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THE UTOPIAN AND THE HEROIC:
DIVERGENT PATHS TO THE COMMUNIST IDEAL

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IDEAL

Bolshevik culture in revolutionary Russia was neither unitary nor disparate, but flowed in two separate and divergent channels. One, which I propose to label "utopianism," was based on the belief that the most urgent tasks facing the new government were to implement social-economic measures that would immediately benefit the people in whose name the revolution was being fought, and to undertake large-scale cultural, educational, and propagandistic campaigns in an effort to instill a proletarian class-consciousness among the population. Only then, it was thought, would Bolsheviks enjoy true mass support; only then would it be possible to establish the economic foundations for socialism. The second, which can be termed "revolutionary heroism," maintained that a drastic advancement of the economy was the most urgent need and that such a campaign must precede, not follow, efforts to produce a new political and cultural outlook on the part of the masses. Part and parcel of the ethos of war communism, this view insisted that in order to attain the socialist goal, militaristic methods must be used in the social-economic sphere regardless of the hardships they might impose or the opposition they might arouse from the public at large. The leading symbol of utopianism was Lunacharsky and his Commissariat of Enlightenment, while that of revolutionary heroism was Trotsky and the Red Army.

Although moderate as well as radical adherents could be found in both camps (there was, of course, considerable disagreement

within each camp), each persuasion in its undiluted form exhibited fervent radicalism, extremist hopes, and reckless impatience to revolutionize existing institutions. It might appear that the heroic approach, with its emphasis on restoration of the economy, was the more pragmatic of the two. This was not the case, however, for both were in their essence incompatible with the true pragmatism of the New Economic Policy. Conflict between them flared in particular during 1920 and early 1921, was continued but in a much reduced form during the twenties, and erupted into the open once again during the Cultural Revolution of 1928-1931. The specific issues over which the battles were fought included labor and trade union policy, the role of women, the question of proletarian culture, and the most appropriate form of higher education.¹ This paper will examine the utopian-heroic conflict in yet another area--secondary education, where the vehement debate of 1920-1921 might well be summed up in the phrase "polytechnism vs. monotecnism."

"At the present moment," declared Lunacharskii in a speech on August 26, 1918, "the government is confronted with one task: how to impart to the people as quickly as possible the huge amount of knowledge they will need in order to fulfill the gigantic role which the revolution has given them."² One might have thought that the primary task of the Soviet government in August, 1918, was to defeat the White armies, but Lunacharskii made no reference to the spreading Civil War in his speech. In fact, Lunacharskii and his Narkompros

colleagues formulated their policies during the first two years after the revolution generally without reference to the military conflict that was devastating so much of the country. Furthermore, since the energies of most other leading Bolsheviks were consumed by the Civil War, the Narkompros leaders were able, for a while, to undertake their reforms with little or no outside interference or opposition.

The major reform effort at this time in the area of primary and secondary education was the statute on the "Unified Labor School" (Edinaia trudovaia shkola, hereafter abbreviated ULS), signed by Lenin and published September 30, 1918.³ The goal of the decree was nothing less than to reform all existing schools in the country into a single mold. With one stroke of the legislative pen, the complex tsarist system of gymnasia, realschulen, pro-gymnasia, primary schools, upper primary schools, and parish schools was declared abolished. In the future all primary and secondary schools were to be divided into two levels (stupeni). The first level (I level) was to provide a five-year course of instruction for children between the ages of eight and thirteen, while the second level (II level) was to offer four years of training for children from thirteen to seventeen. All nine years of education were to be free, co-educational, and compulsory for children of school age. It was hoped that the establishment of a unified network of this nature would guarantee free access to education for children from all classes, in particular from the proletariat and peasantry.⁴

Increased accessibility was only one of the goals of the ULS reform. The other primary goal was to make the new schools

polytechnical in nature. Polytechnism as understood by Krupskaja and Lunacharskii was an eclectic concept that drew on the educational theories of George Kerschensteiner and John Dewey as well as on random comments by Karl Marx. In general, it postulated that pupils learn best by doing rather than by passive reading or listening, and that most of the subjects to be studied in school should be related to the general theme of labor and the economy. The goal was to ^{prepare}enable the future workers to become "masters" (khoziaeva), with a good overall understanding of the economy as a whole, rather than ^{to}training them to become mere cogs in the economic system as they had allegedly been under capitalism.⁵

