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SPONTANEOUS WORKERS' ACTIVITY IN THE SOVIET UNION

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Spontaneity(stikhiinost') is one of the most pejorative terms in the Marxist-Leninist vocabulary. Ever since Lenin's tirade against the evils of a spontaneous workers' movement, spontaneous activity has been vilified. Spontaneity is defined invariably in negative terms: as the absence of order and guidance, as the anti-thesis of consciousness. Remnants of spontaneity under socialism have traditionally been explained by shortcomings in public consciousness which make it lag behind new standards. But spontaneity is by no means solely an ideologically important phenomenon; it has always been associated with opposition to the leading role of the Communist Party in society and thus has the gravest political implications.¹

We understand spontaneous activity as all activity that is not guided, organised or directed closely from above but instead is essentially generated from below by individuals and groups acting on their own initiative and following their own impulses and objectives. In the highly organised and inclusive Soviet system spontaneous activity on any scale is very rare. Yet even in the USSR social groups do act outside the framework of the state and the social and political organisations. The four types of spontaneous activity selected for examination do not exhaust the range of workers' spontaneity. They do, however, constitute the most important forms of such activity and are all, in varying degree, sufficiently visible to permit analysis. The four types chosen - job changing, indiscipline, the writing of critical letters and industrial action - obviously differ a great deal in content and form. The first two are essentially individualistic expressions of individual workers' discontents and preferences. The writing of critical letters is undertaken by individuals and groups who are spontaneously prompted by matters often beyond their immediate concern to articulate criticism and advocate remedies related to wider issues. Although letter writing is unusual in that it is officially approved, it retains its spontaneity in that the vast majority of critical letters are written at workers' rather than higher organisations' initiative. The last type of spontaneous activity is far rarer and far more politically significant than the others and approximates most closely to the spontaneity so reviled by Lenin. The aim of the paper is to examine in each case the scope and nature of the activity, official attitudes

and response, and in particular to analyse the categories of workers involved, their reasons and objectives, focussing throughout on the changes that have taken place since the early 1960s.

Changing Jobs

The most obvious and widespread form of spontaneous workers' activity is labour turnover or, more precisely, that part of turnover which involves workers changing jobs of their own accord without any organisational direction or planning. Soviet workers have long managed to exercise this particular kind of freedom on a relatively large scale. Since the lifting of Stalin's draconian penalties in the early 1950s what can be termed 'avoidable' turnover has constituted almost two-thirds of all labour movement and has run at between 19 and 22 per cent per annum.² Although such levels are not unusually high for an industrialised country - they bear comparison with British figures³ they cause great concern in the Soviet Union in at least two respects. First, they are economically costly: workers usually spend between three and four weeks without work, often not exactly breaking their necks to find a new job. Moreover, their productivity is seriously impaired both before they leave their old job and on taking up new employment. It was estimated in the early 1960s that turnover accounted for something over 12 per cent of all lost working time; in 1969 the total cost was calculated at around three billion roubles.⁴

The second objection to workers changing jobs is based on ideological and political grounds. The phenomenon has long been defined in terms of its spontaneous and unorganised nature and as such it is seen by many Soviet commentators as an expression of individualist, self-seeking interests which conflict with those of society as a whole. Spontaneous activity of this kind is therefore viewed as a negative feature, as something 'fundamentally foreign' to a planned socialist economy. The mass media have tended to take this line and to portray workers who change jobs as irresponsible 'flitters' who place their own profit above that of the community.⁵ Not all Soviet opinion is quite so damning. Most of the sociologists who have undertaken studies of labour turnover adopt a more balanced approach. They see spontaneity of this kind as the legitimate expression of what are often positive social demands upon society and maintain that society has to try

to harmonise these demands with wider interests and possibilities. In this enlightened view, labour turnover is an important manifestation of the survival under socialism of differences and even conflicts between individual and public interest.⁶

What are the factors that prompt workers to take spontaneous action of this kind? The first thing that strikes one upon examining workers' given reasons for changing jobs is that these cannot be forced into any fixed and unvarying rank order. Considerable differences exist, most notably between regions and over time. Most of the large numbers of workers who quit jobs in Siberia and the Far East in the late 1950s did so because they wanted to leave the area altogether. For them general living conditions and family reasons were the first and foremost factors prompting action; pay came next and other factors linked with the job itself came last.⁷ Workers already living in the more prosperous and desirable regions gave relatively lower priority to living conditions in their stated reasons for changing jobs. The reason most commonly given by these workers was the actual work situation - more than a third of Leningrad workers who left their jobs in 1962-63 did so because of factory conditions and job prospects, over a quarter cited living conditions and a fifth mentioned wages.⁸

As the basic standard of living in the remoter areas improved through the 1960s, so the reasons for changing jobs started to move in the direction of Moscow and Leningrad workers' priorities. By the mid-1960s many more workers in cities like Novosibirsk were giving dissatisfaction with their job conditions and pay as reasons for changing. The same tendency is also evident over time in more prosperous areas. A study of turnover in the Estonian building materials industry found that workers first employed between 1958 and 1965 were more likely to leave because of work organisation and general factory conditions than those who had taken up employment between 1945 and 1958. Movement in the same direction is indicated by a survey of job changers in Voronezh in 1968 when one in every two workers said that they had left in order to try and improve their conditions of work rather than their standard of living.⁹

So one can see that as economic progress improves general living standards, workers become much more sensitised to the job and factory situation and far more prone to take action

because of deficiencies in that area. Furthermore, as educational levels rise, so the standards by which workers judge their job situation become more demanding and dissatisfaction tends to grow rather than diminish. Young workers being turned out onto the labour market in the 1970s with a completed secondary education want not merely decent living conditions and tolerable pay, but also expect a job that is fulfilling and corresponds to their qualifications and, most of all, to their higher expectations- they tend to leave if these conditions are not met.¹⁰

This problem of rising expectations is compounded by the fact that it is young workers who figure most prominently. About half of those who change their jobs of their own accord are under thirty. It is similarly unsurprising that the majority of workers leave after less than a year or two on the job, but the popular image of workers flitting from job to job every few months is exaggerated -only one in ten of the Leningrad sample of 1962-63 had held more than two jobs within the preceding eighteen months.¹¹

Since the early 1960s the length of service among job changers has increased. From the authorities' standpoint this is a positive development in that it means that workers are staying put longer. On the other hand, it is worrying that workers with longer records of service are taking spontaneous action of this kind in greater numbers. It means that older and more highly skilled workers are leaving their jobs in search of better conditions. Moreover, while lower paid workers still tend to leave jobs more frequently than their better off fellows, this situation also shows signs of changing. More high paid workers are joining the ranks in search of greater job satisfaction better work organisation and brighter prospects.¹² Paying high wages is therefore a decreasingly effective safeguard against turnover. The stereotype of the job changer of the early 1960s, the young, unskilled, poorly paid workers has altered. He is becoming better educated, more highly skilled and paid; what is more, he is being increasingly joined in his spontaneous quest by his older, more experienced and more highly skilled fellows.

