1, d. 803, ll. 77-79. The OURP member who shot the student used a pistol given to him on the spot by a police officer.

<sup>20</sup> *Russkaia rech’*, September 17, 1906.

his attitude often failed to filter down to rank and file police officers. The Odessa police force, as was the case with police forces throughout most of Russia, was severely understaffed. Local officials and commanders had petitioned the central government since the late 1890s for additional police officers. Although the force grew within a year of the October pogrom to 1,200 regular officers and 300 reserves, this still proved inadequate for a restive city of 500,000 inhabitants.<sup>21</sup> The ratio reflected that of Berlin and Vienna at this time, but the civil unrest in Odessa necessitated a significantly larger police force than the level sufficient for peaceful cities.<sup>22</sup> The inability of the shorthanded police force to cope with the revolutionaries' assault led to a sympathetic attitude by Odessa policemen toward vigilante attacks on Jews, as had been evident during the October pogrom. Consequently, police officers had a remarkably poor record of apprehending OURP suspects in beating incidents.<sup>23</sup> In one letter, General-Governor Glagolev incredibly attributed police officers' failure to apprehend the perpetrators of street beatings to the city's fog and poor lighting.

The street violence continued throughout most of 1907, reaching a crescendo in August after a revolutionary bombing killed two police officers and injured several others. The officers' funerals gave way to armed clashes between OURP members and Jewish self-defense forces that left two Jews dead and at least one OURP member shot.<sup>24</sup> The funeral of another assassinated police officer in early September led to a renewed series of armed conflicts resulting in the deaths of a Jew and a fourteen-year-old Christian

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<sup>21</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 177-79.

<sup>22</sup> William C. Fuller, *Civil-Military Conflict in Imperial Russia, 1881-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 102-03

<sup>23</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 177-79.

<sup>24</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 345-48,

girl.<sup>25</sup> A string of armed robberies broke out, including the beating and murder of an elderly peasant woman in her own apartment by five armed OURP youths.<sup>26</sup>

Already the focus of international media attention, events in Odessa took on a new political importance when foreign citizens and consuls became caught up in the violence. At the end of January 1907, suspected OURP members beat an Italian citizen, followed soon after by the beating of an Austrian.<sup>27</sup> Two weeks later, the British, French, American, and Italian consuls in Odessa received anonymous letters threatening to kill them if they attempted to defend Odessa's Jews. The threats and ongoing street violence provoked a deluge of letters to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from foreign ambassadors in St. Petersburg asking the Russian government to ensure the safety of their citizens in Odessa.<sup>28</sup>

### **Youth Violence**

The prominent role of teenage gymnasium students in rightist agitation and violence extended past their participation in the White Guard gangs. At roughly the same time that the White Guards appeared, the OURP in Odessa underwent the first of a series of schisms. Dissatisfied with Konovnitsyn's dictatorial style, an OURP founder, the hereditary noble N. N. Rodzevich, split from the OURP and established a separate monarchist organization, *Souiz Russkykh liudei* (Union of the Russian Men, or URM).

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<sup>25</sup> *Birzhevye vedomosti*, September 8, 1907, and *Novoe vremia*, September 4, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 15, 18.

<sup>26</sup> DAOO, f. 634, op. 1, d. 806, ll. 4, 5, 9-11, 21.

<sup>27</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 249. After the beating of the Italian, authorities arrested a policeman for failing to arrest the assailant, who the victim had identified to him. See *Ibid.*, l. 342.

<sup>28</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 217, 223, 226. The British General-Consul in Odessa also received a letter from revolutionaries threatening to assassinate him unless his government made a similar appeal to the Russian Government for the safety of British citizens in Odessa. Revolutionaries thus hoped to use negative international publicity over events in Odessa to embarrass the Russian government.

Vowing to support the unlimited autocracy through publications and electoral agitation, the group's political platform closely replicated that of the OURP. The organization began holding regular Sunday meetings in addition to "pedagogical Saturday" sessions dedicated to discussing problems in the Russian educational system.

The URM contained the same teenage hooligan element that dominated the OURP White Guards. As Joan Neuberger notes, inveterate juvenile delinquency existed in St. Petersburg and many other cities. Often abandoned by their families, neglected by working parents, or abused by alcoholic fathers or oppressive workshop masters, these youths lived in overcrowded apartments, flophouses, or on the streets. They often loitered with criminal elements of the underclass in taverns and tearooms, where they internalized crime, prostitution, and begging as a normal way of life.<sup>29</sup> A Ekaterinoslav newspaper printed a particularly vivid description of them: "The majority of them degenerate into that sort of person it has become customary to call 'hooligan.' Already from the age of seven they begin stealing, often using violence. They become more and more embittered and, by the time they are fifteen, their experiences have produced glaring examples of that type of Black Hundred with a rich reserve of hatred toward all that is honest. . . . Bands of children aged seven to twelve have become notorious as the most awful cutthroats."<sup>30</sup> In Odessa, the large number of underemployed dockworkers provided a natural habitat for these kinds of brutalized youths, who indeed gravitated to the violent agenda of the Black Hundred.

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<sup>29</sup> Joan Neuberger, *Hooliganism: Crime, Culture, and Power in St. Petersburg, 1900-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 170-72, 174, 184-85, 190.

<sup>30</sup> Charters Wynn, *Workers, Strikes, and Pogroms: The Donbass-Dnepr Bend in Late Imperial Russia 1870-1905* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 75.

Rowdy youths dominated the URM's chaotic meetings, interrupting the reading of reports and other official business to launch jeremiads against their school officials. The youths, some of whom carried revolvers in the meetings, also indulged in inflammatory political acts like burning the electoral lists of leftist parties. An official observer from Grigor'ev's office reported that Rodzevich, who presided over the meetings, acted "remarkably servile" toward the youths, whose extremism was encouraged by the strident tone of the meetings' orators. One speaker, for example, castigated history teachers en-masse as liberationists and lackeys of the Jews, after which he denounced several teachers by name as "spiders."<sup>31</sup>

Their presence at these meetings in itself violated laws banning youths from joining political organizations, participating in political meetings, or attending public assemblies without the formal assent of their school officials and the accompaniment of a parent. Some of them were too young to legally attend public meetings at all. At the URM's meeting on February 3, 1907, Grigor'ev's representative, Liutsianovich, insisted that Rodzevich expel the young students from the meeting. Rodzevich complied but some of the youths refused to leave, as attendees began cursing at Liutsianovich and accusing both him and Grigor'ev of having been bought off by the Jews. Following a speaker's shrill attack on local and central government officials for their alleged complicity in Jewish and revolutionary misdeeds, Liutsianovich ordered the meeting closed. In a demonstration of the limits of the local administration's authority, Rodzevich simply ignored the order. Liutsianovich ended his report to Grigor'ev on this meeting by

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<sup>31</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, ll 32-33, 47, 49.

requesting to be relieved of the task of attending URM meetings in light of the threats he received from its participants.<sup>32</sup>

Influential Black Hundred sympathizers frustrated Grigor'ev's attempts to disconnect school youths from the rightist organizations. The head of the local seminary, O. Anatoliia, allowed the URM to create its own school within the seminary and to hold URM meetings on its premises,<sup>33</sup> which were frequented by groups of twenty to twenty-five seminary students. Moreover, when Grigor'ev attempted to enlist the support of the head of the Odessa educational system for keeping young students away from URM meetings, the administrator parroted the URM's farcical claim that its Saturday meetings were nonpolitical assemblies that merely discussed "pedagogical and patriotic" themes. Showing a deep familiarity with URM agitation, he added that students' attendance there was much more tolerable than their visits to the *Iliuzion*, a local theater that the URM criticized for allegedly showing immoral and pornographic films.<sup>34</sup>

In a report issued two months later, the same administrator acknowledged that he had been granting permission for students, if accompanied by a parent, to attend the URM's "pedagogical" meetings, which he praised for instilling patriotism and discipline in students that helped to counteract the "antinational" lessons of history teachers. He further praised students who were "secret" (in other words, illegal) OURP and URM members for their opposition to leftist students' plans to spark student strikes throughout the city's gymnasia.<sup>35</sup> The lack of support for his policies among local officials and the blatant intimidation of his representatives prevented Grigor'ev from enforcing the law

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 1. 49.

<sup>33</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, October 31 and November 28, 1906.

<sup>34</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, ll. 66, 69.

<sup>35</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, 1. 96-99.

against youth attendance at political meetings. Reports from Liutsianovich's successor at URM meetings show that he refrained from acting against young students and military cadets who illegally attended URM meetings in light of the "agitated state" of URM leaders and their ongoing conflicts with Grigor'ev's office.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Port Invasion**

The OURP greatly expanded its influence in Odessa, as did Konovnitsyn personally, thanks to its adroit manipulation of another port strike. On November 18, 1906, Glagolev again closed steamship crews' Registration collective bargaining mechanism.<sup>37</sup> Responding to the dissatisfaction of ROPT and smaller steamship companies with the growing empowerment of Registration workers—who demanded that the companies hire workers based exclusively on their own recommendation—Glagolev sought to replace Registration with an official workers' union. Crews responded with a general strike that brought outbound traffic from the port to a standstill.

Owing to the declining fortunes of Odessa's port since the 1870s, Odessa never lacked for job seekers, including those recently laid off due to the economic toll of the previous years' strikes, as well as the permanently unemployed underclass. The OURP found scores of recruits among these people, many of whom joined in the belief that the OURP, with their perceived official connections, would help its members find employment. The OURP now delivered on these expectations. Within days of the steamship crew strike, ROPT began replacing the striking crews with OURP members.

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<sup>36</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, l. 69, 70.

<sup>37</sup> This was the same mechanism that had been closed by Karangozov and reopened after the summer port strike.

When dockworkers joined the strike a week later, they in turn promptly gave way to OURP members. The rapidity with which OURP members replaced the strikers indicates a plan for such a contingency had been worked out in advance between ROPT and Konovnitsyn.

The OURP took control of thirty-five steamship crews, while OURP members supplanted an additional 1,300-1,500 dockworkers.<sup>38</sup> Konovnitsyn organized the dockworkers into cooperatives (*arteli*) that only admitted OURP members. With the support of a grateful ROPT, these *arteli* came to dominate work at the port so that by 1908 virtually all port workers counted among its members, thus effectively closing the port to workers outside the OURP.<sup>39</sup> The OURP further solidified its grip on the port when ROPT hired an OURP dockside security crew that received twenty revolvers from Kaulbars personally.<sup>40</sup>

By allowing the OURP to take control of Odessa's main economic artery, the port strike immensely increased the power of the OURP in Odessa and of Konovnitsyn in particular. Hundreds of new members joined the OURP, which suddenly emerged as a major source of employment in the city. Konovnitsyn became an influential figure within the local economy with his newfound ability to dispense patronage to his supporters. His stature within the Odessa OURP grew as well, as the new OURP dockworkers risked their jobs if they criticized Konovnitsyn's leadership of the organization; if Konovnitsyn expelled any worker from the OURP, that worker would automatically lose his membership in the OURP *artel* as well. Konovnitsyn became a key power broker for

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<sup>38</sup> *Za tsaria*, February 11, 1907, and *Russkaia rech'*, November 29, 1906.

<sup>39</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 13, d. 6, l. 284, and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 208.

<sup>40</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 92.

ROPT, whose director personally began paying Konovnitsyn 200 rubles per month for his provision of the dockside security force.<sup>41</sup> This money supplemented income he received from other sources, especially kickbacks he collected from agreements negotiated by his contractors between the OURP arteli and ROPT. Finally, Konovnitsyn took a big cut of the dues collected from new OURP members and artel workers. Konovnitsyn established six workers' arteli in the city, including one for factory workers, all of which paid dues to the OURP.<sup>42</sup> He also found a valuable use for the OURP maid and janitor artel, which he claimed helped the OURP to keep the city's house dwellers under surveillance.<sup>43</sup>

### **Official Complicity with the OURP**

Rightist extremism and violence at the end of 1906 and beginning of 1907 fed off of continuing revolutionary bloodshed and labor unrest. In addition to the labor unrest at the port, revolutionaries stepped up their campaign of assassinations and bombings. Owing to its replacement of striking workers by OURP members, ROPT emerged as a prime target for the revolutionaries. Revolutionary bombings damaged four ROPT steamships at the port in December and January. Although no lives were lost in those attacks, revolutionaries assassinated two ROPT ship captains over the following two months. Revolutionaries also killed an OURP member on January 20, the same day that a police officer was killed while apprehending an assassin of one of the ROPT captains.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> DAOO f. 2, op. 7, d. 308, l. 34 and op. 11, d. 217, l. 60.

<sup>42</sup> These finances will be examined in detail in the following chapter.

<sup>43</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, March 15, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 347.

<sup>44</sup> *Pravitel'stvennoe soobshchenie*, February 17, 1907 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 339.

