

Radio Free Europe/ Munich
Office of the Political Advisor
Background Information USSR

14 May 1959

TRADE UNIONISM IN RUSSIA

- I. Trade Unionism in Russia
(The Economist, April 25, 1959) p. 1
- II. Communist Attitudes to Trade Unions p. 4

The Economist
April 25, 1959

Some 1,300 delegates who, on March 23rd, gathered in the Kremlin for the twelfth congress of trade unions could boast that they represented almost the whole of the Soviet urban labor force. There are now nearly 53 million trade unionists in the Soviet Union out of a total number of 55 million employees. The unions are mighty in numbers. But are they acquiring an importance in Soviet society that corresponds more closely to their numerical strength or are they remaining, as in Stalin's time, merely an auxiliary branch of the administration? Neither the debates of the congress nor the lengthy report of Mr. V.V. Grishin, chairman of the All-Union Council of trade unions, provided a clear answer to these questions.

Questions about the changing role of the unions in a changing society began to be asked last May after the introduction of two measures aimed at instilling some life into the practically moribund local union organizations. Through these reforms the powers of the factory or shop committees - the lowest branches of trade unions - in the management of their enterprises were greatly increased, at least nominally. The committees are now supposed to have more say not only in the production plan and its fulfilment, but also in the running of the firm and the computation of wages. Officially, their agreement is needed for the introduction of overtime, the sacking of an employee, the distribution of bonuses, or the allocation of housing accommodation.

The reforms are in keeping with the economic decentralization introduced by Mr. Khrushchev. As long as direct control from Moscow was the rule, local initiative was relatively unimportant. But the complexity of a highly diversified modern economy, which drove the government to divide the country into economic areas with their own regional councils, compelled it at the same time to make greater efforts to harness local initiative. The granting of increased powers to union branches was thus dictated not by abstract considerations of democracy but by the search for greater efficiency in a less centralized framework. Naturally, too much importance should not be attached to paper changes alone. Factory committees existed as relics of the revolution, even under Stalin; but their function, like that of the whole trade union movement, was turned inside out.

After the revolution the membership of the unions was only just over a million; now it is nearly 53 million. But numbers are not all. In Stalin's time, the unions were used as mere tools in the drive for higher production. When the time came to restore the country's economy after the ravages of war and civil war, the managers had to be given increased power as well as responsibility. The military principle of unified command was applied to the management of industry, and in the period of rapid industrialization, when millions of raw peasants flocked into the towns, it was applied with military discipline. In principle, the party and trade union representatives in the factory could act as a check on the manager. In practice, they could not.

With production and wages levels dictated strictly from above by the planners, management and trade unions worked together to apply the disciplines and the incentives needed to extract increased output from a raw labor force. The margins were so narrow that the system left no scope for collective bargaining. Thus, on one hand, the unions were the allies of management, advertising labor "norms" and promoting "emulation" among workers. On the other they acted as welfare societies, watching over safety regulations, distributing the funds of social insurance and, during the period of the great migrations, recruiting rural labor and helping in its assimilation.

The peculiar functions of the unions are the outcome of political decisions and not of any structural atrophy. The unions are organized vertically by trade, and since 1948, they have also horizontal links through town, regional and provincial councils. The ladder runs from the shop and factory committee up to the All-Union Council. In theory "all trade union bodies from bottom to top are elected by the members...and are accountable to them." In practice, as in the party, the chain of command runs only downward. Thus, to obtain a measure of greater democracy, what is required is not a change in the statutes but a change in their application, causing the elected members to represent the views of their electors and to defend them at all levels: in the factories, in the regional economic councils and, at the very top, in the central planning board.

The idea that such a revolutionary change might happen suddenly can be ruled out. But steps in this direction are not unlikely, because of changes which have taken place since Stalin's day. In the last few years real wages have gone up substantially. Technological change and the growth of the national income have given the planners more room for manoeuvre. The government has been able to reduce the hours of labor; and a 35 hour working week is the official aim for the late nineteen sixties.

But the biggest change has probably been in the human element. Gone are the days of unlettered peasants come to town. For some time now, most the new recruits to the labor force have first completed seven years at school; many workers of urban origin have been at school for ten years or even more. The spreading of education, and consequently of skill, has compelled the authorities to level off the highly differentiated scale of wage-norms, because the proportion of workers reaching the higher brackets was so large as to make the system too costly. Sporadic efforts to resurrect Stakhanovism have not been successful. Above all, the social and educational gap between workers and management has narrowed considerably. Conditions may have seemed ripe for a partial revival of traditional trade union activity.

A social transformation on this scale will not take place smoothly or at one go. Though wage differentials have somewhat decreased, the slogan of equality of pay - the once famous uravnilovka - remains heretical, and piece rates are still the rule. And yet mechanical advance and the introduction of automation to give strength to the inarticulate pressure for weekly wages not based on piece rates.

In a one-party dictatorship, and when the state is the universal owner, the trade unions cannot perform the classical trade union function of representing their members' interests against the owners' interests. Communists will argue that this dilemma will disappear together with the "withering away of the state". In the meantime, the unions have to strike a balance in their dual allegiance. Their twelfth congress has confirmed that the trade union bosses have no intention of giving in easily to any pressures for greater equality or democracy. At the same time, they continue to deplore the workers' failure to take a sufficient interest in the production conferences of the factories or the union activities of their branch; and there are signs that the search for labor cooperation is gradually inducing them to concede to labor a slightly greater say in union affairs. Planners, with wider margins to play with, may allow trade unions a limited bargaining power. The unions may be given some real say in management, the elaboration of plans and the distribution of resources. The process will not go through without friction, but it is worth watching for its significance for the future of Soviet society.

COMMUNIST ATTITUDE TO TRADE UNIONS

"The Soviet trade unions are a school of management and administration, a school of Communism. They conduct many-sided organisational and educational work among the workers and mobilise them for the fulfilment of tasks of Communist construction." (Article on "The Indestructible Unity of the Party and the People," Pravda, February 25, 1958.)

Soviet trade union practice derives from the fact that in the Soviet Union the State is, with few exceptions, the sole employer of labour (i.e., it is the management); that there is only one Party in the Soviet Union, the Communist Party; and that this Party provides the personnel and policy of both the Government and the leadership of the trade unions. The Government is the transmission belt for Party policy to State industrial organs and the trade unions are the transmission belt for Party policy to the workers. This means that Soviet trade unions do not stand as an independent body between the employer and the employed as they do outside the Communist world.

This booklet gives facts about Soviet trade unions, taken largely from Soviet sources: first, what is relevant in Communist theory and what structure has been built up to give this theory form; second, what this means in practice and how it has affected the workers; and last, present-day trends.

I. COMMUNIST ATTITUDE TO TRADE UNIONS

The Communist attitude towards trade unions varies according to whether the trade unions are inside or outside the Communist world.

Before they seize power, Communists expect trade union members to assist them in their own sphere, to weaken and subsequently to overthrow the government, because all governments not Communist are alleged by the Communists to be against the worker.

Outside the Communist World: Referring to pre-Communist days in the Soviet Union, Lozovsky (old Bolshevik, in 1921 Secretary of the Trade Union International, an authority on Soviet Trade unions, and during the war head of the Soviet Information Bureau), stated:*

"...Two different outlooks--reformism and revolutionary Marxism--came into conflict. The struggle centered around the question whether to become adapted to the autocracy or whether to utilise the concessions wrested from it for overthrowing the rule of the Tsar and the landowners; whether the trade unions should remain neutral with regard to the political struggle of the working class

* A list of publications mentioned in the text is given in the Bibliography.

concerning themselves only with wage issues and labor conditions, etc.: or whether, in addition to this, they should prepare the masses jointly with the Party for the overthrow of Tsarism; whether the trade unions should collaborate with the capitalists and settle all conflicts between labor and capital only by peaceful means; or whether, as militant organisations of the working class, they should always prepare their members and the masses of workers for strikes in order to achieve the satisfaction of their demands by means of direct mass action." (Handbook on the Soviet Trade Unions, Moscow, 1937, p.118)

The Communist struggle for power was declared the main issue, the workers' working conditions of secondary importance. Lozovsky continues:

"The Bolsheviks, in the words of Lenin, said: reforms are but a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle." (ibid, p. 118)

This view holds good today. Working through the camouflaged medium of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), a Communist controlled international front organisation, and through Party members of indigenous trade unions, Communism pursues its aim for the weakening and eventual overthrow of non-Communist governments.

For instance, a resolution adopted by the meeting of the Executive Bureau and Trade Departments of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Prague advocated tactics of "struggle":

"The resolution further demands that...attempts of employers, monopolies and reactionary Governments who...are trying to drive the workers along the road of class co-operation by confusing them and diverting them from the indispensable struggle against capitalist exploitation and its consequences be immediately and systematically condemned."

(Czech News Agency (CTK), December 8, 1955.)

The editorial in the WFTU journal, World Trade Union Movement, (No. 1, January, 1956), foreshadowed a more active policy in the "colonial and dependent countries":

"In Africa, Latin America and the Near and Middle East, the peoples who have suffered under the domination of foreign capital for so many years are straining at the leash, demanding with ever greater determination that their oppressors get off their backs and so enable them to take their destiny into their own hands. In this historical process the workers and their trade unions are playing an ever more important role..."

Inside the Soviet Union: Once power is achieved a very different relationship exists, Communist expect the trade unions to be on the side of the State.

Lozovsky stated:

"Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the trade unions are transformed from organs of struggle of the sellers of labor power against the capitalist class into an apparatus of the ruling class. The tasks of the trade unions lie mainly in the spheres of organisation, economics and education..."

"Being a school of Communism as well as the connecting link between the most backward masses of the proletariat, which have not yet freed themselves entirely from the influence of the old, narrow craft and professional mentality, and its vanguard--the Communist Party--the trade unions must educate, organize these masses culturally, politically, administratively, must raise them to the level of Communism, prepare them for the role of builders of the Communist system, which is being created by the Soviet State...." (op. cit., p. 120).

The role of trade unions as an independent organization standing between the employer (in the Soviet Union, the State) and the employee does not therefore exist in the Soviet Union.

As Zinoviev asked: "Why and from whom do you need independence? From your own Government?" (Isaac Deutscher, Soviet Trade Unions. New York, 1950, p.21)

Lozovsky posed the same question, and, in answering it, went one further by stating that for the unions to wage a struggle against a Communist State would be "both senseless and criminal." (op. cit., p. 130)

Pinpointing the different role assigned by Communists to trade unions in Communist countries and elsewhere, Soviet Trade Unions (published by the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy in London, 1958) reveals that Party policy may not be questioned, only the failure of individuals to carry out that policy. The booklet (p. 33) states:

"Why are there never strikes in the USSR?...all who are a bit familiar with the history of the labor movement in Russia can in no way reproach the Russian working class for not knowing how to avail itself of such a pointed weapon of class struggle as a strike.

"Apparently, the point here is not the ability, but something else, especially if one takes into consideration the fact that strikes are not forbidden by law in the USSR.

"What, then, is the reason?

"First...conflicts between the worker and the management in the Soviet Union do not have a class basis; they owe their appearance to the unsuitability of one or another executive. In the second place, the Soviet State itself

safeguards the interests of the working people and in any dispute will support any justified complaint of the workers against a recalcitrant manager. In the third place, these conflicts are effectively settled by the trade union bodies to the satisfaction of the workers.

"Thus, there is no reason or need for the Soviet working people to resort to strikes as a weapon."

II. THE SUBORDINATION OF SOVIET TRADE UNIONS TO PARTY CONTROL

Soviet trade unions and Soviet trade unionists did not abandon the workers to State and Party control and direction without a struggle.

Overthrow of Early Opposition 1917-32

Rivalry between two opposing points of view about Soviet trade unions soon came to the fore after the 1917 revolution:

- (a) the view held by Trotsky and Bukharin that under Communism, trade unions should become complete organs of the State;
- (b) the view of the Workers' Opposition (led by Schlyapnikov) that the unions should take over all the economic organs of the State.

The argument was resolved in favor of Party direction and the opposition was purged, but not finally until 1929.

The first step was taken at the 10th Party Congress in 1921, which adopted the resolution describing the trade unions as "schools of Communism" and reasserted Party control over them. Recognizing a likely cause for friction and disagreement in the dual role of trade unions as defenders of the workers' interests and sharers in State power, Lenin held that the Communist Party should be "the higher authority" which would settle any such differences at once. (Lenin, Works, Vol. 33, p.168)

Stalin's elaboration on the idea of Party direction of trade unions in 1926 gave the relationship of the Party to the trade unions a definition it has had ever since. Defining "the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat" as consisting of "a mechanism" with "transmission belts," "lever," and a "directing force" (the Party), he said that first among the transmission belts were the trade unions, which although "non-Party organizations" themselves "connect the masses of the workers with the vanguard of the working class," (i.e., the Communist Party). He then summarily defined the unions as "mass organizations of the proletariat, linking the Party with the class primarily in the sphere of production" (Stalin, Problems of Leninism, Moscow, 1953, pp. 164-167). That is, trade unions are conveyors of Party orders to the workers.