The changing profile of job changers makes this form of spontaneous activity more difficult to tackle. The approach that long dominated official policy in this area stemmed from a traditional view of turnover as a wholly negative phenomenon which had to be eradicated by the use of legal restrictions and penalties. A good deal of this legalistic approach still comes through in the constant reminders to trade unions and management to tighten up on the observation of regulations; directors are in particular singled out for criticism and castigated for employing all comers and even enticing workers away from other enterprises.¹³

Since the late sixties a considerable effort has been made to combine such negative sanctions with more positive and preventive measures. Higher wages, greater regional differentials to induce workers to stay in less desirable areas, stable norms and long service increments, all these have constituted a move in the direction of the greater incentives long urged by academics in the field.¹⁴ Measures have been taken in a number of enterprises to rationalise job tasks and thus decrease job dissatisfaction, underemployment and the labour shortage that is the sine qua non of high turnover. At the Shchekino chemical combine, which was a pioneer in this area, turnover was halved within a year.¹⁵ Lastly, an attempt has been made to increase control over job changing by providing far more information and guidance for those who are thinking of leaving as a substantial proportion have no idea where to go. To this end, personnel work has been expanded at enterprise level and since 1967 a network of job placement bureaux has been operating at republic level.¹⁶

It is difficult to assess the impact of these measures. The new bureaux do not seem to have been a spectacular success and incentives and job rationalisation have not yet made significant inroads on the overall levels of turnover. Up to 1969 these showed no sign of changing; since 1970 there has been a decline in turnover in some sectors, such as the food and chemical industries, but in other areas levels have shown no signs of falling and in a few sectors and regions turnover rates are still climbing.¹⁷

Indiscipline

The breaking of work rules is in many ways a more worrying form of workers' spontaneity. Smaller in scale than job changing it still presents a formidable economic problem. Tens of millions of man-days are lost annually through lack of discipline; in 1973 in the RSFSR alone absenteeism was estimated to have cost over half a billion roubles in lost production.¹⁸ In a situation where labour productivity has become almost the only source of growth and an ever higher premium is placed on quality, not only absenteeism, but discipline in the wider sense of a conscientious attitude to work, is vital to success. This is why the introduction of economic reform was accompanied by a renewed campaign against indiscipline and why there is a constant stress on the direct relationship between levels of discipline and productivity.¹⁹

What really makes indiscipline a more formidable and objectionable form of spontaneous activity are its social, ideological and political implications. Like turnover, indiscipline is seen as an anti-social phenomenon but it has none of the former's saving graces. While some workers may change jobs for laudable reasons, absenteeism and drunkenness are irredeemable. Furthermore, all workers who violate disciplinary regulations are also law breakers. Indeed, indiscipline at work is seen to breed lack of discipline outside the factory and is closely identified with hooliganism and petty crime. By defying the authority of management and of the rules workers indirectly defy the authority of society and of the Party and state. It is 'not by chance', as Soviet parlance would put it, that the Central Committee resolution of 1966 on indiscipline in the Tula region stressed that the strengthening of labour discipline meant the strengthening of state power.²⁰

Indiscipline is no new problem; absenteeism reached its height in the late twenties (7.7 man days in 1927). Drastically cut down by the application of punitive sanctions in 1939-40, levels of absenteeism were steadily eroded, even after legal constraints were eased, by the strengthening of industrial habits. By the mid-1950s absenteeism was running at just under one man day per annum and falling. The introduction of economic reform coincided with a rise of about 10 per cent

(from 0.8 to 0.9 man days). It took a sustained campaign some time to eliminate this increase and it is only in the last few years that there have been signs of a downward trend.²¹

Absenteeism, to which all official figures refer and probably grossly underestimate, is by far the most common form of indiscipline, running at between a third and a half of all offences. Other frequent offences are turning up drunk for work (20 per cent and above), arriving late and leaving early, slipping away during working hours (10 per cent), drinking on the job and disobeying orders (10 to 15 per cent and above).²² There is little reliable information on other forms of laxness although we know that bad quality work is widespread and the pilfering of enterprise property is a serious problem.²³

Fortunately, a good deal of data are available the numbers and types of workers involved in disciplinary offences. Surveys at a wide variety of plants in the late 1960s found that between 7 and 10 per cent of the workforce indulged in this form of spontaneous activity, a third of them doing so more than once in the course of the year.²⁴ Like those who frequently change jobs, many offenders are young, but, in contrast to turnover, the under 25 year olds are not particularly prone to take action when it comes to indiscipline. Those between 25 and 30 years of age are more likely to do so, though by far the greatest degree of absenteeism and drunkenness is to be found among workers in their thirties. Taken together these last two age groups comprise between a half and four-fifths of all offenders and even their seniors are by no means immune to taking off extra time, drinking during working hours or disobeying orders.²⁵

This wide age spread is reflected in the distribution of offenders by length of service. The majority are not short stayers but workers with long continuous records of employment. Those with over 6 years of service form the bulk of offenders and a survey in one enterprise found that nearly half the indisciplined workers had been there for more than 15 years. And judging by trends in the Tula region both the age and length of service of this whole group of workers in on the increase.²⁶ The picture is also

fairly clear when one turns to skill. Unskilled and semi-skilled workers are up to three to four times more likely to break the rules, particularly if they work in construction or seasonal jobs, than are their more highly qualified counterparts.²⁷ As one would expect from the above characteristics, education is also negatively related to indiscipline: three-quarters of all offenders in the late 1960s had not finished the 7th class. But the situation is changing as general education levels rise. A Siberian survey in the early 1970s found that workers who had not finished secondary school were only slightly more prone to break labour discipline than their secondary educated fellows. It might not be too long before all workers who take this form of spontaneous activity are secondary school graduates.²⁸

One thing that is probable is that they will still mainly be male. Men have a near monopoly on drunkenness and a two to three fold greater propensity to break factory rules generally. Women, though far more law-abiding, do tend to arrive late for work, leave to do the shopping in working hours and are more likely than men to disobey management orders.²⁹ As to organisational activity, workers who participate in socialist competition are only slightly less prone to be indisciplined while those who belong to the Party appear to commit offences only half as frequently as non-communists. That communists are involved at all in spontaneity of this kind is of course a source of concern for the Party.³⁰ This, and above all the fact that the typical offender is not on the periphery of the workforce but is a semi-skilled, quite well educated and well paid man in his thirties, makes the question of what induces such workers to break the rules particularly important.

Because all indiscipline is in Marxist thinking the concomitant of exploitation, its existence under socialism was long explained away as a mere 'survival' of the capitalist past. While this thesis, which is also applied to spontaneity in general, continues to be trotted out complete with glosses about the influence of bourgeois propaganda, its limitations have been recognised by many academics. An ever greater role is assigned to so-called 'objective' factors and problems.³¹

By far the most prominent of these 'objective' problems is alcohol. Nearly all cases of absenteeism and most of the other forms of indiscipline are linked with drinking. The worst periods of indiscipline occur around pay days and holidays when more than the usual quota of workers are inebriated.³² Offenders give a variety of reasons for drinking that range from personal mood, through comradeship to dissatisfaction with work and with factory conditions. This is not the place to go into what lies at the root of the whole problem of alcoholism in the Soviet Union, suffice it to say that one in every two workers who commit a disciplinary offence put it down to vodka. According to one calculation the 'drying out' of factory workers would increase labour productivity by 10 per cent; this is perhaps the main reason for the vigorous drive since 1972 to reduce consumption.³³

However, there is a good deal to the explanation of indiscipline beyond vodka. . . . Personal circumstances and family difficulties certainly play a part. But a much more significant factor are circumstances at work. Research has found that relations within the workgroup have a very considerable effect on the incidence of indiscipline. The presence of a group of hard drinkers or even of an individual opinion leader who encourages defiance of the rules can make all the difference between a well-ordered and an insubordinate shop or brigade.³⁴ This indicates that most workers are not so much intent on violating the regulations as prepared to be led astray; they appear to have little positive commitment to well-ordered labour. As for the factors that often turn such indifference into indiscipline, these include bad work conditions and poor work organisation leading to excessive overtime and storming. In one poll every fifth offender specifically singled out these shortcomings as the root of his indiscipline and work-linked factors figured more prominently in the explanations offered by higher skilled respondents.³⁵

Although the factors that bring about indiscipline in some respects parallel those that stimulate turnover, there is no direct correlation between the two forms of spontaneity.³⁶