How these principles could be translated into practice, however, was not at all clear, and vagueness and disagreements on this point were a major weakness in the polytechnical position. Lunacharskii thought that secondary-aged pupils should learn various skills, such as lathe work and soldering, and in addition undertake part-time work in factories under direct pedagogical supervision. V. M. Pozner and P. N. Lepeshinskii believed schools should be turned into small communes which through the work of the pupils could satisfy all their own economic needs. Still others wanted to attach schools directly to factories.⁶

But if unable to agree completely on what exactly a polytechnical school was, most Narkompros figures were in clear agreement on what it was not. It was neither a strictly academic school like the tsarist gymnasium or realschule on the one hand, nor a narrow vocational trade school on the other. Furthermore, they all endorsed the basic utopian

premise that a new educational system, however organized, would play an extremely important role in the construction of socialism. As Krupskaja had put it before the revolution, a true labor school organized by a working-class government will be no less than a "tool for the transformation of modern society."⁷

In view of the conditions of the time in war-ravaged, poverty-stricken Russia, the statute on the Unified Labor School could only serve as a declaration of intent, and, as events were to prove, a highly unrealistic one at that. Nonetheless, its basic principles received the complete support of Lenin, and were in fact written into the new party program that was adopted in March, 1919. Point 12(1) of the program, which had primarily been written by Krupskaja herself, called for

The provision of free and obligatory general and polytechnical education (which will familiarize the pupil with the theory and practice of all main branches of production) for all children of both sexes until 17 years of age.

In addition, point 12(3) called for

The complete realization of the principles of the Unified Labor School, . . . a close connection between studies and socially-productive labor, and the preparation of well-rounded members of communist society.⁸

How did Narkompros during the years 1918-1919 undertake the task of converting the inherited existing schools into polytechnical schools

based on the ULS model? The central commissariat laid down few guidelines for this task, and practice varied widely from region to region within the RSFSR. The radical Pozner and his associates (who might be termed "ultra-utopians") simply closed down many of the vocational and trade schools in the Moscow area, whereas in Petrograd they were generally maintained intact. Most teachers, especially in the outlying provinces, had absolutely no idea what was expected of them under the new conditions. The Civil War and disintegrating economy added to the prevailing educational chaos. Beginning 1919, Narkompros's school policy began to come under criticism from within the Bolshevik party for two main reasons: that many of the so-called polytechnical schools had retained a "bourgeois" academic atmosphere that was alien to working-class youth; and that the existing vocational education network had been seriously undermined by the emphasis on polytechnism.⁹ The second criticism was more telling at the time, and in May, 1919, Lunacharskii made the first of what would be a long series of statements in which he reiterated and defended the basic principles behind Narkompros's educational reforms while admitting that errors had been made in the past and that compromises were necessary in the present. General, polytechnical education, he said, should definitely be the norm for children up to age seventeen. But for the first time, he clearly stated that the problems of economic construction demanded that high priority be given to the training of qualified workers. Furthermore, the establishment of a fully functioning ULS system was still a matter of the distant future. Consequently, it was wrong to close existing vocational

schools or neglect their technical equipment. Instead, they should be utilized on condition that their curricula be broadened as soon as possible to include general educational subjects.¹⁰

Nonetheless, Lunacharskii's declaration neither altered the basic policies of Narkompros nor satisfied its critics. Criticism of Lunacharskii and his associates on this and other issues continued to mount until early 1920, when a new educational agency, based on the principles of revolutionary heroism, was created as a direct challenge to Narkompros.

By the end of 1919 it appeared that the Civil War had finally come to an end. The armies of Denikin, Kolchak, and Yudenich had been decisively defeated, and neither the forthcoming Polish invasion nor the last-ditch regrouping of White forces around Baron Wrangel were at that time foreseen. The time had come, it seemed, to transfer attention from the military front to the so-called "second front"--the restoration of the national economy.

It was Leon Trotskii who proposed the methods that were chosen to accomplish this task. Then at the pinnacle of his career, the fiery Commissar of War had been brilliantly successful in whipping the Red Army into a victorious fighting unit. His principles were strict centralization, ruthless discipline, and passionate exhortations for sacrifice from the rank and file. Why not apply the same methods to the equally staggering problem of economic restoration?