The White Guards, spurred on by public outrage at the revolutionaries and facilitated by the sympathetic complicity of local officials, terrorized the city's Jews and university students for an entire year. In mid-December 1906, General-Governor Glagolev released a public statement, similar to Grigor'ev's declaration, condemning the OURP's street beatings. Indicating the continuing problem of police collusion in the beatings, Glagolev acknowledged that most perpetrators escaped apprehension, and he called on police officers to take the 'most energetic measures' to stop the violence.<sup>45</sup> In early February, Glagolev publicly demanded that police apprehend beating suspects who, he specified, mostly comprised fifteen- to twenty-year-old OURP members. He also threatened to take unspecified measures against the OURP if the beatings did not stop.<sup>46</sup>

These pleas, however, contradicted Glagolev and Kaulbars's public support for the OURP. Possessing supreme power as a result of martial law stipulations, Kaulbars established the city's sympathetic policies toward the OURP, which he insistently proclaimed to be a valuable ally in suppressing the revolutionaries. These policies were implemented by Glagolev and his predecessor, Karangozov, who were both directly subordinate to Kaulbars and had both been handpicked by him for the general-governor post. With the police force and the Cossack soldiers at Kaulbars's disposal, an unambiguous crackdown on the OURP, as favored by Grigor'ev, could have quickly ended the violence. But with martial law subordinating Grigor'ev's power over security

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<sup>45</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, December 14, 1906.

<sup>46</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 264, and *Za tsaria*, February 8, 1907. Next to Glagolev's statement, *Za tsaria* printed a letter by Konovnitsyn attributing the beatings to provocateurs donning URP badges in hopes of discrediting the OURP. Three months later, however, the paper openly boasted that the OURP beat Jews when they insulted the OURP, the tsar, the Russian people, or the Orthodox Church. See *Za tsaria*, May 13, 1907. Similarly, in February *Za tsaria* printed a message from the OURP denying that the organization had a *druzhina*, while a *Za tsaria* article just three weeks later declared that an OURP member threatened by revolutionaries would be protected by an OURP *druzhina*. See *Za tsaria*, February 10, March 4, 1907.

issues to both the general-governor and the military commander, the OURP received the necessary legal space to carry out its violent campaign.

Most consequentially, Kaulbars and Glagolev supported the OURP by granting hundreds of weapons permits to OURP members, including to underage White Guard youths.<sup>47</sup> According to Grigor'ev, most OURP members hardly comprised the kinds of people that should have access to weapons; they were mostly residents possessing “a low level of intellectual development, lacking a healthy sense of political tact . . . particular to the rude, uneducated rabble.”<sup>48</sup> On orders of Kaulbars, Glagolev, and the Odessa police chief, these undesirables received weapons permits without any advance inquiry into their reliability. Grigor'ev's requests to Glagolev to revoke their weapons permits following a February 1907 incident in which White Guards fired on a group of rock-throwing workers, killing at least one worker and injuring five, simply went unanswered.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Glagolev delayed Grigor'ev's appeal to search the OURP tearoom for illegal weapons until OURP members transferred the guns to another location.<sup>50</sup>

Kaulbars and Glagolev supported the OURP in other ways as well. Although Grigor'ev was the nominal chief of the police force, under martial law Kaulbars and Glagolev's orders superseded his own. Their sympathetic policies toward the OURP met with little resistance from police officers who revolutionary assassins routinely targeted. Most notably, Kaulbars arbitrarily pronounced not guilty and released from police

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<sup>47</sup> As previously noted, Kaulbars additionally approved the sale of twenty army rifles to the Elizavetgrad OURP, but the Kherson Provincial Governor refused to pass the weapons on to URP members. See GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39., t. 2, ll. 188, 222.

<sup>48</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 91.

<sup>49</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 56-58.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., ll. 104-06.

detention two OURP members arrested for plotting to assassinate Grigor'ev.<sup>51</sup> Police complicity is further evidenced by Glagolev's order allowing police to conduct searches of revolutionaries based solely on allegations voiced by Konovnitsyn, Biuller, or Rodzevich.<sup>52</sup> Grigor'ev even claimed that Konovnitsyn and Biuller reported directly to Kaulbars, thus raising the specter that Kaulbars did not merely tolerate OURP violence, but actually helped to direct it.<sup>53</sup>

Kaulbars made repeated public demonstrations of support for the OURP. He continually overruled Grigor'ev's attempts to ban public OURP demonstrations, which frequently degenerated into mass beatings of Jewish passersby. Demonstrators frequently set off to "greet the Cossacks" at a military garrison where Kaulbars publicly greeted the crowds, which sometimes included armed OURP youths.<sup>54</sup> In February 1907, over Grigor'ev's objections, Kaulbars permitted a four-day-long street demonstration commemorating the first anniversary of the founding of the OURP. During the festivities, OURP members fanned out throughout the city and beat Jews, provoking an armed clash with Jewish self-defense forces that resulted in the wounding of three or four OURP members and the shooting of a janitor who refused to shelter a Jewish resident attempting to flee from OURP attackers. Carrying busts of the tsar, OURP demonstrators later regrouped and marched to the military commander's palace where they were hailed by

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<sup>51</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 118-20.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 91.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 89-90. Kaulbars's role in dispensing orders to the OURP is further evinced by a letter to Grigor'ev written by a fireman who had received a death threat from an OURP member. When the fireman brought his problem before Kaulbars, Kaulbars summoned a White Guard ataman and commanded him to rescind any order to kill the fireman. See GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 6.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 60-63.

Kaulbars.<sup>55</sup> When URP President Dubrovin visited Odessa in September 1906, Kaulbars allowed a raucous demonstration of 300 armed OURP members to meet Dubrovin at the train station, from which police reportedly warned Jews and students to stay away.<sup>56</sup>

Although Dubrovin's visit sparked a new series of beatings by OURP members, Kaulbars hosted the URP leader to breakfast.<sup>57</sup>

Kaulbars's presence at a June 1907 performance of the patriotic opera "*Zhizn' za tsaria*" (A Life for the Tsar) provoked an outpouring of nationalist sentiment from the packed theater. The audience sang along as the orchestra responded to its demands that it repeatedly play the national anthem. Between acts, OURP Vice President B. A. Pelikan sparked vociferous applause by giving a speech praising Kaulbars. Before leading the crowd in the singing of more patriotic hymns, Kaulbars declared his dedication to defending the Russian people and serving the tsar.<sup>58</sup> Grigor'ev reported to Stolypin that the scene at the opera provoked an "extremely hostile mood" against the city's Jewish population that nearly resulted in an explosion of violence three days later when a bombing attack killed a police officer. The assassin turned out not to be Jewish, but the population automatically blamed the Jews, and Cossack troops occupied the city in order to forestall any attempts at a pogrom. The population became further aroused the next day when unknown assailants fired on the officer's funeral procession. Fearing violence, shopkeepers shut their stores and the streets emptied out. Although "a pogrom hung on a hair," the authorities maintained order. Grigor'ev told Stolypin that a "terrible

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., II. 202, 204. In Kaulbars's account of the incident, he refrained from mentioning any beatings by OURP members and claimed the Jewish militias provoked the clashes. See I. 205.

<sup>56</sup> *Rech'*, September 28 and 29, 1906 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 31, 32, and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 60-63.

<sup>57</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 60-63.

<sup>58</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 132-33.

catastrophe” could be expected any day so long as Kaulbars continued to openly support the OURP, adding that it would be impossible to prevent a pogrom if a revolutionary attempted to assassinate the military commander.<sup>59</sup>

### **The Rightist Press**

Kaulbars and Glagolev gave crucial assistance to the OURP by rejecting Grigor’ev’s repeated and emphatic demands to shut down *Za tsaria* and expel Konovnitsyn from Odessa. The paper engaged not only in anti-Semitic agitation, but also launched strident attacks against the government. Karangozov and Glagolev’s tolerance for this criticism came in sharp contrast to their attitude toward leftist papers, dozens of which they banned in Odessa throughout 1906 and 1907.<sup>60</sup> In contrast, *Za tsaria* received only nominal punishments such as twenty-five ruble fines or short-term suspensions following the publication of particularly egregious aspersions.<sup>61</sup> Despite the slightly less inflammatory nature of *Russkaia rech’*, Grigor’ev fruitlessly lobbied for the removal of its publisher and the expulsion of its editor from Odessa as well. He argued that *Russkaia rech’*’s danger stemmed from its wide distribution throughout the Odessa military garrison thanks to its publisher’s position as chief of the local cadet academy.<sup>62</sup>

But *Za tsaria* was the chief culprit in undermining faith in the local government. Openly labeling Grigor’ev as an OURP “enemy,”<sup>63</sup> *Za tsaria* denounced him for

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., I. 137.

<sup>60</sup> In June 1907, Glagolev banned 12 publications in a single day. See *Za tsaria*, June 29, 1907.

<sup>61</sup> Glagolev suspended *Za tsaria*’s publication on June 1-3, 1907 and August 25-31, 1907. See *Za tsaria*, June 4, 1907 and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, I. A, t. 3, I. 13.

<sup>62</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, I. A, t. 1, ll. 18-21. Glagolev, however, once ordered the detention of the *Russkaia rech’* editor for a week after the paper printed a particularly vulgar attack on Jews in an article about a slain police officer. See GARF, f. 102, op., 316, d. 999, ch. 39, I. A, ll. 152-53.

<sup>63</sup> *Za tsaria*, May 13, 1907.

appealing to “revolutionary scum” when he met with dockworkers following another conflict between OURP members and stone-throwing workers on April 4, 1907, in which OURP members shot and killed two workers.<sup>64</sup> It blasted his administration for its alleged refusal to act against easily identifiable Jewish revolutionaries, claiming that the administration showed indifference toward the “crowds of murderers” that freely roamed the city.<sup>65</sup> It heaped further abuse upon other local officials, including Novorossiisk University Rector Zanchevskii, who the paper described as a “formal state criminal,”<sup>66</sup> and even the local police force, which *Za tsaria* speculated may be deliberately missing its shots at criminal suspects on orders from the Jewish Bund.<sup>67</sup>

*Za tsaria* did not spare the central government from withering criticism. It described the OURP’s primary task as struggling against the *government* to keep Jews from obtaining rights that would harm the Russian people.<sup>68</sup> The paper dismissed Stolypin’s increasingly successful (and often brutal) campaign against the revolutionaries as a collection of inadequate half-measures doomed to fail, since only a dictatorial government could save Russia.<sup>69</sup> *Za tsaria* repeatedly upheld the URP as Russia’s “only beneficent resistance to revolution”<sup>70</sup> and once warned that “Stolypin should remember that although he often speaks the language of an Octobrist, he relies upon the URP, without which the government cannot exist for over a month.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., April 6, 1907.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., May 5, 1907.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., March 17, 1907.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., May 6, 1907.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., February 11, 1907.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., April 18, 1907.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., May 6, 1907.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., April 1, 1907.

*Za tsaria*, along with *Russkaia rech'*, also acted as the chief instigator of a bizarre episode in May 1907 known as the Mel'nikov case. According to police and rightwing press reports, on the night of May 23, six unknown Jews kidnapped a nineteen-year-old seminary student and OURP member, Mikhail Mel'nikov. The assailants tortured Mel'nikov by pulling out his hair, cutting him with knives along his chest, legs, and back, and carving the letters "B. O. S. R." (an acronym for "Fighting Organization of the Socialist Revolutionaries") into his leg. They then passed a death sentence on Mel'nikov for his membership in the OURP and for allegedly participating in the beating of Jews. But while moving him to a different location for execution, Mel'nikov cried out, his Jewish captors fled, and nearby soldiers rescued the victim.<sup>72</sup>

National rightwing papers like *Novoe vremia* and *Kolokol* (The Bell) cited the Mel'nikov case as evidence of the sadistic brutality of Jewish revolutionaries. *Za tsaria* printed photos of Mel'nikov's injuries and ran articles and letters from Konovnitsyn denouncing the "scoundrel Yid Socialist Revolutionaries" who perpetrated the attack (although uncharacteristically, *Za tsaria* repeatedly warned against resorting to a pogrom, noting that the tsar has spoken out against such vigilantism). In light of the case, *Za tsaria* called for the immediate removal of any Odessa police officers with Jewish family ties (including, it specified, officers with Christian wives who had converted from Judaism), the dismissal of all Polish police officers,<sup>73</sup> and the expulsion from Odessa of anyone in the local government, courts, banks, hospitals, private business, or at the port who had

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<sup>72</sup> *Novoe vremia*, May 30 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 232, and GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 218-19. Glagolev also released a public statement relating the details of the attack on Mel'nikov and appealing to the population to assist the authorities apprehend the perpetrators. See *Za tsaria*, May 26, 1907.