Opposition, voiced by the trade union leader, Tomskey (at the 8th Trade Union Congress in 1928) was eventually silenced. The 16th Party Conference in 1929 supported Stalin's policy and resolved:

"Bukharin, Rykov and Tomskey are most dangerously opposing the unions to the Party; they aim in fact to weaken Party leadership of the union movement, they hush up defects in union movement, they hush up defects in union work, they defend trade unionist trends and manifestations of bureaucratic ossification in part of the trade union apparatus." (Party Resolutions,* Vol. 2, p. 554)

To ensure that the unions now submitted to the drive for industrialisation, they were not purged under union direction but under the Party's Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate:

"The new (trade union) leadership, headed by Comrade Shvernik proceeded...energetically to reconstruct the unions and root out remnants of the Right-wing opportunist deviation in theory and in practice, to purge the union apparatus of alien persons, bureaucrats and degenerates, and to promote new cadres." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 1st Edition, Vol. 47, p. 422)

Thus by the 16th Party Congress in 1930, Stalin was able clearly to define his policy for the unions as being to "turn to production"; Socialist competition (forms of rivalry between workmates for increased output, tied to financial reward) and shock brigades were to become the "basis of all their production activity"; the "centre of gravity" was to be transferred to the "lowest primary links--the shock brigade, the group, shift, shop enterprise." Party organs were to give "political content" to educative and cultural work; to "improve and strengthen their concrete direction of union organisations." (Party Resolutions, Vol. 3, pp. 64-73.)

By the end of the first Five-Year Plan this had been done. Kaganovich (Stalin's strong man on the Union Presidium) told the 9th Trade Union Congress in 1932 that the old leaders,

"...opposing...the workers' interests to the interests of Socialist industry, and the unions' defensive functions to their production work, they either kept quiet about the unions' role as a school of Communism, or interpreted it...one-sidedly as a school of association, a school in defence of one's interests..." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 1st Edition, Vol. 47, p. 422).

Unions as part of State structure 1933-37

With the opposition routed and Party control established, the incorporation of the unions into the State apparatus

* Full title: The Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the Resolutions and Decision of the Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, 1898-1954. 7th edition, 3 volumes, State Publishing House of Political Literature, Moscow, 1954.

(statification) was completed. This was so successful that Party speakers had sometimes to remind the unions of their duties towards the workers. The subservience of the unions to Party dictatorship was reflected in the purging of union leadership along with the political purges of 1936-38.

"Statification" of the Unions: The trade unions now took over from Government bodies the following functions:

- (i) by decree of June, 1933, (USSR Laws, 1933, 40: 238, Article 1) the functions of the People's Commissariat of Labour (NKT) and all its organs, which were merged with those of the trade union organs at all levels. These were the administration of State social insurance; observance of labour legislation; labour protection and safety measures. (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd Edition, Vol. 35, p. 161.)
- (ii) In 1934 the factory level functions of Rabkrin (the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection); this is the main governmental organ of control and verification, operating in close conjunction with the Party Central Control Commission. (It was these organs together with the Party Control Commission which carried out the purge of trade union leadership mentioned on page 9.) (ibid, Vol. 35, p. 161.)
- (iii) the issue (1934) of "instructions rules and explanations on the application of current labour legislation...subject to confirmation or preliminary sanctions" by the USSR Government. (USSR Laws: 1934, 43: 342.)
- (iv) verifying, through the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU) and Union Central Committees, the fulfilment of Party and governmental directives on questions of production and wages and on the implementation of workers' proposals. (Party Resolutions, Vol. 3, pp. 230f.)

The Workers' Interests: As trade union responsibilities to the State increased, so their responsibility to the workers receded. Their value as "transmission belts," however, demanded that they should not be considered obsolete by the workers. In May, 1935, Stalin condemned the unions for their undemocratic election procedure (lists of candidates "forced through against the workers' wishes,") and stated that "the average worker realised and felt the unions' bad work" and questioned whether "we need unions at all" and, because of lack of political consciousness, suggested "maybe the unions are no longer any use." Stalin condemned "the duplicating" by unions of "the work of the economic agencies, whereas their chief task should lie in devoting full attention to the cultural and welfare needs of the masses." (Pravda, December 11, 1935)

But with the "statification" of the unions the pressure for plan fulfilment was stronger than the ability to defend the workers' interests, for the same charges of neglect were repeated

by Party organs, the unions and a plenum of the AUCCTU in 1937, in spite of the setting up in 1935 of a Committee under Kaganovich to study and improve the situation.

Second Purge of Trade Unions: Along with the political purges of 1936-38 (during which Stalin consolidated his hold over the Party and thus the subjugation of all organs of power to himself) the unions were also purged.

At the 18th Party Congress in March, 1939, the Chairman of the AUCCTU, Shvernik, reported that union membership at factory level had changed to the extent of 70-80 per cent, and in the Central Committee to 96 per cent. (Deutscher, Soviet Trade Unions, New York, 1950, p. 116).

Union subordination to the Party had by then been formally written into the union statute law. The September, 1938 plenum of the AUCCTU decreed:

"Every union in our country exercises its activities under the leadership of the Communist Party, the only proven leader and guide of all working people of the USSR in their struggle for the consolidation and perfection of the Socialist order." (Trud, September 15, 1938.)

Lozovsky (op. cit., p. 121), after posing the question how the Party exercised its leadership in the trade unions, answered:

"It does so through the medium of Communists working in trade union bodies. Party members in trade union committees, of factories and institutions, in presidiums of regional, territorial, republican and central committees of trade unions, in the AUCCTU, constitute Party groups that are subordinate to the respective Party organisations. Thus, for example, the Party group in the factory trade union committee is subordinate to the factory Party committee."

This position was authoritatively restated in 1957. A resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU of December 17, 1957, On the Work of Soviet Trade Unions postulated:

"Bearing in mind that the Party exercises its influence on the work of trade union organisations through Communists who are members of trade unions, the plenary meeting instructs Party committees to develop the sense of responsibility of all Party members for work in trade unions, and to improve the practical work of the Party groups which have been set up in elected trade union bodies in accordance with the Statute of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union). In participating actively in the work of trade unions, the Communists should strive in every way to improve their work and thus increase the part they play in the accomplishment of economic and political tasks." (Pravda, December 19, 1957.)

Trade Union Practice under Party Guidance.

The 18th Party Congress of 1939 lumped the unions together with "Party, Soviet and economic organizations." From all of them was demanded "...concentration--on the daily factual verification of the performance of the tasks set by the Party and Government"; the "development of Socialist competition and the Stakhanovite movement...the securing...of firm labor discipline and high labor productivity." (Party Resolutions, Vol. 3, p. 364). Accordingly the unions "reinforced their attention to questions of organization of labor, production and wages, of strengthening labor discipline, and of struggling against shortcomings in production." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd edition, Vol. 35, p. 161.)

As Lozovsky had stated:

"The Soviets and the trade unions have one and the same goal, but the functions of each of these organizations and their methods vary." (op.cit., p. 130.)

During the 1941-45 war the unions "subordinated all their activity to the interests of the front and the task of defeating the enemy". (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd edition, Vol. 35, p. 161.)

Between 1945 and 1953, during the reconstruction of the Soviet Union, pronouncements were made each year of trade union activity. For instance in 1946, a plenum of the AUCCTU decreed that "the chief task of the unions" should be the "organization of the multi-million masses of workers, engineers, technicians and employees for the struggle to fulfil and overfulfil the 1946-50 Plan...on the basis of Socialist competition". (The Trade Union Workers' Handbook, Moscow, 1948, p. 15.)

The 10th Trade Union Congress in 1949 made an almost identical statement (Trud, May 11, 1949). In 1951 a special All-Union Conference discussed methods as to how the unions could best supervise this work (Izvestia, August 22, 1951), and Trud, organ of Soviet trade unions, told its readers on August 18, 1952:

"The essential duty of the economic and trade union executives is to see to it that every worker and employee labors productively all the 480 minutes of his working day...It is necessary to educate the masses in the spirit of intolerance even to the slightest violations of the production/schedules...It is necessary to expose the hack-workers, the slovenly workers, the people who have lost the feeling of responsibility for the job entrusted to them".

During the period of the "thaw" following Stalin's death in 1953, there was a temporary swing in favor of unions' taking up, in addition to encouragement of labor productivity, their other functions of looking after the workers' interests. Trud declared on June 5, 1953, that economic administrators were used to abusing their authority, ignoring labor legislation and depriving workers of their bonuses and forcing them to work overtime.

By 1954, the pendulum had swung back. Shvernik, chairman of the AUCCTU, stated at the 11th Trade Union Congress:

"The responsibility of mobilizing the efforts of all workers and employees in the fight to implement the great plan of building Communism in our country is entrusted to the Soviet trade unions...I must state that trade unions, and in the first place the AUCCTU, instead of leading the growing, creative activity of the masses, have during recent years slackened off their leadership of Socialist competition...The main task of trade unions must become the still more extensive development of Socialist competition...for the fulfilment and over-fulfilment of production plans". (Pravda, June 8, 1954.)

After the 20th Party Congress in 1956 the unions were once again reminded of their duties towards the workers. Karasev, a Candidate Member of the Party Central Committee, in his pamphlet on the Party plenums of December, 1956, and February, 1957, stated:

"Let the trade unions struggle more actively not only for the fulfilment of production plans, but also for the improvement of the cultural and welfare conditions of the working people". (The Story of the December and February Plenums of the CC CPSU, Moscow, 1957, p.41.)

But any idea that unions are hampered in this work by their constitutional position is quickly quashed, the blame being placed on individuals:

"In our trade union organizations there are still to be found inert workers with no initiative who have come to terms with various defects in the conditions of labor and life and do not raise their voices against those who are personally to blame for these defects. 'But what can we do' these workers usually say in self-justification, 'if the trade unions have few rights?' It need hardly be said how harmful and baseless such arguments are". (Soviet Trade Unions [organ of the AUCCTU] Moscow, 1956, No. 4, p. 51.)

The position therefore remains that the Party holds the reins.

The structure built up to secure and maintain control is now examined. That the worker equally with the manager is culpable for not carrying out Party policy (as it affects him) is often glossed over in Soviet statements about trade unions.

III. TRADE UNION STRUCTURE AND MACHINERY

The pattern of Soviet trade union organization depends on the principle of democratic centralism; trade unions are built up on the "production" principle, i.e., one union for one industry. Their structure for the past 40 years is described here.

It involves trade union machinery at every level of Government (All-Union, Republic, oblast, krai, raion, etc.) and also at every place of work. Trade union structure was particularized thus so as to ensure Party control and union ability to mobilize the workers to fulfil Government plans. When the Party decreed the reorganization of industry in 1957, trade union groupings and functions were realigned

+

to meet the needs of that reorganization.

In 1958 there were 23 trade unions in the Soviet Union under the leadership of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU), elected at a congress.

The AUCCTU has a Chairman, a Presidium, and a Secretariat which carry out the work of the Council (between the scheduled plenary sessions at intervals of not more than six months) and a number of departments and administrations to carry out its business. Each separate trade union has a similar organization: a Central Committee, elected at the trade union congress, with a chairman, secretaries and departments; in turn each trade union has a territorial organization at republic, krai, oblast, town and, or, raion levels each with similar offices and officials (as appropriate) elected at the appropriate level conference down to the primary organization, the Factory Committee, which may set up a Shop Committee and Group organizers to fulfil union tasks. Each chain in the link has statutory functions. Co-ordination between trade unions in the same "national economic area" is effected through Councils of Trade Unions, also elected on similar lines at inter-union conferences. Thus trade union leadership at the top is elected from a small élite.

The principles upon which Soviet trade union structure are built up are:

- (1) the principles of democratic centralism, which means (Trade Union Statutes of 1954⁺, Article 12):
 - (a) All union organs from bottom to top are elected by union members and are accountable to them;
 - (b) union organizations decide all questions of union work in conformity with the USSR Trade Union Statutes and the decisions of higher union organs;
 - (c) decisions of union organizations are adopted by majority vote of the union members;
 - (d) lower organs of a union are subordinate to higher organs.

The operative principle here is that which binds lower organs to accept the decisions of higher organs. Article 19, stipulates, inter alia, that trade unions must rely on "a broad aktiv" in their work. This aktiv is likely to consist of Party members (or leading workers dependent on co-operation for their material position) such as those described by Lozovsky and cited in Chapter II. It is they who ensure that the right candidates are put forward for election.

+ Published in The Trade Union Workers' Handbook, by the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, and cited throughout this chapter.

- (2) The production principle, which means that all persons working in the same enterprise belong to the same union (ibid., article 13). Typical names of trade unions are: of Workers in the Food Industry, of Higher Schools, of Scientific Establishments, etc.

In practice this machinery has afforded neither independence nor democracy.

The supreme organ of Soviet trade unions is the All-Union Congress (which elects the AUCCTU). Statutorily bound to meet every four years, the congress met only twice between 1932 and 1954, namely in 1949 and 1954. A congress was scheduled for October 27, 1958, but was postponed to await a Party Congress in January, 1959. The chairman, who directs the work in this organization, which is the "single center of the unions of the USSR, the headquarters of the Soviet trade union movement" (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd edition, Vol. 9, p. 348), has always been a Party man, with little or no experience of trade union work, and appointed at the will of the Party. Shvernik, appointed AUCCTU chairman in 1930 (to carry out the purges already mentioned on page 9) had been in trade union work for only one year previously; the present chairman, Grishin, is also a Party man. The agenda at the last congress was decided in advance by the AUCCTU. Similarly changes in statutory duties (discussed in Chapter VIII) were carried through before the 12th Congress. The composition of delegates to the congress in 1954 showed that Party and industrial élite formed the basis, e.g., 68.2 per cent were Party members; 64 per cent had higher or secondary education; 36 per cent were fulltime union officials; 30.9 per cent were leading workers (Trud, June 10, 1954). The delegates themselves (one for every 30,000 members) were elected exclusively by trade union congresses (i.e., the top level of each union organization). Soviet Trade Unions (the booklet issued by the Soviet Embassy Press Department in London, 1958), gives the proportion of Party members in unions, viz., "for every Communist Party member in the trade unions there are nine trade unionists without Party affiliation" (p. 25).