The crux of Trotskii's program was the "militarization" of labor, which would subject every able-bodied citizen to "labor conscription"

(trudovaia novinnost') whereby, under threat of military discipline, he would be obligated to perform labor for the state and could even be sent to distant parts of the country for this purpose.¹¹ The country was in crying need of skilled, as well as unskilled, labor and accordingly Trotskii's plan also called for a rejuvenation of vocational education. When the Narkompros leadership got wind of the project, it "sharply protested," fearing that vocational education would be taken out of its hands, narrowly construed, and divorced from the principle of polytechnism.¹² These fears proved justified. The Central Committee approved a modified version of Trotskii's plan on January 22, 1920, and Sovnarkom decrees of January 29, signed by Lenin, established a new organ called the Main Committee of Vocational-Technical Education (Glavprofobr).¹³ As a concession to Narkompros, Glavprofobr was administratively located within the Commissariat of Enlightenment, and Lunacharskii became its nominal chairman. In fact, however, it was granted considerable administrative autonomy, its own budget, and an advisory council in which representatives of Vesenkha, the trade unions, and the economic commissariats easily outweighed those of Narkompros.¹⁴ Its real leader was O. Iu. Shmidt, a mathematician and subsequent polar explorer, ardent vocationalist, and opponent of polytechnism. Although Lunacharskii, as always, tried to make the best of the situation and mediate between the two camps, in fact the lines were drawn for a struggle between the utopian-minded polytechnists in Narkompros and the heroic-inclined vocationalists in Glavprofobr.

The differences between the two groups were fundamental. Whereas

Lunacharskii thought that socialism could be achieved only by educated, class-conscious workers, and Krupskaja regarded the labor school as a "tool for the transformation of modern society," Shmidt, himself only a recent convert to Marxism, cogently presented the opposite view:

Marxists, or anyone whom life has taught to think in Marxist terms, know that it is not words, it is not studies, it is not upbringing that creates new people, but a change in the economic structure . . . if socialism is not accomplished in the economic sphere, all attempts to accomplish it in the school will be in vain.¹⁵

If economic development, then, is primary, does this mean that the role of education is unimportant? Not at all, replied the vocationalists, because among the economy's most urgent needs was a large influx of vocationally trained workers. What it did mean was that the educational system must not be viewed as an end in itself, but must be strictly subordinated to the needs of the economic system.¹⁶ B. G. Kozelev, a leading trade unionist and member of the Glavprofobr collegium, called on the governmental economic organs, especially Vesenkha, to draw up a detailed plan providing precise estimates of the number of specialists that would be needed in each area of the economy in future years. Glavprofobr would then adjust its admissions quotas and allocate its resources among the different vocational schools under its jurisdiction accordingly.¹⁷

The Glavprofobr enthusiasts thus envisioned their committee as a production organ par excellence. Its job was to produce trained human

specialists. It would receive orders for specified quantities and types of its goods from Vesenkha. The source of its raw materials would be unskilled trade unionists and youth currently enrolled in secondary and higher education. The distributing organ, which would send the finished products to their place of employment (under threat of compulsion, if necessary) would be Glavprofobr's twin, the recently established Main Committee for Universal Labor Conscription (Glavkomtrud).¹⁸

It was fantasy to think that such a well-oiled co-ordination could be achieved under the chaotic conditions of 1920. Vesenkha, for one, had never been a strong organ and furthermore was led by Rykov and Miliutin, both moderates who had opposed Trotskii's plan for the militarization of labor from the beginning. Nonetheless, Glavprofobr's plans for vocational education did receive important support in April from the Third All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions-- support that was doubly significant because the previous year's congress had adopted strikingly different resolutions calling for the development of a proletarian culture and for vocational training to be embedded in a general curriculum including subjects such as political economy and business management.¹⁹ Still more important was strong support for vocationalist principles from a completely new and unexpected source--the recently established Commissariat of Education of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

The policies of Ukrainian Commissar of Education G. P. Grinko and his deputy Ia. P. Riappo are prime examples of the heroic approach to education. In some respects, such as the uncompromising nature of

their attack on the status quo, their attitudes resembled those of the most extreme utopians. "The worker-peasant revolution of the twentieth century," wrote Riappo,

will produce not reform of the former institutions, but revolution. . . . Attempts to rebuild the old institutions are completely hopeless. . . . We must approach the question as though we were confronted by a completely clean slate.²⁰

They attacked the Unified Labor School of the Russian Narkompros on the grounds that it represented an insufficient break with the "bourgeois" academic school of the past, and, like some of the ultra-utopians in the RSFSR, they regarded the school itself as only a transitional institution which should be replaced as soon as possible with childrens' colonies that would fulfill the functions of both family and school. Where they strongly differed from both moderate and extreme utopians, however, was in their insistence that education at the secondary and higher level should be directly coordinated with the needs of economic reconstruction. Whereas the Russian Narkompros had during its first two years closed some well-equipped vocational schools, the Ukrainian Narkompros adopted the opposite policy of closing several functioning schools of general education.²¹ One of Grinko's theses approved by the Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Education (August, 1920) read,