<sup>73</sup> Poles comprised less than 5 percent of Odessans. A disproportionate number of them served in the army, however, and the same may have held true with the police force. See Patricia Herlihy, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 250.

been “compromised” over the preceding few years. Ultimately, the paper blamed the Mel’nikov attack on Grigor’ev for his failure to act against the Jewish militias and for his “persecution” of the OURP which, the paper again emphasized, acted as the “only force counteracting the revolution in Odessa.”<sup>74</sup>

A letter from Rodzevich to Stolypin describing the Mel’nikov case and testifying that it proved the Russian population in Odessa was “in danger” provoked a demand from Stolypin that Odessa’s Jews be disarmed.<sup>75</sup> As fearful Jews disappeared from the city’s streets,<sup>76</sup> Glagolev, with Stolypin’s permission, invoked martial law statutes to justify an extended series of mass searches of homes and of people on the streets in order to confiscate illegal weapons.<sup>77</sup> The police carried out mass arrests throughout June, including a reported 1,500 arrests on June 17.<sup>78</sup>

But within days of the attack on Mel’nikov, the leftwing and liberal press began pointing out inconsistencies in Mel’nikov’s story. A week after the attack, *Rech’* (Speech) already speculated that the entire case was a provocation,<sup>79</sup> while journalists soon discovered that a former seminary student had testified to a court investigator that he and several other witnesses were in an orphanage with Mel’nikov on the evening he had supposedly been tortured by unknown Jews.<sup>80</sup> Other problems in the case included

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<sup>74</sup> *Za tsaria*, May 26, 27, 29, 1907.

<sup>75</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 217, 225.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 229.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 235, 238.

<sup>78</sup> *Rech’*, June 9, 1907 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 254, and *The Daily Telegraph*, June 18, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 263. Leftwing press reports claimed OURP members participated in the searches and arrests. See GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 255. Although no other sources verify this claim, its veracity cannot be arbitrarily discounted in light of Grigor’ev’s previous complaints that police officers searched people based solely on allegations by Konovnitsyn, Biuller, and Rodzevich.

<sup>79</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 234.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 247.

doctor reports indicating that Mel'nikov did not suffer the kind of torture he described, as well as authorities' inability to find the location where Mel'nikov claimed he had been held.<sup>81</sup> As doubts grew about the case, Glagolev banned the local press from publishing information about it other than his own official announcements, although he made an exception for *Russkaia rech'*, which fused the story with its typical anti-Semitic narrative.

Authorities eventually put two suspects on trial, which was postponed when Mel'nikov failed to appear in court. After spending six months in custody, a military tribunal found the suspects not guilty.<sup>82</sup> But in a transparent attempt to preserve the credibility of the prosecutors and other authorities that gave credence to the case, the court found that Mel'nikov had, in fact, been tortured by other unknown people.<sup>83</sup> The case provided a little-known precedent for the Beilis case. In both the Mel'nikov and Beilis affairs, the rulings that the inflammatory crimes had actually been perpetrated by unknown assailants provided a moral victory for national rightist leaders and local URP members who had demagogued the cases in order to demonstrate the supposedly satanic nature of Judaism.

Although Glagolev subjected local liberal and leftwing papers to heavy censorship, national leftwing papers could report unhindered on the chaos in Odessa. Subscribing to a generally antigovernment agenda, the liberal and leftist press found in Odessa a compelling narrative of government complicity in a campaign of OURP terrorism. The papers gave the crimes of the revolutionaries short shrift, with the frequent assassinations of officials and police officers usually warranting no more than a few lines,

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<sup>81</sup> *Rus'*, March 1, 1908 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 113.

<sup>82</sup> *Rus'*, March 1, 1908 and *Iuzhnye vedomosti*, March 12, 1908 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 113, 115.

<sup>83</sup> *Vedomosti Odesskago Gradonachal'stva*, March 13, 1908 in DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 195, l. 40.

as compared to lengthy and passionate reporting on the victims of OURP attacks. Grigor'ev sometimes found himself in the awkward position of having to refute to Stolypin the exaggerated accounts of OURP violence published in liberal newspapers. One example is a February 10, 1906, article in *Rech'* claiming that OURP members beat 500 people during the first two days of the groups's anniversary celebration, an account Grigor'ev's disproved with his own report showing that only twenty-eight beatings occurred during a three-week period that included the anniversary.<sup>84</sup> On another occasion, Grigor'ev testified that a series of reported beatings by armed OURP members had not taken place at all.<sup>85</sup> Despite his public campaign against the OURP and his private attempts to convince Stolypin of Kaulbars and Glagolev's complicity, Grigor'ev still came under attack from leftwing papers like *Rus'* for allegedly failing to stand up for the city's Jewish population.<sup>86</sup>

Another common slant found in leftwing accounts of OURP violence consisted of the description of clashes between OURP members and Jewish self-defense forces or hostile dockworkers as straightforward attacks by the OURP. The circumstances surrounding these clashes frequently remained ambiguous, with the police often unable to determine which side initiated the violence. When armed OURP members killed two dockworkers in February 1907, at least nine leftwing papers reported the incident without mentioning that the shooting came as a response to an attack by stone-throwing

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<sup>84</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 235, 241, 250. Another example is Grigor'ev's letter to Stolypin denying a *Russkoe slovo* (Russian Word) account that an audience of OURP members harassed and threatened the prosecutor during the trial of a postal official accused of killing Jews during the October 1905 pogrom. See GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 83, 145-46. An Odessa police officer also cast doubt on the article's claim that members of the defense team deliberately incited the audience. See l. 109. The defendant, Moisenko, was convicted, pardoned, and later rearrested for street beatings. See *Rus'*, April 26, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 103.

<sup>85</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 53

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 8.

dockworkers.<sup>87</sup> Liberal papers also habitually printed unsourced and unsubstantiated rumors, such as one that Glagolev had prepared to arrest progressive leaders to prevent them from running in Duma elections.<sup>88</sup> In a typical example of leftwing exaggeration of OURP crimes, a January 1907 *Tovarishch* (Comrade) article compared the situation in Odessa to that of the *oprichnina* under Ivan the Terrible, when the tsar's security militia murdered tens of thousands of Russians. The article also falsely proclaimed that the Stolypin cabinet had sanctioned the violence.<sup>89</sup> The rightwing press, for its part, delighted in pointing out the inventions and misrepresentations of leftist and liberal reporting on the OURP.<sup>90</sup>

The international press also engaged in hyperbole. For example, Britain's *The Daily Telegraph* published an article, reprinted in *The Times*, carrying the extravagant opening sentence, "Civilized Europe has perhaps never known so terrible a state of affairs as that which prevails in the city of Odessa at the present moment."<sup>91</sup> The exiled Russian novelist and revolutionary polemicist Maxim Gorky contributed to the misinformation with a letter to the editor in *The Daily News* purporting to explain the origins and activities of the URP. Falsely ascribing the URP's creation to a plot by high-ranking government bureaucrats, police officials, and provincial governors, Gorky claimed the URP acted on the orders of governors and police chiefs, who in turn received their instructions from "St. Petersburg." He incorrectly dated the URP's founding at August 1905, which allowed him to describe the pogroms that followed the October Manifesto as

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 60, 65, 67-70, 72. *Rus'* dutifully reported a false rumor that authorities planned to prosecute all the workers injured in the shooting. See l. 75.

<sup>88</sup> *Rus*, March 30, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 79.

<sup>89</sup> *Tovarishch*, January 25, 1907, in GARF, F. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 163.

<sup>90</sup> *Novoe vremia*, February 24, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 10.

<sup>91</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, December 9, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, .l. 87-88.

a URP operation based on orders from some unnamed central source.<sup>92</sup> The German press reported in a similar vein, with *Vossische Zeitung* pointing to the complicity of local police officials in anti-Jewish attacks as proof that the Stolypin cabinet approved of the violence.<sup>93</sup>

In reality, the URP arose on the initiative of Dubrovin, not the central authorities, while the URP could not have organized the 1905 pogroms because the organization did not yet exist. Gorky's apocryphal account, like much of the Russian reporting on the URP, aimed to discredit the central government by exaggerating its complicity in URP violence.<sup>94</sup> Although as is evident in Odessa, local officials sometimes supported violent URP campaigns, the claim that the central government created or controlled the URP is demonstrably false. The relationship was complicated, fluid, and sometimes hostile, as previously described. As was the case with *Za tsaria*, the central government frequently became a target of URP abuse for its alleged timidity in fighting the revolutionaries. In Odessa, the biased, hyperbolic reporting of the leftwing press and the vulgar incitement emanating from its rightwing counterparts added to the environment of extremism and anarchy that pervaded the city in 1906 and 1907. Grigor'ev, who vigorously opposed the URP but also served as a high-ranking local official of the tsarist regime, offended the extremists on both the left and the right, thus becoming an embattled target of attack by the media outlets for both sides.

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<sup>92</sup> *The Daily News*, July 18, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, ll. 20-21. Gorky incorrectly dated the pogroms at October 1906. It is clear he was referring to the October 1905 pogroms because he claimed the entire plot stemmed from the publication of the October Manifesto. He also mentioned that his friend, the SD operative N. E. Bauman, was killed in the violence. Bauman died on October 25, 1905.

<sup>93</sup> *Vossische Zeitung*, September 22, 1906 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, l. 145.

<sup>94</sup> Another typical example is a 1906 *Rech'* article citing a "trusted source" who claimed either Purishkevich or another national URP leader was about to be named vice director of the national police. See *Rech'*, September 9, 1906, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, l. 118.

## **Stolypin's Private Correspondence**

Stolypin's attitude toward OURP violence can be gleaned from his correspondence with Grigor'ev, Glagolev, and Kaulbars. As press articles, citizens' complaints, and secret police reports about events in Odessa reached Stolypin's desk, the prime minister wrote letters to Odessa's authorities seeking information on Odessa's condition and issuing instructions for calming the situation. The correspondence reveals a surprising dynamic at work between Stolypin and Odessa's leaders; Stolypin clearly believed Grigor'ev's version of events—that most of the unrest and violence in Odessa stemmed from the OURP—over that of Glagolev and Kaulbars, who defended the OURP as a crucial source of resistance to the revolutionaries and the Jewish self-defense forces that allegedly sowed the city's chaos. Stolypin thus issued repeated orders to Glagolev and Kaulbars to disband the OURP's White Guards and suppress OURP acts of violence. Glagolev and especially Kaulbars, however, quite brazenly ignored Stolypin's instructions, falsely testifying to have dissolved the White Guards and denying the accounts of OURP violence provided to Stolypin by Grigor'ev. Repeatedly expressing irritation that his orders were being disregarded, Stolypin acted unusually helpless in the face of Kaulbars's blatant insubordination. Despite issuing numerous direct and angry orders, Stolypin ultimately proved unable to assert his authority on Odessa's local leadership.

Beginning in September 1906, Grigor'ev wrote Stolypin and Trusevich, the chief of police, a steady stream of letters relating the OURP's activities in Odessa. The letters typically described the most recent acts of OURP violence, bemoaned the incitement emanating from *Za tsaria and Russkaia rech'*, and criticized Glagolev and Kaulbars's

protection of the OURP and of the two newspapers. Initially, Stolypin responded with a September 9 letter to Glagolev ordering him to “take the most decisive measures to prevent the slightest outbreak” of violence.<sup>95</sup> Glagolev received another letter from Vice Minister of Internal Affairs A. A. Makarov naively asking him to explain to OURP leaders the harm caused by their “propaganda of pogroms.”<sup>96</sup> On November 10, Stolypin went over Glagolev’s head and ordered Kaulbars to take “appropriate suppressive measures” against the OURP in light of the ineffectiveness of Glagolev’s “repeated verbal reprimands” to the group.<sup>97</sup> Kaulbars replied by defending the OURP as a beneficial organization that helped to restrain the Jewish population. He dismissed reports of OURP violence against Jews as either unproven or as isolated incidents provoked by the Jews themselves. Denying that Glagolev had granted weapons permits to large numbers of OURP members, Kaulbars claimed that the OURP now pursued strictly peaceful and legal goals, as its druzhina had been disbanded and its anti-Jewish incitement was diminishing.<sup>98</sup> Recognizing the dubious and, at times, outright false nature of Kaulbars’s account, Stolypin wrote the commander a stern letter in December declaring that OURP violence “cannot be tolerated” and again demanding that he undertake “decisive measures” to “stop these criminal occurrences.” Rebuking Kaulbars for giving the impression that he was protecting the OURP, Stolypin bemoaned the local authorities’ weakness in its dealings with the organization.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 4.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., l. 12.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., l. 51.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., l. 101-04.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., l. 86-88.

