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Soviet Schoolteachers and Moscow:

Educational Policy and Classroom Practice, 1921-1931

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SOVIET SCHOOLTEACHERS AND MOSCOW:

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This paper is part of a larger effort to reexamine traditional assumptions about how and why policies are determined in the Soviet Union. It emphasizes that educational policy in particular could not for long be devised by the State or by the Communist Party in a social vacuum; Moscow had, eventually, to seek some sort of accommodation with a Soviet reality that included the concerns of teachers. Individually and collectively, teachers had a mind of their own. For the best and the worst of reasons they pursued their own course despite directives from Moscow to the contrary. In so doing, they made a difference not only within the walls of the schoolhouse but also within the walls of the Kremlin.

My focus is on Soviet schoolteachers in the Russian Republic and how they reacted to and influenced policy. To be sure, other important forces shaped education. A list would include the Young Communist League, the Ukrainian Commissariat of Enlightenment, and what has been referred to as the technical lobby, a loose-knit group of officials and agencies responsible for the administration and development of the nation's economy. I would also add as a distinct and self-conscious group the visionary theorists at the Commissariat of Enlightenment in Moscow. An excellent summary of what Komsomol and the others represented can be found in the works of Sheila Fitzpatrick.[1] What I intend to do is concentrate on a relatively neglected but vitally significant part of the same story--the teachers.

Because this paper asks what transpired in the classroom and how it affected subsequent educational policy, it must go beyond the customary sources for an examination of Soviet schools. Curricula, syllabi, and instructions from the Commissariat of Enlightenment (Narkompros), decisions of the Party and State, and speeches on education by major Soviet leaders reveal primarily the content of policy. A determination of classroom practice requires a laborious examination of educational periodicals of the time, of memoirs and of periodic reports by educational organs on the state of public schooling. This research has been largely completed. There remains an examination of the archives of the Commissariat of Enlightenment for additional information on classroom practices (especially through a study of inspector's reports) and on the Commissariat's response.

The paper proceeds as follows. First it describes official educational policy as it was determined by central authorities in Moscow from 1917 to 1931. Second, a more difficult task: a survey and analysis of the response of Soviet schoolteachers to those policies. Third, the paper moves into the difficult area of an assessment of the motives of teachers.

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Following the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, leaders of the new Commissariat of Enlightenment approached their task with a burning vision. They would, they hoped, remake humans and human society by a process of cultural enlightenment. A new school system with new curricula and methods, they thought, would play a critical role in this grand transformation. A. V. Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Enlightenment from 1917 to 1929, perhaps

said it best when he declared in 1922: "We seek to organize, for the first time in history, a truly human school," a "non-class school," open to all children capable of taking "fresh small hearts and bright little minds" and producing, "given the right educational approach, a true miracle...a real human being."[2]

Driven by their vision of a new school for a new Russia, Lunacharsky and his colleagues, including N. K. Krupskaya, set out to create in backward and sprawling Russia the most advanced and powerful school system in the world. The Commissariat of Enlightenment ordered the formation of a single school system providing nine years of polytechnical instruction free of charge for all children regardless of social origin. To encourage the proletariat and peasantry to send their offspring, Narkompros intended that schools provide free shoes, clothing, hot breakfasts and medical care. It discouraged homework, standardized textbooks, promotion and graduation examinations and grades (marks). Instead of these timeworn practices, the Soviet school was to rely on a wide range of activities such as singing, drawing, woodworking, excursions, student participation in school and classroom governance, socially useful exercises (from the care of public parks to participation in all sorts of campaigns against illiteracy, religion, alcohol) and, for the senior students, even work in a factory, collective farm or office. During the early and mid 1920s, Narkompros even recommended the replacement of traditional subjects with the study of so-called complex themes such as "October revolution," "Rural Life" and "Preparation for Winter." The Commissariat's supporters vigorously maintained that these changes annihilated the distinction between physical and mental labor that Karl Marx had found so abhorrent; ended rote memorization and the element of fear in the classroom; provided an education

relevant to society and the personal interests of pupils; and produced well-rounded and politically loyal citizens free of class prejudice and all other forms of alleged irrational bias.

Grand ideals and the commitment they generate can make for success. Unfortunately for the leaders of the Commissariat of Enlightenment, their policies depended on a variety of prerequisites, including the support of schoolteachers as we shall see, that did not, in fact, exist. In the mid 1920s the Commissariat made a number of concessions toward a somewhat less experimentalist and more traditional curriculum. It allowed limitations on the role of pupils in school governance and recognized the need for a systematic presentation and learning of a prescribed body of knowledge. Supporters of the complex method now warned against ignoring altogether subject-matter presentations of material. The Commissariat's curriculum for the academic year 1927/28 mirrored these concerns. It emphasized the importance of factual information presented largely in the context of subjects.[3]

In 1929, however, educational policy underwent a metamorphosis. In September, A. Bubnov replaced Lunacharsky as the Commissar of Enlightenment. Bubnov's was a political appointment, consistent with the tense and traumatic period which Soviet Russia had just entered. Heretofore, Bubnov had distinguished himself as an administrator of the Party's propaganda machine, first as head of the Central Committee's Agitation and Propaganda Department and then as chief of the Political Administration of the Red Army. While Lunacharsky had attempted to put some distance between the Commissariat and contemporary politics, Bubnov encouraged active involvement. He intended to see to it that schools

played their part as militant agents in Stalin's version of a transformation of Soviet society. In major speeches following his appointment, Bubnov called upon schools to participate in the class war at the ideological front and in the so-called cultural revolution against religion, kulaks, illiteracy and other political and social ills.[4]

The Commissariat's policies were consistent with Bubnov's rhetoric. Schools once again were urged to adopt radically innovative curricula. From 1929 to 1931, Moscow insisted on the so-called project method. This new method involved the study of subjects in the context of carrying out projects related to one or another of the campaigns associated with the First Five Year Plan. Projects could amount to small groups (brigades), a class, an entire school or even Narkompros officials (from office personnel to inspectors) focusing their efforts on eradicating drunkenness, adult illiteracy or disease (drainage of swamps, for example). They might donate a day's labor at a local factory or collective farm or mobilize voters for a local election. It was now accepted that the school itself had become not the microcosm of the future classless society, as Lunacharsky had envisioned it, but rather a partisan participant in class war, a center of the class struggle. Teachers and pupils were to take their place at the front in the socialist offensive against man and beast. Schools in one district reportedly responded by destroying 1,434 gophers.[5] Those including Krupskaya, who advocated the project method, maintained, in the jargon of the day, that it united theory with practice, aroused healthy student interest in schoolwork and in contemporary affairs, and forced schools to get involved in the cultural revolution. One of its most vocal supporters, V. N. Shul'gin, a member of the Commissariat's

Collegium, director of the Marx-Engels Institute of Pedagogy, and close associate of Krupskaya's insisted that projects enabled schools to merge their activity with that of society. He confidently predicted an eventual "withering away of the school" as life under socialism and education became one, as all distinctions between physical and mental labor, work and play, urban and rural life became things of the past.[6] The method also reinforced the views of those like Shul'gin who favored flexible curricula and instructional materials that could be tailored to fit local needs. Appropriately, in 1930 the Collegium of the Commissariat of Enlightenment and the Second Textbook Conference recommended that texts be little more than looseleaf workbooks complete with blank pages for easy adaptation to match local conditions and for staying abreast of current events.[7] Journal-textbooks (zhurnaly-uchebniki) appeared sporting such awesome titles as "Little Shock Workers" for second graders and "Young Shock Workers" for third graders.[8] The cultural revolution seemed to be on the verge of consuming the very content and methods of education.

Then in 1931 another major policy shift occurred. Hints of impending change had already appeared in Bubnov's remarks throughout the year. At the Fifteenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets (February 26 to March 5), he chose not to emphasize involvement in the cultural revolution but rather underscored the need for order and academic discipline in the schools.[9] A little more than a month later, on April 23, he condemned the "theory of the withering away of the school" in an address to those in the Commissariat primarily responsible for devising school curricula.[10] In particular, he added, the theory weakened the authority of the teacher.