Under the circumstances of extreme economic impoverishment, . . . when the necessity of a qualified working force . . . has become the decisive factor in economic reconstruction,

vocational-technical education must become the basic principle of the entire system of education.²²

Knowledge acquired in a vocational school, according to Riappo, was not an end in itself, but only a means of preparing the student for a definite vocational specialty.²³

Riappo wrote at one point that the Ukrainian educational system of "monotechnism" would only be valid for the transition stage between capitalism and socialism.²⁴ But, like Trotskii's unblushing defense of forced labor, Grinko and Riappo tended to make a virtue out of the necessity of vocational education. Grinko insisted that vocational education should not be viewed as some sort of external appendage added on to general education, but rather as its very source and basis. They both regarded Lunacharskii's ideal of a well-rounded, harmoniously developed personality as a bourgeois remnant, to which they counterposed their own ideal of "Home technicus," who would achieve his fulfillment through participating in the building of a technological society.²⁵

It is time now to move from the realm of general principles to that of specific policy issues. There were a number of issues that divided the Russian Narkompros on the one hand from Glavprobr and the Ukrainian Narkompros on the other during the course of 1920: higher education, adult education, the organizational structure of the commissariat itself. But it was the secondary school issue that was the most divisive and bitterly disputed. On the one hand was the original Narkompros position that all school-aged children should attend a nine-year, general educational, polytechnical labor school

from age eight to seventeen. This position had the great advantage of being enshrined in the party program of 1919; it had the great disadvantage of having failed miserably during the first two years of its attempted implementation. The other position maintained that vocational (or "monotechnical") education must begin no later than age fifteen. Before that, there could be a seven-year school (although the Ukrainians in particular much preferred a network of children's homes or colonies) in which children would learn one or more trades or skills. In addition ^{to the seven-year school,} however, the existing network of trade and vocational schools for school-aged children would be maintained and even expanded. Graduates of the seven-year school could go on to a four-year technicum and a few could go on to a specialized higher educational institute, in which the curricula would be shortened from five years to three.

Lunacharskii's leadership of the polytechnical camp was wobbly, to say the least. He proved quite willing to concede on all essential points while still proclaiming the general principles that were in fact being sacrificed. He admitted past failures, which he attributed primarily to the Civil War and the government's inability or unwillingness to allocate sufficient resources to culture and education. He acknowledged, in view of the economic crisis, the necessity for the establishment of Glavprofobr, said that vocational education should begin even as early as age fourteen, and welcomed the continued existence of vocational schools, especially those in or near factories, for youth who were not attending the general schools.²⁶ But he warned against letting this trend go too far:

We understand that the ruined Russian economy is in need of specialists, but the working class nonetheless has not overthrown the rule of capital in order not to acquire in the course of many years genuine culture, not to raise itself to the consciousness of its own human worth . . . It is essential that the officials of the Unified Labor School completely recognize the tremendous importance of the task which Glavprofobr is forced to fulfill--the task of adapting the growing stream of the new generation in school to the living economic demands which the country is experiencing at the moment. On the other hand, it is necessary that Glavprofobr officials understand that we are living in a socialist society, where it is impossible merely to count on the needs of production and where to forget the man in favor of production will no longer be permitted by the proletariat itself.²⁷

Other Narkompros leaders (especially Krupskaja) and many teachers did not accept their commissar's concessions. The issue was an emotional one--everyone remembered how the tsarist Ministry of Education had aroused both liberal and radical anger by creating a vocational school network that was clearly intended to keep middle and lower-class children from improving or questioning their status. Trying to appear reasonable before a clearly hostile audience at a conference of *Bolshevik-leaning* educators (September, 1920), Shmidt stated that he wasn't in favor of narrow specialization either. But he labeled polytechnism under present

conditions utopian and argued that the last two years of the nine-year school should have a definite vocational bias.²⁸ His views were sharply opposed at the conference by Pokrovskii and Krupskaia.²⁹ In late October Shmidt claimed that Narkompros was trying to establish the educational system of a full-fledged communist society without considering that first it was necessary to pass through a long transition period. He complained that it had proven very difficult, since the establishment of Glavprofobr, to get Narkompros to cooperate in the implementation of a more vocationally-oriented policy but that he still hoped that such cooperation would be forthcoming in the future.³⁰