Kaulbars responded with an even more vociferous defense of the OURP's indispensable role in suppressing the revolution in Odessa. "Thanks largely to the union [the OURP], open revolution is currently almost impossible in Odessa," he declared, praising the OURP as a "formidable force" willing to fight next to the troops and police against the revolutionaries. Led by "reliable and honorable people," Kaulbars claimed the OURP would even help to avert pogroms by calming and restraining the population and by preventing the kind of revolutionary demonstrations that had provoked the 1905 pogrom.<sup>100</sup> Admitting that some OURP members had at one time been armed to counteract the Jewish militias, Kaulbars again claimed that the druzhina had been disbanded, leaving only an "extremely few" number of armed OURP members needed to defend the OURP tearoom. He attributed reports of widespread OURP violence to the manipulation of "isolated facts" by Grigor'ev, whose opposition to the OURP allegedly stemmed from his resentment of rightwing criticism of his bias toward Jews.<sup>101</sup>

Despite his claims that the revolution in Odessa had been all but suppressed, in later correspondence with Stolypin, Kaulbars frequently cited ongoing revolutionary violence in order to justify the need for the OURP to act as a counterweight to the revolutionary movement. Glagolev wrote Stolypin similar letters in praise of the OURP, claiming that "only through the presence of such a force in the population . . . can we be certain of the possibility of suppressing the revolutionary movement." Glagolev emphatically championed OURP vigilantism for eliminating not only participation in the revolutionary movement, but even indifference to it by the "weak-willed and dark

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<sup>100</sup> Kaulbars' claim that the OURP would help to prevent pogroms is somewhat contradicted by his reaction to Grigor'ev's suggestion to close the OURP tearoom. Kaulbars objected that such an act could provoke a pogrom by OURP members. *Ibid.*, I. 218.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, II. 121-24.

mass[es].”<sup>102</sup> As an example, he cited a detainee arrested for distributing illegal literature who told police that he only approaches Jews, not Russians, with his wares because falling into the hands of the OURP would be “worse than jail.” Glagolev and Kaulbars clearly coordinated their communications with Stolypin. Both men misled Stolypin as to the number of weapons permits issued to OURP members; falsely claimed that the White Guards had been disbanded; and parroted the OURP’s perverse claims that Jews and revolutionaries donned OURP badges and engaged in street beatings solely to discredit the OURP.

Exasperated by Glagolev’s and Kaulbars’s intransigence, Stolypin’s letters to them became more insistent. He relayed “decisive demand[s] for fast and harsh measures to end the violence,”<sup>103</sup> but received further rote replies dismissing OURP violence as exaggerations of the leftwing press or as isolated incidents caused by Jewish and revolutionary provocations. Realizing that his orders were being ignored, Stolypin declared in one letter to Glagolev: “I remind you that my demands must be fulfilled.”<sup>104</sup> Angered by Glagolev’s false claims that the White Guards had been disbanded, in another letter Stolypin demanded of him, “Telegraph why, despite my demand, this is tolerated, the druzhina is not destroyed, and the OURP members are not disarmed.”<sup>105</sup> Finally Stolypin wrote to Kaulbars: “In light of the obvious unwillingness of the acting Odessa general-governor to fulfill my instruction to ban the druzhina members from carrying weapons and uniforms,” Kaulbars should “categorically compel . . . Glagolev immediately to order the disarming and dissolution of the druzhina.” Kaulbars curtly

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., ll. 147-50.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., l. 223.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 90.

replied that Odessa remained calm aside from a few “individual street fights,” adding somewhat impudently that he would answer Stolypin’s telegram more completely in a few days, as he was preparing for a trip away from Odessa.<sup>106</sup> In a later letter to Kaulbars reiterating the need for “decisive measures” against the OURP, Stolypin again bemoaned the “local government’s insufficient energy in fulfilling my repeated instructions.”<sup>107</sup> Unable to enforce his orders, Stolypin pathetically appealed to his minister of war, A. F. Rediger, to urge Kaulbars to cease supporting the OURP.<sup>108</sup>

Stolypin’s private correspondence disproves the claims of the leftwing and international press that his cabinet tolerated or, according to some, even directed OURP violence. Many of these press organs had circulated similar reports blaming the central government for instigating the pogroms that had convulsed Russia since 1903. This interpretation ignored the sympathetic disposition toward Jews evinced by both Stolypin and his predecessor, Sergei Witte. In fact, both men’s friendly relations with Jews drew the wrath of the far right, which Stolypin especially incensed with his 1907 proposal to ease official discrimination against Jews, as previously discussed. The violent OURP campaign, similar to the preceding pogroms throughout Russia, followed a general pattern in which anti-Jewish violence erupted from local Christian populations—sometimes spontaneously, other times whipped up by local provocateurs. Local government and police officials often sympathized with the pogromists and even participated in the violence, but it is incorrect to assume they acted with the approval of

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<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 128.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 303.

<sup>108</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 111.

Witte or Stolypin at the center. As we see in Odessa, during the revolutionary events of 1905-07, the prime minister sometimes lacked the power to enforce his decrees locally.

As previously noted, however, the Black Hundred did elicit the steadfast support of the tsar, who empathized with the OURP as well. Despite Konovnitsyn's incendiary criticism of both the local and central governments, the tsar felt an affinity for the OURP leader. Not only did Nicholas II send Konovnitsyn numerous telegrams expressing support for the OURP (as was his habit with many URP branches), but he also held four personal meetings with Konovnitsyn by the end of 1908. Konovnitsyn reported that during the meetings the tsar expressed continual support for the OURP's activities, quoting the tsar as declaring that "the unification of Russian workers in Odessa will serve as an example for all of Russia."<sup>109</sup>

His well-known annual audience with the tsar lent credence to Konovnitsyn's relentless boasting that the tsar had invited Konovnitsyn to report to him personally about any problems the OURP encountered.<sup>110</sup> In one circular to URP branches, Konovnitsyn attributed Stolypin's hostility to his resentment that Konovnitsyn could circumvent his authority by appealing directly to the autocrat.<sup>111</sup> We can speculate that a good deal of truth underlay Konovnitsyn's braggadocio. The tsar's public support for the URP surely gave local officials like Glagolev and Kaulbars fortitude in resisting Stolypin's entreaties to crack down on the organization. Knowing of Stolypin's intolerance of anti-Jewish violence and rightist hooliganism, the tsar may have circumvented Stolypin by

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<sup>109</sup> *Russkaia pravda*, January 1, 1909, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 202. After one meeting with the tsar, Konovnitsyn reported to OURP members that the tsar's young heir, Alexei, wore a URP badge during the encounter. See GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 208-09.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 208-09.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 262.

communicating to Glagolev and Kaulbars his desire that they allow the OURP to operate unhindered. Although there is no evidence to back up the claims of revolutionaries that the tsar personally ordered pogroms or other anti-Semitic attacks, the OURP's violent campaign in Odessa clearly drew at least his tacit approval. The circumstances of Grigor'ev's abrupt resignation allow room for further speculation about the tsar's role in the violence in Odessa. Grigor'ev suddenly resigned in August 1907 immediately after returning to Odessa from a trip to St. Petersburg, where he met with the tsar. The tsar, acting at Konovnitsyn's and Kaulbars' behest, most likely solicited his resignation at that meeting.<sup>112</sup>

Although Stolypin clearly did not sympathize with the OURP's fanatical anti-Semitism, even he supported rightist groups—sometimes publicly, other times covertly—when it was politically advantageous to do so, as previously noted. His ambivalent attitude toward national extremist groups notwithstanding, Stolypin evinced no such indecision in his efforts to halt OURP violence in Odessa. Rather, his inability to restrain the OURP stemmed from structural problems within the Russian governmental system that were exacerbated by pressures from the unrest that convulsed the empire during the Revolution of 1905.

Since General D. H. Miliutin implemented comprehensive Russian military reforms in the 1860s and 1870s, Russia had been divided into a series of military districts. Each district was led by a military commander who was responsible directly to

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<sup>112</sup> In his memoirs, Witte claims Grigor'ev stepped down because his predecessor, D. V. Neidhardt, resented his removal from office and thus undermined Grigor'ev from St. Petersburg. Archival evidence, however, strongly indicates that Grigor'ev's friction with Kaulbars and Glagolev over the OURP played a much larger role in his resignation. See Sergei Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, ed. and trans. Sidney Harcave (New York and England, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990), 684-85.

the tsar and could only be removed by him. But in practice, commanders were dependent on the minister of war, and this ensured a clear chain of command and civilian control of the military. This system broke down during the Revolution of 1905, when the frequent need for immediate military action to suppress popular unrest allowed commanders to break free of ministerial control, which could not be reasserted until 1908.<sup>113</sup> Thus, Kaulbars's rather glib dismissals of Stolypin's orders to suppress the OURP reflected a wider breakdown in civilian control of the army. Although Glagolev answered to Stolypin, Glagolev was more directly responsible to his patron, Kaulbars. Glagolev could therefore frame his disobedience to Stolypin as simply carrying out the orders of his direct superior.

The tsar's assured support of Kaulbars's position on the OURP only bolstered Kaulbars's authority. As William Fuller notes, the Russian military subscribed to a "full-blown cult of the emperor which encouraged officers to confuse the dynastic and military interest." This is hardly surprising, as officers swore allegiance to the tsar, who was also the supreme commander of the army. Nicholas II, a military enthusiast, liked to meddle in military affairs by using his power over appointments and promotions to reward officers who displayed particular personal loyalty.<sup>114</sup> Nationalists like Kaulbars found favor with the tsar, who in turn gave them the support needed to resist Stolypin, a man whom the tsar trusted much less than his faithful military commanders.

We have already discussed the pro forma sympathy for the URP among officials stemming from the tsar's support for the group. This tendency is also evident with respect

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<sup>113</sup> Fuller, *Civil-Military Relations*, 7-8, 211, and Brian Taylor, *Politics and the Russian Army: Civil-Military Relations, 1689-2000* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 61.

<sup>114</sup> Fuller, *Civil-Military Relations*, 30-31.

to events in Odessa. In February 1907, the Russian Government's official newspaper, *Pravitel'stvennoe soobshchenie* (Governmental Report), published the government's formal position on the unrest in Odessa. The article, based on Stolypin's correspondence with Grigor'ev, Glagolev, and Kaulbars, significantly downplayed the level of OURP violence. While meticulously delineating the bombings and assassinations by revolutionaries, the description of the OURP's misdeeds merely entailed the acknowledgement of a few dozen cases of light beatings. The article portrayed these beatings as the actions of individual OURP members, failing to mention that armed, paramilitary White Guards had terrorized the population in an organized fashion. The account ignored the violent incitement of the local rightwing press, although it chided leftwing papers for (truthfully) portraying the beatings as an "organized enterprise" of the OURP.<sup>115</sup>

The article appeared precisely when Stolypin was writing furious letters to Glagolev and Kaulbars demanding "fast and harsh measures" to liquidate the White Guards and disarm OURP members. Although privately Stolypin agreed with Grigor'ev about the OURP's culpability in the violence in Odessa, his public position as expressed in the *Pravitel'stvennoe soobshchenie* article was much more favorable toward the rightists, placing most of the blame on the revolutionaries while refusing to acknowledge that the OURP's violent campaign was systematic and organized. We can speculate as to the reason for this contradiction: relating the full extent of OURP responsibility would have embarrassed the tsar, an outspoken URP supporter who maintained friendly

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<sup>115</sup> *Pravitel'stvennoe soobshchenie*, February 17, 1907, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 339.

relations with Konovnitsyn. This tendency by high-ranking officials to downplay URP crimes and praise the group's ostensibly high-minded ideals complicated efforts to suppress URP violence. Local officials like Glagolev and Kaulbars could resist demands—including those from their own superiors—to restrain the URP, knowing that the central government would be reluctant to sanction officials for showing sympathy toward an organization frequently praised by the government's top officials. If the government itself publicly denied URP crimes, then why should sympathetic local officials have heeded Stolypin's private orders to suppress the organization, especially when they knew the tsar would support their intransigence?

## **Conclusion**

With the advent of the OURP's White Guards at the end of 1906, Odessa's condition transformed from one of perpetual labor and revolutionary turmoil into a near state of war between the revolutionaries and the Black Hundred. With the assistance of the city's two highest officials and the sympathy of parts of a terrorized and exhausted Russian population, the OURP metastasized into a mass organization that gained control of the city's port—its economic lifeline. The OURP's street violence succeeded in driving revolutionary crowds from the streets, but widespread acts of bombings, assassinations, and politically motivated robberies continued unabated by underground cells. The violent acts by both sides and the ceaseless incitement and hyperbole entertained by both the leftwing and rightwing press led to a general breakdown in law and order characterized by random street violence, widespread armed robberies, and the

disruption of university classes. Under such conditions, normal life in the city could not be reestablished.