Later that same year, in August, at the Conference on Production Instruction, Bubnov once again attacked the concept of the withering away of the school and proceeded in a complementary fashion to criticize unspecified distortions in the application of the project method. He made it quite clear that in his view schools should do less with projects and more with the teaching of fundamental subjects.[11]

Bubnov was not alone. Those in the highest echelons of the Party had never endorsed completely the progressive curriculum and philosophies accompanying it. Indeed the Party had issued mixed, even conflicting signals, a reflection, perhaps, of the various pressures at work in the realm of public education. In 1928 and 1929, for example, the Central Committee instructed schools to pay greater attention to academic achievement so that graduates could perform better in the technicums and higher educational institutions.[12] Yet at the same time, it demanded that elementary education be synonymous with a massive social-political campaign.[13] At a session of the Society of Marxist Pedagogues, the representative of the Central Committee's Kul'tprop called upon schools to contribute to the cultural revolution while he denounced the notion that the school or the teacher could wither away.[14] A similar position was taken by the Central Committee's representative at the First All-Russian Polytechnical Congress in August.[15] Mixed signals, but one clear message emerged throughout. The Party proceeded on the assumption that the school was a necessary social institution. On that score, as we shall see, it was quite at one with the teaching cadre.

On the eve of the 1931 school year, as never before, the Central Committee moved dramatically and authoritatively into the realm of school

policy. In a resolution adopted on August 25 and published eleven days later, it denounced "thoughtless scheming with methods" and specifically condemned the project method as an expression of the "anti-Leninist theory of the withering away of the school." This abrupt dismissal of projects allowed the Central Committee to demand even at this late date new curricula to transmit, as it put it, "knowledge of the fundamental subjects of physics, chemistry, mathematics, language, and others."[16] The resolution, however, did not jettison the progressive and polytechnical curriculum altogether. It still called upon schools to engage in socially-useful activity, to maintain shops and to teach the "chief branches of industry." Indeed, the Central Committee warned against any return to the "bourgeois school." Nevertheless, with this decision the Party emphasized the primary importance of the academic side of the curriculum and deprived the schools of a method most suitable for involving teachers and pupils in social and production activity.

The decision was only the beginning. It was but the first in a series of key statements issued by the Central Committee, Soviet of People's Commissars and Commissariat of Enlightenment on the content and methods of primary and secondary education. By the mid 1930s, schools were expected to relay a predetermined body of factual material taught strictly according to subjects, standardized textbooks, fixed lesson plans for specific grades, homework, and annual promotion examinations with little local variation of curricula and materials allowed.

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At no time did a majority of teachers respond as Narkompros wished. Investigations by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (Rabkrin) and

by local departments of education and declarations to as well as resolutions by educational conferences admitted that pre-revolutionary methods and syllabi retained popularity.[17] Reports by school inspectors and information released in government surveys on the state of public education all came precisely to the same conclusion. In 1925 Narkompros complained that despite instructions to the contrary, teachers resorted to the traditional scholastic (slovesnyi) methods.[18] Inspectors of both elementary and secondary schools repeatedly found that teachers relied on the old familiar cycle of dictation, copious notetaking by pupils, homework, memorization, drill, examinations, grades (marks) and little else than formal contact with their students.[19] Narkompros had decisively abolished the traditional grading system of marks (five numbers or words) for written subjective evaluations that would consider the full range of a child's activities in and out of the classroom and school. A pupil's peers were even to participate in this process. But teachers responded with equal decisiveness by using the traditional numbers or corresponding one-word evaluations. Based on inspectors' reports in 1923, Narkompros complained that everywhere the old (bal'naia) system of marks prevailed, with report cards to match at least in Tula.[20] Four years later, according to another report, the "old form of evaluation" still reigned.[21]

Pupils who could not measure up were, as before, failed. Investigations of schools in the city and province of Moscow in 1920 and 1925 revealed that about one of five pupils there was repeating a grade.[22] Other surveys found an even higher rate of failure during the mid 1920s in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Tver, Briansk and Leningrad.[23] Overall, throughout the Russian Republic, about 16 percent of those enrolled in elementary

grades in the 1925/26 and 1927/28 academic years were repeating a grade. Figures for urban and rural schools varied only slightly.[24] Some pupils, of course, failed not to return to school or dropped out for academic and other reasons during the middle of the year. One survey for the RSFSR showed that in 1926/27 those who dropped out ranged from a low of eight percent in urban elementary schools to a high of over 20 percent in rural elementary schools.[25] The total failure rate (a combination of those who flunked with those who dropped out) is difficult to determine; but it can be said that between 20 to 30 percent of all pupils in 1926/27 were not promoted.[26] Inspectors reported that as before teachers resorted to punishment to maintain discipline.[27] Although apparently few of them advocated a return to corporal punishment, many sought to maintain discipline by the threat of expulsion from class and school, assignment of menial chores to be completed after class and public rebukes.[28] Commissariat officials sadly reported that teachers and principals either refused to allow pupils to participate in classroom and school governance or else limited student committees to the enforcing of discipline or cleaning up of the room or grounds.[29]

During the 1920s, schoolroom practice diverged most sharply from Commissariat policy in the matter of the complex method. Individual teachers and whole schools rejected the new method. Often supported by local departments of education, teachers relied as before on standard subject-matter fare. Instructors were especially reluctant to subvert, as they saw it, the study of Russian language, mathematics and science to general themes. In 1927, the Moscow Department of Education observed that the preoccupation with the teaching of skills in reading, writing and arithmetic had reached epidemic proportions.[30] At conferences and

congresses, teachers expressed their opposition to the complex and their refusal to use it.[31] A report to the 1925 All-Russian Conference of Workers of Secondary Schools commented that perhaps a majority of schools relied on the old system of subjects.[32] In the opinion of Narkompros officials, many teachers mechanically implemented the method reducing the themes to little more than "sedentary complexes" in which pupils and instructors concentrated on the usual subject-matter fare in the usual way not getting out from behind their respective desks in the process.[33] Special investigations and inspectors' reports indicated that even in the much-ballyhooed area of social studies, pre-revolutionary history texts, lectures and drills were often the rule.[34]

The facts cried out; teachers did not follow the Commissariat's guidelines and orders. Reluctantly, in 1925 a leading Narkompros official, M. M. Pistrak, recognized considerable opposition to the complex.[35] That same year, Lunacharsky confessed that a "majority of schools have transferred to the subject method."[36] The following year, he admitted that a crisis had developed over the complex.[37] But even as Narkompros began to recognize the dimensions of the problem, it became ever more insistent about the application of its curriculum. In 1923 and 1924 it reemphasized the value of the complex method and called for a study of the same theme in the various subjects taught in the secondary grades. The point of education, it declared, was not the imparting of information arranged by subjects but an acquaintance with life.[38] In an insensitive and even haughty manner, Narkompros insisted into 1925 that it would be the teachers not the policy-makers who would have to adjust. The Pedagogical Section of the Commissariat's State Academic Council, the

organ primarily responsible for the progressive curriculum, demanded that teachers learn to use the complex method by reading more, by carefully studying Narkompros directives and by paying more attention to the surrounding natural, social and economic environment. Although the Section took note of the difficulties involved in employing any new method of instruction, it found the major problem to be an alleged lack of initiative, knowledge and creativity among teachers and, furthermore, "reactionary tendencies on the part of passive teachers."[39] But as inspectors' reports, Narkompros surveys and Rabkrin investigations demonstrated time and again, what Narkompros said and what teachers did remained two separate and distinct things.