It seemed clear that the dispute would have to be resolved by higher authority, and at the end of October Lunacharskii seconded Grinko's proposal to Lenin that a special party conference on education be convened by the Central Committee.³¹ The conference met from December 31, 1920 to January 4, 1921. To the dismay of the participants, only two members of the Central Committee showed up (Zinoviev and Preobrazhenskii) and they did not take an active part in the deliberations.³² With Krupskaia absent because of illness and Lunscharskii willing to compromise on just about everything, the vocationalists were clearly in the ascendant. The adopted resolutions called for a seven-year, not a nine-year school, so that the age of fifteen became the definite transition point between general and vocational education. A new set of factory schools for proletarian youth were to be established along side the seven-year school, and the very idea of a general educational school for youth (iunoshestvo)

which did not provide a definite vocational specialty was condemned as a vestige from the bourgeois past.³³

A relatively new figure at the conference was E. A. Litkens, who had in October been given the job of carrying out an administrative reorganization of Narkompros. His plan, based largely on the model of the Ukrainian Commissariat of Education, would have enshrined the age of fifteen as a transition point by creating a Main Administration of Socialist Upbringing (Glavsotsvos) with jurisdiction for schools and educational activities up to age fifteen, and then giving Glavprofobr jurisdiction over educational institutions for those aged fifteen and above. (Previously the Russian Glavprofobr had enjoyed jurisdiction over only higher technical institutes, not universities, and had only vaguely-defined rights to assist in the drawing up of curricula for the upper grades of the nine-year school.) A civil war veteran and protégé of Trotskii, Litkens was clearly in the heroic tradition and unsparing in his criticism of Narkompros for its slowness to adopt new militaristic approaches to cultural and educational work among the masses.³⁴

To be sure, the resolutions did contain some concessions to Narkompros principles and there were delegates from the trade unions who protested that vocational principles had not been carried far enough at the conference. Nonetheless, Grinko and Shmidt were essentially correct when they smugly claimed that their principles had triumphed.³⁵

Lunacharskii, in a remarkable report to Lenin at the close of the conference, appeared quite satisfied with its results. It is

true, he said, that several of the resolutions reflected the Ukrainian viewpoint, but the differences between the Ukrainian and Russian Narkompros had by now been reduced to matters of detail. Furthermore, the RSFSR contingent, including Lunacharskii, Pokrovskii, Litkens, and Shmidt, found themselves much more united at the conference than they had been in the past.³⁶ Krupskaia, however, was not at all pleased when she learned the results of the conference, and fired off a letter of protest to Lenin.³⁷ And Lenin, as it turned out, needed little urging at this point to involve both himself and the Central Committee in the controversial issue of polytechnism.

Previously Lenin had said relatively little about the reform of educational institutions, although he had of course supported both the Unified Labor School concept and Glavprofobr's militarization policies. As the Civil War was winding down in the fall of 1920, he focused his attention on one of the chief problems that would confront him for the rest of his life--how to progress toward a communist society in a country where the vast majority of the population, including a majority of party members, were uneducated and unenlightened. In November he coined his famous slogan, "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country," and in December the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets accepted the GOELRO program.³⁸ Lenin seemed convinced, however, that the plan would succeed only if it were properly understood by the population as a whole--not just the relatively few technicians that were actually working on it. This consideration helped to breathe new life at this time into his previous

belief in polytechnism.

Two brief notes written by Lenin (November 29 and December 8, 1920) concerning the on-going reorganization of the commissariat of enlightenment give some clues to his thinking on this subject. The gist of his comments was that it might be possible to abolish (!) Glavprofobr and merge its schools with the secondary level ULS schools of Narkompros, but only on the condition that general, political, and polytechnical subjects be assured a large place in the curriculum.³⁹ A somewhat fuller expression of his ideas can be found in his marginal notes (not publicly known until their publication in 1929) on a set of theses which Krupskaja had prepared for the Party education conference. In the theses themselves Krupskaja had reaffirmed the original Narkompros position that the full nine-year polytechnical school was critically important, both for the pupils and for society.⁴⁰ Lenin's comments were those of a hurried, impatient, but incisive man. He objected to the general tone of the theses, which he believed was overly abstract and out of touch with reality. He wanted Krupskaja to defend the principle of polytechnism more cogently. But he then insisted that the "extremely severe economic condition of the country" required the "immediate and unconditional merger" of the upper grades of the ULS with existing vocational schools, though again he emphasized that in the process the curricula should be broadened and narrow specialization avoided. Furthermore, he emphasized that a number of steps should be taken "immediately" in the direction of polytechnical education, such as visits to the new electrical stations combined with experiments and demonstrations designed to show the

limitless practical applications of electricity, similar excursions to state farms and factories, and the "mobilization" of engineers, agronomists, and other practicing specialists to give lectures and demonstrations. Secondary schools should turn out trained metal workers, joiners, and carpenters, but these graduates must also be equipped with general and polytechnical knowledge. He urged Krupskaja to draw up in detail a "minimum" of knowledge that all schools should impart in general or polytechnical subjects, such as the principles of communism, electrification, agronomy, and the like. In a final parting shot--not at Krupskaja but at her enemies--he wrote,