The central government's ambiguous relationship with the URP, along with the loss of ministerial control over military commanders during the Revolution of 1905, left local leaders and military officials with a great deal of autonomy in formulating policies toward the URP. Although Stolypin adamantly demanded the suppression of the OURP, his own complicated attitude toward the organization undermined his ability to enforce his orders on Odessa's recalcitrant local leadership. The government's priority at this time was suppressing the burgeoning revolutionary movement. Because the URP arguably assisted in this task, local officials like Kaulbars had an innate justification for refusing to crack down on the organization. Despite the escalation of URP violence in Odessa into an international scandal, Stolypin could not assert his authority there. The OURP, it seemed, could only be defeated from within the organization itself. This is precisely what occurred.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Corruption Kills**

Corruption pervaded the OURP, as it did nearly all the rightist groups in Odessa. The primary culprit was OURP President Konovnitsyn, whose unbridled venality undermined his organization almost from its inception. Although a firm believer in the rightist cause, Konovnitsyn ran the OURP largely as a vehicle for his own political and, especially, financial aggrandizement. The OURP's unique position as Odessa's first rightwing mass-party provided the group's leader with a plethora of money-making opportunities from private donors, sympathetic local government figures, and city institutions that wanted to support a popular organization dedicated to assisting the police in restoring law and order. Konovnitsyn, however, brazenly ignored his own organization's financial accounting mechanisms and treated OURP funds as his own personal property. His massive embezzlement from the OURP resulted in the quick appearance of strong opposition to his presidency from within the organization and led to the fatal fracturing and weakening of the entire rightist movement in Odessa. In sum, the OURP shared the fate of monarchist organizations in St. Petersburg and numerous other cities: it was killed off by corruption.

#### **Konovnitsyn's Corruption**

Following the OURP's capture of Odessa's port, the dockworkers' arteli emerged as Konovnitsyn's principal moneymaker. Even during hard economic times, the Odessa harbor still functioned as the city's economic lifeline and a major employer of unskilled

laborers. With the OURP arteli encompassing nearly all the dockworkers by 1908, Konovnitsyn made thousands of rubles annually just on the fifty kopeck monthly dues charged to artel members. Additionally, artel members had to pay Konovnitsyn a monthly “donation” of one ruble, ostensibly to support the OURP newspaper, *Za tsaria i rodinu*. Konovnitsyn invented other money-generating schemes as well: he earned 250-400 rubles per month by assessing a twenty kopeck fee for every 1,000 *pud*<sup>1</sup> of cargo handled by the OURP arteli; he charged a five to ten kopeck daily fee for the non-OURP temporary workers that he allowed to work at the port; and he charged the Odessa steamship company (ROPT) 200 rubles per month for his provision of OURP dockside security guards. Konovnitsyn kept most of this money for himself, refusing to even report it to the OURP.<sup>2</sup>

This income paled compared to the riches Konovnitsyn collected through his control of the port contractors who negotiated payments between ROPT and the OURP arteli. Konovnitsyn kept control over artel members through his ability to expel any troublesome workers from the OURP. As previously noted, such an expulsion would automatically trigger a worker’s ejection from the OURP artel as well, thus virtually eliminating his chances of continuing to work at the port. Konovnitsyn used this power to pressure the arteli to elect his favored contractors as artel leaders with the power to negotiate all contracts with ROPT. The contractors then negotiated the workers’ salaries with ROPT, kept a significant share of the salaries for themselves, and paid Konovnitsyn hefty kickbacks. Konovnitsyn in turn protected his contractors from the inevitable

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<sup>1</sup> A *pud* was a Russian unit of weight equivalent to approximately 16.4 kilograms.

<sup>2</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 13, d. 6, l. 311. For unknown reasons Konovnitsyn showed slightly less stinginess with the dockside guards’ salaries than with the other revenue streams, keeping only one-quarter of their payments for himself.

criticism emanating from artel workers. In fact, at OURP meetings White Guards seized workers who complained about this arrangement, beat them, and dragged them from the hall.<sup>3</sup>

Opportunities abounded for large-scale embezzlement in light of the immense amount of money paid to artel contractors for their artel members' salaries. For example, one contractor, D. P. Cherniga, handled over 400,000 rubles in a single year at the port and paid Konovnitsyn at least a 1,000 ruble kickback.<sup>4</sup> In 1908 ROPT paid 264,363 rubles to the OURP contractor Mikhailov for artel workers' salaries. Along with another OURP contractor, Iazvinskii, Mikhailov collected from ROPT a salary for each artel worker of 12 rubles and 75 kopecks for every 1,000 pud of cargo, but paid the workers only 10 rubles per 1,000 pud. Authorities estimated the amount pocketed by the contractors (and shared with Konovnitsyn) at an astounding 30,000 to 50,000 rubles. At other times, Konovnitsyn simply extorted hundreds of rubles from contractors under threat of barring them from the port, and in one instance he outright sold the position of artel leader and contractor to a certain Zabolotnyi for 900 rubles. Owing to the disappearance of tens of thousands of rubles into the pockets of Konovnitsyn and his contractors, OURP artel workers' take-home salaries (as distinct from the salaries actually paid by ROPT to the contractors) fell by 45 percent from the end of 1907 through 1909.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 308, ll. 62-63.

<sup>4</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 13, d. 6, ll. 75-78. Although the former artel secretary who testified to this identified Cherniga as the artel treasurer, Cherniga clearly had functioned as the contractor, and later worked as a contractor for the UAM artel.

<sup>5</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 308, ll. 30-31, 62-63, 65-71, and op. 13, d. 6, ll. 315-16.

Konovnitsyn's corruption affected every aspect of the OURP's operations. He pocketed the excess sums earned from a donation drive launched to purchase a printing press for the organization's paper, *Za tsaria*. In 1910 he claimed the printer as his personal property and sold it off to a Jewish (!) Odessan for 2,700 rubles, which he refused to share with the OURP. According to *Za tsaria*'s first editor, Konovnitsyn confiscated the paper's earnings from him, instructing him not to record the amounts in the paper's account books or tell other staff members about the requisitions. In addition to pocketing the proceeds from other OURP donation drives and fund-raising activities, Konovnitsyn took in thousands of rubles through various petty scams and deceptions, such as pocketing money donated by OURP headquarters in St. Petersburg to help poor OURP members in Odessa; collecting funds from private donors for nonexistent OURP institutions; filing inflated reimbursement claims to the OURP council for various expenses, including completely fictitious business trips; and pilfering the OURP's reserve capital of 1,497 rubles. Konovnitsyn's corruption grew so extensive that a 1910 government audit of his organization found it necessary to divide his misdeeds into four categories: embezzlement, fraud, forgery, and extortion.<sup>6</sup>

Konovnitsyn simply ignored the OURP's own statutes mandating that both the OURP arteli and the OURP itself regularly appoint auditing commissions to report on the group's finances. In theory, Konovnitsyn's activities could be restrained by the dozen or so members of the OURP leadership council, whose responsibilities included oversight of the organization's expenditures. In practice, however, Konovnitsyn kept tight personal control over the organization by means of his ability to personally appoint members to

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<sup>6</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 223, ll. 67-69, and op. 13, d. 6, ll. 283, 311-12, 314-16. Konovnitsyn replaced the OURP reserve fund two years after he stole it, shortly before the government audited the OURP's finances.

the founders' board that elected the council. Despite this power, from the organization's inception, Konovnitsyn's blatant embezzlement and refusal to account for his use of OURP funds provoked widespread dissension among the OURP rank and file as well as council members. Konovnitsyn and his allies summarily expelled from the organization those who demanded financial accountings. They also dismissed rebellious council members, promptly replacing them with Konovnitsyn's favored candidates chosen by the founders' board.<sup>7</sup> Thus Konovnitsyn retained command over the organization, but in the process diminished the union through the expulsion of troublesome members, thereby creating a significant pool of disgruntled former OURP members looking to unite in a new organization outside of Konovnitsyn's control.

### **Union of the Russian Men**

Konovnitsyn's malfeasance led to a series of schisms in which prominent OURP leaders withdrew from the union and created rival rightist organizations. Most, if not all, of these rebels led their groups in a way similar to Konovnitsyn; the new organizations adhered to virtually identical political programs as the OURP, with the leadership of all the groups characterized by a combination of political extremism and a penchant for identifying money-making opportunities. With each schism the entirety of the rightist movement in Odessa became more discredited, as a united, politically powerful organization with close to 10,000 members ripped itself into a collection of much smaller and weaker groupings that often demonstrated greater zeal in attacking each other than they did in criticizing their ostensible Jewish and revolutionary enemies. The

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<sup>7</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 223, l. 51, and op. 13, d. 6, ll. 81-83.

dysfunctions of these organizations' leaderships were replicated in their student, worker, and even paramilitary branches, where corruption allegations and personality clashes kept these subgroups in a constant state of disorder as they transferred from one organization to another.

A council member, the noble N. N. Rodzevich, became the first OURP schismatic. By September 1906—even before the OURP gained control of the port—Konovnitysn's corruption and despotic leadership provoked protests within the OURP council. In October, a group of OURP members led by Rodzevich abandoned the organization and created the Union of the Russian Men. The URM statutes envisioned a nearly identical organizational structure and set of goals as the OURP. After the election of a twelve-member council, Rodzevich attempted to boost the new organization's prestige by selecting a grand duke, N. S. Davydov, as president, naming himself vice president.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the obstreperous youths discussed in chapter 5, URM meetings featured donation collections for an entire galaxy of ostensibly rightist causes: women's schools, parish schools, gymnasiums, festivals, buying a house for the union, the group's general needs, and donations to “the poor.”<sup>9</sup> The URM also briefly established various suborganizations for students, janitors, workers, and to encourage “sobriety,” most of which charged regular dues on top of the standard URM membership fees. Rodzevich controlled the union's finances, usually failing to report them to the organization itself.

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<sup>8</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, ll. 20, 21, and GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 2. Illustrating the uncertainty as to whether Russia had transformed from an autocracy into a constitutional system, the URM statutes provoked a protest from two Odessa Duma members who claimed that the statutes' avowed support for the “unlimited” autocracy contradicted the October Manifesto. In hopes of forestalling the creation of another problematic monarchist organization, Grigor'ev forwarded the protest letter to Stolypin. Authorities registered the group anyway.

<sup>9</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 3.

This sparked vociferous opposition to Rozdevich from URM council members. After just two months, Davydov renounced his membership in the URM and Rodzevich assumed the presidency. Davydov's withdrawal initiated a virtually non-stop series of resignations and replacements of dissatisfied URM council members, most of whom had already joined and then quit the OURP. Liutsianovich, Grigorev's representative at URM meetings, noted that Odessa's Russians moved from one group to another in a vain effort to find an effective rightist organization.<sup>10</sup>

The URM had difficulty exerting control over its own sub-branches. The URM student branch at Novorossiisk University opened in October 1909, founded largely by defectors from the OURP student section who objected to the corruption of OURP student leaders. The URM student branch operated autonomously for several years, but in 1914 Rodzevich removed the students' president and ordered their organization subordinated to the URM's main branch (that is, to himself). The students rebelled, provoking the city mayor to suspend the student branch on the grounds that its escalating conflict with Rodzevich "threaten[ed] social calm and safety." The mayor then disbanded the student branch after an audit found large-scale corruption in the organization which, the audit declared, engaged in hardly any activities other than collecting money.<sup>11</sup>

A URM booksellers' artel fared no better. The artel president's embezzlement of artel funds and his refusal to account for the organization's finances provoked members to expel him from the artel. The president, however, managed to retain control of the organization and in 1912 attempted to transfer the entire artel to the OURP. This sparked a row with Rodzevich, who lobbied the Odessa city mayor to liquidate the group. Such a

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<sup>10</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 16, ll. 32-33.

<sup>11</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 282, ll. 9-10, and op. 11, d. 223, l. 82; GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, ll. 5-6.

move proved unnecessary, as a majority of the artel's members simply quit the group on their own by the end of the following year. Rodzevich's loss of the artel was somewhat compensated by the transfer to the URM of an OURP dockworkers' artel, whose members defected due to Konovnitsyn's corruption.<sup>12</sup>

The URM also ran a number of educational institutions, including a boys' gymnasium, a women's school, two elementary schools, and occupational trade classes. Comprising around 400 students, the URM schools aimed to instill moral, religious, and patriotic values in Odessa's youth. Funding for these institutions came from private donors as well as the city дума, which provided Rodzevich with an annual 12,000 ruble subsidy for his gymnasium. But the schools fell into decline after 1913 when the city дума, which came under the control of a rightist rival of Rodzevich, voted to end its subsidy unless Rodzevich resigned as its director. The URM's fortunes further declined when an investigation by the city mayor uncovered embezzlement in a URM donation drive designed to raise funds for a building to house the women's school.<sup>13</sup>

### **Union of the Archangel Michael**

The OURP underwent another schism in 1908.<sup>14</sup> The new rupture was sparked by OURP Vice President B. A. Pelikan, a city дума member rumored to be Jewish who had served on the legal defense team for Moiseenko, an Odessa postal worker convicted of

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<sup>12</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 297, ll. 30, 53, 57, 59, 69, 79, and d. 308, ll. 82-85.

<sup>13</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, l. 144; GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 6, and f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 54-58.