Individual trade unions have no independence. They are born and die according to how the Government particularizes the branches of industry. There were 162 unions in 1937 (Lozovsky, op.cit., p.19); in 1954 there were 43 (Trud, June 10, 1954); Khrushchev's reorganization of industry has led to their numbers being reduced to 23 from the 47 they constituted in 1957. The organ which conveys the Party decision to amalgamate or create unions is the AUCCTU.

Trade Union Central Committee Presidiums, in their turn, disband their regional organizations at will (Trade Union Worker's Handbook, Moscow, 1957, p. 436).

The councils of trade unions also suffer eclipse or birth at Party behest. For instance, the 1932 Trade Union Congress resolved that "in all its work the AUCCTU must rely directly on the Union Central Committees." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 1st Edition, Vol. 47, p. 435.) By 1937 the councils evidently disappeared, but in 1948 "on the initiative of the Party Central Committee" they were re-established because, as the Chairman of the AUCCTU explained, "some Union Central Committees had proved unable to control systematically their oblast union organs". (Pravda, October 16, 1948.)

The reorganization of industry in 1957, which led to the amalgamation of Soviet trade unions, does not alter the principle of "democratic centralism" as to control, or "the production principle." Its effect on trade union structure has been to align this with the new groupings of industry and the carrying out of operative tasks at lower levels. As Soviet Trade Unions puts it "...now each Union /Republic/ has its own AUCCTU as it were" (p. 15). But the central AUCCTU in Moscow remains the head of these separate bodies, and each separate Union Central Committee deals with the industry for which it is responsible as a whole.

IV. MEMBERS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES

Membership of Soviet trade unions is voluntary, is open to persons paid by the State, i.e., industrial workers, teachers, transport workers, etc., and, since 1956, State farm and machine tractor station (MTS) members. Excluded, therefore, are collective farmers (some 80 million with their families), co-operative workers and other self-employed people.

In 1957 there were some 47 million members, or about 94 per cent of those eligible (Pravda, January 31, 1957, and June 17, 1957). In December, 1957, membership was given as 49 million in a Central Committee resolution (Tass, December 19, 1957), and was stated to be 91.8 per cent of the total number of those employed. (Soviet Trade Unions, p. 22, London, 1958, Soviet Embassy Publication.)

The rights of a member under the 1954 Trade Union Statutes do not entitle him to question the basic principles of Soviet trade unionism but only "the improvement of trade union work" (article 2c). He cannot thus discuss the all-important question of Party dictation, nor criticize the day-to-day activity of Party organs in relation to the union.

The duties of members are exacting and far reaching (article 3)

- (a) strictly to observe State and labor discipline, to struggle against any manifestations of indiscipline at the place of work, since violation of labor discipline damages the interests of the State;
- (b) to safeguard and fortify public Socialist property, which is the sacred and inviolable basis of the Soviet system, the source of the wealth and power of the Motherland and the source of the prosperous and cultured life of all the working people;
- (c) to raise his production and business qualifications, to master the techniques of his trade and advanced methods of work;
- (d) to observe the statutes of the trade unions of the USSR and pay membership dues punctually.

To reconcile the relatively few rights with the exacting duties, substantial material advantages are given.

A member (Article 4):

- (a) receives benefits from the State social insurance funds in a larger amount than do non-members in accordance with the legislation.
- (b) enjoys priority in the distribution of passes to rest houses, sanatoria and health resorts, and also of passes for children to crèches, kindergartens and pioneer camps.
- (c) receives, when necessary, material assistance from trade union funds;
- (d) receives free legal aid, provided by the trade union organs;
- (e) has the use, as also have the members of his family, of the trade union's cultural and sports facilities on terms established by trade union organs;
- (f) has the right to membership of the mutual aid society of his trade union organization.

Even so several million workers prefer not to join the unions, for, as the then AUCCTU head, Shvernik, said at the 11th Trade Union Congress in 1954: "Workers do not join the trade unions because their organizations work badly and are not concerned with the needs and requirements of the workers and employees". (Trud, June 8, 1954.) The same holds good to-day. Trud (November 30, 1957), stated that: "On July 1, 1957, there were more than 4 million workers and employees who were not union members". Literary Gazette (October 14, 1957) commented that the apathy of union members in Moscow had reached such proportions that at the Dynamo factory a meeting called for 5 p.m. on December 10, 1957, which should have been attended by 200 members, failed to attract even a quorum.

What exactly is the system of labors and rewards which the trade unionist is bound by his statutory duties to accept? It is the system of the collective agreement.

V. COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS, WAGES, NORMS AND SOCIALIST COMPETITION

The collective agreement concluded by Soviet trade unions between the factory management and the workers is intended to ensure the fulfilment of State Plans as well as the provision of social security for the workers. In practice social welfare takes second place.

Collective Agreements

The conclusion of collective agreements between the workers and the management is a trade union function.

Collective agreements normally cover, in clauses 1 and 2, the

joint obligations of managers and workers "to fulfil and over-fulfil the State Plan for production, to develop Socialist competition and disseminate advanced experience" and to "apply wage rates confirmed by the Government and stimulate the growth of labor productivity". In clause 3, training schemes to be organized during the year are mentioned, and clause 4 deals with "State and labor discipline", defines the obligations of the trade union committee to conduct "daily explanatory and educational work directed to strengthening conscious comradely labor discipline" plus the obligations of management to acquaint the workers with the Rules of Internal Labor Order and to see that these rules are obeyed. Clause 5 lays down the management's duty to use "the enormous sums allocated by the Soviet State for further lightening labor and for the improvement of safety precautions and industrial sanitation", giving also joint responsibility to management and the unions to improve the workers' leisure amenities. Clauses 6, 7 and 8 deal with housing, welfare and cultural services respectively (Aleksandrov: Soviet Labor Law, 1954).

The use of these agreements to the workers, therefore, obviously depends on three factors:

- (a) who decides the wages;
- (b) what the system of wages is (grades, piece-rates, norms, bonus policy and Socialist competition);
- (c) the fulfilment by the management of the welfare clauses in the agreement.

Shvernik (former AUCCTU Chairman) gave an answer to the first question by specifying the State as the authority which regulated wages in the Communist planned economy of the thirties. He said:

"When the Plan is the decisive principle in the development of our national economy, wage questions cannot be settled outside the plan, out of connection with it. Thus the collective agreement as a form of regulating wages has outlived itself". (Aleksandrov, op.cit., p. 166.)

Realistically therefore, collective agreements were abandoned between 1934-47, but Stalin had them reintroduced in 1947. They still had nothing to do with fixing wages:

"The present-day collective agreement usually includes norms regulating the remuneration of labor (rate systems, with coefficients and grades, progressive scales, etc.) These norms, however, are not the result of the collective agreement contract. They originate from the appropriate State authorities". (Dogadov, quoted in Soviet Studies, Oxford, 1948, Vol. 1, p.84.)

The Council of Ministers' decree reintroducing collective agreement following Stalin's pronouncement shows that, in fact, their use was:

"To ensure the fulfilment and overfulfilment of production plans, a continued increase in the productivity of labor, improvements in the organization of labor, and also an increase in the responsibility of economic and trade union organiza-

tions for improving the material living conditions and cultural services for the workers...etc." (The Trade Union Worker's Handbook, 1949, p. 139.)

Wages Policy

Soviet leaders renounced the egalitarian wage aims of early Communism because, in practice, this did not work when the prime need of the economy in the transition to Socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat was for skilled workers and increased productivity. Hitherto, the theory has been propounded that, when Communism is achieved (and it is this towards which Soviet Russia is now working), to each will be accorded following his needs, from each will be demanded according to his ability.

Wage differentials as part and parcel of State policy were again cited in 1956:

"Socialism represents the first phase of Communism. Productive forces at this stage of Communist society have not yet reached a level sufficiently high to assure the abundance of products necessary for distribution according to needs... Under Socialism differences between skilled and unskilled and between heavy and light work still remain...All this makes it necessary...to make use of such a factor as the personal material interest of the workers in the results of their work." (Kuznetsova, The Organization of Workers' Wages at Industrial Enterprises in the USSR, Moscow, 1956, pp.5f.

The wage system reflecting this decision has several factors. It is based on grades (reflecting what the worker can do) in which pay differentials are used to further current economic policy; based on a norm or output quota (reflecting how much the worker can produce, operated so as to favor piece-workers. To increase productivity the piece-rate system is bolstered by bonus payments (individual and collective) and conversely by fines, and tied to Socialist competition (the rivalry between individuals, teams and factories) where the rewards are financial, honorific and material. These are all acquired at the expense of the slower worker.

The grade: The worker is assigned to his grade by the foreman (against which he, with his trade union's aid, may protest). The number of grades and wage-scales has varied. In 1957 there were more than 1,900 different scales throughout the country. (Moscow Radio, January 22, 1957.) The wage-scale establishes only the relationship between various grades and "no wage rates not confirmed by the Government may be included in the collective agreement". (Aleksandrov and Pasherstnik, Soviet Labor Law, Moscow, 1952, p.224.)

Differentials are used to further State economic policy, e.g., to "stimulate the passage [of workers] to work paid on piece-rates" (Alexandrov, Soviet Labor Law, Moscow, 1954, p. 250) because this aids individual output; to encourage workers in certain trades (e.g., mining and heavy industry as compared with production of consumer goods); to encourage work in specific areas (e.g., the virgin lands, etc.); to encourage permanent cadres of skilled workers in particular enterprises. (Differentials are carried over into pension rights, and social and material welfare.)

The output norms: By 1955 almost three-quarters of the Soviet working population were on piece-rates (Kuznetsova, op. cit., p. 26), for the Party Congress of 1923 had resolved in favor of the "real dependence of individual wages on actual output". (Party Resolutions, Vol. 1, p. 698.) The worker is paid according to whether he reaches the norm or not. Norms have been paid in various ways over the years, e.g., the basic piece-rate; the progressive rate where, once the norm is fulfilled, the rate per unit goes up, sometimes over the full output; the brigade piece-rate, where pay depends on teamwork. The main effect is that the worker (up to 1956) worked "without guarantee of any minimum wage whatsoever" (Kuznetsova, op. cit., p. 30).

Since 1933 (i.e., when the process of "statification" went ahead) the quantitative setting of norms has been left to the management:

"No one but management shall be primarily responsible for technical norm-setting, for wage scales, output norms, piece-rates, etc. To-day, quite a few comrades in the plants share the idea that the union should have as much to say about wages as management. This is a fundamental error. It would imply that the union takes the places of the management. It is a 'Leftist' opportunist distortion, disruption of one-man management, and interference with the operational functions of management. It must be stopped." (Trud, July 8, 1933, quoted by Schwarz, Trade Unions in the USSR, New York, 1953, p. 23.)

Revision of Norms

State management has assessed norms in various ways over the years. The tendency is to revise them each year (usually upwards), to aim to base them on the increased power of the machine, the rationalization of processes and on the experience of workers engaged in Socialist competition (these are called technically based norms), e.g., the Council of Ministers' decree on the State Plan for 1947 said: "State Plans must be calculated not on average-arithmetic norms achieved in production but on average progressive norms, i.e., in emulation of advanced workers" (Pravda, March 1, 1947). Or again "as the technique of production is perfected [as] the workers' qualifications grow, the norm changes accordingly, and in this lies its progressive character." (Goloshchapov, Settlements with Workers and Employees, 9th revised edition, Moscow, 1954, pp. 16f). In 1955 it was stated "the progressive norm is an enormous organizing force for the broad masses in the struggle for the undeviating growth and perfection of Socialist production," (Chigvintsev, Wages Under Socialism, Moscow, 1955, p. 60). In all this trade unions are bound by their statutes to concur, for they are responsible for ensuring Plan fulfilment and overfulfilment and increased productivity. This is the Communist method of achieving that end.

Bonus Payments: These are widely paid to offset poor quality production and excessive waste of material and power (encouraged by the all-out drive for increased production). They are paid to workers who still for one reason or another are on time-rates so as to align them with the principle of piece-rate production. There were, for instance, some 700 payments of bonuses in heavy machine building in 1956 (Kuznetsova, op. cit., p. 55).

There is also the enterprise fund (under the manager's direction) formed from profits made by the enterprise. Half of the fund so formed is devoted to the enterprise's capital expenditure (including repair of its housing) and half to "awards to individual workers." The director must agree the estimates for the fund with trade union works committees, but the disposal of them is his responsibility. (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd Edition, Vol. 45, pp. 292f.) Should there be no profits, there is no fund.

Recent trends in wages policy do not abolish the system and its aims, although they alleviate the lot of the poorest worker. In 1956, a law (Pravda, September 9, 1956) established a minimum wage for the first time in Soviet history; its effect was also to reduce slightly the gap between the lowest and highest paid.

On the same subject, Andrei Verbin (Soviet Trade Unions, 1958, pp. 40-41) reveals how wage systems have been altered wholesale with trade union agreement. Speaking of "some shortcomings in wages" which developed in the war and post-war years, Verbin cites the new system of wages (January 1, 1956) for building workers drawn up "with the help of the trade unions" as having eliminated the 150,000 different planned quotas and the 320 different tariff scales. These had been replaced by a single seven-category scale covering all building-trade workers, with Ministries and Departments compelled to introduce uniform quotas and piece-rate systems for all building workers and assembly work.