In 1926, the Moscow Department of Education (MONO) publicly moved to bring policy more in line with reality. On several occasions that year, MONO stressed the importance of elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic even if it came at the expense of a close relationship with complex themes, called for more study of history, and accepted tests, if used carefully, as appropriate devices for measuring academic achievement.[40] Twice in early 1927 MONO acknowledged and approved, within specified limits, the common practice of assigning homework.[41] The parent organization, Narkompros, also attempted a compromise with its teachers. In 1926 it called for less schematic and more factual instruction in the elementary schools.[42] The 1927 curriculum retreated, as mentioned above, from the complex method and emphasized the importance in all grades of subject-matter teaching.[43] Nevertheless, that year the Commissariat of Enlightenment still insisted in principle on the value of a thematic approach.[44] Its Collegium even approved a call for the

compilation at some point in the future of a single complex book covering various subjects.[45] Fearful lest the compromise go too far, on July 23, 1928 Narkompros once again complained of the dominance of the "traditional lesson system" and of excessive homework and memorization. It concluded with an appeal for a "decisive struggle with attempts to use the undoubtedly correct catchword 'studies' (ucheba) in the spirit of the old scholastic school."[46]

An attempt at compromise between the Commissariat's policies and the predilection of teachers for traditional methods and content abruptly ended in 1929 with the promulgation of the project method. One advocate of projects believed they would force an end to sedentary complexes. Thus the theme "our village," often pursued only within the classroom, would become "how to improve animal husbandry in our village" requiring the application in the field of what was learned behind the desk.[47] Once again, however, teachers acted independently. How many and to what extent they did so is difficult to determine. Speakers at conferences and authors of articles for educational periodicals were more reluctant than before to discuss a failure to implement official policy. But judging from the complaints of the project method's supporters, a considerable number, perhaps a majority, of teachers avoided its implementation. This was acknowledged at conferences on the method in 1930 and 1931.[48] On March 4, 1931, at a meeting of the Society of Marxist Pedagogues, the head of the Timiriazev Agro-Biological Station complained that schools avoided involvement in production and socially-useful labor. "In other words," he concluded, "our school is still a copy of the bourgeois school to a well-known degree."[49] The next month, Shul'gin admitted to the Pedagogical Section of the State Academic Council that

teachers strongly resisted the introduction of the new method.[50] At a conference of the Society of Marxist Pedagogues, P. Rudnev, an official in the Commissariat's Main Administration for Social Training, lamented that teachers did not actually apply the project method. They preferred instead, he said, to rely on traditional methods. Rudnev proceeded with a litany of familiar complaints: teachers failed to employ activity methods, refused to organize excursions, undermined pupil self-government and assigned grades.[51] Teachers indeed continued to fail pupils not meeting minimum standards. The number repeating a grade was lower than during the mid 1920s but remained high nevertheless. About 10 percent of those enrolled in the Russian Republic in 1929/30 and in 1930/31 were repeating a grade.[52]

Krupskaya's concerns may be taken as another indication of the level and escalating significance of resistance by teachers. By the late 1920s, she had become terribly anxious not only about what was transpiring in the classroom but also over how practice might affect future policy. On May 8, 1928, at the Eighth Komsomol Congress, Krupskaya expressed her fears that a growing concern for the academic side of life, especially with instruction in arithmetic, grammar and history, was coming at the expense of a true communist education including anti-religious instruction and socially-useful activity.[53] At a conference on methods, held in December 1929, she seriously suggested that the Commissariat of Enlightenment cope with academic failures and grade repetition by making, essentially, both impossible. Instead of marks, a vestige of the old school Krupskaya called them, she proposed the organization of individual classes by age not by

academic ability. This would, of course, make promotion each year automatic.[54] In addition, she complained repeatedly that teachers were far too quick to terminate student self-government and apply harsh disciplinary measures.[55] By 1931, Krupskaya had become so concerned that she now abandoned her previous reluctance to inject into a discussion of education shrill references to ideology and politics. In January, she said that the struggle against teachers who would introduce old methods was part of the class struggle.[56] At a session of the Commissariat's Collegium the following April, she spoke with even greater urgency. Those who, in her opinion, were then organizing what she alleged to be a campaign for the old school, posed a right-wing danger.[57]

Aware of opposition from above and below, supporters of the project method demonstrated some willingness to compromise. They now admitted that adjustments would have to be made to allow for a systematic presentation of factual information.[58] Addressing the Conference on Production Instruction in mid August 1931, Krupskaya emphasized the importance of imparting predetermined academic skills and knowledge while defending the continued use of complex themes.[59] Narkompros joined in by refusing to approve a complete transfer of schools to the project method and by warning against making the method a fetish.[60] Nevertheless, the Central Committee's resolution of August 25, 1931 denounced the project method as an "anti-Leninist deviation." In so doing, it went a long way in squaring official policy with the desired and actual classroom practice of teachers.

In its decision, the Central Committee warned against unspecified efforts "to turn back to the bourgeois school." Krupskaya feared that

the Central Committee's intervention would nevertheless encourage teachers to maintain or adopt traditional practices. "The old school and right deviation are very much alive," she asserted, "as many say the less innovation the better."[61] Some teachers, she wrote, would now introduce a whole range of punitive measures to restore slavish discipline.[62] Other of her critical remarks were not published.[63] At first, the Collegium of the Commissariat of Enlightenment shared her concern. On September 15, it expressed grave anxiety over "right opportunist elements who attempt to preserve the old scholastic school." Under the guise of defending education, these elements, the Collegium added, would recreate the bourgeois school with little or nothing to do with polytechnical and communist instruction. Although it rejected the "mass application" of the project method, the Collegium deviated from at least the spirit of the Central Committee's resolution by allowing for the method's use in separate individual schools and also for a continuation, although in revised form, of journal-textbooks.[64] Almost a month later, on November 10, while criticizing "large projects" it defended the complex principle as a device to aid in the "struggle with attempts to restore the scholastic school and limit learning only to books isolated from life, from practice."[65] Throughout the remainder of 1931 and into the following year, the Collegium and other organs in Narkompros repeatedly condemned alleged right-opportunist efforts to revive the scholastic school.

These concerns were justified. Teachers responded vigorously to the Central Committee's initiative. At a series of conferences called in January and February 1932 to acquaint teachers with the Party's

decree and with new curricula hastily devised by the Commissariat of Enlightenment, teachers generally approved of the abolition of the project method.[66] And they went further. In greater numbers and certainly more boldly than before, they drilled their charges; some issued detailed codes of conduct and punishments.[67]

Krupskaya, the Narkompros Collegium and others with similar fears found that they could not halt what in effect amounted to the combined march of teachers' desires and classroom practice, the Central Committee's intent and, as will be discussed below, public sentiment. In 1932 Narkompros became more concerned about so-called leftist rather than rightist deviation. It issued traditional curricula to match its new attitude. Krupskaya, despite her prestige, did not escape stinging criticism. In September 1931, the head of the teachers' union, A. Shumsky, followed her presentation at the plenary meeting of the union's Central Committee with a surprisingly sharp attack. After paying his respects, Shumsky charged that Krupskaya had failed to regard the recent Party resolution as a fundamental break in policy, to condemn Shul'gin and to reject the project method and the concept of the withering away of the school.[68] Shumsky's polemic was certainly justified from the Central Committee's point of view. In late 1931 and again in 1932 the Commissariat of Enlightenment publicly condemned Krupskaya's journal, Na putiakh k novoi shkole, although not Krupskaya personally, for alleged sympathy with leftist views.[69] Then without warning, the journal ceased publication after the appearance of its January 1933 issue.

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What motivated teachers is a difficult matter to assess. During the 1920s published Soviet surveys provided detailed information on what pupils ate for breakfast, on absenteeism at school and on the training, age and experience of instructors. But apparently no study was made of the reasons why so many teachers rejected the progressive curriculum. The material that is available, especially in periodical educational literature, reveals that a large variety of factors were at work. Teachers failed to conform to the vision, recommendations and precise instructions of Narkompros for reasons running the entire gamut from the most understandable and indeed laudable to the unfortunate and deplorable. Sometimes they could do no other. Despite the arduous efforts of Lunacharsky and his colleagues, despite a bewildering array of instructions and journals from Narkompros, some, perhaps many, teachers and local inspectors in the colossus that was the Russian Republic remained ignorant of the Commissariat's materials and directives.[70]

Teachers had their own good personal and professional reasons for refusing to become surrogate Party agents during the 1920s and tumultuous period of the First Five Year Plan that followed. They had their classroom responsibilities to fulfill, made more difficult by innovative curricula if applied. Nor did many share the Party's objectives.* In the mid 1920s about 5 percent of the elementary and secondary school

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*The socio-occupational origin of most teachers in the Russian Republic was not such as to generate enthusiasm for the Bolshevik cause. In 1925/26 most primary and secondary teachers were from the peasantry or intelligentsia (sluzhashchie) (from Statisticheskii sbornik po narodnomu prosveshcheniiu RSFSR 1926 g. [Moscow, 1927], pp. 83-84, 94-95, 108-109, 120-121). In January 1931, of teachers in the elementary grades, 14.9 percent were from the working class, 34.2 percent of the peasantry and 36.3 percent of the intelligentsia; of teachers of secondary grades, the percentage figures were 17.4, 18.0 and 51.6 for the same categories (from Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR v osnovnykh pokazateliakh; statisticheskii sbornik (1927/28-1930/31 gg., so vkliucheniem nekotorykh dannykh za 1931/1932 g.) [Moscow-Leningrad, 1932], p. 80.