The two are linked in a curious way by the common factor of management laxity. Managers are willing to employ job changers fairly indiscriminately because of the general labour shortage and they tend to be soft on discipline for the same reason. Directors cannot afford to lose skilled workers, neither do they want to appear as intolerant disciplinarians; their aim is to create an atmosphere of rule flexibility which will allow them to break the rules more easily when this is required by plan fulfilment. Management therefore frequently turns a blind eye to minor infringements and even where offences are formally registered it often fails to impose any penalties.³⁷ Such management attitudes create a climate that breeds a defiant indifference to discipline: many of the most persistent offenders, workers in their thirties and forties who are well established in the factory, know the rules, and even boast that they will not be sacked come what may.³⁸

When management does take steps to punish indiscipline they often seem to be the wrong ones. The great majority of offenders are merely reprimanded, a minority are publicly admonished or materially penalised, only a very small proportion are transferred to lower paid work and hardly any are dismissed.³⁹ This distribution of measures does not necessarily reflect the preferences of all management. One poll revealed that managers strongly favoured the use of transfers and material sanctions. Presumably the failure to impose these should be seen partly in terms of the requirements of good and easy factory relations, and partly as the result of the economic and administrative difficulties involved. Recent changes in regulations have facilitated the use of the harsher methods at management's disposal and it is interesting to note that transfers and material penalties have been more frequently applied.⁴⁰

How effective are such administrative and material sanctions in stemming this form of spontaneity? According to the offenders themselves, they are much less successful than the discussion of cases at workers' meetings or in comrades courts. One out of every two offenders appears to favour such moral correctives though one would hardly expect them to promote the use of the harsher measures.⁴¹

Practice tends to bear out a modified version of the offenders' thesis. The little data we have relating the incidence of recidivism to measures taken shows that moral correction is most effective (producing recidivism in only a fifth of cases), followed closely by material sanctions (a quarter commit further offences). Transfer to lower paid posts is successful in only one in two cases while the majority of offenders who are only given reprimands are soon breaking the rules again.⁴² Such comparisons perhaps exaggerate the efficacy of moral correction as this might be applied more frequently to less serious offenders, harsher penalties being reserved for the hard core who are far more likely to commit further offences. Where indiscipline has most successfully been reduced this has been achieved by the use of a combination of moral, material and administrative methods. In the Tula region, where a 'show campaign' was launched in 1967 and was carefully monitored by sociologists, higher fines and transfers figured as prominently as public moral correction and education drives. One of the best records - a reduction in the number of offenders from nine to a little more than three per cent of the workforce - was set by the Shchekino chemical combine. Here labour economies and job rationalisation provided both negative and positive counters to indiscipline. Dismissals and transfers helped to undermine the sense of security ^{that} stimulates indiscipline while higher wages and better work organisation probably reduced levels of job dissatisfaction.⁴³ In the longer term, it is the positive measures that seem to offer the best chance of success. Improved work organisation, faster automation and all the measures encapsulated by the term scientific organisation of work have already in some enterprises been shown to reduce indiscipline by creating a climate conducive to self-discipline and commitment.⁴⁴

Critical letters

The writing of critical letters to the press is the only form of spontaneous activity that receives official approval and even encouragement. The practice was strongly supported by Lenin, persisted through the Stalin period and has been particularly promoted since the mid-1960s. Letters of all kinds, especially those commenting on problems and putting forwards criticism, are seen as an important channel of communication between public and

and authorities, as essential feedback, to quote a recent Soviet study, on the impact of policy decisions. Trud, for instance, sends quarterly analyses of critical letters to trade union headquarters.⁴⁵ Soviet newspapers receive enormous numbers of letters, ranging from a few thousand at local level to over half a million a year in the case of a national daily such as Trud. The letters deal with anything from praise of individual and collective achievements to criticism and comment of a substantial kind. Critical letters constitute between a fifth and a half of the total and it is on this section of the mailbag that we intend to focus.⁴⁶ Fortunately, for our purposes, workers as an occupational group are leaders in this particular field. A study of those who wrote letters to Komsomolskaya pravda from one city in 1966 found that proportionately workers penned more critical letters than any other group of correspondents.⁴⁷ Trud was chosen for the following survey because it has the largest worker readership (37 per cent) of all national dailies²⁸ and as the all-union trade union organ attracts a large number of letters on nationally relevant issues. Unfortunately there is no data on the composition of Trud correspondents, but a sample count of letters published in the first four months of 1972 showed that 44 per cent came from workers. One could argue that workers letters might be selected more frequently for publication, but it is more likely that the figure reflects the greater propensity of workers to write letters which was found in the Komsomolskaya pravda survey.

Various problems beset any attempt to use published critical letters as evidence of spontaneous activity. Trud publishes only a minute percentage of the letters it receives so that a great deal of sifting has to take place and inevitably the letters that are selected tend to reflect editorial interest. There is no denying that issues may be filtered out. We do know, however, from a survey of Novosibirsk papers in 1966, that almost as large a number of critical letters seem to be published as of those in other categories. Judging by the range of issues covered by the letters in our Trud sample, they can be taken as approximately representative of the

issues that are of sufficient concern to workers to prompt them to take up pen and paper.⁴⁹ A further problem consists in the fact that we know that many letters (40 per cent in the Novosibirsk survey) are organised in some way; they are either written by rabkors (worker correspondents regularly supplying information to the paper) or by full time journalists.⁵⁰ In order to minimise the inclusion of any such organised letters, the sample excluded all letters that were not signed by a specified worker giving a specific address.

A total of 350 critical letters was selected on this basis from every other year between 1964 and 1976. Issues of Trud were read for each of these years, working backwards, until a sample of 70 (1964, 1972 and 1976) or 35 (1966, 1968, 1970 and 1974) had been collected. The years sampled were chosen so as to include workers' letters from the pre-reform period, from the years of reform introduction and particularly - hence the larger sample - from the current period. During the years sampled the publication of letters developed apace: the number of critical letters rising from a rate of about seven per month in 1964 to over 15 per month by 1976.

The distribution of complaints by issue area is shown in table I. The first thing that strikes one is the remarkable consistency with which work conditions remain at the top of the table, attracting 25% to 28% of complaints throughout the period. Apart from the very slight decline of this category, the only noticeable difference is the loss of its lead over the second most frequently mentioned issue in the reform years. Evidence from surveys of workers' attitudes confirms that work conditions persist in being the most important single focus for dissatisfaction.⁵¹ Although the level of complaints centering on conditions remains largely unaltered, their substance does change over the period. In 1964 these complaints tend to be generalised while in the later periods workers address themselves more to specific problems. Equipment is a case in point. Whereas in 1964 less than one fifth of all complaints about conditions concerned equipment, by the reform years the proportion was a third. This rise in apparent concern is supported by surveys of workers in Siberia and Minsk. In Izvestiya polls of young workers in one factory in 1968 and 1973 found that three out of four were critical of factory equipment.⁵² Such a high level of criticism might be explained

Table I. The distribution of complaints by issue area

Issue areas	1964		1966-70		1972-76	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Work conditions	25	28.1	32	27.1	61	25.2
Work organisation	8	9	19	16.1	24	9.9
Supplies	3	3.4	4	3.4	24	9.9
Inefficiency	5	5.6	4	3.4	14	5.8
Management conduct	7	7.8	8	6.8	15	6.2
Violation of labour regulations	9	10.1	13	11.0	25	10.3
Discipline	2	2.2	9	7.6	3	1.2
Pay	6	6.7	8	6.8	19	7.8
Living conditions	10	11.2	5	4.2	22	9.0
Consumer problems	2	2.2	6	5.1	7	2.9
Trade union work	7	7.8	4	3.4	16	6.6
Participation	4	4.5	-	-	-	-
Socialist competition	-	-	3	2.5	9	3.7
Other	1	1.1	3	2.5	3	1.2
Total	89	100.0	118	100.0	242*	100.0

This includes double-weighting of 1974 complaints

by the growing realisation, which emerges from many of the letters, that shortcomings in equipment increasingly are affecting workers' material well-being.