Verbin ends his chapter about wages with a claim that branch trade unions have considerable powers on "the question of quota revision," stating that whereas formerly quotas might be raised only annually, "now, with the consent of the trade union branch committee, factory directors can introduce new quotas to replace obsolete rates, thus avoiding mistakes that used to be made when revisions were made annually." In other words, trade unions must take part in raising quotas, for productivity must outrun wage increase.

A decree of the Party Central Committee, the Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU (Pravda, November 4, 1958) based on a Congress of these bodies about the introduction of a seven-hour working day and the regulation of wages and salaries in enterprises of the machine-building, oil and gas industries, gave the reason for the narrowing of differentials and a higher basic wage as being to secure greater productivity. These bodies jointly found it "essential in the adjustment of wages firmly to adhere to the line of raising further the wages of the lower paid workers and employees and of reducing the difference between the maximum and minimum pay by way of extensive introduction of technically sound production norms and economically effective systems of remuneration to attain a higher proportion of basic pay in workers' wages, so as to ensure that every enterprise has a speedier growth in labour productivity compared with wages."

But differentials are still great. Kommunist (No. 7, 1958), the main Party periodical, had a leading article which derided those advocating "levelling tendencies" in a country which had chosen the Socialist course:

"Lenin, always and everywhere, resolutely opposed levelling tendencies, put forward and defended the idea of material interestedness as an important stimulus for increased production.

"These instructions of V. I. Lenin guide the Party in defining wages policy. That policy has justified itself: it has enabled us to create highly qualified cadres of specialists who do honour to and are the pride of the country, and who are making an outstanding contribution to the construction of Communism. The party is achieving the correct relation between the wage levels of the various groups in accordance with their qualifications and the heaviness of their work...."

Socialist Competition

Socialist competition, innovation and emulation are means of raising productivity both by individual and collective effort and by means of improving techniques. Results obtained are intended to be emulated by all workers, and are applied in the assessment of norms. The Stakhanovism of the mid 1930s has given way to rationalisation and innovation (i.e., a better or new method of organising work) and can be applied to any chosen sphere of operations. Each type of competition has its honorific titles, its rolls of honour, certificates of merit and financial or material rewards, e.g., Eminent Public Cook, Best Turner, etc. The effect is to create, as official State policy, a labour aristocracy and thus to disrupt working-class solidarity. The fostering of Socialist competition is the duty of Soviet trade unions according to their Statutes.

The 9th Party Congress in 1920 named Socialist competition a "mighty force for raising the productivity of labour" and specified that the bonus system "must become a powerful means of stirring competition" (Party Resolutions, Vol. 1, p. 480). In 1929 the Party Conference called on workers to "organise competition in all spheres of construction, organise competition between plants factories, mines, railways, State farms, collective farms, Soviet establishments, schools and hospitals" (ibid., Vol. 2, p. 617). In May, 1929, Stalin stated "the principle of Socialist emulation is: comradely assistance by the foremost to the laggards so as to achieve an advance of all...Socialist emulation syas...catch up with the best and secure the advance of all." (Stalin, Works, Vol. 12, p. 116). He argued that solidarity would not be impaired by it. Nevertheless, the Council of Ministers decreed in September, 1929, that there should be "prizes to workers and employees for improvement achieved by Socialist competition." (USSR Laws, 1929, 58: 541).

Opposition to competition came both from workers and trade union leaders. A letter from a metal worker printed in Trud (July 3, 1929) stated:

"Present-day working conditions are called 'sweating' anyway; and now Socialist competition...Who are these record workers? Young Communists, youths full of strength and zeal. With that, of course, you can move mountains. And their example is imitated by reckless oldsters who may once in a while succeed in a record performance. But how long can they last? One month, two months, maybe six months... But we are just ordinary workers and have to work for years

to come." (Quoted by Schwarz in Labour in the Soviet Union, New York, 1952, p. 192.)

The opposition was condemned (as we have seen) as "Right-Trotskyite renegades and traitors" and "politically degenerate trade unionist elements." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 1st Edition, Vol. 52, p. 280.)

By 1930 the 16th Party Congress instructed trade unions not only to give "advanced workers every kind of encouragement and prizes" but also to organise "Comrades' courts from among the best shockworkers, so as to bring pressure to bear on persons who infringe labour discipline and undermine Socialist competition." (Party Resolutions, Vol 3, p. 65). Accordingly the Party Central Committee in 1930 ordered priority for shockworkers and participants in Socialist competition in obtaining living quarters, facilities for education and rest, and supplies of consumer goods. (The All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on Trade Unions, Moscow, 1939, pp. 564f.)

In 1931 prize funds were allocated for these people in individual enterprises equivalent to 0.5 percent of their annual wages fund. Special canteens or separate dining rooms were opened for shockworkers, "sometimes with flowers on the table, electroplated spoons and forks and special dainties," and they also got the "best chance of receiving theatre tickets and being sent on holiday excursions." (Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Soviet Communism, London, 1936, Vol. 2, p. 749.)

Stakhanovism

Stakhanovism derives its name from Aleksey Stakhanov, who, in August, 1935, fulfilled a record-breaking shift at a Donbass coal mine. This was achieved by a rationalising process of assuring his pneumatic pick a constant supply of compressed air throughout the shift, attaching two timberers exclusively to him to do pit-propping as soon as he had finished cutting, and lengthening the ledges so that one miner did not get in the way of the other. (Lozovsky, op. cit., p. 32). By this method, which amounted essentially to specialising the functions of timberer and cutter, Stakhanov cut 102 tons of coal in a shift; by disregarding his assistants' contribution and ascribing the output entirely to him, the record was allowed to seem more impressive than in fact it was. The idea spread to other industries.

It was taken up by the Party who "from the very start calculated correctly that the Stakhanovite movement could not develop spontaneously, and that it needed leadership and assistance." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 1st Edition, Vol. on USSR, p. 1107.) Thus in November, 1935, the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites was held in the Kremlin under Stalin's chairmanship. The first Stakhanovites were given the Order of Lenin. The conference envisaged higher norms as a result of the Stakhanovite movement, so in December, 1935, the Party Central Committee, considering "questions of industry and transport in connection with the Stakhanovite movement," ordered the raising of all norms. (Party Resolutions, Vol 3, p. 271.)

This was the centre of worker opposition to Stakhanovism. Izvestiya, of August 23, 1935, and Pravda of October 29, 1935, contained accounts of the murder of "leading shockworkers." The Donbass oblast Party Committee issued a decree on "Sabotage of Stakhanovite methods of work," ordering "severe punishment for the guilty" (Za Industrializatsiyu, October 3, 1935). Court cases were reported where sentences of 2 to 4 years "deprivation of liberty" were given (Trud, October 23, 1935). Pravda, November 13, 1935, reported Zhdanov as having stated: "The Party will not shrink from any measures that will help to sweep away all opponents from the victorious path of the Stakhanovite movement." The threat was carried out in the purges of 1937-38.

Since then the Stakhanovite movement, under its new names of rationalisation, emulation and innovation, has become part and parcel of Soviet labour conditions, with all its paraphernalia of awards and rewards.

In 1938 the title of Hero of Socialist Labour was introduced. Challenge Red Banners are awarded by the USSR Council of Ministers, the AUCCTU, Ministries or Republican bodies, according to the level on which competition is engaged. Prizes varying from 10,000 to 700,000 roubles may be awarded, of which 60-70 percent is distributed in individual bonuses--half to workers. (Aleksandrov, Soviet Labour Law, Moscow, 1949, pp. 212, 265f).

In 1956, taking action because of criticism for inertia in publicising Socialist competition results, an "AUCCTU Scroll of Honour" was instituted and trade union Central Committees were brought in on the procedure of calculating competition results. (Pravda, September 13, 1956). In some factories daily competition results are now kept and the winning brigade and shift are rewarded with pennants. (Soviet Trade Unions, Moscow, 1956, No. 11, pp. 51f).

Workers' Welfare

Two of the three questions posed--Who decides wages? and What is Soviet wage policy?--have been answered by the facts just given.

How about the third question? Are the clauses of the collective agreement dealing with the welfare items (improvement in working conditions, safety precautions and hygiene, provision of housing, leisure facilities, canteens, cultural services) fulfilled by management?

In spite of the fact that obligations on management "have a juridical character" and management bears "disciplinary responsibility" to its superior organs for their violation (malicious violation being punishable under the Criminal Codex by up to one year's "deprivation of freedom" or a fine of 10,000 roubles--Aleksandrov, Soviet Labour Law, 1954, p. 213-216), there is ample evidence that these obligations are not fulfilled. For instance, a Plenum of the AUCCTU in 1956 complained: "The

managements of many enterprises, particularly in the coal, oil, timber and ferrous metal and non-ferrous metal industries, systematically fail to carry out obligations under the Collective Agreements to improve working conditions and housing and welfare facilities for the workers" (Trud, March 31, 1956); or again: "Year after year, the same obligations are written down at the enterprises, but failure to fulfil them has now become a habit... a house of 60 flats at the Elektrokabel factory in Kolchuga has been building for about 16 years" (Soviet Trade Unions, 1956, No. 6, p. 2).

In 1956 Trade Union Committees were still being scolded for "acquiescing frequently in numerous instances of violation of Collective Agreements," (ibid. 1956, No. 12, p. 3). In January, 1957, the Trade Union of Workers in State Trade and Public Feeding was still "accepting mass violations by the managers of the rules of safety technique." (ibid., 1957, No. 1, p. 9).

Now, under the Collective Agreement, the Trade Union Committee's responsibility is only of "a social, moral-political character" and its responsibility for non-fulfilment is "moral-political responsibility to its electors, and its superior organs." "Disciplinary responsibility" only comes into the picture where the individual worker, in violation of his obligations under the Agreement also involves an infringement of the Rules of Internal Labour Order. (Aleksandrov, Soviet Labour Law,) 1954, pp. 219f).

In 1958, the abuse of workers' rights continues and trade union organs fail to defend their members, in spite of the new rights given them to deal with cases at factory level (see Chapter VIII). The Deputy Procurator of the Moscow oblast, writing in Leninskoye Znamya (Lenin's Banner, October 28, 1958), cites 1,200 cases during 1957 in his district alone where workers having recourse to the courts secured reinstatement after unjust dismissal; in the first six months of 1958 there were 628 such cases. He draws attention to other "widespread breaches of labour legislation" in failure to allow workers "their annual leave at the correct time," in "unfounded transfer by the administration of rest days, without agreement of the trade unions," in "the illegal use of overtime"; other abuses cited are non-compliance with 1956 regulations stipulating a six-hour day for juveniles and the engagement for seasonal and permanent work of collective farmers without the necessary leave-of-absence papers from their Collective Farm Boards, as specified in 1951 regulations. The procurator draws attention to the fact that such cases ought not to go to the Courts at all, and he castigates trade union organizations for failure to handle such abuses "with sufficient thoroughness," citing the specific case of a carpenter unjustly dismissed on the untrue grounds of redundancy, where the Labour Disputes Commission failed to reinstate him and the Union Works Committee likewise "allowed itself to be led by the administration." The Deputy Procurator continues:

"What are the basic causes of labour disputes? They are born of the bureaucratism of certain directors of enterprises and institutions, of indifference, conceit, self-righteousness and a loss of a feeling of responsibility for work which has been taken on. Such 'managers' as

these, who sometimes ignore the Soviet labour laws, unjustifiably dismiss or transfer a worker from one job to another, and do not pay on time and at the correct rates, are committing other breaches of the law."

The fact is that in practice there is no foundation for the Soviet theory that under Communism there is no cause for friction between workers and management. Given a chance, management falls down on its obligations to the workers, concentrates on its obligation to the State (i.e., its own superior organs) and the trade unions fail to protect the workers' interests. This follows from the nature and structure of Soviet Communist organizations.

VI. LABOUR DISCIPLINE, LABOUR DISPUTES

The Soviet authorities have imposed harsh labour legislation on the Soviet worker over the past 40 years and have used the withdrawal of financial, material and welfare facilities to enforce it. The trade unions have helped to carry out the rules. Some of the penalties have been relaxed since 1956, but the system which allowed their imposition remains, and with it the capacity to reimpose them.

Rules of Internal Labour Order

The present model Rules of Internal Labour Order date from 1941, plus subsequent legislation, although they were first introduced in 1924. (Particular industries and managements of enterprises agree individual adjustments with the Trade Union Central Committee and Factory Trade Union Committee respectively).

They remind workers of their constitutional duty to observe labour discipline "based in the Soviet Union on a conscious attitude to work as a matter of honour...glory...valour and heroism"; they declare their aim of "ensuring the strengthening of Socialist labour discipline, the correct organization of work, full and rational use of working time, the raising of labour productivity, and the output of good-quality products." ("Model Rules of Internal Labour Order for Workers employed in State, Co-operative and Public Enterprises and Institutions," Articles 1-2, published in Collection of Legislative Acts of Labour, Moscow, 1956, pp. 128ff).