Grinko, it appears, has been making an ass of himself, denying polytechnical education (perhaps in part also O. Iu. Schmidt). This must be corrected.⁴¹

The evidence does not support the conclusions of historians who have regarded Lenin's notes as representing a sharp change in his attitude toward polytechnism or as a blunt dismissal of Krupskaja's most treasured ideas.⁴² To be sure, he did in effect support the lowering of the age at which vocational training would begin. But he had clearly hinted at this change earlier, and, more importantly, he continued to support the principle (at least as he understood it) of polytechnism itself. His primary grievances were with the vocationalists, whereas he criticized Krupskaja not so much for her continued support of polytechnism as for her inability to express its principles in clear, practical language.

When Lenin received the results of the Party education conference, therefore, he was like a cat ready to spring. And

spring he did. In a set of directives published in the name of the central committee on February 5, and in a Pravda article under his own name that appeared February 9, Lenin ^{vehemently} attacked the participants and ^{sharply} criticized the resolutions of the conference. In the first place, Lenin reminded them that according to the party program the proper age for the transition from general to technical education was seventeen. The lowering of this age to fifteen, therefore, must be regarded as only a temporary, practical necessity of the present and in no way should be defended, as some had done at the conference, as an act of principle. Furthermore, even in the present, polytechnical principles should be incorporated into vocational education wherever there is even the slightest possibility. The very use of the term "monotechnical education" was, fumed Lenin, "fundamentally incorrect, totally impermissible for a communist, indicating ignorance of the program and an idle fascination with abstract slogans." (That the very concept of polytechnism itself might be an "abstract slogan" was apparently a possibility that Lenin never stopped to consider.) The fundamental defect in the work of Narkompros and Glavprofobr, he said, was the lack of experienced educators and administrators on their staffs. Lunacharskii and Pokrovskii were the only ones who could be called "specialists." The task of all the others was not to engage in empty theorizing, but to find and utilize the skills of those (even if they be bourgeois in origin) who were experienced specialists in the field of education.⁴³

Although spared the brunt of Lenin's attack, Lunacharskii's behavior was nonetheless included in the criticism, as he himself

realized. A rather shame-faced and apologetic Lunacharskii wrote to Lenin that he fully agreed with Lenin's points, but that he had often ^{the ability and} lacked the persistence to put them into effect. "Now we shall correct this," he concluded.⁴⁴

Shmidt was not so easily convinced. After a prolonged and bitter polemic with Krupskaja in the pages of Pravda, he was removed from his position as the head of Glavprofobr by the Central Committee.⁴⁵

What, then was the ultimate outcome of this dispute? In practical terms it was a compromise, with some of the vocationalist measures being adopted in practice while polytechnicism was reaffirmed in principle. But at a larger level the implication of Lenin's policy in this as in several other areas at this time was that both revolutionary heroism and utopianism were wrong insofar as both had demanded a radical transformation of existing institutions that had proved beyond the power of the young regime to achieve. It had become clear that the schools were not going to be reformed or re-built anywhere near as quickly as everyone had hoped in the first years of the revolution. Herein lies a partial explanation for Lenin's continuing interest in the problem of the administrative reorganization of Narkompros. Sovnarkom had issued a decree dealing with this issue on February 11, 1921,⁴⁶ but well after that date Lenin continued to press Litkens to continue working on the job. "Do not," wrote Lenin to Litkens on March 27, "tear yourself away from your organizational-administrative work. From you and only you we will strictly and quickly (in about 2-3 months) demand results . . . Put all attention on that."⁴⁷ For if there were to be fewer efforts to change the nature of schools in

particular or society in general, then there would need to be more efforts to achieve administrative control over the existing, imperfect, and unreformed institutions. This Leninist emphasis on organizational control rather than radical change in either the utopian or heroic direction amounted to a third major approach to the communist ideal, an approach that would predominate during the years of the New Economic Policy from 1921 to 1928.

Notes

1. Kollontai was another leading utopian figure. During the years 1918-1921, Bukharin embraced the principles of both utopianism and revolutionary heroism. In 1921 he abandoned the heroic outlook, after which he became more moderate in general while leaning toward the utopian view on the priority of cultural over economic needs and of persuasion over force as a means of achieving social change. For a more elaborate presentation of these concepts, see James C. McClelland, "Utopianism Versus Revolutionary Heroism in Bolshevik Policy: The Proletarian Culture Debate," Slavic Review, vol. 39, no. 3 (Sept. 1980): 403-25. For the application of this approach to the issue of higher education reform, see McClelland, "Bolshevik Approaches to Higher Education, 1917-1921," Slavic Review, vol. 30, no. 4 (Dec. 1971): 818-31.