Complaints concerning conditions outside the workplace form the second largest issue group in 1964 but thereafter undergo a decline in numbers and a shift in emphasis. Whereas in 1964 such complaints dwell on housing difficulties, by the late sixties and the 1970s the focus has moved to transport and services. The overall fall in the relative importance of this category should be seen against the background of increasing absorption with the factory situation. The growth of complaints about work organisation is part of that trend: from being the subject of one in every complaints in 1964, by the late sixties this issue area attracts ever sixth critical reference. This rise in work organisation-centred complaints is a reflection of the high levels of workers' dissatisfaction in this area. Surveys in the late sixties and the early seventies found

between a quarter and a third of all workers to be critical of work organisation.⁵³ Whatever the shortcomings of economic education, workers letters convey growing awareness of the links between poor work organisation and losses in production that redound on their paypackets.

The decline in the number of work organisation complaints in the 1970s - they fall from over 14 per cent in 1972 to just below 10 per cent in 1976 - should be viewed in the context of a sharp rise in the number of letters dealing with the closely allied issue of supplies. Critical references to the poor flow and quality of supplies double between 1972 and 1976. Many of these letters are obviously coordinated to some extent within the factory as they are sometimes authored by groups of workers plus brigade leaders and even foremen. Nonetheless, the fact that such letters plead on behalf of the shop or the plant does not rule out the possibility that they also express genuine and spontaneous workers' concern. One enterprise survey in 1969, for instance, found that 20 per cent of the workers felt very worried about supply deficiencies and the time losses they caused.⁵⁴ Many of the letters stress that the workforce loses out materially because of supply problems. In view of the close connection between organisation and supply one should perhaps interpret the growth of the latter category of complaints in the 1970s as signalling not a diminution of concern with work organisation but a shift from the introspection of the late sixties to a more outward looking critical stance.

Pay attracts six to eight per cent of all critical references throughout the period (taking fifth to seventh place in the rank order), a level that does not correspond with what we know about workers attitudes in this area. Surveys conducted both in the early sixties and seventies show that approximately two-thirds of all young workers were dissatisfied with their wage levels. And even if it can be argued that young workers are less likely to write letters of complaint, the level of dissatisfaction with pay among older workers does not seem to lag far behind (between a third and a half appear to be dissatisfied).⁵⁵

The discrepancy between these general levels of dissatisfaction and the level of complaint to Trud should be seen as the result of a combination of factors. Not all those who say they are dissatisfied with pay feel so strongly as to take action on the matter - pay comes relatively low down the reasons workers give for changing jobs. Many workers who do feel strongly might think it little use to write a letter of complaint. Lastly, many of the letters that do criticise actual levels of pay are perhaps noted rather than published. Despite such elements of self-censorship and editorial selection, the pay complaints that are printed reveal some interesting trends. It is worth noting the slight increase in pay complaints in the seventies - this is due largely to a sharp rise in 1974 coinciding with the introduction of new wage regulations. There is also a shift of emphasis from complaints about delays in pay and general irregularities in 1964 to ones focussing on the award and distribution of premia, a matter that we know causes a good deal of consternation among workers.⁵⁶ Another indication of greater critical attention to pay is the increasing extent to which the issue figures in complaints about the infringement of labour legislation and workers' rights.

The overall level of complaints about infringements remains at 10-11 percent throughout the period but, once again, the emphasis changes. This time it shifts from complaints relating to the violation of safety regulations and unfair dismissals to ones connected with overtime and off-day working. Complaints concerning management conduct and relations within the enterprise run at a somewhat lower level. The relatively low salience of this issue area in letters to Trud accords with what we know of the levels of workers' dissatisfaction on this score. Only a small minority of workers seem to be actively dissatisfied with relations between themselves and management. This relative harmony may be ascribed to the efforts by management to appear benevolent and tolerant as we noted when discussing the problems of indiscipline.⁵⁷

One change that is evident within the complaints about management is a decline in the charges levelled against lower managers and direct supervisors and a corresponding increase in complaints directed against their superiors. While there is insufficient survey data to confirm or disprove this as a general tendency,

some polls indicate decreasing worker dissatisfaction with the lower echelons of management.⁵⁸

More detailed light is shed on workers' attitudes to management by the assignment of responsibility and blame in the letters sent to Trud. One half of the letters direct their complaints against a specific target or targets. In 1964 nearly 30 per cent of the individuals and bodies named lie outside the enterprise, in the reform years the proportion of such 'external' targets falls to just under a quarter of the total. By the 1970s, as a result of the rise in supply complaints which are usually made against other enterprises or higher administrative bodies, the naming of external targets increases. But even with this fluctuation in the overall level, the majority of targets remain internal and management centred. Two changes take place in the distribution of targets within the management category. First, the proportion of lower management and supervisory personnel falls from a third of all management targets in 1964 to a quarter in the late sixties and a fifth in the seventies. This might be explained by a greater cohesion of the shop unit and the wider scope of responsibility and accountability of enterprise level management under reform conditions.

The second change consists in the decrease in the number of times management alone is made the butt of explicit criticism. Between 1964 and the 1970s the number of such references falls from a half to a quarter of all targets. Instead of being called to account on its own, management is called to account collectively with the enterprise/^{union}organisation. The number of references to such joint union-management targets doubles between 1964 and the 1970s to comprise one in four of all targets. This rapid increase can be traced to an apparent shift in workers' perceptions of responsibility: in 1964 complaints about work conditions and organisation are directed at management alone while in the late sixties and to a far greater extent in the 1970s they are targetted at management and union (the Party is named as a target only once and that is in 1964). The shift towards joint responsibility could be seen as the result of greater union powers in the enterprise.⁵⁹ The greater onus of responsibility

placed on the union in the area of work conditions and organisation is not fully reflected in the overall figure for union targets which shows a rise of only five per cent between 1964 and the 1970s. This is due to a compensating fall in complaints that hold the union to blame for lower management violation of labour regulations and a decline in the number of complaints about general union work and union democracy.

Turning from targets to the critics themselves, we find that a breakdown of letters by sector of origin yields no great surprises. Half the letters come from the heavy industrial sector, particularly from machine-building. These letters focus on problems of work conditions and work organisation. One would expect the heavy industry sector to be the most prominent not merely because of its size in the economy but also because of its high skill levels and its prestige which might increase the chances of its letters being published. Mining provides 10 to 15 per cent of all letters, concentrating on living as well as on work conditions. The remaining 35 to 40 per cent is shared proportionately between manufacturing, transport and construction, the last having more than its due share. These smaller sector letters focus on work conditions, pay, infringements, management conduct and services.

The balance between individual and group authored letters remains remarkably constant over the period. Approximately 45 per cent of letters are written by single workers, 40 per cent by small groups of less than five workers and 15 per cent by larger groups which often extend to a score of workers and occasionally into the hundreds. This means that the great majority of signatories, though not necessarily the majority of authors, are involved in this type of spontaneous activity within a group framework. From the limited information given in the letters, it appears that 90 per cent of signatories are men and that the great majority are either semi-skilled or skilled workers. Going on the findings of the Komsomolskaya pravda survey, most of the letter writers would be in their thirties or forties.⁶⁰

Letters signed by individuals -these come largely from the non-heavy industrial sectors- tend to make a single complaint; most frequently this relates to factory and general facilities, equipment, management conduct, infringement of labour regulations and

retail deficiencies. Group letters, coming predominantly from the heavy industrial and mining sectors, concentrate their attention on the following issue areas: living conditions, which tend to be the subject of large group complaints, working conditions and work organisation. The late sixties in particular see a rise in the number of work organisation grievances put forward by large groups. Lastly, as we have already noted, many of the complaints concerning supplies are backed by the weight of a large group. It seems to be the case that in many issue areas the graver the complaint the larger the number of signatories.