teachers in the RSFSR were full or candidate members of the Party and approximately the same percentage belonged to the Young Communist League.[71] In Moscow an even smaller percentage of teachers belonged to the Party and its organization for young adults.[72] Even by 1931, of the Russian Republic's elementary instructors, only 3.1 percent belonged to the Party and another 10.7 percent to Komsomol; and of secondary teachers 10.9 and 4.5 percent were members of the same.[73]

The experience of those teachers who did respond to the Party's leadership had a chilling effect on the others. Take, for example, the case of schoolteacher Nikolai Fedorovich Iovlev. Following the close of the Civil War, this Red Army veteran returned to his native village of Shileksha, located in a backward area along the Volga river. Iovlev joined the teaching staff there and immediately made himself very visible and controversial, to put it mildly. He became the agent for bringing the dubious benefits of the modern State to the region. Comrade Iovlev excoriated his colleagues for allowing deterioration of the school building and theft of the school's firewood. He mobilized them and others to collect the national tax in kind from the peasantry, to seek better treatment of workers at several small sweatshops, and, perhaps most troublesome of all, to close down local moonshiners. His various campaigns, however, came to an aburpt end with his murder in November 1922.[74] Other instructors had similar experiences especially from 1929 to 1931. In the countryside where projects, when implemented, often amounted to the support of forcible collection of grain and of collectivization, peasants turned on activist teachers with threats and acts of violence. Reliable statistics are unavailable but the incidence of

such acts was sufficiently great to be repeatedly acknowledged as a major problem by State and Party officials.[75] As one delegate at a 1930 conference observed, teachers were expected to participate in campaigns against kulaks but frequently, as a result, it was the teachers who were beaten or killed.[76]

Even if teachers and their charges avoided campaigns, they encountered a public, especially in rural areas, dubious of the value of an education beyond a few elementary grades. What Krupskaya found to be true during her trip down the Volga in 1919, Narkompros officials and leading organs discovered throughout the 1920s--that the populace equated education with the acquisition of elementary literacy after which the young were expected to work at home, in the fields or in a shop or factory.[77] A survey of peasant opinions revealed disenchantment with the alleged failure of the schools to teach the basics of reading and writing and to train pupils to obey their elders. Some of those who were surveyed queried: "Why does the teacher work only four hours a day?" and, "If all are taught, who will sow grain?"[78] In a small village in Moscow province in 1929, the local populace cared little that a school functioned in a working church. "Why do we need a school?" some asked.[79] Many workers attending conferences on education held in urban enterprises and clubs believed a secondary education to be pointless.[80] In rural areas attendance even in the first and second grades dropped markedly when it conflicted with the harvest and planting. Absenteeism in rural elementary schools therefore followed the agricultural cycle--high in September and October (in those schools that even attempted to open that early) and higher yet from March to May.[81] In part because the Russian

public did not share with Narkompros its faith in the power of education, pupils in 1926/27 received on the average only 2.77 years of schooling.[82] In 1930/31, the average was 3.9 years in urban areas and 3.0 in rural regions of the RSFSR.[83]

Dubious of education generally, the public could not comprehend the content and purpose of the progressive curriculum when schools did attempt to apply it. In these instances, teachers found themselves pressured from above by Narkompros and from below by critical parents. But if Narkompros was not in heaven, at least it was far away. Parents were another matter. One inspector reported that not only parents but even local Soviet and Party officials preferred the old methods.[84] The Pedagogical Section of the State Academic Council and MONO reluctantly acknowledged the public's preference for an old-fashioned emphasis on the "three R's."[85] Some teachers who tried the progressive curriculum wrote to their union's periodicals that parents jumped to the conclusion that there was little teaching in the schools. They preferred the traditional content and ambience--"lessons, bells and books."[86] Even when pupils marched into the countryside to help the poor peasantry, the recipients of this assistance distrusted the effort and certainly did not appreciate the loud propaganda that often accompanied it.[87]

Nor were teachers inspired to take on difficult and dangerous responsibilities when State and Party officials often abused them. For financial and political reasons, local authorities withheld or arbitrarily reduced teachers' pay and pensions, capriciously dismissed or transferred them even in the middle of the academic year, treated them as saboteurs and class enemies (which could include confiscation

of property, arrest and deportation to Siberia) and forced them to participate in all sorts of political campaigns.[88] Some local authorities resorted to a particularly interesting but illegal way to cut costs--they fired teachers near the end of the regular academic year and thereby avoided salary payments during the summer months.[89] Dismissals from 1928 to 1930 became more numerous and frequently amounted to a full-scale purge despite orders from Rabkrin and Narkompros to stop it.[90] Some local officials singled out female teachers for a particular kind of "socially-useful labor."[91] The problem was common enough to force the prosecutor's office of the Russian Republic to issue a circular denouncing representatives of local soviets and inspectors who forced instructors to provide room, board and sexual favors.[92]

The tired phrase "overworked and underpaid" certainly applied to teachers. Most of them, it is true, were not burdened with an inordinate number of pupils, but they often had to work simultaneously with two even three grades especially in rural areas.[93] In addition, the high incidence of grade repetition, dropout and reentry or late enrollment in the school system meant that rarely did a teacher face children of the same age in a single class. Moreover, teachers were expected to fulfill numerous social duties. This was true especially in the countryside where the public, as we have seen, believed instructors to be underworked. Complaints poured in and Narkompros could do little else than protest. Organizations from soviets to collective farms required teachers to donate their time and labor to collect the agricultural tax (in 1927), operate the reading hut, keep minutes, serve as accountants or postmasters

or simply stand by the village telephone.[94] It was unfortunate but true that teachers suffered from the worst of all possible worlds: the local populace did not appreciate the value of an education, at least one beyond a few grades, yet found it necessary, if not desirable, to exploit the labor of the few persons in the area who possessed verbal and arithmetical skills beyond the most elementary level. Even when paid the state-guaranteed minimum, many teachers could not have felt adequately compensated. In 1927/28, for example, despite recent increases in pay, elementary teachers still received only about 64 percent of their pre-war salary, secondary teachers less than 50 percent.[95] The situation was little if any better for teachers in Moscow.[96] A study of the living conditions of teachers and their families revealed that they raised their own food, borrowed money and spent their funds primarily on necessities.[97] Some of those schools fortunate enough to have a plot did attempt to help by converting the land into the personal gardens of the teaching staff.[98]

New curriculum or old, teachers had to make adjustments when the State could not provide schools with the most essential of items. It is indeed sad to read repeatedly in the literature of the 1920s of severe shortages of space, chairs, desks, tools, shops, fuel and even pencils and paper (at one point a desperate Commissariat of Enlightenment suggested using the charred ends of sticks as writing instruments and backs of posters as paper). Many urban and rural schools resorted to two and even three shifts.[99] As noted above, one school functioned in a working church amidst the "noise of church singing."[100] Time also was at a premium. During the early and mid 1920s most schools in urban as well as rural regions did not function for the full academic year;

some schools opened only in November or December; many even in Moscow did not offer the required hours of weekly instruction, a problem compounded by a high rate of absenteeism.[101] At the 1925 First All-Union Congress of Teachers, at least several delegates justifiably questioned the wisdom of imposing a new curriculum on overworked teachers confronted with such horrendous material shortages and a disemboweled academic year.[102]

Teachers often had no choice but to reject labor instruction and production practice. Schools lacked laboratory instruments, shop equipment and the space to implement the polytechnical curriculum of the 1920s. To make matters worse, factories, collective farms and the government agencies responsible for them refused for their own good reasons to provide schools with equipment, instructors and places at the work bench.[103] Some factory managers found school excursions too troublesome if not disruptive and refused to receive them.[104] Local soviets, education officials, principals and teachers often displayed little interest in labor instruction. Departments of education refused to allot funds for shops, paid labor instructors less than teachers of academic subjects and transferred funds designated for the upkeep of shops to other purposes.[105] Schools with a plot of land often lacked the equipment and seeds to operate it.[106] Even those instructors who initially greeted production practice and later, projects, must have lost their enthusiasm when their pupils were reduced to weeding fields, gathering firewood, sweeping floors or making lapel buttons or spoons. Little wonder that some schools never opened boxes of what shop equipment did arrive or those with land chose to convert it into teachers' gardens or simply rent it out.[107]