<sup>14</sup> Before this schism erupted, in September 1907, two nobles founded another rightist organization, *Belyi dvuglavnyi orel* (White Two-Headed Eagle). Conceived as a rightwing youth organization, the group quickly fell victim to corruption, intrigues, and an inability to replace over thirty members expelled for unknown reasons in the organization's first few months of existence. It shut down in March 1908, shortly after authorities arrested one of the group's cofounders for refusing to turn over the organization's financial records to government investigators. See DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 195, ll. 17, 25-28.

leading deadly mob attacks on Jews during the 1905 pogrom. After quitting his position on the *Za tsaria* staff due to Konovnitsyn's corruption, Pelikan launched a campaign against him from within the OURP council, including Pelikan's submission to city authorities of a detailed account of Konovnitsyn's financial transgressions. Pelikan gathered the support of council and rank-and-file members and most of the White Guard, who collectively tried to remove Konovnitsyn and his remaining supporters. The issue came to a head on March 16, 1908, when a brawl between the two camps at the OURP tearoom escalated into a gun battle, resulting in over a dozen arrests.<sup>15</sup>

Pelikan resolved the situation by seceding from the OURP and forming an Odessa branch of Purishkevich's Union of the Archangel Michael (UAM). The White Guards went over to Pelikan's group, prompting bitter recriminations from Konovnitsyn, who finally acknowledged the criminal nature of the paramilitary force he had created. "Despite their big salary," he testified to the authorities with regard to the dockside White Guards, "the money wasn't enough for their drunkenness and depravity, and their thirst for money even extended into crime."<sup>16</sup> Konovnitsyn launched a bitter public campaign against Pelikan, even convincing an Odessa monarchist conference to appeal to Grigor'ev's successor as city mayor, I. N. Tolmachev, to expel Pelikan from Odessa. The UAM shot back with an article in its own organ, *Iuzhnyi band* (Southern Gang), describing the congress's attendees as "street scum" and declaring, "The [OURP] stinks,

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<sup>15</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 217, l. 118; *Russkoe slovo*, March 19, 1908. in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 123.

<sup>16</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 217, l. 49.

and as always, it stinks from the head.” The article provoked Tolmachev to suspend the paper for a month.<sup>17</sup>

Tolmachev, complaining that Pelikan recruited “the dregs of society” into the White Guards, finally set about fulfilling Stolypin’s longstanding orders to disband the paramilitary forces, whose physical attacks now extended to members of rival monarchist organizations.<sup>18</sup> Tolmachev successfully ordered the few White Guards remaining in the OURP disarmed, but Pelikan refused to dissolve the UAM White Guards, which even expanded with the addition of a large group of hospital employees who joined owing to pressure from the hospital inspector, a supporter of Pelikan. Tolmachev then appealed directly to Purishkevich, who proved cooperative. After receiving Purishkevich’s unequivocal order to disband the White Guards, Pelikan finally complied.<sup>19</sup> This at last brought the rightists’ two-year campaign of intimidation and beatings of Jews and students on the streets of Odessa to a close.

The UAM made an aggressive effort to supplant the OURP at the port. It created its own artel in 1909 into which it actively recruited OURP artel members as well as workers expelled from the OURP. The UAM also illegally offered work to scores of unregistered workers, thus following the OURP model of utilizing its ability to dispense patronage at the port as an incentive to encourage unemployed workers to join the organization.<sup>20</sup> Using artel members as pawns in his rivalry with Konovnitsyn, Pelikan deliberately lowered his workers’ salaries—and even threatened to have artel members

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<sup>17</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 172-77.

<sup>18</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 849, ll. 5-6.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 299, ll. 67, 68.

work for free—in hopes of driving the OURP arteli out of business.<sup>21</sup> Although the UAM artel typically had between 100 and 200 members, virtually no one could afford the twenty-five ruble membership fee, which only existed to allow Pelikan and his vice president, former OURP vice president and White Guard leader Biuller, a legal pretext for expelling dissident artel members. When a government audit required that the artel provide evidence that it had collected dues from the minimum thirty-five members required to operate the artel, former OURP artel contractor Cherniga borrowed the money for the day and presented it to the authorities. In return for conducting this swindle, Chrnerniga became the UAM artel leader and contractor. He was soon replaced by a new artel leader, Chebanenko, who rebelled against the UAM leadership’s control of the artel’s affairs. This conflict created a schism within the artel between followers of Chebanenko and Pelikan, with relations between the two camps sporadically degenerating into violence.<sup>22</sup>

### **Southern Monarchist Union**

A third schism within the OURP broke out in November 1909, when three council members sent a complaint to the URP headquarters in St. Petersburg claiming Konovnitsyn’s corruption had destroyed public trust in the OURP and had led to the “collapse” of Odessa’s rightist movement. The petitioners called for an immediate audit of the OURP’s finances and the resignation of Konovnitsyn.<sup>23</sup> The URP St. Petersburg council sided with Konovnitsyn, largely because Konovnitsyn had proven loyal to

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<sup>21</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 137, 152.

<sup>22</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 299, l. 2, and d. 304, ll. 121, 130-34, 198, 201, 223-24.

<sup>23</sup> *Novoe vremia*, February 14, 1910, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 242.

Dubrovin during his skirmish with Purishkevich, and because Konovnitsyn's brother, Emanuel, sat on the St. Petersburg URP council. (Emmanuel had not yet broken ranks with Dubrovin.) As discussed in chapter 3, it is also likely that Dubrovin, in light of his own venality, felt uncomfortable encouraging URP branch members to remove their presidents for corruption. With the backing of St. Petersburg, Konovnitsyn then expelled the petitioners, who quickly formed their own rightist organization, *Iuzhnyi monarkhicheskyi soiuz* (Southern Monarchist Union, or SMU).

With an organizational structure and statutes nearly identical to those of the other rightist groups,<sup>24</sup> the SMU distinguished itself by launching a vituperative campaign against Konovnitsyn. "The union [i.e. the OURP] has collapsed," the group proclaimed in an article in its press outlet, *Iuzhnyi bogatyr* (Southern Hero). "[A]ll that's left is the lonely, despised, drunken Konovnitsyn and his supporters—provocateurs and hooligans."<sup>25</sup> A *Iuzhnyi bogatir* article two months later accused Konovnitsyn of corruption, bringing a Pole and a converted Jew into the OURP, and of ordering the beatings of OURP workers who protested Konovnitsyn's extortion rackets. The article ended by calling Konovnitsyn a "vile liar and traitor to the Russian people, whose interests he sold out to its enemies for thirty Jewish pieces of silver." Konovnitsyn responded with similar vituperation in the pages of *Za tsaria*, as the *Iuzhnyi bogatir* editor revealed in his paper that he was receiving death threats from OURP supporters.<sup>26</sup>

Facing sustained attacks from the other three monarchist groups, the OURP dedicated its weekly meetings almost exclusively to wild attacks on Konovnitsyn's

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<sup>24</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 381, ll. 12-18.

<sup>25</sup> *Russkoe slovo*, February 11, 1910 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 242.

<sup>26</sup> *Iuzhnyi bogatyr*, April 7, 1910 in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 249-50.

enemies within the rightist camp. Speakers pronounced hysterical threats against these “Kadet-revolutionaries,” while they denounced Pelikan as “Judas Iscariot.” Attendees even began threatening Tolmachev’s official representative due to Tolmachev’s refusal to ban *Iuzhnyi bogatyr*.<sup>27</sup> Fearing that the conflict could result in violence between the rightist groups, Tolmachev promulgated a ban against rightist incitement toward other rightist organizations. He further warned all the groups’ councils that council members participating in any intra-rightist unrest would be arrested and their unions closed down. In an exasperated report to the central police department, Tolmachev noted that the leftwing press gleefully reproduced “the rude and insulting excesses” of the rightwing papers toward other rightist organizations, serving to discredit the entire monarchist movement.<sup>28</sup>

In May 1910, members of all the OURP splinter organizations joined together to symbolically expel Konovnitsyn “from the sphere of monarchists.” By this time, the eternal skullduggery and corruption surrounding Konovnitsyn had devastated his own organization. Although it once boasted thousands of members, the OURP had been reduced to a rump collection of less than 400 bitter-enders. Having presided over the self-destruction of the entire rightist movement in Odessa, Konovnitsyn resigned as OURP President the following year.<sup>29</sup>

Konovnitsyn’s corruption had set the model for rightist leadership in Odessa. He established himself as leader of the OURP owing to his connections with his brother and with Dubrovin, who overlooked his past indiscretions and obvious moral failings in favor

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<sup>27</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 223, ll. 147, 251.

<sup>28</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 246-47.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., l. 256, and DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 223, ll. 251-52.

of his perceived loyalty. Konovnitsyn immediately grasped the possibilities for personal enrichment that OURP activity could bring and systematically looted his own organization from the outset. Despite the dissatisfaction that Konovnitsyn's venality generated within his union's council, Dubrovin and the central branch expressed confidence in his leadership, standing by him as late as 1910, when the OURP council rebels withdrew to form the SMU. Konovnitsyn ignored the OURP's structural mechanisms for financial control with the implicit approval of Dubrovin who, facing his own leadership rivalries in St. Petersburg, judged Konovnitsyn's loyalty as more important than his competence as a leader.<sup>30</sup>

Konovnitsyn's rivals also proved corrupt as leaders of their own organizations. Whether their money originated with private donors or in the government's coffers, a financial spigot had been opened that was too tempting to resist. As previously noted, many of the rightists' own constituents viewed monarchist organizations primarily as a means to gain jobs, official connections, and other business opportunities, and the leaders themselves in many respects shared this view. Furthermore, the secret nature of the state subsidies and the government's consequent failure to demand strict accounting from the rightists for these funds enabled the diversion of this financing with little risk of exposure or censure. The corruption that pervaded both the OURP and the national organization proved to be the movement's undoing.

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<sup>30</sup> Dubrovin's confidence in Konovnitsyn's loyalty ultimately proved misplaced, as Konovnitsyn sided against Dubrovin when Markov and Konovnitsyn's brother pushed him out of the URP presidency.

## The Tolmachev Period

As in most areas severely affected by the Revolution of 1905, Odessa temporarily stabilized from 1908. Field courts and Stolypin's other repressive measures helped subdue leftwing unrest in the city, while rightist violence nearly disappeared with the dissolution of the OURP and UAM druzhiny. Most importantly, General Kaulbars was relieved of command.<sup>31</sup> From Grigor'ev's resignation in August 1907 until the tsar's downfall in February 1917, Odessa's various city mayors demonstrated a friendlier attitude toward Odessa's rightist movement than had Grigor'ev. Despite Grigorev's bitter experience with the OURP and even Tolmachev's initial difficulties in bringing the rightists to heel, Grigor'ev's successors shared the political establishment's sympathy for the rightists, including the standard view of the movement's key role in suppressing the Revolution of 1905. Like Stolypin, however, Odessa's leaders sometimes played the rightist organizations off against each other by transferring their support from hostile groups to those more willing to cooperate with the authorities. As was the case in St. Petersburg, this strategy did not *cause* the near-collapse of these organizations. Officials gained the ability to manipulate the rightists because rightist leaders' corruption and intrigues cost them the support of former donors, members, and sympathizers, thus making their organizations dependent on government subsidies. With law and order reestablished in the city, the public found little need to tolerate, much less support, the discredited monarchist movement after its dramatic self-immolation.

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<sup>31</sup> According to Witte, Kaulbars's removal stemmed from an incident in 1908 in which a soldier engaged in an altercation with two police officers, one of whom shot the soldier dead. See Sergei Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, ed. and trans. Sidney Harcave (New York and England, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990), 686.

By December 1907, Tolmachev had emerged as Grigorev's successor as city mayor.<sup>32</sup> Tolmachev, an army general, sought to reimpose order in Odessa, but also to patch up official relations with the OURP strained by Grigor'ev's attempts to contain the organization. Tolmachev aimed to accomplish this by siding with Konovnitsyn in his burgeoning dispute with Pelikan. This effort showed in the results of an audit of the OURP's finances ordered by Tolmachev shortly before Pelikan left the OURP. The audit, provoked by Pelikan's accusations of Konovnitsyn's corruption, investigated these claims and also inquired into the general conflict between the Pelikan and Konovnitsyn camps.

Tolmachev carried out the entire audit, completed on April 2, 1908, in bad faith; he even placed Count Trishatnyi—a member of the URP's St. Petersburg council—on the commission overseeing the investigation. Despite the overwhelming evidence of Konovnitsyn's venality, the audit cleared him of wrongdoing and declared the OURP's accounts to be in order. The commission minimized the importance of its discovery of a secret, unregistered slush fund kept by Konovnitsyn by noting that the money was not used for any antigovernment or improper goals. The investigation also blamed Pelikan for the internecine conflict within the organization. Enraged by the audit's whitewash of Konovnitsyn's misconduct, Pelikan filed a complaint against Tolmachev with the Russian State Senate, a body functioning as a supreme court and staffed by official appointees, who ruled in October that Tolmachev conducted the audit in a proper fashion.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Grigor'ev was initially replaced by General Novitskii who served for a few months before a heart attack forced him from office. In addition to his appointment as city mayor, Tolmachev also served as temporary general-governor, replacing Glagolev.