There is also a relationship between the number of signatories and the status of the target against which the complaint is made. Inkeles and Geiger, in a study of critical letters to several Soviet dailies over twenty years ago, found a degree of status correlation between critics and targets.⁶¹ While there is no strict relationship in our sample, there is a tendency for individual workers to set their sights at management, union or local administration, leaving the higher targets to larger groups.

The tone and style of the great majority of letters is straightforward and informative rather than argumentative. Most of the authors attempt to legitimate their complaints by reference to wider interests, usually those of the shop or plant workforce. Although the letters often stress that the situation is leading to waste and inefficiency and occasionally put in a word about the good of the whole economy, they very rarely resort to slogans. In this sense the letters reflect the real thinking and concerns of their authors rather than current propaganda.⁶²

About one in every four letters does more than merely state a complaint or grievance but details the unsuccessful efforts that have already been made to resolve the matter through regular channels. An accumulation of frustration is particularly conspicuous in collectively authored letters. One in two of the larger groups make clear that they are writing to Trud

as a last resort. Such frustration gives rise to an 'extreme' tone in only a very small proportion of letters - 7 per cent in 1964 and half that in the 1970s. These letters fall into two roughly equal categories which we shall call the 'angry' and the 'helpless.' The first category letters adopt an aggressive tone and often bitterly criticise their targets; they are written both by individuals and groups and cover a wide cross-section of issues. The second category of 'extreme' letters tend to emphasise desperation and plead for help and advice. They are most often authored by groups and commonly relate to living conditions. Although such letters probably get prompt attention from Trud, there is still a good chance that, like the majority of writers of critical letters, these groups will be disappointed with the result of their complaint.⁶³ They might try writing a 'helpless' letter to the Central Committee⁶⁴ or failing that, they can and very occasionally do resort to the most drastic form of spontaneous activity - collective protest.

Industrial action

The official Soviet position on industrial action is well known: strikes are not proscribed as illegal actions but dismissed as totally unnecessary in conditions of socialism. There are no signs of the Soviet authorities following their Yugoslav and Hungarian counterparts in allowing very short strikes some legitimacy as signals of conflict situations.⁶⁵

Despite official disapproval Soviet workers do occasionally resort to this extreme form of spontaneous action. After the relatively strike-prone 1920s stoppages almost disappeared until the mid-1950s. Since then we have had a steady trickle of strike reports, running at a few per year, at most a dozen in the peak period of 1959-63. An examination of the main sources of such reports yields a total of 60 stoppages over the twenty year period.⁶⁶ Given that heavy censorship surrounds all such conflicts we would have to multiply this figure to get anywhere near the real total. However, it would be unrealistic

put it at more than a few dozen strikes per year. One has to be careful to guard against a tendency to react to Soviet denials of conflict by insisting that large-scale conflict and contestation in this form must exist. The low level of this type of spontaneity can be attributed to two sets of factors.

First there are the obvious negative constraints operating against strike action. Management, the unions and the Party as well as the security services all work to nip any conflict in the bud. More important are the positive factors that pre-empt recourse to collective and spontaneous protest. Grievances can be channelled through the Youth League, the Party and particularly through the unions; there is also an elaborate disputes procedure. Outside these established institutional channels there are the various outlets for spontaneous activity that we have already discussed. Finally, the potential arena for conflict is circumscribed by the limited scope of management decision-making and management is generally accommodating in areas where it does have the final word. As we noted when examining the problem of indiscipline, most directors are anxious to be flexible and management - workforce relations are generally good.

What strikes do occur are very short: some last for only a few hours and most do not go beyond a day, two at the outside. This brevity can partly be explained in organisational terms. Being essentially spontaneous reactions to management measures, these strikes have an extremely low level of organisation or none at all. At best, temporary spokesmen are selected in an ad hoc fashion to put forward workers' demands; tactics are largely improvised. Some reports of more recent strikes do, however, mention 'workers' representatives' and indicate a higher all round level of preparation.⁶⁷ The reasons for such paucity of organisation are largely connected with the general constraints operating against all such spontaneous activity. Potential leaders are either incorporated into the institutional network of the enterprise, bought off or dismissed. The personal cost of involvement in the organisation of strike activity is high as security services frequently round up 'ring-leaders' after the event.⁶⁸ Given

these constraints it is not surprising that strikes are usually restricted to one enterprise; occasionally other workers come out in sympathy in neighbouring plants, but only in one instance, that of the Donbass strikes of 1962, is there any indication of planned coordination of strike activity over a wider area.⁶⁹

Another reason for the ephemerality of strike action is the speed of response and concession. Because this type of spontaneity is regarded as not only economically but also politically and ideologically highly undesirable, the authorities are almost invariably flexible and accommodating. According to the scale of the action and the importance of the enterprise, representatives of the local administration, the ministry or even of the Politburo arrive on the scene, often within a matter of hours. They usually adopt the role of understanding mediators. They concede to the workers' main demands and also frequently dismiss the most unpopular local management officials. This is usually enough to get a return to work.⁷⁰

Why and how strikes happen is more complex than their settlement. There is nothing like enough information for any generalisations about the strike-proneness of various sectors. One can only note that construction workers seem to figure in many instances, presumably because of their generally poor and uncertain conditions of work. The other group which appears particularly liable to take this form of spontaneous action are the miners - here cohesion and high expectations can reasonably be assumed to play an important part.⁷¹

The degree of management responsibility for the outbreak of strikes is much clearer. Most stoppages are preceded by a build-up of suspicion between management and workforce that is nurtured by a lack of communication. It is often the way in which certain measures are introduced rather than their substance that creates the anger which fuels this type of spontaneity. Workers are sometimes prompted to take action by management refusal even to discuss their demands.⁷² Interestingly enough, survey data on the division of responsibility for labour disputes that are settled by institutional means confirm management's 'leading role' in bringing about conflict. In a poll conducted in 1964, union enterprise committee chairmen and

members of the disputes commission were almost unanimous in blaming management and even one in four management respondents assigned responsibility to their own colleagues. An equal number of managers cited unfounded workers' demands as the cause of disputes, an opinion shared perhaps predictably by only one in six of their union and disputes commission counterparts.⁷³

The issues and demands that lead to strike action fall into two groups: those relating to general living conditions and those involving the factory situation. Housing and food are in the forefront of a high proportion of stoppages. In both cases workers' spontaneous action takes the form of a protest directed not only against management but also against local authorities. As in the letters to Trud, housing is often a grievance put forward by large groups of workers who usually demand only the fulfilment of long-standing but oft broken promises.⁷⁴ The price or shortages in the supply of food are perhaps the most persistent of strike issues. Food figures in the great majority of stoppages to the mid-1960s and in a good few up to the end of the decade. In these cases it is frequently a sudden deterioration of an already bad situation that prompts workers to take action and demand that things be at least restored to the status quo ante.⁷⁵

Strike actions relating to the factory situation largely centre on the question of pay. Most strikes of this kind are sparked by a change in norms or an adjustment of some other sort that means an effective loss in earnings. The workers usually only demand that rates be restored to their old level. As with food, spontaneous action is undertaken in order to get restitution and not to improve on the pre-existing state of affairs. Workers' strike behaviour accords with their attitudes in labour disputes. Mary McAuley concluded from her study of such disputes between 1958 and 1965 that Soviet workers challenged attempts to worsen their existing position but did not press for better conditions.⁷⁶

However, there have been some signs of change since the mid-1960s. By expanding management powers, economic reform may have created more reasons for management-workforce collaboration but it has also multiplied the potential points of conflict between them.⁷⁷ The pressure for greater productivity and the encouragement

labour force reductions is a case in point. Workers have raised objections to transfers and redundancies though there is only one reported instance of strike action being taken.⁷⁸ The growth in the importance of premia and bonuses linked to enterprise performance has brought with it an increase in pay disputes.⁷⁹ Pay has also become an even greater focus for strike action. Although such action is still primarily by reduction of or threats to existing levels, strikers have begun to demand increases.⁸⁰

