



Leonid Alekseyev plays a *shpik* (police informer) in Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 feature film "Strike."

Leonid Aleksandrovich Alekseyev (1879/1881, Bezhetsk, Tverskaya province—after 1957). An anarcho-communist from 1909. He was the son of a cook, who later owned a small hotel in Bezhetsk. Leonid graduated from the local high school and got a job as a machinist. He was drafted into the military and ended up in the fleet. In 1905 he took part in a mutiny and ended up in prison in Vladivostok. Upon release, he left Russia and emigrated to America. He settled in Boston, where he worked as a riveter. In the summer of 1917 he returned to Russia, to his hometown of Bezhetsk. He conducted anti-war rallies, and in the autumn of 1917 was elected to the Bezhetsk Regional Soviet, becoming a member of its executive committee. In October, 1917, he initiated re-election of the local soviets. On November 24, 1917, he participated in the 1st Bezhetsk congress of peasant deputies, which created a peasant soviet. On January 20, 1918, he helped to disperse the Zemstvo [local government organ of the old regime]. In March,

1918, he was one of the organizers of the Bezhetsk Federation of Anarchists. He attended the 4th Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets as a delegate. At the 5th Bezhetsk Regional Congress of Soviets (March 22–30, 1918), he was elected commissar of labour. He was one of the organizers of a commune. At the 6th Bezhetsk Regional Congress of Soviets (June 20 – July 1, 1918), he was elected chairperson of the Regional Executive Committee. He organized book publishing, the journal *Krasnoarmeyets* [Red Army Soldier], and the newspaper *Anarkhiya*. Leonid recalled: "I was absorbed in organizational work for Soviet power, which I considered a transitional stage in moving towards anarchism." On July 20–30, 1918, the Regional Executive Committee was dissolved by the local Bolshevik Military-Revolutionary Committee and Alekseyev was arrested. In December, 1918, he was released. From 1922 he worked in the 1st Proletcult Theatre in Moscow and was active in cinematography.

by Sergei Ovsiannikov (translated by Malcolm Archibald)