Even in the best of material circumstances, teachers were not disposed psychologically or academically to cope with the progressive

curricula of the 1920s. Many teachers lacked the training necessary to use some of the most advanced and demanding syllabi in the world. In 1926, 40 percent of the elementary staff had little more than a primary education; and about 80 percent of both elementary and secondary teachers had no more than a secondary education. In addition, over 80 percent of the teachers had received their education prior to the Bolshevik revolution.[108] Even as late as January 1931, a survey revealed that a large percentage of the teachers in the USSR had launched their careers before the 1917 revolution. Of all elementary and secondary schools, more than half of their instructors were 30 years or older, more than one-third 35 or more; about 40 percent had 13 or more years of experience and one-third had 17 or more.[109] The much celebrated teacher repreparation campaigns of the 1920s contributed more in the way of propaganda and perhaps even resentment than real assistance. They were badly disorganized, underfunded and highly politicized. It was not uncommon for those teachers attending courses in Moscow to get stranded in the capital because local authorities failed not only to help with daily expenses but also to pay for transportation home.[110]

Influenced by their own training and experience, many teachers opposed the progressive curriculum because they thought of learning as the transmission of specific academic skills and subject-matter knowledge. They made this argument at the First All-Union Congress of Teachers in January 1925, at the Conference of Secondary Schools (mid 1925) and at a number of conferences organized from 1927 to 1931 on instruction in such subjects as social studies, natural sciences, geography and physics.[111] Summing up comments at the First All-Union Congress of Teachers, a Commissariat official admitted that it was the older, more experienced teachers who rejected the complex method.[112] At the same meeting, Krupskaya admitted that teachers

did not know what to make of the new school[113] and Lunacharsky confessed that instructors broke their heads over the Commissariat's program.[114] An inspector of schools in the Moscow province wrote that "it is obvious that the raising of skills could not be managed without a well-known retreat from the complex."[115] In 1927, MONO agreed with teachers that homework was necessary if pupils were to learn what was expected of them. This was especially true, MONO continued, in those many schools where insufficient instructional time and the absence of materials precluded anything approximating a normal academic day or week.[116]

In sum, teachers had a variety of reasons to be uncooperative and even resentful. They expressed their concerns, as we have seen, at conferences and to inspectors. They also bombarded their own press with requests, complaints and suggestions. Published summaries of letters to the teachers' union newspaper, Uchitel'skaia gazeta, make fascinating reading. According to these reports, teachers loudly and stubbornly affirmed their intent to cling to old ways, their resentment at new and often confusing terminology in Narkompros programs, their desire to emphasize the three R's "for literacy," and their awareness of pressure from parents who resisted any kind of innovation.[117]

There is a short but particularly captivating article on the difficulties a new teacher faced in the mid 1920s. In July 1926 Narodnyi uchitel' printed an article by E. Gaidovskaia, a young Muscovite who had been ordered to report to a school in a remote place, ninety miles from a town or a railroad.[118] Only two weeks before, she had first heard of the complex. Now, as she put it, she ventured forth "with her instructions to report (naznachenie) in one hand and the Narkompros program in the other." Upon her arrival, she found a dilapidated school with no books on the shelves, one

blackboard for three classes and, in hers, the second grade, one desk for every three pupils. Her effort to cope with such dismal conditions included a violation of the Narkompros egalitarian spirit if not of a precise order. She divided her class into strong and weak groups, the latter of which included pupils who had forgotten half their letters. Neither this device nor people associated with the school helped. When she pestered the director to help her draw up a plan for the implementation of the complex method, he responded: "The complexes. On the table is the Narkompros program, on your shoulders a head. Think of something." Peasant parents looked askance at anything new including instruction in singing and drawing. They preferred harsh disciplinary measures and some withdrew their children from school. That first December the inspector came and actually discouraged the use of the complex method. Perhaps he was as dumbfounded by it as were the director and many teachers. He created more difficulties for Gaidovskaia by taking away the individual responsible for the local point for the liquidation of adult illiteracy. It now fell to an already overburdened Gaidovskaia. The result was predictable: Gaidovskaia, who had begun her career with so much enthusiasm, took her pedagogical library and the Narkompros program off the table and placed them under her bed, where both commenced to hibernate for the winter.

We don't know whether Gaidovskaia continued in the profession. Many teachers in similar even better circumstances did not.[119] Dropping out was a problem even before an individual began his or her career. An investigation of the huge problem of withdrawals from pedagogical technicums in 1931 revealed that over half the students quit because they did not want to become teachers.[120] And this at precisely a time when the nation desperately needed more instructors.

* * * * *

This paper does not pretend to reject as invalid the view that Soviet education, especially under Stalin, was often the product of heavy-handed political and economic considerations. Soviet Russia was indeed a highly authoritarian system featuring a monopoly of political power and a dominant all-emcompassing ideology. As we have seen, adoption of the project method flew in the face of what most teachers wanted and reversed a process of accommodation with their desires.

But politics and ideology provided the contours not the details of school policy. The Commissariat of Enlightenment and Central Committee reacted to as well as they acted on other forces involved in education. When we shift our focus from the chambers of Moscow's Kremlin to the classroom, we discover that teachers did exercise considerable autonomy and in turn influenced the direction of future policy. Practice often sharply diverged from policy and policy often was found to be running after practice. There were other reasons for change in Moscow's policy but assuredly the desired and actual practices of teachers contributed and at times may have been crucial.

It is reassuring to know that human nature in its Russian variant remained stubborn. Not many teachers allowed themselves to be molded into Party agents or joined a crusade against class enemies or even moonshiners. And yet we can share the anguish of Lunacharsky and Krupskaya when schoolteachers, sometimes for the most scoundrelly of reasons, unceremoniously rejected both the program and the vision of the Commissariat of Enlightenment. By their imagination and excellence, and by the absence of such qualities, teachers undermined and thereby influenced central policy.

Finally, a focus on practice as well as on policy puts the relationship between Soviet government and society in proper perspective.

It demonstrates the folly of policies that were far in advance of the capacities, for good or ill, of those citizens required to implement them. A revolutionary state, even a highly authoritarian one, must seek legitimacy and permanence in part by eventually arriving at some sort of accommodation with the abilities and desires of some of its citizens. The Soviet State did so with its teachers in the early 1930s.

NOTES

1. Sheila Fitzpatrick, The Commissariat of Enlightenment; Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky (Cambridge, 1970) and Sheila Fitzpatrick, Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1932 (Cambridge, 1979).

2. Speech delivered May 22, 1923 in Tomsk, in Anatoli Lunacharskii on Education; Selected Articles and Speeches (Moscow, 1981), pp. 160, 167-169.

3. For information on the 1927 curriculum, see Ezhenedel'nik Narkomprosa RSFSR [henceforth Ezhenedel'nik NKP], no. 14 (April 8, 1927), p. 7 and F. F. Korolev, T. D. Korneichik, Z. I. Ravkin, Ocherki po istorii sovetskoi shkoly i pedagogiki, 1921-1931 (Moscow, 1961), pp. 71, 79-80, 85-86.

4. A. S. Bubnov, Stat'i i rechi o narodnom obrazovanii (Moscow, 1959), pp. 22-25, 40-105. See also Bubnov's remarks at the Sixteenth Party Congress in mid 1930 in XVI s"ezd Vsesoiuznoi Kommunisticheskoi partii (b) (Moscow-Leningrad, 1931), pp. 181-185.

5. Novye formy i metody prosvetitel'noi raboty; sbornik (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), p. 71.

6. On Shul'gin, see Fitzpatrick, Education and Social Mobility, pp. 139-144, 150-151, 155-157; Gail Warshofsky Lapidus, "Educational Strategies and Cultural Revolution: The Politics of Soviet Development," in Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1931 (Bloomington, 1978), pp. 94-99; the polemical but informative article by I. Chuvashev, "Politekhnicheskoe vospitanie v reshaiushchem godu," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 12 (December, 1931), p. 158 ff. Shul'gin forcefully and eloquently summarized his views at a session of the Society of Marxist Pedagogues, March 16, 1930: Sistema narodnogo obrazovaniia v rekonstruktivnyi period; soveshchanie Obshchestva Pedagog-Marksistov pri Kommunisticheskoi akademii 7/II-16/III (Moscow, 1930), p. 46 ff.