Under certain conditions, strike action can spill over into wider worker-led spontaneous protest. There are only a few instances of this occurring in the Soviet Union, the most notable being Novochoerkassk in 1962. The strikes that sparked off such protests were only unusual insofar as they involved large numbers of young workers and were badly mishandled by local officials far from Moscow and central advice. It was the failure of local officials to discuss workers' demands that led in the first place to demonstrations in the streets by strikers. At this juncture the issue of food -either a shortage as in Temir-Tau or an increase in prices as in Novochoerkassk- provided a vital link between the strikers and the local populace. The use of force against the demonstrators only cemented this link and turned what were initially protests against specific measures into riots in which a whole array of latent discontents was expressed in attacks on buildings symbolising government, Party and police power. Like the strikes from which they evolved these protests were short-lived. Response from central authorities was more drastic than to factory-limited strikes but followed the same lines.⁸¹

Since 1963 there have been very few protests of this kind and none approaching the scale of Novochoerkassk. The main reason is that the necessary conditions have not recurred - flux and general uncertainty have declined, the standard of living has improved and food price increases are avoided or implemented more slowly and cautiously. The Polish events of 1970-71 and 1976 serve to remind the Soviet leadership of the dangers of doing otherwise.

Recent instances of wider social protest have not only been far smaller than those of the 1959-63 period but have also involved workers less centrally. Instead of strikes leading directly to

demonstrations and riots, workers have been involved as participants in spontaneous protests against food shortages and in particular against militia misconduct. More significantly, nearly all these protests have taken place in the Ukraine and most have had strong Ukrainian nationalist overtones.⁸²

Nationalism in the Ukraine, and possibly in the Baltic states, seems to be the only link connecting workers' spontaneous activity with political action of any kind. There was no response to the calls for workers' strikes by the Citizens' Committee in 1972 and workers general involvement in the Russian dissident movement has been minimal. Intellectual 'dissenters' apparent lack of interest in cooperation and their occasional expression of mistrust of the workers makes any change unlikely. Even in the Ukraine the level of workers' involvement is relatively low: a count of 530 signatories of petitions and protests showed that workers constituted 13 per cent.⁸³ Some Ukrainian workers certainly resent the eradication of their national culture, others object to having Russian bosses but the great majority will not voice a protest let alone take action against central authorities. At the most, like the Kiev construction workers, whose letter to the Central Committee is the only substantial worker authored samizdat document to reach the West, workers appeal for their economic rights rather than risk spoiling their chances of success by raising wider, political issues.

Conclusions

The total number of workers involved in all the types of activity examined is very large; were one to include all those writing letters to the press at all levels perhaps one in every three workers could be said to take part in some form of spontaneous activity. Overall levels of spontaneity have not changed much since the early 1960s. Job changing and indiscipline have proved remarkably resistant to counter-measures, though slight declines in both have taken place in the 1970s.

Predictably, the young stand out as the most volatile and spontaneous group of workers. They change jobs most frequently and tend to be in the front line of protest actions. But spontaneous activity is not the preserve of the young. Older workers are increasingly taking part in job changing and have always constituted the core of the indisciplined. It is likely that they are also the most

assiduous letter writers and, although we have no evidence for this, it is reasonable to assume that spontaneous industrial action is also led by older, more experienced workers. Spontaneity is thus becoming increasingly diffused throughout the workforce and cannot be dismissed as marginal activity by **peripheral** groups of workers.

Workers reasons and objectives for undertaking spontaneous activity vary greatly with age, sex, skill and education but certain general trends recur in all the types of activity we have examined. While in the early 1960s the issues that prompted action were related to basic living conditions, by the mid-sixties conditions at work had become as or even more important a stimulus. And since the late sixties workers have been increasingly inclined to take spontaneous action because of dissatisfaction with the way in which their work is organised. Better conditions of work and higher pay have nurtured higher expectations and a more positive and demanding attitude. This is reflected in the recent tendency of workers to protest not only against a deterioration in existing conditions but to take action to press for improvements.

Such changes in motives and objectives can be seen as concomitants of general economic and social development. Economic reform has also affected the situation inasmuch as greater management power vis-a-vis the workforce has increased the scope for spontaneous activity at enterprise level, particularly for activity by groups of workers. But perhaps the most important effect of the change in economic climate has been to increase the cost of spontaneous workers' activity. When economic growth was the main objective, all types of spontaneous activity were functional, they served as useful and relatively inexpensive outlets for workers' dissatisfaction with what were often very bad conditions. As labour productivity and quality have risen in importance, so the cost of spontaneous workers' activity has spiralled. Job changing and indiscipline may provide a release for the discontented worker, but they are increasingly dysfunctional in terms of the whole system.

Hence the sustained attempt to reduce indiscipline and turnover and to generally tighten up the work situation. This tightening plus the extension of management power have changed

what was long a relatively easy climate on the shop floor. These measures may have succeeded in reducing slightly the levels of individualistic spontaneous activity but they could prompt an increase in group spontaneity directed, like all true 'Leninist' workers' spontaneity, towards improving the economic position of its members.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ See G.Aleksandrov, V.Galyanova and N.Rubinshtein, Politicheskii slovar (Moscow 1940), p.551; M.M.Rosental, P.P.Iudin, Filosofskii slovar (Moscow 1968), p.344; F.I.Kaplan, Bolshevik Ideology and the Ethics of Soviet Labour (London 1969), pp.138,147.
- ² L.S.Blyakhman, A.G.Zdravomyslov and O.I.Shkaratan, Dvizhenie rabochei sily na promyshlennikh predpriyatiyakh (Moscow 1965), pp.11-12,15; A.G.Tarakanov, 'Ekonomicheskie faktory dvizhenie rabochei sily', Vestnik MGU, seriya VII (Ekonomika), no.1, 1973, p.27; Fakiolas, 'Problems of Labour Mobility in the USSR', Soviet Studies, XIV no.1 (July 1962), p.18.
- ³ M.Harris, 'The Social Aspects of Labour Turnover in the USSR', British Journal of Industrial Relations, Vol.II, no.3 (November 1964), p.401; V.Andrle, Managerial Power in the Soviet Union (London 1976), p.78.
- ⁴ See Blyakhman et al., op.cit., p.14; O.V.Smirnov, 'Labor Turnover and Legal Means of combatting it', Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo, no.11 1969 translated in Soviet Law and Government, Summer 1970, p.73.
- ⁵ See O.V.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.73-74; Kaplan cited in M.Harris, op.cit., pp.400-401; G.G.Antosenko, 'Motivy tekuchesti rabochei sily na promyshlennikh predpriyatiyakh Novosibirsk' in Opyt issledovaniya peremeny truda v promyshlennosti (Novosibirsk 1969), p.63; V.Parol, 'On the Question of the Stability and Mobility of Labour' in Izvestiya Akademii nauk Estonskoi SSSR, Vol.20 no.4 1971 translated in Soviet Law and Government, Summer 1972, p.75.
- ⁶ V.Parol, op.cit., p.75; G.G.Antosenko, op.cit., p.63 and especially T.I.Zaslavskaya, 'Trudovaya mobilnost kak predmet ekonomiko-sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniya' in Metodologicheskie problemy sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniya mobilnosti trudovykh resursov (Novosibirsk 1974), pp.37-39.
- ⁷ M.Harris, op.cit., pp.408,409; Fakiolas, op.cit., p.23. Both reproduce data from the major surveys of that period.
- ⁸ Blyakhman et al., op.cit., p.53. Cf the results of conducted in central areas, p.56.
- ⁹ V.Parol, op.cit., pp.85-86; O.V.Smirnov, op.cit., p.79; G.G.Antosenko, op.cit., pp.66,69.
- ¹⁰ Survey of the RSFSR conducted in 1971-72, see Kotlyar, Planovane khozyaistvo no.6 1973 abstracted in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, XXI, no.47, p.16. It is worth noting that subject to these overall trends different reasons are of varying importance to different groups. Living conditions are of most concern to the young, the unskilled and to women workers. Job prospects and relations within the enterprise most concern the very young and the highly skilled older worker who is also worried by deficiencies. Pay is predictably more important for those at the lower end of the wage scale. See Blyakhman, op.cit., pp.58,61-63,105,118,122; G.G.Antosenko, op.cit., p.78; V.O.Smirnov, op.cit., p.80; V.F.Shlyapentokh, 'Vozrast i zarabotnaya plata kak faktory tekuchesti rabochei sily' in Opyt issledovaniya peremeny truda v promyshlennosti (Novosibirsk 1969), p.118.