When engaging a worker the management must demand (a) his Labour Book or certificate of previous occupation, and (b) his passport.* They must then instruct him in work procedures and the use of equipment, in the Rules of Internal Labour Order, and in safety, sanitary and fire regulations. They must issue

* This is the Internal Passport in force since 1932 for all over 16 living in urban, or border areas or near Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev. Change of domicile for over 24 hours involves registering with the police by submitting this passport.

him with a Pay Book within five days. On his departure the management must give him his Labour Book, after entering the reason for his dismissal or departure "in strict accord with the formulations of the Labour Codex or in the form of a reference to an article of the Codex." (ibid., Articles 3-7)

The obligations of managements are (Article 9):

- (a) to organize correctly the labour of workers and employees so that each may work according to his speciality and skill;
- (b) to issue work orders punctually and to supply workers with instruments, materials and spare parts;
- (c) to secure to each worker and employee a particular work-place, lathe, machine, etc.;
- (d) to ensure maintenance of machines, lathes, and other equipment;
- (e) to strengthen labour discipline and implement fully one-man management;
- (f) to introduce Stakhanovite methods of work, and to take steps to rationalize production;
- (g) to observe the laws and rules of labour protection.

Workers for their part, are obliged (Article 10):

- (a) to work honestly and conscientiously;
- (b) to observe labour discipline and conform strictly to the Rules of Internal Labour Order; and to execute swiftly and accurately the instructions of the management;
- (c) to come to work on time; to observe the established length of the working day without any infractions; and to use the whole working time for productive activity only, taking no part in irrelevant matters or conversations, and not wandering idly around or distracting others from their work;
- (d) to execute punctually and carefully orders and tasks received; to fulfil output norms and strive for systematic overfulfilment of these norms; and to afford high qualitative indices of work, producing no rejects;
- (e) to care for Socialist property; machines, lathes, instruments, materials, etc.;
- (f) to observe safety, sanitary and fire precautions, and to use the special clothing and precautionary devices issued;

- (g) to tidy and clean their work-places punctually and to hand them over to the workers in the next shift in good order and cleanliness.

Socialist competition is not mentioned among the workers duties, presumably because participation in Socialist competition is a moral, not a juridical as well as a moral duty.

The model rules specify that the shift rota shall be changed regularly, as a rule once a week. (Article 12) They lay down the procedure for clocking in and out, workers on continuous production being forbidden to leave until relieved. (Articles 14-16) They forbid the following in working hours: calling workers or employees away from their work to fulfil "social duties," convening assemblies, conferences or meetings "relative to public matters," or issuing pay or any sort of document or certificate. (Article 17) It is also forbidden to arrive at work drunk or to drink strong liquor at work. (Article 18)

The Rules prescribe that any violation of labour discipline entails a "disciplinary penalty" or (for railway workers) a court prosecution. (Article 19) "Disciplinary penalties" are (a) reproof, (b) reprimand, (c) severe reprimand, and (d) transfer to other, lower-paid work for up to three months (demotion to a lower post in the case of employees). (Article 20) Lateness and early leaving are specially mentioned as offences to be covered by these penalties. (Article 21) Managements must act immediately once an offence is discovered, and must hear the offender's explanations. No penalties may be imposed after the expiry of one month from the date the offence was discovered. Reproofs and reprimands are lifted if a year passes without the commission of another offence; for good work and behaviour, and at managerial discretion, this period may be reduced. (Articles 22,24)

Certain offences--theft of products, materials or equipment, and hooliganism on factory premises (which were removed from the competence of the "production-comradely courts" in 1940)--have remained criminal acts, and are dealt with by handing over the offender to the courts to be judged under the Criminal Codex. (Articles 27,28)

How did such Rules come into being, how have they been interpreted and what part have Soviet trade unions played in their use?

Labour Discipline

Labour turnover and absenteeism are the bugbear of the Soviet authorities and bear witness to the dissatisfaction of the working people with conditions of work in the Soviet Union. The harsh penalties imposed on the Soviet proletariat are the result of deliberate Communist policy, and affect not the "class enemy" but the working man. The solution found by the authorities, acting on Party initiative, was to seek to tie the worker to his job and to make him work hard by imposing legal, financial and material sanctions for non-cooperation. The Soviet trade unions were made an instrument of this policy. Three fairly distinct periods are apparent.

The First Phase: 1919-1921: During the civil war, labor discipline was imposed by Comrades' Disciplinary Courts (akin to the discipline imposed at that time in the Red Army) set up in 1919. These courts were composed of one delegate each from management, trade union and general workers' meetings. Cases were tried publicly and could include public reprimand; up to six months' suspension of trade union electoral rights; up to one month's demotion, with reduced pay; direction to "hard, socially useful labor" with appropriate pay. Particularly obstructive workers could be sent to concentration camps and criminal cases to higher courts. (RSFSR Laws, 1919, 56: 537)

By 1920, Lenin stated at the 9th Party Congress:

"We are introducing labor service, and are uniting the working people without in any way fearing to use coercion, since no revolution was ever made without coercion, and the proletariat has the right to use coercion so as to hold its own at any cost... Now the task is to apply to the peaceful tasks of economic construction... everything that can concentrate the proletariat... Here iron discipline is necessary." (Lenin Works, Vol. 30, pp.423f.)

The Congress accordingly resolved that the first function of Trade Union Factory Committees was to "raise labor discipline by all means, including Comrades' Disciplinary Courts;" they labelled workers, who "wilfully" left enterprises and "travel from place to place" for better conditions, "labor deserters," against whom trade unions were to wage a "planned, systematic, persistent, severe struggle" by blacklisting them and by forming them into "penal worker gangs" or imprisoning them in concentration camps. (Party Resolutions, Vol. 1, pp.488, 492f.) Similarly the Government, fighting absenteeism, decreed (April, 1920) that absentees should be penalized by forfeiture of pay, by working off lost time in overtime and on holidays; those absent for more than three days in a month were to be tried for sabotage in the Comrades' Disciplinary Courts. (RSFSR Laws, 1920, 36: 172).

In April, 1921, these courts were reorganized so that the AUCCTU provided chairman and vice-chairman and so that they were under AUCCTU and Commissariat of Justice guidance. Members were elected by factory management and candidate members only by general factory meeting of trade unionists. (RSFSR Laws, 1921, 23-24: 142.)

Already, therefore, in the early period of Communism harsh treatment of workers in factories was instituted under trade union direction, and undemocratic procedures adopted in the composition of the courts.

The Second Phase, 1922-35: The end of War Communism, the return of workers to the towns, and the New Economic Policy period brought with them a short-lived amelioration of the workers' lot. In November, 1922, a new Labor Codex decreed the abolition of the Comrades' Disciplinary Courts and their replacement by Rules of Internal Labor Order. The rules were introduced by September, 1924. The new codes guaranteed the worker freedom to change his occupation. The Rules stipulated that management was now to impose the penalties for poor time-keeping and absenteeism. Public reprimand and dismissal were to be effected for repeated offenses only and through the Rates and Conflicts Commission

(RKK), on which management and workers were equally represented.

However, the inauguration of the first Five-Year Plan in 1927 meant stricter measures of labor discipline. Following a Party directive of March, 1927, the Labor Codex was amended in August to make sanctions against workers absenting themselves more stringent. For example, three days' absence without good reason in any one month (instead of three consecutive days or six days a month) became punishable by dismissal without notice (RSFSR Laws, 1927, 87: 577). By November, 1932, the penalties were increased (ibid., 1932, 78: 475), and for every one day's unauthorized absence, a worker could be dismissed, deprived of his rights to use the ration cards issued to him for work in a specific factory and evicted from accommodation allotted to him by the factory. Simultaneously, by a decree of March, 1929, management (chided for feebleness in enforcing the penalties) was given power to impose the full penalties independently, the role of the Rates and Conflicts Commission being reduced to hearing appeals from dissatisfied workers.

This phase coincided with the purges of the trade union leaders (mentioned in Chapter II), who had tried to defend the workers' interests. Moral and economic pressure was now applied to workers who changed jobs. Courts of Honor were set up in workshops and the names of "floaters" displayed on notice boards. By 1930 "a lengthy period at the same factory," etc., was made one of the conditions for priority in housing, for free entrance to higher education, rest homes and sanatoria, and for preferential rations of scarce goods. In key industries an extra three days' annual leave was given to those with two or more years' service in one factory (USSR Laws, 1930, 60: 641). In January, 1931, the full amount of sickness benefit was made available only to trade unionists with three years' service. (Pravda, February 6, 1931.) Persistent "floaters" now became liable to lose their preferential ration cards. By a decree of the People's Commissariat of Labor (January, 1931), workers who left their jobs without notice, or left more than once in a year, even with notice, were named "disorganizers of production."

This undermined the provisions of the Labor Codex guaranteeing workers' freedom to change jobs. Preliminary discussions about the introduction of Labor Books in the winter of 1930-31 were dropped; instead the Internal Passport was introduced in 1932. On applying for work the employee had to produce this passport and have his place of work entered in it. This enabled construction projects to be purged of "floaters" and "money-grabbers" as Pravda (December 28, 1932) explained.

The purges of the 1930s coincide with this phase. Already trade unions were using the weapon of withholding welfare benefits for coercive purposes, and the workers' rights had been whittled down.

The Third Phase, 1938-55: The imminence of war led the Party to complete the process of dragooning the workers. This was done by a number of decrees.

On December 20, 1938, Labor Books were introduced. They are

still in use to-day. The decree (USSR Laws, 1938, 58: 329) stipulated that the books should be uniform throughout the USSR, and printed in Russian and in the language of the Union or Autonomous Republic concerned. (Article 1.) Managements are obliged to enter the following information in the Labor Book: the holder's full name, age, education, trade, "information about his work," transfers from one enterprise or establishment to another (with reasons), and details of "encouragements and awards." (Articles 2, 5, 10.) Punishments are not to be entered, but, as the Large Soviet Encyclopedia points out, the fact that the books contain "notes of change of place of work, and of encouragements and awards...makes it possible to distinguish the conscientious worker from the floater." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd Edition, Vol. 14, p. 487.) Managements may engage workers and employees (other than those entering employment for the first time) only on presentation of their Labor Books, which the management then keeps until the worker is discharged. (Articles 6, 9.) Illegal use, transfer to other persons, forgery or erasure of entries in Labor Books are punishable as crimes. (Article 14.) Reference to the RSFSR Criminal Codex discloses that conviction for this type of offence may entail a sentence of up to three years' deprivation of freedom, up to one year's corrective labor, or a fine of up to 1,000 rubles.

A decree of December 28, 1938 (USSR Laws, 1939, 1: 1), giving management and trade unions that the books should be uniform throughout the task of waging "a decisive struggle...against all who have a dishonest attitude to work," stated:

"The overwhelming majority of workers and employees work... honestly and conscientiously...affording examples of shock-work and labor heroism, strengthening the might and defensive capacity of the Motherland. But...there are still individual, unconscious, backward persons--floaters, idlers, absentees and money grabbers--/who/ by their unconscientious work, absenteeism, lateness for work, aimless wandering about the plant in working hours and other violations of the Rules of Internal Labor Order, and also by wilful transfers from one enterprise to another, subvert labor discipline and do great harm to industry, transport and the whole national economy."

Lateness, going early to dinner, or coming back late, leaving early or idling in working hours, were now called a "gross violation of labor discipline" and were to carry punishments of warning, reprimand, reprimand with warning of dismissal, transfer to lower paid work for up to three months, or demotion to a lower post. Three such violations of labor discipline in one month, or four in two consecutive months, were to be punished by dismissal. (Article 1.) Wilful departure or "floating" was dealt with under the decree by doubling the length of time in a job to qualify for first annual leave and by relating social insurance benefits to longer service in the same employment. (Articles 5-10.) Workers dismissed for breach of labor discipline or leaving at their own request lost not only some of their social insurance rights but were liable to eviction from factory-provided housing "within 10 days...without provision of dwelling space." (Articles 11-12.)

On January 8, 1939, a joint "clarifying" decision of the Party Central Committee, the Council of People's Commissars (now Council

of Ministers) and the AUCCTU laid down that absenteeism could consist in being "more than 20 minutes late". (Izvestiya, January 9, 1939.) On December 31, 1938, the USSR Procurator-General ordered his subordinates to prosecute managers who failed to carry out these provisions. (Sovetskaya Zakonnost, 1939, No.1.) Pravda (January 26, 1939) announced a sentence of eight months' deprivation of freedom for a manager of the Karl Liebknecht works in Dnepropetrovsk for not sacking three absentees. A week later Industriya (February 2, 1939) reported the dismissal of 500 workers for absenteeism from the Petrovsky works in the same town in January, 1939, alone.

On June 26, 1940, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued an edict which prohibited workers from leaving enterprises except by permission of the management (exceptions being made for the aged, the certified sick and those accepted into Higher or Specialized Secondary Educational Establishments). Workers leaving wilfully were to be "prosecuted and subjected, by sentence of a People's Court, to imprisonment for two to four months." For absenteeism the punishment of dismissal was abolished; prosecution by a People's Court or corrective labor at the place of work for up to six months with a 25 per cent stoppage of pay was substituted. From October, 1940, engineers, skilled workers, etc., who refused transfer orders also became liable to prosecution under the edict.

At the outbreak of war in June, 1941, therefore, the Soviet State had acquired legal powers to keep workers at their jobs on pain of four months' imprisonment or six months' forced labor; and the trade unions had to see labor discipline was kept.

With the outbreak of war in 1941 the penalties for wilful departure were sharply increased. An edict of the Supreme Soviet of December 26, 1941, declared all workers employed in "enterprises of war industry" mobilized for the duration of the war and "tied to the enterprises employing them" (war industry included all "industrial establishments co-operating in supplying war industry.") In September, 1942, enterprises "located close to the front" were included in this provision. Persons leaving their jobs without permission were deemed to be "deserters." They were liable to be tried by military tribunals and could be sentenced to five to eight years' imprisonment. In April, 1943, railway, and subsequently river and marine transport, were put under martial law.