<sup>33</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 217, ll. 1, 7, 10, 11, 18.

Tolmachev expressed his support for Konovnitsyn throughout 1908 in numerous other ways. He maintained his loyalty to Konovnitsyn when Pelikan left the OURP and established the Odessa UAM; Tolmachev unsuccessfully lobbied UAM President Purishkevich to remove Pelikan; and he vigorously interceded with the central police department to prevent it from recognizing the UAM's proposed steamship crew artel.<sup>34</sup> Tolmachev also publicly threatened to close down any local leftwing press organs that continued to eulogize the deaths of revolutionaries while remaining silent when rightists and OURP branch presidents were killed.<sup>35</sup> He sought to supplement the OURP's finances by applying to Minister of Internal Affairs Makarov in August 1908 for a 3,000 ruble annual subsidy for the organization.<sup>36</sup> In a particularly unscrupulous show of support for Konovnitsyn, Tolmachev paid him 100 rubles meant to be passed on to an OURP member as a reward for the man's killing of a revolutionary.<sup>37</sup>

Tolmachev also improved official relations with Rodzevich, notwithstanding his predecessor's bitter conflicts with the URM leader. Tolmachev repeatedly petitioned the central government on the URM's behalf, seeking subsidies for the organization as well as recommending permission for it to accept private donations such as buildings for its educational institutions. In response to a communication from the royal court asking whether the URM was a suitable organization to receive a gift from Tsarina Alexandra, Tolmachev praised URM leaders for "honestly and irreproachably" carrying out their

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<sup>34</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 849, ll. 5-6. It is interesting to note that one of Tolmachev's arguments against recognizing this artel was that two of its proposed leaders had allegedly been involved with the Registration collective bargaining mechanism that had been closed for acting overly assertive toward the authorities. Thus, we see workers previously active with the labor movement moving over to the rightist organizations once they gained control of the port. In other words, some workers' political allegiances were determined by the employment opportunities offered at a given time by the opposing political movements.

<sup>35</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, May 17, 1908, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, t. 3, l. 5, l. 256.

<sup>36</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 4. It seems, however, that this subsidy was not approved.

<sup>37</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 857, ll. 10-12.

responsibilities. Tolmachev put forward these accolades despite his personal involvement in investigations and audits of URM corruption. Tolmachev also began participating in the URM's sobriety society, which met in his apartment.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to these displays of official benevolence, from 1908 Tolmachev sought to shore up the rightwing movement (excluding Pelikan's UAM) as its membership rolls and lists of donors declined by securing state subsidies for rightist publications. He began with an appeal to Stolypin in January 1908 for a subsidy to cover the 814 ruble monthly deficit incurred by *Za tsaria i rodinu*, the OURP broadsheet that had mercilessly attacked Grigor'ev. Tolmachev acknowledged that the paper had sharply criticized the local and central governments and Jews in the past, but claimed it had since changed its tone and had begun engaging in "useful patriotic work."<sup>39</sup>

In a February 1909 appeal to introduce state subsidies for *Rusaskaia rech'*, Tolmachev explained the need for these funds. The Odessa press was largely in the hands of Jews, Tolmachev argued, and the local papers retained an antigovernment character, presented "biased" reporting, and offended Russian national sentiments. *Rusaskaia rech'*, however, strengthened the people's devotion to the tsar and fatherland, encouraging them to "selflessly defend everything dear to the Russian heart from the malicious attacks" of the left. The newspaper struggled with a debt of 55,000 rubles (mostly due to the purchase of its printer), which it could not pay off because the local zemstvo and the

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<sup>38</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, ll. 2-6.

<sup>39</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 815, ll. 49-50. Although the letter to Stolypin requesting the *Za tsaria* subsidy is unsigned, it clearly came from Tolmachev, as it often employs the same phraseology found in Tolmachev's appeals for subsidies for *Rusaskaia rech'*. Archival records do not reveal whether Stolypin granted the *Za tsaria* subsidy, and this lack of documentation implies that he did not. Although the central government saw fit to subsidize *Rusaskaia rech'*, *Za tsaria* may have simply gone too far with its previous excesses and personal attacks on Stolypin. Most rightist papers throughout Russia could not survive financially without these subsidies, and Stolypin's apparent refusal to fund *Za tsaria* would explain the paper's abrupt shutdown in 1910, though it is also possible that Konovnitsyn sold off the printer just for the money.

Kherson Provincial Land Bank had withdrawn their subsidies for the paper.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, *Russkaia rech'* generated little advertising revenue, since most newspaper advertisers in Odessa comprised Jewish merchants who boycotted the paper. Tolmachev ended by declaring that the paper's "patriotic activity was so great in the past and so necessary in the future, that to be deprived of it would be a big and irreplaceable loss for the entire Russian cause, [a loss] toward which the camp of the liberationist press strives so hard."<sup>41</sup>

Tolmachev secured a 12,000 ruble annual subsidy for *Russkaia rech'* beginning in 1909. The amount remained largely constant until the February Revolution, although Tolmachev requested extra funds during electoral campaigns. The central government delivered the money to Tolmachev personally, which kept the paper directly dependent on him.<sup>42</sup> Unsurprisingly, *Russkaia rech'* became an unabashed booster of Tolmachev, reporting in 1910 that Odessa's monarchist groups could fulfill their tasks "exclusively thanks to the assistance of I. N. Tolmachev."<sup>43</sup>

In 1910, Tolmachev withdrew his support from Konovnitsyn in favor of the OURP leader's rightwing rivals. With the rightist organizations immensely weakened by infighting, Tolmachev became concerned that Odessa might not retain any kind of significant rightist bloc that could help prevent the reemergence of the revolutionary movement. Thus, he finally acknowledged the major role Konovnitsyn had played in the rightist movement's dissolution. In a March 1910 letter to the police department,

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<sup>40</sup> These institutions had funded the publication out of fear of the agrarian disorders of 1905. With the stabilizing of the agrarian situation by 1909, they probably believed their financing of the rightist movement had become unnecessary.

<sup>41</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 815, l. 2.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 3, 10, 44-45, 53-127.

<sup>43</sup> *Russkaia rech'*, quoted in *Russkoe slovo*, May 4, 1910, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 254.

Tolmachev reported that Konovnitsyn must be watched with “unrelenting vigilance” due to factors that Tolmachev had simply ignored for the previous two years: Konovnitsyn allegedly regarded himself as a “dictator,” had chased out all the cultured and educated elements of the OURP, and refused to account for OURP finances. After vouching for *Za tsaria*’s political reliability and newfound moderation in his 1908 request to subsidize the paper, Tolmachev now welcomed *Za tsaria*’s imminent shutdown because its polemics allegedly discredited other monarchist organizations. Tolmachev claimed that he would not pay such close attention to the rightists except that local дума elections were approaching and he feared that divisions among the Russian population would likely lead to the electoral victory of liberal Kadets and Jews. He further lamented that Konovnitsyn’s attacks discredited Pelikan, who had now earned Tolmachev’s respect by playing an active role in the rightists’ electoral effort.<sup>44</sup>

Konovnitsyn reacted to Tolmachev’s pressure in his usual tactless manner. In May 1910, Konovnitsyn sent a circular to OURP branches claiming to be the victim of a slander campaign by both the left and the right that Tolmachev had orchestrated. The city mayor allegedly acted partly on his own authority and partly at the behest of Stolypin who, Konovnitsyn once again argued, resented his direct access to the tsar.<sup>45</sup> The letter created a final rupture with Tolmachev, who began exerting more pressure on the OURP and on Konovnitsyn, whom Tolmachev banned from speaking at the OURP’s regular Sunday meetings. Moreover, Tolmachev ordered a new audit of OURP finances that detailed the depths of Konovnitsyn’s corruption. (The documented malfeasance even extended to the period that had been covered by the exculpatory 1908 audit, conducted

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<sup>44</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 246-47.

<sup>45</sup> *Russkoe slovo*, May 4, 1910, in GARF, f. 102, op. 316, d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 254.

when Konovnitsyn and Tolmachev had been on better terms.) In an acerbic letter to Stolypin, Tolmachev declared that “without any doubt,” the audit would result in Konovnitsyn’s criminal prosecution, after which the people would understand how Konovnitsyn had exploited them.<sup>46</sup>

Tolmachev never had Konovnitsyn prosecuted, nor did he publicize the audit’s results. We can speculate that Tolmachev feared that Konovnitsyn’s public disgrace would fatally ruin the OURP, further discredit the entire rightist movement in Odessa, and reflect poorly on the local government and on Tolmachev personally for cooperating with Konovnitsyn for so many years. But Tolmachev continued to ratchet up the pressure on Konovnitsyn by banning the OURP in September 1910 from collecting money at any event without the authorities’ prior approval. He also demanded immediate financial accounting for all such activities, and he began giving permission for fundraising events to Konovnitsyn personally instead of to the OURP organization, thus making Konovnitsyn directly responsible for any financial irregularities that might arise.<sup>47</sup> In November 1911, the combination of official pressure from Tolmachev and the attacks from rival rightist groups eventually forced Konovnitsyn to resign as OURP president, which was likely the precise outcome that Tolmachev hoped to achieve.

### **Toward the End of the Autocracy**

In 1912 I. Sosnovskii replaced Tolmachev as city mayor. A committed monarchist whose wife headed a number of rightwing women’s organizations and

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<sup>46</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 223, ll. 251-52.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 345, 382.

charitable groups, Sosnovskii actively courted the dwindling monarchist movement.<sup>48</sup> He lobbied the central government to continue the annual *Russkaia rech'* subsidy and on several occasions unsuccessfully requested increased funding.<sup>49</sup>

The irresponsibility of the movement's activists, however, hindered Sosnovskii's attempts to assist the rightists. The OURP had some capable and serious members among its constituency before its first schism, but Konovnitsyn's malefactions and the constant infighting within the movement drove away these elements. Furthermore, the more honest and hardworking members tended to be busy with their own affairs and businesses, thus leaving the unions' leadership in the hands of less capable members who had more spare time.<sup>50</sup>

Unreliable and unstable activists plagued the UAM in particular. One of these, the semiliterate deacon F. Pavlov-Grigor'ev, worked opening UAM sub-branches until his church alerted Sosnovskii in 1912 that as a deacon Pavlov-Grigor'ev was not permitted to participate in political activities or even to live in Odessa. The church further reported its suspicion that he falsified membership lists for his new sub-branches, while a provincial governor informed Sosnovskii that Pavlov-Grigor'ev was "psychologically abnormal." Another UAM member assigned to open sub-branches, V. M. Vesolovskii, had similar problems. Tolmachev had alerted UAM central branch president Purishkevich as early as 1910 that the quarrelsome Vesolovskii irresponsibly denounced anyone who displeased him, including police officers. Although Tolmachev had even voiced his suspicion that

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<sup>48</sup> Witte attributed Tolmachev's removal to the embarrassment felt by many top officials when the tsar held a personal meeting with Konovnitsyn. This is highly doubtful, seeing as the tsar had repeatedly hosted Konovnitsyn for years before Tolmachev left office in 1912. As noted in chapter 5, the tsar had held four meetings with Konovnitsyn before the end of 1908. See Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, 687.

<sup>49</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 54-55, and f. 1467, op. 1, d. 815, ll. 14, 18.

<sup>50</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 11, d. 216, ll. 32-33.

Vesolovskii, like Pavlov-Grigor'ev, was "not fully psychologically normal," Purishkevich declined to take action against Vesolovskii until 1914, when he suddenly denounced Vesolovskii as a "charlatan."<sup>51</sup> While the schisms in Odessa drove out capable members and thereby proliferated the proportion of poorly educated, uncultured activists, it must be noted that these qualities reflected those of the organizations' corrupt and churlish leaders. Moreover, as noted in chapter 2, these kinds of psychologically unbalanced individuals were present in monarchist organizations from the beginning, attracted by the prospect of money-making opportunities and local power expected from organizations supported by the tsar.