11. Blyakhman, op.cit., pp.47,69.
12. O.V.Smirnov, op.cit., p.12; M.V.Kurman, Dvizhenie rabochikh kadrov promyshlennogo predpriyatiya(Moscow 1971), p.77; Kostlyar, op.cit. p.16; N.A.Aitov, 'Sotsialnye problemy tekuchesti kadrov'in G.V. Osipov and Ya.Szczepanski(eds.), Sotsialnye problemy truda i proizvodstva(Moscow and Warsaw 1969), p.233; G.G.Antosenko, op.cit., p.29.
13. See for instance O.V.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.82-83 and Shelepin's speech to the XV trade union congress, Trud 21 March 1972.
14. E.C.Brown, Continuity and Change in the Soviet Labor Market, Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Vol.23 no.2(January 1970), p.177; Volkov, Pravda 10 April 1972; V.E.Shlyapentokh, op.cit., pp.128-29; O.V.Smirnov, op.cit., pp84-85; Blyakhman et al., op.cit., pp.120-25.
15. See J.Delamotte, Shchekino, Enterprise Sovietique pilote(Paris 1973), p.165.
16. E.C.Brown, op.cit., pp.184-87; D.Dyker, The Soviet Economy(London 1976), p.111; A.Tarasov, Izvestiya 6 September 1971 translated in the Current Digest of the Soviet Press Vol.XXVI, no.36, pp.1-2.
17. Tarakanov, op.cit., p.29; Kostlyar, op.cit., p.16; V.Neiman, Ekonomicheskaya gazeta, no.32 1973, p.9, Tadzhikistan continued to show increases in 1972, see Pravda 29 January 1973.
18. The total number of man-days lost in the RSFSR through absenteeism and other work interruptions was 56million, see Yu.P.Sosin, 'Factors in Strengthening Labor Discipline'in Ekonomika i organizatsia promyshlennogo proizvodstva, no.5(September-October) 1975, pp.166-74 abstracted in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol.XXVIII, no.3, p.8.
19. For instance see Y.Elistratov in Kommunist no.4 1968, p.37 and Brezhnev in Pravda 14 June 1975.
20. B.V.Kravtsov, 'Pravovye aspekty vospitaniya sotsialisticheskoi distsipliny truda', Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo, no.10 1974, p.53; G.Medvedev, 'Effektivnost pravovogo regulirovaniya trudovoi distsipliny' in Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya na Kamchatke(Petropavlovsk 1970), pp.35-36.
21. Trud v SSSR(Moscow 1968), p.173; Yu.L.Sokolnikov, 'Sotsialisticheskaya distsiplina truda i puti ee ukrepleniya', in Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya no.1, 1976 p.93; Sosin, op.cit., p.8 gives a fall of 6.4% for the RSFSR between 1970 and 1972.
22. A.A.Abramova, Distsiplina truda v SSSR(Moscow 1969), pp.41-42,67; N.V.Sviridov, 'Distsiplina - vazhneishii faktor organizatsii obshchestvennogo truda', Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo, no.12 1967, p.18; V.N.Smirnov, Distsiplina truda v SSSR(Moscow 1972), p.114.
23. Iovchuk and L.Kogan, Dukhovnyi mir sovetskogo rabocheho(Moscow 1972) p.232 gives the figure 72% low quality production for an uneducated bricklayer and 12% for a more highly educated one'. P.Juviler, 'Crime and its Study'in H.W.Morton and R.Tokes, Soviet Politics and Society in the 1970s, p.212.

- 24 V.N.Smirnov, op.cit., p.105; V.I.Nikitinskii, Effektivnost norm trudovogo prava (Moscow 1971), p.139; V.I.Malinin and I.Ya Myasnikov, 'Ukreplenie distsipliny truda - vazhnyi faktor povysheniya effektivnosti proizvodstva' in Proizvoditelnost truda: faktory i rezervy rosta (Moscow 1971), p.160.
- 25 V.N.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.46-47, 115; Sviridov op.cit. (1967), p.15; Medvedev, op.cit., p.25; Abramova, op.cit., p.43; Sokolnikov, op.cit., p.94.
- 26 V.N.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.46-47, 108; Sviridov, op.cit. (1967); N.V.Sviridov, 'Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya i ukreplenie trudovoi distsipliny', Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo, no.1 1970, p.54.
- 27 N.A.Filatov, 'O sootnoshenie obejktivnikh uslovii i subektivnogo faktora v vospitanii sotsialisticheskoi distsipliny truda', in Iz opyta konkretno-sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniy (Ulan Uda 1968), p.87; Sokolnikov, op.cit., p.94; Sviridov, op.cit. (1970), pp.54, 57.
- 28 Abramova, op.cit., p.43; Medvedev, op.cit., p.26; N.V.Smirnov, op.cit., p.102; Sviridov, op.cit., (1970), p.54; Sokolnikov, op.cit., p.94.
- 29 Abramova, op.cit., p.42; Blyakhman et.al., op.cit., p.61; Sviridov, op.cit. (1967), p.15.
- 30 Sokolnikov, op.cit., p.94.
- 31 For instance see Abramova, op.cit., pp.76-80; Medvedev, op.cit., p.35.
- 32 Abramova, op.cit., p.41; Sviridov, op.cit. (1967), p.18.
- 33 S.G.Strumilin and N.Ya.Sonin, 'Economics and Alcoholism', Ekonomika i organizatsia promyshlennogo proizvodstva no.4 1974 (July-August), pp.35-66 abstracted in Current Digest of the Soviet Press Vol.XXVII no.8, p.9; Medvedev, op.cit. p.35. On the general problems of alcoholism, see W.D.Connor, Deviance in Soviet Society (New York 1972), esp.pp.39-45.
- 34 V.D.Patrushev and V.A.Shabashev, 'Vliyanie sotsialno-ekonomicheskikh uslovii truda na sotrudnichestva i vzaimopomoshch v proizvodstvennom kollektive', Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya, no.4 1975, pp.87-88; V.N.Smirnov, op.cit., pp.97-98.
- 35 G.Medvedev, 'Issledovanie prichin narusheniya trudovoi distsipliny', Sotsialisticheskaya zakonnost, no.2 1968, p.42; Sosin, op.cit., p.9.
- 36 Sviridov, op.cit., (1967), p.17 shows some relationship in overall terms but Filatov op.cit., p.94 demonstrates the complexity of the connection.
- 37 Smirnov, op.cit., p.111; Barabash et al., 'Distsiplina truda i sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya: iopyt predpriyatiya', Sotsialisticheskii trud, no.1 1969, p.136; Kravtsov, op.cit., p.55; Andrie, op.cit., pp.85-86.
- 38 Smirnov, op.cit., p.110.
- 39 Abramova, op.cit., p.126; Medvedev, op.cit. (1970), p.30; Smirnov, op.cit., p.42.