Post-war Developments

Apart from an amnesty granted at the end of the war of those prosecuted and convicted under the decree of December 26, 1941, absenteeism and wilful departure remained criminal offences for 10 years after the end of the war. It was only on April 25, 1956, that absenteeism and leaving jobs without permission ceased to be criminal offences and that dismissal was reinstated as a punishment for absenteeism. (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 1956, No. 10, p. 52: 203.)

Since April, 1956, a worker may leave his job on giving two weeks' notice to the management. If he does so "at his own wish,"

he loses his record of uninterrupted service, which affects the scale of his social insurance benefits; he loses for six months the right to temporary disability benefit (provision is made for exceptions.) Since February, 1957, temporary disability benefit has been payable without the six months' qualifying period in cases of industrial injury or occupational disease.

Absenteeism without good cause is now punishable by the management, but since 1958 Factory Committees are to have a say in dismissals. Apart from the disciplinary penalties envisaged in the Rules of Internal Labor Order, the offender may be deprived of his long-service increment for up to three months; he may also be dismissed with a note in his Labor Book to the effect that he has been sacked for absenteeism without good cause. Alternatively, the management may, at discretion, hand over the case to a Comrades' Court. The worker has certain procedures for appeal against punishment on this count.

Labor Disputes

From 1922-57 most labor disputes were settled in the first instance by the Rates and Conflicts Commission (RKK). The rates side of their activity disappeared with the growth of planning and State norm-setting; this was recognized formally when, on January 2, 1933, the Presidium of the AUCCTU adopted a decree deeming "incorrect" the practice whereby in many factories norms and rates introduced by the managements were "confirmed" by the RKK; the RKK's duties should be confined to familiarization of the workers with the norms, mobilization of the workers for their fulfillment, and similar tasks; norms and rates could be considered per se, only if they violated the Collective Agreement. (Labor Legislation of the USSR, Moscow, 1941, pp.320f, Article 3.)

In January, 1957, the RKKs were finally abolished and replaced by the Labor Disputes Commissions. Like their predecessors, the new commissions comprised an equal number of representatives of management and the Trade Union Factory Committee; they were to be the courts of first instance for the settlement of all labor disputes between management and workers. (Decree published in Trud, February 21, 1957) Still excluded from the purview of the commission were all those items whose inclusion might have given arbitration some meaning in securing better pay and working conditions. Article 11 excludes, for example:

- (a) the dismissal, reinstatement and transfer of certain responsible workers and employees and the imposition of disciplinary penalties on these persons. The list of responsible persons appended to the decree includes the heads of enterprises, chief engineers, etc., and also the heads of workshops, senior foremen, foremen, etc.;
- (b) the imposition of disciplinary penalties on persons who come within the scope of the statutes on discipline (i.e., on railways, river and sea transport, etc.);
- (c) the establishment of salaries and wage-rates;

"The whole practice of social insurance must be transformed with a view to securing a privileged position for the shockworker and those with long service. We must handle the social insurance weapon so as to promote the attachment of the worker to the undertaking." (Questions of Insurance, 1933, No. 7-8, p. 15)

We have seen what sort of system Communism has imposed in order to carry out this intention. The principle was authoritatively restated in 1947 and again in 1953 (post-Stalin legislation does not infringe this principle). The 17th Plenum of the AUCCTU issued a directive in 1947 which stated:

"The enormous funds of the State Social Insurance scheme must be used by the trade union organizations further to raise the productivity of labour, to strengthen labour discipline and to improve the living conditions of workers and employees." (State Social Insurance, Moscow, 1948, p. 24)

G. K. Moskalenko, an authority, wrote in 1953:

"Soviet law prescribes preferential conditions and rates for key staff in the most important branches of the national economy, for workers underground and in harmful occupations, and for those with a long period of uninterrupted employment ... This differentiation in pension rights is a weapon in the struggle for the creation of reliable qualified staff and the further increase in labour productivity." (Moskalenko, State Social Insurance, 1953, p. 118.)

Soviet social insurance covers sickness and medical benefit, disability allowance, maternity allowance and old age pensions. There is no unemployment benefit. The trade unions administer social insurance funds on behalf of the state, but the allocation of pensions (and, in the case of non-working pensioners, the actual payment of benefits) is in the hands of the local Soviets. Present regulations, however, provide for trade union representation on the Local Pension Commissions. Within each enterprise, social insurance benefits, other than pensions, are sanctioned by the Trade Union Insurance Commission, which is subordinate to and elected for the same term as the Trade Union Factory Committee. (Trade Union Worker's Handbook, Moscow, 1957, pp. 371ff; 273ff as amended April 5, 1958; Bulletin of AUCCTU, No. 8, 1958) Similarly a Trade Union Factory Committee representative is an ex officio member of the Housing Commission both of the factory and (since 1958*) of the local Soviet.

Good examples of how this discriminatory social "insurance system" is applied in practice are provided by temporary sickness benefits, sanatoria passes and old-age pensions.

Sickness and accident benefits are administered by trade unions. According to Moskalenko (Soviet Trade Unions, Moscow, 1953, p. 70), benefits for temporary incapacity take up 30 percent

* See Chapter VIII for the regulations.

- (d) the alteration of the personnel establishment;
- (e) the computation of the workers' periods of labour service for the purpose of social insurance or other rights and privileges;
- (f) the provision and allocation of housing and also "the satisfaction of the everyday needs of the workers."

(a) and (b) refer to groups of employees from whom a higher standard of discipline is expected and whose conflicts are dealt with in a more hierarchical manner by reference to the next rung on the ladder. (c) and (d) mean that redundancy was not a possible subject for labour dispute; nor the question of establishing correctly a worker's length of service for computation of his social insurance benefit, which is established by management, trade unions being instructed only to exercise "strict control." (Collection of Legislative Acts on Labour, Moscow, 1956, p. 414).

(f) was a new provision, the RKKs having previously had the right to deal with disputes in this issue if they arose from management's failure to fulfil its obligations under the Collective Agreement.

The fourteen items (Article 10 of the decree) which did fall within the Labour Disputes Commissions' purview all relate to settling disputes about established pay and conditions of service; e.g., Article 10 (a) reads; "...the application of established output norms and rates, and also labour conditions ensuring the fulfilment of output norms."

The most substantial change introduced by the decree was that appeals against Labour Dispute Commission findings might go in the first instance to the Trade Union Factory Committee* and from thence to the People's Court. The management might also appeal to the People's Courts, but only on a point of law, i.e., if it thought the Factory Committee's decision was contrary to existing legislation. (Articles 31, 32.)

VII. SOCIAL WELFARE

Soviet social legislation has been used as a "weapon" to tie the Soviet worker to his job for fear of losing his home or his old-age pension and to make him work hard and continuously. Unauthorized absenteeism and shoddy work reduce his benefits; conversely, prodigious work increases the basis for their assessment, allowing also the privileges of entry to higher education, rest homes, etc., and giving better rights to those who follow the trades favoured by State policy.

Social Insurance

After their "statification," Soviet trade unions took over in 1933 the administration of State social insurance. Shvernik, chairman of the AUCCTU at the time, stated:

* 1958 legislation on the increased role of Factory Committees is discussed in Chapter VIII.

of all social insurance funds. They are payable to State employees until return to work (or invalidity) unless the worker has been deprived of his rights, and on a five-point scale ranging between 90 percent of wages for those with more than 12 years' continuous service in the same enterprise and 50 percent for those with less than three years' service in the enterprise; they are based on average wages (excluding bonus and overtime awards). Non-trade-union members receive only half these amounts. (Trade Union Worker's Handbook, Moscow, 1957, p. 266). The way that continuous service is interpreted is affected by the provision of labour discipline legislation; absenteeism and changing jobs are punishable by the reduction and temporary removal of these benefits, the facts having been recorded in the Labour Books (i.e., the "loss of rights" referred to above). Amended regulations adopted in February, 1957, provide, however, that for temporary disability resulting from an industrial accident or due to one of the specified occupational diseases, 100 percent of wages can be awarded without regard to the length of continuous service.

Passes to sanatoria (free and part payment) are given out by trade unions. In 1948 the AUCCTU Presidium stated:

"Twenty percent of all tickets for sanatoria and prophylactoria and ten percent of tickets for rest homes are issued free by the trade union organizations at the expense of the State Social Insurance funds. The remaining 80 percent of tickets to sanatoria and prophylactoria and 90 percent of tickets to rest homes are issued on payment of 30 percent of their cost.

"Free tickets must be issued in the first place to persons with the best production record, war invalids who are working, juveniles employed at enterprises, pregnant women, and nursing mothers.

"Central, provincial, factory and local trade union committees must ensure that Stakhanovites and engineering and technical personnel engaged in production have priority in obtaining tickets to sanatoria and rest homes." (Decree No. 1482, May 7, 1948, Trade Union Worker's Handbook, Moscow, 1948, p. 334.)

Distribution of passes is still a trade union task under the 1958 regulations.

Old age pensions are allotted to State employees (i.e., not to collective farmers), men at 60 with 25 years' service and women at 55 with 20 years' service. The special trades favoured by the Government (e.g., heavy industry) qualify at younger ages and with better rates. Since 1956 a minimum and maximum rate has been set--300 to 1,200 roubles a month.

Frequent reference is made to the "huge sums" allocated by the State for social security purposes and the idea is current that the worker contributes nothing. This is not so, although the fact is concealed by the Communist system of social insurance.

Each factory contributes to the factory social insurance fund by an amount determined by the State and assessed in accordance with the factory wages fund and the factory's incidence of accidents and occupational disease. The total insurance fund is thus decreed by the State, wages being kept down in practice by the amount recovered for social welfare benefits. (This is the workers' concealed contribution.) That there is public contribution in this way was demonstrated anew in 1956 by Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress, when the first general adjustment of pensions for over 20 years was being contemplated. The extra amounts then needed to meet the bill were to be secured from savings in the annual price reductions, from increased labour productivity, from cuts in managerial staff, etc. (i.e., the worker was to foot the bill indirectly). Khrushchev said:

"It will be necessary to use some part of the means accumulated in the national economy by growing labour productivity, strict observance by the regime of economy, elimination of various excesses and a further reduction of the managerial and administrative apparatus. For this purpose, it will be expedient to use also part of the means hitherto allocated to meeting State expenses in connection with reducing retail prices. Therefore in the coming years price reductions will have to be carried out on a narrower scale than before, in order to direct a part of the means designated for price reductions to the measures mentioned."

In the same way the 1958 regulations (Article 11) give a Trade Union Factory Committee the right to recover from the factory (and refund to State Social Insurance funds) disability benefits paid out to workers for injury caused through management's negligence.

Cultural Activities

Part of the factory social insurance funds are devoted to the provision of cultural facilities. Trade unions:

"...conduct mass cultural and political educational work among workers, employees and their families; help union members to raise their ideological-political and general educational level, disseminate political and scientific knowledge, and extensively propagate new methods of production and techniques. They set up clubs, houses and palaces of culture, Red Corners and libraries, and develop mass amateur art, physical culture, sport and tourism among workers and employees." (Preamble to the 1954 Statutes.) The 1939 Trade Union Club Statutes listed, inter alia, club functions as being to:

"help workers and employees to study the theory of Marxism-Leninism and the history of the CPSU; organize propaganda of the USSR Constitution, the history of the peoples of the USSR, and the Stalin plan for completing the construction of a classless Socialist society and for the gradual transition from Socialism to Communism;

"conduct mass agitation work in explanation of the decisions of the CPSU, the Soviet Government and the trade unions, and help trade union organs to organize the broad masses of workers and employees for the fulfilment of these decisions;

"inculcate a Socialist attitude to labour and public property, help trade union organizations to develop Socialist competition and the Stakhanovite movement to struggle for stronger labour discipline, to raise labour productivity, and to fulfil and overfulfil the production plan;

"...organize explanation of current political events;

"organize mass propaganda of military knowledge and further the preparation of workers and employees for the defence of the country..." (The Trade Union Worker's Handbook, Moscow, 1948, pp. 495f.)

The trade unions' other "cultural" activities--libraries, Red Corners, amateur art groups, physical culture and sport--are all equally geared to propaganda purposes. Libraries, like clubs, are at present having their statute reviewed; the earlier statute of 1937 laid emphasis on the libraries' duty to give readers every assistance in mastering Bolshevism "by propagating through books the teaching of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin..." (ibid., p. 509). Red Corners--"cultural-enlightenment establishments of the club type," set up in small factories, workshops, etc.,--are basically concerned with mass agitation, "political enlightenment and propagating industrial and agricultural techniques." (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd Edition, Vol. 23, p. 279.)

Amateur art groups "play an important role in the Communist education of the working people"; physical culture and sport, equally, are "an important means for the education of the working people... (by) strengthening their health and training them for labour and defence of their Socialist Motherland." (Trud, June 8, 1954.) In no branch of Soviet life, perhaps, are the all-pervading ambitions of Party propaganda more clearly evident than in the multifarious activities of the Soviet trade unions. The 1958 Trade Union Factory Committee Regulations read:

"Buildings, premises, installations, gardens and parks, designs for cultural-educational, health, physical training and sports activities of the workers and employees of enterprises and establishments and organizations and members of their families, as well as Pioneer Camps, are on the accounts of the enterprises, establishments and organizations and are to be handed over for free use to the factory, plant and local committee. Buildings, premises and equipment rented by the enterprises, establishments and organizations intended for the aforementioned purposes are also to be handed over, free of charge, for the use of the trade union committee.