2. A. V. Lunacharskii, "Rech' na I Vserossiiskom s"ezde po prosveshcheniiu" (Aug. 26, 1918), A. V. Lunacharskii o narodnom obrazovanii (Moscow, 1958), p. 33. This volume hereafter cited as O nar. obr.

3. Dekrety sovetskoi vlasti, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1957-68), 3:374-80.

4. Lunacharskii, "Osnovnye printsipy edinoi trudovoi shkoly" (Oct. 16, 1918), O nar. obr., p. 523.

5. Ibid., passim; N. K. Krupskaiia, "Narodnoe obrazovanie i demokratiia" (written 1915), in Krupskaiia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia v desiati tomakh, 11 vols. (Moscow, 1957-63), 1:249-350, passim (these volumes hereafter referred to as Krupskaiia, Ped. soch.); Krupskaiia,

"Zadachi professional'nogo obrazovaniia," Narodnoe Prosveshchenie: Ezhenedel'noe prilozhenie k Izvestiiam VTsIK, no. 2, June 1, 1918 (this journal hereafter referred to as NP, weekly); Krupskaiia, Ped. soch., 7:15.

6. Valer'ian Polianskii, "Kak nachinal rabotat' Narodnyi Komissariat Prosveshcheniia (lichnye vospominaniia)," Proletarskaia Revoliutsiia, vol. 49, no. 2 (Feb., 1926):52-53; V. Polianskii, "Trud vospitatel'nyi i trud proizvoditel'nyi v novoi shkole," Proletarskaia Kul'tura, no. 4 (Sept. 1918):18-22; P. V. Rudnev, "K istorii razrabotki programmy partii po narodnomu obrazovaniiu," in N. K. Goncharov and F. F. Korolev, eds., V. I. Lenin i problemy narodnogo obrazovaniia (Moscow, 1961), pp. 206, 211-12; Sheila Fitzpatrick, The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 26-34; Oskar Anweiler, Geschichte der Schule und Paedagogik in Russland vom Ende des Zarenreiches bis zum Beginn der Stalin-Aera (Heidelberg, 1964), pp. 102-17, 145-55.

7. Krupskaiia, Ped. soch., 1:350 (?)

8. KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK, 7th ed., 3 vols. (Moscow, 1954), 1:419-20. See also Rudnev, "K istorii razrabotki programmy."

9. Lunacharskii, "Iz doklada na III sessii VTsIK VII sozyva" (Sept. 26, 1920), 0 nar. obr., p. 129, ^{and} "0 shkole rabochei molod^ozhi" (1921), Ibid., pp. 174-75; Fitzpatrick, Commissariat, pp. 59-61; *e.c.* A. N. Veselov, Professional'no-tekhnicheskoe obrazovanie v SSSR: Ocherki po istorii srednego i nizshego proftekhnobrazovaniia (Moscow, 1961), pp. 134-37.

10. Lunacharskii, "O zadachakh professional'no-tekhnicheskogo obrazovaniia v Rossii" (1919), O nar. obr., 539-46.
11. Pravda, Dec. 17, 1919, reprinted in L. D. Trotskii, Sochineniia, 21 vols. (Moscow, 1924-27), 15:10-14. See also E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923, 3 vols. (Baltimore, Penguin, 1966), 2:211-16.
12. TsGA RSFSR, f. 2306, op. 1, ed. khran. 320, pp. 5-6.
13. Trotskii, Sochineniia, 15:107-14; Sobranie uzakoneni i rasporiazhenii rabocheho i krest'ianskogo pravitel'stva RSFSR, 1920, no. 6, arts. 41-42 (hereafter cited as SU). Glavprofobr was built on an already existing vocational organ within Narkompros, but it became, as was intended, much more powerful and autonomous than its predecessor.
14. The membership of the council is listed in TsGA RSFSR, f. 2306, op. 1, ed. khran. 320, p. 66.
15. O. Iu. Shmidt, "O Glavprofobre," Vestnik professional'no-tekhnicheskogo obrazovaniia, no. 3-4 (Aug.-Sept. 1920): 3. This journal hereafter cited as Vestnik.
16. O. G. Anikst, ed., Professional'no-tekhnicheskoe obrazovanie v Rossii za 1917-1921 gg.: Iubileinyi sbornik (Moscow, 1922), p. 14.
17. B. G. Kozelev, "Prof-tekh. obrazovanie, kak ocherednaia zadacha khoziaistvennogo stroitel'stva," Vestnik, no. 1 (May 1920): 9-10.
18. Ibid.; see also Shmidt's speech in 2-ia sessiia sovprofobra i s"ezda gubprofobrov 20-25 okt. 1920 g. (Protokoly zasedanii) (Moscow, 1921), p. 29.