7. See reports on the Second Textbook Conference by N. Nikolaev in Na putiakh k novoi shkole [henceforth Na putiakh], no. 6 (June, 1930), pp. 79-81 and no. 7 (July, 1930), pp. 88-90. See also A. Zelenko, "Ob uchebnikakh, prisposoblennykh k rabote po metodu proektov," Na putiakh, no. 1 (January, 1931), pp. 35-45. These views were similar to those dominating the First Textbook Conference (1926): E. Leonova, "Pervaia Vserossiiskaia konferentsiia po uchebnoi i detskoi knige," Na putiakh, no. 2 (February, 1926), pp. 7-14.

8. Biulleten' Narkomprosa RSFSR [henceforth Biulleten' NKP], no. 32-33 (August, 1931), pp. 14-15.

9. Bubnov, Stat'i, pp. 158-159.

10. Ibid., p. 107. Bubnov addressed a plenary session of the Academic-Pedagogical Section of the Commissariat's State Academic Council.

11. Fizika, khimiia, matematika, tekhnika v sovetskoi shkole, no. 6-7 (1931), p. 45.

12. See the Central Committee's resolution of July 12, 1928 in Narodnoe obrazovanie v SSSR; Obshcheobrazovatel'naia shkola. Sbornik dokumentov 1917-1973 g.g. [henceforth NO] (Moscow, 1974), p. 418 and of November 16, 1929 in KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK, Vol. 4 (Moscow, 8th ed., 1970), p. 341.

13. See the Central Committee's decision of July 25, 1930 in Direktivy VKP(b) i postanovleniia sovetskogo pravitel'stva o narodnom obrazovanii; sbornik dokumentov za 1917-1947 gg. (Moscow-Leningrad, 1947), Vol. I, p. 100.

14. Sistema narodnogo obrazovaniia, pp. 39-40.

15. Biulleten' NKP, no. 26 (September 20, 1930), p. 31.

16. NO, pp.157-160.

17. See resolutions adopted in Vserossiiskii s"ezd zaveduiushchikh otdelami narodnogo obrazovaniia; rezoliutsii piatogo Vserossiiskogo s"ezda zav. otdelami narodnogo obrazovaniia (Moscow, 1926), p. 14; A. Tolstov's report on schools and teachers for the All-Russian Conference of Workers of Secondary Schools in Narodnoe prosveshchenie [henceforth Nar. pros.], no. 5-6 (1925), p. 64. See also the account by Vladimir Samarin who graduated from a nine year school in 1930 in George L. Kline (ed.), Soviet Education (New York, 1957), pp. 26-27; the conclusions of the Commissariat official, M. S. Epshtein, based on a recent first-hand examination of schools, Nar. pros., no. 7 (1926), p. 131; the presentation by the Commissariat official, S. T. Shatsky, to the First All-Russian Conferenceof Jewish Workers of Education, 1926, in S. T. Shatskii, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1964), pp. 350-351.

18. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 14 (April 4, 1925), p. 6.

19. Iz opyta gorodskoi semiletki; sbornik (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927), pp. 13, 22-23; Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 10 (October, 1927), p. 106, no. 1 (January, 1927), p. 113 and no. 5 (May, 1929), p. 118; V pomoshch' organizatoru narodnogo prosveshcheniia; sbornik po voprosam inspektirovaniia i rukovodstva prosvetitel'noi rabotoi (Moscow, 2nd ed., 1928), p. 113; on homework, see Ezhenedel'nik Moskovskogo gubernskogo otdela narodnogo obrazovaniia [henceforth Ezhenedel'nik MONO], no. 5-6 (February 15, 1927), p. 12 and no. 13-14 (April 26, 1927), pp. 3-4; on heavy reliance on tests to determine a pupil's progress, see Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 9 (March 4, 1927), p. 17.

20. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 6 (July 21, 1923), p. 30.

21. Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 10 (October, 1927), p. 108.

22. S. Belousov, "'Vtorogodnichestvo' i ego rol' v zhizni nashei shkoly," Narodnoe prosveshchenie [henceforth Nar. pros.], no. 4-5 (April-May, 1926), p. 145.

23. S. Belousov, "Vtorogodnichestvo v gorodskikh shkolakh," Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 5 (May, 1927), p. 3; V. Krylov, "Uchashchiesia v shkolakh II stupeni," Nar. pros., no. 9 (1925), pp. 64, 68, 72; T. Khrushchev, "O vtorogodnichestve," Na putiakh, no. 9 (September, 1929), p. 46; Vseobshchee obiazatel'noe obuchenie; statisticheskii ocherk po dannym shkol'noi perepisi tekushchei statistiki prosveshcheniia (Moscow, 1930), p. 86.

24. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR v tsifrakh za 15 let sovetskoi vlasti (Moscow-Leningrad, 1932), p. 26.

25. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR; statisticheskii sbornik (Moscow-Leningrad, 1928), p. 172.

26. Ibid., p. 173.

27. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 6 (July 21, 1923), p. 31.

28. See the report on a discussion occurring in Uchitel'skaia gazeta in 1927 and 1928 in F. F. Korolev, Sovetskaia shkola v period sotsialisticheskoi industrializatsii (Moscow, 1959), pp. 257-258.

29. See Epshtein's report in Nar. pros., no. 7 (1926), p. 133; M. Pistrak, "Komsomol i shkola," Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 2 (February, 1923), p. 17.

30. Ezhenedel'nik MONO, no. 5-6 (February 15, 1927), p. 13.

31. See information on the Second All-Russian Congress of Gubsotsvosy, March 10-16, 1923 in Z. I. Ravkin, Sovetskaia shkola v period vosstanovleniia narodnogo khoziaistva 1921-1925 gg. (Moscow, 1959), p. 87; B. Esipov's summary of teachers' comments at the First All-Union Congress of Teachers in Nar. pros., no. 2 (February, 1925), pp. 187-188; the Conference of Secondary Schools, 1925, in Voprosy shkoly II stupeni; Trudy Pervoi Vserossiiskoi konferentsii shkol II stupeni 5-10 iiulia 1925 g. (Moscow, 1926), p. 147.

32. Nar. pros., no. 5-6 (1925), p. 64.

33. V pomoshch' organizatoru, p. 113; Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 26 (June 26, 1925), p. 3; the article by the inspector B. Gur'ianov, "Po stantsam Dona," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 7 (July, 1926), p. 74.

34. I. G. Avtukhov and I. D. Martynenko, Programmy GUS'a i massovaia shkola (Moscow, 2nd ed., 1925), pp. 58-59; Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 2 (February, 1929), p. 134; Ravkin, Sovetskaia shkola, p. 66; L. P. Bushchik, Ocherk razvitiia shkol'nogo istoricheskogo obrazovaniia v SSSR (Moscow, 1961), pp. 185-186.

35. Nar. pros., no. 5-6 (1925), p. 60.

36. Ravkin, Sovetskaia shkola, p. 124; from Lunacharsky's report at a conference of heads of departments of agitation and propaganda of provincial Party committees, October 1925.

37. Korolev, Ocherki, 1921-31, p. 77.

38. See the 1923 curriculum and an instructional letter accompanying it in Novye programmy dlia edinoi trudovoi shkoly (Moscow-Petrograd, 1923), pp. 24-29, 98-99; an instruction regarding the complex method first issued in 1923, Metodicheskie pis'ma. Pis'mo pervoe: O kompleksnom prepodavanii (Moscow, 1925), pp. 15-22; and the 1924 curriculum, Novye programmy edinoi trudovoi shkoly pervoi stupeni (Moscow, 1924), p. 17.

39. Novye programmy (1923), pp. 25-29; Metodicheskie pis'ma. Pis'mo pervoe, pp. 15-22; and especially A. Tukhov, Programmy, pp. 10-11.

40. Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 1 (January, 1926), pp. 19, 21, 23; Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 4 (April, 1927), p. 99; Ezhnedel'nik MONO, no. 48 (December 30, 1926), p. 20.