As was the case with Tolmachev, Sosnovskii hoped to secure a strong rightist electoral turnout that would keep the mechanisms of local government from falling into the hands of leftists or Jews. He proved in the April 1913 city дума elections his willingness to go to extraordinary lengths to ensure proper electoral outcomes. When the rightist group led by UAM head Pelikan lost the election to progressivists, Sosnovskii cited alleged voting irregularities and had the results cancelled. Sosnovskii and Pelikan then presided over an entire campaign of fraud and intimidation in order to manufacture a victory for Pelikan's camp in the revote held three weeks later. The underhanded tactics included: the arbitrary lowering of the property qualification in order to allow more of Pelikan's supporters to vote; the theft of ballots by Pelikan's associates; Sosnovskii's appointment of Pelikan's followers as vote counters; the physical intimidation of voters by members of UAM workers' arteli; and the registration of artel members under false names in order to vote multiple times. The revote resulted in Pelikan's election as head of

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<sup>51</sup> DAOO, f. 2, op. 7, d. 250, ll. 25, 29, 61, 141-42.

the city дума, which thenceforth retained a rightist character even though support for rightists had plummeted in the city at large.<sup>52</sup>

Even with Konovnitsyn gone and a friendly city mayor in office, the right proved unable to unite its disparate organizations into a cohesive movement. The OURP and SMU finally developed a cooperative relationship with Pelikan, whose election as city дума leader put him in an ideal position to dispense patronage and bureaucratic jobs to friendly monarchists. But now URM President Rodzevich reprised Konovnitsyn's role as the spoiler. Rodzevich first clashed with Moiseev, a rightist rival of Pelikan and his predecessor as head of the city дума. That conflict, sparked by Rodzevich's support for Pelikan, provoked Moiseev to abolish the city дума's 12,000 ruble annual subsidy for the URM's educational institutions. Pelikan's refusal to reinstate the subsidy after his election then strained Pelikan's relations with Rodzevich, who publicly denounced both Pelikan and the city дума. This criticism ruined Rodzevich's relationship with Sosnovskii, who had gone to such lengths to ensure Pelikan's election and did not appreciate the дума coming under attacks from the right.<sup>53</sup>

By the beginning of 1916, Rodzevich had irreparably damaged his relations with city authorities and with other monarchist organizations allied with Pelikan. Sosnovskii and the Governor-General, Iebelov, began exerting pressure on the URM by demanding that Rodzevich turn over to them membership lists and URM council meeting protocols. Rodzevich resisted, incredulously claiming that the URM's own membership lists were inaccurate and would create the misleading impression of an inordinately small

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<sup>52</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 853, ll. 11-14. After the February Revolution, the Provisional Government filed charges against Pelikan and several other rightists in connection with the fraudulent 1913 elections.

<sup>53</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 54-58.

membership. In a January 1916 letter to police officials, Rodzevich accused Sosnovskii and Iebelov of leading an “organized campaign” against his organization. He further accused Pelikan of conspiring with local Jews against the URM.<sup>54</sup>

Although rightwing infighting often featured accusations of cooperating with Jews, Rodzevich’s claims had an element of truth. Notwithstanding Pelikan’s ideological predisposition to anti-Semitism, as head of the city дума he cultivated a close relationship with a wealthy Jewish financier named Khari. This unlikely connection, which stirred long-standing rumors that Pelikan himself was Jewish, was based on a healthy dose of personal self-interest; Pelikan supported Khari’s appointment to various official as well as private positions, including the Jewish community’s representative in the city дума, president of the city Inspection Commission (*reviziia kommissiia*), and director of the Bessarabian-Tavri Bank, while Khari bankrolled Pelikan and did favors for him such as doubling the rightist representation at the local credit society.<sup>55</sup> Pelikan doubtlessly adhered to anti-Semitism, but this did not hinder him from patronizing a rich Jewish partner because, as was the case with Konovnitsyn, personal and financial aggrandizement often took precedence over the demands of the monarchist cause.

Rodzevich’s complaints fell on deaf ears at police headquarters, since the other monarchist groups as well as the city authorities disputed his account. His opinion no longer carried much weight in 1916, as the URM’s membership had dwindled to about one hundred people. Rodzevich’s disruptive behavior among the monarchists particularly offended Governor-General Iebelov, who recommended expelling him from Odessa “as

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<sup>54</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 59-60.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 54-58; GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 2, ll. 220-21.

someone harmful to social stability and to the affairs of rightist organizations.”<sup>56</sup> Such a move proved unnecessary, however, as the army drafted Rodzevich in mid-1916, at which time the URM’s activities in Odessa effectively ceased.<sup>57</sup>

## Conclusion

The collapse of the rightist movement in Odessa largely stemmed from its poor leadership. A particularly corrupt and petulant collection of individuals banded together in the original OURP council, quarreled there, and continued their contretemps after forming rival organizations. Alienating the public, rightist leaders became dependent on the government’s political patronage and subsidies to perpetuate their organizations. Although the right still retained some influence in Odessa during the autocracy’s final years thanks to Pelikan’s capture of the city дума, the fraudulent methods needed to achieve Pelikan’s victory reveal the movement’s limited popular support by that time.

The Black Hundred was by no means the only Russian political movement between 1900 and 1917 to undergo debilitating schisms, which also affected nearly all the leftwing and even liberal parties.<sup>58</sup> Ideological disagreements played a larger role in the leftwing and liberal schisms than in their rightist counterparts, and this particularly held true in Odessa, where Black Hundred groups demonstrated a high degree of

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<sup>56</sup> GARF, f. 102, op. 1916, d. 244, t. 1, ll. 61-63.

<sup>57</sup> GARF, f. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 7.

<sup>58</sup> The Mensheviks—their own faction a result of a 1903 schism within the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party with Lenin’s Bolshevik faction—proved particularly prone to debilitating infighting. See Leopold Haimson, ed., *The Mensheviks: From the Revolution of 1917 to the Second World War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). See also the abuse Lenin heaps on his socialist opponents throughout his classic 1902 tract *What is to be Done* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1988). For the Socialist Revolutionary Party, see Manfred Heldenmeier, *The Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party before the First World War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), and Michael Melancon, *The Socialist Revolutionaries and the Russian Anti-War Movement, 1914-1917* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990).

ideological uniformity. Among Odessa's rightists, the disputes were almost entirely personal, and the main source of contention was inevitably accusations of corruption. Konovnitsyn did not alienate his constituency with his physical attacks on Jews or his wild pogromist declamations in *Za tsaria*; to the contrary, this is precisely what drew him the support of a population frightened and exhausted by the attacks of revolutionary groups with perceived Jewish roots. But seeing rightist leaders redirect their crude fanaticism against each other for purely personal reasons was more than the public was willing to bear.

The trajectory of Odessa's rightist movement closely mimicked that of its national counterpart—an initial period of activism and popularity quickly undermined by corruption and virulent factionalism, finally resulting in a collection of rival organizations reliant on secret state funding. Even the Odessan Black Hundred's lingering, undeserved influence in the city duma was reproduced on the national level, where rightists enjoyed an oversized representation in the national Duma thanks to Stolypin's antidemocratic electoral law of 1907. Odessa's rightist movement ultimately shared the fate of its national counterpart. Despite all the secret state subsidies and the underhanded schemes to keep the local duma under rightist control, by 1917 the movement had become a shriveled replica of its former self. Underneath the subsidized publications, officially supported organizations, and phony duma representation lay a discredited movement lacking public confidence. After the revolution, its few remaining members were rarely heard from again.

## Conclusion

Black Hundred ideology never produced a governing philosophy. Instead, it represented a reactionary utopia—a desire for a return to a simpler, premodern time before the onset of industrial capitalism and the incorporation into the Russian empire of millions of Jews and other minorities in the Polish partitions of the late eighteenth century. The fact that this was a romantic, collective striving rather than an achievable goal was reflected in the overall pessimism of the far right movement, whose leaders often seemed to regard the revolution as inevitable. As early as 1912, Tikhomirov exclaimed, “Unhappy monarch, I’ll pity him until death. . . . I personally, I admit, have lost all faith in salvation.”<sup>1</sup> Because the Black Hundred had no real possibility of realizing its vision, the movement’s adherents remained free to pursue their agenda without compromise. Even the concessions countenanced by some rightists before the revolution were undertaken strictly for the goal of winning the war against Germany. One can safely assume that Orlov’s courting of Jews and Purishkevich’s insistence on unity with the left would not have outlasted World War I for long.<sup>2</sup>

The far right’s *raison de-tre* was not to make compromises and achieve some of its wishes, but rather to preserve the purity and completeness of its vision of an

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<sup>1</sup> Iu. Kir’ianov, *Pravye partii v Rissii, 1911-1917* (Moscow: ROSSPIOH, 2001), 411. In a 1909 Duma speech, Purishkevich expressed a similar sentiment: “We [monarchists]—being discredited, and having neither power, strength, nor meaning in the provinces; we in whose midst [leftists] are planting discord between the classes—gentlemen, we will never cope with this revolution, and they will celebrate their victory on the ruins of the real, pure truth.” See *Gosudarstvennaia Duma—Stenograficheskie Otchety*, November 4, 1909, col. 1283-85.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in its admonition of monarchists’ political congresses during wartime, the UAM council asserted that monarchists would again need political congresses after the war to discuss policy toward Russia’s minorities based on their wartime behavior. See *Novoe vremia*, February 9, 1917, in GARF, f. 102, 4<sup>th</sup> delopro., op. 124, d. 110, l. 305.

untrammelled autocracy connected with the Russian people through an organic, mystical bond. General Denikin, leader of the anti-Bolshevik Volunteer Army, commented on this tendency during the Civil War: “For Shul’gin and his associates, monarchism was not a form of state structure, but a religion,” he noted. “In a burst of passion for the idea, they took their belief for knowledge, their desires for real facts, their mood for the people’s.”<sup>3</sup>

The government’s decade-long funding of the Black Hundred turned out to be a poor investment. When the revolution arrived, the movement proved unable to sway events, having squandered its little remaining public influence during World War I. The state’s ostensibly secret subsidies failed to shore up a meaningful counterforce to the revolutionaries, but succeeded in further discrediting the government. The association with the Black Hundred also reflected poorly on the tsar, whose repeated personal audiences with disreputable figures like Konovnitsyn did little to prop up the autocracy’s fading prestige.

The very existence of this slush fund—approved by a succession of prime ministers, ministers of internal affairs, justice ministers, and ultimately the tsar himself—speaks to an abiding sense of insecurity in the highest echelons of the autocracy. Aside from the rightists’ own vituperate criticisms of the government, one might wonder why the government viewed as beneficial a movement whose essential argument was that the autocracy, at almost any given moment, was on the verge of being overthrown. Clearly, Kir’ianov is correct in arguing that the government hoped to keep the Black Hundred to use in the event of another revolutionary outbreak.<sup>4</sup> However, two other concerns emerge from the communications of government officials as the paramount reasons for the

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<sup>3</sup> Makarov and Repnikov, “Russkie monarchisty,” 58.

<sup>4</sup> Kir’ianov, *Pravye partii*, 390.

government's funding of the Black Hundred—a sense of gratitude for its fight against revolutionaries during the turbulent years of 1905-07, and a desire to emulate the tsar's support for the movement.

In the end, the Black Hundred did not founder owing to officials' habits of playing off rightist leaders against each other. Instead, corruption among the movement's leaders brought about the movement's irreversible decline. The money and other benefits associated with membership in an officially-supported organization help to account for the movement's rise, although this is not to discount its substantial, short-lived popularity as a means to express opposition to the revolutionaries. More importantly, corruption explains the Black Hundred's downfall. This dissertation has focused on the damage done to the monarchist cause by the venality of Dubrovin in St. Petersburg and Konovnitsyn in Odessa. But police reports show Black Hundred branch presidents throughout the country replicated their practices. This widespread corruption was a natural occurrence in a movement with numerous unscrupulous local leaders whose financial improprieties were tolerated in the center.

If not for its corruption, could the Black Hundred have served as a meaningful buttress of the autocracy? Probably not. With its extremist, vigilante origins, the Black Hundred thrived on the chaos of the Revolution of 1905. Once the government suppressed the revolt, monarchists had to compete in the realm of conventional politics. Lacking clear solutions for alleviating the plight of workers and peasants, rightists continued to emphasize the fight against revolutionaries and Jews. But without an immediate revolutionary threat, as the autocracy became increasingly unpopular, the appeals of the Black Hundred failed to resonate with the public. This movement, born in

violence, was ill-suited to succeed in the absence of widespread civil strife. By 1917, when the autocracy once again needed its service, the Black Hundred had already been crippled. It was not vanquished by the revolutionaries, Jews, government officials, or any of its other eternal enemies. Rather, the movement had devoured itself.

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## Biography

Born in Philadelphia, PA, Jacob Langer graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1995 with a dual major in History and Political Science. After working for four years as a reporter and editor in the Czech Republic, he returned to America and later entered the Ph.D. program in the History Department at Duke University, earning his Master's degree in 2002. He presented his research on the Black Hundred at two meetings of the Southern Conference of Slavic Studies. Jacob earned two academic-year FLAS fellowships, a summer FLAS fellowship, a summer research fellowship from the Duke Graduate School, and a six-month Title VIII award from the American Councils's Research Scholars Program for research in Russia and Ukraine. His article, "Fighting the Future: The Doomed Antirevolutionary Crusade of Vladimir Purishkevich" appeared in the June 2006 issue of *Revolutionary Russia*.