"The maintenance, repair, heating, lighting, cleaning, guarding and also the equipment of buildings, premises and installations, mentioned in this article, as well as Pioneer Camps, are undertaken at the expense of the enterprise establishment of organization." (Article 16).

VIII. REORGANIZATION OF INDUSTRY AND THE TRADE UNIONS

Following the changes that have taken place in political leadership and economic policy in the Soviet Union, certain changes have been wrought in trade union organization and functions. The changes arise from Party (not trade union) policy; they do not alter the relationship of the Party to the unions. Thus the Party continues to formulate government (management) and trade unions policies and to provide the leadership of both.

Policy of Decentralization

The Party has stipulated the delegation of operative tasks, within the overall plan worked out by the central authorities, to factory level, and has enhanced the directing role of trade union regional organizations, especially the inter-union councils, within the scope of that directive. But the principle is still one of democratic centralism, of Party guidance through the Party aktiv (bound by Party Statutes to give first loyalty to the Party), of the production principle in industrial unions. The new statutory duties of Trade Union Factory Committees and Production Conferences specifically deny interference or alteration of the agreed Plan.

Since trade unions are organized on the production principle, the reorganization of industrial management through decentralization (proposed by Khrushchev in March, 1957, and being put into effect since July, 1957) has affected trade union structure.

This reorganization involved the abolition of a considerable number of industrial ministries; as a result trade unions were reduced (as scheduled) from 47 in 1957 to 23 in 1958. The future of the Union Central Committees, which are, according to the AUCCTU Secretary, "the equivalent of Ministries in the trade union structure," came under discussion.

The Secretary of the AUCCTU* distinguished three schools of thought on future trade union structure:

- (i) to retain the various central committees, but with reduced functions such as legislative activity and foreign relations for which consultation with Gosplan (i.e., the coordinating planning link in the economy) are required;
- (ii) to abolish both the Central Committees and the branch unions completely and to replace them by a general Union of Soviet Workers;
- (iii) to abolish the Central Committees but not the branch unions; these to be reformed into big "independent" unions (e.g., Union of Donbass miners, Union of Moscow oblast miners, etc.) subordinate to the AUCCTU;
- (iv) a fourth suggestion (Soviet Trade Unions, Moscow, 1957, No. 4, p. 14) postulated the raising of the Inter-Union Councils of Trade Unions from coordinating to directing bodies; to form a basis for the regionalization of trade unions, parallel to that of industrial management.

The proposals worked out by the Presidium of the AUCCTU and presented to and approved "basically" by an AUCCTU plenum in June, 1957, are an amalgam of these proposals, retaining all the previous skeleton trade union structure. This suggests caution and an anxiety to reinsure against failure by retaining the old machinery.

The proposals (Trud, June 13, 1957, except as otherwise stated) call for:

- (i) "a shift of the centre of gravity of the operative direction of trade union organizations to oblast, krai and republics";
- (ii) the raising of "the role of Trade Union Councils to give them more rights and to widen their field of duty"; the Councils to become "full directing organs, capable of carrying on the day to day direction of the whole of the local trade union organs and primary organizations"; Councils to cooperate with the new Councils of National Economy (CNE) "in the working out and fulfillment of State plans and measures for the improvement of norm setting, the organization of labour and the cultural and welfare servicing of workers and employees";
- (iii) the survival, but reduction in number, of the Central Committees and branch structures (Tass, June 11, 1957). The Central Committees' function was redefined as "to participate in planning the development of the relevant branch of the national economy in working out systems of wages, uniform handbooks of wage-scales and qualifications, and uniform norms and rules of labour protection, safety technique and protective clothing; to take part in the work of Gosplan, the State Scientific and Technical Committee and other All-Union organs. Central Committees are to strengthen ties with the trade unions of foreign countries and to participate in the work of international associations of trade unions."

The Party Plenum's Directive

Having been aired in the Press, these ideas were formally adopted by the Party at its plenum from December 15 to 17, 1957. The Resolution on the Work of Soviet Trade Unions (Tass, December 19, 1957) took into account the necessity for the internal reorganization of Soviet trade unions because of the industrial reorganization on regional lines. It postulated an increase in the work of the primary organization (the Factory or Local Committee) and more use of production conferences, now to be made permanent. But it restated the fact of Party control at each level; the continuance of central direction through the AUCCTU; the continuance (under the regionalized structure) of Socialist competition; and the participation of trade unions in housing allocation and old-age and disability pensions among the social security benefits.

Extracts from the Resolution:

Party Guidance

"The strength of Soviet trade unions lies in the fact that they use as a guide the Leninist policy of the Communist Party, which forms the vital basis of Socialist society. The trade unions can succeed in their task only if they are guided, aided and supported by the Party...

"The Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the CPSU instructs the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics, the krai, oblast, town and raion committees, and primary Party organizations, to improve their guidance of trade unions; to tackle, first, the task of promoting and educating trade union officials; and to recommend for responsible trade union positions the best and best-trained workers, who have a gift for organization and enjoy prestige among both Communists and those outside the Party...

"Party committees are in duty bound skilfully to channel the work of trade union bodies, constantly to help them perform their functions, to encourage and develop their initiative in every way, and to take measures against Communists in management who disregard the trade union organizations and seek to minimize their role...

"Bearing in mind that the Party exercises its influence on the work of trade union organizations through Communists who are members of trade unions, the plenary meeting instructs Party committees to develop the sense of responsibility felt by Communists about their work in trade unions, and to improve the practical work of the Party groups which have been set up in elected trade union bodies in accordance with CPSU rules. In participating actively in the work of trade unions, the Communists should strive in every way to improve their work and thus increase the part they play in the accomplishment of economic and political tasks...

"The Plenary Session requires the Central Committees of the CPs of the Union Republics, as well as Kraikoms and Obkoms of the CPSU and the Party group of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council to ensure a higher standard in the trade unions' organizational work and to give practical assistance to trade union councils in organizing their activity on new lines."

Democratic centralism in trade unions

"The decisive role in performing the tasks confronting the trade unions belongs to their primary organizations. The All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU), the Republican krai and oblast councils and trade union committees must considerably improve the guidance of the primary organizations."

The Party gives the Factory Committees an increase role

"The Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the CPSU thinks it expedient to extend the functions of trade union

factory committees, with a view to empowering them to take part in drafting the production-financial plans of factories in solving problems of norm-setting and wage rates, to control the observance of labor legislation and the fulfillment of collective agreements, to express their opinions about candidates for leading economic posts and not to permit the dismissal of workers and employees without the consent of the factory committee."

Production Conferences

"Of great importance for securing workers' participation in industrial management are production conferences, which make it possible to combine the principles of the undivided responsibility of the manager with control from below... General factory and shop conferences are rarely held. This restricts the possibilities open to workers and employees of solving problems involved in the operation of a factory shop or the plant as a whole. Some Economic Administrations do not take part in production conferences and do not fulfill their decisions, as a result of which the workers lose interest in these conferences..."

"The Plenary Session believes in the expediency of giving permanent status to production conferences at plants and new projects. Their work must proceed with the broad participation of workers, engineers, technicians and office employees and they must include representatives of the management, the Party and Komsomol organizations, and of scientific-technical societies."

Conferences under trade union guidance and aimed at plan fulfillment

"Trade union organizations must improve the guidance of production conferences, enhance their role and prestige and make their decisions more effective. The work of production conferences must be subordinated to the task of fulfilling and over-fulfilling State plans, utilizing to the utmost the internal production reserves, ensuring conditions for efficient work, improving methods of management of factories and new projects. It is expedient for the conferences to discuss production plans, problems of production and labor organization, improving quality and lowering production and construction costs, norm setting, capital construction, improvement of internal factory management, etc."

Socialist competition

"One of the most important forms of securing the participation of the working people in industrial management--a tested method of Communist construction--is Socialist competition..."

"To ensure a further powerful development of all branches of the national economy it is necessary to eliminate resolutely shortcomings in the guidance of competition, to elevate competition to a new, higher plane, to concentrate attention on extending competition to embrace all workers, engineers and

technicians, on the fulfilment and overfulfilment of production quotas by all workers, on a wide propagation of the experience of the best workers. The entire work in the organization of competition must be based on Leninist principles: publicity, comparison of results, the possibility of a practical repetition of the experience gained, and comradesly mutual assistance. Now it is also highly important to organize competition between factories and new projects within Economic Administrative Areas and between the Areas themselves. At the same time it is expedient to keep up competition between similar enterprises in different Economic Areas as well as between workers of leading trades...

"It is necessary to intensify the activities of trade unions in stimulating workers, engineers and technicians to join the ranks of rationalizers of production and inventors, and to channel their constructive efforts towards revealing national economic reserves, perfecting equipment, technology and the organization of production. It is necessary to establish rigid control over the timely examination and practical realization of proposals for rationalization of production and inventions, to fight persistently against a conservative, bureaucratic attitude towards this matter. It is necessary to improve the guidance of scientific-technical societies, enhance their role in studying and propagating advanced experience, the latest achievements of science and technology, to foster constructive co-operation between scientists and technologists."

Collective agreements

"The most important problems of production, labor amenities and cultural services provided for the working people are reflected in the collective agreements which lay down the mutual obligations of factory workers collectively and the management. The trade union organizations and economic administrators must improve the procedure of concluding these agreements, ensure unconditional fulfilment of the obligations assumed both by the management and the workers collectively, check their execution regularly with the participation of a broad aktiv and inform the workers and employees of the results of these checks."

Wages, productivity, bonuses

"In view of the fact that the activity of the State Committee on Labor and Wages of the USSR Council of Ministers has a direct bearing on the vital interests of workers and employees, henceforward the most important decisions must be taken jointly by the Committee and the Praesidium of the Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions [i.e., decisions taken at AUCCTU Presidium level]..

"Lately, with the direct participation of trade union organizations, a series of measures have been implemented to introduce more order in the system of wages in building at the Donbas mines and iron and steel works and also of the salaries of administrators and specialists working on State farms. However, the shortcomings in the organization of norm-setting and wages

are being eliminated too slowly as yet...labor productivity must outrun wage increases and pave the way for the latter...

"Trade union and economic organs must continually perfect the system of remuneration of workers, administrators and engineering-technical personnel and employees and see that the system of wages and bonuses should become a powerful lever of material incentive in increasing output, raising labor productivity, improving the economic operation of shops and plants, cutting production costs below the limit set by the plan and in applying new technology. It is necessary to see that every worker should know his production norm, pay rate, and wage scale and clearly understand how his wages are computed...

"In view of the fact that during the sixth Five-Year Plan period a shorter working day will be introduced, trade unions must take an active part in working out and implementing measures aimed at ensuring that this transition should result in a further growth of labor productivity and should not involve a curtailment of production or lower wages for workers and employees."

All the usual items of social welfare were mentioned.

Social Welfare

"The trade unions must continue to improve the organization of social insurance...ensure a correct distribution of accommodation in sanatoria and rest homes, tighten control over the fulfilment of the plans of construction of medical, prophylactic and child-welfare institutions.

"The Plenary Session of the Control Committee of the CPSU believes that trade unions must tighten control over the activity of social organs, take part in allocating old-age or invalid pensions to workers and employees, display daily care for their cultural requirements and daily needs and maintain contact with them."

Accordingly the AUCCTU held a plenum on January 7, 8, 1958, to discuss "the tasks of the trade unions in connection with the decisions of the December plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." (Tass, quoting Pravda, January 7, 1958.) The outcome was (i) the submission of proposals to the Supreme Soviet which enacted a decree on Regulations on the Rights of Factory-Plant and Local Committees (July 15, 1958); (ii) the joint decree of the Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU (July 9, 1958) on Regulations on Permanent Production Conferences at Industrial Enterprises, Construction Sites, State Farms, Machine and Repair Tractor Stations. (MTS and RTS.)

The first decree brings down to factory level some functions previously within the competence of the higher trade union organs, gives the Factory Committees a greater responsibility towards management in so far as plan fulfilment and factory efficiency are concerned; and a say at this level in overtime, bonus payments, dismissals and appointments.

Statutory Duties of Factory Committees in 1958:

The first 14 Statutory rights of Factory Committees now are:

1. The factory, plant and local trade union committees, elected on the basis of the Statute* of the respective trade union, represent the workers and employees of the enterprises, establishment and organization in all questions relating to work, living conditions and culture and shall enjoy the rights of a juridical person.

2. The factory, plant and local committee participates in the drafting of production plant plans and plans of capital constructions of the enterprise, establishment and organization, as well as in drafting plans for the construction and repair of houses and of other places of cultural and social amenities.

3. The factory, plant and local committee concludes on behalf of the factory workers and employees the collective agreement, exercises systematic control over the timely fulfilment of measures provided for under the collective agreement.

Jointly with the management it confirms estimated expenditure from the funds of the enterprise for improving production, and also for individual awards and single payments of assistance.

4. The factory, plant and local committee has the right to hear reports of the managers of enterprises, establishments and organizations on the fulfilment of the production plans and commitments entered into under the collective agreement, reports on measures for organizing and improving working conditions, material and living conditions and cultural amenities of the workers and employees and has the right to demand the elimination of shortcomings.

5. The factory, plant and local committee submits to higher economic and government organs proposals on questions of improving the work of the enterprise, establishment and organization, also on working conditions and material and cultural amenities of the workers. The above-mentioned organs must consider these proposals and inform the factory, plant and local committee of the results of the investigation.