- 40 Sviridov, op.cit. (1970), pp.55-56; Barabashev et al., op.cit., p.135; A.A. Abramova, 'Leninskie polozenie o diszipline truda i novoe zakonadelstvo', Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo, no.4 1973, pp.39-40.
- 41 Abramova, op.cit. (1969), p.130; Sviridov, op.cit. (1967), p.19; Sokolnikov, op.cit., p.1
- 42 Nikitinskii, op.cit., pp.139-44. Cf. Medvedev's higher estimate of the effectiveness of transfer, op.cit. (1970), p.32.
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- 44 Sokolnikov, op.cit., pp.95-96; Sosin, op.cit., p.8; Filatov, op.cit., p.87.
- 45 A.I. Verkhovskaya, 'Redaktsionaya pochta i ee avtory' in Voprosy teorii i praktiki massovykh sredstv propagandy vyp.4 (Moscow 1971), p.275; S.I. Igoshin, 'Redaktsionnaya pochta kak istochnik sotsiologicheskoi informatsii' in Zhurnalist pressa chitatel (Leningrad 1969), p.104; Vasilenko in Gazeta, Avtor, Chitatel (Moscow 1975), p.32.
- 46 Igoshin, op.cit. pp. 00-03; for Trud see Vasilenkov in Gazeta, Avtor, Chitatel, p.30; N. Wessell, The Credibility, Impact and Effectiveness of the Soviet General Press. An Analysis of Soviet Research on the Soviet Non-Specialised Newspaper (PhD thesis Columbia 1972), p.275; G.S. Parfenov, 'Nekotorye itogi issledovaniya pechati novosibirskoi oblasti', Vestnik MGU seriya XI zhurnalistika, no.4 1968, p.29.
- 47 Verkhovskaya, op.cit., pp.289-90.
- 48 N. Wessell, op.cit., p.85
- 49 Parfenov, op.cit., pp.26-30
- 50 ibid.; M. Danielov, Todjistikostoni Sovety - The Tadzhik Republic Newspaper in the Tadjik language (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Soviet and East European Research Centre, Soviet Institution Series no.5, January 1976), pp.42-44.
- 51 A.G. Zdravomyslov, V.P. Rozhin and V.A. Iadov (eds.), Man and his Work (New York 1970), p.194; the Izvestiya polls of young workers in 1968 and 1973 showed a 5% increase in dissatisfaction with conditions (65% - 70%), see Izvestiya 24 October 1973 translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol. XXV no 43 p.9.
- 52 G. Cherkasov, Sotsiologiya truda i profsoyuzy (Moscow 1970); Izvestiya 24 October 1973, loc.cit.
- 53 N.V. Smirnov, op.cit., p.94; Iovchuk and Kogan, op.cit., p.195; Zdravomyslov et al. op.cit., p.194.
- 54 Bokarev, op.cit., p.44.
- 55 Zdravomyslov et al. op.cit., pp.132, 173; Izvestiya 24 October 1973 and loc.cit., N.V. Smirnov, op.cit., p.93; A. Vinokur, Industrial Workers' Evaluations of their Families' actual monetary income and their conception about normal income in the USSR (Hebrew University of Jerusalem Soviet and East European Research Centre, Research Paper no.20, January 1977), p.22.

- 56 Patrushev and Shabashev, op.cit., p.87.
- 57 Zdravomyslov et al., op.cit., pp.173,257; Izvestiya, 7, 10, 12 March 1968 translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol.XX, no.11, p.7; Andrie, op.cit., p.86.
- 58 V.N.Smirnov, op.cit., p.93.
- 59 Andrie, op.cit., pp.80-81; Trud 25 March 1972.
- 60 Verkhovskaya, op.cit., p.298.
- 61 A.Inkeles and K.Geiger, 'Critical Letters to the Soviet Press' in Social Change in Soviet Russia (Camb., Mass. 1968), pp.318-19.
- 62 Cf. the similar findings in the sample of letters in 1947, ibid., p.306.
- 63 Verkhovskaya, Pismo v redaktsiu i chitatel (Moscow 1972), p.142.
- 64 Cf. the very similar style of a letter from Kiev construction workers to the Central Committee, see Critique, no.2, pp.74-77.
- 65 E.C.Brown, Soviet Trade Unions and Labour Relations (Camb. Mass. 1965), p.230; M.McAuley, Labour Disputes in Soviet Russia 1957-65 (Oxford 1969), p.251.
- 66 These sources were emigres journals and the Western press. For the best comprehensive survey of strikes, see M.Holubenko, 'The Soviet Working Class: Dissent and Opposition', Critique no.4 (Spring 1975), pp.5-26.
- 67 See M.L.Kalb, Eastern Exposure (New York 1958), p.264 on the 1956 Moscow ball-bearing factory strike; cf. the better organisation at a Kiev machine-building enterprise, see The Ukrainian Quarterly, Vol.XXIX, no.4 (Winter 1973), p.443 and Suchasnist, no.12 1973, p.119.
- 68 The Morning Star 4 August 1972 reported a union backed stoppage over safety violations; M.Makarenko, Iz moi zhizni (Munich 1974), pp.34-46.
- Holubenko, op.cit., pp.10-11; H.Smith, The Russians (London 1976), p.276.
- 69 G.Saunders (ed.), Samizdat: Voices of the Soviet Opposition (New York 1974), p.31; G.Hodnett and P.Potichnj, The Ukraine and the Czechoslovak Crisis (Canberra 1970), p.112. Posev 5 March 1965 reported strike action throughout the Donbass in 1963 but this is not confirmed elsewhere.
- 70 J.Kolasky, Two Years in Soviet Ukraine (Toronto 1970), p.193; Posev, 27 January 1967, p.7; A.Bolter, 'When the Kettle Boils Over', Problems of Communism no.1 (January-February) 1964, p.35.
- 71 See for instance Posev 18 January 1963 (no.3), p.4 and 21 January 1967 (no.4), p.7. A study of 2000 Yugoslav strikes concluded that the poorer sectors were more strike prone, see Jovanov, Socialist Theory and Practice, July-September 1967, pp.68-81.
- 72 J.Kolasky, op.cit., p.191; M.Kalb, op.cit., p.264; Radio Liberty Research Bulletin 2 November 1960; Posev, 27 January 1967 (no.4), p.7.
- 73 V.I.Smolyarchuk, 'Konkretno-sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya i voprosy dalneishego ukrepleniya sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti v trudovykh otnosheniyakh' in Konkretno-sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya v pravovoi nauke (Kiev 1967), p.50.

- ⁷⁴ Kiev construction workers letter to the Central Committee, loc.cit.; cf. the situation at Temir-Tau, see Posev 10 April 1960 (no.15), p.4.
- ⁷⁵ Holubenko, op.cit., p.16; J.Kolasky, op.cit., p.193; Posev, 31 January 1964 (no.5), p.1.
- ⁷⁶ M.McAuley, op.cit., p.200
- ⁷⁷ cf. E.C.Brown, op.cit. (1966), p.236 and M.McAuley, op.cit. pp.253-54
- ⁷⁸ J.Delamotte, op.cit., pp.67-68; Holubenko, op.cit., p.22.
- ⁷⁹ Smolyarchuk, op.cit., pp.64-65 of the distribution of issues in 1958-60 given in M.McAuley, op.cit., p.160.
- ⁸⁰ The Ukrainian Quarterly, Vol.XXIX, no.4 (Winter 1973), p.443; for a report of pay demands by striking railmen, see Guardian of Liberty (Munich) June 1976; for recent pay strikes also see H.Smith, op.cit., p.276 and Holubenko op.cit., pp.15-16.
- ⁸¹ For the best accounts of Novocherkassk and Temir-Tau and other protests in the 1959-63 period, see A.Boiter, op.cit.; J.Kolasky, op.cit., pp.190-92; The New York Times 8 December 1959.
- ⁸² Holubenko, op.cit., p.15; An Interview with Leonid Plyushch (Dialoh 1976), pp.11-12.
- ⁸³ M.Prokop, Suchasnist, nos.7-8 1974, p.143.