41. Ezhenedel'nik MONO, no. 5-6 (February 15, 1927), pp. 12 and no. 13-14 (April 26, 1927), pp. 3-4.

42. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 35 (September 3, 1926), p. 114.

43. See also instructions in Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 27 (June 8, 1927), pp. 7-8.

44. Ibid., p. 9.

45. Sovetskoi shkole--novyi uchebnik, no. 7-8 (1927), p. 226.

46. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 35 (August 25, 1928), p. 7.

47. Vtoraia stupen' sovetskoi trudovoi shkoly (Moscow, 1929), p. 180.

48. See information on a Conference on the Project Method, December 17-19, 1930, in "Detskaia konferentsiia po metodu proektov," Na putiakh, no. 1 (January, 1931), pp. 50-52 and on the Second Republic Conference on the Project Method, April 9-14, 1931, in L. Raskin, "Voprosy teorii i praktika metoda proektov," Na putiakh, no. 5 (May, 1931), pp. 25-34.

49. Sistema narodnogo obrazovaniia, p. 33.

50. Russkii iazyk v sovetskoi shkole [henceforth Russkii iazyk], no. 4 (1931), p. 181.

51. "O metodakh raboty v shkole," Na putiakh, no. 7-8 (July-August, 1931), pp. 47-59, 58.

52. Vseobshchee obiazatel'noe obuchenie, p. 86; S. Shatskii, "O liqvidatsii vtorogodnichestva," Na putiakh, no. 5 (May, 1931), p. 11. Figures provided by Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR v tsifrakh, p. 26, are lower especially for 1930/31.

53. N. Krupskaia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 5 (Moscow, 1959), pp. 267-268.

54. "Soveshchaniia Metodbiuro GUS," Na putiakh, no.1 (January, 1930), p. 54.

55. N. Krupskaia, "Detskoe samoupravlenie v shkole," Na putiakh, no. 10 (October, 1930), p. 21; N. Krupskaia, "Samoupravlenie v shkole," Na putiakh, no. 4 (April, 1931), pp. 25-28; Na putiakh, no. 7-8 (July-August, 1931), pp. 15-16.

56. N. Krupskaia, "Obshchestvo pedagogov-marksistov," Vestnik kommunisticheskoi akademii, no. 1 (January, 1931), p. 39.

57. See information based on archival materials in the Central Party Archive in Z. I. Ravkin, "V bor'be za leninskii stil' raboty Narkomprosa," Narodnoe obrazovanie, no. 2 (February, 1964), p. 48.

58. See L. Skatkin, "K voprosu o metode proektov," Na putiakh, no. 8-9 (August-September, 1930), p. 57; R. Mikel'son, "Pervye shagi politekhnizma v ShKM," Na putiakh, no. 7-8 (July-August, 1931), p. 46; R. Lemberg, "Znaniia v proektakh nachal'noi shkoly," Na putiakh, no. 2 (February, 1931), pp. 40, 50.

59. Krupskaia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 4 (Moscow, 1959), pp. 467-471, 484.

60. Biulleten' NKP, no. 10 (March 31, 1930), p. 49; Biulleten' NKP, no. 21 (July 20, 1930), p. 36; Russkii iazyk, no. 5 (1931), p. 12.

61. Krupskaia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 4 (Moscow, 1959), p. 495; first published in Iunyi kommunist, no. 13 (1931). See also similar concerns expressed in Izvestiia, September 11, reprinted in Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1958), pp. 542-543.

62. Krupskaia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 4 (Moscow, 1959), p. 528; first published in Na putiakh, no. 8 (1932).

63. See her article written for Vestnik Kommunisticheskoi Akademii in October 1931 but never published until 1959, and then with some deletions, in Sovetskaia pedagogika, no. 3 (March, 1959), pp. 108-112. See also her remarks not published at the time that the new program for social studies, which she reviewed in November, 1931, represented a retreat to the old academic school: Krupskaia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 10 (Moscow, 1962), p. 390.

64. Biulleten' NKP, no. 39 (September 25, 1931), pp. 3-4, 8.

65. Biulleten' NKP, no. 52 (December 1, 1931), pp. 4-5.

66. K. Shubin, "O nekotorykh itogakh realizatsii postanovleniia TsK o shkole," Na putiakh, no. 4 (April, 1932), p. 26.

67. See the complaints and observations to this effect in K. Shubin, "O nekotorykh itogakh," p. 26; V. K., "Realizatsiia reshenii TsK VKP(b) o nachal'noi i srednei shkole," Kommunisticheskoe prosveshchenie, no. 23 (December 15, 1931), p. 47; I. D. Danilov, "Teni proshlogo," Kommunisticheskoe prosveshchenie, no. 1 (January 25, 1932), pp. 70-73; N. Vinogradskii, "Leningradskii oblast' v bor'be za realizatsiiu resheniia TsK VKP(b) ot 25/VIII 1932 g. o shkole," Kommunisticheskoe prosveshchenie, no. 1 (1933), pp. 95-96, 98; I. Nikiforov, "O realizatsii postanovleniia TsK o shkole v TsChO," Kommunisticheskoe prosveshchenie, no. 1 (1933), p. 102; Biulleten' NKP, no. 47 (November 5, 1931), p. 16; N. Sergievskaia, "Aktivizatsiia metodov prepodavaniia," Metodika politekhnicheskoi shkoly, no. 7 (1932), p. 28; V. Litvinov, "Vokrug novykh programm," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 3 (March, 1932), p. 82. The Central Committee decision gave heart to teachers who wanted more systematic instruction in their respective disciplines: See Russkii iazyk, no. 8 (1931), p. 107 and Fizika, khimiia, matematika, tekhnika v sovetskoi shkole, no. 8 (1932), pp. 19-20.

68. A. Shumskii, "Reshenie TsK VKP(b) v deistvii," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 12 (December, 1931), pp. 49-53. I cannot locate Krupskaya's speech; as far as I know, it remains unpublished.

69. Kommunisticheskoe prosveshchenie, no. 1 (January, 25, 1932), pp. 68-69; Kommunisticheskoe prosveshchenie, no. 2 (February 5, 1932), pp. 63-68, especially 63-64.

70. Narkompros made complaints to this effect in Ezhnedel'nik NKP, no. 20-21 (May 18, 1928), p. 22 and no. 51 (December 10, 1928), p. 2.

71. Statisticheskii sbornik po narodnomu prosveshcheniiu RSFSR 1926 g. (M, 1927), pp. 82-83, 94-95, 108-109, 120-121, 124-125; Prosveshchenie v RSFSR v 1926/27 uchebnomu godu (Moscow, 1928), pp. 122-123.

72. Sostoianie i perspektivy razvitiia narodnogo obrazovaniia v Moskve i moskovskoi gubernii (materialy k dokladu zav. MONO, t. Aleksinskogo na IV plenume MK VKP(b) 25 iiunia 1928 goda) (M, 1928), p. 17.

73. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR v osnovnykh pokazateliakh; statisticheskii sbornik (1927/28-1930/31 gg., so vkliucheniem nekotorykh dannykh za 1931/1932 g.) (Moscow-Leningrad, 1932), p. 80.

74. Zhurnalist, no. 3 (1922), p. 38. See several issues of Pravda: December 2, 1922, p. 3; January 14, p. 5; January 17, p. 5.

75. Soviet sources blamed the well-to-do peasants, kulaks, for attacks on teachers. The label kulak, however, was attached to anyone opposed to collectivization. See comments at the All-Union Congress of Workers of Enlightenment in "Vsesoiuznyi s"ezd rabotnikov prosveshcheniia," Na putiakh, no. 3 (March, 1929), pp. 43-47; remarks by Bubnov at the Sixteenth Party Congress, 1930, in XVI s"ezd, p. 185; and information in T. B. Bibanov, "Obshchestvenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost' uchitel'stva v period sotsialisticheskogo stroitel'stva (1925-1936)," Sov. ped., no. 7 (July, 1977), p. 110.

76. "Vsesoiuznyi s"ezd rabotnikov prosveshcheniia SSSR," Na putiakh, no. 3 (March, 1929), p. 46.

77. N. Krupskaia, Pedagogicheskie sochineniia, Vol. 11 (Moscow, 1963), pp. 732-733, 736, 740, 743; Metodicheskie pis'ma. Pis'moe pervoe, p. 19; Russkii iazyk, no. 1 (1930), p. 159; Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 3 (March, 1929), p. 21.

78. Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 3 (March, 1929), pp. 22-24.

79. Ibid., no. 5 (May, 1929), p. 119.

80. Ibid., no. 3 (March, 1929), p. 21.

81. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR v osnovnykh pokazateliakh, p. 28.

82. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR; statisticheskii sbornik, p. 177.

83. Massovoe prosveshchenie v SSSR k 15-letiiu oktiabria. Part 1 (Moscow-Leningrad, 1932), p. 68.

84. B. Gur'ianov, "Po stantsam Dona," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 7 (July, 1926), p. 73.

85. Avtukhov, Programmy, p. 39; Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 1 (January, 1926), p. 20.

86. S. Shumov, "O chem pishet narodnyi uchitel'," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 4 (April, 1925), p. 88; Rabotnik prosveshcheniia, no. 1 (January, 1926), p. 28.

87. See the report in Novye formy i metody prosvetitel'noi raboty; sbornik (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), p. 73. The report faulted kulak influence over the poor.

88. On September 9, 1921 the Central Committee issued a circular instructing party organs to refrain from heretofore frequent transfers of communists working in the field of education (NO, p. 445). The Central Committee also sent a letter to all local party organizations instructing them to cease treating teachers as saboteurs (NO, p. 444). Problems continued. Educational literature of the 1920s featured a steady stream of complaints. On pay, see Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 25 (June 25, 1926), pp. 1-2; no. 3-4 (January 18, 1929), p. 9; no. 26b (June 30, 1929), p. 10; Biulleten' NKP, no. 23 (August 10, 1930), p. 10; Za vseobshchee obuchenie no. 2 (1930), p. 20. For transfers and dismissals, see issues of Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 25 (June 19, 1925), p. 11; no. 31 (August 6, 1926), p. 3; Biulleten' NKP, no. 10 (April 1, 1931), p. 8. Lunacharsky was especially concerned. See his comments in Nar. pros., no. 7-8 (July-August, 1925), pp. 13-14 and no. 11 (November, 1926), p. 19. His successor was also concerned. See Bubnov's remarks at the Sixteenth Party Congress, June-July, 1930, in XVI s"ezd, p.185. See also the resolution of the Soviet of People's Commissars, August 3, 1930, in NO, pp. 457-458. Here Sovnarkom admitted that the courts had failed to protect teachers (p. 457).

89. Prava uchashchikhsia i uchashchikh (Moscow, 1925), p. 243.

90. Ezhnedel'nik NKP, no. 42 (October 12, 1928), pp. 12-13; Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 7 (February 8, 1929), p. 7; Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 42 (October 1, 1928), pp. 12-13; Za vseobshchee obuchenie, no. 2 (1930), pp. 19-20.

91. See such incidents reported in Ezhnedel'nik NKP, no. 52 (December 14, 1928), p. 38 and Za vseobshchee obuchenie, no. 2 (1930), p. 19.

92. See the circular of December 31, 1929 in Zakonodatel'stvo o trude rabotnikov prosveshcheniia (Moscow, 1931), p. 170.

93. Massovoe prosveshchenie v SSSR, p. 70.

94. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v SSSR 1926-27 uchebnyi god (Moscow, 1929), pp. 41-44; Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 25 (June 19, 1925), p. 11; Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 9 (September, 1927), p. 115; Za vseobshchee obuchenie, no. 2 (1930), p. 20; Russkii iazyk, no. 4 (1931), p. 196.

95. I. Zakolodkin, "Kul'turnye nozhnitsy," Nar. pros., no. 10 (October, 1928), p. 100.

96. Sostoianie i perspektivy, p. 17.

97. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v SSSR 1926-1927 uchebnyi god, pp. 37-40.

98. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 30 (July 20, 1928), p. 12; Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 14 (April 4, 1925), p. 3.

99. See figures for 1926 on dual shifts in Zakolodkin, "Kul'turnye nozhnitsy," pp. 96-97 and for 1927/28 and 1930/31 in Massovoe prosveshchenie v SSSR, p. 78. In 1930/31 over 50 percent of the urban schools operated in at least two shifts.

100. Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 5 (1929), p. 119.

101. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 19 (May 8, 1925), pp. 10-11; Prosveshchenie v RSFSR v 1926/27 uchebnomu godu, p. XVI; Narodnoe prosveshchenie v SSSR 1926-1927 uchebnyi god, pp. 23-26; Sostoianie i perspektivy, p. 13; Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 20-21 (May 18, 1928), p. 21.

102. Avtukhov, Programmy, p. 90.

103. See the Polytechnical Congress (August, 1930) for stinging criticism of such agencies as the Supreme Economic Council and Commissariat of Agriculture, as reported in Biulleten' NKP, no. 26 (September 20, 1930) and Russkii iazyk, no. 5 (1930). Similar criticism is in Za vseobshchee obuchenie, no. 8 (1931), p. 14; Na putiakh, no. 7-8 (July-August, 1931), p. 19; R. Mikel'son, "Pervye shagi," p. 45; "O metodakh raboty v shkole," Na putiakh, no. 7-8 (July-August, 1931), p. 56; A. Kirienko, "Soveshchanie po voprosam stroitel'stva fabrichno-zavodskoi semiletki," Na putiakh, no. 7-8 (July-August, 1928), p. 87.

104. Narodnyi uchitel', no. 12 (December, 1931), p. 161.

105. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 20-21 (May 18, 1928), p. 26 and no. 27 (June 29, 1928), p. 6 and no. 46 (November 15, 1929); Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 5 (May, 1929), p. 115.

106. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 30 (July 20, 1928), p. 12.

107. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 20-21 (May 18, 1928), p. 23 and no. 14 (April 4, 1925), p. 13; Biulleten' NKP, no. 3 (January 25, 1930), p. 14.

108. Korolev, Sovetskaia shkola, p. 104. See also statistical information in Statisticheskii ezhegodnik; sostoianie narodnogo obrazovaniia v SSSR (bez avtonomykh respublik) za 1924/25 uchebnyi god (Moscow, 1926), p. XCVII; V. A. Popov, Shkoly sotsial'nogo vospitaniia; g. Moskvy i Moskovskoi gubernii. Statisticheskii obzor (Moscow, 1930), p. 91; Statisticheskii sbornik, pp. 76-77, 88-89, 102-103, 114-115, 122-124.

109. Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR v osnovnykh pokazateliakh, p. 80.

110. Ezhenedel'nik NKP reported on these problems: no. 6 (February 11, 1927), pp. 4-5; no. 8 (March 5, 1926), p. 34; no. 35 (August 25, 1928), p. 14.

111. Nar. pros., no. 2 (February, 1925), pp. 187-188 and Voprosy shkoly II stupeni, p. 147. See also issues of Inostrannyi iazyk v sovetskoi shkole; Obshchestvovedenie v sovetskoi shkole and of Russkii iazyk v sovetskoi shkole. The latter carried particularly valuable reports in no. 2 (1929), pp. 134-135 and in no. 4 (1931), pp. 154-155, 192.

112. Nar. pros., no. 2 (February, 1925), pp. 187-188.

113. Uchitel'stvo na novykh putiakh; sbornik statei, dokladov i materialov Vsesoiuznogo s"ezda uchitelei (Leningrad, 1925), pp. 176-177.

114. Nar., pros., no. 2 (1925) p. 280.

115. Vestnik prosveshcheniia, no. 5 (May, 1929), p. 118.

116. Ezhenedel'nik NKP, no. 5-6 (February 15, 1927), p. 12 and no. 13-14 (April 26, 1927), pp. 3-4.

117. These summaries are in S. Shumov, "O chem pishet narodnyi uchitel'," p. 88; N. Leskin, "Sviaz' navykov s kompleksom," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 2 (February, 1926), pp. 28-32; and Rabotnik prosveshcheniia, no. 1 (January, 1926), p. 28.

118. E. Gaidovskaia, "Pervye shagi," Narodnyi uchitel', no. 7 (July, 1926), pp. 76-78.

119. "Vsesoiuznyi s"ezd rabotnikov prosveshcheniia SSSR," Na putiakh, no. 3 (March, 1929), p. 46; Za vseobshchee obuchenie, no. 2 (1930), p. 20.

120. Biulleten' NKP, no. 18 (March 25, 1932), p. 13.