19. Iu. Milonov, ed., Putevoditel' po rezoliutsiiam vserossiiskikh s"ezdov i konferentsii professional'nykh soiuzov (Moscow, 1924). Cf. pp. 185-88 (1919 resolutions) and 253-60 (1920 resolutions).

20. Quoted in I. Krilov, Sistema osviti v Ukraini (1917-1930) (Munich, 1956), p. 39.

21. Lunacharskii, "Iz doklada," O nar. obr., p. 129; and "Rech' na III s"ezde RKSM" (Oct. 2, 1920), O nar. obr., p. 151.

22. Grinko's theses are reprinted in Krilov, p. 44.

23. Ia. P. Riappo, Sistema narodnogo prosveshcheniia na Ukraine: Sbornik materialov, statei, i dokladov (Kharkov, 1925), pp. 168-69.

24. Ibid., p. 175.

25. See speech by Grinko in 2-ia sessiia, pp. 21-23; Anweiler, pp. 175-76.

26. Lunacharskii, "Osnovnye voprosy novogo fronta" and "Deklaratsiia o professional'no-tekhnicheskome obrazovanii v RSFSR," Vestnik, no. 1 (May 1920):3-4, 12-16; "Iz doklada," O nar. obr., pp. 119-43; "Edinaia trudovaia shkola i tekhnicheskoe obrazovanie" (Oct., 1920), O nar. obr., pp. 156-63.

27. Lunacharskii, "Edinaia trudovaia shkola," pp. 159-60.

28. Shmidt, "O Glavprofobre," and "Shkola 2-i stupeni (Tipy i uklony)," Vestnik, no. 3-4 (Aug.,-Sept. 1920):3-7, 12-14.

29. P. V. Rudnev, "Iz istorii bor'by za Leninskii printsip politekhnicheskogo obrazovaniia (Fevral' 1920 g. - Fevral' 1921 g.)," in Goncharov and Korolev, eds., V. I. Lenin i problemy narodnogo obrazovaniia, p. 253.

30. 2-ia sessiia, pp. 27-28.

31. Literaturnoe nasledstvo, vol. 80, V. I. Lenin i A. V. Lunacharskii: Perepiska, doklady, dokumenty (Moscow, 1971), p. 224. Hereafter cited as Lit. nas., vol. 80.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
33. The resolutions of the conference are reprinted in Direktivy VKP(b) po voprosam prosveshcheniia, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1930), pp. 313-22.
34. Prilozhenie k biulleteniu VIII s"ezda sovetov, posviashchenoe partiinomu soveshchaniuu po voprosam narodnogo obrazovaniia (Moscow, Jan. 10, 1921), pp. 2-3, 16.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5, 7. See also Shmidt, "Pervyi god raboty Glavprofobra," Vestnik, no. 9 (Feb. 1921): 13.
36. Lit. nas., vol. 80, p. 239.
37. Rudnev, "Iz istorii bor'by," p. 264.
38. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, 2:369-72.
39. V. I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, 55 vols. (Moscow, 1958-65), 52:21-22, 42:87. This set hereafter referred to as PSS.
40. Krupskaiia, "Tezisy o politekhnicheskoi shkole," Ped. soch., 4:35-37.
41. Lenin, "O politekhnicheskome obrazovanii: Zametki na tezisы Nadezhdy Konstantinovny" (late Dec., 1920), PSS, 42:228-30. Quotation on p. 230. Emphasis in original.
42. Respectively, Fitzpatrick, Commissariat, p. 197, and Robert H. McNeal, Bride of the Revolution: Krupskaya and Lenin (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1972), p. 206.
43. Lenin, "Direktivy TsK kommunistam-rabotnikam Narkomprosa" and

"O rabote Narkomprosa," PSS, 42:319-32. Quotation on p. 323.

44. Lit. nas., vol. 80, p. 244. For cautiously optimistic accounts of the conference by Lunacharskii and other Narkompros spokesmen, see NP, weekly, no. 79, Feb. 20, 1921 (published early March).

45. Lit. nas., vol. 80, pp. 246-48.

46. SU, 1920

47. Lenin, PSS, 52:112. *Emphasis in original.*