6. In agreement with the factory plant and local committee the management of the enterprise:

- (a) Draws up the list of trades and jobs which must be paid according to timework and piecework rates, or according to rates applicable to hot and heavy work, and for work involving harmful working conditions, in accordance with the standard schedule in force for the different branches of industry.
- (b) Establishes the tariff categories for work performed, and the grades which are allocated to workers, in accordance with the existing handbook of wage-scales and qualifications.

* These are the 1954 Statutes discussed in Chapter IV.

- (c) Lays down new norms and revises existing norms in connection with the introduction of technical measures and organizing methods, replaces temporary norms of output by permanent norms and rectifies obsolete norms.
- (d) Introduces regulations governing progressive piecework and the bonus system of wages (in accordance with the existing standard regulations), determines the category of workers and the size of bonus to be paid as other means of incentive.
- (e) Determines the amount of premium for managers, engineers and technical workers and employees on the basis of existing standard regulations on bonuses.

7. The factory, plant and local committee at enterprises and building sites conducts production conferences, organizes workers' meetings and production-technical conferences, systematically controls the fulfilment of decisions taken and proposals put forward by the workers and employees.

Jointly with the administration it organizes Socialist competitions and assesses the results, determines the winner of the competition, awards collectives of leading shops and departments the order of the Red Banner and Order of Merit, spreads experience gained, decides the question of awards of merit and monetary prizes and also the question of inscribing the names of leading production workers on the Board of Honour or of entering names in the Book of Honour, and it widely popularizes the results of Socialist competitions.

8. The factory, plant and local committee stimulates in every way the development of inventions and rationalization methods and supervises the timely introduction of inventions which have been adopted, technical improvements and proposals for rationalization; it investigates jointly with the factory administrations complaints of workers and employees relating to the rejection of their rationalization methods, as well as complaints about the calculation of awards, and the time taken to pay out awards for proposals for rationalization and technical improvements which have been adopted.

9. The factory, plant and local committee exercises control over the administration of establishments, enterprises and organizations on the adoption of labour laws safety precautions and health measures. Representatives of the trade union committee sit on the commissions which take over new shops and production sectors for operation.

As provided for under existing legislation, overtime in exceptional circumstances can be worked only with the consent of the factory, plant and local committee.

Persons of 15-16 years of age can only be engaged by the administration in agreement with the factory, plant and local committee.

The lists of work and trades which, because of their harmful working conditions, entitle workers and employees to receive milk and soap, and also the annual holiday schedule, are to be drawn up by the management of enterprises, establishments and organizations in agreement with the factory, plant and local committee.

10. Workers and employees cannot be dismissed from an enterprise, establishment or organization by the management without the consent of the factory, plant and local committee.

The factory, plant and local committee considers the wage complaints of workers and employees by decision of the Labour Disputes Commission set up at enterprises, establishments and organizations. In this connection it has the right to abide by the decision of the Commission or to revoke it and pass a decision based on the merits of the dispute.

11. The factory, plant and local committee is in charge of the State Social Insurance of workers and employees of establishments, enterprises and organizations; it allots social insurance benefits, its representatives take part in the allotting of pensions to workers and employees by the social insurance organization; it sends workers and employees for cures to sanatoria, to health resorts and rest homes, supervises the health service of the workers, employees and members of their families.

The factory, plant and local committee sees that insurance contributions are paid in time by enterprises, establishments and organizations, and when necessary it exacts the undisputable stipulated amounts for insurance contributions.

In cases where the factory, plant and local committee establishes that a factory injury or the professional disease of a worker or employee is caused by the management violating the labour laws or rules on safety measures, the committee passes a ruling which is binding on the management, under which the enterprise, establishment or organization must reimburse--without disputing the issue--the State Social Insurance budget for expenses incurred in the payment of benefits for temporary disability in connection with the injury or disease.

12. The factory, plant and local committee checks the fulfilment of the housing plans and cultural and social amenities, supervises the spending of the housing funds and funds of communal enterprises. A representative of the trade union committee participates as an ex-officio member in the work of the housing commission which deals with the allocation of accommodation to workers and employees of enterprises, establishments and organizations, and also with the allocation of buildings constructed and equipment provided for their cultural and social needs.

In enterprises, establishments and organizations housing is allocated jointly by the management and the factory plant and local committee.

13. The factory, plant and local committee exercises public control over the work of State and cooperative trade undertakings and public catering facilities for workers and employees of enterprises, establishments and organizations.

The price of meals and food products and also the hours of opening of workers' canteens, snack bars, shops and kiosks are fixed in conjunction with the factory, plant and local committee.

14. The factory, plant and local committee is authorized to raise before the responsible organization the question of dismissal or punishment of managerial staff, who do not fulfil their commitments under the collective agreement, who indulge in bureaucracy, tolerate procrastination and violate the labour laws. The appointment of people to executive positions is made by the management, bearing in mind the opinion of the factory, plant and local committee."

Factory Committees now have the duty to represent workers in all questions of labour (Article 1); to participate in drafting factory production plans and housing plans (Article 2) (Central Committees now exercise this function at Gosplan, i.e., Central Planning, level, in place of the AUCCTU); to hear reports of heads of enterprises, etc., regarding fulfilment of production, housing, safety measures, etc., (formerly an AUCCTU and Central Committee job); to express an opinion on norms, revision of norms, tariffs, scales, wages, etc. (Article 6, (a), (b), (c), a duty formerly limited to the AUCCTU with supervision at Central Committee and Factory Committee levels); to demand the dismissal or punishment of any member of management for failure to abide by the rules or inefficiency in plan fulfilment; to be consulted in the dismissal of workers.

Production Conferences in 1958

The Production Conference decree lays down in the preamble: "The permanent production conferences represent one of the basic forms of drawing workers and employees on a large scale into the management of production, of subordinating their work to the tasks of fulfilling and overfulfilling the State plans, of using fully internal production capacities, of creating conditions for high labour productivity, and of perfecting the methods of management of enterprises and building sites," and for their election, composition, organization and work.

The Production Conferences (which in theory and Trade Union Statute are always supposed to have been held, but which Trud (July 18) admitted "did not always work properly...met irregularly and their suggestions were frequently ignored by the management") have been placed firmly under the guidance of the Trade Union Factory Committee (cf. Article 3 of Factory Committee Regulations). They have the same sort of structure as all other Soviet institutions, a five to 15-man Presidium headed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, which prepares the agenda; with representation from Party, Komsomol and working class élite. (Article 1.)

Conclusion

Production conferences and the Trade Union Factory Committees have the same tasks as given to the previous Soviet trade union structure, since they are concerned with plan fulfilment under conditions of Socialist competition, piece rates and with premium awards, the trade union organs taking responsibility (sometimes direct, sometimes supervisory) for welfare and State insurance, as part of this system. In the functions, the only thing that has changed is that trade unions now have powers vis-à-vis

management at factory level. In so far as these relate to plan fulfilment, the powers suggest that the Party is now intent on using the trade unions to secure greater efficiency and as a weapon to ensure the cooperation of management at factory level in the success of the Party's regionalization of industry, an innovation which met with considerable opposition from management at the higher Government levels.

To secure trade union cooperation from the rank and file, concessions to the workers were necessary. These have involved during the three years 1955-1957, rectifying the worst measures described earlier, but not the system. Therefore, the possibility of their reimposition remains. In 1958 the right has been afforded for trade unions to be heard on all labour matters. But the subordination and control of unions remains (i) AUCCTU, Trade Union Councils, the branch structure, Factory Committees, with the Central Committees retained and operating at central level, in the issue of legislation and in foreign relations, and (ii) the Party regional structure ordered to give guidance, and the Party aktiv within the trade unions ordered to live up to its name. Under these conditions, whatever the trade unions do for the workers will still be at the will of the Party and not at the request of the workers. The overall decisions on plans, wages and amount of social benefits will still come down from above. The Production Conferences, both in their composition and functions, give the worker no real say in management.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the Trade Unions
Publishing House of the All-Union Central Council of Trade
Unions, Moscow, 1939.
(Vsesoyuznaya Kommunisticheskaya Partiya /Bolshevikoy/ o
Profsoyuzakh).

Chigvintsev, I.N.: Wages Under Socialism
State Publishing House of Political Literature, Moscow, 1955.
(Zarabotnaya Plata pri Sotsializme.)

Collection of Legislative Acts on Labor
State Publishing House of Juridical Literature, Moscow, 1956.
(Sbornik Zakonodatelnykh Aktov o Trude.)

Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
Organ of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.
(Vedemosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR.)

Goloshchapov, B.A. (Compiler): Settlements with Workers and
Employees
State Financial Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, 9th Revised
Edition.
(Raschety s Rabochimi i Sluzhashchimi.)

Handbook on the Soviet Trade Unions, A. Lozovsky (editor)
Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR,
Moscow, 1937. (in English)

Izvestiya
News, the official daily organ of the Soviet Government.

Kommunist, theoretical and political journal of the Central Com-
mittee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Kuznetsova---see Organization of Workers' Wages.

Labor Legislation of the USSR
Juridical Publishing House of the People's Commissariat of
Justice, Moscow, 1941.
(Trudovoe Zakonodatelstvo SSSR.)

Large Soviet Encyclopaedia
1st Edition, 65 Volumes with supplementary volume on the USSR,
Moscow, 1926-1947, 2nd Edition, 50 Volumes (projected), Moscow,
1949.
(Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya)

Lenin, V.I. Works
4th Edition, 35 Volumes, Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Moscow,
1941-1950.
(Sochineniya.)

Lozovsky---see Handbook on the Soviet Trade Unions

Organization of Workers' Wages at Industrial Enterprises of the USSR, A.S. Kuznetsova.
State Publishing House of Political Literature, Moscow, 1956.
(Organizatsiya Zarabotnoy Platy Rabochikh na Promyshlennyykh Predpriyatiyakh SSSR.)

Party Resolutions:

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the Resolutions and Decisions of the Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, 1898-1954
7th Edition, 3 Volumes, State Publishing House of Political Literature, Moscow, 1954.
(Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Sovetskogo Soyuza v Rezolyutsiyakh i Resheniyakh Sezdov, Konferentsiy i Plenumov TsK, 1898-1954.)

Pravda (Truth) official daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Questions of Insurance, periodical, organ of the Central Social Insurance Administration, originally of the People's Commissariat of Labor, and, since 1933, of the AUCCTU.
(Voprosy Strakhovaniya.)

RSFSR Laws:

Collection of Statutes and Orders of the Worker-Peasant Government of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, 1917-1938.

People's Commissariat of Justice of the RSFSR, Moscow.
(Sobranie Uzakoneniye i Rasporyazheniya Raboche-Krestyanskogo Pravitelstva Rossiyskoy Sovetskoy Federativnoy Respubliki.)

Schwarz, Solomon, M.: Labor in the Soviet Union, Praeger, New York, 1952.

Schwarz, Solomon M.: Trade Unions in the USSR, New York, 1953.

Short Handbook on State Social Insurance
Publishing House of the AUCCTU, Moscow, 1950.
(Kratky Spravochnik po Gosudarstvennomu Sotsialnomu Strakhovaniyu.)

Soviet Labor Law, N.G. Aleksandrov
State Publishing House of Juridical Literature, Moscow, Editions of 1949, 1950, 1954.
(Sovetskoe Trudovoe Pravo.)

Soviet Labor Law, N.G. Aleksandrov and A.E. Pasherstnik
State Publishing House of Juridical Literature, Moscow, 1952.
(Sovetskoe Trudovoe Pravo.)

Soviet Studies
Periodical, Blackwell's, Oxford.

Soviet Trade Unions
Periodical, organ of the AUCCTU.
(Sovetskie Profsoyuzy.)

Soviet Trade Unions, Andrei Verbin. (Industrial Correspondent of Soviet Weekly.)
Published in English by the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy in London, 1958.

Soviet Trade Unions, Isaac Deutscher
Royal Institute of International Affairs, London and New York, 1950.

Stalin, Problems of Leninism
In English, translated from the 11th Russian Edition, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953.

State Social Insurance--Collection of Edicts, Decrees, Orders, Instructions and Explanations.
Publishing House of the AUCCTU, Moscow, 1948.
(Gosudarstvennoe Sotsialnoe Strakhovanie-Sbornik Ukazov, Postanovleniy, Rasporyazheniy, Instruktsiy i Razyasneniy!)

Tass, official news agency of the Soviet Government.

The Trade Union Worker's Handbook
Publishing House of the AUCCTU, Moscow, Editions of 1926, 1948, 1949, 1956 and 1957.
(Spravochnik Profsoyuznogo Rabotnika.)

Trud, daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union.

USSR Laws:

Collection of Laws and Orders of the Worker-Peasant Government of the USSR, Administration of Affairs of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, 1924-1938, Moscow.
(Sobranie Zakonov i Rasporyazheniy Raboche-Krestyanskogo Pravitelstva Soyuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik.)

Collections of Decrees and Orders of the Government of the USSR, 1938, Moscow.
(Sobranie Postanovleniy i Rasporyazheniy Pravitelstva Soyuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik.)

Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, Soviet Communism: a New Civilization?
Longmans, Green & Co., London, Volume 1, 1935, Volume 2, 1936.

World Trade Union Movement
Journal of the World Federation of Trade Unions, published in Prague, headquarters of the movement.

Zycie Warszawy, daily newspaper, Warsaw, Poland.